

DIVISION: Programs Division

[PROG - 317]

POLICY NAME

Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The Board for the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District recognizes that assessment and evaluation are integral to the teaching and learning process. The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to support student growth and to improve student learning and achievement.

The Board will ensure a planned approach to student assessment, evaluation and reporting that is based on the provincial and other approved curriculum outcomes and reflects the following:

1. The teacher as the professional best positioned and most responsible for assessing and evaluating student learning, and reporting it to parents/guardians.
2. The student as partner and involved in the various aspects of the assessment process.
3. A fair, equitable, transparent and ongoing process that includes clear communication with students and parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year, and at other appropriate times throughout the school year.
4. Instruments that are meaningful, valid and reliable.
5. Practices that encompass a wide variety of data sources.
6. Opportunities for students to demonstrate progress and the full range of their learning.
7. Differentiated instruction and assessment that takes into account the uniqueness and needs of each individual learner, including those with exceptionalities.

APPROVED: *June 3, 2017*

AMENDED: _____

Principles

- Classrooms are places where we foster hope and a joy of learning. Assessment and evaluation practices will provide opportunities to promote learning, show learners their strengths, and demonstrate how they can progress or develop further.
- Assessment and evaluation practices respect the uniqueness of each student, promote holistic development, and assist students in achieving their full potential.
- Assessment is a collaborative process and a shared responsibility involving students, teachers, parents/guardians and other stakeholders. Parents/guardians are well informed about their child's learning, and all stakeholders work together to cultivate a positive learning environment for all students.

Rationale

The Board is responsible for the implementation of primary, elementary, intermediate and high school curriculum in schools under its jurisdiction across the province, as prescribed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Quality assessment and evaluation is essential to determining whether students have appropriately achieved the curriculum outcomes identified. The purpose of this policy is to establish the expectations and requirements with respect to assessment and evaluation practices in our schools.

Background

This policy addresses the process for assessment, evaluation and reporting for students from NLESD schools, as outlined in the bylaws of the Board and approved by the Minister of Education.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all students and schools within the jurisdiction of the NLESD.

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DEFINITIONS

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is broadly defined as the process of collecting and analyzing information that can be used:

(i) to inform students, and their parents/guardians where applicable, about the progress they are making toward attaining the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours to be learned or acquired, and

(ii) to inform the various personnel who make educational decisions (instructional, diagnostic, placement, promotion, graduation, curriculum planning, program development, policy) about students.

Assessment supports and promotes student learning when it occurs on a regular, ongoing basis, providing students with clear descriptive feedback from which they can set goals for improvement. Being interconnected with curriculum and instruction, assessment plays a continuous role in informing instruction, and checking progress and success, while working towards the achievement of outcomes.

There are three facets to assessment:

Formative Assessment

Assessment **for** learning (formative assessment): Teachers use evidence to determine what students understand in order to plan and guide instruction and provide helpful feedback to students. It involves frequent, interactive assessments designed to make student understanding visible. This enables the teacher to identify learning needs and adjust teaching accordingly. It is an ongoing process of teaching and learning. Examples of formative assessment include (but are not limited to) teacher observations, homework, work samples, tests, assignments and projects.

Self-Assessment

Assessment **as** learning (self-assessment): Students use assessment evidence, including self-assessment, to monitor their own learning. It actively involves students' reflection on their learning and monitoring of their own progress.

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Summative Assessment

Assessment **of** learning (summative assessment): Assessment of learning is summative in nature. It involves strategies to confirm what students know and to demonstrate if students have met curriculum outcomes at important points in time. It typically comes at the end of a course or program to determine the extent to which the learning outcomes have been achieved. Examples include (but are not limited to) projects, performances, presentations, tests, and provincial assessments.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is the continuous cycle of collecting data to analyze, reflect upon and summarize information about student learning. Through evaluation, teachers exercise their professional judgement about the evidence collected through assessment activities. They use their insight, knowledge about learning and experience with students, along with the specific criteria and knowledge of the curriculum, to make professional judgements about student performance in relation to curriculum outcomes and for the purpose of assigning student grades.

REPORTING

The extent to which curriculum outcomes are achieved is reported through both formal and informal means. Although there are clearly identified formal reporting periods (e.g., report cards, parent conferences, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), mid-year exam results), communication with parents/guardians and students is continuous throughout the year (e.g., meetings, phone calls, emails, PowerSchool). Communication to students and parents/guardians about learning must be purposeful, accurate, transparent, timely and accessible.

PROCEDURES

1. The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District will establish Administrative Regulations that govern the application of this policy.
2. The Administrative Regulations will be reviewed by the CEO/Director of Education in collaboration with the District administrative staff.
3. Newfoundland and Labrador English School District uses assessment data and evidence for decision-making at the classroom, school, and District level.
4. The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District recognizes that assessment impacts how students learn, their motivation to learn, and how educators teach to further student learning.

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POLICY DIRECTIVES

1. Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes prescribed by the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) and other approved courses form the framework for teaching, learning, assessment and evaluation.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Student academic success is the collective responsibility of students, teachers, administrators and parents/guardians, each with a distinct role. As a part of their responsibility, stakeholders will promote academic rigour and high expectations.

3. Professional Judgement

Professional judgement refers to judgement that is informed by professional knowledge of students, curriculum outcomes, context, evidence of learning, and assessment that indicate success in student learning.

In exercising professional judgement, educators commit to accurate, equitable and bias-free evaluation, assessment and placement, considering the diverse needs of the student population, to ensure all students can achieve their potential.

4. Assessment Practices

Assessment is a collaborative process involving students, teachers and parents/guardians. Assessment supports and promotes student learning when it occurs on a regular, ongoing basis, providing students with clear descriptive feedback from which they can set goals for improvement. Being interconnected with curriculum and instruction, assessment plays a continuous role in informing instruction, checking progress and success while working towards the achievement of outcomes.

Schools will promote academic rigour and high expectations by utilizing a variety of assessment practices. These practices are embedded in a range of supports provided to students as part of a school-wide academic intervention program. Within this context, escalating levels of interventions are used, which may include: contact with parent/guardian, student conferencing, explicit instruction, re-assessment, alternate assessment, differentiated instruction and assessment, ongoing communication with students and parents/guardians, referral to the school service delivery team, tutoring, and a review of the student's program. If school-wide practices/protocols permit, mark reduction may be employed to address late/missed assessments and academic dishonesty, up to and including the full value of the assignment/assessment.

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5. **Communication and Reporting**

Communication to students and parents/guardians about learning must be purposeful, accurate, transparent, timely and accessible. Although there are clearly identified formal reporting periods, communication with parents and students about student achievement is continuous throughout the year. The school's assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy will be communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course, and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course. Effective communication includes both formal elements (e.g., report cards, PowerSchool, parent/guardian teacher conferences, IEPs/ISSPs) and informal elements (e.g., telephone calls, emails, face-to-face conversation, anecdotal notes).

6. **Programming Decisions and Student Placement**

All programming decisions and appropriate interventions will be made as a team, taking into consideration the individual needs of the student in relation to the achievement of the required program outcomes.

7. **Appeals**

All appeals regarding assessment, evaluation and student placement decisions will follow the process defined by the NLESD's Student Appeals Policy (GOV-101)

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