



## AP 3-400 – ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND REPORTING

### FOUNDATION STATEMENTS

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Western School Division believes that student assessment, evaluation and reporting are central to student learning. Each aspect plays a critical role in the educational process and must be effectively communicated to students and parents.

Western School Division recognizes that student's responsibility for their learning matures and develops as they move through the system.

The division values the professional work of its staff and recognizes that their responsibility to the learning process remains consistent in diverse environments.

The division recognizes that a strong invitational partnership between the home and the school is essential for the learning environment. Positive parental support to the student-educator relationship further enhances learning and achievement.

Assessment, evaluation and reporting practices in Western School Division will be directed by and are consistent with:

- *Principles and Strategies for Fair Student Assessment in support of Effective Learning and Teaching*
- Provincial policy and legislation
- Approved curricular outcomes
- Public Schools Act

### PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

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#### Purpose

This document serves to:

- Define Western School Division's current understandings based on current research regarding assessment for improving student learning;
- Guide teacher practice concerning assessment;
- Support teacher professional judgment based on expertise, content knowledge, and pedagogical underpinnings; and
- Comply with Provincial legislation and directives.

#### Mission

Within our community of learners, Western School Division is committed to assessment practices which enable and empower students to take active ownership of their learning.

#### Vision

The intention of this policy is to develop people who:

- are curious and excited about learning
- take responsibility
- know where they are at and set sights on further learning (metacognition and goal setting)



- are confident
- are creative and generative – thinkers, problem solvers, communicators
- are resilient
- are positive contributors
- are collaborators

*Teaching is to impart knowledge or skill and learning is to acquire knowledge or skill by study.  
It is our professional responsibility to see that intended outcomes are learned and  
that the teaching that supports the learning is deliberate and intentional.*

*Anonymous*

## PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

### Defining Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and evaluation are key components in the development of student learning as well as the planning and implementation of instruction. While the two are inherently linked in the learning process, it is necessary to appreciate the distinction between **assessment and evaluation**.

**Assessment** describes the process of gathering and interpreting evidence of student learning. The purpose of assessment is to provide both student and teacher with information that will guide further instruction and improve learning. The information and feedback that is gathered is **formative** and is often referred to as **assessment for learning** and **assessment as learning**. In addition, the information that is collected should not be used to assign marks that would reflect a student’s performance.

**Evaluation** is the process of making a judgment about the quality of student performance over a period of time. The purpose of evaluation is to enable teachers to communicate student achievement in a quantifiable or measurable manner. Evaluation is **summative** in nature and is often referred to as **assessment of learning**. Generally, evaluation will result in the allocation of marks, a percentage, or a rating on a scale.

### Guiding Principles of Assessment and Evaluation

The processes involved in assessment and evaluation will be unique for a given grade level, subject area, course, or even class. However, the following principles will be considered to guide effective assessment and evaluation practices.

Effective assessment and evaluation...

**Assessment for learning** helps teachers gain insight into what students understand in order to plan and guide instruction, and provide helpful feedback to students

**Assessment as learning** occurs when students develop an awareness of how they learn and use that awareness to adjust and advance their progression.

**Assessment of learning** informs students, teachers and parents as well as the broader educational community of achievement at a certain point in time in order to celebrate success, plan interventions and support continued success.

**Assessment (formative)** provides information that guides further instruction and is designed to improve student learning. Examples include practice, initial drafts, discussion, and observations.

**Evaluation (summative)** is a response to student performance that indicates achievement and the end of an instructional period. Examples include assignments, projects, final drafts, quizzes, tests, and exams.



- . **support and reflect curricular outcomes**  
Assessment and evaluation should reflect classroom instruction and be guided by clear performance targets and criteria, which are consistent with curricular outcomes.
- . **are part of effective learning and teaching**  
Assessment and evaluation are an integral part of curriculum, planning, and instruction. They should inform students and teachers about learning goals and processes, as well as guide decisions for future instruction and learning.
- . **engage students**  
Students should be active participants in the processes of assessment and evaluation. Students shall have opportunities to engage in self-assessment so they can be more reflective of their learning and set future learning goals. As a part of being engaged, students should be motivated and encouraged to be responsible and accountable for their learning.
- . **reflect the developmental needs of learners**  
Assessment and evaluation strategies should consider a variety of learning styles as well as social, cultural, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs.
- . **are ongoing and systematic processes that involve a variety of strategies and methods**  
The concept of **triangulation** should be employed when assessing and evaluating student learning. By engaging in a **variety** of assessment strategies from the three primary areas – observations, conversations, and products – teachers will generate more opportunities for students to demonstrate and enhance their learning.  
  
In addition, the assessment and evaluation strategies that are selected should be valid and reliable measures of the learning outcome or outcomes being addressed.



## PRINCIPLES OF GRADING

Throughout the school year or term, teachers analyze assessment data and make judgments regarding students' levels of performance in relation to outcomes, established criteria, and individual student growth. These judgments will result in the designation of student **marks** and **grades**.

### Guiding Principles of Grading

Curricular outcomes are used as the basis for grade determination. A student's mark will be based on individual achievement, whether an independent or cooperative learning strategy is used

- A grade will be calculated by comparing the individual's achievement to pre-determined criteria for the outcome being measured.
- Effort, attitude, participation, attendance, punctuality and other behaviours should not be included in grades/marks unless the specific behaviours are stated outcomes of a Department of Education document or are otherwise stated in this policy document.
- In order to ensure that grades are based on a balance of assessment tools, the triangulation method is used.
- Based on the best evidence available, a teacher will use his/her professional judgment to determine the grade.

### Application of Grading Practices

- When calculating marks to determine a grade, teachers are encouraged to use median and mode. There still may be instances where the mean is used.
- In determining a grade, teachers will look for the most consistent level of achievement with special emphasis on most recent evidence.
- Students will be given multiple opportunities\* to demonstrate their learning over the duration of a course.
- Zeros will only be used to indicate that a student, after given multiple opportunities has not demonstrated any learning of a curricular outcome.
- A student may receive a No Response (NR) when, after being given multiple opportunities to complete a task, the student has completed none of the requirements for that task.

### Academic Responsibility

Teachers also have important responsibilities in supporting the learning of all students. Their responsibilities include the following:

1. **Establish and clearly communicate expectations regarding assignments.**  
Assignment requirements and assessment criteria will be discussed with students. Teachers communicate to students the intended learning outcomes, the nature of the products and performances, and the criteria for judging the evidence of learning.

*A **mark** is the score, letter, or number given on any single test or performance.*

*A **grade** is the number or letter reported at the end of a period of time as a summative statement of student performance.*

*In a sequence of marks arranged from smallest to largest, the **median** is the middle mark (if the sequence has an odd number of marks) or the average of the two middle marks (if the sequence has an even number of marks). For example, in the sequence 4, 8, 10, 56, the median is 9 (the average of 8 and 10).*

*The **mode** is the mark that occurs most frequently in a set of marks.*

*The **mean** is the average value of a set of numbers.*

*\***Multiple opportunities** can be defined as more than one assignment opportunity to show the same outcome or more than one opportunity to complete the same assignment as determined by the teacher based on effective practices.*

*A **No Response** indicates that despite being given multiple opportunities, the student has completed none of the requirements for a task.*



Teachers will be prepared to clarify the expectations if necessary, by providing exemplars, and to provide timely and specific feedback to students.

2. **Set and communicate reasonable timelines for assignments and support students in meeting these timelines.** The timelines teachers set provide adequate time for students to complete the work, while being mindful of other demands and of student strengths and challenges. Teachers use their professional judgment to establish reasonable but firm expectations regarding timelines. Professional judgment is also used to support and motivate students who do not take responsibility for their work through the use of a variety of strategies to ensure students make regular progress on assignments. Regular communication about student progress among teachers, students, and parents will support timely completion of assignments.

Teachers will:

- Teach and assist students to manage time effectively—monitoring student progress at each stage of a complex assignment can ensure they stay on track.
- Anticipate which students may require additional supports to complete assigned tasks, and monitor those students more closely.
- Encourage students to communicate with the teacher in advance of the due date should an extension be requested by the student or required by the teacher.
- Contact parents to discuss strategies for keeping students on track when they are falling behind or if there is a pattern of the student not taking responsibility for their work.

Other strategies teachers may use are:

- Solicit and consider student input and collaborate with other staff to coordinate the timing of major assignments.
- Share assignment timelines and reminders through many means, including classroom web pages, email, and course outlines.

3. **Establish, communicate, and apply consequences for late and missing work.** Students must understand that there will be consequences for not completing assignments that provide evidence of learning or for submitting those assignments late. If, after establishing and clearly communicating expectations regarding assignments, setting and communicating timelines for assignments, and supporting student learning using the strategies provided above, student work is still late or missing, teachers may apply the following strategies based on their professional judgment:

Teachers will:

- Discuss with the student and, where appropriate, with the student's parents about the reasons for not completing the assignment, and consider the legitimacy of reasons.



- Develop an agreement with the student to complete the missing work. This may require a supervised setting.

Teachers may:

- Provide appropriate support to students in the form of counselling or peer tutoring to address issues and barriers that may be preventing the student from completing assigned work.
- Provide additional supports for students who are learning English or French as an additional language.
- Provide alternative assessment tasks that accommodate diverse learning needs.
- Deduct marks for late or missing assignments in accordance with approved divisional procedures. (Please see your school for the currently approved procedures.)

In applying consequences to late or missing work, teachers will consider the nature of the assignment, the individual circumstances of the student, and the potential impact of the consequence on subsequent learning and motivation. Whatever the consequence, students are ultimately responsible for the timely completion of their assignments and for knowing that there are consequences for failure to adhere to those parameters.

### Academic Honesty

Teachers and principals have the following responsibilities:

- **Communicate and reinforce expectations of academic honesty with students.**

Aspects of academic dishonesty include:

- *cheating* (e.g., copying others' work, using cheat notes);
- *lying* (e.g., misrepresenting contributions to group work, lying about circumstances to obtain extensions); and
- *plagiarizing* (submitting or representing someone else's work as one's own).

- **Respond appropriately to academic dishonesty.**

Teachers will apply the following strategies to deal with academic dishonesty and invoke these sanctions as appropriate:

- Contact parents.
- Document the incident in the student's file.
- Have the student redo the work honestly.

Teachers may apply the following strategies to deal with academic dishonesty and invoke these sanctions as appropriate:

- Report this behaviour on the report card.
- Enforce loss of privileges for the student at the school.
- Enforce other disciplinary measures such as an extension.
- Deduct marks for academic dishonesty in accordance with the following procedure: (under development)



- Ensure that mark deduction results in a mark that, in the professional judgment of the teacher, fairly represents the student's actual achievement.

Teachers need to consider the nature of the assignment, the age and maturity of the student, the individual circumstances of the student, and the potential impact of the consequence on subsequent learning and motivation. Whatever the consequence, students should complete the work in an honest way.

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## COMMUNICATING STUDENT LEARNING

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The purpose of communicating student learning is to inform the student and parent(s) regarding:

- academic growth
- academic progress
- academic achievement
- active learning skills
- personal growth
- social development
- decisions that support further learning

On-going communication between the teacher and the student, parents, and other educators is an important part of improving student learning and improves the teacher's instruction of that student. This ongoing communication fosters the development of rapport between all parties.

### Informal Communication

Teachers communicate student learning in a variety of ways on an on-going basis as part of assessment and evaluation, focusing on the **student's growth and progress**.

Types of informal communication include the following.

- Comments – oral and written
- Dialogue – planning and reflection
- Conferencing
- Interviews
- Anecdotal remarks
- Graded assignments
- Learning conversations
- Phone calls to parents
- Emails to parents

***Growth** describes a student's sequential development that has occurred without reference to established standards or a learning continuum.*

***Progress** describes a student's sequential development based on achievements made in reference to established standards or a learning continuum.*

***Achievement** is a measure of a student's level of performance at a specified time or for a given task or outcome.*



## Formal Communication

There are scheduled reporting periods that serve as formal means of communication with students and parents. Two primary methods of communicating formally are report cards and conferences.

### Report Cards

Formal report cards communicate information about student achievement and behaviours in a practical and meaningful format. This format will look different at different levels (Early Years, Middle Years, and Senior Years) to better express student learning at those stages.

The formal report card will contain information about student achievement and/or growth in relation to curricular outcomes, and information about a student's personal and social growth.

### Conferences

Conferences provide an opportunity for dialogue between student, parent, and teacher regarding the student's learning.

K-12 students will have student-involved conferences following first and second term report cards.

## Intra and Inter School Communication

Teachers will communicate information about a student's learning to other teachers to better support the student's learning.

This information is communicated by means of the Consultative Collaborative Model through:

- . Class reviews
- . Resource files
- . Grade group meetings
- . Transition meetings (between grades and/or schools)
- . Student Assistance Programs



## ASSESSMENT SUPPORT FOR EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS

Exceptional learners include those individuals whose characteristics, strengths, and educational needs may not be appropriately addressed through the use of regular programming and services. Assessment of students with specific learning needs falls under the Appropriate Educational Programming Regulation in the *Public School's Act*.

Establishing appropriate expectations and clearly defined attainable goals is the foundation of a fair and effective assessment process for students who have specific learning needs. Teachers may find that traditional assessment instruments do not accurately reflect these students' abilities to meet or work towards the course outcomes. While the concepts of differentiation and triangulation should continue to be applied, alternative assessments may be required for exceptional learners.

### Providing Support to Meet Outcomes

When exceptional learners are unable to meet curricular outcomes with regular programming, despite the use of differentiated strategies, this may be an indication that further interventions are necessary. To facilitate success, a proactive approach using the consultative/collaborative model for supports should be applied. The first efforts should be made by the classroom teacher to adapt teaching and learning processes and assessment procedures to meet the unique needs of the individual student. This will include an Adaptation Profile for the student. In providing students with adaptations, the specific learning outcomes are not modified and progress or achievement will be assessed and reported in the same way as all other students.

If, despite the application of adaptation strategies, an exceptional learner is unable to meet the regular curricular outcomes, modifications to the student's programming may be necessary. Prior to curricular modifications, testing is required to determine cognitive levels or disabilities. Based on the needs identified, an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) outlining the modifications will be developed for the student by a team including the classroom teacher(s), the resource teacher, parents, the student, and other support personnel. As a result of the modified goals and outcomes stated in the IEP, assessment and reporting may assume an alternate format that will reflect the student's progress and achievement towards these specific goals and outcomes. All curricular outcomes will be presented to a student with modified curricular learning expectations but only the outcomes that have been retained or changed will be assessed.

### Providing Support for Gifted Learners

When gifted learners consistently exceed the grade level expectation for curricular outcomes with regular programming, this may be an indication that further challenge is necessary. To facilitate enrichment and foster further success, a proactive approach using the consultative/collaborative model for

*Exceptional learners are students who may have the following specific needs:*

- cognitive disabilities
- language and speech disabilities
- learning disabilities
- physical disabilities and/or chronic health problems
- behavior disorders
- English as an Additional Language
- literacy or numeracy deficits
- gifted students

*Differentiated Instruction is the range of instructional strategies, techniques, and approaches used to support student learning and to help each student achieve high expectations and realize his or her potential.*

*Adaptations are changes in the teaching process or materials or in student products to help a student achieve the expected learning outcomes.*

*Modifications are changes to or reductions in the number of curricular outcomes made for a student with significant cognitive disabilities.*



supports should be applied. The first efforts should be made by the classroom teacher to use teaching strategies, learning processes and assessment procedures that will meet the unique needs of the individual gifted student. This may include an Adaptation Profile for the student. In providing students with compacting of or extensions to the curriculum, the specific learning outcomes are not modified but are covered more quickly or expanded upon to foster deeper understanding and thinking. Progress or achievement will be reported in the same way as all other students.

Confining assessment to tests that require only memorization and other lower levels of thinking does not provide gifted learners with what they need. They need opportunities for expanding their interests and demonstrating their creativity. Alternative forms of assessment, using differentiation and choice, are recommended.

***Characteristics of Gifted Learners:***

- *learn in a shorter period of time and with less practice*
- *demonstrate advanced levels of comprehension*
- *have a capacity for retaining and processing information*
- *display a high degree of initiative and intrinsic motivation*
- *have a need for freedom and individuality in their learning*
- *have interests in issues and a wide range of topics*
- *demonstrate a high degree of responsibility*

***Suggested Assessment Tools:***

- *self-directed inquiry projects (advanced research)*
- *creative problem-solving projects/community-based projects*
- *independent study/integrated units*
- *fieldwork (with mentors)*
- *Debates*
- *presentations*
- *seminars*
- *role-playing (representational) form*



## ACADEMIC SUPPORTS

### Promotion and Retention of Students

**In Kindergarten to Grade 8, promotion decisions rest with the principal, who consults with teachers, parents, and other specialists as appropriate.** The decision is based on the evidence of the student's progress and growth, and considers the grade level placement that would support and extend the student's learning.

Whether the decision is to retain or to promote a struggling student, the school must address that student's learning needs through the development of an intervention and support plan.

**In Grades 9 to 12, the final decision on whether or not to grant credits rests with the principal, who consults with teachers, parents, and other specialists as appropriate.** Granting credits and diplomas must be based on clear evidence of achievement of the learning outcomes set out in provincial curricula or modified curricula (as set out in an individual education plan), as appropriate. Students that do not meet the minimum requirements necessary to receive a credit in a course will have the opportunity to repeat that course in a subsequent semester. Supports may be necessary to facilitate the student's success when repeating a course.

### Providing Supports for Success

#### Promotion with an Intervention Support Plan

When a struggling student has been promoted to a grade based on the decision of the Principal, who consults with the teachers, parents and other specialists as appropriate, an Intervention Support Plan will be developed by the school to address the learning needs of that student. In providing supports, the student should have the opportunity to acquire the necessary prerequisite knowledge while developing an understanding of the current outcomes. When developing a plan to assist these students, the following supports should be considered.

- Communication set up during the transition meetings with students.
- Intervention addressing specific areas of deficiency. This may include using structured programs such as Later Literacy, Reading Recovery, Precision Math, etc..
- Referrals made to the resource team including clinicians for diagnosis and suggested strategies.
- Adaptation profiles to communicate from one teacher to another.
- Meetings with the school team to address growth, ongoing concerns and strategies that may work for the child.
- Use of a Variety of technology applications such as computer-assisted learning programs such as Word Q, Speak Q, and Rosetta Stone.
- Differentiated instruction to address the diverse learning needs of the individual child while helping the student to be a part of the group.
- Home-School Liaison conference to explore programming and resources pertinent to the student's unique learning needs. Class composition and the

*Minimum requirements are defined as a student achieving 50% of the outcomes for the course.*



human resources (teachers, support personnel and Educational Assistants) available to support the plan. The receiving teacher's experience and training in relation to the student's learning needs.

### **Retention with Supports**

If there are circumstances where the school, in consultation with the parents/guardian and student, determine that retention is in the student's best interest, the student will have the opportunity to repeat a grade based on the learner's developmental stage. Upon making this decision, the school team will create a written plan that will specify classroom strategies and school-based supports to address the educational, emotional, and social effects of retention on the student. While the input of the parents/guardians and student is considered valuable, the final decision to retain a student will be made by the Principal.

### **Providing Supports for Students Repeating a Course**

When a student does not meet the minimum requirements for demonstrating the learning outcomes in a course and as a result does not receive his/her credit, the student will have the opportunity to repeat the course in a subsequent semester. At this time a Support Plan, detailing specific alternative instructional or behavioral strategies, will be developed by the school team and implemented by the teacher in collaboration with the resource teacher.

When developing a plan to assist students in the acquisition of course credits, the following supports should be considered.

- . Student Assistance Program (SAP)
- . Home-School Liaison
- . Referral to Guidance or Resource
- . Assignment to the resource room for assistance
- . Reading interventions by resource personnel
- . Mentoring/tutoring
- . Time-table changes and adjustments
- . Attendance contract
- . Communication with home
- . Individualized instruction by the classroom teacher
- . Progress Reports
- . Computer-assisted learning
- . Credit recovery
- . Correspondence



### **Substitution for Credit in 9-12**

Under special circumstances at the Grade 9-12 level, the principal may assign a Substitution for Credit to a student who has not received a credit in a course that is mandatory for graduation. This adjusts the allocation of the credits received by a student, but does not alter the number of credits required for graduation. The number of credits that may be substituted is limited to 2 full credits as prescribed by the Department of Education.

### **Assigning an Incomplete (IN) for Students**

The designation of an Incomplete (IN) allows students to continue working toward meeting the expected learning outcomes to receive their credit in a given course. An IN may be assigned when a student is making progress in the course, but for specific reasons (i.e. sickness, death in the family, mental health concerns, etc.) requires additional time and assistance to complete the required work.

When the school team (classroom teacher, principal, resource personnel if required) assigns an IN, a plan of completion must be developed. In developing and implementing the IN plan, there will be communication between the student, teacher, parents/guardians, and administration. The plan that is developed will include the learning expectations for the student, a list of tasks to be accomplished, and a specific time frame for completion. Due to the semester system a fair and reasonable timeline will be dependent upon specific circumstances. Timelines for IN completion must consider the school's timetable, course registration requirements, and regulations provided by the Department of Education.

If the requirements outlined in the IN plan are not achieved by the student, the student will not earn credit for those tasks. If it is determined that the student will not earn credit for the tasks, his/her final mark will be a reflection of the tasks for which there was no response. In either case, the student will have an opportunity to repeat the course to receive his/her credit.



## ACADEMIC APPEAL PROCEDURES

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Situations may arise where a student, parent, or guardian believes that the evaluation of the student does not accurately reflect the student's achievement. In such a case, an appeal procedure can be implemented to resolve the concern.

The following steps outline the protocol for an academic appeal;

1. The teacher, student, and parent meet to discuss the academic concern. At this meeting or a subsequent meeting between the parties, the teacher presents his/her resolution.

*If a resolution is not agreed upon, the concern may be appealed further in step 2.*

2. The teacher presents the concern and his/her suggested resolution to the Principal.
3. The Principal, teacher, student, and parent meet to discuss the concern. During this meeting, the Principal documents the academic concern and rationale for appeal.

To conclude the meeting, **Section 1** and **Section 2** of the ***Academic Appeal Form (AP 3-403)*** are completed by the Principal based on the information provided in the meeting. It is essential that the intent and concern for the appeal are clearly stated so ensure consistency if the appeal procedures continue. The Principal, teacher, student, and parent will review and sign the *Academic Appeal Form*.

Following the meeting, a decision will be rendered in writing in **Section 3** of the *Academic Appeal Form* by the Principal within 10 school days.

4. The Principal and teacher meet to discuss the decision for resolution made by the Principal.
5. The Principal, teacher, student, and parent meet and the Principal indicates his/her decision for resolution.

*If a resolution is not agreed upon, the concern may be appealed further in step 6. Situations may arise where a student, parent, or guardian believes that the evaluation of the student does not accurately reflect the student's achievement. In such a case, an appeal procedure can be implemented to resolve the concern.*

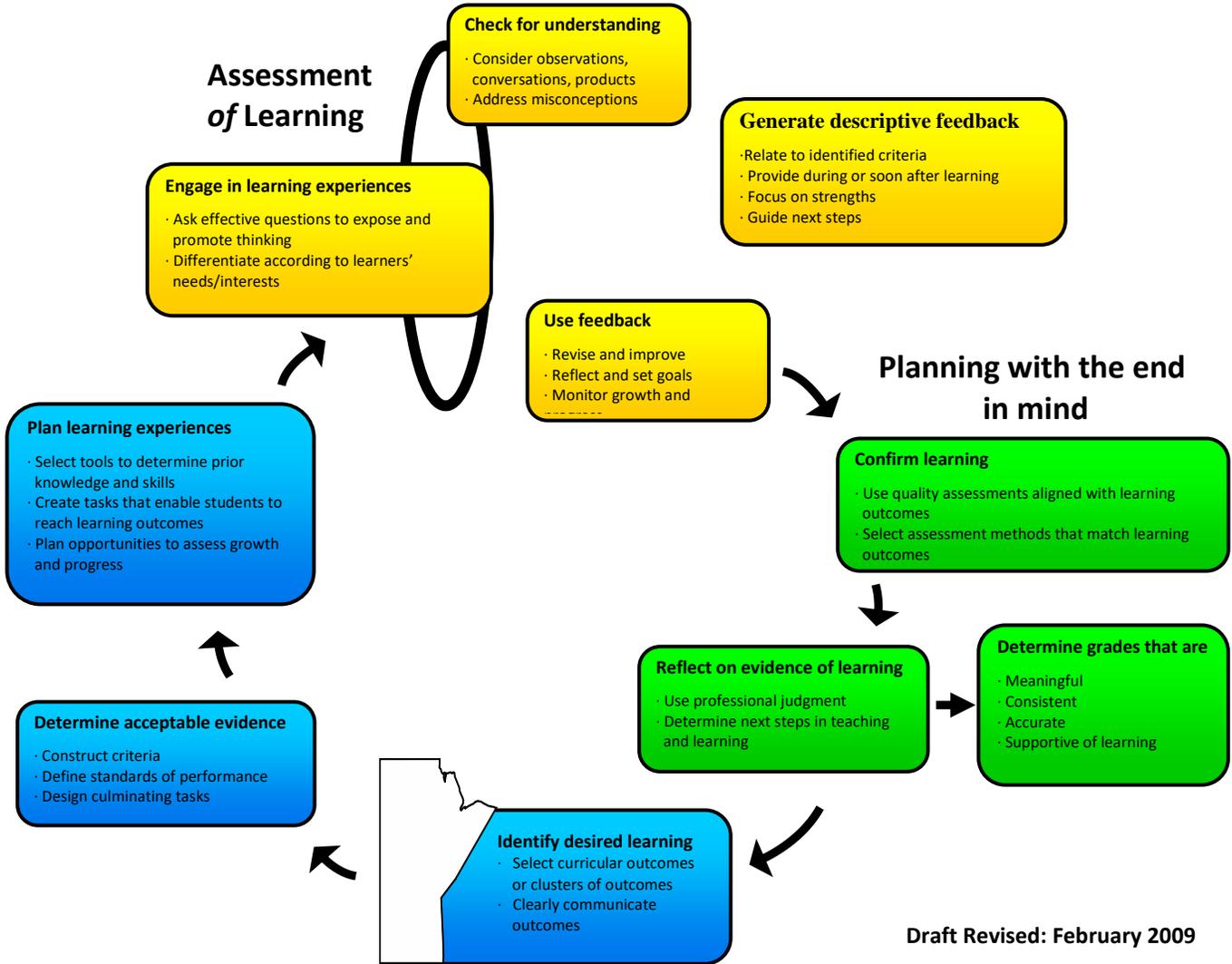
6. The Principal and teacher present the concern and their suggested resolution to the Superintendent. At this meeting the original *Academic Appeal Form* and all other documentation are used to outline the concern to ensure consistency.
7. The Superintendent, Principal, teacher, student, and parent meet to review the appeal.

Following the meeting, a decision will be rendered in writing in **Section 4** on the *Academic Appeal Form* by the Superintendent within 10 school days.

8. The Superintendent presents the resolution to the Principal and teacher as well as the parent and student. These parties should be addressed independently.



ASSESSING AND COMMUNICATING STUDENT LEARNING



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## EXAMPLES OF TRIANGULATION

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<b>Observations</b>	checklists of skill: reading, writing, listening, speaking observation charts	
	group work records	developmental continuum
	presentations/demonstrations	talk-alouds
	discussion records	
<b>Conversations</b>	feedback charts	self-assessments
	group work self-evaluations	learning logs
	student-teacher conferences	admit and exit slips
	academic interviews	anecdotal reports
	process/reflective journals	goal-setting/action plans
	student profiles	student learning groups
<b>Products</b>	notebooks	response journals
	quizzes/tests	portfolio of selected work
	projects	posters/collages
	photos	essays/reports
	graphs	research papers
	sheet work	lab reports

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