Assessment, Instruction, and Feedback for Learning

Assessment is a central component of effective teaching and learning. Planning effective assessment and instruction requires teachers to know their learners *as they are known* (i.e. within their family and community), the learning context, and the curriculum. The provincial curriculum documents guide teachers in what learners should be able to know, show, and do in relation to the outcomes which support learning through competencies, concepts, and selected skills. Additional curriculum resource materials provide learning context, evidence of learning, research-informed methods of instruction and assessment, and criteria for success.

Assessment is the bridge between teaching and learning. Assessment provides evidence of student learning. How teachers assess may vary depending on the purpose, the teaching and learning environment, and sometimes the individual learner needs. Teachers use evidence of student learning to evaluate progress, adjust instruction to respond to learner needs, (i.e. address gaps in learning, extend/deepen learning), and communicate with parents/guardians about their child's progress and achievement and also provide suggestions around ways to support their child's learning.

Regardless of where teaching and learning occurs (i.e. in-person, on-line), the following core principles must guide classroom assessment for learning practices:

1. Get to know learners *as they are known*.
2. Identify and clearly communicate with learners the learning outcomes and criteria for success.
3. Plan instruction and learning experiences that will meet the identified needs and interests of all learners.
4. Design a variety of assessment opportunities that will generate evidence of learning. Provide options for learner voice and choice wherever possible.
5. Use evidence of learning to provide feedback during the learning and practice phase that moves learning forward, (e.g., check for understanding of what was taught; plan for next steps in instruction).
6. Use the criteria for success to provide ongoing feedback to learners, explaining what the learner has under control and the next steps to go deeper in their understanding and application of concepts and skills.
7. Gather evidence of learning from a variety of sources, (e.g., conversations/conferences, observations, and products).
8. Track and record evidence of student learning to inform follow-up instructional and evaluative decisions.
9. Use tracked and recorded evidence of learning, from a variety of sources and opportunities, along with professional judgment, to evaluate and summarize learner progress and achievement.
10. Build and maintain close communication with parents/guardians, in a variety of ways, throughout the school year, regarding learner progress and achievement.

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The information below provides some suggestions or considerations about what each principle might look like when teaching and learning in the school or when teaching and learning on-line. It will be important to consider how to set students up for success with various methods prior to a potential shift from an in-school learning environment to an on-line learning environment.

Core Principles	In-School	On-line	Additional Resources/Links
1. Get to know learners as they are known.	• Conversation with learners and parents/guardians (in-person, email, phone).	• Same as in-school. • Conversation with learners and parents/guardians (Google Meet, email, phone). • Google Form surveys.	• Inclusive Education Policy • Inclusive Education: The Call to Value Black Students' Lives • African Nova Scotian Framework PowerPoint Presentation • Cultural Competence: Connecting Home Language and School Language • Planning for Equity and Inclusive Education through Multi-tiered Systems of Supports • Planning for ALL Students through an MTSS Lens • Educator's Guide to Capable, Confident, and Curious: Nova Scotia's Early Learning Curriculum Framework Implementation Draft 2018-2019
2. Identify and clearly communicate with learners the learning outcomes and criteria for success.	• Consider the scope and sequence of concepts, using current curriculum documents. • Select critical elements of the curriculum to focus on as you get to know your students and move forward with learning. • Identify the outcome(s) and learning intentions. • Divide overall learning goals into manageable pieces. • Develop and communicate criteria	• Same as in-school.	• Nova Scotia Curriculum • Nova Scotia Developmental Reading Continuum P-6 • Nova Scotia Developmental Writing Continuum P-6 • P-3 Writing Exemplars Supplementary Resource • Using the Developmental Phonemic Awareness Continuum P-3 in a Balanced Literacy Program • Grade 7-9 Stages of Writing

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	for success.		[Continuum Supplemental Resource](#) • [Mathematics Outcomes Progression P-3 (2020-2021) Supplementary Resource](#) • [Mathematics Outcomes Progression 3-7 (2020-2021) Supplementary Resource](#) • [Mathematics Outcomes Progression 6-9 (2020-2021) Supplementary Resource](#)

3. Plan instruction and learning experiences that will meet the identified needs and interests of all learners.	• Develop experiences and instruction that are aligned with curriculum outcomes.
	• Plan opportunities for whole group, small group, and individual instruction.
	• Consider multiple means for engagement.
	• Consider multiple means of representation:
	  – How will learners access information and engage in learning?
	• Consider multiple means of action and expression:
	  – How will learners communicate their thinking and understanding?
	• Plan opportunities for explicit instruction, exploration, time for learner practice, application, and reflection/sharing.
		• Same as in-school but with attention paid to the following:
		  – Accessibility of digital text (written and visual)
		  – Technologies that support synchronous and asynchronous instruction
		  – Digital tools that enable learner collaboration
			• [Planning for Equity and Inclusive Education: through Multi-tiered Systems of Supports](#)
			• [Planning for ALL Students through an MTSS Lens](#)
			• [Moving Forward with Mathematics P-12 Supplementary Document](#)
			• [eLearning Support](#)
			• [Teaching & Learning within Covid-19 Protocols, P-12](#)
			• [Technology Considerations for Schools 2020-2021](#)

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4. Design a variety of assessment opportunities that will generate evidence of learning. Provide options for learner voice and choice wherever possible.	Opportunities such as: – Think, pair, share – Voting – Call and response – White board – Sharing circle	Same as in-school but everything is shared digitally or via Google Meet: – Jamboard or digital whiteboards – Google Forms	• Assessing Literacy P-3 (2020-21) Supplemental Resources • eLearning Support
5. Use evidence of learning to provide feedback during the learning and practice phase that moves learning forward (e.g., check for understanding of what was taught; plan for next steps in instruction).	• Observation • Questioning • Checklist • Self-reflection • Exit Slips • Concept checks • Thumbs Up, Down • Polls	• Same as in-school • During Google Meet using breakout rooms, tasks, etc.: Observations, Questioning, Thumbs up, thumbs down • Exit slips (Google Forms) • Concept checks (Google Classroom or email) • Jamboard, digital whiteboards, sketch notes	
6. Use the criteria for success to provide ongoing feedback to learners, explaining what the learner has under control and the next steps to go deeper in their understanding and application of concepts and skills.	• Verbal feedback can be given directly to the student in class. • Written feedback can be recorded as anecdotal notes or comments on student work. • Feedback should be provided during the learning practice giving the students time and opportunity to use the feedback to improve their learning. • Feedback can be provided by the teacher or peers. • A variety of tools can support teachers and students with giving and understanding feedback: – Checklists or rubrics can help clarify success criteria and this language can be used to provide feedback or direction	• Verbal feedback can be given directly to a student through Google Meet by using a voice recorder such as Mote or Read Write for Google. • Written feedback can be shared – as a recording (Mote or Read Write for Google) – as anecdotal notes or comments in a digital document – as comments inserted on a PDF – via email.	• Providing Descriptive Feedback Elementary P-6 (Appendix B Literacy in Grade 3 Lessons Learned) • How-To Tutorials

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for future learning. Self reflection is another form of feedback. Starters can assist teachers in helping students reflect on and understand their own success.
– Achievement levels (see below) can also be used to quickly indicate the overall level and depth of learning a student has demonstrated.

Sample Feedback starters:
Tell me more about...
– I used to and now I...
– What is your strongest evidence to show that you understand/can...?
– When you were reading, I noticed...what were you thinking?
– What are some things you might include next time...?
– What prompted you to add...to your writing...?
– How can I help support your learning?

| 7. Gather evidence of learning from a variety of sources, (e.g., conversations/conferences, observations, and products).

Note: Teachers should value all three sources of information, but the balance between them may not be equal. Some subject areas will rely more heavily on | • Conversations/conferences often happen in person.
• Observation of learners working or of a learner's performance often happens in-person in real-time. It can also be recorded and viewed by the teacher later.
• Products can be submitted to the teacher or shared with other | • Same as in-school.
• Conversations/conferences can happen via Google Meet.
• Observation of learners working or of a learner's performance can happen in Google Meet in real-time, or it can be recorded and later viewed by the teacher.
• Products are submitted to the | • [Professional Judgment and Evidence of Learning](#)
• [How-To Tutorials](#) |

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observation, and others will rely more on analysis of products and work samples. No subject should rely exclusively on product, or exclusively conversation or observation as the means of assessment.	learners in person or through digital means (email, shared in Google Drive, submitted in Google Classroom).	teacher through digital means (email, shared in Google Drive, submitted in Google Classroom).	
8. Track and record information about student learning to inform follow-up instructional and evaluative decisions.	• Keep scores or marks, notes, and artifacts for each learner. • Record scores, comments, marks, and notes in Power Teacher Gradebook.	• Same as in-school. • Tracking can also be done through google classroom (handed in, missing, etc.).	• How-To Tutorials
9. Use tracked and recorded evidence of learning, from a variety of sources and opportunities, along with professional judgment, to evaluate and summarize learner progress and achievement. – Teachers will need to consider when enough evidence has been gathered to support the making of a reliable judgment regarding how well a learner is progressing in their learning.	• Collect evidence of student learning from a variety of sources throughout the learning process. • Review the information collected to note patterns or trends in learning. • Determine a fair summary grade (percentage, letter grade, etc.), reporting code (well developed, developing as expected, etc.), or a comment that accurately reflects the learner's achievement at that time.	• Same as in-school.	
10. Build and maintain close communication with parents/guardians, in a variety of ways, throughout the school year, regarding learner progress and achievement.	• Communicate with parents/guardians in a variety of ways (e.g., phone calls, emails, notes, meetings, etc.), learner progress and achievement throughout the learning process. • Communicate to parents/guardians, on the	• Same as in-school, but when meetings are necessary, they will be virtual.	• Nova Scotia Report Card User Guides • Report Card Comment Writing Tips: P-12

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provincial report card, a summary that accurately reflects their child's progress and achievement at that point in time.

Achievement Level Language	
Level 4	In-depth knowledge and understanding of content and concepts. Able to <u>extend the application</u> of related skills.
Level 3+	Competent +
Level 3	Competent knowledge and understanding of content and concepts. <u>Appropriate application</u> of the related skills.
Level 2+	Developing +
Level 2	Developing knowledge and understanding of content and concepts. <u>Developing in the application</u> of related skills.
Level 1+	Limited +
Level 1	Limited knowledge and understanding of content and concepts. <u>Limited application</u> of related skills.
INS	Insufficient evidence

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