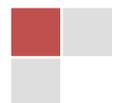2011

# Chignecto-Central Regional School Board Guidelines

*For Classroom Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting Policy/Procedures*

## Introduction

*These guidelines are meant to provide additional information to specific references for*

*Policy ES-G-04 and the related procedures only.*

**Guideline 1: Summative assessment evidence is used to determine level of achievement.**

**Research Review:**

**Summative assessment**, sometimes called **assessment of learning**, occurs at the end of important segments of student learning. It is used to summarize and communicate what students know and can do with respect to curriculum expectations at a specific point in time (Adapted from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010).

Normally information from **formative assessment** and practice...is not used to determine level of achievement; use only summative evidence (O'Connor, 2007, p. 95). Formative assessments are only considered in determining level of achievement if summative evidence is insufficient or not available. Formative or summative assessments are defined by the teacher and are reflected in the assessment plan. Assessments *for* learning are used to provide feedback to students and should not become a part of the calculation of the grade. For example, while quizzes have traditionally been used as summative assessments teachers may find them more suitable as formative assessment to help identify where students are in their learning and to guide further instruction. Surprise quizzes are unfair and unwarranted if used as summative scores.

Homework should not be used as summative evidence, it is for formative purposes. *Homework tasks designed to help students practise and consolidate new learning provide formative assessment information that both teachers and students can use to adjust instruction and focus learning (Ontario Ministry of Education 2009).*

The summative assignment scores are included in the tracking process and would be products for which students will be held accountable.

In short, **assessments *of* learning** serve as the primary sources of information for determining grades. Students not only need to have a clear understanding of the purpose for each assessment, but they also need to know the way in which the results will be used. Teachers should inform students which assessments are summative, and provide multiple and varied opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know, understand, and can do. In a case where a student has had difficulty with a certain summative assessment task, teachers may choose to review formative assessment evidence and use their professional judgement to adjust the summary grade (Adapted from Foothills School Division, 2009).

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- Are you able to articulate clearly which assessment pieces are formative and which are summative?
- Does the information from the **summative assessment** reflect the student's learning over time?
- Are your grades determined from **summative assessments** that are clearly linked to the learner outcomes?
- Do your **summative assessment** tasks align with the key understandings as defined by the teacher?
- Have you determined a purpose for each homework assignment?
- Have multiple and varied opportunities been provided for students to demonstrate what they know, understand, and can do?
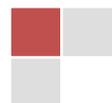
- How will you collect further evidence of understanding, if, in your professional opinion, a student's demonstration of learning does not reflect his/her actual level of understanding?
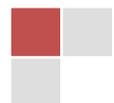
**Guideline 2**: **Not all scores need be included in a grade.**

**Research Review:**

When teachers select samples of student performance, they need to understand clearly the purpose of each task, and its relevance in the grading process. That is, they do not mark everything, nor do they include every mark in determining the [final] level of achievement. Teachers must seek an appropriate balance between the formative, instructional purposes of assessments of student learning, and the summative, evaluative purpose required in grading (Guskey& Bailey, 2001, p. 31). Thus, it is essential that there be a clear distinction between **assessment** *for* **learning** and **assessment** *of* **learning** tasks, since **assessment** *for* **learning** tasks are not usually included in a final grade (Adapted from Foothills School Division, 2009).

*Generally, since* **formative** *assessments represent "practices," they should not comprise part of a student's grade. That said, teachers sometimes find that they have insufficient* **summative** *evidence to be able to triangulate the data, especially when determining interim grades. In this case, it may be necessary to dip into the formative data bin for a third piece of data (Cooper, 2010).*

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- Should all **summative** student work find its way into report card grades?
- How do you determine which **summative assessments** contribute to the final grade?
- How do you determine the number of samples of student performance required to assess a key understanding?

**Guideline 3: Assessment planning must be in place.**

**Research Review:**

At the beginning of each unit, identify the curriculum outcomes that will be addressed during the period of instruction. Identify the key understandings that emerge from these outcomes. Determine appropriate assessment of those understandings. The **assessments of learning** (summative) will provide evidence of the extent to which students have achieved the targeted understandings. Those summative assessments need to be identified first, and then the smaller, enabling "practice" **assessments for learning** (formative) can be planned as building blocks toward them. Finally, plan learning experiences and instruction that make such understanding possible (Adapted from the Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009).

**\*Three Stages of Assessment Planning**:

| Stage 1- Desired Results |
|---|
| Curriculum Outcomes: <br> &bull; *What curriculum outcomes will this plan address?* |
| **Stage 2- Assessment Evidence-Includes Both Formative and Summative** |
| Valid, reliable and sufficient measures of the desired results: <br><br> &bull; *Through what authentic performance task(s) will students demonstrate the desired understandings?* <br><br> &bull; *By what criteria will "performance of understanding" be judged?* <br><br> &bull; *Through what other evidence (i.e. quizzes, tests, observations, homework, and journals) will students demonstrate achievement of the desired results?* |
| **Stage 3- Learning Plan** |
| Explicit Instruction: <br> *What learning experiences and instruction will enable students to achieve the desired results?* <br> ***How will the plan:*** <br><br> &bull; *Help the students know what is expected?* <br><br> &bull; *Hook all students and hold their interest?* <br><br> &bull; *Provide opportunities to rethink and revise their understandings and work?* <br><br> &bull; *Allow students to evaluate their work and its implications?* <br><br> &bull; *Be tailored to individual needs and abilities of learners?* <br><br> &bull; *Be designed to maximize initial and sustained engagement?* |

\*Template adapted from *Understanding by Design- Expanded 2$^{nd}$ Edition* (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005).
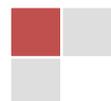
**Considerations for Implementation:**

*Guiding Questions*

- How do we start with outcomes, and:
    - organize them into clusters/ units?

    - determine questions that will anchor students to learning?

    - decide which skills are needed to achieve key understandings?

- How will the acceptable evidence be collected-**formative** and **summative**?

- How do we then decide the sequence of activities/learning experiences that will lead to desired results? (Designing the learning plan)

- Does the plan allow for equitable and multiple opportunities to demonstrate their achievement?
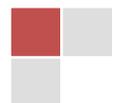
**Guideline 4: Clearly communicate the purpose and expectations of an assignment, the criteria for evaluating the work, and the weighting (if appropriate), to the student when it is assigned.**

**Research Review:**

*Before students undertake a piece of work that will be assessed, they need to know two things: the criteria to be assessed and the indicators that will be used to assess the quality of student performance, for each criterion. In student words, they need to know "what are you looking for, and what do I have to do to get a Level 4/Excellent?"*

*Gone are the days when students achieved high marks by guessing what the teacher was looking for. Criterion-referenced assessments must include clearly articulated statements about quality that are communicated to students before they begin work on a task. These statements take several forms, including rubric checklists, and exemplars (Adapted from Cooper, 2010).*

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- How will we know students understand on what and how they are being evaluated?
- Are students involved with the construction of criteria?
- Do students understand the weighting?

**Guideline 5: Ensure a system is in place in the classroom for completion of assignments.**

**Research Review:**

*Once we have assigned an engaging task and given a process timeline to students and in some cases to parents, we need to make frequent checks to determine all students are managing their time effectively. For example, this may be accomplished in a number of ways:*

1. *While students are working, the teacher conducts a visual check.*

2. *The teacher visually checks a representative sample of students.*

   *The practice of checking a representative sample of students is essential from the standpoint of manageability. At Checkpoint 1, the teacher must check on those students who are least likely to have identified their inquiry question. When teachers conduct what may appear to the class as random checks as a routine part of their classroom practice, students are kept on their toes. At Checkpoint 2, the teacher checks in with another sample of students. This sample may include those students from Checkpoint 1 who were not ready. Once again, the message to students is that you are a step ahead of them. And when someone blurts out, "You're always picking on me," simply reply, "No, I'm just providing you with support so you don't fall behind."*

3. *Provide plenty of in-class time to work on essential tasks*

   *Perhaps the simplest and most effective strategy for avoiding students' incompletion of major tasks is to have them do a major portion of the work during class time in order to be closely monitored by the teacher. This seems a simple solution, but it's one that, in my experience, is rarely used.*

   *If we consider for a moment the range of problems that might be solved by devoting a significant portion of class time to having students work on essential assessment tasks, I believe all teachers would be willing, at the very least, to give it a shot. Consider the following advantages:*

   o *The teacher is able to monitor all students' progress on assigned tasks.*

   o *The teacher is able to intervene early with students who are habitually late in submitting work.*

   o *The potential for plagiarism is significantly reduced when the teacher is monitoring the work.*
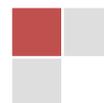
o *The dilemma of missing tasks is avoided.*

o *The opportunities for formative assessment-informal feedback while work is in progress-are dramatically increased.*

o *The opportunities to involve students in self- and peer assessment are dramatically increased, thereby increasing student understanding of what is expected…. "*

*(Cooper, 2010)*

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- Devise a system wherein all staff work together to ensure all students complete their learning requirements (School-based support system).

- Communicate clearly the expectations for completion of assignments to students.

- Endeavour to include regular conference opportunities to meet with students who may have difficulties completing the assigned learning.

- **Assign zero as a placeholder** for missing work in the PowerTeacher Gradebook, which can be overridden upon completion of the assignment (See Guideline 9).
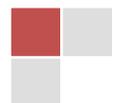
**Guideline 6:  Social development/work habits are reported separately from academic evidence.**

**Research Review:**

In an outcomes-based accountability system, achievement alone should be the basis for grades. If behaviour or effort is to be rated, it must be reported separately (Trumbull, quoted in O'Connor, 2002, p. 85). When attendance, behaviour, attitude, and late assignments, for example, are also included in the calculation of grades, it is impossible to ascertain a pure level of performance. Reporting achievement separately from behaviours means stakeholders will know that the grade represents academic achievement only. Student achievement should be measured strictly against the *Nova Scotia Public Schools Program* (Adapted from Foothills Division, 2009).

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- Separate academic evidence of achievement from social development/work habits in the PowerTeacher Gradebook.

- Involve students in authentic ways to monitor their actions as responsible learners and identify areas for improvement/growth.

- Use **assessment *for* learning** activities to provide feedback to students so  appropriate adjustments can be made.

- Apply logical consequences to support change in behaviour, rather than penalizing the student and distorting the level of achievement.

- Communicate social development/work habits in the Learner Profile/ Work Habits section of the Provincial Report Card Grades 1-12.
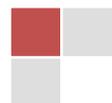
**Guideline 7: Ensure that the most recent evidence of achievement is also the most accurate. The value of using most recent evidence is dependent upon the construction of assessments that revisit key essential learnings.**

**Research Review:**

If students demonstrate that past assessment information no longer accurately reflects their learning, out-dated information must be discarded and replaced by the new information. Continuing to rely on past assessment data miscommunicates student learning (Stiggins, 2001, p. 140). The focus for our grading practices should acknowledge the continuous development of learning by monitoring consistency in student achievement. When consistency of learning is not apparent, the emphasis in the grading process should reflect the use of the most recent evidence to determine level of achievement. In the case of knowledge and skills that are cumulative or repetitive, teachers need to look particularly closely at the most recent information in order to determine accurate grades (Foothills School Division, 2009).

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- Provide several opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the learner outcomes.

- Provide timely feedback so the most recent evidence of achievement is likely the most accurate.
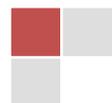
**Guideline 8: Level of achievement is assessed independently of group work performances.**

**Research Review:**

Cooperative learning is an effective teaching strategy and group work can also be used to teach life skills such as co-operation, responsibility, ownership, and the value of team work. These group process criteria must be given to students at the beginning of the learning task so members are aware of team responsibilities from the beginning (Adapted from Foothills School Division, 2009).

Group work provides students with opportunities to develop and practise skills in peer and self-assessment. This gives teachers opportunities to model and provide instruction related to applying success criteria, providing descriptive feedback, and developing collaborative learning skills. Teachers and students can use assessment information obtained in group situations to monitor progress towards learning goals/outcomes and to adjust the focus of instruction and learning. Assignments for evaluation may involve group projects as long as each student's work within the group project is evaluated independently and assigned an individual grade, as opposed to a common group grade (Adapted from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010).

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- Do the criteria being used reflect individual student achievement in relation to the curriculum outcomes?

- Do the criteria being used reflect individual student achievement in relation to group process skills?

- Is individual accountability structured within the cooperative group?

- Are students aware of the criteria they will be assessed on at the individual level?

**Guideline 9: School-wide and classroom systems are to be in place for late and missed assignments, tests and quizzes.**

**Research Review:**

**The use of zero as a grade misrepresents level of achievement.**

There are strong and often divergent opinions on the issue of how to deal with late and missed assignments, tests and quizzes. Many stakeholders, including many parents and students, believe marks should be deducted when assignments are late and a zero should be assigned when a student does not submit an assignment. These stakeholders are of the opinion that there should be clear boundaries on student behaviour and known consequences for not submitting assignments for evaluation or for submitting them late. Proponents of this view believe unless students face academic consequences for non-performance in school, they will not learn to be accountable to themselves and others and will not be prepared to meet the requirements of employers or of postsecondary educational institutions. They also believe a lack of consequences for non-performance is unfair to students who meet known requirements and constitutes an inequitable approach.

On the other hand, many experts in the field of assessment and evaluation discourage deducting marks or giving zeros for late and missed assignments, arguing such measures do not make students change their behaviour or help them succeed in the long run. They believe success is the best way to breed more success, punitive measures such as deducting marks only serve to discourage students and promote failure. It is more appropriate and more productive to focus on preventive measures. These experts are also concerned because every assignment – whether submitted on time or late – provides evidence of learning, deducting marks for late assignments could misrepresent the student's true level of achievement. They believe lateness and failure to submit assignments are most appropriately reported – and addressed – as issues relating to the development of learning skills and work habits. Supporting non-performing students by helping them develop these skills and habits, rather than using punitive measures, is a matter of meeting individual students' needs and should not be considered a form of unwarranted "special treatment". The professional judgement of the teacher, acting within the policies and guidelines established by the Department of Education and Board, is critical in determining the strategy that will most benefit student learning. (Adapted from the Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010)

If the grade is to represent how well students have learned, mastered, established learning outcomes, or achieved specified learning goals, then the practice of assigning zeros clearly misses the mark (Guskey, 2004, p. 35).

Regrettably, zeros are sometimes used as a type of punishment for behavioral infractions such as cheating, tardiness, or incompletion of the work. Zeros are not even related to learning or achievement but to non-academic factors like behaviour, respect, punctuality, etc (O'Connor, 2002,
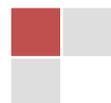
p. 151). Some may believe the punishment of a zero is justified and deserved, but no studies support the use of zeros or low grades as effective punishments (Guskey, 2004, p. 144). Some teachers may hope assigning a zero when students fail to submit work will lead to more responsible action in the future. A zero in a record renders a grade ineffective communication, as well as ineffective in creating responsibility for [students'] own learning (O'Connor, 2002) (Adapted from Foothills School Division, 2009).

**In cases of students missing assignments, tests and quizzes, a *zero* can be used as a placeholder in the PowerTeacher Gradebook to be overridden when the student passes in the missing assignment. There must be mechanisms in place supporting students and making it possible for them to complete the missing work. (*See "Procedures for Supporting Students with Completion of Late and Missed Summative Assessments" on page 16.*)**

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- Do we need help with planning in specific courses for formative and summative assessments?

- Are we clear about which of our assignments/tests/projects are formative and which are summative?

- Does our school have a system in place which supports students taking make up tests/quizzes?

- Are these clearly communicated in our communication plan?

- Is appropriate instruction and development of assignments/tests in place to meet the diverse learning styles within the class?

- What is an appropriate response when students do not complete one or more of the summative assessments that provide essential evidence of learning?

**Sample from a communication plan that clarifies expectations for students making up missed assignments, tests and quizzes:**

*In the course of studying a unit, there are often daily assignments and quizzes that are given to help with understanding the learning outcomes. They may be considered as part of the formative work. The summative work is most often a unit test or a project/major assignment which indicates the level to which students understand the key understandings of the learning outcomes.*

*All assignments have clearly defined due dates and are to be handed in at that time. If the assignment is not complete and ready to hand in, students are expected to let their teacher know in advance of class for an extension.*

***Late assignments:*** *If an assignment is late, the student may be asked to complete it in the teacher's presence at a convenient time. Parents will also be contacted.*
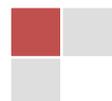
*If the student is absent the day the assignment is due, it is their responsibility to hand in the assignment to the teacher on their first day back at school. Assignments are often part of the formative work and should be completed in order to be ready for the unit test.*

***For missed summative assignments see "Procedures for Supporting Students with Completion of Late and Missed Summative Assessments".***

***Quizzes*** *along with most assignments may be more suitable as part of the formative mark.*

***Missed quizzes*** <u>*will*</u> *be made up at the earliest possible time. As this may be part of the formative work, it is best to have all quizzes completed before the unit test.* ***This is dealt with at the classroom level and not within the school-wide plan described in Guideline 9.***

***Unit Tests*** *are a major component of the summative mark.* ***Completion of these tests*** *will follow the guidelines of the school wide plan (See,* ***"Procedures for Supporting Students with Completion of Late and Missed Summative Assessments"****).*

*(Adapted from and used with permission of Secondary Science Teacher, N. Despotakis, 2011.)*

**Provided on page 16, is a chart outlining the process to be followed in the school-wide plan for supporting students missing summative assessments.** All formative assessments are best dealt with at the classroom level. The following procedures, found in the chart, support completion of summative assessments which is inclusive of summative assignments, tests and quizzes.

## *Procedures for Supporting Students with Completion of Late and Missed Summative Assessments*

Appropriate instruction and development of assignments/tests is in place to meet the diverse learning styles within the class

↓

Assignment not passed in/Test, Quiz not written

↓

Conference with student and/or parents/guardians

↓

Zero is used as placeholder in PowerTeacher Gradebook

↓

Plan developed for completion of missed assessments

↓ ↓

**Student completes assignment within the support structure of the school**

**Student writes test within the support structure of the school**

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

On completion and submission of assignment it will be marked and appropriate scores recorded in PowerTeacher Gradebook and zero is overridden.

If student work is still missing two weeks prior to each reporting period and all intervention strategies have been exhausted, including the consideration of individual circumstances, the student will not receive credit for that assignment and the zero is **not** overridden.

On completion of the test it will be marked and appropriate scores recorded- in PowerTeacher Gradebook and zero is overridden.

If a student has not taken the opportunity provided to complete the test, and all intervention strategies have been exhausted, including the consideration of individual circumstances, the student will not receive credit for the test and the zero is **not** overridden.

↓ ↓

In the event that this is a continued practice it is considered that the student has failed to provide sufficient evidence of achievement of outcomes and is in jeopardy of not receiving the course credit. The student may be considered a candidate for credit recovery*.

*The final definition of credit recovery will determine where in the chart it will fall.*

**Guideline 10:  A school-based support system must be in place for students requiring additional support in order to complete assignments.**

**Research Review:**

Establish a school-wide, integrated support system. For example, set up supervised Learning Centres, completion contracts, tracking systems for incomplete tasks, and communication processes for students and parents so all students can be successful. A consequence for not completing the work *is* completing the work; increased student responsibility should be a natural corollary of a systematic and systemic intervention process (Foothills School Division, 2009).

*See "Procedures for Supporting Students with Completion of Late and Missed Summative Assessments" on page 16.*

**Considerations for implementation:**

- Do the assignments which have been created reflect the diversity of the learners within the class?
- Are you able to create assignments which are completed in class in order to implement a checkpoint model?
- Can you set up the assignment so you can give descriptive feedback during the completion of the assignment?
- Can Program Support Teachers or other personnel be freed to help students with their work? For example ISS?
- Can an Extra Help Club be implemented?
- Is peer tutoring available?

**Sample of one type of support structure:**

*Amnesty Day:*

Amnesty Day is a one-time scheduled date prior to each reporting period. Advertised well in advance, students have the opportunity to pass in any/all missing tasks or assignments with no penalty. Amnesty Day is the final deadline for all assignments included in the reporting period. Each new reporting period becomes a "fresh start". *A cautionary note*: To encourage independent work habits rather than the sharing of peer assignments already graded or reviewed by the teacher, portfolios could be maintained in the classroom and updated at regular intervals, providing students with evidence of their learning and growth throughout the semester.

**Guideline 11: Students are held accountable to the highest level of academic integrity.**

**Research Review:**

CCRSB is a place where learning and knowledge are based on the core values of respect, accountability and honesty. We hold our students to the highest standards of performance and integrity, and require each student and staff member to maintain these principles. Plagiarism, cheating, deception, and sabotage are serious offences that are treated seriously (Adapted from Foothills School Division, 2009).

**Considerations for Implementation:**

Teachers are encouraged to discuss the notion of academic integrity with students at all grade levels, and provide examples of unacceptable practices. In the event of questionable academic integrity, the teacher or the school administration will notify the parents. As a consequence, students will be required to do a similar replacement assignment or exam in order to demonstrate honest evidence of learning. Any further disciplinary actions/consequences will be left to the school's discretion (Foothills School Division, 2009).

*Academic dishonesty is an attitudinal and a behavioural issue and must be dealt with as such. Contact with parents and documentation in anecdotal records are appropriate responses. Furthermore, if the assessment task in question is one that represents evidence of essential learning, then the students must complete an alternative task. These tasks should not require additional work for the teacher. Part of effective assessment planning involves generating, over time, alternative forms of major assessment tasks for situations such as student absence and academic dishonesty (Cooper, 2010).*

**Examples of Academic Dishonesty:**

Plagiarism:

- Copying and pasting a passage of text unchanged from an Internet or online resource without  properly citing the source
- Copying and pasting slides/photos/pictures without properly citing the source
- Copying word-for-word from a printed resource (encyclopaedia, atlas, etc.)

Academic cheating:

- Possessing unauthorized materials (cheat sheets, notes, etc.)
- Having someone else compose or write the work

- Allowing someone else to copy the work
- Turning in or copying another's work
- Falsifying quotations, references, and/or data

Deception:
- Fabricating an excuse for a missed deadline
- Falsely claiming to have submitted work

Sabotage:

- Deleting files
- Disrupting the experiments and presentations of others
- Defacing another's work

**Guideline 12: A balanced assessment plan must provide opportunity for students to show evidence of learning through observations, conversations and products.**

**Research Review:**

*Teachers use a variety of assessment strategies to elicit information about student learning. These strategies should be triangulated to include observation, student-teacher conversations, and student products. Teachers can gather information about learning by:*

- *designing tasks that provide students with a variety of ways to demonstrate their learning;*
- *observing students as they perform tasks;*
- *posing questions to help students make their thinking explicit;*
- *engineering classroom and small-group conversations that encourage students to articulate what they are thinking and further develop their thinking.*

*The ongoing use of observations and conversations may be part of the formative component in the larger picture of a teacher's assessment plan. Teachers then use the information gathered to adjust instruction and provide feedback. However, observations and conversations recorded using appropriate tracking tools should also be considered as summative when appropriate. By using multiple sources of evidence teachers increase the reliability and validity of the evaluation of student learning. Student product, may be in the form of tests or exams and/or assignments. Assignments may include rich performance tasks, demonstrations, projects, and/or essays (Adapted from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010).*

*High schools must prepare students for life beyond university, college, or apprenticeships…Since the challenges of daily life require us to perform and to communicate both orally and in writing (do, say, and write), classroom assessment must be balanced, drawing on all three categories accordingly (Adapted from Cooper, 2010).*

**Considerations for implementation:**

- How can we design tasks that provide students with a variety of ways to demonstrate their learning?

- What are we looking for and how are we tracking students as they perform tasks?

- How do we pose questions to help students make their thinking explicit?

- How do we engineer classroom and small-group conversations that encourage students to articulate what they are thinking and further develop their thinking?

- How do we use the information gathered to adjust instruction and provide feedback?

**Guideline 13: A report card grade must capture the trend in student achievement over time - the most consistent achievement.**
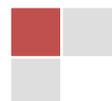
**Research Review:**

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 (tests/exams, assignments for evaluation).
In addition, the teacher will consider that some evidence carries greater weight than other evidence; for example, some performance tasks are richer and reveal more about students' skills and knowledge than others. Teachers will weigh all evidence of student achievement in light of these considerations and will use their professional judgement to determine the student's report card grade.

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' professional judgement and interpretation of evidence and should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement, with special consideration given to more recent evidence providing the same outcomes are being addressed. (Adapted from the Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010)

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- How will I track evidence collected through observations, conversations, and student products (tests/exams, assignments for evaluation) of learning?

- How will I determine if some evidence carries greater weight than other evidence?

- What factors do I consider when determining the student's most consistent level of achievement?

- Avoid using the mean as a method to determine summary of student achievement.

**Guideline 14: Be thoughtful about the weighting of summative evidence in determining a final grade.**

**Research Review:**

Students typically complete a variety of assignments and assessments during a grading period; teachers need to decide beforehand how each will be weighted. Deciding how to weight summative tasks should be done carefully, and communicated to students and parents at the onset of the task. No single test can assess everything. The clearest picture of students' growth and development is gained when a wide variety of assessment information is considered, rather than making this determination from limited assessment samples that are heavily weighted (Alberta Education, 2009).

*Is there a magic number or a formula for gathering sufficient evidence of achievement grading and reporting? No, but there are some important guidelines, which are listed below … The sample of evidence in reporting must:*

- *include triangulated data (a minimum of three pieces of evidence) for major learning target*

- *not include diagnostic evidence*

- *not include formative evidence if triangulation is possible with summative evidence (Cooper, 2010)*

**Considerations for Implementation:**

- Does the assessment tool reflect the key understandings?

- Is there consistency within the staff or department around the weightings of the summative assessments being used to determine a final grade?

- Have students been given a variety of ways to demonstrate their learning on summative assessments?

- If mid-term and/or final exams are to be administered, has careful consideration been given to the purpose of these exams, and to their weightings in the fair determination of a final grade?

- How can we use conversation, observation and product as part of gathering multiple forms of evidence?

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