

Supporting your Child's Learning through Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

The purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.



Ontario students will bring home new and improved provincial report cards starting in the 2010-11 school year. These changes are part of *Growing Success*, the government's updated policy on the assessment, evaluation and reporting of student achievement.

What role do I have as a parent?

We know that you, as a parent or guardian, are vital partners in your child's education and that children do better at school when their parents are involved.

We know that you want clear, meaningful and understandable information about how your child is doing at school. We know you want to hear from your child's teacher regularly throughout the school year. This policy – with its new report cards – will help make that happen.

What is different for elementary students?

Beginning this school year, elementary students in Grades 1 to 8 will bring home a new fall progress report card and two revised provincial report cards, one in winter and one at the end of the school year.

The new *fall progress report card*:

- encourages early and ongoing communication between you and your child's teacher
- tells you how well your child is developing the learning skills and work habits we know are essential for success
- continues to report on all academic subjects – such as language, math, social studies, science and technology – but instead of assigning a grade or mark, it will tell you how well your child is progressing: "very well", "well" or "with difficulty"

Essential Learning Skills and Work Habits

There are six learning skills and work habits now emphasized throughout Grades 1 to 12 in all Ontario report cards:

- Responsibility
- Organization
- Independent Work
- Collaboration
- Initiative
- Self regulation

- highlights strengths and areas to improve before evaluations are completed
- includes comments from your child's teacher that are personalized, clear and meaningful.

The improved *elementary provincial report card*:

- also emphasizes and gives examples of the learning skills and work habits required
- has ample space for teachers to add meaningful, clear and personalized comments so you can understand how your child is progressing
- uses letter grades for Grades 1-6 and percentage marks for Grades 7-8 so you clearly understand how well your child is doing
- provides suggestions on how you can support your child's learning at home.

When will my child bring these elementary provincial report cards home?

There are three formal and required reporting periods for elementary grades.

1. The new fall progress report card will be issued between October 20 and November 20.
2. The first provincial report card will be issued between January 20 and February 20.
3. The second provincial report card will be issued at the end of the school year.

Exact dates are set by individual school boards.

Have the secondary provincial report cards changed?

Yes. Improvements to the secondary provincial report cards include:

- more emphasis, with examples, on the learning skills and work habits required
- additional information about the different levels of achievement and how this corresponds to percentage marks
- teachers' comments that are personalized, clear and meaningful.



Date:

Student:		OEN:	Days Absent:	Total Days Absent:
Grade:	Teacher:		Times Late:	Total Times Late:
Board:		School:		
Address:		Address:		
		Principal:	Telephone:	

[Space for Board Information]

Open space where each school board can customize for their own use. Types of information that could be added include the board's vision statement, mission or educational goals.

Learning Skills and Work Habits

E – Excellent G – Good S – Satisfactory N – Needs Improvement

Responsibility

- Fulfills responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment.
- Completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines.
- Takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour.

Organization

- Devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks.
- Establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals.
- Identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks.

Independent Work

- Independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals.
- Uses class time appropriately to complete tasks.
- Follows instructions with minimal supervision.

Collaboration

- Accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group.
- Responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others.
- Builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships in person and through personal and media-assisted interactions.
- Works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals.
- Shares information, resources, and expertise, and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.

Initiative

- Looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning.
- Demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks.
- Demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning.
- Approaches new tasks with a positive attitude.
- Recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.

Self-Regulation

- Sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them.
- Seeks clarification or assistance when needed.
- Assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests.
- Identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals.
- Perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.

Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement

Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement: Teachers will add personalized and easy to understand comments that discuss a student's progress in the six learning skills and work habits.

Column where teachers will add a letter symbol to report student development in the six learning skills and work habits:

E – Excellent

G – Good

S – Satisfactory

N – Needs Improvement

Student:		OEN:		Grade:	
ESL/ELD – Achievement is based on expectations modified from the curriculum expectations for the grade to support English language learning needs.				IEP – Individual Education Plan NA – No instruction for subject/strand	
Subjects		Progressing With Difficulty	Progressing Well	Progressing Very Well	Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement
Language Reading, Writing, Oral Communication, Media Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> NA French <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/> Core <input type="checkbox"/> Immersion <input type="checkbox"/> Extended Native Language <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> NA Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French Science and Technology <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French Health and Physical Education Health Education <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French Physical Education <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French The Arts Dance <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> NA Drama <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> NA Music <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> NA Visual Arts <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> NA					
To Parents/Guardians and Students: This copy of the progress report card should be retained for reference. The original or an exact copy has been placed in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR) folder and will be retained for five years after the student leaves school.					
Teacher's Signature X			Principal's Signature X		
[Space Designated for Board]					

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Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement: Teacher comment on how a student is progressing to date towards meeting the curriculum expectations of the subjects, identify significant strengths, areas with difficulty and next steps for improvement.

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Open space where each school board can customize for their own use. Examples of information/uses include providing additional comments, requesting a student or parent interview, outlining next steps and sharing information about school activities.

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Columns where teachers check one of the boxes to report on whether a student is progressing "with difficulty", "well" or "very well" in a particular subject, for example math, science, social studies, language, health and physical education.

When will secondary students bring provincial report cards home?

As in the past, semestered schools will send report cards home twice per semester. Non-semestered schools will issue a report card three times per year.

Exact dates are set by individual school boards.

Will teachers' comments be easy to understand?

Yes. All new report cards now include large spaces for teachers to add comments about what your child knows and can do. They can use the space to describe strengths and next steps for improvement as well as add their own observations and personal comments.

Will I hear from my child's teacher at other times?

You should hear from your child's teacher regularly throughout the school year. Besides report cards, other types of communication include parent-teacher or parent-student-teacher conferences, interviews, phone calls, checklists and informal reports.

How do teachers determine my child's grades?

Teachers look at assignments, tests, exams, demonstrations and projects for evidence that your child is learning the curriculum.

This learning means more than just knowing the facts. Students must also show an understanding of what they are studying by communicating and applying what they have learned. They must also demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

All work is reviewed with special attention given to the quality of work at the end of a unit of study, term or semester. Teachers do not simply calculate averages. As well as looking at tests or assignments, they also talk to and observe your child in the classroom to gather as much information as possible before making a decision on the final grade.

What is homework used for?

Ongoing homework is used to develop study and organizational skills, consolidate knowledge and prepare for the next class. It also helps develop strong learning skills and work habits, which are reflected in the provincial report card.

What does an “R” mean on my child’s provincial report card in Grades 1 to 8?

An “R” means extensive remediation is needed since the required skills and knowledge of the subject have not been met. It is important to work with your child’s teacher to develop strategies to support your child in gaining the required knowledge and skills.

What does an “I” mean on my child’s Grades 1 to 10 provincial report card?

An “I” means the teacher did not have enough information to assign a grade or mark. This may happen, for example, if your child recently moved schools or has had an extended illness.

Are there consequences for cheating or plagiarizing?

Yes. The updated assessment policy makes it clear that students are responsible for their own work. School boards are working with local communities to develop policies to prevent, detect and set consequences for cheating and plagiarizing that are consistent with ministry guidelines.

Ask your school about its policy on cheating or plagiarizing.

Are there consequences for not completing work or submitting work late?

Your child is responsible for showing what he or she has learned or accomplished in the time frame allowed by their teacher.

Ontario’s policy lists many strategies teachers can use to both prevent and address late and missed assignments. Options range from peer tutoring and offering time-management lessons to school-wide planning of major assignments.

In all grades, if your child consistently misses assignments or hands in work late, this may be reflected in the Learning Skills and Work Habits section of the report card. Grades 7 to 12 students may also have marks deducted.

Ask your school about its policy on late or missed assignments.

Have Ontario's education standards changed?

No. The Ontario curriculum clearly shows what students are expected to know and be able to do in all subjects and courses. Each student is assessed and evaluated against the same high provincial standards.

Why is more prominence and emphasis being given to learning skills and work habits?

Research shows students need to learn more than just facts if they want to succeed in postsecondary education and the world of work.

Ontario's students are also learning to take initiative, work independently, be self-reliant and work in a team. Schools are teaching critical thinking and problem solving skills in order to give your child the ability to seize every opportunity for jobs and growth in the new knowledge economy.

Why did the government introduce a new assessment, evaluation and reporting policy?

The purpose of assessment, evaluation and reporting is to improve student learning. New approaches present educators with new challenges and new opportunities to benefit students. Reflecting this new knowledge, *Growing Success* updates and clarifies the best practices and techniques teachers use to collect and share information with parents and students.

Fundamental Principles

Ontario's teachers use assessment and evaluation practices and procedures that:

- are fair, transparent and equitable
- support all students
- are carefully planned
- are clearly explained to students and parents at the beginning of the school year
- are ongoing and varied, and provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning
- include feedback that is clear, meaningful and timely
- help students to become independent learners.

For more information, and to view *Growing Success* in its entirety, visit the Ministry of Education's website at ontario.ca/EDUparents.