



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Parent Guide to Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

Grades 9–12

Let's talk about:

- ◆ Assessment
- ◆ Evaluation
- ◆ Reporting
- ◆ Important Documents and Course Components
- ◆ Report Cards and Grades
- ◆ Learning Skills and Work Habits
- ◆ Student Roles and Responsibilities
- ◆ Teachers
- ◆ Parents/Guardians
- ◆ Parent/Teacher Communication



Our Partnership with you...

Your child's education today must prepare them for tomorrow's world. Students need to learn more than facts – they must acquire 21st century skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

Instruction, assessment and evaluation in today's classrooms support multiple learning goals. As students explore personal interests and pathways to success, they work towards key exit outcomes, developing skills and habits that will help them be productive, successful citizens.

This guide offers clear, meaningful information about assessment, evaluation and reporting. It will also provide you with tips on how to communicate with your child and their teachers and answers some of the most common questions you may have regarding your child's education.

The Fundamental Principles of Assessment and Evaluation

as outlined in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools* (2010)

Teachers use assessment and evaluation practices that:

- ◆ are fair, transparent and equitable;
- ◆ support all students;
- ◆ are carefully planned;
- ◆ are clearly explained to students and parents at the beginning of the school year;
- ◆ are ongoing and varied, and provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning;
- ◆ include feedback that is clear, meaningful and timely; and,
- ◆ develop student self-assessment skills.

Note: The term
"parent" refers
to parent and/or
guardian.

What is Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting?

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



Evaluation: The process of judging the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria and assigning a value to represent that quality.



Reporting: The process of communicating students' achievement of the curriculum expectations and the demonstration of Learning Skills and Work Habits. The Provincial Report Card represents a summary of a teacher's professional judgement about student achievement and gives students descriptive feedback in comments, indicating what they have learned and need to learn, as well as providing guidance to help students improve their learning.

Assessment and evaluation is designed to improve student learning, not just to provide a student with a final mark. Parents play an important role in their child's education. When parents, students and school staff work together, students are successful.

How has Assessment and Evaluation changed over time?

Many view "assessment" as the process of gathering information that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the expectations of a particular subject or course. Assessment is not only used to judge student work, it is used to help students learn. Good assessment takes into account learning styles, strengths and needs and reflects a student's achievement against a set of criteria (not against other students) and takes place over time.

In the past, most of the attention was paid to marks/grades on student work. Today, teachers focus more on the *ongoing feedback* that is provided to students so that they clearly understand what they need to do to improve their work. A grade is assigned at report card time and is a summary of demonstrated learning.

Assessment has three roles:

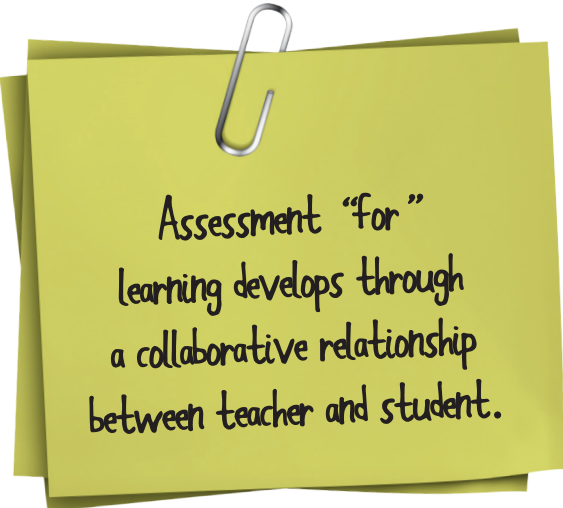
- ◆ **For** learning: providing students with feedback about their work
- ◆ **As** learning: helping students to set learning goals and monitor their own progress
- ◆ **Of** learning: evaluation and reporting of progress in the form of grades or marks

Assessment "for" learning...

Assessment "for" learning refers to the use of assessment data by students and their teachers to decide where the students are in their learning, where they need to go next and how to get there. The information gathered is used by teachers to provide feedback and adjust their instruction, and by students to focus their learning.

Why is this important?

The information gathered during this type of assessment is used for the specific purpose of helping students improve while they are still gaining knowledge and practising skills. This type of assessment incorporates dialogue between teacher and student. When students are more involved in the classroom assessment they become more aware of their strengths and areas needing improvement. They can then focus their efforts on closing the gap between where they are and where they need to be.



Assessment "for"
learning develops through
a collaborative relationship
between teacher and student.

Assessment “as” learning...

Assessment “as” learning refers to the process where students reflect on their learning. Teachers use self-assessment, peer feedback, reflection and journal entries to guide students to think about what works best for them.

Why is this important?

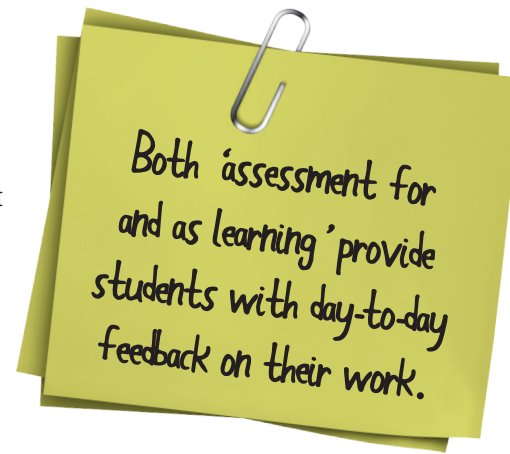
The goal is to help students become independent, self-directed learners, who are able to set personal goals, monitor their own progress, determine next steps and reflect on their learning. When they consider their learning skills and work habits, not just their achievement related to the curriculum expectations, they become independent learners.

Assessment “of” learning...

Assessment “of learning, often referred to as summative assessment, is used by teachers after a period of learning, and at the end of a course to determine what students have learned. Teachers use multiple assessment tools such as written tests, projects, portfolios, oral presentations and conferences. Students are expected to turn in assigned work to meet deadlines established by teachers.

Why is this important?

Students value collaboration when they receive a mark that is based on their individual level of performance within a group. Motivation is enhanced when students understand that growth in their achievement will be considered when grades are determined.



How does the balance between these different forms of assessment help students learn?

Students will be evaluated less and assessed more; given more opportunities to practice new skills and receive feedback on their learning before being evaluated on that learning. Emphasis will be placed on more recent and most consistent performance/achievement. Research has shown that providing feedback more often and receiving grades less often can improve student achievement.

Important Documents and Course Components

Course Outline
Course Work
Progress Reports
Parent-Teacher Interviews
Interim Reports
Summative Work
Final Reports

Course Outline

All students receive course outlines at the beginning of each course. These outlines contain valuable information about ideas and skills that students will learn, course assessment and evaluation, and academic expectations of students. Reading the course outline provides parents and their children with an opportunity to discuss assessment, expectations, and course organization. Throughout the semester, it is a useful reference point to help students organize their time and to give parents a starting point for conversations with teachers about their children's progress.

Included in the course outline will also be information about promoting academic honesty. Students should approach their learning with honesty and integrity, and complete course requirements through their own work. Teachers promote academic honesty by helping students understand how to share responsibility in group projects, how to document research assignments and how to prepare for tests. Each secondary school has an assessment and evaluation policy that addresses academic honesty. Both students and parents should familiarize themselves with this policy.

Course Work

Course work refers to all of the learning activities and tasks that students engage in throughout the year. Teachers plan course work to include on-going assessment. They may collect student products, such as assignments and tests, observe students as they work or perform, or have conversations with students. Course work helps students learn and provides an ongoing view of individual learning and improvement over time.

Progress Reports

Early in the semester, a Progress Report gives an initial indication of student progress.

Parent-Teacher Interviews

Following the Progress Report, there is a chance for the teacher, the parent(s) and the student to meet and talk. This is an opportunity to support students' success by responding to individual needs early in the semester.

Interim Reports

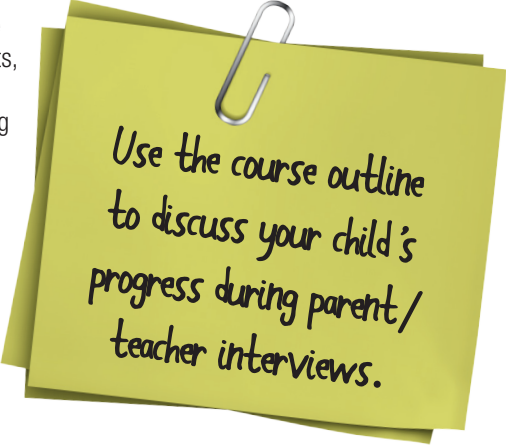
The mid-term report gives a summary of student achievement mid-way through the course. Achievement is reported through learning skills, comments, and marks.

Summative Work

Every course in Ontario must incorporate Summative Work. This is a body of work that students complete towards the end of a course, such as exams and culminating tasks. It gives students an opportunity to demonstrate their achievement over the full range of course expectations.

Final Reports

The final report gives a summary of student achievement at the end of the course. Final grades for report cards are calculated with 70% of the grade reflecting Course Work, and 30% of the grade reflecting two or more pieces of Summative Work.



Use the course outline to discuss your child's progress during parent/teacher interviews.

How Do Teachers Determine Students' Grades?

Teachers do not simply calculate averages in an electronic grading program or spreadsheet in order to determine student grades. They use both mathematical calculations and professional judgment and consider factors such as consistency, recent improvement and amount of evidence to determine students' grades. Teachers and students gather evidence of their learning over time from observations, conversations and student products. Teachers then look at the more recent and most consistent level of achievement or performance as measured against the curriculum expectations and the achievement chart. In reporting, students' achievement in learning skills and work habits are separated from student achievement in curricular subjects (unless specifically allowed by the curriculum). Teachers then summarize the evidence of learning into a percentage grade for 9–12 for provincial report cards. Report card comments that accompany students' grades identify specific student strengths and criteria yet to be met, include classroom examples/evidence and offer specific next steps for improvement.

Which Standards Are Students Measured Against?

In Ontario, the report card grade represents the level of achievement of the overall expectations of a course. It is not a numerical proportion of the material that the student knows or the student's ranking relative to others. The achievement chart sets out four broad categories of learning including Knowledge and Understanding, Thinking, Application and Communication and four levels of achievement (Levels 1 to 4).

Assessment Criteria

Students are assessed on four categories of achievement:

Knowledge: The understanding of facts, concepts, theories, principles, procedures, processes.

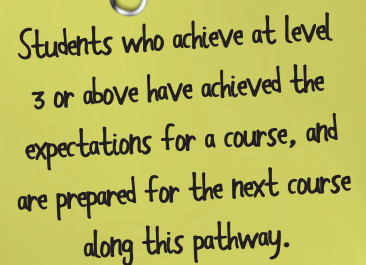
Thinking: The ability to plan, analyze, interpret, problem solve, evaluate, etc.

Communication: The ability to communicate with different audiences for different purposes in oral, visual and written form.

Application: The transfer of knowledge and skills to new, real-world, and unfamiliar contexts.

Levels of Achievement:

Achievement Level	Meaning	OCDSB Report Card Grade
4- 4 4+	Achievement exceeds the provincial standard	80-86 87-94 95-100
3- 3 3+	Achievement meets the provincial standard	70-72 73-76 77-79
2- 2 2+	Achievement approaches the provincial standard	60-62 63-66 67-69
1- 1 1+	Achievement is limited - far below the provincial standard	50-52 53-56 57-59
R	The student has not demonstrated the required knowledge or skills.	0-49
I	There is insufficient evidence to determine a level of achievement (Grade 9 and 10 only). This can happen, for example, if you child recently moved schools or has had an extended illness.	none



Students who achieve at level 3 or above have achieved the expectations for a course, and are prepared for the next course along this pathway.

English Language Learners

When a student's achievement is based on expectations modified from the grade level curriculum expectations to support English language learning needs, teachers will indicate this by checking the "ESL/ELD" boxes on the progress report cards and the provincial report cards for the appropriate subject(s)/strand(s).

Students with Special Needs

Reporting depends on the contents of the Individual Education Plan (e.g. alternative, modified or accommodations only), of the student. Additional information detailing the reporting requirements is available from the school.

Learning skills and work habits help students to learn more effectively, develop their potential as independent learners and take ownership over their own learning. While they contribute to a student's ability to be successful at school, they are evaluated separately from student achievement of course expectations and are not used in determining the final grade.

These skills and habits will be relevant to students long after graduation in helping them to transform into critical thinkers, and responsible productive global citizens.

There are six Learning Skills and Work Habits on Grade 9-12 report cards.

Learning Skills and Work Habits

Learning Skills and Work Habits	Sample Behaviours
Responsibility	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fulfills responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour
Organization	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks
Independent Work	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals uses class time appropriately to complete tasks follows instructions with minimal supervision
Collaboration	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals shares information, resources, and expertise and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions
Initiative	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning approaches new tasks with a positive attitude recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others
Self-regulation	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them seeks clarification or assistance when needed assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges

The development of learning skills and work habits are reported using the following four letter grades:

E = Excellent
consistently demonstrates

G = Good
usually demonstrates

S = Satisfactory
sometimes demonstrates

N = Needs Improvement
rarely demonstrates

The learning skills and work habits from the Ontario Report Card are closely aligned with the employability skills identified by the Conference Board of Canada as essential for success in the workplace.

Learn more at: <http://goo.gl/bsM3fK>

How does Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting fit with the OCDSB's Community of Character and Exit Outcomes?

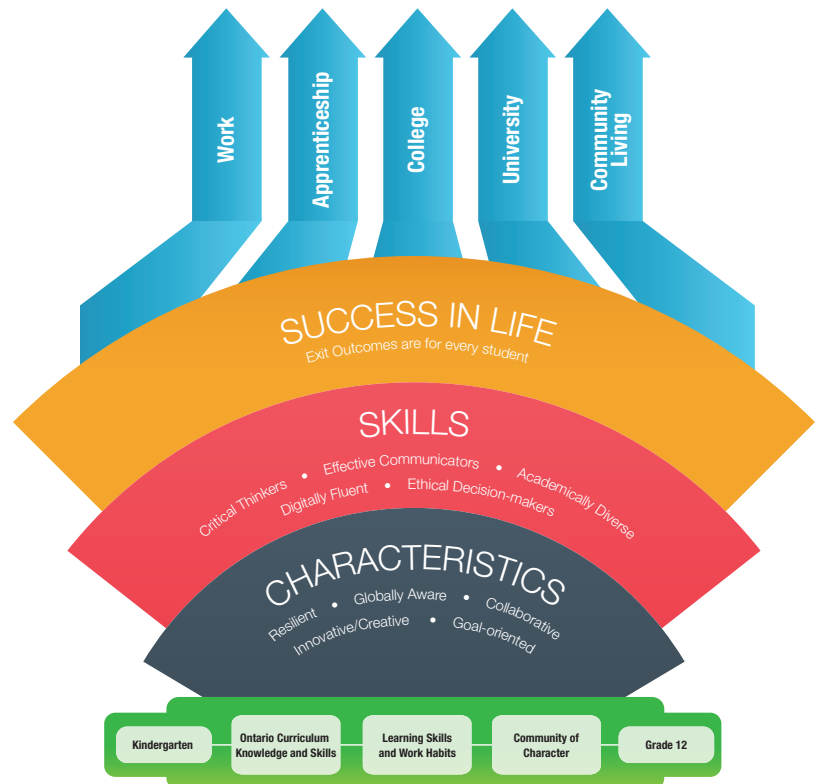


Learning Skills and Work Habits Contribute to Community of Character

The OCDSB incorporates ten character traits to support all students in becoming contributing members of society. The development of learning skills and work habits will help students recognize the link between character education and their classrooms.

Assessment and Evaluation Practices Enhance Exit Outcomes

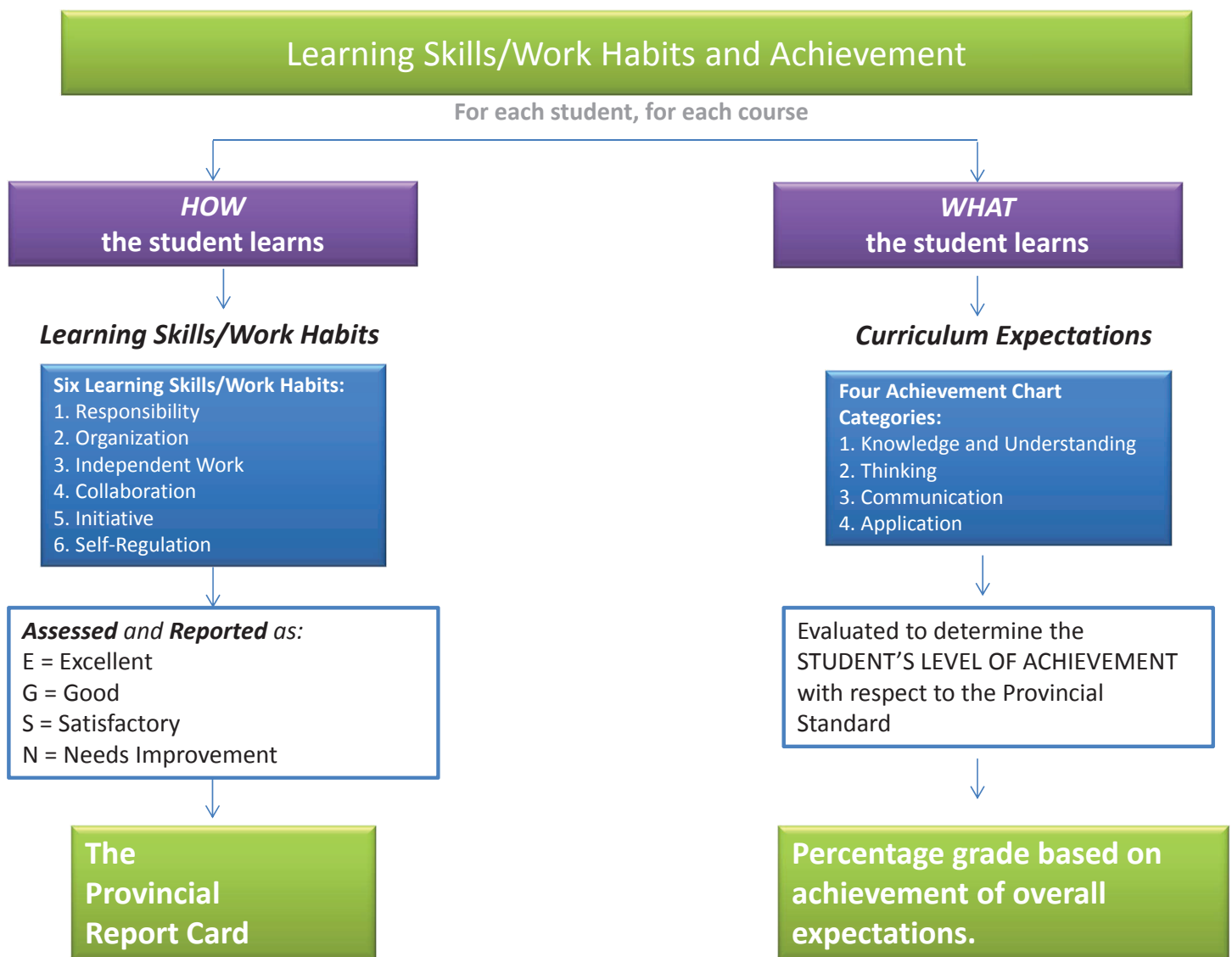
Our goal is to have every secondary student leave our school district with the required characteristics and skills to be a 21st-century success story. We have a vast array of programs and services to help meet the needs of each and every student. Our school district has invested significantly in the professionals who work with and support students on a daily basis. We believe that our focus on teaching and learning can assist every student in moving on to post-secondary opportunities of their choice.



Learn more at: www.ocdsb.ca

Learning Skills / Work Habits and Achievement

What does this mean for my child?
How are they learning? What are they learning?



Roles and Responsibilities

Communication
is Key!

Parent Role

Parents can support their children's learning by:

- ♦ familiarizing themselves with course outlines, curriculum expectations, and assessment criteria;
- ♦ supporting their children in choosing courses that are appropriate to the children's aptitude, interest and goals;
- ♦ helping their children develop strong learning skills and a positive attitude towards learning;
- ♦ working with teachers to send their children clear, consistent messages about curriculum expectations and assessment criteria; and,
- ♦ working with teachers to identify their children's strengths, interests, learning needs and best learning strategies.

Student Role

Students understand and work towards the curriculum expectations and achievement criteria by:

- ♦ understanding the learning expectations and how they will be assessed (read and discuss outlines, assignments, rubrics, etc.);
- ♦ engaging in the learning process – being punctual and attentive, and actively participating in course work;
- ♦ meeting deadlines;
- ♦ developing their learning skills;
- ♦ demonstrating their learning through oral and written products and presentations;
- ♦ using feedback to set goals and work on “next steps” for improvement; and,
- ♦ academic honesty;
- ♦ self-advocating for learning needs.



Teacher Role

Teachers ensure that assessment of student work is valid and reliable, and that it will lead to the improvement of learning for all students by:

- ♦ assessing student work in a transparent and equitable way;
- ♦ supporting all students, and recognizing their diverse needs;
- ♦ providing multiple opportunities for students to show their learning;
- ♦ providing a variety of meaningful tasks;
- ♦ providing descriptive feedback to guide student learning; and,
- ♦ helping students become successful learners.

Parent/Teacher Communication — Tips and Tools for Parents

The parent/teacher meeting is an important time to share ideas and information with your child's teacher. You can also discuss ways to help your child develop strengths and overcome challenges. These 10 tips will help you get the most out of your time with the teacher. Remember that time may be limited at parent/teacher meetings.

1. **Be prepared.** Before meeting the teacher, think about what you want to know and understand about your child's school experience. Review the report card and write down key questions you want to ask.
2. **Ask yourself questions.** Focus on what you want to get out of your parent/teacher meeting by asking yourself questions. For example, "What methods are being used to teach my child?" or "What can I do to get involved in my child's learning?"
3. **Talk to your child beforehand.** Ask your children what they think they are good at and what needs improving. Let them tell you how they feel about school, the teacher and getting along with others.
4. **Arrive ready.** Be sure you come to the parent/teacher meeting in a positive frame of mind and with all the materials you need. Bring the questions you prepared in advance along with your child's report card.
5. **Relax and feel confident.** You know your child best and want what's best. Remember, the teacher also wants your child to be successful.
6. **Be clear about what's being said.** If you need clarification or have concerns about an answer the teacher gives, ask the teacher to explain it further.
7. **Think about what was discussed.** Take some time to think about what you and the teacher talked about. If you are still unclear about something or want to ask more questions, don't be afraid to call the teacher to talk further.
8. **Follow-up at home.** Talk with your child after you have met with the teacher. Discuss what was talked about in the meeting, focusing on the positive and how to achieve the goals that you set.
9. **Keep a log or journal.** Write down the actions you take and any observations about your child. This is important information that can be shared with the teacher at the next meeting.
10. **Arrange the next meeting.** Set a date when you will call the teacher for an update on your child's progress or to arrange another meeting.

Resources

Growing Success

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>

Pathways to Success

<http://www.pathtosuccess.ca/>

Ontario Curriculum

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/>

OCDSB Education and Career Pathway Choices

http://www.ocdsb.ca/programs/sec/Secondary%20Docs/OCDSB_CareerMap.pdf

OCDSB Exit Outcomes

<http://www.ocdsb.ca/med/pub/Publications%20%20Updated/OCDSB%20Exit%20Outcomes.pdf>

P21.org c21canada.org - 21st Century Framework

<http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-framework>

<http://www.p21.org/our-work/resources/for-community>



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Our Mission:

*Educating for Success —Inspiring
Learning and Building Citizenship*



Public Education *Doing it W.E.L.L.*

Well-being Engagement Leadership Learning

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