



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	
Effective:	January 2022
Last Revised:	January 12, 2022

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## ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING

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### 1. PURPOSE

This administrative procedure sets out board expectations for the assessment, evaluation, and reporting of student achievement.

Rainbow District School Board is committed to enabling all students to reach their potential and to succeed. The development of clear and consistent assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices from grades 1 to 12 maintains the system-wide focus on high standards, improving student learning, reducing the achievement gap, and increasing public confidence.

The Ministry of Education's *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition Covering Grades 1-12*, provides the direction and foundation for all program planning and assessment. This document promotes fairness, transparency, equity, and consistency across the province in the assessment, evaluation, and reporting of student learning.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

[The definitions are selected from pages 143-156 of *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools*]

**Achievement Chart:** Achievement chart is a standard, province-wide guide to be used by teachers to make judgments about student work based on clear performance standards.

**Achievement Levels:** Achievement levels are brief descriptions of four different degrees of student achievement of the provincial curriculum expectations for any given subject/discipline. Level 3 is the "provincial standard". Parents of students achieving at level 3 in a particular grade or course can be confident that their children will be prepared for work in the next grade or the next course. Level 1 identifies achievement that falls much below the provincial standard. Level 2 identifies achievement that approaches the standard. Level 4 identifies achievement that surpasses the standard.

**Assessment:** Assessment is the process of gathering, from a variety of sources, information that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations in a subject or course.

**Assessment as Learning:** Assessment *as* learning means that students are actively engaged in the assessment process. That is, they monitor their own learning; use assessment feedback from the teacher, self, and peers to determine next steps; and set individual learning goals. Assessment *as* learning requires students to have a clear understanding of the learning goals and the success criteria.

**Assessment for Learning:** Assessment *for* learning is the ongoing process of gathering and interpreting evidence about student learning for the purpose of determining where students are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there. The information gathered is used by teachers to provide feedback and adjust instruction, and by students to focus their learning. Assessment for learning takes place while the student is still learning and serves to promote learning.

**Assessment of Learning:** Assessment *of* learning is the process of collecting and interpreting evidence for the purpose of summarizing learning at a given point in time, to make judgments about the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria, and to assign a value to represent that quality. The information gathered may be used to communicate the student's achievement to parents, other teachers, students themselves, and others. It occurs at or near the end of a cycle of learning.

**Curriculum Expectations:** Curriculum expectations are the knowledge and skills that students are expected to develop and to demonstrate in their class work, on tests, and in various activities on which their achievement is assessed and evaluated. *Overall expectations* describe in general terms the knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate by the end of each grade/course. *Specific expectations* describe the expected knowledge and skills in greater detail.

**Evaluation:** Evaluation is the process of judging the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria and assigning a value to represent that quality. Evaluation is based on assessments *of* learning that provide data on student achievement at strategic times throughout the grade/subject/course, often at the end of a period of learning.

**Parents:** Every use of "parents" in this procedure includes guardians or a single parent or guardian.

### 3. APPLICATION OF THIS PROCEDURE

Assessment and evaluation are a shared responsibility for all members of the educational community. All stakeholders will work together to ensure that assessment, evaluation, and reporting are valid and reliable, and lead to the improvement of learning for all students.

## PROCEDURES

### 4. Fundamental Principles

- 4.1 The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. The following seven fundamental principles lay the foundation for rich and challenging practice. When these principles are fully understood and observed by all teachers, they will guide the collection of meaningful information that will help inform instructional decisions, promote student engagement, and improve student learning.
- 4.2 To ensure valid and reliable results that lead to improvements in learning, teachers will use practices and procedures that:
- are fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;
  - support all students, including those with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction (English or French), and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;
  - are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;
  - are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;
  - are ongoing, varied in nature, and administered over a period of time to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
  - provide ongoing, descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement;
  - develop students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set goals, and plan next steps for their learning. [*Growing Success*, p. 6]

### 5. Assessment and Evaluation

#### 5.1 Assessment *for* Learning and as Learning

As essential steps in assessment *for* learning and as learning, teachers need to:

- plan assessment concurrently and integrate it seamlessly with instruction;

- share learning goals and success criteria with students at the outset of learning to ensure that students and teachers have a common and shared understanding of these goals and criteria as learning progresses;
- gather information about student learning before, during, and near the end of a period of instruction, using a variety of assessment strategies and tools;
- use assessment to inform instruction, guide next steps, and help students monitor their progress towards achieving their learning goals;
- analyze and interpret evidence of learning;
- give and receive specific and timely descriptive feedback about student learning; and
- help students to develop skills of peer and self-assessment.

## 5.2 Assessment of Learning and Evaluation

5.2.1 Assessment of learning involves collecting and interpreting evidence for the purpose of summarizing learning at a given point in time on the basis of established criteria and to assign a value to represent that quality.

5.2.2 Evaluation accurately summarizes and communicates to parents, other teachers, employers, institutions of further education, and students themselves what students know and can do with respect to the overall curriculum expectations.

## 5.3 Determining Report Card Grades

5.3.1 For Grades 1 to 6, student achievement of the overall curriculum expectations will be evaluated in accordance with the achievement charts in the provincial curriculum and will be reported using letter grades.

5.3.2 Teachers may also use the codes “R” and “I” when evaluating and reporting student achievement in Grades 1 to 6.

- The “R” indicates that the student has not demonstrated the required knowledge and skills and that extensive remediation is needed. Parents will be informed prior to reporting an “R”. Teachers will continuously monitor student success and plan for interventions to improve learning, and inform parents of the instructional strategies being used.
- Teachers will use their professional judgment to determine when the use of an “I” is appropriate and add the statement, “There is insufficient evidence to assign a letter grade.” The report card comments will indicate why an “I” has been assigned (e.g., significant absences, recent move, modified day). In cases where the teacher does

not have sufficient evidence to determine a letter grade, but has been able to collect some evidence of what a student has learned, strengths and the next steps for improvement will be indicated in the report card comments.

- 5.3.3 For Grades 7 to 12, a student's achievement of the overall curriculum expectations will be evaluated in accordance with the achievement charts in the provincial curriculum and will be reported using percentage marks.
- 5.3.4 For Grades 7 and 8, teachers will use the code "R" to indicate achievement below 50 per cent. For Grades 9 to 12, teachers will use percentage marks to indicate achievement below 50 per cent. Both "R" and marks below 50 per cent signal that additional learning is required before the student begins to achieve success in meeting the subject/grade or course expectations. "R" and percentage marks below 50 per cent indicate the need for the development of strategies to address the student's specific learning needs in order to support his or her success in learning. When appropriate, parents will be consulted in this process.
- 5.3.5 For Grades 7 to 10, teachers may use the code "I" to indicate that there is insufficient evidence to assign a percentage mark. ("I" may not be used in Grades 11 and 12.) [Paragraphs 5.3.1 to 5.3.5 are from *Growing Success*, pp. 40-42]
- 5.3.6 When considering the minimal percentage mark to appear on a Grade 9-12 report card, teachers will:
- use observations of the students, student conversations, and student products;
  - consider the most recent evidence of achievement;
  - consider the student's most consistent level of achievement;
  - record the grade the student earns;
  - consult with the principal before recording a grade below 20%.

## 6. Professional Judgment

*Growing Success* notes: "Teachers' professional judgments are at the heart of effective assessment, evaluation, and reporting of student achievement". [p. 8]

"Successful implementation of policy depends on the professional judgment of educators at all levels, as well as on educators' ability to work together and to build trust and confidence among parents and students. It depends on the continuing efforts of... professional learning communities to clarify and share their understanding of policy and to develop and share effective implementation practices. It depends on creative and judicious differentiation in instruction and assessment to meet the needs of all students, and on strong and committed leadership from school and system leaders, who coordinate, support, and guide the work of teachers." [*Growing Success*, p. 2]

## 7. Learning Skills and Work Habits

- 7.1 The development of learning skills and work habits is an integral part of a student's learning. The development of learning skills and work habits needed to succeed in school and in life begins early in a child's schooling. Learning skills and work habits are developed over time and follow a continuum of growth which may look different across grades, subjects, and for individual students. To the extent possible, however, the evaluation of learning skills and work habits, apart from any that may be included as part of a curriculum expectation in a subject or course, should not be considered in the determination of a student's grades.
- 7.2 Teachers will work with students and their parents to ensure that they understand the learning skills and work habits and their importance. Students benefit when teachers discuss and model these skills, and when teachers and parents work with students to help them develop these abilities. Students also benefit when teachers work with them to explain how these skills will be assessed and evaluated.
- 7.3 Teachers will work with students to help them develop the following learning skills and work habits from Grades 1-12:
- responsibility
  - organization
  - independent work
  - collaboration
  - initiative
  - self-regulation
- 7.4 These six learning skills and work habits are to be reported on in progress reports and provincial report cards in both elementary and secondary schools.  
[*Growing Success*, Chapter 2]

## 8. Learning Skills and Work Habits: Late and Missed Assignments

- 8.1 *Growing Success* establishes fundamental principles which enable all students to reach their potential and promotes student responsibility for submitting assignments within agreed upon timelines.
- 8.2 When responding to late and missed assignments, teachers will:
- take into account individual students, their learning styles and needs;
  - implement accommodations and modifications that assist students to complete assignments; and
  - consider the impact of their decisions on student learning.

8.3 For late and missed assignments, teachers will implement effective assessment and evaluation strategies and interventions that are purposeful and systematic in nature that may include:

- asking the student to clarify the reason for not completing the assignment;
- helping students develop better time-management skills;
- collaborating with other staff to prepare a part- or full-year calendar of major assignment dates for every class;
- planning for major assignments to be completed in stages, so that students are less likely to be faced with an all-or-nothing situation at the last minute;
- maintaining ongoing communication with students and/or parents about due dates and late assignments, and scheduling conferences with parents if the problem persists;
- in secondary schools, referring the student to the Student Success team or teacher;
- taking into consideration legitimate reasons for missed deadlines;
- setting up a student contract;
- using counselling or peer tutoring to try to deal positively with problems;
- holding teacher-student conferences;
- reviewing the need for extra support for English language learners;
- reviewing whether students require special education services;
- requiring the student to work with a school team to complete the assignment;
- for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students, involving Indigenous support workers and members of the extended family;
- understanding and taking into account the cultures, histories, and contexts of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students and parents and their previous experiences with the school system;
- providing alternative assignments or tests/exams where, in the teacher's professional judgment, it is reasonable and appropriate to do so;
- deducting marks for late assignments, up to and including the full value of the assignment.

[*Growing Success*, p. 43]

## 9. Academic Honesty

9.1 Strategies that prevent cheating and plagiarism are fundamental to student success.

9.1.1 Cheating is defined as the use of assistance that is not permitted in an assignment or test.

9.1.2 Plagiarism is defined as the use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another without attribution, in order to represent them as one's own original work.  
[*Growing Success*, p. 151]

9.2 Teachers will:

- a) inform and review, at the beginning of each year or semester, how students will be evaluated, the classroom expectations regarding work completion, and the consequences of cheating and plagiarism;
- b) use strategies that help prevent cheating and plagiarism;
- c) use knowledge of student work, performance and language patterns to detect cheating and plagiarism;
- d) use progressive measures and student accountability when cases of academic dishonesty are detected; and
- e) take into account the grade level, maturity of the student, number and frequency of incidents, individual student circumstances, and the extent of the cheating and/or plagiarism.

9.3 Academic consequences of cheating and/or plagiarism may include some or all of the following:

- a) conducting a conference with the student and/or parent;
- b) providing additional assignments that encourage personal reflection regarding the student's choices;
- c) assigning and grading an alternate assignment that demonstrates the defined curricular expectations;
- d) assigning a grade of zero for the current assignment; and/or
- e) declaring the student ineligible for in-school bursaries, scholarships, awards, or letters of reference.

9.4 Principals may consider suspending a student for repeated offences.

## 10. Roles and Shared Responsibilities

10.1 Assessment and evaluation is a shared responsibility. The board is committed to implementing assessment, evaluation, and reporting procedures that are fair, equitable, and transparent, and result in accurate information about student learning in relation to Ontario curriculum expectations or alternative expectations. Accurate and fair assessments provide meaningful information for students, parents, families, community members, and educators.

10.2 Supervisory officers will support and facilitate the principles of *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools*.

10.3 Principals will:

- a) communicate to stakeholders the implications of *Growing Success*; and
- b) ensure the implementation of assessment, evaluation, and reporting procedures based upon *Growing Success*.



## 10.4 Teachers will:

- a) communicate and implement assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices based on the fundamental principles of *Growing Success* as set out in section 4 above;
- b) use assessment information to guide decisions related to instruction, increase student motivation, assist students in setting goals, and promote improved student learning;
- c) ensure that assessment, evaluation, and reporting strategies are valid and reliable, and lead to the improvement of learning for all students;
- d) ensure that students' demonstration of their achievement is assessed in a balanced manner with respect to the four categories of the achievement chart; and
- e) communicate with parents regarding what they might do to assist their child.

## 10.5 Parents are encouraged to:

- a) establish and maintain high expectations;
- b) ensure regular attendance;
- c) monitor progress;
- d) communicate with teachers;
- e) support school expectations; and
- f) set learning goals with their child(ren).

## 10.6 Students will:

- a) provide evidence of their learning as outlined by their teachers;
- b) reflect upon and respond to feedback provided by their teachers;
- c) set personal learning goals;
- d) become increasingly self-aware;
- e) improve self-advocacy;
- f) communicate with their teachers when they are in need of further support; and
- g) practice academic honesty.

**REFERENCE DOCUMENTS*****Legal:***

*Education Act, Section 264: Duties of Teacher*

*Education Act, Section 265: Duties of Principal*

*Education Act, Section 286: Duties of Supervisory Officer*

Ontario Regulation 298 Operation of Schools, Section 11 Duties of Principals

Ontario Regulation 298 Operation of Schools, Section 20 Duties of Teachers

Ontario Regulation 298 Operation of Schools, Section 23 Requirements for Pupils

Ontario Student Record Guideline

*Education Quality and Accountability Office Act 1996*

*Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition  
Covering Grades 1-12 (2010)*

**Board:**

Board Policy No. GOV-01 Vision, Mission, and Values  
Board Policy No. GOV-02 Strategic Directions for Rainbow Schools  
Board Policy No. GOV-03 Role of the Corporate Board  
Board Policy No. GOV-06 Role of the Director of Education  
Board Policy No. GOV-11 Learning and Working Environment: Equity and Inclusion  
Board Policy No. GOV-14 Parent and Community Relations  
Administrative Procedure School Councils  
Administrative Procedure Personal Information of Students  
Administrative Procedure Accountability for Student Learning  
Administrative Procedure Homework  
Rainbow District School Board, Growing Success Guide Grades 1-12, 2010

**Resources:**

Education Quality and Accountability Office. *EQAO Guide to School and Board Improvement Planning: A Handbook for School and Board Leaders*. (Revised March 2005)  
Ontario Ministry of Education. *Reach Every Student: Energizing Ontario Education*. (2008).  
Ontario Ministry of Education. *The K–12 School Effectiveness Framework: A support for school improvement and student success*. (2013).  
The Institute for Educational Leadership. Ontario Leadership Framework.  
The Institute for Educational Leadership. *Ideas into Action for School and System Leaders*.