



Important Stuff: Policies and 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.
- The Ontario Curriculum: Program Planning and Assessment, 2000, which outlines the requirements for student assessment, evaluation, and reporting.

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.

For more information: www.tdsb.on.ca > Programs > Special Education

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 contacting Jan Fukumoto, SEAC Liaison at jan.fukumoto@tdsb.on.ca.

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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 choose Quick Links - "Safe 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

is support where the expectations of a course are not modified. Students are provided assistance, e.g. extra time for test writing, a scribe, computer-assisted program supports etc. Students receiving an accommodated program follow the same course of study as their peers.

MODIFICATION

is support that changes the expectations of a course. If the expectations are modified significantly then a credit may not be possible at the secondary level. Students receiving a modified program may not be following the same course work as their peers or using the same textbooks. Sometimes students that require extensive modification to their programs benefit from access to highly specialized programs.



TDSB Super Council

The TDSB SuperCouncil provides students with a unique opportunity to participate through the political process in student governance. Not unlike the Student Council in most schools, the SuperCouncil is made up of young people that run for executive positions. These positions include: President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, Communications Officer and Conference Chair and also include two student trustees that sit as members of the Board. Each spring all secondary schools are asked to send three delegates to a SuperCouncil conference at which time they vote to determine the trustees and membership to the SuperCouncil executive. Once chosen the SuperCouncil meets four times per year and participate on one of four regional Education Office Student Councils which also meet several times throughout the year. Your local/regional education office council ideally has a representative from every secondary school and it has its own Staff Advisor. Each year these students work on things like the "Student Bill of Rights" and advise on Safe Schools, they produce the Student Voice, maintain a website, and plan and organize a broad range of initiatives. Want to know more?

Contact www.tdsb.on.ca choose "Students" - "Secondary" click on SuperCouncil Icon.



The Program Planning and Assessment, 2000 outlines the requirement for assessment and evaluation and reporting of student progress in all subjects under OSS. The TDSB guideline, *Fresh AER: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Secondary Schools, 2006* supports the shift in assessment practices resulting from the Ministry direction to ensure consistency and equity of opportunity for our students.

***“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.

Achievement Levels

The achievement levels are associated with percentage grades and are defined as follows:

80 to 100% Level 4: a very high to outstanding level of achievement, above the provincial standard

70 to 79% Level 3: a high level of achievement, at the provincial standard

60 to 69% Level 2: a moderate level of achievement, below but approaching the provincial standard

50 to 59% Level 1: a passable level of achievement, below the provincial standard

below 50%: insufficient achievement of the curriculum expectations, no credit granted

Important Stuff: Assessment & Evaluation

Assessment and Evaluation of Student Achievement

A) Definitions

Assessment is the collecting and analyzing of data and information about a learner's progress and guides efforts towards improvement.

Assessments provide the necessary information to:

- Diagnose and track student progress and achievement;
- Provide feedback;
- Develop students' ability to assess their own progress;
- Implement and improve instruction.

What is the purpose of assessment? The purpose of assessment is “for learning”. “*Assessment for learning*,” is also known as formative assessment. It is used to identify individual strengths and weaknesses compared to curriculum expectations, and provide descriptive feedback to help students reach these expectations.

Evaluation is the application of judgement to the data collected and its analysis to place a “value” on the learner's achievement.

Evaluations provide the necessary information to:

- Guide decisions about grading, student placement and certification;
- Provide achievement data;
- Communicate information for accountability and certification purposes.

What is the purpose of evaluation? “*Evaluation for grading*.” Evaluations, also known as ‘summative evaluations’, measure achievement, not progress and occur at the end of a unit of learning. They are represented by numerical percentages (%) to determine a student's final grade in the course.

B) Purpose of Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting

The following more specific purposes contribute to the overall goal of improved student learning:

- Clear directions for improvement
- Information to parents/guardians about student progress
- Students' skills in self- and peer- assessment
- Accommodate the needs of all students
- Placement decisions are bias-free
- Improve instruction and programs
- Guide decisions about grading, student placement
- Provide information for accountability purpose

Principles of assessment and evaluation:

Principle I: *Assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices are fair and equitable for all students.*

Principle II: *Assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices are based on the Ontario curriculum and Ministry policy documents.*

Principle III: *Assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices are clear, accurate, and timely.*

Principle IV: *Assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices require the partnership of students, parents/guardians, teachers, principals, and other partners in education.*

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, by distance education or he or she may be required to, or choose to, repeat the entire course.

Withdraw From a Course

If students in Grade 11 or 12 courses withdraw within five instructional days following the issue of the first 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 first 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 five learning skills;
- a comment by each subject teacher for each subject, including student strengths, areas for improvement, and suggested next steps, as appropriate.

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 break-down 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.