

Important Stuff: Policies & Practice

Equity in Education

The Toronto District School Board has policies and procedures to ensure that students have equity of access to learning opportunities. For students to achieve their full potential, the education system must be free from discrimination and must provide all students with a safe and secure environment so that they can participate fully and responsibly in the educational experience. The implementation of these principles influences all aspects of school life. It promotes a school climate that encourages all students to work to high standards, affirms the worth of all students, and helps them strengthen their sense of identity and develop a positive self-image. It encourages staff and students to value and show respect for diversity in the school and in the larger community.

Learning activities are designed to help students develop a respect for human rights and dignity and to develop a sense of personal, social, and civic responsibility. These activities reflect diverse points of view and experiences and enable students to learn about the contributions of a variety of peoples, in the past and the present, to the development of Canada. Students are encouraged to think critically about aspects of their own and their peers' backgrounds and to become more sensitive to the experiences and perceptions of others.

All TDSB Schools Adhere to the Following Ministry Policies:

- *Ontario Secondary Schools, Grades 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements, 1999 (OSS)*, which outlines all policy related to secondary education in the province of Ontario;
- *Choices Into Action: Guidance and Career Education Program Policy for Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1999*, which describes the approaches that Principals and teachers are expected to take when teaching students learning skills in the three areas of: student; interpersonal; and career development.
- Curriculum Policy Documents, which outline the requirements for study in each subject available in Grades 9 and 10; and Grades 11 and 12.
- *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12 (2010)*.

The diploma requirements for students is carefully outlined in the centre section of this publication called, Course Selection Planning Guide.

Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that they adhere to these requirements, and that they give careful consideration each year to the educational planning process.

Special Education Programs

Recognizing the needs of exceptional students and designing programs that respond effectively to these needs are important and challenging aspects of program planning to which the Toronto District School Board staff are committed. The Board provides a wide range of program options for students with special needs, including the Learning Strategies Course (GLE).

After an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) identifies a student as exceptional, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed and maintained for that student. An IEP may also be prepared for students who are receiving Special Education programs and services but who have not been identified as exceptional by an IPRC.

The IEP is based on a thorough analysis of the student's strengths, needs, and interests. It will identify what the student is expected to learn and will explain how the Special Education program and services will help him or her achieve those learning goals and expectations. For those exceptional students who are 14 years of age or older, the IEP will also outline a coordinated plan for transition to post-secondary activities, including education, work, or adaptation to community living. Further information can be obtained from the secondary school Special Education personnel or from the Guidance/Student Services Department.

SEAC – Special Education Advisory Committee

The Toronto District School Board has established a Special Education Advisory Committee.

The committee consists of voluntary representatives from local associations, community representatives and trustees. SEAC members are available as a resource to parents/guardians of students with special needs.

Further information concerning SEAC can be obtained by visiting:

www.tdsb.on.ca > Programs > Special Education > Who can help? > Special Education Advisory Committee

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Choices

2012–2013

Safe School Policy

Foundation Statement

The mission of the Toronto District School Board is to provide "learning environments that are safe, nurturing, positive and respectful."

Such learning environments are peaceful and welcoming for all. They must be free of negative factors such as abuse, bullying, discrimination, intimidation, hateful words and deeds and physical violence in any form. They must also clearly demonstrate respect for human rights and social justice and promote the values needed to develop responsible members of a democratic society.

Safe Schools information is available on the Toronto District School Board web site at: www.tdsb.on.ca click on Students tab > "Safe and Caring Schools."

Student Planners

Many schools in the TDSB use student planners or agendas as important communication vehicles. Planners often contain valuable information regarding upcoming events, the school's Code of Conduct, examination protocol, and information regarding co-curricular and extra curricular activities offered in the school. These publications are also extremely useful time management tools and where available their use should be encouraged.

Semestered and Non-Semestered

- Secondary schools are generally organized on either a full-year model (non-semestered) or a semestered model (half-year).
- Students in a full-year, non-semestered secondary school usually study eight courses from September to June. The year is divided into two or three terms for examination and reporting purposes.
- Students in a semestered secondary school usually study four courses from September to January, and four courses from February to June, with examinations and reports at the end of each semester.

NOTE

Students who have an IEP or an IPRC designation generally receive the following support:

ACCOMMODATION

The process of changing, for individual students, the way the curriculum is delivered to them in ways that are appropriate to their identified learning needs. These may be in the form of individualized teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment. Accommodations allow the student to participate in learning without any changes to the knowledge and skills the student is expected to demonstrate.

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. Such changes may reflect a decrease in the number or complexity of expectations.



TDSB Student SuperCouncil Captivate • Motivate • Initiate

The TDSB Student SuperCouncil is a group of 20 democratically elected students from all over TDSB. The SuperCouncil's main goal is to bring a student voice to the Boardroom.

One of the ways to do this is to host quadrant meetings in each of the four TDSB quadrants. Through these meetings students can voice their opinions and ideas. The student voice then goes through the SuperCouncil and into the Boardroom through two Student Trustees. SuperCouncil has many Staff Advisors who hold positions of responsibility within TDSB who are there to help the Student Executives to do the best job they can.

SuperCouncil also hosts events, like the Elections Conference and Leadership Retreat. On top of this, student voice has brought us initiatives and policies like: the Student Leadership Policy, SAC Handbook, Homework Moratorium Policy...etc.

You can help to bring student voice to the Boardroom! Get involved! Attend the meetings and events. To learn more about opportunities that SuperCouncil can offer join the 'TDSB Student SuperCouncil' Facebook group and visit the website at www.supercouncil.ca. SuperCouncil needs you!

Levels of Achievement

The achievement chart also identifies four levels of achievement, defined as follows:

Level 4 (80 – 100%) identifies achievement that surpasses the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with a high degree of effectiveness.

Level 3 (70-79%) represents the provincial standard for achievement. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with considerable effectiveness.

Level 2 (60-69%) 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 1 (50-59%) represents achievement that falls much below the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with some effectiveness.

Below 50: The student has not demonstrated the required knowledge and skills. Extensive remediation is required

It is the intention of the TDSB to provide a consistent and fair approach to dealing with instances of academic dishonesty, specifically with plagiarism and cheating. To ensure academic honesty and avoid instances of plagiarism, it is the student's responsibility to understand what actions constitute as plagiarism, as well as the penalties that correspond to academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Direction to staff and students on this issue are described in the Academic Honesty Procedure (PR 613) and can be found under the Policies, Procedures and Forms tab on www.tdsb.on.ca.

Important Stuff: Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement

***“Not all things that count can be counted.
Not all things that are counted count.”***

Our responsibility as educators is to be accountable for things that count.

Beginning in September 2010, assessment, evaluation, and reporting in Ontario schools will be based on the policies and practices outlined in, *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12 (2010)*. This document updates, clarifies, coordinates, and consolidates the various aspects of the policy, with the aim of maintaining high standards, improving student learning, and benefiting students, parents/guardians and teachers in elementary and secondary schools across the province.

The Seven Fundamental Principles of Assessment and Evaluation:

To ensure that assessment, evaluation, and reporting are valid and reliable, and that they lead to the improvement of learning for all students, teachers use practices and procedures 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 to 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/guardians 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.

Assessment & Evaluation

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

Assessment is the process of gathering information that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations in a subject or course. Assessment is seen as both **assessment for learning**, a process which determines where students are in their learning and where they need to go, and **assessment as learning** which focuses on the explicit fostering of students' capacity over time to be their own best assessors.

Evaluation refers to the process of judging the quality of student learning on the basis of established performance standards and assigning a value to represent that quality (*Note Levels of Achievement*). Evaluation accurately summarizes and communicates to parents/guardians, other teachers, employers, institutions of further education, and students themselves what students know and can do with respect to the overall curriculum expectations. Evaluation is based on **assessment of learning** that provides evidence of student achievement at strategic times throughout the grade/course, often at the end of a period of learning.

For the entire Growing Success Document please visit www.tdsb.on.ca/guidance or www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf

Important Stuff: Reporting

Failure to Complete Courses

If a student has completed a course but has failed to achieve the curriculum expectations at a passing level, staff will determine the best way to enable the student to earn a credit for the course, in consultation with the student and parents/guardians. If possible, the student should be allowed to repeat only the material relating to the expectations not achieved. This may be done at summer school, through independent study, through an individualized remediation program, credit recovery, by distance education or he or she may be required to, or choose to, repeat the entire course.

Withdrawal from a Course

If students in Grade 11 or 12 courses withdraw within five instructional days following the issue of the second to last provincial report card in a semestered or non-semestered school, the withdrawal is not recorded on the Ontario Student Transcript (OST). If a student withdraws after five instructional days following the issue of the second to last provincial report card, the withdrawal is recorded on the OST. The percentage grade at the time of the withdrawal is recorded. Although this is unlikely to occur, a withdrawal for Grade 9 or 10 courses is not recorded on the OST.

Provincial Report Card

The standard Provincial Report Card, includes the following information:

- each course that the student is studying;
- the student's mark expressed as a percentage grade, along with the course median;
- number of classes missed and times late for class;

- the student's achievement in six learning skills;
- an anecdotal comment from each subject teacher with a focus on what students have learned, including significant strengths, and identified next steps.

The report card will include information with respect to a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) where appropriate. The report card will also indicate whether a course has been adapted to meet the needs of students who are learning English as a Second Language or need assistance with English Literacy Development.

Student progress is generally reported at mid-term or mid-semester and completion of the year. A Response Form is included for student and parent/guardian comment.

A summary of credits earned to date, including a breakdown of compulsory and optional elective credits, is provided at the end of the final report card of the year or semester.



Attendance

Regular attendance at school is critical for students' learning and achievement of course expectations. Where, in the Principal's judgement, a student's frequent absences from school are jeopardizing his or her successful completion of a course, staff will communicate with the student and parents/guardians to explain the potential consequences of the absences, including failure to gain credits, and to discuss steps that could be taken to improve student attendance.

Ontario Student Record

- The Ontario Student Record folder (OSR) is the official record for a student. The OSR is created when a student enters the Ontario school system and moves with the student from school to school. Every Ontario school keeps an OSR for each student enrolled.
- The OSR is created under the authority of the Education Act, and the contents of the OSR are protected under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The parents/guardians and the student may examine the contents of the OSR on request, with the assistance of the principal or designated administrator.
- The OSR folder contains achievement results, credits earned, and other information important to the education of the student.

Ontario Student Transcript

- The Ontario Student Transcript (OST) is a provincially standardized document which provides a comprehensive record of a student's achievement in secondary school. Copies are available to students upon request.
- The credits that a student has earned towards fulfillment of the requirements for the graduation diploma will be recorded on the OST, regardless of how or where the credits were earned.
- In Grades 9 and 10 only the successfully completed courses are recorded on the OST.
- In Grades 11 and 12 all withdrawals, repeats and successful courses are recorded on the OST.