



Parents' Guide to Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

Parents' Guide to Assessment

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in their child's education. Assessment, evaluation, and reporting are integral parts of a student's education, providing valuable insights into their progress, strengths, and areas for improvement. This guide is designed to equip parents/guardians with the knowledge and understanding needed to navigate the world of assessment, evaluation, and reporting effectively and empower them to actively engage in their child's educational journey.

Definitions

Assessment - Assessment is defined as the process of gathering, from multiple and varied sources, information that accurately reflects how well a student is demonstrating achievement of the curriculum expectations in a subject or course. The purpose of assessment is to improve student learning. Information, including **conversations, observations, and products** must be gathered using a variety of practices, including **assessment for learning** (providing students with feedback about their work), **assessment as learning** (helping students to set learning goals and monitor their own progress), and **assessment of learning** (evaluation and reporting of progress in the form of grades or marks). Assessment feedback provides valuable information for students, teachers, designated early childhood educators (DECEs), and parents/guardians to guide the student towards improvement. It also provides information to guide educators in their selection of instructional approaches and the overall effectiveness of programs and classroom practices.

Evaluation - Evaluation is the process of judging the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria and a value to represent that quality. Evaluation is based on an analysis of all assessment data that provides evidence of achievement of the overall expectations of the subject/course. Evaluation occurs at strategic times throughout the subject/course, often at the end of a period of learning.

Reporting - Reporting practices provide consistent, detailed strengths, and next steps to support student learning. Teachers report student achievement through formal reporting methods using the Kindergarten Communication of Learning: Initial Observation and the Kindergarten Communication of Learning, Elementary Progress Report Card, Elementary Provincial Report Cards, as well as the Provincial Report Card, Grades 9-12. An alternative report card may be used to report student achievement where the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum may differ from parts or all of a student's program (e.g., students with Alternative Curriculum goals in their Individual Education Plan [IEP]).

Evidence of Student Achievement for Evaluation (Triangulation of Assessment)

Evidence of student achievement for evaluation is collected over time from three different sources: observations, conversations, and student products. This is referred to as Triangulation of Assessment and increases the reliability and validity of the evaluation of student learning. The assessment triangle will not always be equally distributed as this is not a "one size fits all" model for students. For example, a student might demonstrate greater understanding through observations and conversations than through products. The goal is to determine what the students have learned and how to best support their learning going forward.

Fundamental Principles

Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting are integral components of the school curriculum. [*Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Grades 1 to 12, 2010*](#) sets out the Ministry of Education's assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy.

Based on the seven fundamental principles from *Growing Success (2010)*, teachers provide opportunities for the improvement of learning for all students by using practices and procedures that meet the following criteria:

- 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 voluntarily identify as Indigenous;
- 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 lived experiences of all students;
- are communicated clearly to students and parents/guardians 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; and,
- develop students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning.

Parent/Guardian Role

Parents/guardians can support their child's learning through the following actions:

- familiarizing themselves with course outlines, curriculum expectations, and assessment criteria;
- supporting their child in choosing courses that are appropriate to the child's aptitude, interest and goals;
- helping their child develop strong learning skills and a positive attitude towards learning;
- working with teachers to send their child clear, consistent messages about curriculum expectations and assessment criteria;
- working with teachers to identify their child's strengths, interests, learning needs, and best learning strategies;
- communicating regularly about student achievement to the classroom or subject teacher, as required via phone or electronic means;
- monitoring their child's progress by attending student-involved conferences and by returning the parent/guardian comment section of the elementary and secondary provincial report cards;
- making requests to the principal at the beginning of the school year, to the extent possible, for religious accommodation (if appropriate); and,
- ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually.

Student Role

Students understand and work towards the curriculum expectations and achievement criteria by:

- actively engaging in learning and assessment activities – being punctual and attentive, and actively participating in course work;
- demonstrating their knowledge and skills, and learn to monitor their personal progress in learning through ongoing reflection and metacognition (i.e., assessment as learning);
- sharing the responsibility for learning by demonstrating their achievement of the curriculum expectations within timelines established with their teachers and peers;
- communicating their strategies and goals in response to teacher and peer feedback;
- embodying academic honesty; and,
- communicating concerns about personal achievement and learning needs with teachers.

21st Century Learning

In today's rapidly evolving world, education is no longer just about memorizing facts and figures. To prepare students for the future, it is crucial to recognize the importance of 21st century skills in their development. These skills go beyond traditional academic knowledge and focus on equipping students with the abilities they need to thrive in the modern world.

Assessment plays an important role in evaluating a student's progress and abilities, and it is essential that schools incorporate 21st century skills into this process. So, what exactly are these skills? They encompass a range of abilities such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, collaboration, communication, and digital literacy. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills enable students to analyze information, evaluate different perspectives, and find innovative solutions to complex problems. In a world driven by rapid technological advancements and global challenges, these skills are invaluable for navigating uncertainties and making informed decisions.

Educators are increasingly adopting innovative assessment methods to teach and evaluate these 21st century skills. This could involve project-based assessments, presentations, portfolios, group discussions, simulations, and even real-world applications of knowledge. By assessing these skills alongside academic knowledge, educators gain a more comprehensive understanding of a student's abilities and potential. It allows educators to identify their strengths, areas for improvement, and tailor their education accordingly. Moreover, it prepares students for the challenges and opportunities they will encounter in their future careers and lives.

Parents/guardians play a vital role in supporting the development of these skills. By nurturing 21st century skills alongside academic knowledge, it empowers students to become well-rounded individuals who can adapt, innovate, and thrive in an ever-changing world.

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Learning Skills and Work Habits

The development of learning skills and work habits is an integral part of a student's learning. All learning skills and work habits are reported on during each reporting period using four levels: E – Excellent, G – Good, S – Satisfactory, N – Needs Improvement. Report card comments related to the learning skills and work habits focus on students' strengths, and next steps needed to develop.

The six learning skills and work habits are:

Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● fulfills responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment; ● completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines; and, ● takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour.
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks; and, ● establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals; identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks.
Independent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals; ● uses class time appropriately to complete tasks; and, ● follows instruction with minimal supervision.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● accepts various roles and an equitable share of the work in a group; ● responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others; ● builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions; and, ● works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals, shares information, resources, and expertise, and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.
Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning; ● demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks; ● demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning; ● approaches new tasks with a positive attitude; and, ● recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.
Self-Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sets individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them; ● seeks clarification or assistance when needed; ● assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests, identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals; and, ● perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.

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Achievement Levels

The final letter grade (Grades 1-6) or percentage mark (Grades 7-12) represents the quality of the student's overall achievement of the expectations for the subject/course and reflects the corresponding level of achievement as described in the achievement chart for that subject/course. The final grade or mark should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement with special consideration for most recent achievement. For Kindergarten, a student's learning will be communicated in three categories: key learning, growth in learning, and next steps in learning.

Teachers of Grades 1-8 may use the code 'R' to report achievement below level 1 (Grades 1-6) and below 50 percent (Grades 7-12).

When a student in Grades 1-10 has provided insufficient evidence for a teacher to assess achievement, a teacher may use the code 'I' in a mark book and/or on a student's report card, including a final report card. Teachers will use their professional judgment to determine when the use of 'I' is appropriate and in the best interest of the student.

In Grades 9 and 10, a student who receives an 'I' on the final report card to indicate insufficient evidence will not receive a credit for the course; however, the student may be considered for credit recovery by the student success team. The code 'I' cannot be used for Grade 11 and 12 courses. For students in Grades 9-12, a mark of zero may be given when a teacher is unable to collect any evidence of student learning. A mark of zero can only be assigned after interventions outlined in [Growing Success](#) (page 44) have been implemented.

NA indicates that there has been no instruction on a subject or strand for a particular reporting period.

Achievement Level	Report Card Grade (Gr 1-6)	Report Card Percent (Gr 7-12)	Meaning
4+ 4 4-	A+ A A-	95-100 87-94 80-86	Achievement surpasses provincial standard
3+ 3 3-	B+ B B-	77-79 73-76 70-72	Achievement meets provincial standard
2+ 2 2-	C+ C C-	67-69 63-66 60-62	Achievement is approaching provincial standard
1+ 1 1-	D+ D D-	57-59 53-56 50-52	Achievement falls much below provincial standard
R	R	0-49	Student has not demonstrated the required knowledge and skills
	I	I	Insufficient evidence to assign a grade

Reporting Timelines

Kindergarten classes use the Kindergarten Communication of Learning: Initial Observation between October 20 and November 20 as established by the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) school year calendar. Schools use the Kindergarten Communication of Learning twice a year. The first Kindergarten Communication of Learning is sent home between January 20 and February 20, and the second is sent home towards the end of June. In Kindergarten, the learning expectations are connected with four “frames” which align with the four foundational conditions needed for students to grow and flourish: Belonging and Contributing, Self-Regulation and Well-being, Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours, and Problem Solving and Innovating. Children’s learning in these four areas is evaluated and described in the first and second term reports.

Elementary schools use the Elementary Progress Report Card between October 20 and November 20, as established by the SCDSB school year calendar. Schools use the Elementary Provincial Report Cards twice a year. The first Provincial Report Card is sent home between January 20 and February 20, and the second Provincial Report Card is sent home towards the end of June.

In secondary, the Provincial Report Cards, Grades 9-12, are issued to parents/guardians two times each semester. Students who are 18 years of age (or older) are issued report cards directly. The Midterm Report Card in semester one goes home in November and the Final Report Card in February. In semester two, the Midterm Report Card is issued in April and the Final Report Card is issued in July.

Assessment and Evaluation for Multilingual Learners

If a student has modified expectations as determined by observable language behaviours on the initial Steps to English Proficiency (STEP) and continued observations on the STEP continuum to meet their language learning needs, the reporting and evaluation will be based on the recorded modified expectations.

Students with Special Education Needs

Accommodations refer to differentiated teaching and assessment strategies, staffing support, and/or individualized equipment required to enable a student to learn and/or to demonstrate learning. To attain a credit, provincial curriculum expectations are expected to remain consistent, including for students receiving various accommodations. Students in the SCDSB can be provided with special education supports and accommodations regardless of a formal diagnosis, identified exceptionality, and/or IEP.

Modifications are changes made to the age-appropriate, grade-level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student’s individual learning needs. For students with an IEP, these changes could include expectations from a different grade level, and/or significant changes (i.e., increase or decrease) in the number and/or complexity of the expectations. At the secondary level, a credit may or may not be granted for a course, depending on the extent to which the expectations in the course have been modified.

Alternative learning expectations are developed to help students acquire knowledge and skills that are not represented in the Ontario Curriculum expectations. Because they are not part of a subject or course outlined

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in the provincial curriculum documents, alternative expectations are considered to constitute alternative programs or alternative courses (i.e., secondary school courses).

Report card marks and comments for students in Grades 1-12 with special education needs may reflect classroom assessment that is based on the expectations and goals defined in the student's IEP which may differ from the Ontario curriculum and noted on the student's report card. For students in Kindergarten, the key learning, growth in learning, and the next steps in learning reflect the expectations and goals outlined in the student's IEP.

Late and Missed Assignments

In all subjects, teachers are expected to provide students with numerous and varied opportunities to demonstrate the full extent of their achievement of the curriculum expectations.

Teachers plan for major assignments to be completed in stages, to support student learning of time management skills and include assessment as learning with timely descriptive feedback throughout the learning process, so that students receive the critical feedback they need to ensure their success.

The goal is to have students complete all assigned assessments in order for the teacher to determine a final mark. The teacher and student will communicate when setting deadlines for assessment of learning tasks. It is the combined responsibility of the teacher and the student to seek solutions to issues that may arise regarding assessment timelines and completion dates.

Feedback, Recovery, and Improvement Days (Grades 9-12)

The final three days of each semester can be used to support students in achieving their maximum level of success in the course. Secondary schools are expected to coordinate feedback, recovery, and improvement days for students. Students who would like to receive feedback from an assessment, to rescue or recover a credit or to improve on an area of missed expectations, are able to attend and meet with teachers and support staff. Teachers and support staff will communicate with students who will benefit most from attending this opportunity; however, all students are invited to attend. There will be no new instruction on these days, but it is an opportunity for students to work more closely with their teacher(s) if they require feedback, credit recovery, or an opportunity to improve on an area of missed expectations.

Culminating Activities (Grades 9-12)

When planning a form of culminating activity/task, teachers are expected to take into consideration the course they are evaluating, and how best to have students demonstrate their understanding of the overall expectations for the course. The culminating activity/task takes place at or towards the end of the course and may span over multiple days or even weeks. The culminating activity/task may be composed of multiple parts, including observation, product, and conversation-based formats. The format of the culminating activity/task should be based on what is most appropriate for students. The culminating activity/task can include an examination, presentation, assignment, interview, conference, portfolio, etc. Each semester will have scheduled culminating activity days to minimize situations where students have more than one exam or task in

one day and to accommodate the ability for teachers to provide their students with feedback and the opportunity to improve their learning.

Determining a Report Card grade: Grades 1-12

Teachers will take various considerations into account when determining the grade to be entered on the report card to appropriately reflect the student's learning and achievement. The teacher will consider all evidence collected through observations, conversations, and student products. Determining a report card grade will involve teachers' professional judgment and interpretation of evidence, and should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement, with special consideration given to more recent evidence.

Resources

Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2010

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>

Growing Success: The Kindergarten Addendum, Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2016

<https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/GSKindergartenAddendum2018.pdf>

Growing Success: The Mathematics Addendum, Grades 1 to 8, 2020

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/growing-success-assessment-evaluation-and-reporting-ontario-schools-kindergarten-grade-12#section-1>

SCDSB APM A1460 - Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

<https://www.scdsb.on.ca/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=4976756>