

D-P Catholic students fare well in EQAO's latest assessments

Students in Dufferin-Peel Catholic schools are outpacing the provincial average in the latest Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) testing.

Announcing the results last Wednesday, the school board said they involve the 2015-16 annual assessments completed in Grades 3, 6, 9 and 10.

The EQAO assessments and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) provide an indication of each student's achievement in reading, writing and/or mathematics at key points throughout formal schooling.

The assessment results for elementary students report on reading, writing and mathematics at both the primary and junior levels of study. Grade 3 students participate in the primary assessments and Grade 6 students complete the junior assessments.

The Grade 9 EQAO assessment focuses on mathematics achievement, while the OSSLT assesses students' proficiency in reading and writing. Successful completion of this test (or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course) is one of the 32 requirements necessary to obtain the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

The OSSLT results are provided for two groups of students: those eligible to write for the first time in Grade 10, and those who were previously eligible to write, but who were unsuccessful in a prior year.

Results of the primary EQAO assessments indicate notable growth on the Grade 3 assessment of reading, as well as a return to the trend of high proportions of Dufferin-Peel students meeting, or exceeding the provincial standard (Levels 3 or 4) in primary writing, the school board said in a release. In primary mathematics, the results indicate a modest recovery after a period of decline. Compared to the province, Dufferin-Peel primary students continue to outperform the province as a whole.

Dufferin-Peel's junior EQAO assessments were higher than the provincial results and indicated continued steady growth in reading and writing. A slight decline continued to be observed in junior mathematics among both Dufferin-Peel students and students across the province.

At the secondary level, the 2015-16 EQAO assessment results for Grade 9 mathematics indicate that Dufferin-Peel students continue to demonstrate high levels of performance at the academic level of study, the board said. The proportion of students who achieved the provincial standard on the academic assessment was relatively consistent with the previous assessment year, and was notably higher than that of the province.

Although Grade 9 applied mathematics achievement in Dufferin-Peel showed some recent decline, D-P students continued to outperform their provincial peers on this assessment. Given the results in both elementary and Grade 9 EQAO mathematics assessments, the board continues to dedicate a wide range of supports to schools to focus on improving learning in this key subject area for all students.

Success rates for Dufferin-Peel students on the OSSLT administered by EQAO indicate that Dufferin-Peel students exceeded the provincial success rates by between two and four per cent. The percentage of Dufferin-Peel students passing the OSSLT on their first attempt continues to exceed provincial performance and highlights the ongoing excellence of Dufferin-Peel students in terms of literacy skills. Additionally, among students who were previously unsuccessful on the OSSLT, Dufferin-Peel demonstrated much higher success rates than the province as a whole.

EQAO assessments are but one of the tools we use to gauge student achievement, said Director of Education Marianne Mazzorato. This year's assessment results tell us that our students continue to demonstrate strong levels of achievement, particularly in literacy. These results reflect our trustees' commitment to the well-being and success of all students as demonstrated by the Board's Strategic System Plan and the dedication of resources intended to put students in positions to succeed.

The board said it will further analyze the EQAO and OSSLT results to provide support to schools, students and parents/guardians to ensure that more students continue to improve in all assessment areas. Each school has its own plan, which will be reviewed in the context of the test results, to improve students' skills in all subject areas. School plans include strategies to assist all students, including intervention and reinforcement for students who did not achieve the provincial standard or who were not successful on the OSSLT.

As trustees, we are committed to allocating resources and supports to ensure that our students are put in the best possible position to succeed, said Board Chair Mario Pascucci. We are encouraged by this year's results and acknowledge and commend our teachers, support staff and administrators under the leadership of our senior management team, for supporting the vision of the Board of Trustees.

Board and individual school results will be available on the board website at www.dpcdsb.org later this fall. Additional information on the various assessments can be obtained through the EQAO website at www.eqao.com.

The EQAO is an independent agency whose mandate is to ensure greater accountability and help improve the quality of education.

The 2015-2016 results for Dufferin-Peel students and the province in all six elementary EQAO assessments, the Grade 9 mathematics assessments, and the OSSLT are presented below (provincial average in parentheses)

Primary Reading, 77% (72%)

Primary Writing, 79% (74%)

Primary Mathematics, 65% (63%)

Junior Reading, 83% (81%)

Junior Writing, 83% (80%)

Junior Mathematics, 52% (50%)

Grade 9 Academic Mathematics, 87% (83%)

Grade 9 Applied Mathematics, 54% (45%)

OSSLT (First-Time Eligible) 83% (81%)

OSSLT (Previously Eligible) 53% (49%)