



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Understanding Your Child's Kindergarten Reports

A Parent's Guide to Kindergarten Communication of Learning: Initial Observations and the Kindergarten Communication of Learning

The Ontario government is introducing new provincial reports in Kindergarten. School boards will start phasing in these new reports in the 2016-2017 school year. In 2017-18, all parents^[1] of children in Kindergarten will receive the following reports:

- Fall – Initial Observations Report
- Winter and Spring – Communication of Learning Reports

These three reports will help parents understand their child's progress during the course of the school year. The reports are part of Ontario's updated policy on the assessment, evaluation and reporting of children's learning in kindergarten, found in [Growing Success, The Kindergarten Addendum 2016](#).

This guide has information to help you understand:

- the format of the new reports
- how you can support your child's learning through ongoing communication with their educators.

Fundamental Principles of Assessment and Evaluation

The purpose of these reports is to foster your child's learning and development, and to support your child in becoming an independent learner.

Just like educators teaching Grade 1-12 students, kindergarten educators use assessment and evaluation practices and procedures that are designed to offer feedback that is clear, meaningful and timely.

Your Role as a Parent

Children do better at school when their families are involved. Families, educators and caregivers, who work as partners, enjoy a meaningful relationship and share valuable communication that can support a child's sense of trust, belonging, well-being and success as a learner.

The kindergarten reports offer:

- clear, meaningful information about your child's learning

- three formal opportunities to hear from your child’s educators throughout the school year
- a basis for supporting ongoing communication between home and school.

The Initial Observations Report

The Initial Observations Report will be sent home between late October and November, 2017. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of observations of your child’s learning since the start of the school year and early evidence of growth in learning in relation to the overall expectations of *The Kindergarten Program (2016)*.

This first formal report of the school year can help educators and families develop a positive relationship as partners who share the goal of helping children to be successful. It will give you information about appropriate next steps to support your child’s learning both at school and at home.

The Communication of Learning Report

This report is organized according to the four parts or “frames” of the 2016 Kindergarten Program:

- Belonging and Contributing
- Self-Regulation and Well-Being
- Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours
- Problem Solving and Innovating

These frames reflect the integrated way in which learning happens through children’s play and inquiry in kindergarten.

For each of the frames, educators will add personalised comments about your child that are clear and easy to understand.

These comments:

- will tell you about your child’s “key learning” and “growth in learning”
- can provide specific examples
- may include next steps to support your child’s learning at school and at home.

Educators will indicate if the expectations for your child need to be modified by checking the ESL (English as a Second Language) box or the IEP (Individual Education Plan) box.

Definitions of Terms Used in Kindergarten Reports

The following section explains some of the terms that will be used in your child’s reports.

Key Learning

Key Learning is the most significant learning for your child leading up to the time each report is completed. The most important learning for your child may not be the same as for another child. Educators describe the most important and significant skills, interests and/or knowledge your child has demonstrated based on the overall expectations in the *Kindergarten Program (2016)*.

Growth in Learning

Learning means more than just knowing the facts. Children can demonstrate their new learning by communicating and applying what they have learned in different contexts. When educators evaluate Growth in Learning and record it on your child's report, they consider:

- the ways in which your child learns
- how they are developing
- the direction their learning is taking.

Growth in Learning can refer to one or more of the following:

- movement from a simpler to a more complex stage of development
- an increase in skills or scope of knowledge
- an increase in learning related to kindergarten "frames" such as belonging, contributing, self-regulation, well-being, math, literacy, problem solving and innovation.

Next Steps in Learning

Educators use their observations of how your child is learning in relation to the Kindergarten Program expectations to determine appropriate learning goals for your child.

These "Next Steps" are included in each of the Kindergarten reports that you will receive. There may also be ongoing and less formal communication about your child's next steps at other times.

Educators will work with your child to set personalized learning goals and support your child's progress in the classroom. You can also have a conversation with your child's educators about ways to encourage your child's progress at home.

The Role of Educators

Communication with Parents

Ongoing, clear and meaningful communication between parents, their child and the educator team is vital to a child's growth in learning. You will hear from your child's educators regularly throughout the school year. In addition to written documents, other types of communication might include:

- school or class blogs or websites
- photos and/or children's work
- discussions between a parent and educator or between a parent, child and educator
- sharing the child's portfolio with you
- informal communication through phone calls, notes, letters or emails.

The educators and the principal in your child's school will be able to provide more information about what kinds of communication you can expect to receive.

Evaluation and Observation

Educators observe your child work with other children, adults and materials. They see and hear what children create, and how they work with materials (e.g., paint, blocks, crayons, books, etc.), as they show their thinking and learning. Educators have many conversations with your child to understand how your child is making sense of their experiences. They also observe how children problem-solve, use social skills, and how they understand their own thoughts and feelings. Educators use these conversations and observations in gathering as much information as possible about your child's learning.

Educators analyse this information to evaluate your child's Key Learning and Growth in Learning in relation to the overall expectations of the Kindergarten Program. This evaluation is reflected in the comments they write on the Communication of Learning report.

Where can I find out more?

Additional information to help parents support their child's learning at home:

- [Understanding Your Child's Kindergarten Reports](#)
 - [Publications for parents on the Ministry of Education's website](#)
 - [Preparing your Child for Kindergarten](#)
 - [Reading and Writing with your Child \(K-6\)](#)
 - [Doing Math with Your Child \(K-6\)](#)
- [1] The word 'parents' is used in this guide to refer collectively to a parent, guardian, caregiver, and/or close family member who is responsible for raising the child.