



POSITION PAPER ON EVALUATION

The *Tournée sur l'évaluation* was conducted throughout the province by the MELS during the 2008-09 school year. The consultation focused on two specific aspects of the evaluation process: the Report Card that communicates academic progress to the student and parent, and the uniform Ministry examinations. The following challenges, proposed solutions and appended questions represent the position of the LCEEQ in relation to the aspects of evaluation that were the focus of this consultation.

REPORTING ON STUDENT PROGRESS

CHALLENGES

- ⇒ Reporting competency development in the form of a percentage mark has created the following issues:

Converting a teacher's professional judgement, represented by a rating that corresponds to the status/level of the student's development within a competency scale, into a percentage mark is inconsistent with the fundamental principles found in both the Evaluation Policy and the Evaluation Frameworks. This is particularly the case at the elementary level;

There is an absence in the educational milieu, at the present time, of a common and standardized correspondence between a teacher judgement and the conversion of this rating within the competency scale into either a corresponding and specific percentage or a

common range from which a percentage is derived; this situation is not coherent with the "equitable" characteristic of student evaluation;

- ⇒ Despite the Progression of Learning document at the elementary level recently distributed by MELS, there remains an incongruency between the Evaluation Policy, the Evaluation Frameworks and the inclusion of "knowledge" acquisition as a component of competency based evaluation;

- ⇒ Implementing changes to the Report Card, required by the MELS, within a time frame that does not reflect the needs and reality of the educational milieu, for example, changes in October 2008 to be implemented in November 2008;

- ⇒ Implementing changes to the Report Card, required by the MELS, incurring ongoing and additional costs for the educational milieu;

- ⇒ The absence of clear and consistent communication, by the MELS, to students and parents on the changes, content and meaning of student progress contained in the Report Card;

- ⇒ Reporting on the progress of students with special needs that reflects the status/level of competency development of the individual student within his/her own IEP while simultaneously placing the student's evaluation in the context of the anticipated level of achievement for students of his/her age. The current Report Card contradicts the spirit of the MELS' guidelines/policy on special needs and IEP's, as well as, the MELS' documents on Evaluation. This is a complex issue, one which percentage based Report Cards, particularly at the elementary level, seems to complicate.

FURTHER QUESTIONS & PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

How is the reference to "differentiation" contained in the Evaluation Policy to be interpreted? To what degree can "differentiation" realistically be implemented by the teacher in the classroom? Are there limits to the expectations placed on teachers with regard to the degree of "differentiation" that can be implemented by the teacher to address the needs of every student in his/her classroom?

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- ⇒ That teachers be supported in making professional judgements in relation to the status/level of competency development of students; that this support be in keeping with the practices established by the Evaluation Frameworks and the philosophy of the Evaluation Policy, as well as, the principles of evaluation inherent in the QEP;

- ⇒ That a common and standardized formula be decided upon and adopted by the MELS by which either a corresponding percent mark or a range be established, the later being more generally accepted and in keeping with the tenets of the Evaluation Policy, such that the teacher judgement as to the status/level of competency development attained by the student and the conversion of this judgement into a percentage results in equitable evaluation for all students;

- ⇒ That knowledge acquisition, the use of this knowledge and the use of other resources demonstrate competency development and are the basis of evaluation and hence of reporting. Evaluation situations need to incorporate, in an identifiable way, the acquisition of knowledge such that a student's knowledge acquisition is included in competency based evaluation and ultimately communicated in the report card and/or bilan;

- ⇒ That changes to the Report Card, required by the MELS, be communicated in a timely manner during the academic year prior to implementation;

- ⇒ That changes to the Report Card, required by the MELS, be supported in the educational milieu by the funding needed to implement the changes;

- ⇒ That clear, consistent, and timely communication to students and parents with regard to the Report Card be provided to the milieu by the MELS;

- ⇒ That reporting on individual progress is viewed as a key component of evaluation for students with IEP's indicating goals at a lower cycle of competence than the students' physical cycle placement. IEP goals should be specific, measurable and achievable, thus providing clarity to parents on how their child is situated in terms of expectations and anticipated progress on the development of cycle competencies;

- ⇒ That for those students, whose IEP's clearly indicate modified instructional levels, the end-of-cycle 'bilan' reflect the student's individual progress and level of competency development, regardless of the anticipated age-related competencies.

Further Questions:

Given that within one classroom, a teacher may have a number of students who have IEP's, to what degree is it possible for the teacher to differentiate instruction and evaluation not only for the students who have IEP's but also for those who do not? How is evaluation consistent and equitable for the students in this classroom?

MELS UNIFORM EXAMINATIONS

CHALLENGES

- ⇒ Providing adequate QEP programme training, inclusive of evaluation, for teachers within the time-line proposed for uniform examinations by the MELS;
- ⇒ Absorbing, by the educational milieu, of the cost of additional and adequate QEP programme training for teachers;
- ⇒ *Examens d`appoint* that largely reflect the evaluation of knowledge as distinct and separate rather than intrinsic to competency based evaluation as reflected in the Policy on Evaluation and in the QEP;

Does the degree of overt inclusion, in an Evaluation Situation, of knowledge acquisition by the student vary with the subject domain?

Does this need for the overt inclusion of knowledge acquisition in an Evaluation Situation differ at the elementary and the secondary level?

- ⇒ Timing of the delivery of examinations to the milieu and the logistics and adaptation required by the milieu to comply with the preparation for and writing of the MELS examinations has been difficult and unwieldy. This becomes an even greater concern in view of the planned implementation of uniform examinations by the MELS in 2010 and 2011.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- ⇒ That uniform examinations be delayed by the MELS until such time as adequate QEP programme training, inclusive of evaluation, for teachers has been completed;
- ⇒ That funding be re-instated for the purposes of sustainability, adaptation and/or changes related to the QEP for a minimum of 5 years;
- ⇒ That the number of competencies for specific programs be reduced. Furthermore, that MELS' uniform exams evaluate fewer competencies and supplement the evaluation to include the remaining competencies of the subject domain by deferring these to the educational milieu;
- ⇒ MELS' uniform exams should overtly incorporate, in an identifiable way, a student's knowledge acquisition such that it is included in competency based evaluation;
- ⇒ That delivery of MELS' examinations to the milieu be timely to include specific delivery dates that are upheld; that further consultation with the milieu on the

MELS' obligatory and uniform examination schedule be conducted with a view to consideration of the logistics required in the milieu;

- ⇒ That the final MELS' examination schedule be made available to the milieu one full academic year in advance to allow the milieu to adequately prepare, and to set the school boards' and private school calendars to accommodate the MELS' examination schedules.

November 5, 2009