

Cloud Storage

Why move to Cloud storage?

Simply put, we do not have the capacity in our EIPS servers to support enough in-house servers to host our Communicating Student Learning (CSL) Report Cards. An excellent alternative to in-house servers is to purchase and utilize a “piece” of the Cloud. Cloud storage is extremely secure and allows us to purchase only as much storage as we need. This unlimited, secure storage option ensures that every parent will be able to access their child’s report card will for many years to come.

What is Cloud storage or computing?

In the simplest terms, cloud computing means storing and accessing data and programs over the Internet instead of a computer's hard drive. The cloud is just a metaphor for the Internet. There is a public Cloud, upon which most of us have medical, financial and other personal data stored. Our report card is not stored on this public part of the Cloud, it’s on our own EIPS Cloud.

What about our EIPS Cloud?

We (EIPS CSL) have purchased our own part of the Azure Cloud and it is directly linked to our secure server. No one else has access to it- in fact, we have our own address within the Cloud. In essence, we have built a secure wall around our server, our secure connection to the Cloud, and the piece of the Cloud we own.

What about security with the Cloud?

[Canadian Developer Connection](#) is a Canadian content site related to security in The Azure Cloud. There’s a couple of key messages about the Azure Cloud shared on the site:

- Microsoft is committed to safeguarding the privacy of our data; we control where our data resides and who can access it.
- We (EIPS) specify the geographic areas where our data is stored—data can be replicated within a geographic area for redundancy.
- We get additional contractual commitments about the transfer of personal data to address the E.U. Data Protection Directive
- We limit Microsoft access to and use of our data—we strictly control and permit access only as necessary to provide or troubleshoot the service.
- Microsoft will never use our customer data for advertising purposes

This [infographic](#) provided by Microsoft demonstrates a commitment by Microsoft to keep the data safe and the ownership where it belongs.

EIPS’ Director of Learning Technologies, James Aitchison, recently met with a representative for Microsoft. Mr. Aitchison states: *“In speaking with the educational representatives for Microsoft directly in a face to face conversation they reassured me that the data on their servers belonged to the author.”*

Microsoft’s Cloud is currently housed in the United States however, they are building Canadian Cloud sites and once they are completed, we will move our piece of the Cloud to Toronto, Canada.

Why are you making us sign a permission slip for the new report card? We didn’t have to before.

Our previous report card was housed on our local server. Our new report card requires a great deal more space, hence the need to access a secure part of the Cloud. We are an organization that takes pride in being transparent and open. We want parents to know that we are changing how we are housing our report card information. It is still extremely secure (and is more secure than keeping students marks in a binder or on a thumb drive). However, parents need to be aware that their child’s name and Alberta School Number (ASN) will be on our Cloud.

The only way to access the report card is to log on to a PowerSchool account. Once inside PowerSchool, parents will need to click on a button that reads “Communicating Student Learning”. Note that PowerSchool is password secure. Should a password be compromised, external users could see a child’s name, their ASN, and the report card content (marks and comments).

What demographic information is shared on the CSL?

Only the child's name and Alberta School Number (ASN) appears on the report card. All other demographic data is housed in PowerSchool (which resides on a server inside of our school division's central office).

How do I access my child's report card?

The only way to access the report card is to log on to a PowerSchool account. Once inside PowerSchool, parents will need to click on a button that reads "Communicating Student Learning". Note that PowerSchool is password secure.

What if I still say no?

Your child will receive a generic version of our report card. He or she will still receive their marks and comments, but parents will not be able to access all the digital information contained in the actual CSL.

How long will my child's report card be kept?

You will be able to access your child's report card through PowerSchool for the duration of their schooling. Paper copies of all final report card(s) will be kept in their student record. The [School Act](#) (p. 5) stipulates that we must keep our graduating students' student records for seven years after they graduate.

Can I withdraw my permission for my child's report card to be shared digitally during the course of the school year?

Yes, you may withdraw permission at any time. Please contact your child's teacher or principal with your change.