

Professional Judgement Matters

PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT MATTERS

ETFO Professional Judgement Guidelines for the Completion of the Elementary Provincial Report Card – Grades 1 to 8

(*Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, 2010*)

This document applies to the Elementary Provincial Report Card only.

The first Elementary Provincial Report Card is issued between January 20 and February 20. The second Elementary Provincial Report Card is issued at the end of the school year. Exact dates are set by individual school boards. The Elementary Provincial Report Card is designed to show a student's achievement at two points in the school year. The first provincial report card reflects the student's achievement from September to January/February for the school year. The second provincial report card reflects the student's achievement from January/February to June of the school year.

Professional judgement is an important concept for educators. It is defined in our central agreement. Section C. 2.5 of the Teacher/Occasional Teacher Central Agreement reads as follows:

“Professional Judgement” shall be defined as judgement that is informed by professional knowledge of curriculum expectations, context, evidence of learning, methods of instruction and assessment, and the criteria and standards that indicate success in student learning. In professional practice, judgement involves a purposeful and systematic thinking process that evolves in terms of accuracy and insight with ongoing reflection and self-correction.

Teachers should use their professional judgement when completing the reporting comments. The term “teachers’ professional judgement” is used consistently throughout the *Growing Success* document and is enshrined in our central agreement. This Professional Judgement Matters will support members in advocating for their professional judgement, protect against increased workload and ensure consistency from school to school across the province as the provincial report cards are completed.

As a teacher exercising your professional judgement, you should be prepared to provide rationale for the decisions you make.

The following guidelines for completing the Elementary Provincial Report Card are aligned with the *Growing Success* policy:

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Comments

It is in the writing of comments that teachers can most exercise their professional judgement. The term “personalized comments” does not mean that every student must have a different comment. A well-written and meaningful comment may apply to several students in the class.

Teachers are not required to completely fill the comment boxes; the comments should be based on quality, not quantity. Comments should follow the format of Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement. Teachers may use their professional judgement to make reference to particular strands in their comments. Comments should describe in overall terms what students know and can do.

Space is provided on the provincial report card for teachers to make anecdotal comments about students’ achievement of curriculum expectations in each of the subject areas taught. Teachers should focus on what students have learned, describe significant strengths and identify next steps for improvement. Teachers may make reference to the particular strands they are reporting on. Comments should describe in overall terms what students know and can do.

Comments may be written in full sentences or in point form. Comments should be entered in a font size that is clear and legible. ETFO would suggest a 12-point font.

Learning Skills and Work Habits

In most cases, the homeroom teacher will complete the Learning Skills and Work Habits section. In the space provided for anecdotal comments, the teacher will use her professional judgement to elaborate on the student’s demonstration of the skills and comment on “strengths” and “next steps for improvement.” Other teachers wishing to highlight some aspect of a student’s development of learning skills and work habits may comment in this space as well.

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Ontario Ministry Guidelines (*Growing Success, First Edition, 2010 and Growing Success: The Mathematics Addendum, Grades 1-8, 2020*)

The following table highlights the key expectations that all teachers must follow when completing the provincial report card.

Subject Area	Key Expectations
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four strands are reported on in January/February and four strands in June
French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers should fill in the letter grade/percentage mark for each strand that is part of the student's instructional program in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriate. If a particular strand is not part of the student's program during that reporting period, indicate this in the comments and leave the grade/mark column blank. • Teachers do not have to report on all four strands in both terms. • For Core, grades 1-3: Boards will make decisions about which strands to cover, if the program is offered in the board. If certain strands are not taught in grades 1-3, the teacher should leave the grade/mark column blank. An explanatory comment should be provided. • For Core and Extended, grades 4 to 8 and Immersion, grades 1 to 8: Teachers are expected to report on all four strands within the school year.
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be reported as one overall grade/mark, with supporting comments • The letter grade/percentage mark will best reflect the overall learning of the student in mathematics for each reporting period • When assigning a grade or mark, consideration should be given to the student's integrated learning across the strands taught in each reporting period • Comments will describe significant strengths demonstrated by the student and identify next steps for improvement; they may also describe growth in learning • When appropriate, teachers may make reference to particular strands in their comments
Science and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be reported on in January/February and in June • May indicate in the comments box which strands are being reported on within the subject • All of the strands must be accounted for in instruction, assessment, and evaluation by the end of the year
Social Studies (Grades 1 to 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be reported on in January/February and in June • May indicate in the comments box which strands are being reported on within the subject • All of the strands must be accounted for in instruction, assessment, and evaluation by the end of the year

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Subject Area	Key Expectations
History and Geography (Grades 7 and 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Teachers should complete percentage marks for history and/or geography in the column headed Report 1 or Report 2, as appropriateAchievement in both History and Geography must be reported at least once in the school year
Health and Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Both Health and Physical Education must be reported on in January/February and in June
The Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">At least three of the subjects are reported on in January/February and at least three subjects in JuneEach subject must be reported on at least onceThe French box should be checked if a particular Art subject is taught in French
Strands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">When achievement in a strand for any subject area is not reported for January/February or June, it should be noted in the comments that instruction was not provided for that strand, and the "NA" box for that strand should be checked

Special Education

The IEP must be created within the first 30 school days of the start of the student's placement and then reviewed and updated as appropriate for the January and June reporting periods.

If the student's expectations in the IEP are modified and vary from the expectations of the regular program for the grade, teachers must check the "IEP" box for that subject/strand on the report card. Teachers must include the following statement in the section "Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement:" "This (letter grade/percentage mark) is based on achievement of expectations in the IEP that vary from the Grade X expectations (and/or) are an (increase/decrease) in the (number and/or complexity) of curriculum expectations."

If the student's IEP requires only accommodations to support learning in a subject and/or strand, teachers will not check the "IEP" box. The letter grade or percentage mark is based on the regular grade expectations.

Student achievement in alternative program areas may be reported to parents by means of anecdotal comments noted in the provincial report cards or in an alternative format (e.g., in the evaluation section of the IEP). If a teacher is using an alternative format, it should accompany the provincial report card at the regular reporting times.

ESL/ELD

Teachers will check the ESL/ELD box on the provincial report cards to indicate that modifications have been made to grade level curriculum expectations to support the language learning needs of English language learners. The ESL/ELD boxes should be checked at the strand level.

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Rotary/Planning Time Teachers

For rotary/planning time teachers, the completion of the report card should not be the sole responsibility of the homeroom teacher. A collaborative process should be in place for all teachers who instruct a classroom to have the opportunity to include their marks and comments on the report card for the subjects they teach without the expectation being placed on the homeroom teacher.

Six-Week Rule

The six-week rule regarding report card completion applies to all three formal reporting periods. The Elementary Provincial Report Card would be completed for each student who has been enrolled in the school for more than six weeks within the reporting period. (See Section 3.2 of the Ontario Student Record (OSR) Guideline, 2000, page 8)

Kindergarten Reporting

See the Professional Judgement Matters Guidelines in the Professional Judgement section on the ETFO Website.

Additional Reporting

Teachers should not be asked to do any additional written reporting to parents (formal or informal) other than the progress report card and the two provincial report cards.

Interviews

There should be no requirement that teachers conduct formal interviews after all three reporting periods. Teachers will use their professional judgement to have meetings with parents if they have concerns with a child's learning outside of the regular formal interview timelines.

Related Resources about Professional Judgement

Here is the link to the [EduGAINS Frequently Asked Questions](#). This site provides helpful answers relating to the reporting process.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact staff in Professional Relations Services (PRS) at 416-962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836. See also ETFO's website – Advice for Members.