



Advice For Members

Diagnostic Assessments

The government has issued Diagnostic Assessment Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 155 which provides direction to teachers, principals, and school board personnel about the use of diagnostic assessment.

PPM 155 signals a fundamental change in the locus of control on the use of diagnostic assessments from school boards and principals to individual teachers.

PPM 155 articulates the distinct roles that teachers, principals, and school boards play in the diagnostic assessment process.

The key component of the memorandum is the central role of teachers' professional judgement in the selection, use, and timing of diagnostic assessments in their classrooms.

The key components of the PPM are:

- Teachers must use diagnostic assessment during the school year to inform their instruction;
- District School Boards will generate a list of approved diagnostic assessment tools;
- Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine:
 - which diagnostic tool(s) from the board's pre-approved list they will use;
 - which student(s) they will use the tool with;
 - how often they will use the diagnostic tool; and
 - when they will use the diagnostic tool.

PPM 155 **does not** apply to the administration of special education assessments which identify students with special needs or to provincially mandated assessments such as the Grade 3 and 6 EQAO. Teachers will continue to administer both of these types of assessments.

Administrators cannot direct members to perform diagnostic assessment in a manner that is contrary to the member's professional judgement. Members cannot be directed to use a specific tool, to administer assessments to specific students, or to complete an assessment by a specific date. Should a member be directed by an administrator to conduct an assessment that is contrary to the member's professional judgement the member should contact the ETFO local president immediately.

If school boards request teachers to conduct diagnostic testing to gather additional 'diagnostic data' for their Board Improvement Plan, it is ETFO's position that teachers must be provided with release time during the instructional day to conduct the assessment and to complete all aspects of the marking and administration of such diagnostic assessment.

PPM 155 is available on the ETFO website in the Advice for Members section.