The Peel District School Board: A Leader In Supporting Its Teachers In Excellent Assessment And Evaluation

Susan Meredith

The Peel District School Board has long been committed to helping its teachers use the best assessment practices to improve student learning and the best known evaluation strategies and tools to ensure that student progress is tracked and reported fairly and accurately. The underpinning of all assessment and evaluation in Peel classrooms is Policy #14: Student Assessment and Evaluation in Peel Elementary and Secondary Schools. Revised in 2002, it reflects the policy, rationale, principles of effective assessment, a range of assessment tasks to promote fair and inclusive assessment, suggested assessment tools, and specific guides for elementary and for secondary schools. As well expectations around the communication of student progress and a glossary of assessment and evaluation

terms, it ensures that no Peel educator, student or parent is left in the dark as to expectations. Policy #14 is supported by Policy # 70, Peel's Homework policy.

Peel teachers and administrators also have another important tool to support their work in assessment and evaluation. In 2001 a new *Assessment Handbook for Secondary Teachers and Administrators* was issued to assist staffs in secondary schools with implementing the most current Ministry assessment, evaluation and reporting expectations and including best practice. This handbook was distributed to all teachers and sessions were held in each secondary school to ensure that every teacher felt confident in implementing new expectations. That training continues for staff new to Peel through Lunch and Learn sessions, small group sessions af-

ter school and through other staff development opportunities.

The Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting Handbook for Elementary Teachers and Administrators has been revised this year to similarly reflect the most current policies and best practices and align with the secondary handbook. This 2002 version is being shared with elementary staff in a series of training sessions which are occurring both at the board level, with two large sessions being led by assessment expert Damion Cooper, and at the school level. Teachers are being supported in their schools by resource teachers to learn implement the most effective practices.

Other support documents give teachers even more specific information and guidance. They include: Peel Writing and Reading Scales, a Kindergarten Assessment Practices Handbook, ESL/ESD Resource Manuals, Peel Guidelines for Visual Arts Competitions, to name a few.

"Lifelong learning, striving to be the best" is Peel's motto. The board provides strong supports for its teachers to do their best in assessing, evaluating and reporting student progress so that learning improves for all students.

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Order Number: BK-113