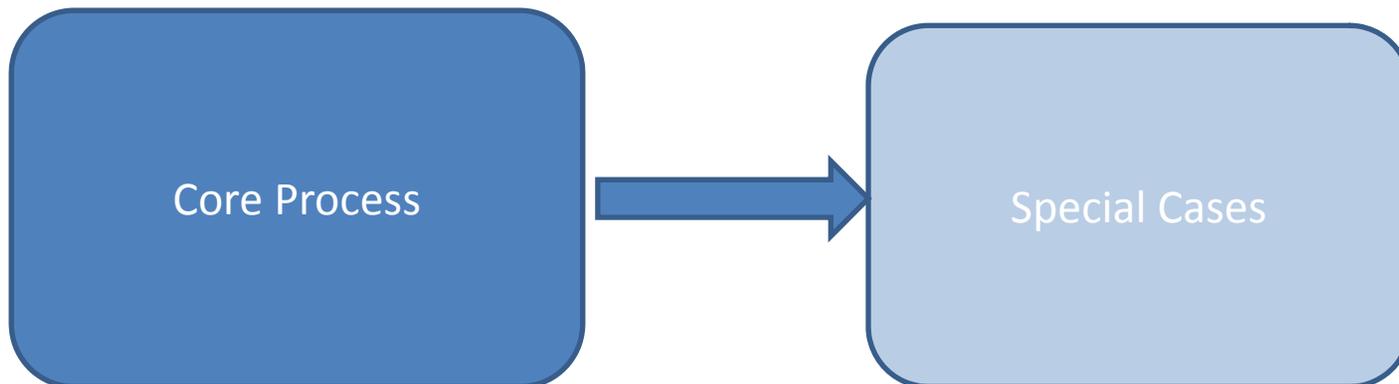# Growing Success

Guiding Principles and

A Shift In Thinking
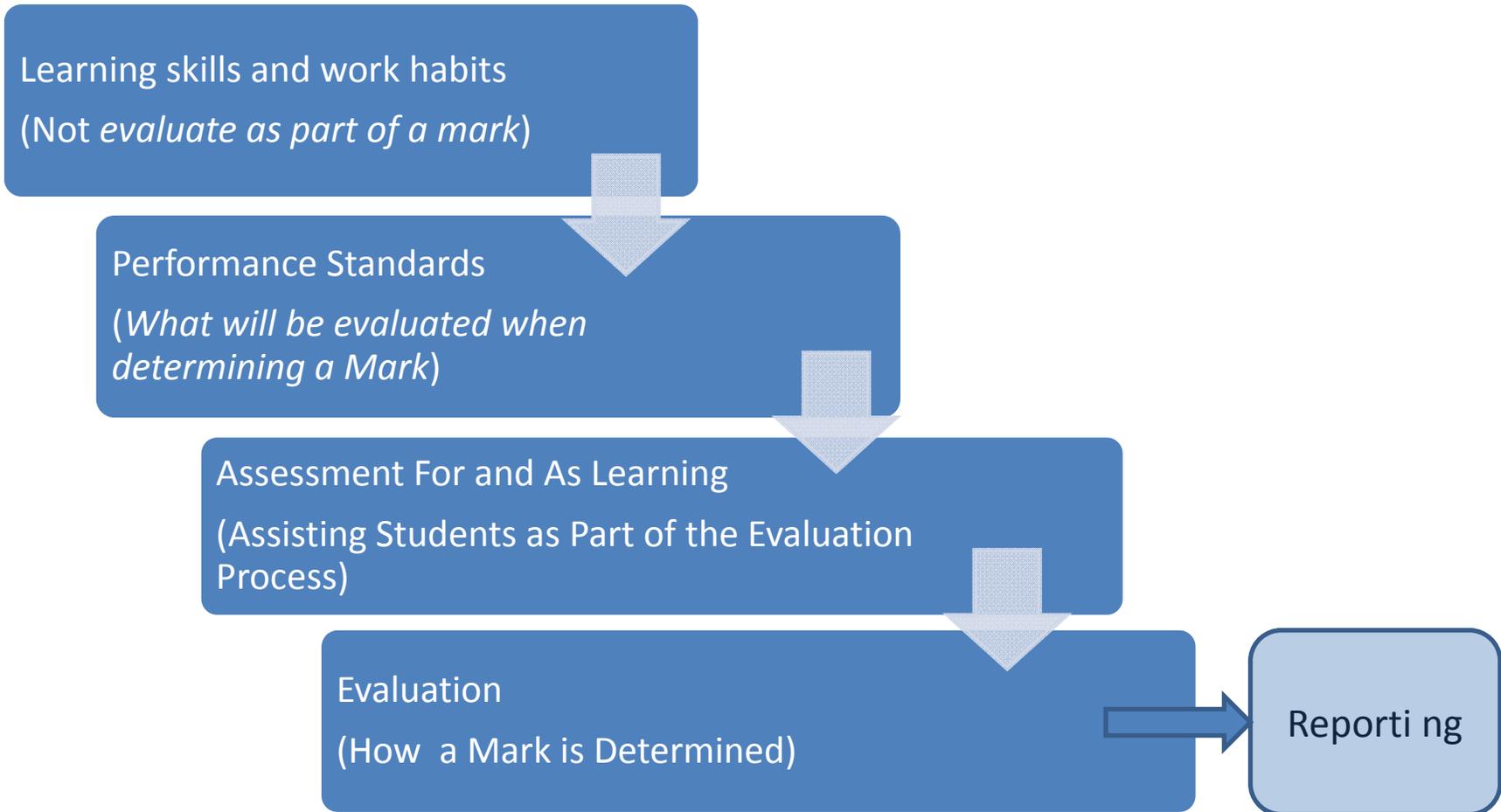
Growing Success: General Approach

How the document is set up:

1. The document lays out some Fundamental Guiding Principles and then…

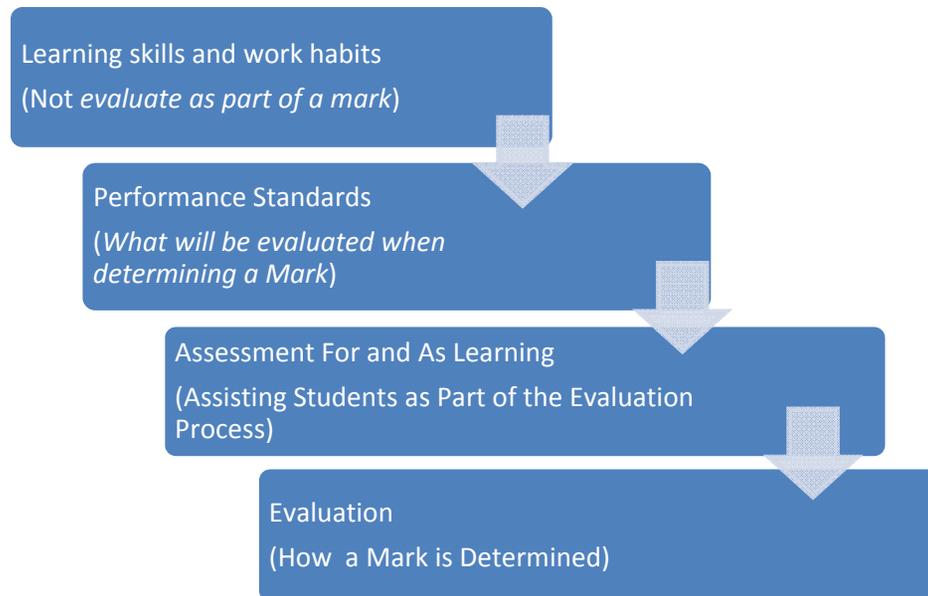| Core Process | → | Special Cases |

Growing Success: Core Process

Growing Success: Special Cases

It then contains chapters on:

1. *Reporting* (Important for administrators…is very prescriptive)

2. *Students with Special Needs* (Important for us, but will be saved for a subsequent iteration…we can't do everything at once!)

3. *E.S.L. Learners* (Not as significant here).

4. *E-Learning*

Growing Success

In the interest of time: this is an introductory overview. We'll focus, for the time being, on the initial "biggies."

Learning skills and work habits
(Not *evaluate as part of a mark*)

Performance Standards
(*What will be evaluated when determining a Mark*)

Assessment For and As Learning
(Assisting Students as Part of the Evaluation Process)

Evaluation
(How a Mark is Determined)

Growing Success: A Problem

Problem for us:

The most fundamental shift in thinking apparent in *Growing Success,* is most apparent in the chapter on Evaluation.

Learning skills and work habits

(Not *evaluate as part of a mark*)

Performance Standards

(*What will be evaluated when determining a Mark*)

Assessment For and As Learning

(Assisting Students as Part of the Evaluation Process)

Evaluation

(How Marks are Determined)

Another Problem

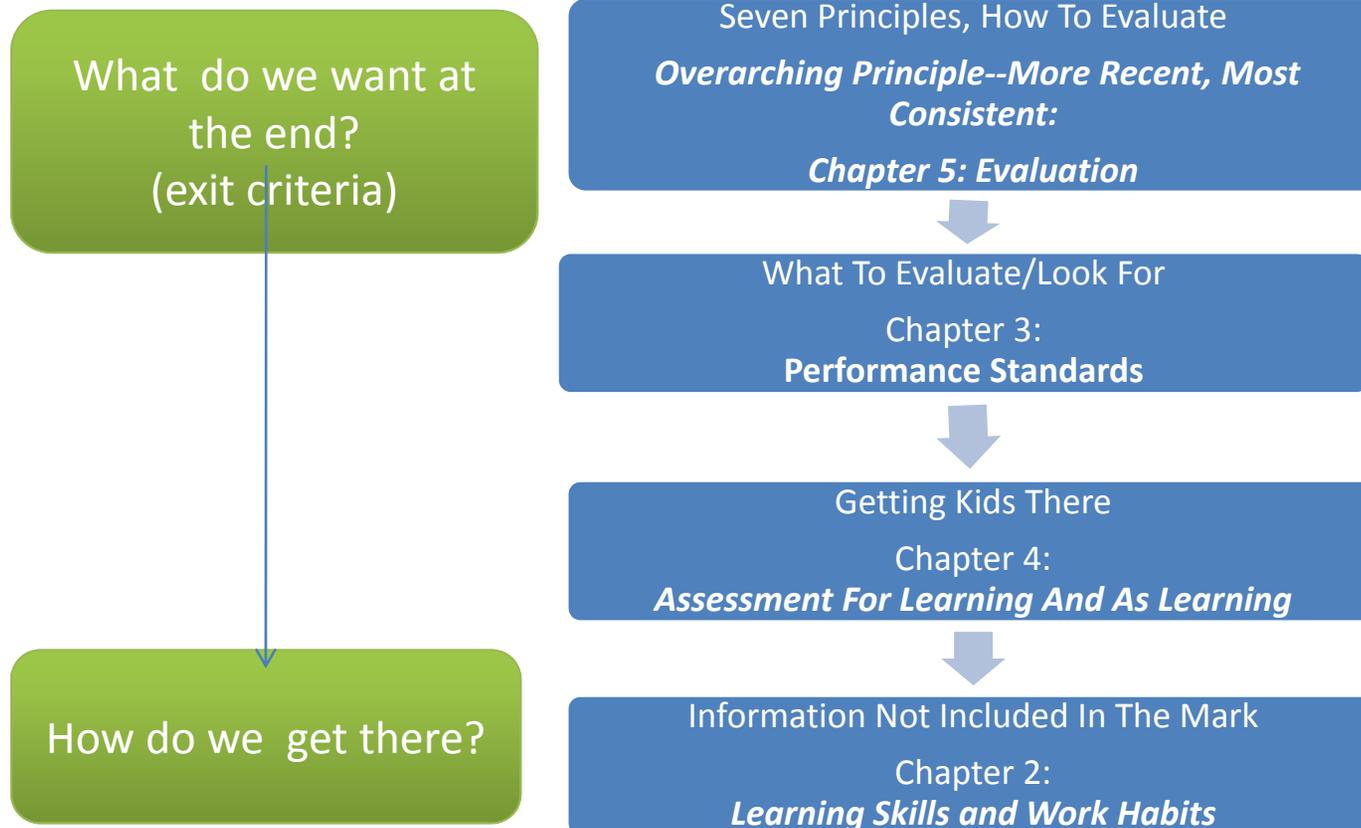Good course design often starts with what you want kids to do at the end of a course.

Shouldn't we:

- Determine what we want kids to do(determine what will be evaluated: good backward design) ?
- Then determine how to get there?

Shouldn't our discussion reflect this approach?

Our Approach

This series will provide a basic overview. With this in mind we will do the following

What do we want at the end? (exit criteria)	**Seven Principles, How To Evaluate** *Overarching Principle--More Recent, Most Consistent:* *Chapter 5: Evaluation*
	↓
	What To Evaluate/Look For Chapter 3: **Performance Standards**
	↓
	Getting Kids There Chapter 4: *Assessment For Learning And As Learning*
	↓
How do we get there?	**Information Not Included In The Mark** Chapter 2: *Learning Skills and Work Habits*

Guiding Principles

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.

Seven fundamental principles. Teachers use practices and procedures that:

- are fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;

- support all students, including those with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction (English or French), and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;

- are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;

Guiding Principles

– are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;

– are ongoing, varied in nature, and administered over a period of time to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;

– provide ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement;

– develop students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning.

How is this any different?
What Is Not Being Said

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.

But Assessment also provides a filtering mechanism

Which is to say that, those who are capable move on, while those who are not do not.

This isn't talked about in Growing Success: why?

Why No Discussion of Filtering Mechanism?

Historically:

- We have done the "filtering" thing well

- Filtering student ability level is *relatively* easy when compared to maximizing all students' ability level

- The process of "filtering" (squashing dreams?) sounds really harsh for a variety of reasons!!

What's the Difference Then?

We have always taught, encouraged, and filtered. So how is the material described in Growing Success, and its predecessor documents different?

The **primary** purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.

(i.e. our focus is on maximizing what students are capable of doing)

Shift

Evaluation as Filtering mechanism

- Primary responsibility with student

- Is great in an industrial economy that requires more brawn than brain (an education system that filters out the brawn, lets the brains through)

- Doesn't spend time and energy on those who don't need skills

Evaluation to Improve Student Learning

- Shared (not only the teacher's…is *shared* between the student and teacher)

- Is more appropriate to a post-industrial, information economy where the smartest groups win

- Maximizes general problem-solving, thinking, communication skill levels

In *Growing Success*
This General Shift

From:

- Averaging of marks (identifying which kids are smart and which are not)

- Averaging of all marks (including assignments where students were learning with evaluation)

- Averaging of all marks (mark reflects student's academic ability along with other life skills)

To:

- "more recent evidence of achievement" (identifying academic level achieved…which kids have learned)

- Assessment for learning and assessment of learning (providing time to learn before evaluation takes place)

- Mark reflects academic ability, other learning skills kept separate

Today

More Recent, Most Consistent in

Chapter5: Evaluation

"More Recent" in
Chapter 5: *Evaluation*

1. *Evaluation is based on assessment* of *learning that provides evidence of student achievement at strategic times* **throughout the grade/course, often at the end of a period of learning**. (p.38)

The assumption is that evaluation for learning (previously *assessment*) has taken place. The assumed development is one where students are allowed and expected to learn. They then demonstrate their skill level.

"More Recent" in
Chapter 5: Evaluation

*Assignment for evaluation **must not include** ongoing homework that students do in order to consolidate their knowledge and skills or to prepare for the next class. (p.39)*

Some of what's described here is *assessment for learning* (homework marks) and learning skills (preparing for next class).

"More Recent" in
Chapter 5: Evaluation

*Teachers will…use their professional judgement to determine the student's report card grade. The report card grade represents **a student's achievement of overall curriculum expectations, as demonstrated at that point in time.*** (p.39)

Again the implicit idea is that students should be allowed to learn, and then demonstrate their ability levels using devices like "rich" culminating activities.

"More Recent" in
Chapter 5: Evaluation

Seventy per cent (sic) of the grade will be based on evaluation conducted throughout the course. ***This portion of the grade should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement throughout the course, although special consideration should be given to more recent evidence of achievement.***

Thirty per cent (even more sic) of the grade will be based on a final evaluation administered at or towards the end of the course. This evaluation will be based on evidence from one or a combination of the following: an examination, a performance, an essay, and/or another method of evaluation suitable to the course content. ***The final evaluation allows the student an opportunity to demonstrate comprehensive achievement of the overall expectations for the course.***

Caviat

It must be made clear to students that they are responsible for providing evidence of their learning within established timelines, and that there are consequences for cheating, plagiarizing, not completing work, and submitting work late. (p.42)

There's a massive tension here between:

The desire to make courses manageable so that teachers and students can get their respective jobs done.

The desire to isolate academic performance from developing learning skills.

A Solution to this Tension?

To the extend possible, the evaluation of learning skills and work habits, apart from any that may be included as part of a curriculum expectation in a subject course, should not be considered in the determination of a letter grade or percentage mark for that subject or course.

What are the writers of *Growing Success* trying to do with this example, and with similarly open-ended explanations.

Provide us with the approach, but give us room to find out what works and make sense in:

1. Our community
2. Our departments, and even (to some extent)
3. Our individual classrooms

In Conclusion

More Recent, Most Consistent

Students should be:

1. given opportunities to learn before being evaluated,

2. given feedback before evaluation,

3. allowed to learn and then demonstrate their skill level.

Our Problem

Establish how "More Recent, Most Consistent" will work for us in:

What follows here are some examples/possibilities for discussion.

Our hope is that departments will then use these possibilities to begin a dialogue that leads to consistency.