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POLICY IKA

Evaluation of Student Learning & Promotion – Youth Sector

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to help improve student learning and classroom instruction. Assessment and evaluation nurture self-esteem by providing strategies for improving and enriching student performance. In the New Frontiers School Board, assessment and evaluation will be used to:
- a) make decisions about student performance in order to:
 - identify specific student needs;
 - make decisions concerning improvement and adapt classroom instruction for individual students, those students on IEPs and for the whole class;
 - evaluate an individual student's performance at the end of a unit or at the end of a cycle in relation to the competencies as described in the curriculum;
 - b) provide feedback in order to:
 - help students develop their self esteem, and set appropriate goals for their learning;
 - provide constructive information to assist students in identifying their strengths/needs so they can apply learning skills to improve their performance;
 - motivate students;
 - c) communicate with students, parents/guardians to provide information about student performance in relation to the cycle competencies as described in the curriculum and standards established by the school and in the objectives outlined for those students who have individual educational plans (IEP) ;
 - d) place, promote and certify to fulfill the legal obligation of schools in the area of student placement and promotion;
 - e) provide data or information in order to:
 - establish a basis for the evaluation of the curriculum;
 - guide the development or adaptation of instructional programs;
 - guide in the selection of classroom instructional strategies;
 - inform staff, parents and the students of the significant results, interpretations and conclusions of the assessments.
- 1.2. This policy on Evaluation of Student Learning and Promotion provides the framework to support academic learning for all students and to allow students to become active participants in their own learning. It also describes and sets the guidelines for promotion from one cycle to another and from elementary and secondary school.
- 1.3. The contents of this policy are based on the regulations and principles as described in:
- the Education Act
 - the Basic School Regulation (BSR)
 - the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning (Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sports)
 - the Framework for the Evaluation of Learning
 - the Competency Scales (Elementary and Secondary)

2. Definitions

- 2.1. Assessment is a continuous process of gathering information about student learning and performance using a variety of sources over time.
- 2.2. Evaluation is the process of judging the quality of student work in the assessments on the basis of established criteria, and the assigning of a value to represent that quality.
- 2.3. Examination is a formal end-of-year evaluation requiring a written or oral response, administered during the scheduled examination period as determined by the Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sports (MELS).
- 2.4. A Performance Task gives the student the opportunity to illustrate, perform, or demonstrate what they know and can do. Some performance tasks are designed to have students demonstrate their understanding by applying their knowledge to a particular situation.
- 2.5. A Learning and Evaluation Situation (LES) is an authentic, engaging evaluation that is often open-ended. Involving higher-order thinking skills, it often takes two or more classroom periods to complete. It may be assigned during the year and is used as an end-of-cycle evaluation.
- 2.6. Other definitions are included in Appendix C of this policy.

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1. The school board's vision of "Learning for All" is based on a commitment to fundamental values of openness, leadership, and cooperation in a caring and learning environment.
- 3.2. The essence of this policy is that student evaluation is an integral part of teaching and good practice. It is treated as an ongoing and comprehensive process that is based on careful planning and systematic implementation. Evaluation is a critical element that influences teacher decision making and guides improvement in student learning.

The guiding principles of student evaluation are the following:

- Evaluation is an integral part of the teaching-learning process.
- Evaluation is a planned, continuous activity.
- Evaluation takes into account that the curriculum is based on the mastering of competencies.
- Evaluation reflects the intended outcomes of the student curriculum.
- Evaluation assists teachers in meeting individual needs and providing appropriate programs for students.
- Evaluation includes not only measurement but also interpretation and judgment.
- Evaluation is sensitive to socio-demographic and economic differences such as culture, gender, and geographic location.
- Evaluation uses assessment techniques for formative, diagnostic, and summative purposes.
- Evaluation provides information within the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.
- Evaluation respects and safeguards confidentiality.
- Evaluation is fair and equitable, giving all students opportunities to demonstrate the extent of their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Evaluation gives supportive feedback to students and parents.
- Evaluation helps to foster students' abilities to apply knowledge into life experiences.
- Evaluation encourages active student participation and self-appraisal to foster lifelong learning.
- Evaluation provides for student development, improvement and empowerment.
- Evaluation includes the communication of a teacher's overall evaluation plan to students in advance. Students should be made aware of the objectives of the program and the procedures to be used in assessing performance relative to the objectives.
- Evaluation process and results are regularly communicated to parents/guardians and students in a meaningful manner.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

- 4.1. Responsibility of the student – The student has the responsibility to become actively involved in the learning process, including participating in the setting of learning objectives. In addition, the student will monitor his/her progress towards these goals and evaluate success in meeting the goals. The student should also participate in the process of reporting the results of the evaluation through, for example, student-led conferences.
- 4.2. Responsibility of the parents – The parent has the responsibility to be an active participant in his/her child's education and to work in collaboration with the school in establishing a home-school partnership. The parent ensures regular student attendance, participates in parent-teacher interviews, reviews results communicated by the school, and takes an active role in supporting the student's learning.

- 4.3.** Responsibility of the teacher – The teacher selects the means of evaluating the progress of students and assesses regularly on an on going basis the achievement of competencies and assessment of needs of the students entrusted to his/her care. (Education Act, art. 19) The teacher supports learning by providing students with ongoing feedback from a variety of sources to enable students to set new goals for learning for self-improvement. Feedback is provided both on a regular basis as well as more strategic moments such as at the end of a unit of study or at the end of a cycle. The teacher provides varied assessment and evaluation opportunities that reflect different learning styles and multiple intelligences. This may involve the creation of an IEP. The teacher provides students with a clear description of the expectations and evaluation criteria at the beginning of a unit, project or course of study. The teacher uses the Competency Scales provided by MELS as a reference tool to help determine overall competency development in elementary education. The teacher uses professional judgment to interpret the results of assessment in the evaluation process, working in collaboration with the cycle team and other colleagues. The teacher reports these results, as required, to the student, parent/guardian, school administration and the school board. The teacher participates in professional development related to student assessment and evaluation procedures.
- 4.4.** Responsibility of the school administration -
The principal is responsible for:
- on the recommendations from teachers, the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement in keeping with the prescription of the Basic School Regulation and subject to the examinations which may be imposed by the MELS or the school board. (Education Act, article 96.15)
 - approving the reporting tools used by the school and for informing the Governing Board of evaluation procedures.
 - presenting, annually, the current school calendar to the Governing Board, indicating when and how parents / guardians will be regularly informed about student progress.
 - ensuring collaboration within cycle teams in the reporting process.
 - provide pedagogical leadership to teachers regarding the evaluation of learning.
 - reviewing each report card and indicates his/her approval with a signature on the document. (At the high schools, the vice-principals are also involved in this task.)
 - using assessment data for school improvement and assists staff in using assessment data for program planning.
- 4.5.** Responsibility of the school board – The school board ensures that each school evaluates student achievement and administers the examinations imposed by the MELS. The school board may also impose internal examinations, in the subject domains it determines, at the end of each cycle of the elementary level and at the end of the first cycle of the secondary level. (Education Act, article 231)
The School Board will:
- upon request of the schools, provide the schools with a model report card to be used in reporting to parents in elementary and secondary schools.
 - assure that the regulations of the MELS are followed in each of its schools.
 - develop policy and procedures with regard to student assessment and evaluation in consultation with principals, teachers, parents, and students where appropriate.
 - assure that the structures for consultation on evaluation by school board committees are in place.
 - provide opportunities for professional development and help share best practices related to assessment and evaluation procedures and philosophy.
- 4.6.** Responsibility of the Ministry of Education – the Ministry provides the Basic School Regulation for the organization of schools and the educational services provided to schools. In this capacity, the Ministry, through its Basic School Regulation:
- establishes the rules for the evaluation of learning achievement and the certification of studies. (Education Act, article 447-4)
 - determines which diplomas, certificates and other official attestation will be awarded by the Minister and prescribes the conditions under which they are awarded. (Education Act, article 447-5)
 - authorizes a school board, on condition and to the extent determined by the Minister, to exempt a category of students from the application of a provision of the Basic School Regulation. (Education Act, article 447-10)

5. Communication and Reporting:

5.1 Reporting to students to provide them with direction in their learning are essential. As well, parents/guardians are entitled to receive feedback regarding their child's academic progress and feedback as to whether he/she is meeting the expected outcomes of an educational program.

5.2 Communication and reporting is a responsibility shared by all partners, as described in section 4 of this policy. In addition, obligations for communication of student learning are specified in the Basic School Regulation (Section 29).

As per the Regulation, the following reporting procedure is described:

- for students in Kindergarten, a minimum of four communications per year are issued, including at least two progress report cards and an annual summary of learning;
- for students in elementary, a minimum of eight communications per cycle are issued, to include at least five progress report cards and an end-of-cycle report. Report cards will be issued at least three times in the first year of the cycle and twice in the second year of the cycle, followed by the end-of-cycle report;
- for students in the first cycle of secondary school, a minimum of eight communications per cycle are issued, to include five progress report cards and an end-of-cycle report. Report cards will be issued at least three times in the first year of the cycle and twice in the second year of the cycle, followed by the end-of-cycle report;
- for students in the second cycle of secondary, a minimum of four communications per year are issued, including at least two progress report cards and an annual summary of learning;
- for students who are identified with special needs (Basic School Regulation, Section 29), one communication with parents per month is required.

5.3 Communications with parents may take a variety of forms. Parent-teacher interviews, portfolios, student-led conferences, communication books, individual education plans (IEPs), phone calls, etc. are all an integral part of the ongoing process of reporting to parents.

6. Accommodations and Modifications:

6.1 Every student with special needs, identified with a ministerial code, must have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). An IEP is not mandatory for non-identified students, but must be completed for students who regularly require accommodations for instructional, environmental or assessment situations.

6.2 Accommodations refer to the teaching strategies, supports and/or services that are required in order for the student to demonstrate learning. These accommodations do not alter the expectations established in the curriculum and are categorized as follows:

- Instructional Accommodations refer to changes in teaching strategies that allow students to access the curriculum.
- Environmental Accommodations refer to changes that are required to the classroom and/or school environment.
- Assessment Accommodations refer to changes that are required in order for the student to demonstrate learning

6.3 Accommodations may include but are not limited to such considerations as setting (i.e. a separate room); presentation (i.e. large print); scheduling (i.e. parts of an examination given in a different order); response (i.e. use of a scribe, reader, computer); and timing (i.e. extended time).

6.4 The accommodations agreed upon should be specified in the student's IEP, and should be in use throughout the school year, not just on examinations.

6.5 Modifications refer to changes made to the cycle level expectations for disciplinary or cross-curricular competencies to meet the needs of the student. They include:

- Expectations for a different cycle level
- Significant changes (increase or decrease) to the number and/or complexity of the learning expectations based on the IEP

6.6 If some of the learning expectations for a student are modified from the curriculum expectations, the teacher must check the IEP box for the subjects concerned on the report card and enter the comment – "Expectations for this subject have been modified".

6.7 The comments on the report card must reflect the needs of the IEP statements. They must reflect, and clearly state, the progress of the student when the appropriate modifications are in effect. If at the end-of-cycle the teacher determines that the student's learning expectations are modified to such an extent that they do not meet the end-of-cycle competency requirement, the following statement must be included in the comments section of the report card – "This grade is based on achievement of the expectations specified in the IEP, which differ significantly from the curriculum expectations for the subject."

7. Promotion

7.1 As the organization of the program of studies is based on cycles, promotion to the next cycle will be based on the evaluation of students at the end of each cycle.

7.2 The rules governing promotion from elementary to secondary education and from Cycle One to Cycle Two of secondary education are the responsibility of the school board.

7.3 Promotion from one cycle to another in elementary and secondary school is prescribed in the Basic School Regulation, Section 28. The principal determines, on the advice of the teachers, whether a student will continue to the next cycle, with or without support measures, or will complete an additional year in the same cycle, with support measures.

7.4 When it can be demonstrated that a Kindergarten student will benefit from an additional year, derogation may be requested from the school board. Derogation is approved by the Director of Educational Services, based on the recommendation of the school administration.

7.5 A student may be retained for one additional year at the Elementary level and one additional year at the Cycle 1 Secondary level if there are reasonable grounds to believe that this action will enable the student to master the required program competencies.

7.6 In the second cycle of secondary school, students are promoted by subject or discipline, from one year to the next up to 18 years of age. (Basic School Regulation, Section 28; Education Act, Section 1)

8. Home Schooling:

8.1 In accordance with guidelines established by the Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sports, students who live within the territory of the New Frontiers School Board and have received authorization from the school board for home schooling must be evaluated at least once a year.

Education Act

Teacher's right.

19. In accordance with the educational project of the school and subject to the provisions of this Act, the teacher has the right to govern the conduct of each group of students entrusted to his care.

Teacher's prerogatives.

The teacher is entitled, in particular,

- 1) to select methods of instruction corresponding to the requirements and objectives fixed for each group or for each student entrusted to his care;
- 2) to select the means of evaluating the progress of students so as to examine and assess continually and periodically the needs and achievement of objectives of every student entrusted to his care.

1988, c. 84, s. 19.

Approval of proposals.

96.15. The principal is responsible for approving, on the proposal of the teachers or, in the case of matters referred to in subparagraph 5, of the members of the staff concerned and after consulting with the governing board in the case of proposals under subparagraph 3,

- 1) in accordance with the policies determined by the governing board, the local programs of studies developed to meet the special needs of students;
- 2) the criteria for the introduction of new instructional methods;
- 3) in accordance with this Act and in keeping with the school budget, the textbooks and instructional material required for the teaching of programs of studies;
- 4) the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement in keeping with the prescriptions of the basic school regulation and subject to the examinations that may be imposed by the Minister or the school board;
- 5) the rules governing the placement of students and their promotion from one cycle to the other at the elementary level, subject to the rules prescribed by the basic school regulation.

Procedure.

The proposals of the teachers or the staff members under this section shall be made according to the procedure determined by the teachers or the staff members at general meetings called for that purpose by the principal or, failing that, according to the procedure determined by the principal.

Time limit.

A proposal of the teachers or the staff members concerning a subject referred to in this section must be made within 15 days after the proposal is requested by the principal, failing which the principal may act without such proposal.

Reasons.

If the principal does not approve a proposal of the teachers or the staff members, the principal shall give reasons, in writing, for the decision.

1997, c. 96, s. 13.

Student achievement.

231. Every school board shall ensure that each school evaluates student achievement and administers the examinations imposed by the Minister.

Basic school regulation.

447. The Government may make regulations to be known as the “basic school regulation”.

Content.

The basic school regulation shall relate to

- 1) the nature and objectives of educational services, including preschool education, instructional services, student services and special educational services as well as the general organizational framework thereof;
- 2) the date, between the beginning of the school year and 1 January, for determining the age at which a person is eligible for admission to the educational services referred to in section 1.

Other provisions.

In addition, the basic school regulation may

- 4) establish rules on the evaluation of learning achievement and the certification of studies;

Basic School Regulation

DIVISION VII
EVALUATION OF LEARNING

28. Evaluation is the process whereby a judgment is made on a student's learning on the basis of information gathered, analyzed and interpreted, for the purpose of making pedagogical and, where appropriate, administrative decisions.

A decision to promote a student to the next cycle shall be based on the student's competency report and on the rules governing promotion established by the school or the school board, according to their respective responsibilities.

In the second cycle of the secondary level, the promotion of a student to the next year shall be by subject.

O.C. 488-2005, s. 8.

29. In order to inform the parents of a student of the student's academic progress, the school shall provide

(1) at least 8 communications per cycle, including 5 report cards and an end-of-cycle competency report if the student is at the elementary school level or in the first cycle of secondary school; or

(2) at least 4 communications per year, including 2 report cards and an end-of-year competency report if the student is at the preschool level or in the second cycle of secondary school. Despite the first paragraph, the communications to be provided are given to the student if the student is of full age.

At least once a month, information shall be provided to the parents of minors in the following cases:

(1) their results put them at risk of not achieving the objectives of the programs of studies of the cycle or, for children in preschool education, when their progress indicates that they will not be ready to proceed to the first grade of elementary school at the beginning of the following school year;

(2) their behaviour does not comply with the school's rules of conduct;

(3) an individualized education plan providing for this information was prepared for those students.

The information is intended to foster collaboration between the parents and the school in correcting learning difficulties and behavioural problems as soon as they appear and, in some cases, in implementing an individualized education plan.

O.C. 651-2000, s. 29; O.C. 488-2005, s. 9.

Definitions

Adaptive Dimension

the concept of making adjustments in approved educational programs to accommodate diversity in student learning needs; includes those practices the teacher undertakes to make curriculum, instruction, and the learning environment meaningful and appropriate for each student

Accountability

preparation and ability to account to the public for the performance of the educational system

Affective Domain

a major area within the taxonomy of educational objectives pertaining to the hierarchical pattern of classification characteristics of attitudes, interests, and appreciation and valuing

Anecdotal Records

refer to written descriptions of student progress that a teacher keeps on a day-to-day basis

Appropriate Frequency of Assessment

appropriate balance between assessment and evaluation activities and instructional processes

Assessment Stations

areas designated by the teacher for student activities that are specifically used for assessment purposes

Bias

the treatment of students unequally by virtue of their gender, race, culture, socioeconomic status, or any other stereotyped bases

Cognitive Domain

a major area within the taxonomy of educational objectives pertaining to the hierarchical pattern of classification characteristics of knowledge outcomes and intellectual abilities and skills

Common Essential Learnings

a set of six interrelated areas containing understandings, values, skills, and processes that are considered important as foundations for learning in all school subjects: communication, numeracy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social values and skills, independent learning, and technological literacy.

Competency

A demonstration of learning behaviours based on the mobilization and effective use of a set of resources in a given situation; the application of prior and new knowledge and resources to problem-solve in real life situations that are progressive, durable and transferable.

Competency Scales

A guide that provides a description of proficiency levels indicating the development of subject specific and cross-curricular competencies.

Contract

agreement between a student or a group of students and a teacher regarding what will be done, who will do it, how it will be done, when it will be completed, and how it will be evaluated

Core Curriculum

Saskatchewan framework for curriculum that comprises [earnings necessary for all students including Required Areas of Study, the Common Essential Learnings, and the Adaptive Dimension

Criterion

standard against which something is compared

Criterion-referenced

comparing students' results to the standard of what was taught

Curriculum

translation of educational goals into an organized set of intended learning outcomes and instructional plans

Diagnostic Evaluation

designated to identify the level of students' skills and knowledge so that appropriate instruction can be provided

Direct Instruction

an instructional strategy; highly teacher directed; includes methods such as lecture, didactic questioning, explicit teaching, practice and drill, and demonstrations

End-of-Cycle Report

summarizes and evaluates the development of all subject and cross-curricular competencies by a student during the cycle.

Experiential Learning

an instructional strategy; inductive, learner-centered and activity-oriented

Extended Open-Response

a testing exercise that requires a student to respond comprehensively to an assigned topic

Formal Assessment

structured assessment procedures with specific guidelines for administration, scoring and interpretation of results

Formative Evaluation

designed for use during instruction to stimulate, guide, and evaluate learning in specific units of instruction

Group Assessments

assessments that focus on or account for the progress of a group

Halo Effect

the tendency to rate students with pleasing personalities and good 'back records in class more highly than other students regardless of their actual performance on the tasks being rated

Holistic Rating Scale

a type of rating scale that combines global and analytic scoring methodologies

Independent Study

an instructional strategy; instructional methods that purposefully foster the development of individual student initiative, self-reliance, and self-improvement

Indirect Instruction

an instructional strategy; mainly student-centered; associated with methods such as inquiry, induction, problem solving, and discovery

Individual Assessments

assessments that focus on individual student progress; constructed by the teacher; completed individually by the students

Inference

an indicator of the extent to which the teacher is the instrument that evaluates whether a student attains a desired objective

Informal Assessment

a variety of procedures used to determine performance, student progress and/or direct instructional changes; less structured than or structured differently from standardized tests; results are relevant to instruction

Instructional Strategies

approaches teachers may take to achieve learning objectives; classification includes Direct Instruction, Indirect Instruction, Experiential Learning, Interactive Instruction, and Independent Study

Interactive Instruction

an instructional strategy; relies on discussion and sharing among participants

Kinesthetic

having to do with the sensation of position, movement, tension, etc. of the parts of the body

Learning Outcomes

includes Facts and Information; Concepts; Learning Generalizations; Step-by-Step Psychomotor Skills; Step-by-Step Cognitive Skills; Thinking Skills; Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision-Making Processes; Creative Thinking and Performance; Interpersonal and Social Skills; Attitudes, Appreciations, and Values

Norm-referenced

comparing students' results to results obtained from the group on which the test was normed

Observation Checklists

an assessment instrument or data recording device that records the presence or absence of attainment of desired concepts, skills, processes, or attitudes

Performance Assessments

assessment techniques that provide information on student learning in tasks that require students to actively engage in their learning through activities such as manipulating materials, demonstrating skills, solving multi-stage problems, or participating in debates

Portfolios

method of organizing and storing of student-produced materials assembled over an extended period of time that allow the teacher to evaluate student growth and overall learning progress during that period of time

Program Evaluation

a formal process of gathering and analyzing information about some aspect of a school program in order to make a decision or to communicate the merits of the aspect to other decision makers or appropriate groups

Psychomotor Domain

a major area within the taxonomy of educational objectives pertaining to the hierarchical pattern of classification characteristics of motor skills, abilities, and dexterity

Rating Scales

data recording devices that allow the teacher to represent the extent to which specific concepts, skills, processes, or attitudes are attained by students

Required Areas of Study

seven areas of study required for all students within the context of the Saskatchewan Core Curriculum: language arts, mathematics, arts education, health education, physical education, science, and social studies

Self-referenced

comparing students' assessment results to her/his development over time

Summative Evaluation

designed to be used at the end of instruction; measures the extent of student learning progress relative to the learning outcomes of the course of instruction

Systematic

a factor of consideration for the timing and scheduling of assessment and evaluation processes through a given course of study

Weighting

assigning the relative importance or value to a single item or elements within a list of related items