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**STUDENT ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND REPORTING IN PEEL  
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**Statement of Policy**

The Peel District School Board (PDSB) approves a student assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy that is applied consistently throughout the Kindergarten program and Grades 1-12. This policy is informed by the provincial policy for assessment, evaluation, and reporting required in *Growing Success (2010)*, *Growing Success: The Kindergarten Addendum (2016)*, and provincial curriculum expectations. To ensure effective implementation of ministry policy, direct statements from provincial and board policy documents have been embedded consistently throughout Policy 14. These direct statements are referenced by endnotes.

The Student Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Peel Elementary and Secondary Schools policy is aligned with and supports the principles and expectations of the Board Human Rights policy (Policy 51) and Equity and Inclusive Education policy (Policy 54). At all times, this policy should be interpreted to be consistent with the Board's policies and the *Human Rights Code*. This policy also aligns with the *English Language Learners, ESL & ELD Programs, and Services* document (2007). The *Student Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Peel Elementary, and Secondary Schools* policy is also aligned with the Ontario Ministry of Education document, *Supporting Minds*, and our own mental health strategy. The policy honours and enacts our goal to empower modern learners<sup>1</sup>. In PDSB, it is expected that assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices are based on triangulated evidence of student achievement of the provincial kindergarten program expectations, curriculum expectations, alternative curriculum expectations where appropriate, and student demonstration of learning skills and work habits.

**Purposes of Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting**

**The primary purpose of assessment, evaluation, and reporting is to improve student learning.<sup>2</sup>**

Other purposes include the collection of meaningful evidence of learning and data that will help inform instructional decisions and the promotion of student engagement. Evaluation accurately summarizes and communicates to families, other teachers, employers, institutions of further education, and students themselves what students know and can do with respect to the overall curriculum expectations.<sup>3</sup>

## **Principles of Effective Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting**

To ensure that the process of assessment, evaluation, and reporting is valid and reliable, and to ensure that this process leads to the improvement of learning for all students, PDSB teachers and school teams use practices and procedures that are:

- fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;
- supportive of all students, including those with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction (English or French), and those who are Indigenous;
- 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;
- communicated clearly to students and families at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;
- 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;
- providing ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement;
- developing students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning<sup>4</sup>.

### ***Assessment for English Language Learners***

English Language Learners requiring accommodation to curriculum expectations will benefit from a variety of accommodations to assessment, which may include

- allowance of extra time;
- use of alternative assessment strategies (e.g., oral interviews, learning logs, portfolios);
- use of simplified language and instructions (e.g., in the context of tasks that require completion of graphic organizers, cloze sentences).

English Language Learners requiring modification to curriculum expectations will have the ESL/ELD box checked on the report card. Students on Steps 1-4 may require program modifications.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Assessment for Students with Special Education Needs***

Students with special education needs are engaged in procedures that are part of a process of continuous assessment and program planning. A student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) describes their educational program and any accommodations and modifications that may be required. The IEP specifies whether the student requires:

- accommodations only; or SEP

- modified learning expectations, with the possibility of accommodations; or [L] [SEP]
- an alternative program, not derived from the curriculum expectations for a subject/grade or a course. [L] [SEP]

For a student with special education needs who requires modified or alternative expectations, assessment and evaluation of their achievement will be based on the modified curriculum expectations or alternative expectations outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). For a student with special education needs who requires "accommodations only", as described in their IEP, assessment and evaluation of achievement will be based on the appropriate subject/grade/course curriculum expectations and the achievement levels outlined in the curriculum documents<sup>6</sup>.

### **Assessment in the Kindergarten Program**

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve learning and to help children become self-regulating, autonomous learners.<sup>7</sup> In the Peel District School Board, it is expected that assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices are based on the belief that all children are "competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential<sup>8</sup>" and through the practices of observation and documentation, educators collect evidence of children's learning through the process of pedagogical documentation<sup>9</sup>.

In Kindergarten, the term "educators" refers to the teacher and the early childhood educator team. Educator teams collaborate in observing, monitoring, and assessing the progress and development of the children and both contribute to communicating formally and informally with families.

Assessment is the process of gathering and interpreting information that accurately reflects the child's demonstration of learning in relation to the four frames: Belonging and Contributing, Self-Regulation and Well-Being, Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours, and Problem Solving and Innovating. These frames outline the knowledge, skills, and conceptual understandings presented in the overall expectations of The Kindergarten Program.

Educators provide descriptive feedback by noticing and naming the learning as they interact with children when they are actively engaged in play and inquiry that is intentionally designed to help each child move forward within their zone of proximal development.

The process of pedagogical documentation invites students to engage in assessment as learning as they often contribute to their own assessments through their reflections on the documentation. Children are supported in setting individual goals, monitoring their own progress, determining next steps, and reflecting on their thinking and learning to help them become confident, autonomous learners. Children enter Kindergarten at different stages of development and with diverse backgrounds and experiences. They will leave Kindergarten demonstrating variations in growth and learning in relation to the expectations.

Evaluation in Kindergarten is the summarizing of evidence of a child's learning in relation to the overall expectations at a given point in time, in order to specify a child's key learning, growth in learning, and next steps in learning. It is the culmination of the process of analysing and interpreting collected evidence of learning, whereby educators regularly and systematically examine their anecdotal observations, notes, and other documentation (e.g., photos, videos, samples of the child's learning, information shared by the family, other types of evidence) and ask the questions:

- What is the most significant learning demonstrated by this child at this time?
- How does it link to the overall expectations within this frame?
- What does it tell me about the growth in learning of this child?

Through analysis and interpretation of a child's learning, educators gain greater insight into the child's relationships, interactions, understanding of concepts, learning styles, dispositions, and interests, as well as into the role of cultural context in the child's learning. With this insight, educators are able to judge each child's **key learning, growth in learning, and next steps in learning at given points in time.**<sup>10</sup>

Homework is not developmentally appropriate for children in Kindergarten. It is best practice for educators to develop and maintain reciprocal relationships between home and school. Schools can model and encourage families to engage their children in play-based learning opportunities both at school and at home. Some examples of how educators might engage families are found on pages 110-111 of the Kindergarten Program Document (2016).

In Kindergarten, it is expected that teachers and early childhood educators collaborate in observing, monitoring, and assessing the development of the children in Kindergarten and in communicating with families, and that **the teacher will ensure that the appropriate Kindergarten Communication of Learning templates are accurately and descriptively completed and processed**<sup>11</sup>.

### **Assessment Purposes and Sources**

Teachers apply informed professional judgment when designing assessment opportunities using the framework of assessment *as* learning, assessment *for* learning, and assessment *of* learning. Evidence of student learning is collected over time from a combination of the three different sources – *observations, conversations, and/or student products/representations.*<sup>12 13</sup> Assessment opportunities are informed first and foremost by curriculum expectations, clearly communicated to students as learning goals and success criteria. Feedback to students is provided based on learning goals and success criteria.

### ***Assessment Opportunities***

Teachers obtain evidence of learning through a variety of means, which may include, but are not limited to formal and informal observations, student-teacher conversations, discussions, learning conversations, questioning, conferences, tasks done in groups, demonstrations, projects, portfolios, performances, peer and self-assessments, self-reflections, essays, and tests.<sup>14</sup>

Homework, if assigned, is used as assessment *for* learning, not as assessment *of* learning. Homework does not factor into grades, as it is non-evaluative. Teachers report on homework only when referencing the learning skills. Homework assignments that are “designed to help students practise and consolidate new learning can also provide assessment information that both teachers and students can use to adjust instruction and focus learning.”<sup>15</sup> See Policy 70 for additional information regarding homework.

### ***Assessment Tools***

Teachers develop or co-construct assessment tools with students based on curriculum expectations using learning goals and success criteria. Assessment tools include pedagogical documentation, rubrics, learning maps, single point rubrics, checklists, developmental continua, etc. To ensure transparency, assessment tools must be shared with students prior to assessment and evaluation and must be returned to students with their evidence of learning.

### **Communication About Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting**

Although there are clearly identified formal reporting periods, communication with families and students about student achievement is continuous throughout the year.<sup>16</sup> Ongoing communications with families and students about student learning is essential. Teachers communicate with families and students regarding students’ achievement, next steps, required supports, and feedback. Grade updates are shared at specified summative periods or required reporting times to focus on assessment *for* learning and assessment *as* learning. The school’s assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy will be aligned with the Board policy and communicated clearly to students and families at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course. In the same way, the policy regarding late and missed assignments, as well as academic honesty, will also be clearly communicated to students and families.<sup>17</sup>

It is important to recognize that communicating with families is essential. To facilitate this essential communication, teachers may need to use interpreters, settlement workers, or other community support personnel to assist in communicating information about student progress and achievement. For Indigenous students, teachers should consider involving Indigenous counsellors and/or members of the extended family.<sup>18</sup>

Educators are increasingly using digital tools to collect, curate, and assess evidence of learning. Digital tools are also used to communicate to families and students. Educators are reminded to adhere to PDSB policy and operating procedures when making decisions about the use of third party assessment tools.<sup>19</sup>

Evidence of learning captured for the purpose of assessment *for* and *as* learning will be returned to students with descriptive feedback in a timely manner, which allows students to set goals and work toward improvement prior to assessment *of* learning.

Evidence of learning captured for the purpose of assessment *of* learning during the term will be returned to students with descriptive feedback in a timely manner, which allows students to set goals and work toward improvement prior to final evaluations in grades 9-12.

### ***Reporting and Professional Judgement***

It is the duty of a teacher to “ensure that report cards are fully and properly completed and processed” (O. Reg. 209/03, s.1). In Kindergarten, the communication of learning will communicate information about the child’s learning in three categories: Key Learning, Growth in Learning, and Next Steps in Learning.<sup>20</sup> For Grades 1 to 12, reporting is based on evidence of student achievement of the provincial **overall** curriculum expectations.<sup>21</sup> Also, teachers ensure that students’ evidence of learning is assessed in a balanced manner with respect to the four categories of the achievement chart (Knowledge, Thinking, Communication, Application) as indicated through criteria.<sup>22</sup>

Determining a report card grade involves teacher informed professional judgement and interpretation of evidence and should **reflect the student’s most consistent level of achievement, with special consideration given to more recent evidence.**<sup>23</sup> This aspect of professional practice is in keeping with the recognition that there “is a need to move away from using computers which calculate a student’s mark based on parameters entered into a program to generate a neatly quantifiable result”.<sup>24</sup> *Supporting Your Child’s Learning Through Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting* (p. 6) asserts the Ministry of Education’s expectation that, in determining a report card grade, “Teachers do not simply calculate averages.”<sup>25</sup>

The teacher will consider:<sup>26</sup>

- all evidence collected through observations, conversations, and student products;
- submitted evidence, the number of assignments for evaluation that were not completed or submitted, and the evidence of learning that is available for each overall expectation for a subject in a particular grade or course;
- that some evidence of learning carries greater weight than other evidence of learning; and
- all evidence of learning in light of these considerations and will use their professional judgement to determine the student’s report card grade.

The report card grade represents a student's achievement of overall curriculum expectations, as demonstrated to that point in time. When writing report card comments for grades 1-12, teachers

- describe in overall terms what students know and can do;
- provide families with personalized, clear, precise, and meaningful feedback;<sup>27</sup>
- write using clear, meaningful language that students and families can understand; and
- should provide essential information to families and students to help students improve their learning.<sup>28</sup>

In elementary, administrators will work collaboratively with educators to determine site-based practices for report card writing as required by the reporting memo.

In secondary, administrators will work collaboratively with educators to determine site-based practices for report card writing as required by the reporting memo.

When reporting on student performance that the teacher has evaluated as an "R" (Grades 1- 8) or below 50 per cent (Grades 9-12), teachers will describe specific remedial measures that are planned or strategies that have been developed to address the student's specific learning needs.<sup>29</sup>

When students are experiencing difficulty in providing quality evidence of learning, it is expected that teachers will contact the families in a timely manner in order to consult with them and involve them in supporting the student.<sup>30</sup>

### ***Levels of Student Achievement***

#### **Level 4 / "A" (Grades 1-6)/ 80%-100% (Grades 7-12)**

A very high to outstanding level of achievement. Achievement is above the provincial standard **but still within the grade level.**

#### **Level 3/ "B" (Grades 1-6)/ 70%-79% (Grades 7-12)**

A high level of achievement. Achievement is at the provincial standard.

#### **Level 2/ "C" (Grades 1-6)/ 60%-69% (Grades 7-12)**

A moderate level of achievement. Achievement is below, but approaching the provincial standard.

#### **Level 1/ "D" (Grades 1-6)/ 50%-59% (Grades 7-12)**

A passable level of achievement. Achievement is below the provincial standard.

#### **"R" (Grades 1-8)/ "0-49%"(Grades 9-12)**

The code "R" represents achievement that falls below level 1 and is used in the evaluation and reporting of student achievement in Grades 1 to 8.<sup>31</sup> 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.<sup>32</sup> It is the professional responsibility of the educator to ensure that sufficient communication with families and students has been made prior to assigning an “R” on a report card. The teacher must consult with the principal before assigning a “R” as a report card mark.

For achievement below level 1 in Grades 9 to 12, percentage marks below 50 per cent may be assigned.<sup>33</sup> For students in Grades 9 to 12, if the teacher’s professional judgement is that the student’s report card mark is 20 per cent or below, then the teacher must consult with the principal before assigning the report card mark.

### ***Insufficient Evidence***

This indicates that there is insufficient evidence of achievement. “I” may be used on a student’s report card, including the final report card, to indicate that insufficient evidence is available to determine a letter grade or percentage mark.<sup>34</sup> It is the professional responsibility of the educator to ensure that sufficient communication with families and students has been made prior to assigning an “I” on a report card. The teacher must consult with the principal before assigning an “I” as a report card mark.

In cases where the teacher does not have sufficient evidence to determine a letter grade or percentage mark but has been able to collect some evidence of what a student has learned, strengths and the next steps for improvement are indicated in the report card comments. The report card comments should indicate why an “I” has been assigned.<sup>35</sup> 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.<sup>36</sup>

However, there may be instances where students in Grades 9 and 10 who receive an “I” on their final report card may be considered for credit recovery.<sup>37</sup> These are cases where, in the professional judgement of the teacher, evidence of achievement is available for some overall expectations.<sup>38</sup> It is then possible to identify the remaining expectations to be achieved for the credit to be earned.

### ***Absence of Evidence***

As demonstrated by our Character Attributes in Action, we expect all those in our learning community to act in a responsible manner. The student is responsible for providing evidence regarding what they have learned or accomplished in the time frame allowed by the teacher.<sup>39</sup> At appropriate times throughout the school year (e.g., at the beginning of the term, when an assignment is given), teachers communicate deadlines to students and the consequences for not completing assignments for evaluation or for submitting those assignments late.<sup>40</sup>

In some cases, students do not provide any evidence of their achievement of the overall curriculum expectations in products/representations. When students do not submit products/representations to the teacher at all (missed assignments), the evidence for the teacher to assess is limited to conversations and observations. Similarly, when



students do not submit products in a timely manner to the teacher (late assignments), assessing the evidence can be problematic. Student products that are plagiarized also fail to provide any evidence of student learning.

When supporting students who are experiencing difficulty in providing evidence of learning, teachers and school teams use a clear procedure that considers four mitigating factors<sup>41</sup>:

- the grade level of the student;
- the maturity of the student;
- the number and frequency of occurrences; and/or
- the individual circumstances of the student.

Before considering mitigating factors, the first step is to ask the student to clarify the reason for not completing the assessment so that legitimate reasons for missed deadlines can be taken into consideration. After considering mitigating factors, teachers choose the most appropriate response(s) from a range<sup>42</sup> that includes:

- helping students develop better time-management skills;
- maintaining ongoing communication with students and/or families about due dates and late assignments and scheduling conferences with families if the problem persists;
- in grades 7 to 12 classrooms, referring the student to the Student Success team or teacher;
- 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, accommodation and or modification for English language learners, which may involve collaboration with settlement workers and interpreters;
- reviewing whether students require special education services;
- requiring the student to work with a school team to complete the assignment;
- for Indigenous Inuit students, involving Indigenous counsellors and members of the extended family;
- understanding and taking into account the cultures, histories, and contexts of students and families and their previous experiences with the school system; and
- providing alternative assignments or tests/exams where, in the teacher's professional judgement, it is reasonable and appropriate to do so.

After clarifying that there were no legitimate reasons for the assessment to be late or missed, and considering mitigating factors, teachers may deduct marks for late or missed assignments, in Grades 7-12. However, teachers must ensure that mark deduction will not result in a grade on the report card that, in the professional judgement of the teacher, misrepresents<sup>43</sup> the student's actual achievement (please see section above on "Insufficient Evidence").

## ***Assigning a Zero***

Assigning a zero indicates that the student has not provided any evidence of their learning. Therefore, a zero may be used **as a placeholder** during assessment *for* learning and assessment *as learning*. A zero provides an opportunity for the teacher to discuss with the student and parent/guardian the student's obligation to provide evidence of learning and for the student to be responsible for their learning.

Teachers use their professional judgement in gathering information from observations, conversations and products, not simple mathematical calculations (e.g., averaging all marks), to determine a report card grade.<sup>44</sup> In an assessment of learning context (e.g., portfolio, essay, a unit test), teachers may use their professional judgement to assign a zero. However, teachers must ensure that the assignment of a zero in an assessment *of* learning context will not result in a misrepresentation of the student's overall achievement as signified by the report card mark.<sup>45</sup>

For students in Grades 9 to 12, if the teacher's professional judgement is that the student's report card grade is 20 per cent or below, then the teacher must consult with the principal before assigning the report card grade.

## ***Academic Honesty***

As demonstrated by PDSB's *Character Attributes in Action*, we expect all those in our learning community to act in an honest manner. Plagiarism is defined in Ministry policy 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.<sup>46</sup> School teams and teachers will make it clear to students that the evidence of learning provided must be their own and that cheating and plagiarism will not be condoned. School teams and teachers will address the prevention of cheating and plagiarizing by communicating to students and families the process of documentation to be used in the class, grade, and school. School teams and teachers may use whatever means of detecting cheating and plagiarism that best supports student achievement and success.

When responding to students who have plagiarized or cheated, teachers and school teams will use a clear procedure that considers four mitigating factors<sup>47</sup> and an equity stance to learning and teaching when determining the appropriate outcomes and support for the student:

- the grade level of the student;
- the maturity of the student;
- the number and frequency of incidents; and/or
- the individual circumstances of the student.

When a student plagiarizes or cheats, the student does not provide evidence of their own learning. Based on the consideration of mitigating factors, school teams and teachers will choose from a variety of possible responses (see p. 8). Some resolutions include assigning a placeholder zero and/or the opportunity to provide additional evidence of learning.

**Anchor Marks**

PDSB implemented Anchor Marks **in Grades 7 and 8** in **Sept 2013**.

- Anchor marks are designated marks for each level of achievement assigned to students during reporting cycles based on most consistent evidence of learning derived over time, from observations, conversations and student products.
- They support criterion-referenced assessment in *Growing Success* policy and use of achievement levels supported by moderated marking and exploring evidence of learning. Anchor Marks are not true midpoints in the mathematical sense.
- The designated anchor mark from the chart **must** be used when anchor marks are being implemented.
- Teachers can still use both mathematical calculations and professional judgement to arrive at an anchor mark, combined with the principle of most consistent achievement with special consideration for more recent evidence/gains made by the student.
- **Teachers can assign a mark of 100% to evidence of student learning. Similarly, a final grade of 100% can also be assigned (above the anchor mark).**

**Levels of Student Achievement and Anchor Marks**

When evaluating student achievement, teachers will refer to the achievement charts described in *Growing Success* (page 40) and respective curriculum documents. The achievement charts have the following structure:

Grades 1 to 6		Grades 7 to 8		
Achievement Level	Letter Grade	Achievement Level	Percentage %	Anchor Mark
4+	A+	4+	95-100	98
4	A	4	87-94	91
4-	A-	4-	80-86	84
3+	B+	3+	77-79	78
3	B	3	73-76	75
3-	B-	3-	70-72	71
2+	C+	2+	67-69	68

2	C	2	63-66	65
2-	C-	2-	60-62	61
1+	D+	1+	57-59	58
1	D	1	53-56	55
1-	D-	1-	50-52	51

### **Assessment and Evaluation in Grades 9-12**

For Grades 9 to 12, a final grade (percentage mark) is recorded for every course. The final grade will be determined as follows:<sup>48</sup>

- **Seventy per cent** of the grade will be based on assessment *of* learning conducted throughout the course. This portion of the grade should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement throughout the course, although special consideration should be given to more recent evidence of achievement.
- **Thirty per cent** of the grade will be based on a final evaluation administered at or towards the end of the course, during the last three to four weeks prior to the final evaluation schedule. This evaluation will be based on evidence from one or a combination of the following: a portfolio, a student-teacher conversation, an inquiry, a performance, an essay, an examination, and/or another method of evaluation suitable to the course content and pathway. The final evaluation allows the student an opportunity to demonstrate comprehensive achievement of the overall expectations for the course. Teachers use professional judgment based on existing evidence of student learning and curriculum when selecting the appropriately aligned overall and specific expectations to evaluate.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (**PLAR**) is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby secondary students may obtain credits for prior learning<sup>49</sup>. Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school. More information about the PLAR process can be found in CISS OP 18<sup>50</sup>.

### ***General Administrative Expectations***

1. As essential steps in assessment *for* learning and *as* learning, teachers need to<sup>51</sup>:
  - 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; [L] [SEP]
  - gather information about student learning before, during, and at or near the end of a period of instruction, using a variety of assessment strategies and tools; [L] [SEP]
  - use assessment to inform instruction, guide next steps, and help students monitor their progress towards achieving their learning goals; [L] [SEP]
  - analyse and interpret evidence of learning; [L] [SEP]
  - give and receive specific and timely descriptive feedback about student learning; and
  - help students to develop skills of peer and self-assessment. [L] [SEP]
2. Decisions about the type of assessment to be used should be based on the purposes and principles outlined in the Guiding Principles section and [the Final Evaluation AssessPeel guide](#).
  3. Equity and fairness must be reflected in teacher assessment practice in Peel secondary schools. Assessment provides opportunity for students to demonstrate a balance of the achievement chart categories. Assessment tools include criteria that reflect a balance of the achievement chart categories. The process for determining grades must be consistent among all sections of the same course within a school and from semester one to semester two.
  4. The grade level, the pathway of the student, and the curriculum expectations will be considered when determining the nature of assessment. A wide range of assessment strategies/options must be considered.
  5. Assessment in specialized and regional programs and in online/e-learning courses will align with *Growing Success*.
  6. All students are to receive a grade on the mid-term and final report card. However, there are also instances where students arrive at a time in the course that may not allow for accurate reporting (e.g., newcomers or transfer students). Students who arrive less than 6 weeks prior to reporting may be considered to have mitigating factors.
    - When mitigating factors exist in Grade 9 and 10 courses, an “I” for insufficient is recorded.
    - When mitigating factors exist in Grade 11 & 12 courses, a placeholder of 40 is used.

The following comment will be included on the mid-term report card:

At this time, evidence of learning is still being gathered for [insert student name]. The grade indicated does not reflect complete learning for this course, but is a

placeholder until a valid grade can be determined at the end of the appropriate learning cycle. [insert student name] is encouraged to actively engage in class and to demonstrate learning as much as possible.

The following comment will be included on the final report card:

At this time, sufficient evidence of learning was not gathered for [insert student name]. The grade indicated does not reflect complete learning for this course, but is a placeholder until a valid grade can be determined at the end of the appropriate learning cycle. [insert student name] is encouraged to re-enroll in this course.

### ***Secondary Final Evaluations***

1. During final evaluations (last 3-4 weeks), a site-based moratorium will be in place. A moratorium may include limitations on field trips, homework, testing and other site-based decisions. Any homework assigned during the moratorium should allow students to prepare and practise for final evaluations. This homework will receive feedback and will not impact student marks on final evaluations.
2. There will be a common, district-wide calendar for both semestered and non-semestered schools for **scheduled final evaluations** (the five Scheduled Exam Days).
3. Final evaluation schedules take into account fairness to students with respect to timing for school-life balance and pathway:
  - in-class components of final evaluations must be planned with fairness in mind. In-class components of final evaluations must take place in the last three to four weeks of the semester prior to the beginning of the **scheduled final evaluations**
  - when a student has more than two final evaluations in one day during scheduled final evaluations, a resolution that considers fairness to the student must be approved by the administration in consultation with the teacher.
  - when a student misses a final evaluation (or component) for medical or compassionate reasons, a resolution that considers fairness to the student must be approved by the administration in consultation with the teacher. (Possible resolutions could include completing an assessment at an alternate time or an alternate form of assessment).
4. Not all secondary courses and pathways require a timed, formal evaluation during scheduled final evaluations.
5. Components of final evaluations benefit from authentic triangulation of evidence when necessary and appropriate to meet the overall expectations and to reflect the assessment practices of the term.
6. Accommodations on final evaluations for ELLs include:
  - allowance of extra time;
  - use of alternative assessment strategies (e.g., oral interviews, learning logs, portfolios);

- use of simplified language and instructions (e.g., in the context of tasks that require completion of graphic organizers, cloze sentences).
7. Accommodations and modifications on final evaluations for exceptional students and all other students with IEPs must be consistent with the accommodations and modifications outlined in the IEP.
  8. Arrangements are to be made for students under suspension to participate in final evaluations. Expectations and arrangements must be clearly communicated to the student and parent/guardian.
  9. Final evaluations administered toward the end of the course must be consistent with assessment practices students have experienced during the term. In general, teachers are encouraged to balance the four achievement chart categories (Knowledge, Thinking, Communication, Application) by including criteria that are clearly aligned to assessment opportunities.
  10. Students are provided opportunity to review final examinations and to receive feedback on their evidence of learning. Students can not keep or photograph their examinations or their evidence of learning. Aligning with current Peel practice, evidence of learning capture through examinations will be kept for one calendar year.

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## **Definitions**

**Assessment:** 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.<sup>52</sup>

**Assessment as learning:** The process of developing and supporting student metacognition. Students are actively engaged in this assessment process. They monitor their own learning, use assessment feedback from 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 as learning focuses on the role of the student as the critical connector between assessment and learning.<sup>53</sup>

**Assessment for learning:** 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. This process includes setting goals and criteria based on the curriculum. The information gathered is used by teachers to provide descriptive, non-evaluative feedback and to differentiate instruction appropriately.<sup>54</sup>

**Assessment of learning:** 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.<sup>55</sup>

**Communicating Learning in Kindergarten:** Communication with families<sup>56</sup> about a child's learning should be ongoing throughout the school year and should include a variety of formal and informal means, ranging from formal written reports to informal notes, conversations, and discussions. Communication about learning should<sup>[SEP]</sup> be designed to provide detailed information that will support children in their learning, help educators to establish plans for learning, and assist families in supporting learning at home.<sup>57</sup>

**Kindergarten Communication of Learning: Initial Observations:** Educators will provide an overview of the child's key learning and growth in learning during the fall of the school year, along with information about next steps in learning. This overview will serve as the basis for discussion with parents and as a support for parents' ongoing participation in their child's learning.<sup>58</sup>

**Kindergarten Communication of Learning:** The Communication of Learning is issued at the end of the second and third reporting periods. Educators will provide clear descriptions, including anecdotal comments, about the child's learning and growth in relation to the overall expectations in each of the four frames. Parents' participation in their child's next steps in learning should be encouraged and supported.<sup>59</sup>



***Culturally Responsive Practices:*** An approach to instruction and assessment that empowers educators to recognize and respond to the reality that all students learn differently and that these differences may be connected to, but not limited to, any combination of background, language, family structure and social or cultural identity.<sup>60</sup>

***Differentiated Instruction:*** An approach to instruction designed to maximize growth by considering the needs of each student at their current stage of development and offering that student a learning experience that responds to their individual needs. Differentiated instruction recognizes that equity of opportunity is not achieved through equal treatment and takes into account factors such as the student's readiness, interest, and learning preferences.<sup>61</sup>

***Evaluation:*** 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.<sup>62</sup> Evidence of learning can be captured through group work; however, each student's learning is evaluated independently and assigned an individual mark, as opposed to a common group mark.<sup>63</sup> Assignments for evaluation must not include ongoing homework that students do in order to consolidate their knowledge and skills or to prepare for the next class<sup>64</sup>. The evaluation of student learning is the responsibility of the teacher and must not include the judgement of the student or of the student's peers.<sup>65</sup>

***Feedback:*** Feedback provides information to students, families, and teachers about learning. It helps to reduce the gap between the student's current level of understanding and/or performance and a desired goal.<sup>66</sup> Descriptive feedback helps students to learn by providing information about their current achievement (Where am I now?) with respect to a goal (Where am I going?) and identifying appropriate next steps (How can I close the gap?).

***Final Evaluations Timeframe:*** Take place during the time period dating back **three-four** weeks from the end of the last day of **scheduled final evaluations** (the five Scheduled Exam Days).

***Grading:*** The process of assigning a letter grade, number, or symbol to indicate value of evidence of learning gathered through assessment of learning at the end of a learning period.

***Informative Assessment:*** One of the six elements of the Empowering Modern Learners document, informative assessment guides every part of the learning process. Deep, lasting learning is achieved when a transparent and equitable approach to assessment is used. Active involvement of learners in the assessment process connects them with their learning and fosters reflection and a drive to learn more.

Providing multiple and varied ways for learners to demonstrate learning and make their thinking visible allows for continuous, ongoing feedback. <sup>67</sup>

***Learning Goal:*** A learning goal is a statement that clearly articulates the learning that will take place during a lesson or a series of lessons. The phrase represents specific statements of the knowledge and skills that students must develop by the end of a given period of time (i.e., end of lesson or clearly identified time period). These statements are derived from curriculum expectations.

**Pedagogical Documentation:** The term “pedagogical documentation” refers to the process of gathering and analysing a wide range of evidence of a child’s thinking and learning over time and using the insights gained to *make the child’s thinking and learning visible* to the child and the child’s family. The process enables educators to support further learning for each child in the most effective way possible.<sup>68</sup>

**Professional Judgement:** Professional judgement refers to judgement that is informed by professional knowledge of content standards (i.e., curriculum expectations), performance standards (i.e., achievement chart categories), learning skills and work habits, context, evidence of learning, and methods of instruction and assessment that indicate success in student learning. In professional practice, judgement involves a purposeful and systematic thinking process that evolves in terms of accuracy and insight with ongoing reflection and self-correction.<sup>69</sup>

In exercising professional judgement, educators commit to accurate, equitable and bias-free evaluation, assessment and placement – considering the diversity of the student population – to ensure that all students are successful and can achieve their potential.<sup>70</sup> The professional judgement of the teacher, acting within the policies and guidelines established by the ministry and board, is critical in determining the strategy that will most benefit student learning.<sup>71</sup>

**Reporting:** The process of communicating with families **and** students about student learning at ministry required times. Reporting includes the provision of descriptive feedback and student achievement data using the templates and guidelines presented in the respective versions of *Growing Success* (2010) or *Growing Success: The Kindergarten Addendum* (2016).

**Steps to English Proficiency (STEP):** STEP is a framework for assessing and monitoring the language acquisition and literacy development of English language learners across The Ontario Curriculum from grades 1 to 12.<sup>72</sup>

**Success Criteria:** Success criteria are standards or specific descriptions of successful attainment of learning goals written to clarify expected demonstration of learning derived from curriculum. These can be co-constructed by teachers and students or developed by teachers and discussed and agreed upon in collaboration with students. They are used to determine to what degree a learning goal has been achieved and should reflect the knowledge and skills a student has learned. Teachers use success criteria to provide descriptive feedback to students. Success criteria describe what success “looks like” and “sounds like,” and allow the teacher and student to gather information about the quality of student learning. They are balanced to achievement chart categories and are aligned to the learning goal.

**Universal Design for Learning:** This approach to teaching and learning provide access to the curriculum for *all* students, and to assist educators in designing products and environments to make them accessible to everyone, regardless of age, skills, or situation.<sup>73</sup>



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- <sup>1</sup> Empowering Modern Learners, 2017
  - <sup>2</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 6
  - <sup>3</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p.38
  - <sup>4</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 6
  - <sup>5</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 78-79
  - <sup>6</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 70
  - <sup>7</sup> Growing Success: The kindergarten addendum, 2015, p. 6
  - <sup>8</sup> Kindergarten Program, 2016, p.10
  - <sup>9</sup> Kindergarten Program, 2016, p.36
  - <sup>10</sup> Growing Success, the Kindergarten Addendum, 2016, p. 11
  - <sup>11</sup> Growing Success, the Kindergarten Addendum, 2016, p. 13
  - <sup>12</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 34, 39
  - <sup>13</sup> Kindergarten Program, 2016, p.66, 69
  - <sup>14</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 28
  - <sup>15</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 39
  - <sup>16</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 53
  - <sup>17</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 53
  - <sup>18</sup> Reporting Student Learning: Guidelines for Effective Teacher-Parent-Student Communication, 2010, p. 4
  - <sup>19</sup> Peel District School Board, Policy 78, COMS2, COMS3, COMS7
  - <sup>20</sup> Kindergarten Program, 2016, p.14
  - <sup>21</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 38
  - <sup>22</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 17
  - <sup>23</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 39
  - <sup>24</sup> OSSTF/FEESO Growing Success Policy Work Group Report: A Resource for Local leaders to Assist in the Implementation of Growing Success, p. 7
  - <sup>25</sup> Supporting Your Child’s Learning Through Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting, 2010, p. 6
  - <sup>26</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 39
  - <sup>27</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 64
  - <sup>28</sup> Reporting Student Learning: Guidelines for Effective Teacher-Parent-Student Communication, 2010, p. 3
  - <sup>29</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 65
  - <sup>30</sup> Reporting Student Learning: Guidelines for Effective Teacher-Parent-Student Communication, 2010, p. 16
  - <sup>31</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 41
  - <sup>32</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 41
  - <sup>33</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 41
  - <sup>34</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 42
  - <sup>35</sup> Reporting Student Learning: Guidelines for Effective Teacher-Parent-Student Communication, 2010, p. 16
  - <sup>36</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 42
  - <sup>37</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 42
  - <sup>38</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 42
  - <sup>39</sup> Supporting Your Child’s Learning Through Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting, 2010, p. 7

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- <sup>40</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 44
- <sup>41</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 42
- <sup>42</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 43
- <sup>43</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 44
- <sup>44</sup> Supporting Your Child’s Learning Through Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting, 2010, p. 39
- <sup>45</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 44
- <sup>46</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 151
- <sup>47</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 43
- <sup>48</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 41
- <sup>49</sup> PPM 129, 2001. Retrieved <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/129.html>
- <sup>50</sup> CISS OP 18, 2017. Retrieved <https://intranet.peelschools.org/Board/Documents/CISS%2018.pdf>
- <sup>51</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 28-29
- <sup>52</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 143
- <sup>53</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 143
- <sup>54</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 143-144
- <sup>55</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 144
- <sup>56</sup> For the purposes of this policy, “families” refers to families/guardians. Teachers and school teams will communicate assessment information with the families//guardians of a student (age 18 or older) unless and until that student provides direction in writing that all further communication by school staff regarding education matters must be with that student only. If students are 16 or 17 years of age and have removed themselves from the care and control of their parent/guardian, then all communication regarding assessment will be with the student only.
- <sup>57</sup> Growing Success: The kindergarten addendum, 2015, p. 12
- <sup>58</sup> Growing Success: The kindergarten addendum, 2015, p. 15
- <sup>59</sup> Growing Success: The kindergarten addendum, 2015, p. 15
- <sup>60</sup> Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, 2013, p. 2
- <sup>61</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 148
- <sup>62</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 143
- <sup>63</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 39
- <sup>64</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 39
- <sup>65</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 39
- <sup>66</sup> Assessment for Learning: Video Series, Descriptive Feedback Viewer’s Guide, 2010, p. 3
- <sup>67</sup> Empowering Modern Learners, 2016, p. 7
- <sup>68</sup> Growing Success: The kindergarten addendum, 2015, p. 6
- <sup>69</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 152
- <sup>70</sup> Peel District School Board, Policy 54, p. 4
- <sup>71</sup> Growing Success, 2010, p. 46
- <sup>72</sup> Steps to English Proficiency, 2015, p. 4
- <sup>73</sup> Learning for All, 2013, p. 14