

Dufferin-Peel students continue to outpace provincial EQAO averages

Results of the recently released 2013-14 Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments were good news for the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board.

It marks the sixth consecutive year in which the percentage of Dufferin-Peel students achieving at, or above, the provincial standard in Grades 3 and 6 has equalled or exceeded the provincial averages.

Dufferin-Peel students exceeded the provincial average by a minimum of three per cent in five of the six assessment areas, while matching the provincial average in primary mathematics. The results came from the spring 2014 administration of the (EQAO) primary and junior division assessments of reading, writing and mathematics.

Dufferin-Peel's trend of high achievement levels on the EQAO tests was maintained in the primary and junior assessments. Reading and writing in both Grades 3 and 6 have demonstrated steady, incremental improvement over the last five years (spring 2009 through spring 2014). Similar to the provincial trend, primary mathematics achievement in Dufferin-Peel has declined slightly over time. The board continues to show good performance in junior mathematics, but recognizes the need to further improve student learning in this key subject area.

"Dufferin-Peel students have met or exceeded the province's benchmark, as well as outperformed the provincial average consistently over time," said Director of Education John Kostoff. "This is reflective of the culture of excellence that we strive to foster among students and staff at Dufferin-Peel. We continue to work hard on behalf of all students, to share best practice, advance new teaching and learning concepts and continue to improve student learning, achievement and well-being among all our learners."

"It takes a collaborative effort by all parties – students, parents/guardians, faculty, staff, administrators and trustees to maintain this level of excellence over time," said Board Chair Mario Pascucci. "As trustees, we are committed to allocating resources and doing all we can to ensure that our students are put in the best position possible to succeed. These results, as well as our continuous improvement over time, are great indicators that we are right on track."

The EQAO assessments provide an indication of each student's achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. The spring 2014 assessment results for elementary students report on these three subject areas for two groups of students: Grade 3 students (primary assessments) and Grade 6 students (junior assessments).

At the primary level, Dufferin-Peel students scored 73 per cent in reading, compared to the provincial level, of 70. In writing, the students were at 83 per cent with the provincial average at 78. In terms of math, the Dufferin-Peel kids tied the provincial average at 67 per cent.

The levels for Dufferin-Peel junior students were 82 per cent in reading (compared to the provincial average of 79), 82 per cent in writing (78) and 57 per cent in math (54).

The board will further analyze the EQAO 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.

"EQAO assessments are but one of the tools we use to gauge student achievement and we are quite pleased with our results, not only with this assessment, but with our upward trending results over time," said Associate Director of Instructional Services Sheila McWatters. "By the same token, we know that we still have work to do and want to ensure our parents/guardians and students that we will continue to work strategically and prudently to improve even further in all subject areas."