



Niagara Catholic District School Board

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, REPORTING AND HOMEWORK

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

300 – Schools/Students

No 301.10

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In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the following are Administrative Operational Procedures for Assessment, Evaluation, Reporting and Homework.

PREAMBLE

The Board acknowledges that the primary purpose of assessment, evaluation, and reporting is to improve student learning and achievement for all students. The Board promotes a family-friendly approach to homework to support the learning, achievement and well-being of all students.

To ensure that assessment, evaluation and reporting practices are valid and reliable to improve the learning of all students, educators will use practices and procedures that support all students and:

- are fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;
- are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals, the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs and experiences of each student so that all students can become self-directed, responsible, lifelong learners;
- are communicated clearly to students and parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year/course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year/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 specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning; and
- support students in developing the qualities and characteristics defined by the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.

Principals, vice-principals, educators, Board staff and parents/guardians share a collective responsibility and accountability for improving student achievement. All staff is responsible to gather, record, and share assessment, evaluation and reporting information for each student as required by principals. This information is based on curricular expectations, performance standards, instruction, and assessment and evaluation practices, informed by the professional judgement of the educator, to support improvement in learning, the achievement of Kindergarten to Grade 12 expectations, and Learning and Work Habits for students in Grades 1 to 12.

DEFINITIONS

Assessment

Assessment is the process of gathering information, from observations, conversations and student products to demonstrate how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations and to improve student learning from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

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 educators to provide feedback and adjust instruction and by students to focus their learning.

Assessment as Learning

Assessment “as” Learning is the process that actively engages students in the assessment process to monitor their own learning; using feedback from educators, self, and peers to determine next steps and set goals for learning.

Assessment of Learning

Assessment “of” Learning is the process of collecting and interpreting evidence of student learning for the purpose of summarizing learning at or near the end of a period of learning. Educators will use professional judgement to indicate the quality of student learning based on established success criteria, in order to assign a value, mark or grade to represent that quality. This information is used to communicate the student’s achievement to parents/guardians, students, principals/vice-principals and other educators.

Cheating

Cheating is broadly understood to mean offences against the academic integrity of the learning environment. This would include, but is not limited, to the following:

- copying from another student or making information available to another student for the purpose of copying during a test/examination/quiz or for individual/group assignments;
- failing to follow instructions of the presiding teacher during an examination;
- submitting any written work (electronic or hard copy) in whole or in part which has been written by someone else;
- using direct quotations or paraphrased material in any assignment without giving the proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is usually defined as presenting someone’s words and ideas as one’s own. It can take many forms, including the following:

- submitting an essay/assignment written by someone else e.g., buying an essay online, downloading an essay from a free website, having someone else complete one’s assignment or copying or using work done by another student (including homework);
- piecing together material from one or several sources and adding only linking sentences;
- quoting or paraphrasing material without citing the source of the material, including books, magazines or print from all electronic sources (videos, podcasts, etc.);
- not providing quotation marks for direct quotations – even if sources have been cited.

Homework

Homework is work that students do at home to practise skills, consolidate knowledge and skills, and/or prepare for the next class. Homework can also provide assessment information that both teachers and students can use to adjust instruction and focus learning. 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.

ASSESSMENT PRACTICES FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

To support effective assessment practices for the evaluation of student learning and to determine report card marks and comments, it is the responsibility of the teacher informed by professional judgement, in consultation with the principal, to:

- collect and share evidence of student learning and achievement over time, from multiple sources that include observations, conversations, and student products;

- ensure that peer-assessment is not used as a grade or mark;
- consider all of the evidence of student work that a student has completed or submitted along with, the evidence of student work that was not completed or submitted, and the evidence of achievement that is available for each overall expectation for a subject or course;
- ensure that the report card information represents a student's achievement of overall curricular expectations and the student's most consistent level of achievement, with special consideration given to more recent evidence;
- ensure that for students with special education needs and English language learners, who may require accommodation, but who do not require modified expectations, evaluation of achievement be based on the appropriate subject/grade/course curricular expectations; and for students who require modified or alternative expectations, evaluation of achievement will be based on the modified or alternative expectations outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Niagara Catholic District School Board upholds the value of academic integrity as a commitment to honesty, trust, and fairness for all members of its educational community.

It is the responsibility of students to practice academic integrity in all aspects of their school work so that the marks they receive are a true reflection of their own achievement. Students must understand that assessments completed and assignments submitted for evaluation must be their own work and that cheating and plagiarism will have consequences.

Practicing academic integrity also helps students to fulfill the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations by demonstrating that they are: self-directed, responsible, lifelong learners, collaborative contributors, and responsible citizens.

Prevention of Cheating and Plagiarism

It is expected that school staff will develop and implement strategies to eliminate the incidents of cheating and plagiarism and will integrate these strategies into instruction in an atmosphere of trust and support.

Reporting of Cheating and Plagiarism

All confirmed incidents of cheating and/or plagiarism must be reported to the principal/vice-principal(s), and parents/guardians by the classroom/subject teacher and will be noted in the Student Management System.

Schools will employ a variety of methods in order to identify instances of cheating and plagiarism.

These methods may include; but are not limited to:

- teacher monitoring based on professional judgement and knowledge of an individual student's work, writing style etc.;
- conducting internet searches to identify possible sources of student work;
- collaboration between teachers, library technician, principal/vice-principal(s) in tracing questionable information; and
- third party plagiarism tracking software (if available).

The appropriate response and consequence to address cheating and/or plagiarism, must consider:

- the individual student and circumstances (e.g., mitigating factors: student's age, grade level and/or maturity of the student);
- the nature and severity of the cheating and/or plagiarism; and
- number and frequency of incidents.

LATE AND MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Students must understand that there will be consequences for incomplete assignments and/or for submitting late assignments.

Where in the teacher's professional judgement it is appropriate to do so, a number of strategies may be used to help prevent and/or address late and missed assignments.

These strategies may include; but are not limited to:

- asking the student to clarify the reason for not completing the assignment on time;
- helping students develop better time-management skills and work habits;
- collaborating with other staff to prepare a part-or full-year calendar of major assignment dates for every class/subject;
- 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 through a variety of means with students and/or parents/guardians about due dates and late assignments, and scheduling conferences with parents/guardians 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;
- utilizing guidance counsellors, child and youth workers, chaplaincy leaders and/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 in cooperation with special education staff;
- requiring the student to work with a school team to complete the assignment;
- involving Indigenous counsellors and members of the extended family for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students;
- understanding and taking into account the cultures, histories and context of each student, their parents/guardians and their previous experiences within the school system; and/or
- providing alternative assignments or tests/exams where, in the teacher's professional judgement, it is reasonable and appropriate to do so.

MARK DEDUCTION FOR LATE OR MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

The Niagara Catholic District School Board discourages the use of punitive measures, namely deducting marks and giving zeros for late and missed assignments. The focus should be on the use of preventative measures because punitive measures may only serve to discourage students and promote failure. Every assignment, whether submitted on time or late, provides evidence of learning. Therefore, deducting marks or giving zeros could misrepresent the student's true level of achievement.

Supporting students who are not performing by using preventative measures, and by helping students to improve their learning skills and develop better work habits is a matter of meeting individual students' needs and should not be considered a form of unwarranted "special treatment". The professional judgement of the teacher, acting within the *Growing Success* policy and guidelines established by the Ministry and Board procedures is critical in determining the strategies that will most benefit student learning and achievement, well-being and ensure equity for all students.

If in the professional judgement of the teacher, mark deduction is necessary, mark deduction will be limited to up to ten (10) per cent per assignment.

REPORTING ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Kindergarten

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.

The evidence of learning includes conversations, observations, samples of the child's work, information shared by the family and other forms of evidence.

Three (3) formal written reports will be provided during the school year.

- For the first reporting period: Kindergarten Communication of Learning: Initial Observations
- For the second (Term 1) and third (Term 2) reporting periods: Kindergarten Communication of Learning

Grades 1 to 8

Student achievement of the overall curriculum expectations will be evaluated in accordance with the achievement charts in the provincial curriculum using letter grades for Grades 1 to 6 and percentage marks for Grades 7 and 8.

Three (3) formal written reports will be provided during the school year.

- For the first reporting period: Elementary Progress Report Card
- For the second (Term 1) and third (Term 2) reporting periods: Elementary Provincial Report Card

Grades 9 to 12

Student achievement of the overall curriculum expectations will be evaluated in accordance with the achievement charts in the provincial curriculum using percentage marks.

A final grade (percentage mark) will be recorded for every course. The final grade will be determined as follows:

- a) Seventy (70) per cent of the grade will be based on evaluation 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;
- b) Thirty (30) per cent of the grade will be based on one or more final evaluations administered at or toward the end of the course. Final evaluations are an opportunity for the student to demonstrate comprehensive achievement of the overall expectations. The following applies:
 - Final written exams may or may not be required.
 - Final evaluations and marks may be adjusted on an individual basis to support changes in a student's performance and to reflect a student's most consistent level of achievement in the professional judgement of the teacher.

Two (2) formal written reports will be provided twice each semester:

1. Provincial Report Card, Grades 9-12: First Report
2. Provincial Report Card, Grades 9-12: Final Report

DETERMINING THE LOWER LIMIT OF MARKS BELOW 50 PER CENT

It is the expectation that clear and ongoing communication with the student and parents/guardians or adult student regarding ways to support success in learning has occurred, in collaboration with teachers, principals and vice-principals, Student Services, and Student Success teachers to support the student as required.

Grades 1 to 8

Teachers will use the code “R” (remediation required) to indicate when student achievement has fallen below level 1. “R” signals that additional learning is required before the student begins to achieve success in meeting the curricular expectations. Through consultation with parents/guardians, strategies to address the student’s specific learning needs will be developed in order to support the student.

Grades 9 to 12

Teachers will assign a percentage mark on report cards to indicate achievement below fifty (50) per cent. A mark of thirty (30) per cent will be issued for a mark below thirty (30) per cent which signals that additional learning is required before the student begins to achieve success with the need for the development of strategies to address the student’s specific learning needs.

A mark below thirty (30) per cent will not be issued on report cards.

Students with Individual Education Plans and English Language Learners

Students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who require modified or alternative expectations and beginning English language learners with modified expectations would rarely receive an “R” or a mark below fifty (50) per cent.

THE MEANING AND USE OF “I” – GRADES 1 TO 10

It is the expectation that clear and ongoing communication with the student and parents/guardians or adult student regarding ways to support success in learning has occurred, in collaboration with teachers, principals and vice-principals, Student Services, and Student Success teachers to support the student as required. It is also expected that the report card for a student in receipt of an “I” includes comments that reflect the nature of the re-engagement effort as well as prescriptive next steps to remediate the current achievement level.

For Grades 1 to 10, the code “I” may be used in a mark book and/or 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.

For the report card, teachers will use their professional judgement to determine when the use of “I” is appropriate and in the best interest of the student. Teachers may find it appropriate to use “I” when evidence of a student’s achievement is insufficient or there are extenuating circumstances beyond the student’s control.

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, 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. These are cases where, in the professional judgement of the teacher, evidence of achievement is available for at least a few of the overall expectations, on the basis of which it is possible to identify the remaining expectations that must be addressed and to design a credit recovery program.

For Grades 11 and 12, the code “I” is not applicable for Grades 11 and 12 courses. In Grades 11 and 12, until an assignment has been submitted, the mark area may be left blank in a mark book to indicate that an assignment is late or missed.

HOMEWORK AND A FAMILY-FRIENDLY APPROACH

The Niagara Catholic District School Board promotes a family-friendly approach to homework that supports the work that students do at home to practise skills, consolidate knowledge and skills, and/or prepare for the next class.

In determining the assigning of homework, teachers should reflect on the value of homework as part of the students' learning experience. When homework is assigned, consideration for the time it takes to complete at home must be considered as to protect family time and other student commitments outside of the school day. Furthermore, consideration for age appropriateness and student readiness to complete homework is important, as well as ensuring that homework is reasonable in quantity and high quality.

Homework will not be assigned for completion during statutory holidays, Board holidays or Professional Activity Days, as noted on the Board calendar. In addition, students will not be expected to participate in or submit an assessment for evaluation upon return to school on the day after a statutory holiday, Board holiday or Professional Activity Day.

References

- [*Education Statutes and Regulations of Ontario 2013 Edition: Operation of Schools-General R.R.O. 1990 Regulation 298*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education. Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12, 2010*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education, Learning for All, A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum No. 155, "Diagnostic Assessment in Support of Student Learning" January 7, 2013*](#)
- [*Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations: Institute for Catholic Education: Third Edition 2019*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education, Achieving Excellence, A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario, 2014*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education, The Individual Education Plan \(IEP\), A Resource Guide 2004*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education, The Kindergarten Addendum: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools 2016*](#)
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