

# YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



BOARD POLICY	
<i>Policy Section</i> <b>Students</b>	<i>Policy Number</i> <b>309</b>
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<i>Original Approved Date</i> <b>December 16, 1997</b>	<i>Subsequent Approval Dates</i> <b>May 27, 2014 March 28, 2017</b>

**POLICY TITLE: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

**SECTION A**

**1. PURPOSE**

The York Catholic District School Board is committed to providing a high-quality educational experience to all students, enabling them to reach their potential as 21<sup>st</sup> century learners and make successful transitions to the post-secondary destination of their choice. We believe that every student is unique and that each must have opportunities to achieve success according to his or her own interests, goals and God-given abilities.

Effective assessment and evaluation practices are the foundation for success. This policy is intended to ensure that assessment and evaluation practices are clearly understood and consistently applied.

**2. POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the York Catholic District School Board to maintain high standards of practice to ensure that assessment and evaluation practices are rooted in our Catholic understanding of the human person, that they are valid and reliable, that they lead to improvements in student achievement, and that they foster engagement and well-being.

In order to do so:

- our teachers will use assessment and evaluation practices that are fair, transparent, equitable for all students, and understood by stakeholders; and,
- parents should support their child(ren) to set goals and plan for success in their studies.

2.1 York Catholic District School Board's assessment and evaluation practices recognize and affirm our Catholic Faith values by:

- 2.1.1 Respecting the dignity and worth of all learners;
- 2.1.2 Being 'just' and 'compassionate' in nature by providing varied opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning;

- 2.1.3 Fostering life-long learners and recognizing the God-given capacity of all persons to learn and grow throughout their lives; and,
- 2.1.4 Reflecting the holistic nature of assessment that integrates the nature of learning and faith Formation.

### **3. PARAMETERS**

- 3.1 The purpose of assessment and evaluation shall be to foster, promote and improve student success, achievement and well-being. Assessment and evaluation tools and strategies shall be consistently applied and provide equitable opportunity for success and achievement to all students of the York Catholic District School Board.
- 3.2 Assessment and evaluation processes shall be communicated in a timely manner and will provide information to be used by teachers and students to:
  - 3.2.1 Determine where students are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there.
  - 3.2.2 Monitor progress towards achieving the overall and specific curriculum expectations.
  - 3.2.3 Provide feedback, make adjustments, and set individual goals.
  - 3.2.4 Promote the development of reflective habits of mind (i.e., metacognition).
  - 3.2.5 Engage parents/guardians in their child's learning.
- 3.3 Teachers shall use a variety of strategies (e.g., observations, student-teacher conversations, student products, self/peer assessment) to elicit information about student growth and learning.
- 3.4 Students shall be assessed and evaluated against curriculum expectations using criterion referenced tools. Where required, modifications and accommodations shall be provided in accordance with a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- 3.5 Students shall be provided with ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement. All assignments, tests, quizzes, projects or other activities utilized for assessment and evaluation shall be returned to students in a timely manner but prior to exams, to further support improved learning and achievement.
- 3.6 Students shall be provided with multiple opportunities to demonstrate achievement of curriculum expectations.
- 3.7 Assessment and evaluation tools shall be free of bias.
- 3.8 The Board shall designate up to ten (10) instructional days per school year as examination days, four (4) per semester with one (1) per semester for inclement weather or emergency situations.
  - 3.8.1 To foster student success and equity of opportunity, students will be scheduled to write one exam per day during this designated time.
- 3.9 As per YCDSB Policy 316 *Secondary School Post-Examination Review*, a regular instructional day, in close proximity to each final examination period and the

completion of course studies, shall be designated for post-examination review and included in the School Calendar and communicated in Student Agendas.

- i) Semester 1 Post-Examination Review day will occur, each school year, on the first day of Semester 2.
- ii) Semester 2 Post-Examination Review day will be dependent on the designated June exam schedule for each school year.

3.10 Teachers shall use the York Catholic District School Board's Guidelines and Procedures for the Implementation of Ministry Policy: *Growing Success - Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools Document*, to guide their assessment and evaluation practices.

## **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **4.1 Board of Trustees**

4.1.1 To uphold the Assessment and Evaluation of Student Achievement policy.

4.1.2 To use assessment and evaluation information (school and system) to inform decisions that support Board planning processes and provide effective and appropriate education programs for students.

### **4.2 Director of Education**

4.2.1 To oversee compliance with the Assessment and Evaluation of Student Achievement policy.

### **4.3 Senior Administration**

4.3.1 To support implementation and compliance with the policy and related guidelines.

4.3.2 To provide leadership and professional development opportunities to build capacity and ensure the use of effective, bias-free assessment and evaluation strategies and tools.

4.3.3 To use assessment and evaluation information (school and system) to inform the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-being.

4.3.4 To support school administrators and staff in the analysis, communication and response to large scale assessment information.

4.3.5 To support school staff in their understanding, use and communication of fair, transparent, and equitable assessment and evaluation information for student and school improvement.

### **4.4 Principals**

4.4.1 To support compliance with the policy and related guidelines by building capacity to understand and implement the Board's Guidelines and Procedures for the Implementation of Ministry Policy: *Growing Success - Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools*.

4.4.2 To provide leadership and professional development opportunities to ensure the use of effective, bias-free assessment and evaluation strategies and tools.

4.4.3 To support school staff in the analysis, communication and response to large scale assessment information.

4.4.4 To use assessment and evaluation data, including information from the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being, to inform the School Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-being.

4.4.5 To ensure consistent administration of large-scale assessments.

#### **4.5 Teachers**

4.5.1 To implement effective assessment and evaluation practices in accordance with the Board's Guidelines and Procedures for the Implementation of Ministry Policy: *Growing Success - Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools*.

4.5.2 To provide students with ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement. All assignments, tests, quizzes, projects or other activities utilized for assessment and evaluation must be returned to students to further support improved learning and achievement.

#### **4.6 Students**

To fully participate in their learning by:

4.6.1 Articulating what they are expected to learn and be able to do.

4.6.2 Monitoring and assessing their learning.

4.6.3 Setting specific improvement goals and planning accordingly.

4.6.4 Demonstrating achievement of curriculum expectations.

4.6.5 Developing the learning skills and work habits that support life-long learning.

#### **4.7 Parents**

4.7.1 To engage with teacher(s), their child(ren) and School Administration to support improved student achievement and promote well-being.

### **5. DEFINITIONS**

#### **5.1 Accommodation**

Accommodation is used to refer to the "unique teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individual equipment required to enable a student to learn and to demonstrate learning. Accommodations do not alter the provincial curriculum expectations for the grade."

#### **5.2 Achievement**

Achievement refers to the learning and skills that students are able to demonstrate.

#### **5.3 Assessment**

Assessment is the process of gathering and recording information about students' knowledge and skills as well as providing students with descriptive feedback to guide their improvement. Information should be gathered from a variety of sources over time. Assessments include:

#### **5.4 Assessment as Learning**

The process of developing and supporting student metacognition. Students are actively engaged in this assessment process when they monitor their own learning, use assessment feedback from teacher, self, and peers to determine next steps, and set individual learning goals. Assessment as learning requires students to have a clear understanding of the learning goals and the success criteria. Assessment as learning focuses on the role of the student as the critical connector between assessment and

learning. The co-construction of success criteria is a powerful opportunity to engage students in assessment as learning.

### **5.5 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 learning. The co-construction of success criteria is a powerful opportunity to engage students in assessment for learning.

### **5.6 Assessment of Learning**

The process of collecting and interpreting evidence for the purpose of summarizing learning at a given point in time, to make judgments about the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria, and to assign a value/grade/achievement level to represent that quality. The information gathered may be used to communicate the student's achievement to parents, other teachers, students themselves, and others. It occurs at or near the end of a cycle of learning. Assessment of learning usually involves rich performance tasks, demonstrations, projects, or essays. Assessment of learning does not include ongoing homework that students do to practice skills, to consolidate knowledge, to prepare for the next class or to be introduced to new content.

### **5.7 Bias**

Bias refers to an inaccurate and limited view of the world, a given situation, or individuals or groups. A bias against or towards members of a particular cultural, racial, religious, or linguistic group can be expressed through speech, nonverbal behaviour, and written and other materials.

### **5.8 Catholic Understanding of the Human Person**

As Catholics, we draw on sacred scripture, the teachings and traditions of the church, and the lived faith of the current community. From this, we present an understanding of the human person as inherently good, loved by God, always capable of improvement, and already redeemed.

### **5.9 Criterion-Referenced Assessment**

Criterion-referenced assessment describes a student's accomplishment of curriculum expectations in relation to the achievement chart.

### **5.10 Engagement**

There are four dimensions of student engagement:

- 5.10.1 Spiritual Engagement: The integration of faith with life through reflection, planning and action;
- 5.10.2 Intellectual Engagement: A serious emotional and cognitive investment in learning, using higher order thinking skills such as creativity and analysis) to increase understanding, solve complex problems, or construct new knowledge;
- 5.10.3 Social Engagement: A sense of belonging and participation in school life; and,
- 5.10.4 Academic (or Institutional) Engagement: The understanding and appreciation of the formal requirements of schooling.

### **5.11 Evaluation (Assessment of Learning)**

The process of collecting and interpreting evidence for the purpose of summarizing learning at a given point in time, to make judgments about the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria, and to assign a value/grade/achievement level to represent that quality.

### **5.12 Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

A written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, including a record of the particular accommodations needed to help the student achieve his or her learning expectations. An IEP must be developed for a student who has been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), and may also be developed for a student who has special education needs but has not been identified as exceptional. An IEP is a working document that identified learning expectations that may be modified from or alternative to the expectations given in the curriculum policy document for the appropriate grade and subject or course. It outlines the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purpose of reporting student achievement.

### **5.13 Modification**

Modifications are changes made in the age-appropriate grade level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs. These changes may involve developing expectations that reflect knowledge and skills required in the curriculum for a different grade level and/or increasing or decreasing the number and/or complexity of the regular grade level curriculum expectations.

### **5.14 Ontario Curriculum Expectations**

The knowledge and skills that students are expected to develop and demonstrate. The Ontario Curriculum Policy documents identify expectations for each grade/course from Kindergarten to Gr. 12.

### **5.15 Peer Assessment**

Peer assessment refers to a reflective, non-evaluative practice, based on established criteria, in which students make observations about their peers' performance (e.g., checklist, interview). The evaluation of student learning is the responsibility of the teacher and must not include the judgment of a student's peers.

### **5.16 Professional Judgment**

This term refers to judgment 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, judgment involves a purposeful and systematic thinking process that evolves in terms of accuracy and insight with ongoing reflection and self-correction.

### **5.17 Reflective Habits of Mind (Metacognition)**

The process of thinking about one's own thought processes. Metacognitive skills include the ability to monitor, assess, and manage one's own learning (e.g., think aloud, self-assessments, decision-making, goal setting, planning for success, reflections).

### **5.18 Reporting**

Reporting is the process of communicating the results of assessment and evaluation to students and parents/guardians.

### 5.19 Self-Assessment

Self-assessment refers to reflective practices based on established criteria in which students make observations about their own learning and performance. They may use tools like checklists, conferencing, and journals to frame these reflections. When students assess themselves, they develop insights into their own learning and are better able to monitor, track, and plan next steps for their learning.

### 5.20 Well-being

Well-being refers to being happy, hopeful, resilient (i.e., spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically strong) and successful. Students with a sense of well-being feel:

- physically well;
- nourished and active;
- physically and psychologically safe;
- included, valued and supported at home, at school and in the community;
- able to participate in productive activities;
- able to form and sustain healthy relationships;
- able to cope with adversity and are resilient; and,
- that adults care about their well-being.

## 6. CROSS REFERENCES

YCDSB Policy 313 Homework

YCDSB Policy 316 Secondary School Post-Examination Review

YCDSB Policy 601 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

*YCDSB Guidelines and Procedures for the Implementation of Ministry Policy: Growing Success – Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2011*

*Education Act*

Ministry of Education: *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, Grades 1-12, 2010*

*Ontario Regulation 304: School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days*

<b>Approval by Board</b>	<b>March 28, 2017</b> _____ <i>Date</i>
<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>March 29, 2017</b> _____ <i>Date</i>
<b>Revision Date(s)</b>	<b>March 28, 2017</b> _____ <i>Date</i>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>March 2022</b> _____ <i>Date</i>