**Evaluation of Learning in the Elementary & Secondary Schools**

GOAL: To establish the framework in which the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board and its schools will fulfill their respective responsibilities under the Education Act with respect to the evaluation of learning of students in Elementary and Secondary Schools.

**Revision: Final Version for Consultation.**

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**A Glossary of Terms**

The following terms and their definitions are presented to assist the reader in the understanding of this policy document:

**Adapted Program**: Students on adapted programs are assessed using the same evalulative tools as their peers. An adapted program retains the learning outcomes of the prescribed curriculum, but adaptations are provided so the student can participate in the program. These adaptations can include alternate formats (e.g., Braille, books-on-tape), instructional strategies (e.g., use of interpreters, visual cues and aids) and assessment procedures (e.g. oral exams, additional time).

**Assessment**: The process of the gathering of data through a variety of means and the subsequent analysis in order to discover the progress and achievement of the student.

**Authentic Assessment**: The task to be performed for evaluation purposes involves assessing student achievement or performance in situations that closely match the experiences of the world outside the classroom.

**BSR**: Basic School Regulation (Régime Pédagogique)
**Competencies:** The Quebec Education Program defines a competency as a set of behaviours based on the effective mobilization and use of a range of resources.

**Compulsory Subjects:** Language of Instruction; Mathematics, Science and Technology; Second Language Instruction; Arts Education; Physical Education and Health Education; History and Citizenship Education; and Ethics & Religious Culture.

**Contexts:** Different kinds of settings or challenges related to an outcome. The situation that describes the environment in which performance is required. The identification of all the elements of the situation in which performance is required.

**Criteria:** Conditions that must be met for any desired outcome to be realized.

**Cross-Curricular Competencies:** The Quebec Education Program recognizes the need to develop intellectual, methodological, personal and social, and communication-related competencies in all students. Cross-curricular competencies are generally developed through learning and evaluation situations used to acquire subject-specific competencies. These competencies are called *cross-curricular* because they are of a generic nature and are used in various subject areas. By definition, they have greater scope than subject-time competencies, since they go beyond the boundaries of the subject areas.

**Cycle:** The Program of Study is divided into 5 cycles. Cycle 1 Elementary: year 1 and year 2, Cycle 2 Elementary: year 1 and year 2, Cycle 3 Elementary: year 1 and year 2, Cycle 1 Secondary: levels 1 & 2 and Cycle 2: levels 3, 4 and 5.

**End of Cycle Evaluation:** The evaluation that occurs at the completion of a two year cycle taking into account an extended series of learning tasks. It is intended to inform the student, the teacher and the parent about the degree of learning acquired by the student.

**Evaluation:** Evaluation is the process whereby a judgment is made on a student’s continuous learning on the basis of information gathered, analyzed and interpreted for the purpose of making pedagogical and administrative decisions. (*MELS- Policy on the Evaluation of Learning, 2003*).

**Formative Evaluation:** Continuous monitoring of, and meaningful feedback about, the students’ learning progress in support of and for learning.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A legal document which permits the modification and adaptation of a student’s program from the regular course of study.

**Judgement:** A professional opinion on the learning of a student or of a group of students.

**Learning Outcome:** A statement which describes the observable result that will indicate the attainment of the knowledge, skill, or attitude being measured.

**MELS:** Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport

**Modified Program:** A modified program has learning outcomes which are substantially different from the prescribed curriculum, and specifically selected to meet the student’s special needs. For example, a Grade 9 student in a modified math program could be focusing on functional computational skills in the context of handling money and personal budgeting. Or, in language arts, a Grade 5 student could be working on recognizing common signs and using the phone. In these examples, the learning outcomes are substantially different from those of the curriculum, for most other students. A student’s program may include some courses that are modified and others that are adapted.

**Objective:** A specific statement of intent which the student will be able to do as a result of learning.

**Peer Evaluation:** Students making observations about the performance of classmates.

**Portfolios:** A meaningful collection of student work that exhibits the student’s overall efforts, progress and achievement in one or more subject areas over a period of time. A portfolio documents a student’s best works and/or may include a variety of other kinds of student information/data.

**Process:** The intermediate steps a student takes in reaching the final performance or end product. Process includes all strategies, decisions, rough drafts, and rehearsals used in completing a given task.
Promotion: The transition of a student to a higher level from one cycle to the next or from one level of education (elementary) to the next (secondary).

QEP: Quebec Education Plan

Rubric: A set of scoring or marking guidelines. A rubric will state all the dimensions being assessed, contain a scale, describe the different levels of performances, list the criteria, and often include exemplars.

Self Evaluation: A student’s reflective practice in which observations are made about one’s own performance.

Standard of Performance: Level at which a specific performance is considered to be successful. This can be indicated by a score or qualitative description obtained on the basis of a predetermined explicit criterion.

1.0 Foundations of the Evaluation of Learning

The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board strives to promote success for all students through their active involvement in their own learning. This is achieved by providing opportunities for:

- The promotion of values that supports the rights and responsibilities of all partners in the teaching and evaluation process.
- Differentiated instruction and evaluation practices in classrooms.
- Students to demonstrate their learning in authentic contexts.
- The use of embedded authentic evaluation practices on an on-going basis.
- The implementation of evidenced-based evaluation techniques and new methods.

1.1 The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board believes that the purpose of evaluation is to advance student learning and to focus on the improvement of the teaching-learning process to support student success.

1.2 Assessment and evaluation are integral parts of the teaching-learning process and effective classroom practice. This process enables students to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and evaluation. In addition, this process informs and assists teachers in order that teaching may be adjusted for student success.

1.3 Assessment practices should be in authentic teaching-learning situations and in keeping with the conditions under which learning has occurred. Further, the assessment process must provide sufficient opportunities for students to demonstrate the competencies required by the program of studies.

1.4 Evaluation must be based upon the values of justice, equality and equity. Evaluation must be fair, coherent, rigorous, transparent and provide students with opportunities to demonstrate the acquisition of knowledge and competencies.

1.5 Evaluation is an integral part of the learning process and, as such, has the following orientations:

1.5.1 Evaluation must be an integral part of all aspects of the teaching and learning process.

1.5.2 Evaluation of learning must be based on the teacher’s professional judgment.

1.5.3 Evaluation of learning must respect differences.

1.5.4 Evaluation of learning must be consistent with the evaluation criteria delineated in the Quebec Education Plan (QEP).

1.5.5 Evaluation must allow the student to play an active role in evaluation activities, thereby increasing the students’ involvement in their own learning.
1.5.6 Evaluation of learning must contribute to improving the student’s quality of spoken and written language across the curriculum.

1.5.7 Evaluation of learning for the purposes of certification must be based upon the acquisition of the competencies as elaborated in the QEP.

1.5.8 Learning may be acquired in a variety of settings and in different ways. Recognition of prior learning experiences and achievements must be taken into account.

2.0 Responsibilities of the School Board

The evaluation of learning is the collaborative concern of students, parents, teachers and schools, the School Board and the Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), each within their scope of responsibility.

2.1 First and foremost, the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board supports the evaluation initiatives of the schools. The School Board supports the process of assessment and evaluation for progress in learning through school and classroom designed assessments.

2.2 Each year, after consultation with the schools, the School Board will determine the subjects and grade levels for the purposes of a common evaluation and develop the necessary instruments and processes for the evaluation. Such evaluation may occur at the end of each Elementary cycle, Secondary cycle 1, and the end of each year at Secondary, cycle 2.

2.2.1 In the event that the MELS has not mandated an examination, or the School Board has not prescribed a common evaluation process for a compulsory subject, each school will be responsible for an evaluation plan.

2.2.2 Evaluation at the end of cycle, or end of each year at secondary cycle 2, must be based on a representative collection of evidence that demonstrates the student’s degree of attainment of the competencies set out in the curriculum. Therefore, summative evaluation will be based upon the scales of competency levels as prescribed by the MELS. This evidence may include performance-based assessments and examinations.

2.2.3 In assuming its responsibility to account for student achievement, the School Board will undertake the regular collection and analysis of the performance data in order to promote school improvement.

2.3 The School Board will provide schools with professional and technical assistance in the professional development of teachers concerning the evaluation process and in the development of assessment instruments and/or practices.

2.4 The School Board will be responsible for ensuring that the school report reflects the competencies stated in the curriculum, unless otherwise mandated.

2.5 The School Board will provide a common computerized format for the school report.

2.6 Annually, the School Board will inform the public concerning the educational achievements and quality of its system.

2.7 The School Board will coordinate the necessary supports for schools to develop common assessment practices and standards. The School will ensure that the confidentiality of an individual student’s evaluation data is protected.

2.8 The School Board may authorize the use of various instruments to access student achievement.
3.0 **Responsibilities of the School**

3.1 Each school will be responsible for the evaluation of student achievement and the administration of examinations required by the MELS and by the School Board.

3.2 Annually, each school will establish the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement. This should include: the role of classroom assessment, a description of valid assessment practices, instruments and systems; the process for evaluating cross curricular competencies within each subject; a schedule for the evaluation of student learning, the criteria for grades/marks/scoring system; and the standards for promotion, retention and placement of students.

3.2.1 At the beginning of the school year, the school will inform students and parents of the modalities of evaluation.

3.3 The School may request the assistance of the School Board in the development of authentic assessments.

3.4 The School will use a variety of assessments tools to evaluate the student’s attainment of learning concomitant to the QEP, and if applicable, the student’s IEP.

3.5 At the end of each cycle, the School will be responsible for the summative evaluation of student learning including any assessment required by the School Board or the Ministère de l’éducation du loisir et du sport (MELS).

3.6 The School will ensure that the confidentiality of an individual student’s evaluation data is protected.

3.7 Annually, the school will inform its community of the educational achievements of its students.

4.0 **Responsibilities of the Principal**

4.1 On the recommendations of the teachers, the Principal will be responsible for approving the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement in keeping with the policies of the School Board, the Basic School Regulation, and subject to the examinations required by the MELS or the School Board.

4.2 The Principal, in collaboration with the staff, will monitor the development and application of standards within the subjects at each level and the evaluation of the competencies of the QEP.

4.3 The Principal, in collaboration with the staff, will be responsible for the annual review of the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student learning.

4.4 The Principal will be responsible for approving the rules governing the placement of students and their promotion based on the recommendations of the teachers. The Principal also informs the Governing Board of these rules.

4.5 After consultation with the student’s teachers, the placement of individual students will be the responsibility of the Principal. The Principal will arrange for consultations with students, teachers, non-teaching professionals and parents regarding the placement of individual students in specific cases.

4.6 The Principal will be responsible for the coordination of communication to the parents and to the students concerning student evaluation.

5.0 **Responsibilities of the Teachers**

5.1 The evaluation of student learning is a primary responsibility of the teachers. The teachers will be expected to use a variety of assessment techniques and instruments coherent with the instructional approaches used and appropriate for describing student learning. The evaluation of student learning must be in relation to the competencies identified in the QEP and if applicable, the student’s IEP.
5.2 The teachers will be expected to use formative assessment to support the evaluation of the learning process.

5.3 Assessment methods will be appropriate for, and compatible with, the purpose and the context of teaching and learning. The teachers will specify to their students the criteria and the expected outcomes pertaining to the evaluation of their learning in terms appropriate to the age of the students.

5.4 The students will be provided with opportunities to demonstrate the competencies of the QEP.

5.5 As the goal of assessment is to improve learning, constructive feedback is an essential element. The feedback should be descriptive and timely and should enable the students to set new goals for their learning.

5.6 The opportunity, and the time, for self-evaluation and goal-setting will be provided to the students.

5.7 The students participating in group projects will be evaluated based upon their individual contribution.

5.8 The summative procedures for judging student performance will be appropriate to the competencies required by the curriculum and will be consistently applied and monitored. Interpreting the results of the assessment should yield an accurate and informative representation of a student’s performance in relation to the objectives of instruction.

5.9 All learning activities may be used to formulate a teacher’s judgement of the achievement of a student. The final mark, however, shall not be determined by calculating the average of formative and summative results.

5.10 The end of cycle assessment should be representative of the results obtained throughout the evaluation process. The results/marks will be accorded by the teacher to indicate a student’s achievement of a standard, a rubric or a pre-determined outcome.

6.0 Evaluation of Students with Special Needs

The School Board will promote the goal of success for all by providing an opportunity for the recognition for different types of achievements. Assessment will be consistent with the student’s program of studies. The decision to differentiate and/or modify an assessment will be linked to the Individual Education Plan and in accordance with the QEP and the MELS certification guidelines.

6.1 Alternate forms of assessment may be used for students with learning difficulties provided that the assessment addresses the evaluation of the competencies in the QEP.

6.2 The adaptations or modifications of the evaluation must be defined in the IEP and communicated among the parties. The person responsible for certification of studies at the School Board and the head of the Direction de la sanction des études must reach an agreement regarding any other special measures designed to allow students to demonstrate their learning or to give their answers.

7.0 Placement, Promotion & Certification of Studies

7.1 The Principal is responsible for approving the rules governing the placement of students and their promotion based upon the proposal of the teachers and other members of the staff concerned.

7.2 The rules for promotion of students from elementary to secondary school are as follows:

Promotion from the elementary to the secondary school is based on the recommendation of the elementary school. It usually takes place after six years of elementary studies. However, promotion is compulsory after seven (7) years of elementary school. A student may be promoted after five years of elementary school if she/he demonstrates the attainment of end of cycle 3 outcomes taking into consideration the social and emotional maturity.
7.2.1 A student may be retained for the benefit of attaining the competencies required. Such retention shall be possible annually and only once during the elementary education.

7.3 The rules for promotion from the first to the second cycle at secondary will be determined by the student’s attainment of the cycle one competencies. This promotion is based upon the recommendations of the school cycle team. Students must meet the requirements for admission to a particular program(s) at cycle two of secondary.

7.3.1 In the second cycle of the secondary level, the promotion of a student to the next level shall be by subject in the case of a student taking the general education path or the applied general education path.

7.4 Placement in a work-oriented path, whether in pre-work training or in a semi-skilled training program, shall follow the admission rules outlined in the Basic School Regulation. The decision to place a student in either program will be made in the best interest of the student, and in collaboration with the school principal, the teachers, the non-teaching professionals, the parent(s) and the student.

7.5 The Principal will consult with the student’s teachers, the non-teaching professionals and the parents in determining the appropriate placement for the following year of a student who has not attained sufficient mastery of the competencies in the QEP.

7.6 The decision on the final placement of the student rests with the Principal of the school.

7.7 For those students enrolled in summer school in the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board and in other accredited schools, the results achieved in summer school will determine the placement for the following year.

7.8 For a secondary school diploma, the students must accumulate the required credits as stipulated in the Basic School Regulation (BSR).

7.9 Based on the school board recommendations, students in either program will receive a pre-work training or a semi-skilled trade certificate which will be awarded by the MELS.

8.0 **Reporting Practices and Procedures**

8.1 The School Board will provide a common computerized format for the school report card.

8.2 At least 8 communications per cycle, including 5 report cards and an end-of-cycle competency report if the student is at the elementary school level or in the first cycle of secondary school; or

   At least 4 communications per year, including 2 report cards and an end-of-year competency report if the student is at the preschool level or in the second cycle of secondary school.

8.3 The other forms of communications which address students’ academic performance, social development, work habits and attendance may be developed by an elementary and/or a secondary school after consultation with teacher council.

8.4 The school reports will be clear and easy to understand for parents and students and will include all the pertinent information required by the Basic School Regulation.

8.5 All evaluation criteria will be established before assessment and reporting.

8.6 In schools, the end-of-cycle or end-of-year competency report will indicate the student's level of attainment of the learning outcomes as contained in the Quebec Education Program (QEP).

8.7 The reporting of the students’ acquisition of cross-curricular competencies will be in conformity with the BSR.
9.0 Responsibilities of the Students

9.1 The students will take responsibility for their learning and progress by:

- Completing their assigned class work or homework so that they are prepared for assessment;
- Assessing their work using criteria related to the learning objectives;
- Incorporating the feedback and revising their work and goals in light of their self evaluation as well as input from the teachers and their peers;
- Investing the time and effort necessary to complete work within the assigned time to ensure satisfactory progress;
- Managing, where applicable, their portfolios in an organized manner;
- Being present at the appropriate time and place for examinations in which they are registered;
- Seeking clarification of their evaluation when necessary;
- Participating in student-led conferences and/or parent-teacher conferences.

10.0 Responsibilities of the Parents/Guardians

10.1 Parents/guardians are requested to support their son’s/daughter’s education by:

- Becoming actively involved, in and supportive, of his/her learning progress;
- Remaining informed about school policies, procedures and expectations;
- Monitoring evaluation results, praising good performance, and encouraging extra effort when necessary;
- Assisting him/her in setting realistic goals and expectations;
- Contacting the school and participating in student-led conferences and meetings upon request.
- Ensuring that vacations are not taken during scheduled examination periods.
- Providing an educational plan for students who are home schooled and presenting the student for required evaluations.

11.0 Implementation

11.1 This policy will take effect upon adoption by the Council of Commissioners.