

Our Shared Belief

*We believe that we are called to use
fair, equitable, and transparent assessment and evaluation practices,
informed by our Christ-centred approach to professional judgment,
to create hope, engagement, and growth for all to realize their full potential.*

Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting Policy

The St. James Catholic Global Learning Centre assessment, evaluation and reporting policy contains guidelines which inform our assessment practices. The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. Information gathered through assessment helps teachers to determine students' strengths and weakness in their achievement of curriculum expectations in each subject. This information also serves to guide teachers in adapting curriculum and instructional approaches to students' needs and assessing the overall effectiveness of programs and classroom practices. In a Catholic context, this means that our practices recognize and affirm the dignity of all learners, encouraging and supporting them to reach their potential in order to optimize their achievement. This policy includes beliefs and actions of teachers and students, which ensure the fairest, most accurate assessment.

At St. James Catholic Global Learning Centre, the primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.

Assessment

What is assessment?

Assessment is the process of gathering information from a variety of sources that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations in a course.

A balanced assessment program includes a variety of assessment tools. Not all learners learn in the same manner and a multi-modal approach to assessment is key to optimizing learning success for all students. Planning for assessment is an essential part of instruction. Collection of data throughout the learning process allows responsive teaching and thus improvement of student learning.

The Seven Fundamental Principles

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

- are fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;
- support all students, including those with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction (English or French), and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;
- are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;
- are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;
- are ongoing, varied in nature, and administered over a period of time to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
- provide ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement;
- develop students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning.

(Growing Success 2010, p. 6)

Assessment for, as, and of learning are all a parts of effective assessment practice. The definitions, descriptions, and purposes of assessment for, as, and of learning are outlined in the table below.

The Purposes of Assessment, the Nature of Assessment for Different Purposes, and the Uses of Assessment Information

Purpose of Classroom Assessment	Nature of Assessment	Use of Information
<i>Assessment for learning</i>	<p>Diagnostic assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> occurs before instruction begins so teachers can determine students' readiness to learn new knowledge and skills, as well as obtain information about their interests and learning preferences. 	<p>The information gathered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is used by teachers and students to determine what students already know and can do with respect to the knowledge and skills identified in the overall and specific expectations, so teachers can plan instruction and assessment that are differentiated and personalized and work with students to set appropriate learning goals.
<p>"Assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there." (Assessment Reform Group, 2002, p. 2)</p>	<p>Formative assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> occurs frequently and in an ongoing manner during instruction, while students are still gaining knowledge and practising skills. 	<p>The information gathered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is used by teachers to monitor students' progress towards achieving the overall and specific expectations, so that teachers can provide timely and specific descriptive feedback to students, scaffold next steps, and differentiate instruction and assessment in response to student needs.
<i>Assessment as learning</i>	<p>Formative assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> occurs frequently and in an ongoing manner during instruction, with support, modelling, and guidance from the teacher. 	<p>The information gathered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is used by students to provide feedback to other students (peer assessment), monitor their own progress towards achieving their learning goals (self-assessment), make adjustments in their learning approaches, reflect on their learning, and set individual goals for learning.
<p>"Assessment as learning focuses on the explicit fostering of students' capacity over time to be their own best assessors, but teachers need to start by presenting and modelling external, structured opportunities for students to assess themselves." (Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, p. 42)</p>	<p>Summative assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> occurs at or near the end of a period of learning, and may be used to inform further instruction. 	<p>The information gathered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is used by the teacher to summarize learning at a given point in time. This summary is used to make judgements about the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria, to assign a value to represent that quality, and to support the communication of information about achievement to students themselves, parents, teachers, and others.
<i>Assessment of learning</i>		
<p>"Assessment of learning is the assessment that becomes public and results in statements or symbols about how well students are learning. It often contributes to pivotal decisions that will affect students' futures." (Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, p. 55)</p>		

(Growing Success 2010, p. 31)

Providing students with clear learning goals, success criteria and descriptive feedback are essential elements of effective assessment practice.

Learning goals developed from curriculum expectations are phrased in student-friendly language are provided for students to identify what students are expected to know and be able to do.

Success criteria are co-constructed with students to determine what skills and understandings are necessary for achievement of the learning goals. What is it we expect students to learn? How will we know they have learned it?

Timely, individualized, **descriptive feedback** is provided for students to help determine personalized goals and next steps and bridge the gap between understanding and attainment of learning goals. Descriptive feedback provides students with a description of their learning and helps students learn by providing them with precise information about what they are doing

well, what needs improvement, and what specific steps they can take to improve. According to Davies (2007, p. 2), descriptive feedback “enables the learner to adjust what he or she is doing in order to improve.”

Self-evaluation and **peer-evaluation** based on success criteria are also encouraged to help students actively participate in and reflect on their learning.

(Growing Success 2010, p. 33-34)

At St. James Catholic Global Learning Centre we are committed to:

- Using a variety of assessment tools to gather information about student learning throughout the period of instruction that are appropriate for all diverse learners
- Being responsive teachers by using assessment to inform instruction
- Sharing learning goals - explaining learning objectives so students may know what is expected and can more readily hit the intended target (post guiding question and/or goals and explain how it will be presented and assessed)
- Co-creating success criteria – students and teachers will collaborate and create success criteria – What do I need to do to be successful?
- Providing individualized descriptive feedback to assist students in setting goals and achieving success

Meeting the Needs of All Students

Our practices allow for the inclusion of students with special needs. Teachers are encouraged to use **differentiated instruction** as a regular practice. All students are given a variety of opportunities to learn in ways that support their strengths and learning styles, and allow them to demonstrate their understanding. In planning for inclusion, teachers differentiate **content, process, and product** to insure that all students can succeed.

For students with special education needs, assessment and evaluation are key components of programming, as the Education Act makes clear: “‘Special education program’ means, in respect of an exceptional pupil, an educational program that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil” (Education Act, S.1(1)).

A student’s **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** describes his or her educational program and any accommodations that may be required. The IEP specifies whether the student requires:

- accommodations only; or
- modified learning expectations, with the possibility of accommodations; or
- an alternative program, not derived from the curriculum expectations for a subject/grade or a course.

Accommodated - student is working at grade level, and benefits from changes in teaching, classroom/school environment, assessment methods

Modified – student is working outside their grade level curriculum expectations or at grade level with changes in the number and/or complexity of expectations

Alternative - Alternative learning expectations are developed to help students acquire knowledge and skills that are not represented in the Ontario curriculum expectations.

Existence of an Individual Education Plan is indicated on report cards for students who are on modified or accommodated programs. For a student with special education needs who requires modified or alternative expectations, assessment and evaluation of his or her achievement will be based on the modified curriculum expectations or alternative expectations outlined in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP). For a student with special education needs who requires accommodations, as described in his or her IEP, assessment and evaluation of achievement will be based on the appropriate subject/grade/course curriculum expectations and the achievement levels outlined in the curriculum documents.

(Growing Success 2010, p. 70-71).

English Language Learners:

When curriculum expectations are modified in order to meet the language-learning needs of English language learners (often referred to as ELLs), assessment and evaluation will be based on the documented modified expectations. This will be noted on the Elementary Progress Report Cards and the elementary provincial report cards, and will be explained to parents. Teachers, in collaboration with their principals, will determine the most effective way to document the modification of curriculum expectations for English language learners.

A variety of types of accommodations may be used to support English language learners as they develop English language proficiency. Modification of some or all of the curriculum expectations may be required to support English language learners, especially those who are in the early stages of learning English or those who have had limited prior schooling.

(Growing Success 2010, p. 76)

At St. James Catholic Global Learning Centre we are committed to:

- Offering a variety of instructional strategies
- Offering multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding
- Providing variety and student-choice in opportunities to demonstrate understanding
- Participating in the development and implementation of IEPs for students with special needs
- Providing the necessary supports for our ELLs

Reporting on Student Progress

What is evaluation?

Evaluation is the process of judging the quality of student learning on the basis of established performance standards and assigning a value to represent that quality.

THE ACHIEVEMENT CHART

The achievement chart is a standard province-wide guide. The chart provides a reference point and a framework in which to assess and evaluate student achievement using the four categories of knowledge and skills, as outlined below:

Knowledge and Understanding	subject-specific content acquired in each course (<i>knowledge</i>) and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (<i>understanding</i>)
Thinking	the use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes, as follows: planning skills, processing skills, and critical/creative thinking processes
Communication	the conveying of meaning through various forms
Application	the use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts

Levels of Achievement

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

Level 1 represents achievement that falls much below the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with limited effectiveness. Students must work at significantly improving learning in specific areas, as necessary, if they are to be successful in the next grade/course

Level 2 represents achievement that approaches the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with some effectiveness. Students performing at this level need to work on identified learning gaps to ensure future success.

Level 3 represents the provincial standard for achievement. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with considerable effectiveness. Parents of students achieving at level 3 can be confident that their children will be prepared for work in subsequent grades/courses.

Level 4 identifies achievement that surpasses the provincial standard. The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with a high degree of effectiveness. *However, achievement at level 4 does not mean that the student has achieved expectations beyond those specified for the grade/course.*

(Growing Success 2010, p. 18)

Determining a Report Card Grade

Teachers will take various considerations into account before making a decision about the grade to be entered on the report card. The teacher will consider all evidence collected through **observations, conversations, and student products**. The report card grade represents a student's achievement of overall curriculum expectations, as demonstrated to that point in time. Determining a report card grade will involve teachers' informed professional judgment and interpretation of evidence and should reflect the student's most *consistent* level of achievement, with special consideration given to more recent evidence.

Teachers will benefit from leadership by the principal to ensure that there is a common understanding among all staff about the process for determining the final grade. The principal will work with teachers to ensure common and equitable grading practices that follow ministry policy and board guidelines.

(Growing Success 2010, p. 38-39)

Comments are related to how the student has performed with respect to the learning goals. While guiding questions or part of the central idea may be included in the comment, the intent of the comment is meant to be personal indicating how the student is achieving with the content.

LEARNING SKILLS AND WORK HABITS

The six learning skills – **Responsibility, Organization, Independent Work, Collaboration, Initiative, and Self-regulation** – are not included when determining a student's grade, unless cited as a specific expectation of the Ontario curriculum. These skills are evaluated separately on the provincial report card using a four-point scale:

E-Excellent

G-Good

S-Satisfactory

N-Needs Improvement.

Considerations for IB:

In Kindergarten through Grade 5 report card comments for each term need to address the learner profile attributes, attitudes developed by students throughout the term. Learning skills is an appropriate section to comment on the growth of the IB learner profile.

Comments are personalized and related to the individual learner. Teachers also may find it useful to use the following key vocabulary learner profile attribute, central idea, action, transdisciplinary skills, international-mindedness, reflective practice, exploring, investigating, metacognition, natural curiosity, analyzing, making connections, building knowledge, global context etc.

In Grades 6-8 (MYP) comments may include approaches to learning. Additional criterion related IB rubrics are also used in the evaluation of MYP students.

For inquiry units that lend themselves to Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, Math, Physical Education and Health or Religion, comments specifically address how the student has demonstrated his/her understanding of the central idea. MYP teachers will include their unit of inquiry statement in place of the central idea as well as the global context where applicable.

At St. James Catholic Global Learning Centre we are committed to:

- Participating in common planning, marking and assessment practices across grade level and subject areas
- Commenting on all learner profile attributes throughout the year

Communication with Parents

We have a responsibility to communicate effectively and regularly with parents and guardians by providing them with meaningful information. This can be through formal communication such as student-led conferencing, portfolios, and report cards, as well as informal communication such as agenda books, newsletters, and phone calls.

Portfolios & Evidence of Learning

All students develop a portfolio. Portfolios are shared with parents during conference times. The aim of the portfolio is to demonstrate growth over time.

St. James Catholic Global Learning Centre - Student Portfolio requirements

✓	1 sample	Evidence of work in each of the 6 PYP units of inquiry (transdisciplinary evidence)	Total: 6
✓	1 sample	Student reflection of IB attitudes and/or learner profile attributes per inquiry unit (e.g. Inquiry Ticket, self-reflection etc.)	6
✓	1 sample	Evidence of learning task in mathematics per term	3
✓	1 sample	Written work per term	3
✓	1 sample	PM Benchmark per term (FDK-Grade 3), CASI per term (Grades 4-5)	3
✓	1 sample	Student choice: evidence of work from any subject area per term (students should provide some form of written reasoning for selection)	3

PYP Portfolios

Progress: Contents of the portfolio will contain evidence of work in PYP inquiry units (transdisciplinary evidence), reflection of IB attitudes and learner profile, and evidence of growth in other inquiry-based project work across the curriculum.

Product: At the end of the year students write a letter of introduction to next year's teacher with samples of work in inquiry units. Students choose their best work and show case it to their new teacher.

MYP Portfolios

Contents of portfolios will be kept in student binders to be assembled in a file prior to students sharing it with their parents. Contents are selected by the students and contain the following:

- ~ minimum of one sample and two reflections for each of the eight IB subject areas
- ~ samples may show evidence of growth or best work in the core subjects
- ~ evidence of self assessment using IB reflection sheets (and IB terminology, including profile)
- ~ evidence of goal setting and action plan
- ~ an opportunity for parental response

*Please note that some students may elect to utilize an electronic portfolio in lieu of hardcopy.

Students will share their portfolios with their parents the week following conferences. The portfolios will be returned to the homeroom teacher who will then review the parent response. At conference time, exemplars are displayed for parents and students to review while waiting. At the end of the year the goal sheets are passed to the next teacher (in each subject area). The portfolio contents stay with the students.

Student Led Conferencing

Student led conferences at St. James Catholic Global Learning Centre are an opportunity for students to share evidence of their learning. During conferences:

- Students take a lead role
- Portfolios are used to show evidence of learning
- Parents/Guardians actively participate in this process and give specific feedback

Role of students

- Students demonstrate their learning using appropriate terminology
- Celebrate their accomplishments and determine their goals and next steps

Role of teachers

- Teacher as facilitator
- Guide the use of portfolios
- Teach the students how to demonstrate their learning
- Provides opportunity for one on one dialogue with parent
- Designs opportunity for parents to understand how their child is achieving
- Revisits goal setting throughout the term

Role of parents/guardians

- Actively participate in the conference
- Provide feedback to students (or use response form)

Reporting Schedule

- Curriculum Night – 3rd or 4th week of school. We communicate to parents about the philosophy of the report card, assessment process, key learning goals, teacher expectations, and curriculum summaries.

Report cards are sent home at the end of the reporting period at these approximate times:

- 1st reporting period – Progress report mid-November
- 2nd reporting period – Report card early February
- 3rd reporting period – Report card 2 end of June

At St. James Catholic Global Learning Centre we are committed to:

- Timely communication with parents regarding the progress of their child(ren)
- Assisting students with the development of a portfolio including samples of work, assessment pieces and parental response.
- Providing portfolio selections from each subject area to the students teacher at the start of a new school year
- Using a variety of parent communication techniques (i.e. classroom webpages, classroom newsletters and calendars, inquiry tickets)

The Dufferin-Peel assessment, evaluation and reporting policy aligns with the following documents and resources:

- Teacher support document – Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2010
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>
- Teacher support document – Education Act, 1990
- Teacher support document – Individual Education Plan : Standards for Development, Program Planning, and Implementation 2000
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/iep/iep.pdf>
- Teacher support document - Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students With Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/panel/speced.pdf>
- Teacher support document - Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for all Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/LearningforAll2013.pdf>

- Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board support document – Assessment and Evaluation Policy, 2010
- International Baccalaureate PYP document: Making the PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education, 2007
- International Baccalaureate MYP subject area guides and personal project guide
- Ontario Ministry of Education documents and online tools – The Ontario Curriculum – Grades 1–12: Achievement Charts (Draft), 2004

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/achievement/charts1to12.pdf>