
Reporting Student Progress: Policy and Practice

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Introduction

Requirements for formal and informal reporting are based on ministerial orders and regulations authorized under the *School Act*. Schools must follow the specific requirements for reporting student progress as outlined in the policy.

This document, *Reporting Student Progress: Policy and Practice*, provides teachers and administrators with policy guidelines and suggested practices for reporting student progress in primary, middle and graduation years.

Policy

* For the remainder of this document, the term “parent” also refers to “guardian.”

Provincial regulations for reporting student progress require that parents or guardians* be provided with a minimum of:

- **three formal written report cards.** The formal written report must be on a form approved by the Minister or school board and must follow the requirements for the specific grade and program as stated in legislation and policy. One formal report shall be made at the end of the school year. Formal reports identify student progress and are placed in the Permanent Student Record file.
- **two informal reports each school year.** At least two informal reports must be provided to parents each school year. Schools determine how they will communicate informally with parents.

Formal Reports

Formal reports communicate to parents and students significant aspects of the students’ progress in the areas of intellectual, social, human and career development.

Performance Scale

The performance scale for Primary students indicates, in words or as a graph, the student’s level of performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes set out in the provincial curriculum for each subject and grade.

For Kindergarten, performance is described as one of the following:

- Approaching Expectations
- Meeting Expectations
- Exceeding Expectations

For Grades 1 to 3, performance is described as one of the following:

- Not Yet Meeting Expectations
- Approaching Expectations
- Meeting Expectations
- Exceeding Expectations

Use of the performance scale to show progress in language arts (including reading, writing, and speaking/listening), mathematics, social studies and science is mandatory. The performance scale may also be used to report progress in other areas, such as fine arts, personal planning, physical education, social responsibility and work habits.

Letter Grades

Criterion-referenced letter grades in Grades 4 to 12 indicate students' level of performance in relation to the prescribed learning outcomes set out in provincial curriculum guides for each subject or course and grade, and the learning outcomes for board authorized courses and independent directed studies. Letter grades will appear on report cards in Grades 4 and 5 unless the board chooses to communicate them to parents in another document. Letter grades must be included on report cards in Grades 6 to 12.

Reporting on Daily Physical Activity

Kindergarten to Grade 9

When students are meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of Daily Physical Activity, a comment of ***“Meeting requirement”*** will be made on term and final reports. A comment of ***“Not meeting requirement”*** will be made at any time when students are not meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of Daily Physical Activity. Where a “Not meeting requirement” comment is made, it is recommended that a further comment is added to outline a plan for the student to meet the requirement.

Grades 10 to 12

When students are meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of the Graduation Transitions Program, a comment of ***“Meeting requirement”*** will be made on term and final reports. A comment of ***“Not meeting requirement”*** will be made at any time when students are not meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of the Graduation Transitions Program. Where a “Not meeting requirement” comment is made, it is recommended that a further comment is added to outline a plan for the student to meet the requirement.

Upon successful attainment of the Graduation Transitions Program, ***“Requirement Met (RM)”*** will be recorded on the student's transcript.

Informal Reports

Each school year, teachers must provide parents with a minimum of two informal reports. In relation to curriculum, informal reports may describe:

- what the student is able to do
- the areas of learning that require further attention or development
- ways the teacher is supporting the student's learning needs

(and, where appropriate, ways the student or the parents might support the learning)

Informal reports are an important link between home and school and can take a variety of forms, such as:

- telephone calls
- interim reports (written or oral)
- conferences (parent-teacher, three-way, student-led, etc.)

Parents should have the opportunity to meet with teachers for a conference at least once each school year. A record of each informal report should be kept, noting the date, and type and topic(s) of discussion.

Reporting Guidelines

The [Student Progress Report Order](#) authorizes the requirements for reporting the progress of all Kindergarten to Grade 12 students in British Columbia.

Kindergarten to Grade 3

Formal reports for each student in Kindergarten to Grade 3 must include:

- a performance scale indicating the student's level of progress in relation to the prescribed learning outcomes in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies
- a performance scale to show progress in language arts in the specific areas of reading, writing, and speaking/listening

- separate reporting for social studies and science for at least two reports in each school year
- reporting in each of the specific areas of fine arts (dance, drama, music and visual arts) at least once in each school year
- written reporting comments that clearly describe, in relation to the learning outcomes:
 - what the student is able to do
 - areas in which the student requires further attention or development
 - ways of supporting the student in his or her learning
- written comments to describe student behaviour, including information on attitudes, work habits and effort
- a separate description of student social responsibility
- comments about student progress with reference to the expected development for students in a similar age range
- **Daily Physical Activity:** When students are meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of Daily Physical Activity, a comment of “*Meeting requirement*” will be made on term and final reports. A comment of “*Not meeting requirement*” will be made at any time when students are not meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of Daily Physical Activity. Where a “Not meeting requirement” comment is made, it is recommended that a further comment is added to outline a plan for the student to meet the requirement.

At the end of the school year, the following information must be placed in each student’s Permanent Student Record file:

- the final student progress report for the two most recent years

Grades 4 to 7

Formal reports for each student in Grades 4 to 7 must:

- provide Ministry-approved letter grades as set out in the Provincial Letter Grades Order to indicate the student’s level of performance as it relates to the learning outcomes for each subject or course and grade

- include written reporting comments that clearly describe, in relation to the learning outcomes:
 - what the student is able to do
 - areas in which the student requires further attention or development
 - ways of supporting the student in his or her learning
- include written comments that describe student behaviour, including information on attitudes, work habits, effort and social responsibility
- follow school board policy for communicating letter grades to parents of students in Grades 4 and 5
- **Daily Physical Activity:** When students are meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of Daily Physical Activity, a comment of “*Meeting requirement*” will be made on term and final reports. A comment of “*Not meeting requirement*” will be made at any time when students are not meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of Daily Physical Activity. Where a “Not meeting requirement” comment is made, it is recommended that a further comment is added to outline a plan for the student to meet the requirement.

At the end of the school year, the following information must be placed in each student’s Permanent Student Record file:

- the final student progress report for the two most recent years (including documentation to support the communication of Grade 4 and 5 letter grades if the board chooses to provide the letter grades in a document other than the student progress report)

Grades 8 to 12

Formal reports for each student in Grades 8 to 12 must:

- provide Ministry-approved letter grades as set out in the Provincial Letter Grades Order to indicate the student’s level of performance as it relates to the learning outcomes for each subject or course and grade
- include written reporting comments, where deemed appropriate, that describe, in relation to the learning outcomes:
 - what the student is able to do
 - areas in which the student requires further attention or development
 - ways of supporting the student in his or her learning

- describe student behaviour, including information on attitudes, work habits, effort and social responsibility
- provide percentages for Grades 10, 11 and 12 courses as outlined in the Provincial Letter Grades Order
- include the credits assigned toward meeting the general requirements for graduation as set out in:
 - Ministerial Order 205/95, [Graduation Requirements Order](#)
 - Ministerial Order 302/04, Graduation Program Order, and
 - Ministerial Order 320/04, British Columbia Adult Graduation Order
- **Daily Physical Activity (Grades 8 and 9):** When students are meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of Daily Physical Activity, a comment of ***“Meeting requirement”*** will be made on term and final reports. A comment of ***“Not meeting requirement”*** will be made at any time when students are not meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of Daily Physical Activity. Where a “Not meeting requirement” comment is made, it is recommended that a further comment is added to outline a plan for the student to meet the requirement.
- **Daily Physical Activity (Grades 10 to 12):** When students are meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of the Graduation Transitions Program, a comment of ***“Meeting requirement”*** will be made on term and final reports. A comment of ***“Not meeting requirement”*** will be made at any time when students are not meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of the Graduation Transitions Program. Where a “Not meeting requirement” comment is made, it is recommended that a further comment is added to outline a plan for the student to meet the requirement.

Upon successful attainment of the Graduation Transitions Program, ***“Requirement Met (RM)”*** will be recorded on the student’s transcript.

At the end of the school year, the following information must be placed in each student’s Permanent Student Record file:

- the final student progress report for the two most recent years
- or
- an official copy of the Transcript of Grades

Students with Special Needs

Where a student with special needs is expected to achieve or surpass the learning outcomes, performance scales, letter grades and regular reporting procedures will be used to indicate progress. However, instructional and assessment methods for some students with special needs may differ, and this will be reflected in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Where it is determined that a student with special needs is not capable of achieving the learning outcomes of provincial or Board Authority Authorized curriculum, and substantial course or program modification is necessary, specific individual goals and objectives will be established for the student in his or her IEP. Performance scales, letter grades, and structured written comments may be used to report the level of the student's success in achieving these modified goals and objectives that relate to each XSIIEP or LD (locally developed non-credit) course in which the student may be enrolled.

It may not be appropriate to provide letter grades to all students (i.e., students with limited awareness of their surroundings, students with fragile mental/physical health, students medically and cognitively/multiply challenged). This decision is best made by the school based team.

If students receive letter grades for the courses in which they are enrolled, then a School Completion Certificate AND a transcript can be produced. If no letter grades are assigned then only a School Completion Certificate is available.

Students on Modified Curricula

Students with special needs who are working toward individualized goals or objectives in an IEP may receive structured written comments or letter grades. The most appropriate form of reporting for the student should be determined by the School Based Team.

If letter grades are used, it should be stated in the body of the student progress report that the grade is given in relation to the individualized goals and objectives and not in relation to provincial or Board Authority Authorized learning outcomes. The specific IEP goals and objectives addressed in each course should be included in the body of the student progress report.

ESL Students

Where an ESL student is following the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum or a local program, regular reporting procedures, including performance scales, percentages and letter grades, are used to show progress. Where an ESL student is not following the learning outcomes, the written report must contain comments describing what the student can do, areas in which he or she requires further attention or development, and ways of supporting his or her learning.

Letter Grades and Descriptions

On student progress reports in Grades 4 to 12, teachers must use the approved letter grades as set out in the [Provincial Letter Grades Order](#).^{*} Students in the 1995 Graduation Program must have percentages accompanying letter grades for courses numbered 11 and 12. For students in the 2004 Graduation Program, percentages must accompany letter grades for courses numbered 10, 11 and 12.

The successful completion of a course numbered 10, 11 or 12 requires a minimum of a C- (50%).

* Unless the school board chooses to provide letter grades to parents of students in Grade 4 and 5 on a document other than a report card.

Percentages Associated with Letter Grades

A	86	100
B	73	85
C+	67	72
C	60	66
C-	50	59
F	0	49

The successful completion of a course numbered 10, 11 or 12 requires a minimum of a C-.

Teachers use the following letter grades in student progress reports in Grades 4 to 12.

- A The student demonstrates excellent or outstanding performance in relation to the learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- B The student demonstrates very good performance in relation to the learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- C+ The student demonstrates good performance in relation to the learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- C The student demonstrates satisfactory performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- C- The student demonstrates minimally acceptable performance in relation to the learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- I In Progress or Incomplete. The student, for a variety of reasons, is not demonstrating minimally acceptable performance in relation to the learning outcomes. An "I" letter grade may only be assigned in accordance with section 3 of the Provincial Letter Grades Order.
- F Failed or Failing. The student has not demonstrated, or is not demonstrating, minimally acceptable performance in relation to the learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade. The letter grade "F" may only be assigned if an "I" (In Progress) letter grade has been previously assigned for that course or subject and grade or if the "F" is assigned as a result of failing a provincially examinable course.
- W Withdrawal. According to the policy of the board, and upon request of the parent of the student or, when appropriate, the student, the principal, vice principal or director of instruction in charge of a school may grant permission to a student to withdraw from a course or subject.

The following may be used only on final reports in Grades 4 to 12:

SG	Standing Granted. Although completion of normal requirements is not possible, a sufficient level of performance has been attained to warrant, consistent with the best interests of the student, the granting of standing for the course or subject and grade. Standing Granted may be used in cases of serious illness, hospitalization, late entry or early leaving, but may only be granted by an adjudication process authorized by the principal, vice-principal or director of instruction in charge of the school. Standing Granted may not be used for the Graduation Transitions or for a course with a required Graduation Program Examination.
TS	Transfer Standing. May be granted by the principal, vice-principal, or director of instruction in charge of a school on the basis of an examination of records from an institution other than a school as defined in the <i>School Act</i> . Alternatively, the principal, vice-principal, or director of instruction in charge of a school may assign a letter grade on the basis of an examination of those records. Transfer Standing may not be used for the Graduation Transitions.
RM	Requirement Met. The student has met the learning outcomes set out in the “Program Guide for Graduation Transitions”. Requirement met may only be used for Graduation Transitions.

Letter Grade “I”

1. An “I” (In Progress or Incomplete) may be assigned at any time during the school year and is not restricted to term and formal reports.
2. Where an “I” (In Progress or Incomplete) is assigned, the student and the parent of the student must be informed and have an opportunity to consult with the teacher on the plan of action specified in subsection (3) of the Provincial Letter Grades Order.
3. Where an “I” (In Progress or Incomplete) is assigned, teachers must be prepared to identify what the problem is and specify a plan of action that is intended to help students achieve the learning outcomes.

4. An “I” (In Progress or Incomplete) may be communicated in a variety of ways, including a written plan, verbally by telephone, or in a direct meeting involving teacher, parents and students.
5. Where an “I” (In Progress or Incomplete) is assigned, the “I” letter grade must be converted to another letter grade:
 - a. when letter grades are recorded on the Permanent Student Record card,
 - b. before submission to the Ministry of Education for inclusion on that student’s transcript of grades, and
 - c. before a student’s records are transferred to another school, unless there is agreement between the principals of the two schools to defer the conversion of the “I” letter grade.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Ministry, school boards, school administrators and teachers have different, yet complementary, roles and responsibilities in reporting to parents.

It is the responsibility of the Ministry to:

- provide legislation and policy regarding reporting student progress and make this information available to parents
- provide relevant provincial curriculum that defines the expected learning outcomes for each subject or course
- provide descriptions of student performance through provincial learning assessment activities
- provide resources to assist school boards and districts and educators in their work to implement provincial policies
- provide optional standardized provincial report card forms
- evaluate the effectiveness of reporting requirements
- provide parents with information about what they can expect their children to be learning and how this learning will be reported to them

It is the responsibility of school boards to:

- ensure that provincial legislation and policy is followed in schools
- offer each school assistance in following reporting policy and procedures
- establish local policy for the communication of letter grades to parents of students in Grades 4 and 5
- approve the use of local report card forms that satisfy Ministry content requirements, if the provincial report card forms are not used
- monitor the effectiveness of new reporting practices and address deficiencies

It is the responsibility of school administrators to:

- ensure that teachers follow provincial legislation and policy
- use approved report card forms
- follow the procedures established by the school board for the communication of letter grades to parents of students in Grades 4 and 5
- assist teachers with reporting procedures and monitor parental satisfaction with reporting policies
- establish a school policy for withdrawal and transfer of students in Grades 8 to 12
- maintain complete and accurate records of reports as required by the *School Act*, regulations made under it, and ministerial orders
- determine the most appropriate way of ensuring that schools respond to parents' requests for information on the curriculum taught in schools

It is the responsibility of teachers to:

- follow provincial legislation and policy for reporting on student progress
- provide parents with complete, easily understood and accurate evaluations of their children's performance based on the provincial curriculum
- provide written reports to parents of students with special needs that follow the legislation, guidelines and procedures established in the policy related to students with special needs
- indicate, in relation to the expected learning outcomes as set out in the curriculum, what each student is able to do, areas in which the student requires further attention or development, and ways of supporting the student in his or her learning
- provide a description of each student's behaviour, including information on attitudes, work habits, effort and social responsibility
- indicate, where appropriate, how parents and students can support classroom learning
- follow the guidelines when assigning an "I"

Relevant Orders

[Student Progress Report Order \(PDF\)](#)

[Required Areas of Study in an Educational Program Order \[PDF\]](#)

[Provincial Letter Grades Order \[PDF\]](#)

[Educational Program Guide Order \[PDF\]](#)

[Individual Education Plan Order \[PDF\]](#)

[Special Needs Students Order \[PDF\]](#)

[Graduation Program Order \[PDF\]](#)

[Graduation Requirements Order \[PDF\]](#)

Practice

Evaluating Student Performance

Evaluation of student performance is based on standards. Standards are realistic expectations of what students need to know and be able to do as a result of their education. In British Columbia, prescribed “learning outcomes” outline what schools are required to teach and what students are expected to learn.

Based on learning outcomes and expected levels of performance, teachers set specific criteria to evaluate students’ learning. These criteria form the basis for evaluating and reporting student progress.

In the primary years, children’s progress is reported using a performance scale and written comments to show progress in relation to the expected learning outcomes. Progress is also reported in relation to the expected development for students in a similar age range.

In Grades 4 to 12, letter grades indicate student performance in relation to the learning outcomes for each subject or course and grade. For students in the 2004 Graduation Program performance in courses numbered 10, 11 and 12 are reported using letter grades **and** percentages. Students in the 1995 Graduation Program receive letter grades and percentages for courses numbered 11 and 12.

The *BC Performance Standards*, developed for voluntary use, are intended as a resource to support ongoing instruction and assessment. Performance standards describe levels of achievement in reading, writing, numeracy and social responsibility.

The *Primary Program: A Framework for Teaching* and provincial *Integrated Resource Packages* (IRPs) also contain information about student development in specific grade ranges.

Assessment and Evaluation

When teachers evaluate student performance, they consider:

- the learning outcomes
- the expected level or quality of student performance in achieving these outcomes

Assessment is the systematic gathering of information about what students know, are able to do and are working toward. Assessment should be continuous, collaborative, consultative and based on an agreed set of criteria.

Evaluation is a judgment about the quality of a response, product or performance, based on established criteria and standards.

Assessing, evaluating and reporting student achievement and growth are integral to learning. They can be positive, supportive experiences for students.

Assessment methods and tools include:

- observation
- student self-assessments
- daily practice assignments
- quizzes
- samples of student work
- pencil-and-paper tests
- holistic rating scales
- projects
- oral and written reports
- reviews of performance
- portfolio assessments

From information collected through assessment activities, teachers evaluate student performance. They use their professional expertise, knowledge about learning and experience with students, along with specific criteria, to make judgments about student performance in relation to learning outcomes.

Teacher assessment can help students redirect their efforts, improve performance and establish learning goals.

Evaluation may take different forms depending on the purpose.

- Criterion-referenced evaluation measures student performance in classrooms. Criteria are based on learning outcomes. When the program for a student with special needs is substantially modified, evaluation may be referenced to individual goals. These modifications are recorded in an IEP (Individual Education Plan).
- Norm-referenced evaluation may be used for large-scale system assessments.

Setting criteria with students and communicating it to parents:

- improves instruction and clarifies expectations for student performance
- creates more objective progress reports
- provides important information about students to better meet their learning needs
- increases student motivation
- provides structure and clarity
- informs students about what is expected of them and the standard for success before they begin the learning activity and, as a result, makes success accessible to all students
- provides students with opportunities for self-evaluation
- encourages parents to better assist their children
- builds appropriate expectations in the minds of parents and an understanding of their children's progress in relation to the subject, course and grade

Criterion-Referenced Evaluation

When criterion-referenced assessment is used, student performance is compared to established criteria rather than to the performance of other students.

Evaluation Referenced to Curriculum

Criteria are based on the learning outcomes for a particular subject and grade or course.

Criterion-referenced evaluation involves the following steps:

1. Choose learning outcomes from the curriculum.
2. Establish criteria, involving students in the process whenever possible.
3. Plan learning activities that will help students acquire the knowledge or skills outlined in the criteria.
4. Provide examples of the desired levels of performance.
5. Implement the learning activities.
6. Use various assessment methods based on the particular assignment and students.
7. Review assessment data and evaluate each student's level of performance or quality of work in relation to the criteria.
8. Report the results of evaluation to students and parents.

Evaluation Referenced to Individual Goals

Students with special needs whose learning outcomes are substantially modified must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that outlines their individual goals. When these students are not expected to achieve the learning outcomes outlined in the provincial curriculum or a local program, an evaluation system referenced to individual goals is used. To evaluate their learning, their performance is compared to these established individual goals. Such evaluation has the following characteristics:

- Specific individual standards or expectations are set for the students based on their ability and past accomplishments.

- The learning goals and expectations are set by teachers in consultation with parents and students, and are recorded in the student's IEP.
- Student performance is evaluated with reference to the goals, expectations and criteria recorded in the IEP.
- Structured written reports are provided to parents.
- Some students with special needs can achieve or exceed the prescribed learning outcomes stated in the provincial curriculum with adaptations to the instruction or assessment methods (e.g., tape-recording their answers). Their progress can be described using an evaluation system referenced to the provincial curriculum.

Norm-Referenced Evaluation

Norm-referenced evaluation compares one student's achievement to that of others. A norm-referenced evaluation system is not meant for classroom assessment because a classroom does not provide an appropriate reference group with which to compare an individual student's performance.

To use norm-referenced evaluation appropriately, a student's achievement must be compared with a reference group large enough to represent the population. Norm-referenced evaluation is used in:

- large-scale system analysis, such as the Canadian Test of Basic Skills
- determining ranking for scholarship competitions
- diagnosing students with learning difficulties using tests such as the WISC-R

Formal Reports

Kindergarten to Grade 3

Using the Performance Scale

For each of the three reporting terms, teachers use a variety of strategies to gather achievement information that indicates student level of performance relevant to learning outcomes. Assessment strategies may include observation, student self-assessment, daily practice assignments, quizzes, samples of student work, projects, tests, oral and written reports and portfolio assessments.

The following steps outline the process for determining student progress on a performance scale:

1. The teacher chooses learning outcomes that will be taught during the term.
2. The teacher develops criteria relevant to the learning outcomes.
3. The teacher models or provides examples of the desired levels of performance.
4. Students participate in learning activities to meet the required learning outcomes.
5. Students demonstrate their learning.
6. The teacher collects assessment data and evaluates student performance.
7. The teacher reviews assessment data and assigns a weighting to each learning activity. For example, a large project may be weighted differently than a worksheet.

Note: A more accurate reflection of student progress may be evident later in the term. Thus, averaging marks over the full term may not provide a true picture of the students' overall performance in relation to the learning outcomes.

8. The teacher describes student progress as “Approaching,” “Meeting,” or “Exceeding” expectations for Kindergarten students and “Not Yet Meeting,” “Approaching,” “Meeting,” or “Exceeding” expectations for students in Grades 1 to 3.

Grades 4 to 12

Assigning Letter Grades (Grades 4-12)

Letter grades indicate a student's level of performance in relation to learning outcomes. Letter grades may be assigned for an activity, a unit of study, a term or at the completion of a course or subject.

Assigning Letter Grades for an Activity or Unit

The Ministry of Education provides a full range of authorized letter grades for use. Teachers choose the appropriate letter grade for each student and for each grade level, subject or course.

1. Learning outcomes for the activity and unit are identified to make clear what the student is expected to know and be able to do. *The provincial curriculum outlines broad learning outcomes. From these, specific learning outcomes for the unit and learning activities are established by the teacher.*
2. Specific criteria for the unit and activity are established. *It is helpful for students to be involved in establishing the criteria. This way they understand what is expected of them.*
3. Different levels of performance or models are developed. *Students are more likely to be successful when they clearly understand the criteria and the level of performance expected.*
4. Students participate in learning activities to allow them to practise the skills and acquire the required knowledge. *Feedback is provided to help students continue their learning. Practice exercises help students meet the criteria and achieve the expected level of performance. Results from practice exercises support students' learning but should not contribute to the term or final letter grade.*
5. Students are given opportunities to demonstrate their learning. *Teachers may have students represent their learning in a variety of ways. Assessment data is collected from tests, teacher observations, student self-assessment, written assignments, portfolios and performance tasks.*
6. Student performance is evaluated in relation to the criteria. *Evaluation of each student's performance is based on the assessment data collected and is compared to the established criteria.*
7. The teacher assigns a letter grade for the activity or unit. *The letter grade indicates how well the criteria were met. Teachers often include written feedback to students along with a letter grade. In this way students gain the information necessary to continue their learning.*

<p>Example #1</p> <p>Criteria for an Interview</p> <p>The student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• open and close the interview• make eye contact• ask questions in an open-ended manner• paraphrase responses• ask probing questions• show appreciation to the person being interviewed	<p>A Grade 5 teacher planned a social studies unit on immigration. One of the learning outcomes selected from the provincial curriculum guide was the skill of interviewing. The students were to interview their families to determine immigration patterns within their class. The teacher and students established criteria for an effective interview.</p> <p>The teacher provided examples of interview techniques, had the students practise the techniques and gave them feedback on their performance. The students worked in pairs to role-play an interview to demonstrate these skills. The students understood the criteria their performance would be judged against.</p> <p>The evaluation of students' work for this activity was based on self, peer and teacher evaluations. The letter grades assigned for this activity were based on the teacher's judgment of the students' level of performance demonstrated in relation to the criteria. The teacher recorded the students' letter grades so that they could be included in their term marks.</p>
<p>Example #2</p> <p>Criteria for the Representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All main stages of the cycle are present.• The stages are represented in the correct order.• The beginning and end of the cycle are in the same place.• All stages of the cycle are clearly labeled.	<p>A Grade 4 class was studying the life cycle of the salmon and the factors that influence the cycle. One of the specific learning outcomes established by the teacher was for the students "to know and be able to represent the life cycle of the salmon."</p> <p>The students developed criteria by answering the question: "What will you need to include in your life cycle of the salmon to show its whole life?"</p> <p>The students' representations of the life cycle were evaluated in relation to the stated criteria and recorded to contribute to their term marks.</p>

Example #3**Criteria for Good
Written Directions**

- The title includes the word “directions”, “instructions” or a synonym.
- The first sentence indicates the purpose of the directions.
- The instructions list the materials needed to carry out the task.
- The instructions are numbered (1, 2) or lettered (A, B) sequentially.
- Each instruction is written in sentences directed to a single reader but without “you”. For example, “Turn the handle to the right”, not, “You turn the handle to the right”.
- The instructions are worded simply.
- Concrete physical descriptions (directions of movement, materials) are given where needed.
- The concluding sentence indicates that the task is complete.

In a secondary English course, the teacher selected learning outcomes from the provincial curriculum related to writing for different purposes and audiences. The students were to apply their skills by writing instructions such as those found in “how-to” manuals. The students were to demonstrate the ability to write clear, concise instructions that would enable accurate completion of a task. The teacher and students developed a set of criteria for evaluating their written instructions.

The teacher and students established the following performance scale:

ONE: (I)	These are not really directions. It is impossible to do the activity using the directions. Only one or two steps are given. There is no introductory or concluding sentence. A maximum of two of the criteria are met.
TWO: (C)	Three or four steps are given in sequence. Of the eight criteria, up to four are present.
THREE: (B)	There are five to seven criteria of good instructions present, including numbers seven and eight. The rough copy shows evidence of revision.
FOUR: (A)	Six to eight criteria of good instructions are present including numbers six and seven. The rough copy shows evidence of revision.

The students’ written assignments were evaluated in relation to the criteria and to the performance scale. The teacher incorporated the results into the letter grade for the term.

Assigning Letter Grades for a Term

Throughout the term, teachers record assessment and evaluation data regarding students' level of performance in relation to criteria established for the activities. The records may be in the form of teacher observations, work samples, tests, assignments and performance tasks. Prior to issuing report cards, the teacher reviews the evaluation data and judges each student's overall performance for that term.

Generally, when assigning letter grades for a term, the teacher:

1. determines the relative importance of each learning activity in relation to the learning outcomes for the term
2. collects and records the assessment and evaluation of the student's performance demonstrated through the learning activities
3. reviews the evaluations for the unit or term and assesses the importance (weighting) of each activity to decide the relative worth of each. Some activities may be worth more than others; for example, the marks from a short test may be worth less than the mark for a large project. Furthermore, because learning is cumulative, students may not demonstrate the same high level of performance at the beginning of the unit as they do near the end. The letter grade should represent the student's abilities in relation to the outcomes for the term. Thus, simply averaging marks may not provide a true picture of the student's abilities.
4. judges the student's overall performance in relation to the outcomes for the unit or term and decides whether the overall performance is:
 - outstanding
 - very good
 - good
 - satisfactory
 - minimally acceptable
 - progressing but needs more time to complete requirements
 - not demonstrating minimally acceptable performance
5. assigns Ministry-approved letter grades that correspond to the level of performance demonstrated by the student

Example #1

A Grade 5 teacher developed a unit on immigration using the following learning outcomes from the provincial curriculum. Students needed to acquire:

- knowledge of the different areas of the world from which people emigrated in the past
- knowledge of recent immigration patterns
- understanding of the various challenges people encountered settling in Canada

The teacher designed and implemented various learning activities with specific criteria attached. To assign letter grades for the term, each student's performance was reviewed.

For example, a particular student:

- demonstrated outstanding performance in her interviewing skills (The student was observed while conducting an interview and demonstrated all criteria at a high level of performance. The written assignment that accompanied the interview met all the required criteria at an exceptional level. It showed she was able to gather facts from an interview and use them effectively in written work.)
- demonstrated in her essay the ability to critically analyze and understand the concepts presented in the unit
- accurately completed a map to show immigration patterns

The teacher judged the student's performance for the term to be at an outstanding level. The Ministry letter grade descriptions were reviewed and the A most closely matched the student's overall performance.

Example #2

A secondary English teacher developed a unit that required students to write for different purposes and audiences. The activities included writing a set of instructions (as found in a manual), a letter to the editor and a résumé. The teacher worked with the students to develop specific criteria for each writing assignment.

The teacher designed various learning activities with the specific criteria attached so that the students understood the relationships between the purpose, audience and the form of the writing. To assign a letter grade for the term, each student's performance was reviewed. For example, a particular student:

- wrote a set of instructions, met most of the criteria and demonstrated a B performance
- wrote a letter to an editor, met five of the eight criteria for the activity and demonstrated a C performance
- completed the résumé, met six of nine criteria, but missed an important component and therefore demonstrated a C performance (This activity was the most complex.)

The teacher reviewed the evaluations of the student's performance on the assignments and determined that, in his professional judgment, the student's performance was meeting all the criteria at a reasonably high level. The teacher reviewed the Ministry letter grade descriptions and assigned a C+, the letter grade with the corresponding description that best matched the student's performance.

Assigning a Letter Grade as a Final Mark

At the end of the school year or at the completion of a course, teachers assign a letter grade to indicate each student's overall performance in the subject and grade or course. The final term work may be more heavily weighted as it indicates more accurately the performance of the student in relation to the outcomes. The final letter grade is not necessarily derived by averaging the term marks.

Reporting Graduation Transitions Assessment

The Graduation Transitions Program is a mandatory four-credit requirement for students following the 2004 Graduation Program.

Grades 10 to 12

Students begin working on their Graduation Transitions requirements under the guidance of their Planning 10 teacher.

When students are meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of the Graduation Transitions Program, a comment of ***“Meeting requirement”*** will be made on term and final reports. A comment of ***“Not meeting requirement”*** will be made at any time when students are not meeting the Prescribed Learning Outcomes of the Graduation Transitions Program. Where a “Not meeting requirement” comment is made, it is recommended that a further comment is added to outline a plan for the student to meet the requirement.

Upon successful attainment of the Graduation Transitions Program, ***“Requirement Met (RM)”*** will be recorded on the student's transcript.

Reporting Student Behaviour

The *School Act* requires that teachers provide parents with information regarding their children's behaviour. In formal reports, teachers provide written comments, including information about attitudes, work habits, effort and social responsibility.

Problematic behaviour is best reported to parents through written comments and conferences.

Written Reporting Comments

Written reporting comments provide parents with information about their children's growth and progress in school. Parents' perceptions of the validity of the progress report are often directly related to the quality of the written reporting comments. The following are some guidelines for writing clear comments.

- Write meaningful comments that refer specifically to the student's progress.
- Anticipate the questions parents may ask about their children's growth and progress.
- Recognize that parents vary widely in their educational experiences and familiarity with educational terms.
- Write directly to parents about what their children are able to do and areas that need development. For example, instead of "When writing, Jason often needs to be reminded to use correct punctuation," write "Jason needs to work on using punctuation correctly."
- Use only as many words as necessary to make the message clear.
- Use simple words and short sentences.
- Use plain language (see the suggestions provided).
- Use point form.
- Avoid unfamiliar expressions. For example, instead of "... able to decode words and use context clues" say "...able to figure out unfamiliar words by using clues from the letters and surrounding words."
- Provide an explanation in parentheses if a word may be unfamiliar to parents. For example, if you use "high-frequency spelling words," add (common words used often in writing).

Plain Language	
Instead of:	Try using:
a majority of	most
a number of	many, several
as a means to	for, to
assist, facilitate	help
communicate	talk, write, call
constitutes	is, forms, makes up
due to the fact	because, since
endeavor	try
exhibit a tendency	tend
factor	reason, cause
for the purpose of	for
in the course of	during
in the near future	soon
it will be necessary	I/we/you must

Suggested Words and Phrases

The following are suggested words and phrases to use in reports.

<p>To describe what students are able to do, use words such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows • can • continues to • works well • is practising • demonstrates • is able • is increasing • has completed 	<p>To write about ways that learning is being supported, use expressions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to continue to support • to develop a variety of strategies • to provide opportunities • the plan for ____ is • will continue to • his or her goals for continued growth in this area • my goals for _____ are • it would support _____'s if he or she
<p>To describe areas that require further attention, use phrases such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • needs adult help with • needs guidance from an adult • requires more time and practice • needs reminders to • avoids work that requires • finds _____ challenging • needs practice with • is a concern • requires ongoing support • is receiving help from the learning- assistance teacher in _____ 	<p>To describe areas that require further development, use expressions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is working toward • is developing • is beginning to • is continuing to • is increasing • is practicing • is becoming • provide experiences that interest him or her by • provide experiences that challenge him or her by • challenge and expand his or her • the success he or she experiences in ____ will be strengthened further by
<p>To report on student progress at the primary level, with reference to the expected development for students in a similar age range, use expressions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is typical for this age and grade • like many children of his or her age • development is characteristic of many children in this age and grade group • easily meets expectations • not comfortable working independently with the mathematics materials and ideas that one would expect of children in his or her age and grade range • fulfills the expectations for learning • will take longer to reach • is not meeting the expectation • at this time his or her achievement in _____ is not yet within the expectations of learning for this age and grade group. I am confident that with ongoing support and encouragement from home and school, he or she will meet the expectations in _____ 	<p>To report on student progress at the intermediate level, in terms of the student's level of performance as it relates to the learning outcomes for each subject or course and grade, use expressions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • easily meets the expectations of his or her grade and age group • met the learning outcomes • meeting the outcomes • below expectations for this grade level and requires assistance • completed _____ in a manner beyond what is typical of a Grade _____

Writing About What Students are Able to Do

Comments about what a student is able to do should note significant events in the student's growth, development, progress and learning. The following are excerpts from actual written reports.

Kindergarten to Grade 3

Emily

Emily is now able to:

- write simple sentences in her stories and in her journal
- use capitals and punctuation marks correctly (I have included a sample of her writing, as she has improved in this area.)
- read her own stories and selected passages to the class with more confidence
- recognize many words and self-correct while reading orally
- add and subtract numbers to 20

Jon

Jon's skill in mathematics has improved steadily since the last reporting period. For example, he now understands the value of numbers to 10. He can use objects to show numbers up to 10 and count up to 29. He is very proud of his learning.

Grades 4 to 7

Mike

Mike's cheerful, positive and enthusiastic attitude toward school and his strong academic skills have helped him make many friends and adjust quickly to his new school. In the short time Mike has been here, he has shown that he can:

- read aloud fluently and with expression (others enjoy listening to him read)
- understand what he reads (his summary of Gentle Ben was excellent)
- follow directions (he carefully read the written directions and made a model of a fur-trading fort)
- read maps, charts and graphs to locate information

Nikki

In science, Nikki developed a three-dimensional display and wrote a report about her concerns for the environment. Her work showed that she can:

- identify and explain issues
- locate and use information from many sources
- use graphs and charts accurately to display information
- express her opinions strongly in writing
- use a word processor to present her work in published form
- present her ideas artistically

Grades 8 to 12

Peter

Peter's analytical abilities have improved since the beginning of the year. His essays and projects this term show that he can analyze a contemporary Canadian political issue from several points of view and support his position on the issue. In a class debate, he stated his position, supported it with evidence and articulated it clearly to others.

Courtney

Courtney has demonstrated that she understands the science concepts covered this term. In her lab reports she clearly detailed the process of cellular regeneration and explained how the various components of the V-rebs cycle function.

Writing About Areas That Require Further Attention or Development

Parents need to know about areas in which their children may require further attention or development. Teachers should tell parents about areas of concern in a meeting or a phone call before sending them a written report. The written report should state concerns clearly, provide specific examples and describe methods to support improvement. Parents also need to know areas in which their children excel and those that require challenges to promote development. The following are excerpts from reports of this kind.

Kindergarten to Grade 3

Parents are reassured when written comments relate to what their child needs to learn and suggest ways to support their child's learning.

Parents want to know about their children's successes, accomplishments and growth in learning.

All parents want to know that their children are being challenged, even when the children are meeting or exceeding expectations. It is helpful for parents to see what their children will be learning next.

Heather

As we have discussed, I am concerned about Heather's reading. Most children in her age range are reading books with lots of print and only a few pictures. Heather is reading mainly picture books with four or five words on a page. Her understanding continues to be based largely on the illustrations.

Each day, I listen to Heather read orally for five to ten minutes, and since September I have regularly tape-recorded Heather's reading. I have noticed that she can recognize a greater number of words by sight. I will send the tape home so that you can hear how her reading has developed over the past few months.

At home, you could support Heather's reading development by reading to her each night and by encouraging her to read a passage of her choice to you.

Carlos

As discussed during our telephone conversations:

- I am concerned about Carlos' writing. I believe he has the ability to accomplish much more.
- Carlos writes in simple sentences. He is encouraged to expand his thoughts by including more detail in his stories.
- It appears easier for him to focus on the writing task if he selects his own topic.
- Writing for a specific audience is one way to encourage Carlos to put more effort into his writing. We are currently setting up pen pals with a neighbouring school, which will give him a real audience for his writing.
- He and I will keep you informed of his progress through his learning log, which he takes home once a week.

Katerin

Katerin has shown natural leadership qualities. I am challenging her to build on this strength and to take a leadership role in various school projects, such as introducing guest speakers and organizing the puppet show. She is very excited about playing the lead role in our spring drama production.

Grades 4 to 7

It is important to let parents know when their child recognizes an area requiring further attention and is determined to do something about it.

It is helpful for parents to know about the next step in their child's learning or development.

Lyla

I am sending Lyla's writing along with this report. For this term her samples of writing include a mystery story, a report on a novel (Amish Adventure), a letter to the prime minister and several paragraphs on topics covered in social studies and science. When Lyla and I reviewed her work, we noted the following:

- Her ability to write effectively for different purposes has improved (to tell a story, to explain, to summarize ideas).
- She needs to add more specific details and examples in her writing.
- She is now using a greater variety of sentences. (This was a goal that Lyla set last term.)
- She knows the correct format for business letters and how to write a paragraph that has one central idea.
- She needs to edit (check her work) more carefully for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Her goal for next term is to edit more carefully. She will meet with her peer editor before she hands in her work.

Kim

Kim is working to improve his spelling skills. In his daily work he misspells many high-frequency words (common words that people use a lot in writing, such as beautiful, because and remembered). He is trying hard to overcome problems in this area by keeping a small dictionary in his desk and learning to use the spell-checker on the word processor. We also work with spelling patterns each week.

Laura

Laura can read and understand stories and articles that are short and simple and have few new words. To help Laura read more advanced material, she is:

- receiving extra practice in figuring out unfamiliar words by strategies such as using context clues (using surrounding words to figure out the unfamiliar words), picture clues and phonics
- reading for different purposes, adjusting her speed when she reads to follow directions compared to when she scans (looks over rapidly) to locate specific information
- being challenged to infer (figure out what the author means)
- locating and using information from several different sources to complete research projects

*Grades 8 to 12***John**

When writing historical essays, John needs to support his ideas with accurate historical facts and details. When researching a topic, John needs to use more sources and to cite them in his work.

Yari

Yari effectively completed the planning and design phases of her technology projects, but must ensure that she completes all of the required parts of the product. I will have her develop checklists to help her keep track of what needs to be done.

Writing About Ways to Support Students' Learning

Setting goals is important. While some are set by teachers, others should be set by students. Parents are often included in this goal-setting process so that they can offer support at home for continued success at school.

Kindergarten to Grade 3

Teachers provide examples of student work to illustrate how the student has met the goals.

Jay

Jay is easily distracted. One of the goals Jay and I have set is for Jay to move to a space where he can work on his own when he finds it difficult to concentrate.

Jane

Here is a goal that Jane set for herself for next term: "I want to start to learn how to write instead of printing." I will support her interest in learning handwriting by setting time aside for handwriting practice. In addition to handwriting with the whole class, there is a handwriting centre in our classroom where Jane often works. Jane wants you to notice her handwriting in her journal, so I have included two samples with this report. One is from a month ago, and one is dated last week. We would like you to notice her growth in this short time.

Grades 4 to 7

Teachers provide information to parents about areas where a student requires further challenges and support.

Jeremy

Jeremy and I have discussed ways to improve the organization of his work. He will now keep a daily assignment book to record his homework assignments. This will help him remember deadlines, especially for assignments such as long-term research projects. Before he leaves class each day, I will check to see that he has his assignment book and has recorded homework assignments. You could support Jeremy's learning by making sure that he completes his homework and that he returns the assignment book each day.

Jessica

Jessica needs to memorize her addition and multiplication facts. To support this goal:

- I will give Jessica practice drills each day to improve her accuracy and speed
- Jessica will take a drill sheet home each night to practise
- you could assist her learning of the basic facts by using flash cards with her each night

Teachers describe students' levels of performance and indicate the goals for continued development.

Mark

In our three-way conference, we agreed to the following goals for Mark for next term in science:

- independently, Mark will use science materials to investigate science questions
- Mark will generate more than one hypothesis (a theory based on some evidence) when he does experiments

These goals will be supported by:

- my encouraging his independence during his experiments
- Mark asking his partner for help before asking the teacher
- Mark handing in his experiments with at least two hypotheses listed

Grades 8 to 12

Teachers explain ways in which students will be supported in reaching their goals.

Inder

Inder needs to improve the clarity and expression of his oral presentations. In order to help him achieve this goal, I have shown him ways to practise speaking clearly and with expression. Inder has agreed to use a tape recorder so that he can monitor his clarity and expression. I will listen to him practise his speech and provide suggestions for him to use in his next presentation.

Teachers organize conferences (parent- teacher, teacher-student, student-led, three-way) to communicate information about student progress.

Tara

When writing instructions for an electronics project, Tara's goal is to fully analyze the task and make sure that she has included all the important steps. Tara plans to research technical manuals to identify models she can adapt to her purpose. Tara will meet with me prior to her next project to review the model she has chosen.

Informal Reporting

Informal reporting is the ongoing communication between parents and teachers that occurs throughout the school year. Informal reports may include telephone conferences, interim reports, written communication, portfolio reviews and face-to-face conferences.

The *School Act* requires that teachers provide parents with two informal reports each school year. Teachers should keep a record of such communication, noting the date, the topic or focus of the informal report, a summary of the discussion and any follow-up action decided on.

Conferences

Conferences are an important exchange of information between home and school. Teachers should meet with parents at least once each school year to discuss their children's progress.

Teachers choose a conference that is best suited to the needs of parents, students and themselves. The conference might be:

- a parent-teacher conference in which they meet alone to discuss student progress
- a student-centered conference such as a student-led or three-way conference in which the student is actively involved

Conferences may be held before or after one of the formal reports. Student-Centered Conferences in the Assessment Handbook Series, published by the Ministry of Education (February 1994), provides additional information on student-led and three-way conferences.

Preparing for the Conference

Teachers send letters home inviting parents to attend the conference. The letters outline the conference times. Teachers often ask parents to fill in preliminary surveys and forms regarding specific areas they would like information about or topics they would like to discuss. Teachers often ask parents to provide additional information regarding their own observations of their children and their learning.

The conference can help teachers:

- understand parents' impressions and expectations of the school and the educational program
- obtain additional information about the children in their class
- encourage parents' understanding and support of the program
- communicate children's development and progress and suggest ways in which parents can support their children's learning
- strengthen the communication between home and school

The conference can help parents:

- better understand the school program
- increase their understanding of learning and assessment
- heighten their awareness of their children's abilities
- learn about ways in which they can support their children's growth, progress and learning
- participate in the reporting process

The conference can help students:

- join their parents and teachers in examining and reflecting on their learning
- demonstrate their skills and abilities
- participate in setting personal goals for future learning
- take responsibility for their learning through self-evaluation
- gain knowledge of themselves and enhance their self-esteem

Suggestions for a Successful Conference

Before the conference teachers should:

- set up the conference area in a way that promotes communication
- familiarize themselves with the child's history by reviewing background information and the student's permanent files
- determine the key area or areas for discussion
- prepare a conference form for record keeping, to focus the discussion, and to record follow-up

During the conference teachers should:

- welcome the parents
- establish the conference parameters and the role of each participant
- ask open-ended questions, listen closely, take notes and paraphrase parents' concerns
- avoid educational jargon
- be specific when illustrating what the child does or does not do
- keep the focus of the conference on the student
- conclude the meeting by briefly summarizing its highlights, planning follow-up actions and, if necessary, setting a date for another conference

After the conference teachers should:

- send a note home thanking parents for attending and asking them for feedback on the conference
- record specific information, concerns and actions discussed on a conference form
- file the conference form
- begin to implement any follow-up action required
- continue to communicate with parents in follow-up notes, conferences, or telephone calls

Promotion and Retention

Research on Promotion and Retention

The research on retention generally supports promotion with intervention over retention. The following is a synopsis of research on promotion and retention.

The achievement and adjustment of students who are retained tends to be no better than those of comparable children who are promoted.

Repeating a grade does not ensure that children will overcome the areas of deficiency.

Students who repeat the same material without new instructional strategies tend not to attain the same levels of competence as students who are promoted.

Retained students tend to have a more negative attitude toward school.

Students who are retained often develop problems in the areas of personal adjustment and socialization.

Students who have been retained are more likely to drop out of school.

Where students have been retained and show significant increases in achievement, there have been marked changes in instructional strategies.

In the primary years, students should not repeat a grade. In Grades 4 to 12, the decision to advance or repeat a grade or course will be made in the best interest of that student by the teachers, parents and the school principal. Many school districts have developed policies about promotion and retention.

Promotion

Most students achieve the prescribed learning outcomes each year and progress to the next grade or level. Where areas of concern remain at the end of the school year, these should be identified, so that the receiving teacher can make appropriate learning plans for individual students early in the next year.

Retention

Students generally take 13 years to graduate. However, under special circumstances, parents and teachers might find that retention is in the student's best interest. Retention affects the student socially, emotionally and educationally. Where a decision is made to retain a student, alternative materials and instructional strategies should be identified to address previous areas of difficulty.

Promoting with Intervention

As soon as a student begins to show signs of not meeting expectations, the teacher should clearly identify the problem and set out a plan of action to remedy it. When a student does not achieve expected learning outcomes in one or more areas by the end of a school year, but is promoted to the next grade, a concrete intervention strategy should be developed. The intervention plan should involve both the promoting teacher and the receiving teacher, in order to determine the best course of action to address the student's learning problem.

Where a student is identified as a student with special needs, policies and procedures are in place to provide him or her with an IEP (Individual Education Plan). In other cases, a plan for intervention is developed based on a diagnosis of the problem, including information about what has been done previously to assist the student.

Schools must structure learning environments that help students achieve expected learning outcomes. Intervention may also include programs offered in the community or workplace.

Assigning an “I” (In Progress or Incomplete)

The “I” designation allows students to continue working toward the learning outcomes without failing or repeating an entire year or course. An “I” may be assigned at any time during the school year to indicate a student is making progress, but requires additional time or assistance to meet the learning outcomes.

When teachers assign an “I”, they must outline a plan of action for the student. The plan will include areas that require further attention or development or specific requirements that must be fulfilled to meet the learning outcomes. (See Letter Grades “I” in this document).

An “I” assigned during the school year signals that the student’s work is not meeting expected standards. The plan of action informs them about the problem and identifies what needs to be done in order to address the problem.

The “I” must be converted to a letter grade for the permanent student record card and before submission to the Ministry of Education for inclusion on the student’s transcript of grades.

In secondary schools, the teacher who assigns the “I” is responsible for assessing the student’s progress to the completion of the subject or course and converting the “I” to another letter grade. Since a student may not be able to register in a subsequent course until the “I” has been converted, teachers should establish timelines for “I” completion that consider the school’s timetable and course registration requirements.

When the teacher who assigned the “I” is not available, the school principal will review the documentation accompanying the “I,” decide whether the requirements have been met, and convert the “I” to a letter grade.

An “I” will not appear on the final transcript of grades. A student may receive an “F” as a result of failing a provincially examinable course without having received an “I” in his or her school marks or if an “I” was previously assigned.

The following are examples of interventions to assist students in achieving learning outcomes:

Naomi

Naomi is a 10-year-old Grade 4 student. Naomi's Grade 4 teacher was concerned about her reading abilities. Naomi was able to read picture books independently, and with much individual support from the teacher she could read simple chapter books. Although she progressed through the year, she was still below the expected level for her age and grade. Naomi's parents were concerned that she might fall behind and be unable to catch up. They believed that repeating a grade might be the only answer.

Naomi's teacher referred her to the learning-assistance teacher for a formal assessment of her reading abilities. This assessment provided a profile of her strengths and weaknesses, which was used in developing an intervention plan.

In consultation with Naomi's parents, the teacher outlined a program for summer reading activities and suggested possible summer school programs. He consulted with the receiving teacher regarding the information he had gathered, and they discussed the possibility of referring Naomi for individual learning assistance for the following year. He and the receiving teacher developed a detailed summary of Naomi's strengths and weaknesses and used this to develop a plan to address Naomi's reading development in the Grade 5 classroom.

Eric

Eric is a 13-year-old student entering Grade 8. Eric's Grade 7 teacher was concerned because he was working below the expectations for the course and grade in mathematics, except in geometry. Eric had limited knowledge of basic facts and operations with whole numbers and was unable to add, subtract and multiply decimals and fractions. Prior to the December reporting period, the teacher set up a conference with Eric's mother to alert her to his difficulties and to inform her that Eric would receive an IP on his report card.

In the December report card, the teacher outlined Eric's goals over the coming term. She provided an outline of activities so that Eric's mother could help him at home (this was used for only a short time because the mother had to take on an additional job to support the family).

Eric was referred to the school's computer learning centre, where he worked with a computer program at his own pace to correct areas of deficiency. He was also assigned a peer tutor to help him practise his basic facts.

The combination of intervention strategies was only partly successful in correcting the areas in which Eric was having difficulty. By the end of the year his teacher felt confident in promoting him to Grade 8 as long as he continued to receive intervention. In consultation with the teachers at the junior high school, Eric received an "I" in mathematics, along with the requirement to attend summer school or complete appropriate units of distance education.

Jennifer

Jennifer is a 16-year-old Grade 11 student.

In the first few weeks of the course, Jennifer's chemistry teacher recognized that she was having serious difficulties. Jennifer did not hand in her labs, her in-class assignments showed that she had limited understanding of the course work, and she was absent for the unit test. In discussion with Jennifer and her parents, the teacher decided to give her an "I" on the first report rather than an "F", since Jennifer agreed to complete her labs and do a make-up test within a designated time. Jennifer met this obligation.

During the second term, the timeliness of Jennifer's work was still a problem. The teacher outlined all assignments and expectations and gave the list to Jennifer and her parents. Jennifer completed her assignments slowly but more carefully.

During the last term, it became evident that Jennifer was unlikely to be successful by the end of the school year. The teacher arranged a meeting with Jennifer's parents to set out the options. Jennifer and her parents requested that she receive an "I" at the end of the year and be given a list of requirements for completion before September 1. The parents agreed to monitor her work and employ a tutor to help her.

During the first week of September, the teacher reviewed Jennifer's work and found it incomplete. Jennifer's "I" was converted to an "F" and she repeated the course.

Resources

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