

## Assessment for Learning and as Learning Procedure

### RATIONALE:

Based on the fundamental principles of *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools* and so that assessment, evaluation and reporting are valid and reliable, teachers use practices and procedures that:

- provide ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific to success criteria, meaningful, and continuous 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.

### TERMINOLOGY:

*Parent:* The term "parent" throughout this Procedure is intended to be inclusive and represent parent, guardian and caregiver

*Assessment for Learning:* The ongoing process of gathering and interpreting evidence about learning for the purpose of guiding instruction and providing feedback to students.

*Assessment as Learning:* The process of developing and supporting students to understand their own thinking process. Students monitor their own learning, use assessment feedback from the teacher, self and peers to determine next steps and set individual learning goals.

*Descriptive Feedback:* Precise information provided to students by the teacher or peers (peer assessment). This information is specific to the students' achievement of learning goals. It is based on the success criteria and includes what students are doing well, what needs improvement and what specific steps they can take to improve.

*Evaluation:* The process of judging the quality of student work based on established criteria to identify how well students have achieved the curriculum expectations.

*Learning Goals:* Brief statements that describe for a student what he or she should know and be able to do by the end of a period of instruction, (e.g., a lesson, series of lessons, or subtask).

The goals represent subsets or clusters of knowledge and skills that the student must master to successfully achieve the overall curriculum expectations.

*Peer Assessment:* Assessment of a student's work or learning processes by classmates.

*Reporting:* The process of providing students and parents with clear, detailed and straightforward information regarding how well the student is progressing and achieving in relation to provincial learning expectations, curriculum expectations, and the learning skills/work habits required for effective learning.

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*Success Criteria:* Standards or specific descriptions of successful attainment of learning goals developed by teachers based on curriculum documents. Success criteria are discussed and agreed upon with students, and are used to determine to what degree a learning goal has been achieved. Criteria describe what success “looks like,” and allow the teacher and student to gather information about the quality of student learning.

### PROCEDURES:

#### 1.0 Responsibility

##### 1.1 The Principal promotes and supports:

- 1.1.1 continuous professional development for all teachers.
- 1.1.2 a collaborative learning culture based on shared knowledge.
- 1.1.3 a sense of collective responsibility for student outcomes.
- 1.1.4 all teachers to develop a shared understanding of the purposes of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment.
- 1.1.5 teachers to plan assessment concurrently and integrate it seamlessly with instruction.
- 1.1.6 teachers to share and clarify learning goals at the onset of learning.
- 1.1.7 teachers to co-construct or share and clarify success criteria.
- 1.1.8 teachers to use a variety of strategies to elicit evidence of learning and gather evidence of learning before, during and at or near the end of a period of instruction.
- 1.1.9 teachers to analyze and interpret evidence of learning, and use assessment information to guide instruction and plan next steps.
- 1.1.10 teachers to provide descriptive feedback to help students improve their learning and achieve learning goals.
- 1.1.11 teachers to teach and support students’ development of self and peer-assessment skills.
- 1.1.12 teachers to support students in developing their own learning goals.

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### 1.2 The teacher:

- 1.2.1 plans assessment concurrently with instruction.
- 1.2.2 integrates assessment seamlessly with instruction.
- 1.2.3 shares and clarifies learning goals at the onset of learning, ensuring common understanding for all students.
- 1.2.4 co-constructs or shares and clarifies success criteria at the onset of learning, ensuring common understanding for all students.
- 1.2.5 uses a variety of tasks to elicit evidence of student learning.
- 1.2.6 gathers information about student learning before, during and at or near the end of a period of instruction.
- 1.2.7 analyses and interprets evidence of learning and uses information gathered from evidence of learning to guide instruction and plan next steps.
- 1.2.8 provides descriptive feedback to help students improve their learning and achieve learning goals.
- 1.2.9 teaches and supports students' development of self and peer-assessment skills.
- 1.2.10 supports students in developing their own learning goals.

### 2.0 Process

- 2.1 Plan instruction and assessment collaboratively, whenever possible, with teachers of the same course/grade/division/department using the backwards design process. See Evidence of Learning Appendix 1 for details.
- 2.2 In planning, identify learning goals and frequent "checkpoints" when student achievement of the learning goals will be assessed. See Evidence of Learning Appendix 1 for details.
- 2.3 Gather information about student knowledge and skill prior to the onset of learning through diagnostic assessment activities and use this information in planning instruction and assessment.

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- 2.4 Share and clarify learning goals, ensuring common understanding for all students. See Appendix 1 for more details.
- 2.5 Co-construct or share and clarify success criteria, ensuring common understanding for all students. See Appendix 1 for more details
- 2.6 Plan instruction and a variety of student activities that will elicit evidence of achievement of the learning goals.
- 2.7 Use a variety of strategies at “checkpoints” in lessons to elicit evidence of student achievement of the learning goals.
- 2.8 Assess student achievement of the learning goals using the success criteria.
- 2.9 Use evidence of student learning gathered during learning to adapt instruction and provide descriptive feedback to students.
- 2.10 Provide students opportunities to improve their learning based on descriptive feedback from teachers, peers and self-assessments.
- 2.11 Through modeling, guided and explicit instruction teach students to peer and self-assess their achievement of the learning goals using the success criteria and to develop descriptive feedback based on that assessment.
- 2.12 Provide students descriptive feedback on their ability to peer, self-assess and give descriptive feedback
- 2.13 Through modeling, guided and explicit instruction teach students to develop their own learning goals to meet their individual learning needs.

## Appendix 1

### Background and Context

Traditionally there was a separation of instruction, learning, and assessment. Instruction was what the teacher did, learning was what the students did, and assessment was the way to see how well the students accomplished the learning. In an assessment *for* learning and assessment *as* learning environment, assessment is instruction and instruction is assessment. The activities students engage in to learn the curriculum are constructed with checkpoints that provide feedback to teachers on how well students are learning. Teachers use the information they gather to adjust instruction and provide descriptive feedback to students.

*Used with skill, assessment can motivate the unmotivated, restore the desire to learn, and encourage students to keep learning, and it can actually create, not just measure, increased achievement.*  
Stiggins et. al. (2006).

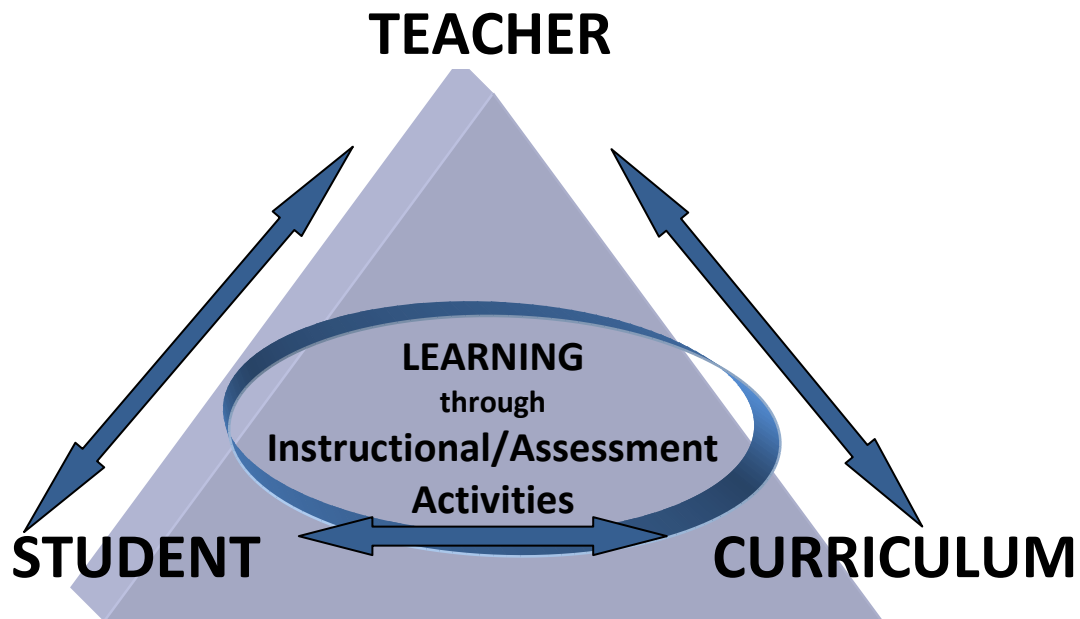
When using assessment *for* learning teachers:

- Plan assessment concurrently with instruction.
- Integrate assessment seamlessly with instruction.
- Share and clarify learning goals at the onset of learning, ensuring common understanding for all students;
- Co-construct or share and clarify success criteria at the onset of learning, ensuring common understanding for all students.
- Use a variety of tasks to elicit evidence of student learning.
- Gather information about student learning before, during and at or near the end of a period of instruction.
- Analyse and interpret evidence of learning.
- Use information gathered from evidence of learning to guide instruction and plan next steps.
- Provide descriptive feedback to help students improve their learning and achieve learning goals.
- Teach and support students' development of self and peer-assessment skills.
- Support students in developing their own learning goals.

The goal of assessment is to develop students as independent autonomous learners. To this end teachers plan and provide learning activities based on the curriculum. Through these activities students engage with the curriculum. The diagram below shows this learning relationship between the teacher, the student and the curriculum. The accompanying expanded diagram shows the interconnections assessment for and as learning in classrooms and schools today.

*"Teachers can work with other teachers to review student work. By working together, they establish agreement among themselves about what is expected and what can be learned from a particular assessment (task). Bringing a collective insight about what is expected to the exercise results in more reliable determinations of what students understand."*  
([Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth](#), p. 10)

## Appendix 1



**Learning**<sup>1</sup> is the curriculum (knowledge or skill) that a student acquires by instruction, study and/or experience.

Teachers develop the activities which provide the instruction, study and/or experience and gather the evidence to assess how well learning is happening. adapted from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/learning>

### STUDENT

Teachers start by knowing their students and how they learn. Who they are, where have they been in their learning and where they are going. Teachers know student learning preferences, interests, strengths, and needs and provide instructional activities utilizing this knowledge. Teachers help students learn these same things about themselves, developing their metacognition.

### CURRICULUM

The curriculum is what students need to know and be able to do. It comprises both the content standards, the expectations from the Ontario Curriculum Policy documents and the Learning Skills and Work Habits. Each curricula has at its heart big ideas, or enduring understandings. These are the concepts or skills, deeply understood or mastered which will be part of students' lives years after they leave the classroom.

### TEACHER

Teachers know their students. They understand the curriculum, the big ideas and why it is important for students to learn these. They know how to integrate explicit instruction and assessment of the learning skills and work habits into long range plans and daily instruction. Teachers employ a wide range of instructional and assessment strategies to best meet the needs of their students. Teachers work and learn collaboratively.

## Appendix 1

Knowing our students is essential for teachers to, “on a daily and hourly basis, make professional judgments that ensure effective implementation of assessment principles.”

Knowing our students allows teachers to make “decisions with respect to individual students and groups of students that have profound implications for them.”

Knowing our students helps teachers understand that “how students feel about themselves as learners and whether they enjoy learning and strive for excellence are closely related to their teachers’ professional skills.”

Knowing our students empowers teachers “both in differentiating instruction and assessment and in helping students understand how they can improve.”

Knowing our students is essential for teachers to “create environments in which students feel valued and confident and have the courage to take risks and make mistakes.”  
all quotations from  
*Growing Success*, page 8

## **References**

Stiggins, R.J., Arter, J.A., Chappuis, J., & Chappuis, S. (2006). *Classroom assessment for student learning: Doing it right – using it well*. Portland, OR: Assessment Training Institute.

Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education. (2006). *Rethinking classroom assessment with purpose in mind*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. Available at [www.wncp.ca](http://www.wncp.ca).