

# Policy based on ministry direction, says superintendent

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it is to be "used as a last resort."

Kalvaitis said it's ironic that the ministry is addressing the late assignment issue directly because his understanding, as a veteran educator, has been that penalties from teachers for handing in late assignments were applied to very few students in the past.

Since the ministry has addressed the issue it needs to be discussed and implemented fairly, he said, noting boards are now expected to put together an assessment and evaluation committee to discuss such practices.

"It won't work unless there is a lot of support from each school."

An education ministry spokesperson said that there are two tracks for student assessment — curriculum expectations and learn-

ing skills, and that the latter is to be used to address issues like homework completion.

Teachers can consider mark deductions in their student evaluations but mitigating factors — like students with special challenges or needs, learning problems or problems at home — should be considered first, said Patricia MacNeil.

The Halton public board's superintendent of East Burlington schools noted it's board policy, based on ministry direction, to give students a chance to explain why their work is late and extra time to get it done so it can be evaluated and feedback provided.

"We don't just automatically deduct (marks) or give a child a zero if they're a day (late) after an assignment or miss a test," said Jeff Blackwell who also said the deduc-

tion of marks is not to be given for assignments that are even several weeks overdue.

A student receiving zero for a project, test or assignment is a possibility though, he conceded.

"Yes, at some point, as a piece (of learning) we have to put a zero in because it's time to write our (report cards)... So the core point here is we put pressure on the student to show us their learning and to perform rather than just saying, 'OK, here we hit you with a zero, we'll all just forget about it.'"

Shaheen's principal at Nelson said student assessment and evaluation criteria and practices, specifically in the area of marking, have been the subject of increased discussion and debate in recent years.

"It went off the radar for a while and has

returned. For the last year-and-a-half it has been more of an issue. There's definitely a lot of conversation on this," said longtime educator Gary Crocker.

"Teachers are having difficulty separating learning skills from achievement. One skill is completing work (on time). It doesn't mean that not getting work in on time isn't important," he said.

The Nelson principal said that at his school it has been expected practice since the start of this school year that teachers not deduct marks for late assignments. "It's an issue more for some teachers than others," he said, noting that he's known some teachers in the past who have deducted anywhere from 10 to 50 per cent for late work.

— with files from Steve LeBlanc

## Changes made to design

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Since the proposal first came forward, changes have been made to the golf course design, with fairways being moved off the north end of the property to protect greenspace that provides a corridor through the area for wildlife.

While this modification does leave a larger area of the forest on the property intact, 27 hectares, or 44 per cent of the existing forest cover, would still have to be removed to make way for the fairways. Mohawk plans to replant as many trees as it can.

Town Senior Manager of Development Services Anne Dawkins told the committee that the loss may even result in Woodbine purchasing 27 acres of wooded lands elsewhere that would go into public ownership.

The plans also include upgrading the present sewage treatment system at Mohawk to incorporate the latest technology so that the treated water is safe to use for site irrigation and for discharge purposes.

If the project is ultimately approved, the construction phase would result in \$84 million in expenditures in the region for materials, salaries and services and 1,400 person years (the equivalent of one person working a full year) of direct and indirect employment.

Once the expanded Mohawk site is up and operating, it's expected to bring 68,000 new visitors to the region annually and \$47 million in expenditures, along with 300 person years of employment.

While the Town committee endorsed the expansion this week, it will also have to go before town council on Monday for approval and then on to regional council for an Official Plan amendment. Woodbine also has an outstanding appeal of the Town's comprehensive zoning bylaw at the Ontario Municipal Board that has to be dealt with.

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