

Peel board students are going to see more stress on math

By Bill Rea

The Peel District School Board will be increasing its emphasis on mathematics in the new school year.

The math test scores have been dropping over the last couple of years, and Caledon Trustee Stan Cameron said this is an effort to reverse that.

“The harsh reality is that our Grade 3 and 6 (provincial test) scores in mathematics have fallen steadily over the last five years,” Director of Education Tony Pontes was quoted as saying last week in the Toronto Star. “And while our Grade 9 math scores have improved, there are still too many students performing below provincial expectations, particularly in the applied level. That is not inspiring. That is not a definition of greatness. And not what our students deserve.”

Cameron said the declining math scores have been experienced across the province. He said the latest numbers for Peel have not been released, but “it’s concerning for sure.”

The number of Grade 3 students reading at or about the Provincial standards has dropped in the last five years from 71 to 67 per cent, Cameron said. And the Grade 6 numbers dropped from 61 to 54 per cent over the same period.

“It certainly has our attention,” Cameron said, adding teachers in the board have been attending Math Camp to pick up new methods and teaching ideas. He also said there will be efforts to incorporate math instruction with other subjects. There are also efforts being made to get parents involved in helping their children with their homework.

“We’re looking forward to moving forward in helping our kids improve,” he said.