

October 31st, 2021

To: the Honourable Education Minister Jennifer Whiteside and Deputy Minister Scott MacDonald

My name is Jennifer Slack and I am writing to you in my role as President of the Provincial Intermediate and Middle Years Teachers Association (myPITA) to provide our feedback on the Draft Reporting Order.

We appreciate you having released the reporting order for broad feedback; with the wide variety of educational needs within our province, and the way that population density, community composition, and district leadership can affect conditions on the ground, this broad appeal for feedback is an excellent way for concerns to be identified early on, allowing you to address them before implementation of the order.

MyPITA recognizes that a new reporting order is long overdue, especially for the younger grades where the revised curriculum has been in place for several years. We have been looking forward to a reporting structure that better reflects the pedagogy of the revised curriculum and that honours the cycle of learning and assessment that happens in schools. These are our main concerns with the reporting order as currently posted.

The purpose of the summative report at the end of the year is unclear. A cumulative or summative report does not fit with the new curriculum's goal of fostering the idea of learning as a continuing journey and a strengths-based approach to reporting. Summative reports hold a child's early errors against them if "averaged" and holds no meaning beyond a basic learning update if it is to report their current achievements, putting us back at the traditional 3-written-report-cards that so many districts in the pilot programs were thrilled to get away from as inconsistent with a modern classroom experience. Parents have provided regular feedback to teachers that they value the non-written learning updates via 3-way and student-led conferences far more than the formal written reports.

Reporting on student goal setting. This is already in the curriculum under health and career education. Placing it as a reporting order requirement makes it performative and divorces it from its genuine place in the classroom. This will become a "check box to tick" rather than supporting authentic conversations around how to set goals and monitor progress on them. The collation of the goals, and their inclusion in a formal report, is also a far more significant increase in teacher work-load than ministry staff may be aware. This is especially true in the lower grades, among students with diverse needs, and in high schools where students are taking subject-specific courses.

Supporting diverse learners. The information on how to report on students who are achieving significantly below grade-level expectations is unclear. If we are to use grade level proficiency scales, then many of our IEP or AIP students will consistently have the report of Emerging regardless of their progress and achievements, which can be demoralizing. However, the reporting order requires proficiency scales for all subject areas for all students, which does not give the districts the ability to omit scale grading for those students where it would be inappropriate and MyEducation does not provide any flexibility in terms of adding the extra information that would provide parents with a true understanding of their child's progress.

Non-traditional schooling formats. The reporting order appears to have been written with the idea of providing flexibility to districts with how they report out. However, the strictures of the “one size fits all” reporting order will be challenging for schools that operate in a non-traditional format to accommodate.

Support. For many schools, these changes in reporting will require a significant shift in how they report out. Teachers will need time and in-service opportunities to make the shift to the new reporting requirements. Coming on the heels of all the changes that were required for navigating the pandemic, this change needs to be supported with adequate time and funding.

Proficiency scale/letter grade split. Students will have spent 10 years learning under a specific pedagogical approach and are expected to continue learning that way through grade 10-12. However, the reporting from 10-12 is based on letter grades and percentages, which are antithetical to the learning methods supported by the new curriculum.

Recommendations from myPITA:

- That the requirement for a summative assessment report be removed and that only two formal written reports be required. If a report at the end of the course of study is required, it should be one of the two formal written reports documenting the child’s current level of progress, along with the appropriate descriptive feedback. A third informal report could be added to make up the five required learning updates.
- That the requirement to report on student goal setting be removed from the reporting order, except as it relates to standard curricular reporting on Health and Career Education
- That reporting on socio-emotional goal-setting, learning, and progress be considered an appropriate informal learning update, as this is a large part of a child’s educational program, and that it also be acknowledged in the formal written report requirements.
- That sufficient funds and reporting order implementation days be made available to the education system to properly prepare teachers for the switch to the new reporting methodology
- That MyEd have the proven ability to allow for the implementation of the requirements of the reporting order and that adequate trials to stress-test and bug fix the system be run **before** the implementation of the new reporting order; the order should not be brought into effect until the government-supplied technology to support it is in place.
- That the proficiency scale be used from K-12 and that there be no requirement for traditional letter grades or percentages in the K-12 system

Thank you for your time and consideration and your request for our feedback.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Slack
President, myPITA