

POLICY – PO518

Growing Success – Student Assessment

Area:	Teaching and Learning
Source:	Superintendent of Education – Teaching and Learning
Approved:	March 26, 2012
Revised:	Jan. 11, 2021

1. Introduction

The Durham Catholic District School Board believes that the purpose of assessment, evaluation and reporting is to improve student learning and support each student in fulfilling their God-given potential, according to their interests, abilities and goals. Catholic educators should strive daily to deliver programs and employ assessment practices that respect the individuality and dignity of each student as they support the formation of the image of the Catholic learner as articulated in the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*. In doing so, Catholic educators should consistently demonstrate faith in students' ability to succeed and should strive to implement practices that provide hope for all students. Ensuring the success of all students is central to the vocation of Catholic educators and consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

2. 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.

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. The information gathered is used by teachers to provide feedback and adjust instruction, and by students to focus their learning. Assessment for learning is a high-yield instructional strategy that takes place while the student is still learning and serves to promote ongoing growth.

Assessment as Learning - The process of developing and supporting student metacognition. Students are actively engaged in monitoring their own learning; using

assessment feedback from teacher, self, and peers to determine next steps; and setting 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.

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

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.

Professional Judgement - Judgement that is informed by professional knowledge of curriculum expectations, context, evidence of learning, methods of instruction and assessment, and the criteria and standards 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.

Learning Goals - Brief statements that describe for a student what he or she should know and be able to do by the end of a period of instruction (e.g., a lesson, series of lessons, or subtask). The goals represent subsets or clusters of knowledge and skills that the student must master to successfully achieve the overall curriculum expectations.

The Seven Fundamental Principles - The Ministry of Education's *Growing Success* document outlines seven fundamental principles to ensure that teachers use practices and procedures that:

- are fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;
- support all students, including those with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction (English or French), and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;
- are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;
- are communicated clearly to students and parents/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

Success Criteria - Standards or specific descriptions of successful attainment of learning goals developed by teachers on the basis of criteria in the achievement chart, and discussed and agreed upon in collaboration with students, that are used to determine to what degree a learning goal has been achieved. Success criteria describes what success “looks like”, and allows the teacher and student to gather information about the quality of student learning.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that assessment, evaluation and reporting practices are clear, consistent, and well aligned across panels and across school boards and schools; promote the development of students as independent and autonomous learners, and ensure that every student in the system benefits from the same high-quality process for assessing, evaluating, and reporting achievement. The policy and procedure are designed to provide direction to ensure consistent practices that incorporate and model fairness, transparency and equity.

4. Application / Scope

This policy applies to all students and staff and acknowledges the responsibility of all staff and parents/guardians in supporting effective assessment, evaluation and reporting practices to improve student learning.

5. Principles

5.1 The Board is committed to:

- 5.1.1 assisting students in achieving the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations by promoting both spiritual and intellectual growth.
- 5.1.2 Implementing assessment strategies that reflect the Seven Fundamental Principles in the *Growing Success* document and that are viewed and applied from a Catholic world view
- 5.1.3 Implementing assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices that respect the dignity, worth and talents of each student in the Durham Catholic District School Board
- 5.1.4 Implementing assessment strategies that will:
 - (a) take into account the individual learning needs and strengths of students

- (b) inform instructional decisions;
- (c) promote student engagement;
- (d) improve student learning; and
- (e) assist students in achieving the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations.

6. Requirements

- 6.1 The Director of Education shall issue administrative procedures to support this policy and amend them thereafter as the need arises.
- 6.2 The Board will ensure that assessment, evaluation and reporting practices are consistent with a Christ-centred teaching and learning environment and is aligned with the current provincial policy Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools.
- 6.3 The Board will ensure fair and equitable assessment practices are in place consistently across the system that are designed to motivate and engage students and to promote student learning.
- 6.4 The Board will ensure that 'Assessment for Learning' and 'Assessment as Learning' practices are recognized and employed to improve student learning.
- 6.5 The Board will ensure that all educators use communication processes with students and parents/guardians regarding assessment and evaluation that are clear, accurate and meaningful.

7. Sources

- 7.1 Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools *First Edition Covering Grades 1-12. 2010.*
- 7.2 Growing Success: The Kindergarten Addendum, 2018
- 7.3 Education Act, Bill 242 (Chapter 10 Statutes of Ontario, 2010)
- 7.4 Learning for All, Ministry of Education, 2013
- 7.5 Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-12 Curriculum Documents
- 7.6 Special Education Ontario Policy and Resource Guide, 2017
- 7.7 Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations, 2019

8. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

- 8.1 Growing Success – Student Achievement Administrative Procedure (AP518-1)