

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members
From: Mike Thomas, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)
Date: September 25, 2025
Regarding: **Progress Reports, Kindergarten Initial Communication of Learning, and Using Professional Judgement**

Teachers, Trust Your Professional Judgment!

Think of Professional Judgment as your secret superpower—endorsed by the ETFO Central Collective Agreement (C2.5). It's the thoughtful, reflective decision-making you do every day: choosing what matters most to highlight in your students' learning, how to describe it in a way parents understand, and identifying meaningful next steps.

"Judgment that is informed by professional knowledge of curriculum expectations, context, evidence of learning, methods of instruction and assessment, and the criteria and standards that indicate success in student learning."

This isn't just fancy language; it's permission to use your expertise confidently and creatively in every report you write. This definition underscores our role as the reflective practitioners, entrusted with making informed decisions that best support our students' learning.

Your Professional Judgment is central to creating meaningful progress reports and Kindergarten Communication of Learning. Use your professional judgment to highlight student growth, communicate clearly and accessibly for parents, and identify practical next steps.

Whether preparing Progress Reports for Grades 1–8 or the Kindergarten Initial Communication of Learning, your Professional Judgment supports:

- **Content Selection:** Deciding what learning to highlight based on observations and assessments.
- **Language Use:** Crafting comments in clear, parent-friendly language that accurately reflect student progress.
- **Next Steps:** Identifying meaningful strategies to support continued growth.

In Kindergarten, this means focusing on key learning areas and developmental milestones, ensuring that reports are both informative and reflective of each child's unique learning path.

Here are some tips and highlights to support you with Progress Reports and Kindergarten Initial Communication of Learning:

- Content:
 - Clearly describe student learning, strengths, and areas for growth.
 - Next steps for growth—at school and home.
 - Language: Keep it clear, concise, parent-friendly.
 - Evidence: Use observations, assessments, and work samples; provide specific examples.
 - Professional Judgment: Decide what to report, how to describe learning, and what next steps are meaningful.

Quick Tip: Think “strength + growth” in every comment

Kindergarten Specific Guidance

Initial Communication: Early snapshot of learning.

- Content:
 - Key learning & developmental milestones
 - Next steps tailored to each child
 - Specific anecdotal evidence from classroom observations and activities
- Collaboration: Work with ECEs to ensure shared understanding.
- Templates & Signatures: Use official templates; follow signature rules.

Quick Tip: Focus on growth trajectory, not just “where they are now.”

Reminders:

Be specific & concrete—give examples, not generalities.

- Highlight progress & next steps, not only gaps.
- Use your professional judgment—it’s your expertise on display.
- Keep comments accessible for parents, even when describing complex learning.

Final Thoughts

Your professional judgment is not just a right; it’s a vital part of what makes our education system strong and responsive. By thoughtfully applying this judgment in our reporting, we ensure that each student’s learning story is told with accuracy, care, and respect.

Ensure your Progress Reports and Kindergarten Initial Communication of Learning align with Growing Success and the Kindergarten Addendum.

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.

Mike Thomas, President
ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

c. Released Executive, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local