

## Elementary and Secondary Report Cards: Q's and A's

Version #5 □ October, 2010

Changes are highlighted in yellow

### Elementary

**Q.**

The last page of the provincial report card includes a tear-off for the parent/guardian to write comments and sign. Would it be better if this was on a separate page to:

- provide more space for the parent to comment;
- make it easier to file; and
- ensure that it is less likely to get lost when a Grade 1 student is returning it to the school?

**A.**

No changes of any kind can be made to the report cards.

**Q.**

What flexibility, if any, do we have in determining the size of comment boxes on the provincial report card or the progress report card? Can we change the size to suit our needs?

**A.**

The design of the progress report card and the provincial report card is standard. The size and location of boxes must not be changed.

**Q.**

Has the size of the font and/or the type face itself been determined or can we establish this with our vendor?

**A.**

Comments about student achievement should be in nine-point type, for legibility. (This statement appears in the Growing Success policy document.) No type face has been determined.

**Q.**

On the progress report card, there is no delineation of strands for language and mathematics; however, the health and physical education and the four areas of the arts are broken into complimentary parts. This seems to be counter-intuitive given the importance of literacy and numeracy. Visually, at least, this seems out of balance. Is this open to change or is the template fixed?

**A.**

The template is standard and is ministry policy. In the case of The Arts, the four areas are considered to be subjects. In the case of Health Education and Physical Education, ministry policy now requires teachers to report separately in these two areas. No changes are to be made to the template.

**Q.**

For the statement: "In the case of the elementary progress report card, it is not necessary for teachers to comment on all subjects/strands in the one space provided for comments." Does this mean that writing in the comment box on the progress report card is optional for elementary teachers?

**A.**

Teachers are definitely expected to comment in the comment box on the progress report card to provide parents with information about the progress of their children. The statement indicates that it is not necessary for teachers to comment on ALL subjects/strands.

**Q.**

For the elementary report cards, the ESL/ELD and IEP boxes are shown at the strand level rather than subject level. Is this the direction that the ministry is taking?

**A.**

Yes, the ESL/ELD and IEP boxes are now checked at the strand level. The intent is to tie the report card more closely with the IEP and students' language learning needs.

**Q.**

"Intensive Core French" is not an option under French on the report card. Are these students identified as Core French?

**A.**

Yes. "Intensive Core French" is to be checked as Core French. Intensive Core French is still a pilot program.

**Q.**

For Grades 1-8, there are no specific statements with respect to the ESL/ELD box. As you know, in the 1998 Guide to the Provincial Report Card, it identifies the statements that must appear in the "Strengths/Weaknesses/Next Steps" comment section. Unlike the statements for students with IEPs, there is no mention of statements for ESL/ELD. Can we assume that there is no change to the existing statements indicated in the 1998 Guide to the Provincial Report Card for ESL and ESD boxes?

**A.**

For the *Growing Success* policy, no statements will appear in the space for comments when the ESL/ELD boxes are checked.

**Q.**

Our board does not provide instruction or report student achievement for Native Language. May we exclude it from the report card? We do not include it on the current report card.

**A.**

Native Language must not be removed from the report cards.

**Q.**

For the progress report card comment field, is this one comment field for all teachers to share or subject specific for each teacher? If this is one field for all teachers to share, it would be difficult technically to manage the print area for all of the comments entered by each teacher. Some may enter more comments than others. There is a sensitivity to altering comments entered by other staff. We struggle with this technically today with the existing elementary report cards. If the comment area is subject specific how much space is each teacher entitled to enter and ultimately print?

**A.**

The comment area on the progress report card is not subject specific. Teachers are to share this space and, if possible, the electronic versions should facilitate the sharing. The position of the ministry is that students benefit when teachers collaborate in the assessment of their work. In addition, it is alright for one teacher to enter more comments than another. The comments do not need to line up with the subjects and teachers do not need to enter comments for all subjects/strands.

**Q.**

When producing the first of two provincial report cards, what date range should be used to calculate the days absent and times late? Should the date range start with the first day after the progress report card period ended, or the first day of the school year? (The total days absent and total times late would naturally be calculated from the first day of the school year).

**A.**

There are three reporting periods. For each of the three report cards, days absent and times late are recorded for that reporting period. For each of the three report cards, total days absent and total times late are recorded as accumulated totals for the start of the year to date.

**Q.**

When the elementary progress report card is printed, do the sections designated for board design remain blank?

**A.**

No. Each board must work with their vendor to design the two sections on the elementary progress report card that appear at the top of the first page and at the bottom of the second page. The resulting design will be used consistently in all the elementary schools in the board.

**Q.**

On the elementary provincial report card, there is only one box for French for The Arts. What is the process for checking the box for French if some of The Arts strands are taught in French and some are not?

**A.**

Check the box for French if at least one of The Arts strands is taught in French. Use the space for comments to indicate if some of the other strands are taught in English.

**Q.**

What precisely does “complete the design of the elementary progress report card” mean?

**A.**

Suggestions for completing the two spaces on the elementary progress report card designated for board use are provided on page 50 of *Growing Success*. For example, the tear-off space on the bottom of the second page might be designed to look similar to the tear-off section of the elementary provincial report card. Boards should work closely with their vendors to design these spaces.

**Q.**

Will the information on the elementary progress report card for Grades 1-8 be included in the OnSIS data submissions beginning in 2010?

**A.**

No.

**Q.**

For the elementary progress report card and provincial report card, should all teachers who teach a particular student be able to enter an evaluation (E, G, S, N) for the learning skills and work habits? Should all teachers be able to enter comments?

**A.**

The home room teacher only (in collaboration with the other teachers where appropriate) will determine and enter the evaluation for the learning skills and work habits. However, all teachers who teach a particular student should be allowed to enter comments on the elementary progress report card and provincial report card.

**Q.**

Does the *Growing Success* policy change current policy for the development of an IEP in the elementary grades?

**A.**

Currently, an IEP must be developed and in place within 30 school days of the student's placement in a special education program/service. The formal review and update of the IEP should take place at least once every formal reporting period.

*Growing Success* policy has introduced a fall progress report card to be issued between October 20 and November 20. In addition, a revised provincial report card is issued in January/February and June. As in the past, *Growing Success* policy indicates that there are three formal reporting periods. Therefore, the number of IEP reviews in the elementary grades continues to be three (3).

**Q.**

For the elementary provincial report card, how many strands must teachers report on for Report 1 in January/February and for Report 2 in June for language, mathematics, Health and Physical Education, and the Arts?

**A.**

For Language, four strands are reported on in Report 1 and four strands are reported on in Report 2. For Mathematics, at least four strands are reported on in Report 1 and at least four strands are reported on in Report 2 and each strand is reported on at least once. For Health and Physical Education, both are reported on in Report 1 and Report 2. For The Arts, at least three strands are reported on in Report 1 and at least three strands are reported on in Report 2 and each strand is reported on at least once.

**Q.**

In the comments box for Learning Skills and Work Habits on the elementary progress report card and the elementary provincial report card, are teachers required to add the statement about modifications for students with IEP's?

**A.**

In the case of the Learning Skills and Work Habits, there are no IEP boxes. In addition, teachers are not required to write a statement about modifications in the comments box.

**Q.**

When a teacher checks the IEP box beside subjects/strands on the Elementary Progress Report Card, is the statement about modified expectations also included in the comments box?

**A.**

No.

**Q.**

Does the ministry have a formal policy or guidelines on student promotion from one grade to another for the elementary panel? Or, are these decisions made solely at the school/school board level?

**A.**

With respect to promotion policy, according to the *Education Act*, it is the responsibility of the school principal to decide whether a student is sufficiently prepared for work at the next grade level, or whether it would be in the best interest of the student to repeat the grade. This decision is made in consultation with the child's teacher and parents who know the characteristics of the particular child and which approach would be more beneficial for his or her continued learning and progress.

**Q.**

With the new *Growing Success* policy, are we to follow the six week rule for all three reporting periods or just for Report 1 and Report 2 in January/February and June?

**A.**

As stated on page 49 of *Growing Success*, both the Elementary Progress Report Card and the Elementary Provincial Report Card are placed in the student's OSR. Also, on page 53, policy states that there are three formal reporting periods for the elementary schools. Therefore, the six week rule applies for all three reporting periods.

## Secondary

**Q.**

For the semestered report card, are the page numbers to be printed as part of the form? Most of our semestered students have four courses so would require three pages instead of four.

**A.**

Yes. The page numbers on the semestered report card must be printed as part of the form. There should be no changes to the pages of the report cards and their numbering. While most students take four full-credit courses per semester, some students take part-credit courses and will require both pages. The report cards must be standard for all students.

**Q.**

May we print page 4 on the back of page 1 and renumber the pages in order to be green and save collating effort and paper?

**A.**

The design of the report cards must not be changed in any way.

**Q.**

The achievement level/percentage mark range fails to include the mark of ALT. ALT may be used on the OST for alternative courses that do not lead to credit.

**A.**

ALT is not used on the provincial report card. Please refer to policy on page 63 of *Growing Success* under the heading IEP with Alternative Learning Expectations.

**Q.**  
What is the maximum character count for the comments box? Is there a suggested font size?

**A.**  
The font size is 9-point.

**Q.**  
We determine Grade 9 and 10 courses by the fourth character of the course code, so we would consider courses with a 1, 2, A or B as junior courses. However, for any LVxBx courses, full disclosure rules consider them to be senior courses even though the fourth character of the course code is B. Is it correct to assume that these courses would not be assigned the code “I”?

**A.**  
Yes.

**Q.**  
The columns for credit earned, percentage mark, total absences, total lates, and perhaps telephone appear to be too narrow for the largest data value that could be printed there. For example, a credit value of ‘0.50’ or absences of ‘88’ may not fit in their columns. If the data cannot fit, is it acceptable to reduce the font size to 8 for those fields?

**A.**  
Yes. If it is necessary, font size for these columns may be reduced to size 8.

**Q.**  
When calculating the median for a small class, it is conceivable that the median could be ‘I’. This could be a privacy issue, which could identify the mark that several students earned. Should the median be suppressed if it is an ‘I’.

**A.**  
It is expected that teachers will use the code ‘I’ on the report card for very few students, that ‘I’ would not be the median, and that it would not be necessary to suppress the median. Note that the code ‘I’ is not a mark. The code ‘I’ is defined on page 42 of the *Growing Success* policy document. In determining the median, the code ‘I’ is ranked below the percentage marks.

**Q.**  
How should the course median be calculated? Should the medians of semestered courses be separated from non-semestered courses? What about different course types, such as early completion, credit recovery, e-learning, and co-op?

**A.**  
The course median is calculated for all students taking the course.

**Semestered and non-semestered** courses should have separate medians since students are at different points in the course when report cards are issued.

Students taking the course through **e-learning** are included in the calculation of the median. The ministry is currently giving further consideration to this issue and how marks and medians for students in e-learning courses are entered on report cards and the Ontario Student Transcripts.

A **cooperative education** course and the related course are listed as separate entries on the report card and OST, using the name of the related course and its course code for both courses. The cooperative education course is identified by the inclusion of “co-op” after the course name and, on the OST, by the notation “C” in the “Note” column. A median is calculated for the related course. A median should not be calculated for the co-op course and the space for the median on the report card for the student taking co-op should be left blank.

A student taking **credit recovery** should have the final mark recorded on the final secondary report card (semestered or non-semestered). That student’s credit recovery mark should not be included in the calculation of the median for the regular students taking the course. The space for the median for the credit recovery student on the final report card should be left blank.

The marks of students doing **early completion** of a course should be included in the calculation of the median, even though they may complete their work earlier.

**Q.**  
For students on the OSSD 1989 or OSSC, what do we print for the “Completion of Requirements for Graduation” page? Given that the requirement areas and required credits are part of the form and not to be changed, how valid is it to produce this page for these students?

**A.**  
The section headed “For School Use” on the “Completion of Requirements for Graduation Page” may be used to record local requirements, specialized programs completed, or certificates earned by the student.” Therefore, as in the past, the credits earned should be recorded on this page with appropriate information and comments in the “For School Use” space.

**Q.**  
On the “Completion of Requirements for Graduation” page, is the purpose of the ‘For School Use’ text box for a common message to all students? Or can this space contain information applicable only for this specific student?

**A.**  
See response for question above. This space can be used for information for all students and for individual students.

**Q.**  
What is the numeric equivalent of ‘I’?

**A.**  
There is no numeric equivalent for the code ‘I’. The policy for this code is provided on page 42 of *Growing Success*.

**Q.**  
Who in a secondary school enters information in the space on the Completion of Requirements for Graduation page labelled “For School Use”?

**A.**  
In most schools, the principal designates a person  such as the office manager or senior secretary  to enter information into this space

**Q.**

The code “I” is not assigned on report cards for students in Grades 11 and 12. Does this apply to the students’ enrolment grade or the grade level of the course?

**A.**

The policy applies to the grade level of the course.

### **Elementary and Secondary**

**Q.**

When report cards are filed in students’ Ontario Student Records (OSR’s), must they include the principals’ signatures?

**A.**

Yes. The report cards are not complete without the principals’ signatures.

**Q.**

How is the median calculated when there is an even number of students? For example, 40 students are taking the course □ the 20<sup>th</sup> student has a percentage mark of 63% and the 21<sup>st</sup> student has a percentage mark of 60%.

**A.**

The median is the arithmetic mean of the two middle scores. In this case, the median is  $(63 + 60)/2 = 61.5$ .

**Q.**

How will the ministry support trending analysis with the changes to the marks, subjects, and the new learning skills and work habits?

**A.**

In some cases such as grades for the elementary mathematics strands and grades and medians for the secondary courses, trending analysis can be continued from the past. In other cases such as for the evaluation of the learning skills and work habits for Grades 1-12 and grades for elementary Health and Physical Education, trending analysis will need to restart at the 2010-2011 school year.

**Q.**

Should a letter grade or a percentage mark be assigned along with the code “I”?

**A.**

No.

**Q.**

In a small school where very few students are taking a subject/course, should the median be suppressed due to privacy concerns?

**A.**

No. The median on a report card provides very little information about the marks of other students. For example, the marks 90, 80, 70, 60, and 50 have a median of 70 as do the marks 72, 71, 70, 69, and 68.

**Q.**

In a small school, where only two students are taking a subject/course, and one student has an “I”, what is the median? Does the same apply when one of the students has an “R”?

**A.**

In these special cases, the space for the median should be left blank.

**Q.**

Will the final edition of *Growing Success* include report cards for Junior and Senior Kindergarten?

**A.**

The final edition of *Growing Success* will include policy related to the Full-Day Early Learning-Kindergarten Program. Decisions about what the policy will be and what report cards might be included will be made in consultation with stakeholders.