



## ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE

### **TITLE: Assessment, Evaluation, Grading and Reporting Guideline: Grades 1 - 12**

**Effective Date: September 2010**    **Responsibility:** Superintendent of Program & Schools  
Revised Date: May 2011

#### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this document is to define the Near North District School Board's assessment, evaluation, grading and reporting policies for elementary and secondary schools. These policies and practices are consistent with the mission and vision statements of the Near North District School Board and Ministry of Education policy.

The guidelines have been provided in an effort to promote system consistency in assessment, evaluation, grading and reporting practices throughout the elementary and secondary schools in the Near North District School Board.

#### **REFERENCES:**

*The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1 to 8 Curriculum Documents (revised)*  
*The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9 to 12 Curriculum Documents (revised)*  
*Growing Success- Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools (2010) First Edition Covering Grades 1-12*

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

A research-based, philosophical shift related to Assessment and Evaluation has prompted a significant change in practice for educators in Ontario and throughout the world. A major principle underlying this shift in philosophy is that assessment and evaluation practices can best support students when they clearly communicate next steps for student learning. Effective assessment, evaluation and reporting practices inform educators about student achievement and assist educators in adjusting their instruction.

*Used with skill, assessment can motivate the unmotivated, restore the desire to learn, and encourage students to keep learning, and it can actually create – not just measure, increased achievement.*

*Stiggins (2004)*

## **THE PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. Information gathered through assessment helps teachers to determine students' strengths and weaknesses in their achievement of the curriculum expectations in each subject and in each grade. This information also serves to guide teachers in adapting curriculum and instructional approaches to students' needs and in assessing overall effectiveness of programs and classroom practices.

Assessment is the process of gathering information from a variety of sources (including assignments, day-to-day observations, conversations or conferences, demonstrations, projects, performances, and tests) that accurately reflects how well a student is demonstrating the curriculum expectations in a subject. As part of assessment, teachers provide students with descriptive feedback that guides students' efforts towards improvement. Evaluation is the process of judging student work. Teachers exercise their professional judgement in judging the quality of student work against established criteria and in assigning a value to represent that quality.

We know that parents have an important role to play in supporting student learning. Studies show that students perform better in school if their parents or guardians are involved in their education. This is the basis for the principle that students and parents should be informed on an ongoing basis and each school should have procedures in place to communicate to parents about their child's progress during the course of the year.

The Near North District School Board holds high expectations for all students so they can acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and values to become responsible members of society.

## **PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:**

In order to ensure that assessment and evaluation are valid and reliable and that they lead to the improvement of student learning for all students, teachers must use assessment and evaluation strategies 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 and 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 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;
- develop students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning.

## THE LANGUAGE OF ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

**Accommodation:** Students with special educational needs may require accommodations to allow them to participate in the curriculum and to demonstrate achievement of the expectations. Accommodations include individualized teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment.

**Alternative Learning** expectations are developed to help students acquire knowledge and skills that are not represented in the Ontario curriculum expectations.

**Assessment** is the ongoing process of assessing the learning to help give teachers and students **precise and timely information** so that teachers can adjust instruction in response to individual student needs.

Information gathered through assessment:

- helps teachers to determine students' strengths and weaknesses in achieving the curriculum expectations at a given point in each subject/course,
- serves to guide teachers in adapting curriculum and instructional approaches to students' needs and in assessing the overall effectiveness of programs and classroom practices, and
- promotes student self-assessment.

**Descriptive Feedback** is provided by the teacher as an opportunity to guide the students' efforts towards improvement. Descriptive feedback can be verbal or written and should be meaningful, timely and with a clear direction for improvement.

**Evaluation** is the process of *judging* the quality of student work on the basis of established criteria, and assigning a value to represent that quality.

**Grading** is the process of summarizing evaluation information and assigning a letter or percentage grade on a report card.

**Informal Diagnostic Assessment** activities/tools are used as required at the beginning of a course or unit to determine students' strengths and learning needs; and to plan, modify and adjust instruction or provide alternative learning opportunities. Diagnostic assessment data is not used in the determination of a grade.

**Median** is the percentage mark at which 50% of the students in the subject/strand/course have a higher percentage mark and 50% of the students have a lower mark.

**Modifications** are changes made to the grade-level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs. Modifications may include the use of expectations at a different grade level and/or an increase or decrease in the number and/or complexity of expectations relative to the curriculum expectations for the regular grade level.

**Professional judgement** is at the heart of effective assessment, evaluation, and reporting of student achievement. Professional Judgment 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.

**Reporting** is the process of communicating student achievement formally and informally. The provincial curriculum requires that students be evaluated and reported on in two areas of learning:

- 1) curriculum expectations and
- 2) learning skills and work habits (i.e., responsibility, organization, independent work, collaboration, initiative, self-regulation)

**Success Criteria** describe in specific terms what successful attainment of the learning goals looks like. Teachers identify the criteria they will use to assess students' learning, as well as what evidence of learning students will provide to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. The success criteria are used to develop an assessment tool, such as a checklist, a rubric, or an exit card.

### *Teaching – Assessment – Learning – Evaluation*

## **ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT OF CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS**

### **1.1 Informal Diagnostic Assessment**

Teachers should use **diagnostic** assessment activities to determine students' strengths and learning needs to plan, modify, adjust instruction or provide alternative learning opportunities. Diagnostic assessment **will not be used** in the determining of a report card grade. Teachers may refer to this data to measure student progress and achievement.

### **1.2 Assessment**

1.2.1 **The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning.** Information gathered through assessment helps teachers to determine students' strengths and weaknesses.

1.2.2 Assessment should provide **multiple opportunities** for students to practise skills, demonstrate learning, and receive feedback before evaluation takes place.

1.2.3 Assessment may be used to support teachers' professional judgement in determining a grade. Teachers should track this data separately, using appropriate strategies.

1.2.4 As part of assessment, teachers provide students with **descriptive feedback** that guides their efforts towards improvement. Feedback must be specific and provide a clear direction for improvement.

1.2.5 The usual pattern of a student's assessment should be considered when the evaluation does not reflect typical performance.

### 1.3 Success Criteria

- 1.3.1 Assessment *for* learning and assessment *as* learning also require that students and teachers share a common understanding of what constitutes success in learning. **Success criteria** describe, in specific terms, what successful attainment of the learning goals look like. When planning assessment and instruction, teachers, guided by the achievement chart for their particular subject or discipline, identify the criteria they will use to assess students' learning, as well as what evidence of learning students will provide to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. The success criteria are used to develop an assessment tool, such as a checklist, a rubric, or an exit card (i.e., a student's self-assessment of learning). Teachers can ensure that students understand the success criteria by using clear language that is meaningful to the students and by directly involving them in identifying, clarifying, and applying those criteria in their learning. Examining samples of student work with their teachers helps students understand what constitutes success and provides a basis for informed co-construction of the success criteria. The success criteria should be open to review and revision, guided by the teacher's professional judgement, as students' progress towards achievement of the learning goals. Teachers can enhance their understanding of success criteria and build common knowledge about levels of achievement through teacher moderation – that is, through assessment of student work done collaboratively with fellow teachers. (*Growing Success 2010*)

### 1.4 Evaluation (summative assessment)

- 1.4.1 All curriculum expectations must be accounted for in instruction, but **evaluation** focuses on students' achievements of the **overall expectations**. A student's achievement of the overall expectations is evaluated on the basis of his/her achievement of related specific expectations. Teachers will use their **professional judgement** to determine which specific expectations should be used to evaluate achievement of overall expectations, and which ones will be covered solely in instruction and assessment.
- 1.4.2 Teachers will use evaluation tasks to evaluate student performance after assessment opportunities have been provided.
- 1.4.3 Evaluation activities may be divided into smaller tasks throughout a unit or a culminating task.

### 1.5 Missed or Late Assignments - General

- 1.5.1 Teachers will clearly communicate assignment due dates, deadlines and time frames. Teachers could post such dates on Websites or insert them into newsletters in an effort to keep parents and students informed. The assessment and evaluation plan for the assignment will be communicated at the onset. There should be no surprises as to the due date and content of the assignment. Common times, days and format provide consistency and help students plan ahead.
- 1.5.2 Major assignments requiring long term planning should be communicated well in advance. Opportunities for feedback and encouragement will be built into the assessment in order for students to develop good time management and organizational skills.

- 1.5.3 All evaluations are due within the time frame specified by the teacher. If a student is absent with just cause, the student must be prepared to submit or complete the missed evaluation on the day of his/her return to school or as soon as is reasonably possible. **Extenuating circumstances** may warrant an extension of the due date or an alternative evaluation. It must be made clear to students early in the school year that they are responsible not only for their behaviour in the classroom and the school but also for providing evidence of their achievement of the overall expectations within the time frame specified by the teacher, and in a form approved by the teacher. Students must understand that there will be consequences for not completing assignments or for submitting assignments late.
- 1.5.4 Schools will inform parents about the board policy on late and missed assignments.

## 1.6 Late Submissions

- 1.6.1 The provincial curriculum and report card requires that the students be evaluated and reported on in two areas of learning:
- 1) curriculum expectations and
  - 2) learning skills and work habits (i.e., responsibility, organization, independent work, collaboration, initiative, self-regulation)
- 1.6.2 Submitting assigned work on time is a **learning skill**. Teachers will continue to help students understand the benefits of managing their time well, and should explicitly teach time-management skills. Late submission of assignments should be reported within the learning skills and work habits of “Responsibility” and/or “Organization”.
- 1.6.3 The evaluation of learning skills and work habits, apart from those which may be included as part of a curriculum expectation in a subject, should not be considered in the determination of a student’s grades. (*Growing Success, 2010*)

Many experts in the field of assessment and evaluation discourage deducting marks or giving zeros for late and missed assignments, arguing that such measures do not make students change their behaviour or help them succeed in the long run. They believe that success is the best way to breed more success, that punitive measures such as deducting marks only serve to discourage students and promote failure, and that it is more appropriate and more productive to focus on preventive measures. These experts are also concerned that, because every assignment – whether submitted on time or late – provides evidence of learning, deducting marks for late assignments could misrepresent the student’s true level of achievement. They believe that lateness and failure to submit assignments are most appropriately reported – and addressed – as issues relating to the development of learning skills and work habits. Supporting non-performing students by helping them develop these skills and habits, rather than using punitive measures, is a matter of meeting individual students’ needs and should not be considered a form of unwarranted “special treatment”. (*Growing Success 2010*)

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. (*Growing Success 2010*)

#### 1.6.4 Late marks may not be deducted in Grades 1-6.

In Grades 1 to 6, late and missed assignments for evaluation will be noted on the report card as part of the evaluation of the student's development of the learning skills and work habits. When appropriate, a student's tendency to be late in submitting, or to fail to submit, other assignments (including homework) may also be noted on the report card as part of the evaluation of the student's development of the learning skills and work habits. (*Growing Success 2010*)

#### 1.6.5 It is expected that teachers and school teams will use a variety of strategies to ensure that students submit assignments for evaluation and meet timelines. Late and missed assignments for evaluation will also be noted on the report card as part of the evaluation of a student's development of the learning skills and work habits. When appropriate, a student's tendency to be late in submitting, or to fail to submit, other assignments (including homework) may also be noted on the report card as part of the evaluation of the student's development of the learning skills and work habits.

A number of strategies that may be used to help prevent and/or address late and missed assignments are listed below. This list is not an exhaustive list of interventions; other strategies can certainly be employed. Teachers, based on their professional judgement, will use a series of appropriate strategies to help students provide the required evidence of their achievement with regards to overall course expectations. The deductions of marks should not be the first strategy considered.

- asking the student to clarify the reason for not completing the assignment;
- helping students develop better time-management skills;
- collaborating with other staff to prepare a part- or full-year calendar of major assignment dates for every class;
- 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 ("Park It");
- maintaining ongoing communication with students and/or parents about due dates and late assignments, and scheduling conferences with parents 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;
- using counselling 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;
- requiring the student to work with a school team to complete the assignment;
- for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students, involving Aboriginal counsellors and members of the extended family;
- understanding and taking into account the cultures, histories, and contexts of First Nation,

- Métis, and Inuit students and parents and their previous experiences with the school system;
- providing alternative assignments or tests/exams where, in the teacher’s professional judgement, it is reasonable and appropriate to do so;
  - providing opportunities for students to take a pass on a late
  - providing a formal opportunity for students to explain the reason for a late submission (e.g., this is often done by implementing a Late Assignment Form on which students explain the reason for the late submission and then have it signed by a parent/guardian prior to submitting the work.)
  - deducting marks for late assignments.

## 1.7 Missing Assignments

- 1.7.1 **Deciding on a Zero** – Occasionally, an assignment may not be submitted and teachers sometimes have gaps in their record of achievement of expectations for those students. Because evaluation is criterion-based, teachers evaluate each student’s achievement of the overall curriculum expectations. Therefore, zeros assigned to a student should be subject to serious consideration.

Assigning a mark of zero indicates one of two possibilities relative to student achievement:

**Evidence of Zero** – The student’s demonstration/assignment reveals *no knowledge or skills* related to the expectations being evaluated. In the case that a student has demonstrated no knowledge or skill development, it is possible—although unlikely—that a zero may be given for a particular evaluation.

**Zero Evidence** – The teacher has *no evidence* of the student’s knowledge or skills related to the expectations being evaluated. In such cases, students miss tests, do not hand in assignments, or are absent for demonstrations or oral presentations. The “zero” represents the student’s absence of submitted evidence of that learning.

“Zero evidence” is the more common circumstance encountered by teachers. While students are accountable for providing the teacher with evidence of their learning based on the curriculum expectations, teachers should make every effort to encourage students to submit work and to be present for evaluations. The teacher may employ the “Park-It” strategy to ensure a student provides some evidence of learning.

When using the “Park It” strategy, a teacher, after assigning a zero for an incomplete evaluation, makes every effort to ensure that the student is scheduled into a student support centre to receive focussed attention that will assist him/her in completing the unfinished or missed evaluation. This will allow the student to provide some evidence of learning.

- 1.7.2 If evaluation opportunities remain unfinished after strategies regarding missing assignments have been exhausted, a placeholder of zero (0) is recorded in the teacher’s mark book, indicating lack of evidence of a student’s achievement of particular curriculum expectations.



Teachers will use their *professional judgement* to determine what to do with the zero placeholder. They will choose from two possibilities:

1. If the curriculum expectations addressed in the assignment/activity have been adequately evaluated through other evaluation tasks, the teacher should discount the zero placeholder at the end of the term.
2. If a significant number of overall expectations have not been evaluated because of missed or incomplete assignments, the teacher should leave the zero placeholder.

***In making this decision, teachers must ask themselves, “Do I have sufficient evidence of this student’s achievement to determine a justifiable grade?”***

- 1.7.3 Students and parents will be advised that failure to complete evaluation activities reduces the body of evidence upon which the teacher can draw to evaluate student achievement of curriculum expectations, and could jeopardise the student’s grade.

## **1.8 Learning Skills and Work Habits**

- 1.8.1 The Provincial Report Card focuses on two distinct aspects of student achievement:

- 1) Achievement of curriculum expectations, and
- 2) Development of learning skills and work habits

- 1.8.2 The learning skills and work habits identified on the provincial report card (Grades 1-12) can be demonstrated by the student in all subject areas and in other behaviours at school.

The learning skills and work habits are evaluated and reported as follows:

E – Excellent

G – Good

S – Satisfactory

N – Needs Improvement

The Learning Skills and Work Habits are as indicated in the following table:

Learning Skills and Work Habits	Sample Behaviours
Responsibility	The student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fulfils responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment;</li> <li>• completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines;</li> <li>• takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour</li> </ul>
Organization	The student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks;</li> </ul>

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

**Note: Homework completion should be reported within the learning skills and work habits of “Responsibility” and/or “Organization”.**

1.8.3 Teachers will provide regular feedback on learning skills and work habits. The letter assessment can appear as part of other assessment tools (i.e., collaboration, which is a learning skill and work habit, could be assessed with a letter grade on a given rubric).

1.8.4 The development of learning skills and work habits is an integral part of a student’s learning. To the extent possible, however, the evaluation of learning skills and work

habits, apart from any that may be included as part of a curriculum expectation in a subject or course, **should not be considered in the determination of a student's grades.** Assessing, evaluating, and reporting on the achievement of curriculum expectations and on the demonstration of learning skills and work habits *separately* allows teachers to provide information to the parents and student that is specific to each of the two areas of achievement. (*Growing Success 2010*)

- 1.8.5 By reporting a student's achievement of the curriculum expectations separately from the student's demonstration of learning skills and work habits required for effective learning, teachers can provide more specific information to parents and students and identify more clearly the student's strengths and areas in which improvement is needed.

## 1.9 Achievement Charts

- 1.9.1 Teachers in all subject areas will use the subject-specific Achievement Charts found in *The Ontario Curriculum* documents as a common framework for assessing, evaluating, grading, and reporting student achievement of the curriculum expectations.

The Achievement Charts:

- provide various categories and criteria with which to assess and evaluate students' learning;
- assist the teacher and student in the development of success criteria;
- guide the development of quality assessment tasks and tools (including rubrics);
- help teachers to plan instruction for learning;
- assist teachers in providing meaningful feedback to students.

- 1.9.2 The Ontario curriculum for Grades 1 to 12 comprises *content standards* and *performance standards*. Assessment and evaluation will be based on both the content standards and the performance standards:

The content standards are the curriculum expectations, which describe the knowledge and skills that students are expected to develop and demonstrate.

The performance standards are outlined in the achievement chart that appears in the elementary and secondary curriculum documents for every subject or discipline. The achievement chart for each subject/discipline is a standard, province-wide guide and is to be used by all teachers as a framework within which to assess and evaluate student achievement of the expectations in a particular subject or discipline.

## 2.0 Categories of the Achievement Chart

- 2.0.1 The achievement chart identifies four categories of knowledge and skills. It enables teachers to make judgements about student work that are based on clear performance standards and on a body of evidence collected over time.

The categories identified by clear criteria represent four broad areas of knowledge and skills within which the subject expectations for any given grade/subject are organized.

The four categories should be considered as interrelated, reflecting the wholeness and interconnectedness of learning.

The categories of knowledge and skills are:

- **Knowledge and Understanding:** Subject-specific content acquired in each grade/course (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)
- **Thinking:** The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes
- **Communication:** The conveying of meaning through various forms
- **Application:** The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts

2.0.2 Teachers will ensure that there is sufficient evidence of achievement in each of the categories of knowledge and skills to provide a valid grade.

2.0.3 Teachers will ensure that student work is assessed and or evaluated in a balanced manner with respect to the four categories of knowledge and skills, and that achievement of particular expectations is considered within the appropriate category of knowledge and skills.

2.0.4 **Level 1** represents achievement that falls much below the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with limited effectiveness. Students must work at significantly improving learning in specific areas, as necessary, if they are to be successful in the next grade/course

**Level 2** represents achievement that approaches the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with some effectiveness. Students performing at this level need to work on identified learning gaps to ensure future success.

**Level 3** represents the provincial standard for achievement. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with considerable effectiveness. Students achieving at this level can be confident that they will be prepared for work in subsequent grades/courses.

**Level 4** identifies achievement that surpasses the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with a high degree of effectiveness. *However, achievement at this level does not mean that the student has achieved expectations beyond those specified for the grade/course.*

## 2.0 Arriving at a Grade

2.1.1 In determining report card grades, teachers will use their professional judgement to interpret evidence. A student's grade should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement, with special consideration given to more recent evidence.

2.1.2 A student's achievement must be communicated formally to students and parents by means of the Provincial Report Card Grades 1-8 and the Provincial Report Card Grades 9-12. The report card provides a record of the student's achievement of curriculum expectations in every subject, at particular points in the school year, in the form of a letter (Grades 1-6) or a percentage (Grades 7-12) grade.

- 2.1.3 The letter or percentage grade represents the quality of the student’s overall achievement of the expectations for the subject and reflects the corresponding level of achievement as described in the achievement chart for the discipline.

## 2.1 Grading and Reporting

- 2.2.1 A student’s achievement of the overall curriculum expectations will be evaluated in accordance with the achievement charts in the provincial curriculum. It is expected that professional judgement will inform the determination of a final grade. An anecdotal comment will also accompany each student’s grade. The following conversion chart shows how the four levels of achievement are aligned to letter and percentage grades by grade level:

Level	Letter Grade Grades 1-6	Percentage Grade		
		Grades 7-8	Grades 9-10	Grades 11-12
Level 4+	A+	95 – 100	95 – 100	95 – 100
Level 4	A	87 – 94	87 – 94	87 – 94
Level 4-	A-	80 – 86	80 – 86	80 – 86
Level 3+	B+	77 – 79	77 – 79	77 – 79
Level 3	B	73 – 76	73 – 76	73 – 76
Level 3-	B-	70 – 72	70 – 72	70 – 72
Level 2+	C+	67 – 69	67 – 69	67 – 69
Level 2	C	63 – 66	63 – 66	63 – 66
Level 2-	C-	60 – 62	60 – 62	60 – 62
Level 1+	D+	57 – 59	57 – 59	57 – 59
Level 1	D	53 – 52	53 – 52	53 – 52
Level 1-	D-	50 – 52	50 – 52	50 – 52
R or Below 50	“R” or “I”	“R” or “I”	% or “I”	%

- 2.2.2 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. For achievement below Level 1 in Grades 9 to 12, percentage marks below 50 per cent are assigned. 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. “R” and percentage marks below 50 per cent indicate the need for the development of strategies to address the student’s specific learning needs in order to support his or her success in learning. When appropriate, parents will be consulted in this process. (In Grades 1 to 8, 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”.)
- 2.2.3 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 interests of the student. For example, teachers may find it appropriate to use “I” *when evidence of a student’s achievement is insufficient because the student has enrolled in*

*the school very recently or because there were issues or extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control, such as protracted illness*, that affected his or her attendance and/or ability to provide sufficient evidence of achievement of the overall expectations.

In Grades 9 and 10, a student who receives an “T” 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 “T” 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 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.

## **2.2 Evidence of Student Achievement**

- 2.3.1 At each reporting period, the teacher will assign a letter or percentage grade based upon student assessment evidence keeping in mind that some evidence carries greater weight than other evidence. For example, some performance tasks are richer and reveal more about students' skills and knowledge than others. Teachers will weigh all evidence of student achievement in light of these considerations and 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.
- 2.3.2 At the time of reporting, if a student has missed one or more evaluation activities, the teacher will review the student's data and consider the following:
- whether the student demonstrated achievement of the expectations on the missed evaluation(s) through other assignments or in another context deemed appropriate by the teacher
  - the student's most consistent level of achievement on the completed evaluations with particular emphasis on the more recent achievements
  - the student's reason or extenuating circumstances for the missed evaluations
  - consultations with appropriate school personnel, including, resource teachers and the administration.
- 2.3.3 When considering a student's grade, 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. Assignments for evaluation may involve group projects as long as each student's work within the group project is evaluated independently and assigned an individual mark, as opposed to a common group mark. (*Growing Success 2010*)

## **3.0 Cheating and Plagiarism**

### **3.0.1 Defining Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Simply put, plagiarism is any use of another person's research, ideas or language without properly acknowledging the original source. There are different types of plagiarism:

### 3.0.2 Complete Plagiarism

A student submits, as his or her own work, an assignment that has been written by someone else. This could include published work, or the work of another person (student, friend, family member, etc.)

#### Original Source

*“Macbeth is the architect of his own destruction and nothing he does is forced upon him.”*

#### Complete Plagiarism

*“Macbeth is the architect of his own destruction and nothing he does is forced upon him.”*

**PROBLEM:** The student has repeated someone else’s sentence verbatim (word for word), without any attempt at acknowledging the source.

### 3.0.3 Near-Complete Plagiarism

A student submits an assignment in which most of the work has been completed by someone else, with little original thought. This could include a scattering of original words taken from another source, or adding an introduction or conclusion to someone else’s work.

#### Original Source

*“Like anorexia, bulimia can kill. Even though bulimics put up a brave front, they are often depressed, lonely, ashamed and empty inside.”*

#### Near-Complete Plagiarism

*“Like anorexia, bulimia kills. Even though bulimics act bravely, they often feel sad, lonely, ashamed and empty.”*

**PROBLEM:** The student’s sentence is too close to the original, with no acknowledging of the source. Rather than presenting the main points of the passage, it repeats phrases word for word.

### 3.0.4 Patchwork Plagiarism

A student creates an assignment by “stitching” together ideas, sentences, and paragraphs from a variety of sources into one work.

#### Original Sources

1. *“That was the end. An incredulous cry of “La Garde Recule” echoed along the French line, and the entire army began to disintegrate.”*
2. *“The disintegration of a once-proud army into a mass of panicking men took place almost within the blink of an eye and Napoleon’s dreams, and reputation, lay shattered.”*

#### Patchwork Plagiarism

*“The Battle of Waterloo ended. An incredulous cry echoed along the French line, and the entire army began to disintegrate, almost within the blink of an eye. Napoleon’s dreams, and reputation, lay shattered.”*

**PROBLEM:** The student’s sentences continue to sound too much like the original sources. The student has not organized and expressed the information in his/her own language.

### 3.0.5 Self Plagiarism

A student uses an assignment written in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course. If a student wishes to use a previously completed essay as a starting point for new research, he/she should get the teacher’s approval, and provide the teacher with a copy of the original assignment.

### 3.1 Policy on Plagiarism

- 3.1.1 Each of the types of plagiarism noted is as serious as the other. The Near North DSB policy on plagiarism will be applied to all plagiarized assignments – written, oral or visual. A **mark of zero** will be assessed for all plagiarized assignments.
- 3.1.2 **For the first offence**, the student is counselled by the teacher and allowed to do a make-up assignment **which will count for two-thirds of the earned mark**. The information is kept on file in the Main Office where all teachers can have access to it and parents are informed.  
**For any subsequent offence in any course or any subsequent year**, the mark remains at zero, the information is kept on file in the Main Office, and parents are informed.

### 3.2 Avoiding Plagiarism

- 3.2.1 Students must be taught practices which will help them avoid plagiarism. They should be instructed to:
- Choose topics that interest them
  - Manage their time wisely
  - Make good notes and planning sheets
  - Consult with the teacher regularly
  - Believe in their own skills
- 3.2.2 Likewise, students must be taught to understand features of a well-researched, properly cited assignment.

#### **In well-researched assignments:**

- The voice of the student is clear and distinct.
- Direct quotations are in quotation marks, and are cited in the style outlined by the teacher.
- Borrowed ideas are paraphrased and are cited in the style outlined by the teacher.
- Research material is used to enhance and support the student's topic.
- A Works Cited/References page clearly and correctly acknowledges all sources used by the student in the assignment/essay.
- A Bibliography/Works Consulted page, following the style of a Works Cited page, is included if requested by the teacher.

#### **In plagiarized assignments:**

- The voice of the student is overshadowed by language and words which do not belong to the student.
- Borrowed word-for-word sections may be presented as the student's own words.
- Borrowed ideas may be presented as the student's own ideas.
- Research material may be presented as if it *were* the student's argument.
- A Works Cited/References page may be missing or it may not clearly acknowledge the materials used by the student in the assignment.



## **4.0 Reporting Student Achievement**

4.0.1 Teachers will use a variety of reporting methods to communicate with parents and students achievement including: parent interviews, conferencing, phone calls, letters to parents, online tracker, the Provincial Progress Report and the formal Provincial Report Card.

### **4.1 Elementary Progress Report**

4.1.1 A progress report will be issued to students in Grades 1 to 8, in the Fall between October 20 and November 20. Teachers will use the Elementary Progress Report Card (Grades 1 to 8) to inform parents of the progress students are making towards achievement of the curriculum expectations for each subject/strand.

In creating this report, teachers will indicate whether the students is:

- progressing with difficulty
- progressing well
- progressing very well

Page one of the Progress report is to be completed by the home room teacher in collaboration with the other teachers. On page two, all teachers who teach a particular student will have the opportunity to check off the appropriate box and enter comments. It is not necessary for all teachers to comment on all subjects/strands.

In the event that a student did not receive instruction in a subject/strand, the teacher will check the N/A box.

### **4.2 Completing the Provincial Report Cards:**

4.2.1 All report card comments will reflect student achievement and include the following:

- Strengths
- Areas for Improvement
- Next Steps

In writing anecdotal comments, teachers should focus on what students have learned, describe significant strengths, and identify next steps for improvement. Teachers should strive to use language that parents will understand and should avoid language that simply repeats the wording of the curriculum expectations or the achievement chart. When appropriate, teachers may make reference to particular strands. The comments should describe in overall terms what students know and can do and should provide parents with personalized, clear, precise, and meaningful feedback. Teachers should also strive to help parents understand how they can support their children at home.

It is important that teachers have the opportunity to compose and use personalized comments on report cards as an alternative to selecting from a prepared set of standard comments. It is expected that principals will support best practice and encourage teachers to generate their own comments. (*Growing Success 2010*)

- 4.2.2 The learning skills and work habits reported will reflect evidence gathered throughout the reporting period, and will be reported using the four-point scale (E - Excellent, G - Good, S - Satisfactory, or N - Needs Improvement).
- 4.2.3 **Elementary Report Cards:** Report cards for students in **Grades 1-8** will be issued twice per year. The first report will be distributed between January 20 and February 20 and the second will be distributed at the end of June.
- 4.2.4 The following are instructions for completing the **Provincial Report Card: Grades 1-8 – Subjects and Strands**.

### **Language**

Fill in the letter grade/percentage mark for each of the four strands for language in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriate.

Check the “NA” box if the student is enrolled in an immersion French program and is not receiving any language instruction in English.

### **French**

Fill in the letter grade/percentage mark for each strand that is part of the student’s instructional program in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriate. If a particular strand is not part of the student’s program during that reporting period, indicate this in the comments and leave the grade/mark column blank.

### **Core/Immersion/Extended French**

Check the appropriate box to indicate the type of program the student is enrolled in.

### **Native Language**

Indicate the Native language in the space provided (e.g., Ojibwa, Cree). Fill in the letter grade/percentage mark for Native language in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriate.

Check the “NA” box if the student does not receive any instruction in a Native language.

### **Mathematics**

Fill in the student’s letter grade/percentage mark for at least four of the five strands for mathematics in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriate. Achievement in each of the five strands must be reported at least once in the school year, in either Report 1 or Report 2.

When achievement in a strand is not reported for Report 1 or Report 2, it should be noted in the comments that instruction was not provided for that strand, and the “NA” box for that strand should be checked.

### **Science and Technology**

Fill in the student’s letter grade/percentage mark for science and technology in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriate. In the space provided for comments, indicate which strands are being reported in the given period.

**Social Studies (Grades 1 to 6)**

Fill in the student's letter grade for social studies in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriate. In the space provided for comments, indicate which strands are being reported in the given period.

**History and Geography (Grades 7 and 8)**

Fill in the student's percentage mark for history and/or geography in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriate. When students are instructed in only one of history or geography for the reporting period, parents should be informed at the beginning of the reporting period.

If either history or geography is not part of the student's program for Report 1 or Report 2, this should be noted in the comments, and the appropriate "NA" box should be checked. Achievement in both history and geography must be reported at least once in the school year, in either Report 1 or Report 2.

**Health and Physical Education**

Fill in the student's letter grade/percentage mark for health education and physical education in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriate.

- 4.2.5 **Secondary Report Cards:** Report cards for students in **Grades 9-12** will be issued twice per semester for semestered schools. The first report will be at the halfway point of the semester and the second will be after exams have been completed.

Report Cards will be completed three times per year for non-semestered schools.

- 4.2.6 The following are instructions for completing the **Provincial Report Card: Grades 9-12**.

**Specialist High Skills Major**

Provincial Report Cards Grades 9-12 SHSM box indicates the student is taking the course as a credit towards a specialist high skills major.

**Studies in French**

Provincial Report Cards Grades 9-12 the French box indicates that the student is receiving instruction in French for the course.

- 4.2.7 A median mark must be provided for all students who are studying the subject in Grades 7 and 8 and all students taking the course in Grades 9 through 12.
- 4.2.8 Teachers for Grades 9-12 may place a mark as low as 0 for students who receive a failing grade.

**5.0 Reporting Achievement for Students with an IEP – Elementary**

- 5.0.1 **Elementary – IEP with Modified Curriculum Expectations** – If the expectations in the IEP are based on expectations outlined for a grade in a particular subject and/or strand in an Ontario curriculum document, but vary from the expectations of the regular program

for the grade, teachers must check the “IEP” box for that subject/strand on the Elementary Progress Report Card and the Elementary Provincial Report Card.

On the provincial report card, teachers must also include the following statement in the section “Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement”:

**“This (letter grade/percentage mark) is based on expectations in the IEP that vary from the Grade X expectations (and/or) are an (increase/decrease) in the (number and/or complexity) of curriculum expectations.”**

#### 5.0.2 Elementary -- IEP with Alternative Learning Expectations

In most cases where the expectations in a student’s IEP are *alternative learning* expectations, it is neither required nor advisable to assign letter grades or percentage marks to represent the student’s achievement of the expectations. However, in some cases, when evaluation is based on a clearly articulated assessment tool (e.g., a rubric), a letter grade or percentage mark may be assigned in a subject and/or strand and recorded on the provincial report card. In those cases, teachers must check the “IEP” box for the subject and/or strand and must include the following statement in the section “Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement”:

**“This (letter grade/percentage mark) is based on alternative learning expectations in the IEP, which are not based on the Ontario curriculum.”**

#### 5.0.3 Elementary – IEP with Accommodations Only

If the student’s IEP requires only accommodations to support learning in a subject and/or strand, teachers will not check the “IEP” box. The letter grade or percentage mark is based on the regular grade expectations

### 5.1 Reporting Achievement for Students with an IEP – Secondary

#### 5.1.1 Secondary – IEP with Modified Curriculum Expectations

If the student has an IEP that identifies modified expectations, teachers must check the “IEP” box for every course to which the plan applies. If some of the student’s learning expectations for a course are modified from the curriculum expectations, but the student is working towards a credit for the course, it is sufficient simply to check the “IEP” box.

If, however, the student’s learning expectations are modified to such an extent that the principal deems that a credit will not be granted for the course, teachers must include the following statement in the “Comments” section:

**“This percentage mark is based on achievement of the learning expectations specified in the IEP, which differ significantly from the curriculum expectations for the course.”**

#### 5.1.2 Secondary – IEP with Alternative Learning Expectations

In most cases where the expectations in a student’s IEP are *alternative learning* expectations, it is neither required nor advisable to assign percentage marks to represent the student’s achievement of the expectations.

However, in some cases, when evaluation is based on a clearly articulated assessment measure (e.g., a rubric), a percentage mark may be assigned and recorded on the secondary report card. In those cases, teachers must check the “IEP” box for that course and must include the following statement:

**“This percentage mark is based on alternative learning expectations specified in the IEP, which are not based on the Ontario curriculum.”**

### 5.1.3 Secondary – IEP with accommodations only

If the student’s IEP requires only accommodations to support learning in a course, teachers will not check the “IEP” box. The percentage mark is based on the regular course expectations.

## 6.0 Reporting Achievement for ESL Students

6.0.1 The ESL/ELD box should **not** be checked on the elementary progress report card or the elementary and secondary provincial report cards to indicate:

- that the student is participating in ESL or ELD programs or courses;
- that **accommodations** have been provided to enable the student to demonstrate his or her learning (e.g., extra time to complete assignments, access to a bilingual dictionary, opportunities to work in the student’s first language).

6.0.2 The ESL/ELD box should be checked on the elementary progress report card or the elementary and secondary provincial report cards to indicate:

### **Elementary**

- When a student’s achievement is based on expectations **modified** from the grade level curriculum expectations to support English language learning needs.

### **Secondary**

- When a student’s achievement is based on expectations **modified** from the course curriculum expectations to support English language learning needs.
- Where a modification is made to course curriculum expectations, the principal will work collaboratively with the classroom teacher to determine the integrity of the credit.

6.0.3 For an English language learner, when modifications to curriculum expectations have been made to address both language learning needs and special education needs, the teacher will check both the “ESL/ELD” box and the “IEP” box.

## 7.0 E-Learning

7.0.1 E-learning is one of a number of alternative methods school boards can use to supplement traditional classroom teaching in order to deliver credit courses to Ontario secondary school students.

7.0.2 Teachers who teach using online courses and tools, whether through the provincial Learning Management System (LMS) or another LMS, must abide by the provincial assessment, evaluation, and reporting policies outlined in the present document.

- 7.3 Online courses meet the same rigorous assessment and evaluation standards as courses taught in traditional classrooms. This is achieved through:
- the *design of courses* and their related assessment and evaluation instruments and strategies;
  - the variety and robustness of *tools within the learning management system*, such as chats, threaded discussions, blogs, whiteboards, quizzes, student tracking tools, and teacher feedback tools;
  - provisions for *teacher mediation of e-learning courses* (including allowing teachers to modify the course content to meet their students' needs), and for *teacher training* related to the delivery of online courses;
  - *implementation strategies* put in place by the school board and *teacher training* provided by the ministry.

## 8.0 Credit Recovery

- 8.0.1 Credit recovery is designed to help regular day-school students at the secondary level meet the expectations of a course they have completed but for which they have received a failing grade.
- 8.0.2 Credit recovery is one of several options to be considered for a student who fails a course.
- 8.0.3 Students may only recover the credit of the actual course failed; they may **not** use credit recovery to earn credit for a course of a different type, grade, or level in the same subject or for a course that they have neither taken nor failed.
- 8.0.4 Students who withdraw from a course and do not attempt the summative evaluation are **not** eligible for credit recovery.
- 8.0.5 To ensure the integrity of the recovered credit, the student must demonstrate achievement of all of the overall expectations for a course between the original course offering and the credit recovery process.
- 8.0.6 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 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 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.
- 8.0.7 The assessment and evaluation practices used for credit recovery must be consistent with ministry and board policies.
- 8.0.8 **Determining Eligibility for Credit Recovery**  
Eligibility to gain access to a credit recovery program shall be based on a variety of indicators and not solely on a mark designation.

Eligibility for the credit recovery program is based on (but is not limited to) the following criteria:

- proven success in current courses
- a mark of no less than 40% (credit recovery for a student with less than 40% will require approval from the principal).
- fewer than 15 absences in the course they would like to recover
- support from either a teacher, guidance counsellor and/or administrator (based on the Recommended Course Placement Form)
- support of the Student Success Team/Student Support Centre