

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members
From: Mike Thomas, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)
Date: September 25, 2025
Regarding: **When Professional Judgement Meets Diagnostic Assessments: A Quick Guide for Teachers**

Teaching is part art, part science, and all about decisions - lots and lots of decisions. Your professional judgement is the secret compass that helps navigate the sea of assessments, ensuring each choice supports student learning effectively. Luckily, the rules for using this compass are clearly laid out in *Growing Success*, PPM 155, and the ETFO Collective Agreement, C2.5.

PPM 155 reminds us that diagnostic assessments are tools - not mandates that limit your creativity. Boards provide teachers with a pre-approved list of assessments aligned with the Board Improvement Plan for student achievement. Your professional judgement is what decides **which tool, for which student(s), and at what frequency and timing**. In short: the Board supplies the ingredients, you decide how to cook.

Key Points to Remember:

- **Mandatory Use:** Teachers are required to use diagnostic assessments in accordance with PPM 155 during the school year.
- **No Teacher Evaluation:** Assessment results are for instructional purposes only; they **cannot** be used to evaluate, discipline, or terminate a teacher.
- **Board's List:** While the Board is currently reviewing its pre-approved assessment list, (see below for the list from 2024)
- **No Extra Assignments:** Teachers cannot be directed to administer diagnostic assessments beyond the pre-approved list.
- **Teacher Choice:** Beyond the Board list, you can, and do, use a variety of diagnostic tools to inform instruction. We are professionals and know that assessments drive instruction.
- **Documentation:** You should be prepared to provide evidence of your diagnostic assessment practices. Documentation may include pre-tests, observations, rubrics, checklists, student self-reflections, or running records. This documentation can be for individual students or small groups.

Assessment	Recommended Grade Level(s)
Choice of Literacy Assessments:	
Phonological Awareness	Early Years and Primary
TVDSB Letter Name and Letter Assessment	Early Years and Grade 1
High Frequency Words	Early Years and Primary
Primary Spelling Inventory (PSI)	Primary
Elementary Spelling Inventory	Junior and Intermediate
Upper Elementary Spelling	Intermediate
Décode	Primary French Immersion
Escalire	Primary, Junior, Intermediate French Immersion
TVDSB-Created Assessments Elementary Grade and (Grade 9, Grade 10, Grade 11, OLC)	Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Senior
Choices of Math Assessments:	
TVDSB-Created Assessments Scope and Sequence (1-8) Grade 3 and 6 Check-ins Secondary Skill Builders	Grades 1 - 12
Professional Resources and Mathematics Education (PRIME)	K – 8, Numbers and Operations

Super Quick Summary:

- The Board develops a pre-approved list of diagnostic tools.
- Teachers choose the type, timing, and frequency.
- Principals may request the results - teachers provide them on a timeline of their choosing.

In short, professional judgement isn't just a buzzword; it's your superpower in navigating assessments while keeping instruction personalized, purposeful, and (dare we say) slightly fun.

For any questions, concerns, or simply a friendly chat, the Local ETFO Office is only a phone call away at 519-474-3150 or an email to etfothamesvalley.com - we're here to help.

Your Released Team
ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local



c. Released Executive, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local