

# Agenda

## Parent Involvement Committee UGDSB – Monday, January 28th, 2013

**7:00 pm, Room 9, UGDSB offices (Victoria Road, north of Woodlawn, west side)**

Dessert, coffee and tea provided

### Meeting Minutes

**Present: Martha MacNeil, Heather Janes, Anne Charles, heather bailey, Kay Elford, Jane Brown, Martha Rogers, Brent McDonald, Tracey Lindsay, Scott Doern, Ronda Sharpe, Sarah Bolton-Blair, Deb Drake, Kathy Watts**

TIME	TOPIC	
15 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Welcome and Introductions <i>Martha welcomed everyone and the meeting started at 7:00 pm.</i></li><li>2. Approval of agenda <i>Approved</i></li><li>3. Approval of Previous Minutes <i>Approved</i></li><li>4. Chair's report <i>The people 4Education have sent out the School Council survey. All councils are encouraged to fill this out either online or hard copy. School Council input 2013-2014 Principal Leadership Survey is out. School councils are asked to complete and return to Superintendent by March 8<sup>th</sup>.</i></li></ol>	Martha M.
30 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Board/Ministry report <i>Bill 13- Safe &amp; accepting schools. This Bill encourages the involvement of the school community to ensure a safe school climate. The community works with staff to foster a safe, equitable, warm welcoming environment. Parents and community members are invited to sit on the Safe and Inclusive School Committee. February 1 is the deadline for School Boards to have their safe school policy in place. See attachment for more details. or <a href="http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/safeacceptschools.pdf">http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/safeacceptschools.pdf</a> Labour Updates: ETFO. The ministry has imposed contracts as the union was unable to ratify an agreement prior to the deadline. Some schools are running extra curriculars.</i></li></ol>	Brent

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	<p><i>Some are not. Some field trips are taking place some are not. It is the individual teachers' choice whether or not to participate in anything "extra." Grade 8 trips are still a possibility as the deadlines have been extended. In some cases parent groups can organize a trip. They must first speak to the Principal to ensure procedure is followed, Insurance etc. Since kids have not had opportunity to fundraise; cost may be a financial issue for some families. School will ensure that \$ is not a barrier for any student. Report Cards should look familiar. Expectations are that they will be filled out completely.</i></p> <p><i>Intermediate students are concerned about not being able to earn their school tabs &amp; letters as extra curriculars are ltd. Direction to follow as to how these kids can still earn their school letters for Graduation.</i></p> <p><i>On Feb. 8 there will be mediation of the UGDSB with 9 teachers that are taking their union to the Labour Relations Board.</i></p> <p><i>There are 2 school boards in the province that are taking ETFO to the Labour Relations Board claiming that ETFO is directing their members in illegal strike actions. Outcome may have significant impact.</i></p> <p><i>At the Secondary level many extra curriculars are running. Most school teams are running with the exception of GCVI where most things have stopped completely. Concerning that this may affect future enrolment.</i></p> <p><b>Guest: Tracey Lindsay</b>  <b>"PPM 155 – Diagnostic Testing"</b></p> <p><i>Tracey Lindsay is currently the Principal of Program. She presented PPM 155 which is a memorandum that outlines how diagnostic assessment tools may be used effectively to inform teaching and learning practices in the classroom in support of student leaning and achievement .Please see the attachment for details.</i></p>	
<p>20 minutes</p>	<p><b>6. Focus group project progress</b></p> <p><i>Event will take place Jan.29 &amp; Feb 19. After the parents have received their training the PIC will help the Leaders as they go out to lead the focus groups. Martha will be setting up a Google Group for the participants. So</i></p>	<p>Axy/Martha M.</p>

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	<i>far @ 25 people have signed up.</i>	
20 minutes	<p><b>7. Spring Event</b>  <i>Will take Place April 25<sup>th</sup> 4:30-8:30 at College Heights. Annie Kidder &amp; Jacqui Strachan are the Guest Speakers. Round tables not available</i></p>	Axy/Martha M.
10 minutes	<p><b>8. Communications</b>  <i>Some changes have been made to the website.            On Sat. May 4<sup>th</sup> the Wellington Catholic School Board is hosting a Free Event 9am-2:30: 8 Guest Speakers for parents as partners, Building Relationships &amp; Promoting Success.            Things to post on the PIC website:            Grant writing tips, Grants that are available, Principal Leadership Input survey, info about the school based Funding Grant. (It was noted that this should become more transparent on how it works and what it can used for.)            Info about the PIC games that are available to be borrowed            Ideas about succession planning for when schools are splitting due to new schools being built. There is no formal policy but some good practices are in place to help determine how money/resources could be divided. Suggested to talk to schools that have gone through this process            Website could list the schools hosting PRO events and give info on what they are doing.</i></p>	Kathy
5 minutes	<p><b>9. Budget items</b>  <i>Focus Group Training: \$10560            Supplies: \$ \$600            Spring Event: Speakers \$2060            Food: \$2500            Babysitting &amp; Mileage: \$3000            Supplies: @\$750            Brochures: \$2971.90</i></p>	Heather J.
10 minutes	<b>10. Open Discussion</b>	All

*Next meeting: Monday, February 25th, 2013 at 7pm, JD Hogarth Public School, Fergus*

**Date of Issue:** January 7, 2013

**Effective:** Until revoked or modified

**Subject:** DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT IN SUPPORT OF STUDENT LEARNING

**Application:** Directors of Education  
Secretary-Treasurers and Supervisory Officers of School Authorities  
Principals of Elementary Schools  
Principals of Secondary Schools  
Principals of Provincial and Demonstration Schools

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline how diagnostic assessment tools may be used effectively to inform teaching and learning practices in the classroom in support of student learning and achievement.

This memorandum also outlines how teachers shall use their professional judgement to determine:

- which assessment and/or evaluation tool(s) from the board's list of pre-approved assessment tools is applicable;
- for which student(s); and
- the frequency and timing of the use of the tool.

In order to inform their instruction, teachers must utilize diagnostic assessment during the school year.

A teacher's professional judgement is the cornerstone of assessment and evaluation. Diagnostic assessment is used to identify a student's needs and abilities and the student's readiness to acquire the knowledge and skills outlined in the curriculum expectations. Information from diagnostic assessment helps teachers determine where individual students are in their acquisition of knowledge and skills, so that instruction can be personalized and tailored to provide the appropriate next steps for learning. The ability to choose the appropriate assessment tool(s) as well as determine the frequency and timing of its administration allows the teacher to gather data that is relevant, sufficient, and valid in order to make judgements about student learning during the learning cycle.

Effective assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices play an important role in achieving the three core priorities of the Ministry of Education: high levels of student achievement, reduced gaps in student achievement, and increased public confidence in publicly funded education. The Education Act and regulations made under the act, the policy outlined in *Growing Success*, and related ministry policies and frameworks, such as the Ontario Leadership Framework and the School Effectiveness Framework, are not altered by the direction given in this memorandum.

*Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12, 2010* outlines the policy that supports such effective practices, and the ministry is committed to the continued implementation of this policy. *Growing Success* requires teachers to conduct diagnostic and formative assessment as essential steps of assessment *for* learning and assessment *as* learning. Specifically, teachers need to:

- plan assessment concurrently and integrate it seamlessly with instruction;
- share learning goals and success criteria with students at the outset of learning to ensure that students and teachers have a common and shared understanding of these goals and criteria as learning progresses;
- gather information about student learning before, during, and at or near the end of a period of instruction, using a variety of assessment strategies and tools;
- use assessment to inform instruction, guide next steps, and help students monitor their progress towards achieving their learning goals;
- analyse and interpret evidence of learning;
- give and receive specific and timely descriptive feedback about student learning;
- help students to develop skills of peer and self-assessment.

(*Growing Success*, pp. 28–29)

This memorandum provides direction on the selection and use of diagnostic assessment tools used to gather data and information about student learning.

The direction, principles, and criteria set out in this memorandum will take effect immediately.

## SCOPE

This memorandum applies to the use of formal diagnostic assessment tools. This memorandum does not apply to the following types of assessment:

- *Special education assessments.* These include educational and/or other professional assessments conducted to identify students with special education needs, to determine the special education programs and/or services required by these students, and/or to support decisions related to such programs and services.
- *Large-scale assessments.* These include provincial assessments conducted by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) – the assessments of reading, writing, and mathematics in Grades 3 and 6; the assessment of mathematics in Grade 9; and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. They also include assessments conducted as part of ministry-approved national or international assessments, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), and the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP). They may also include ministry-mandated assessments.

## USE OF DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT TOOLS IN SUPPORT OF STUDENT LEARNING

In *Growing Success*, the term *diagnostic assessment* is defined as “assessment that is used to identify a student’s needs and abilities and the student’s readiness to acquire the knowledge and skills outlined in the curriculum expectations. Diagnostic assessment usually takes place at the start of a school year, term, semester, or teaching unit. It is a key tool used by teachers in planning instruction and setting appropriate learning goals” (p. 146). Diagnostic assessment provides information that 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” (p. 31).

Data from diagnostic assessment and formative assessment is used to determine students’ readiness to learn the new knowledge and skills set out in the curriculum expectations, and obtain information about students’ interests and learning preferences. This data may be collected through a variety of means, which can include observation, student portfolios, and student self-assessment, among others. This information helps teachers plan daily classroom instruction and assessment that are differentiated and personalized, and set appropriate learning goals with their students.

Research confirms the importance of using various kinds of information to develop and monitor plans to improve student learning (in Ontario, the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement is such a plan). School and board leaders are expected to use data to identify trends, strengths, and weaknesses that can inform specific actions for improvement in student achievement.

### Guiding Principles of Selection of Diagnostic Assessment Tools

All assessment conducted in Ontario public schools is guided by and subject to the fundamental principles listed and discussed on pages 6–8 of *Growing Success*.

In addition to the fundamental principles set out in *Growing Success*, teachers, principals, and school board staff will use the following principles when selecting diagnostic assessment tools:

- All available classroom, school, and board data and information (e.g., information from day-to-day classroom assessments, data from provincial report cards, and EQAO data) should be taken into account when determining what additional data and information, if any, is needed for board improvement planning.
- School board staff reviews diagnostic assessment tools to ensure that the tools support the collection of valid and reliable evidence.
- In developing their Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement, principals and school board staff must clearly communicate with teachers the purpose of the tool and how it is used.
- Duplication of effort and excessive student testing are avoided to allow for effective use of instructional time.

### Criteria for Selection of Diagnostic Assessment Tools

In selecting diagnostic assessment tools, teachers, teacher affiliates, principals, and school board staff, in their respective roles and responsibilities, will consider whether a diagnostic assessment tool:

- is related appropriately to the knowledge and skills identified in the curriculum expectations;

- is designed to provide information that assists in identifying student needs and targeting improvements;
- identifies strengths and gaps in students' knowledge and skills and provides sufficient evidence from which inferences about students' learning can be made;
- is appropriate in content, design, and mode of delivery;
- provides a range of targeted strategies that teachers can use to plan next steps in instruction and student learning;
- forms part of a balanced, comprehensive assessment system that provides detailed evidence of each student's development.

### **Criteria for the Use of Diagnostic Assessment Tools**

In using diagnostic assessment tools, teachers will ensure that:

- the tools are administered judiciously so that they support the identification of student learning needs, track progress, and supplement instruction;
- the tools are administered judiciously so that they produce the type of data and information required to effectively inform classroom instruction;
- the tools are administered in a manner that will allow the teacher to assess students' progress and share such information with the principal upon request;
- the information is used to guide students in focusing their learning efforts, setting and monitoring goals, and determining next steps in learning.

## **COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENT LEARNING**

### **Collective Responsibility and Professional Judgement**

Teachers, principals, and school board staff share a collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and, in their respective roles, exercise their professional judgement as defined in *Growing Success*:

Judgement that is informed by professional knowledge of curriculum expectations, context, evidence of learning, methods of instruction and assessment, and the criteria and standards that indicate success in student learning. In professional practice, judgement involves a purposeful and systematic thinking process that evolves in terms of accuracy and insight with ongoing reflection and self-correction. (p. 152)

As stated in *Growing Success*, "teachers' professional judgements are at the heart of effective assessment, evaluation, and reporting of student achievement" (p. 8). In addition, successful implementation of policy "depends on the professional judgement of educators at all levels, as well as on educators' ability to work together ... on the continuing efforts of strong and energized professional learning communities to clarify and share their understanding of policy and to develop and share

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effective implementation practices, ... on creative and judicious differentiation in instruction and assessment to meet the needs of all students, and on strong and committed leadership from school and system leaders, who coordinate, support, and guide the work of teachers” (p. 2).

### **Teachers**

Teachers will use their professional judgement, as defined in *Growing Success*, when selecting and using diagnostic assessment tools. Teachers must utilize diagnostic assessment during the school year, selecting tools from the board’s approved list. In selecting and using diagnostic assessment tools from the board’s list, teachers shall determine the following:

- the diagnostic assessment tools that are applicable;
- which student(s) will be assessed (individual student, small group, or whole class);
- the frequency of use of the diagnostic assessment tools;
- the appropriate timing of the use of the diagnostic assessment tools.

### **Principals**

Principals play an important role in ensuring a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on student learning. Through the use of a variety of tools to support and monitor student progress, principals will continue to provide leadership when working in collaboration with teachers to gather information about student learning in support of school and board improvement plans for student achievement.

### **Boards**

Through the use of quality diagnostic assessment tools, valid and reliable data and information on student achievement is collected. Boards shall establish and provide a list of approved diagnostic assessment tools that are consistent with their board plans for improving student learning and achievement. In consultation with teachers and principals, boards will continue to collaborate to develop a common understanding of the planning process and the need for student data and information that can inform actions taken to improve student learning. Boards will continue to periodically review and update, where necessary, the approved list of diagnostic assessment tools.

A tip sheet drawn from evidence-informed resources that focus on promoting a safe, inclusive and accepting school climate

Issue #1A – October 2012 Update

# Whole School Approach to Promoting a Safe, Inclusive and Accepting School Climate

## The Question:

“We want to move forward to implement a whole school approach to accepting schools. How do we proceed?”

## The Answer:

Understanding five essential elements is key to successful implementation of a whole school approach:

1. Definition
2. Research
3. Leadership and evidence
4. Common elements
5. Components

*“Bullying should be considered across multiple contexts that include the individual, family, peer, school and community ... this perspective is reflected in the whole-school approach in that it seeks to alter the context of bullying on multiple levels while addressing inter and intra-individual concerns.”*

*K.P. Allen, 2011*

## 1. DEFINITION

A whole school approach engages all key learning areas, all grades and the wider community. Students and adults in the school and the wider community develop awareness and understanding of the factors that contribute to safe, inclusive, caring and accepting school climates.

All aspects of school life are considered, such as curriculum, school climate, teaching practices, policies and procedures.

## 2. RESEARCH

Research shows that there is a direct link between students’ success and the school environment in which engagement in learning takes place.

An effective school does more than achieve academic markers; it develops healthy relationships among staff, among students, and between staff and students to promote a positive school climate.

A whole school approach involving all education and community partners is an important step to bring about systemic changes. Canadian and international research calls for the adoption of safe schools policies, equity and inclusive education policies, and related initiatives.

*“A positive school climate makes negative behaviours such as bullying and harassment unacceptable.”*

*Pepler & Craig, 2004*

## 3. LEADERSHIP AND EVIDENCE

A whole school approach requires shared and committed leadership including at the level of: the Director of Education, Supervisory Officer and Principal. This is essential for establishing a vision, policies, procedures and programs that promote a positive school culture.

A whole school approach is evidence-informed and starts with a review of data from a school climate survey. The results of the survey should inform the development of strategies, practices, programs, bullying prevention and intervention plans, etc.

A pre- and post-evaluation strategy is critical. The pre-phase creates a baseline and identifies gaps and areas of concern as well as areas of strength and success. A post-evaluation gathers evidence to test the efficacy of the prevention, responses, interventions or supports provided and changes are made where necessary.



*“Research on bullying prevention in schools has repeatedly shown that principals’ leadership is essential to establishing a foundation of collaboration across all groups within the school community – staff, students, parents, and community partners.”*  
Jaffe, Crooks & Watson, 2010

#### 4. COMMON ELEMENTS

School policies and procedures in addressing student behaviour must be consistent regardless of the individual involved or the context, taking into account mitigating factors.

Building a positive school climate means embedding the principles of equity and inclusive education in all aspects of the learning environment to support the well-being and achievement of all students.

Implementation of the whole school approach needs to occur at four levels: school level, classroom level, individual level and community level. The common, overlapping themes of prevention, response, intervention, support and monitoring occur at all the levels. At each level the following elements are critical:

- Identification of roles and responsibilities
- Staff, student, parent and community engagement
- A pre- and post-evaluation strategy (you may find the [Ministry’s Sample School Climate Surveys](#) to be useful tools.)

*“A comprehensive evaluation of a bullying-prevention program needs to include assessments of change at different levels of the system”* Pepler & Craig, 2004

#### 5. COMPONENTS

No single solution can guarantee the creation and maintenance of a positive, safe, inclusive, caring and accepting school climate. Success requires an ongoing, comprehensive, and collaborative effort on the part of everyone involved.

According to research, the following types of activities should occur within each component:

##### Individual Level:

- Foster respectful relationships and understanding among those around you.

- Hold meetings with students and their parents when inappropriate behaviour occurs.
- Support positive change and positive behaviour.
- Develop individual intervention plans for students involved in serious incidents.

##### Classroom Level:

- Communicate positive behavioural expectations and consistently enforce school-wide rules on behaviour.
- Hold regular class meetings and communicate regularly with parents.
- Learn and practice curriculum-linked and evidence based/research informed prevention and intervention strategies that give opportunities for social emotional learning to build and practice healthy relationship skills.
- Embed the principles of respect, equity and inclusive education through curriculum resources and classroom practices.

##### School level:

- Establish a coordinating committee (e.g., a Safe Schools Team as referenced in [Policy and Program Memorandum 144](#)).
- Provide training for committee and staff.
- Conduct pre- and post-evaluations and use results to inform practices, e.g. school climate surveys.
- Establish school rules regarding behaviour.
- Develop bullying prevention and intervention plans.
- Review and refine the school’s supervision plan, which should identify “hotspots” or those areas difficult to supervise.
- Develop processes that are transparent for engagement and communication with parents, with a focus on diverse parent groups.
- Promote a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate.

##### Community Level:

- Foster school-community partnerships to support the school’s programs.
- Involve community members in the policy development process.
- Communicate the school’s Code of Conduct and expectations on appropriate behavior to the school community.

Building and sustaining a positive, inclusive, safe and accepting school climate is a complex challenge requiring multi-pronged solutions and monitoring progress.

This tip sheet has been updated to support boards in the implementation of a whole school approach. You may also find the following Ministry resources helpful: [Introduction to Promoting a Positive School Climate, A Resource for Schools](#), and [Worksheet for Discussion and Planning](#).

## REFERENCES

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