





# COGITO ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please explain why you are interested in the Cogito Alternative Program for your child.

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2. Please describe experiences at home and at school that have prepared your child for Cogito instruction.

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3. How did you learn about the Cogito Alternative Program?

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# GRADE 1 PARENT COMMITMENT

- ❖ I understand that I am enrolling my child in the Cogito Alternative Program, with distinct characteristics and differences from mainstream program education, within the Edmonton Public Schools.
- ❖ I understand that by making this choice, I support and subscribe to the Cogito Alternative Program goals, educational philosophy, and teaching methods and practices as outlined in the Cogito Foundational Principles and policies.
- ❖ I understand that my child will be presented with curricular expectations that exceed the Alberta Education Program of Studies.
- ❖ I understand that dress and behavioural expectations must conform to a whole-group environment and contribute to the positive image of an orderly, safe and secure school within the Cogito Alternative Program.
- ❖ I understand that regular attendance is crucial to student success, and that frequent or extended absences may jeopardize progressive grade placement or ability to continue in the Cogito program.
- ❖ I understand that it is my role to provide a distraction-free space, and to monitor and supervise my child's daily homework assignments (but not to teach).
- ❖ I agree to encourage and support daily reading as an ongoing life skill.
- ❖ I agree to be a cooperative partner with the school by providing meaningful feedback to the teacher, responding to teacher requests, attending each parent-teacher conference requested by the school, and reviewing and signing my child's agenda/homework book daily.
- ❖ I agree to participate in implementing an improvement plan should my child be at risk of not meeting Cogito grade level expectations.

**I understand that by signing this commitment form, I have read the Cogito Foundational Principles and the statements above, reviewed them with my child, and agree to support them to the best of my ability.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian – please print*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian – please print*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Signature*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_





# COGITO ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM

## STUDENT PROFILE: Grade 1

The Cogito Program provides a structured classroom experience for the average child. We have found from experience that this program is of greatest benefit to a student who can work well in a teacher-directed, whole-group instructional setting, and who:

- ❖ Desires to excel at every task;
- ❖ Values high academic achievement;
- ❖ Has the ability to sit quietly and focus on tasks for an extended period of time;
- ❖ Will do nightly homework (sometimes with the assistance and guidance of parents/guardians);
- ❖ Demonstrates perseverance, curiosity, initiative and the desire to learn;
- ❖ Demonstrates the ability to listen and follow oral directions independently;
- ❖ Has strong personal support for the program;
- ❖ Displays respect for him/herself, others and the environment;
- ❖ Responds to challenge positively and is not discouraged when faced with correction;
- ❖ Takes pride in improving organizational and personal management skills;
- ❖ Possesses average cognitive and developmental abilities; and
- ❖ Shows a desire to work and play cooperatively with peers.

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begin here*

 EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR DEFINING METHODS AND PRACTICES OF A K – 12 COGITO ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM



1. Cogito upholds academic excellence for all students and encourages and expects their best possible work. Standards of achievement and measurable outcomes are clearly laid out for each grade level. The curriculum systematically builds the strong knowledge base essential for formulating meaningful opinions, analysis and processes.
2. Cogito actively fosters an orderly, disciplined and secure school environment based upon clear ethical principles (focused on learning), that are firmly adhered to and enforced. Standards will be set for dress of both students and staff (which may include uniforms), classroom organization (desks in rows), as well as other features described in *Effective Schools* research.
3. Cogito approaches subjects as separate but inter-related disciplines necessary for a broad liberal arts education. The program focuses on a solid foundation of English, mathematical concepts and other basic academic skills, as well as seriously attending to sciences, geography, second language, fine arts and physical education. History focus occurs at appropriate grade levels. Complementary courses are set and designed to enrich the core, often showing the connections between the disciplines.
4. Cogito challenges and encourages students to always produce the best work they can. Teachers assign, correct and return in a timely fashion, regular homework that reinforces and applies what has been explicitly taught. Homework is meaningful and in measured amounts. Systematic attention is paid to teacher marking of student work and errors corrected by the student, thus promoting accuracy and precision in expressive language, mathematical solutions, penmanship and spelling, in addition to curricular content.
5. Cogito provides clear, timely and objective reporting of students' progress and individual achievements to grade level, district and provincial standards and norms in a quantified fashion. Student marks will be reported as percentages at appropriate grade levels.
6. Cogito recognizes that diligence, effort and scholastic achievement generate self-esteem, attention span and powers of concentration by providing a classroom environment where students work hard, spend their time on task and are actively engaged in learning.
7. Cogito limits instructional methods and practices to those that fit the school's philosophy and are supported by *Effective Schools* research. Whole group, teacher directed instruction is stressed. Cogito does not allow computer technology to be the focus of education; instead computer skills are taught directly as a practical art.
8. Cogito holds teachers, and the principal who leads the program, accountable for the effective teaching of a sound knowledge-based curriculum, the ability to maintain an orderly, emotionally secure and productive environment, adherence to the Cogito philosophy, and the measured performance of their students. Parents recognize that the principal is the primary decision-maker on all instructional matters.
9. The principal ensures students, teachers and parents are instructed as to their roles and responsibilities as detailed in the *School Act* and all foundational Cogito documentation.
10. Cogito realizes that the primary responsibility of the teacher is to deliver the curriculum, not to function as a social agency or as an instrument of social engineering. The work of teachers is compromised when they assume the role of parent, nurse or social worker.
11. Cogito recognizes that, while schools are set up to teach students, parents have a primary stake and rightful interest in the education of their children and in the operation and performance of those schools in which their children are enrolled. Parents are true and valued partners in their children's education and can look to the teacher and administration to foster this important role.

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