



Education  
Quality and  
Accountability  
Office

# Annual Report

2004–2005

## *Working together* to improve student learning

### Message from the Chair and the CEO

We are pleased to report that the recent upward trend in student learning across all subjects and grades tested by EQAO is continuing. Now that we know what the results are, let's focus on what they mean.

At its heart, provincial testing is about feedback. Feedback is *the* critical part of the learning process, whether one is trying to improve one's golf score, grow a greener garden or be a better person.

Ontario's province-wide test results and the reports that accompany them provide multi-layered feedback to a variety of education partners. Most important, the results spark conversations about learning, innovation and best practice. The goal of all this feedback is to create a culture of learning, continuous innovation and improvement. It is about assessment *for* learning, not just assessment *of* learning.

The test scores are not the end result but just one part of an ongoing cycle of learning. The most important part is what happens after the results are in. The biggest change agents, as always, will be our most dedicated lifelong learners—our teachers. Our best catalysts will be our most effective leaders for change—our principals. Together, they will use the test results as a springboard for improving student learning.

The continued improvement in student performance in recent years gives us every reason to take comfort. But it gives us little reason to feel comfortable. Ontario is still a long way from reaching its goal of having 75 percent of its 12-year-old students meet or exceed the provincial standard in all subject areas by 2008. And there are still individual children who are not mastering the foundational skills that will set them up for future success in school. We all have a lot of work to do.

Like all of the many partners involved in helping our students reach their potential, EQAO is itself a learning organization. In the year ahead, we will continue to learn from our partners in education and from international experts about how to reach our goals. We will continue to search for new ways to design better tests, improve the way they are administered, find better and more useful ways of reporting the results, be useful and be perceived to be useful to teachers, and stay at the leading edge of providing actionable feedback.

As in our education system, we will continue to create within EQAO a culture of learning, continuous innovation and improvement.

Charles E. Pascal,  
Chair, Board of Directors

Marguerite Jackson,  
CEO

*We place a great deal of emphasis on using EQAO data to guide instruction and make literacy a school-wide focus.*

Anna Convertini, Principal  
Marshall McLuhan Catholic  
Secondary School, Toronto

Toronto Catholic District School Board

*We incorporate literacy skills into our daily activities, and staff support for this approach is probably the biggest factor in our success. We collectively set a target each year and do improvement planning for the year based on EQAO data.*

Jeff Reaburn, Principal  
South Huron District High School, Exeter

Avon Maitland District School Board





# EQAO

## Trends in Student Achievement

### Grade 3 and Grade 6

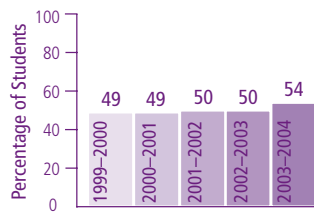
More Ontario students are making the grade on the Grades 3 and 6 assessments, which measure the reading, writing and mathematics knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn by the end of these grades. Student achievement has steadily improved over the past five years in both grades, positioning the students for successful learning. More than 300 000 English- and French-language students took the tests in 2003–2004.

*I think we have EQAO testing to test our skills, what we need help on, what's too easy for us and what we need a challenge on.*

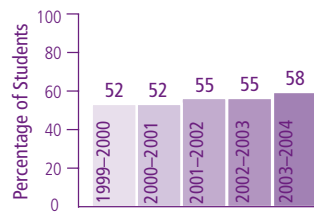
Grade 3 Student

### Percentage of Students at or Above the Provincial Standard

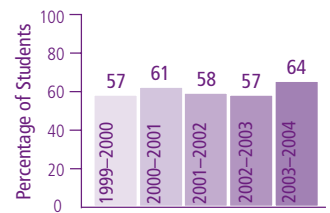
Grade 3 Reading



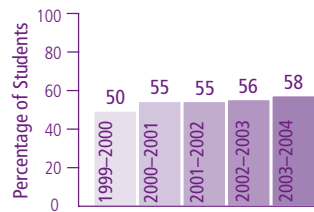
Grade 3 Writing



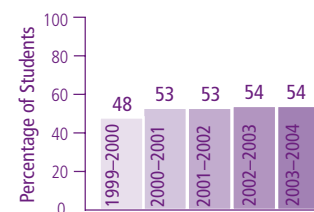
Grade 3 Mathematics



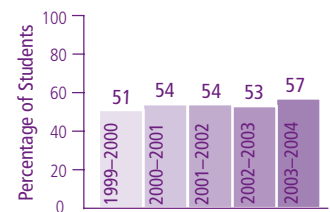
Grade 6 Reading



Grade 6 Writing



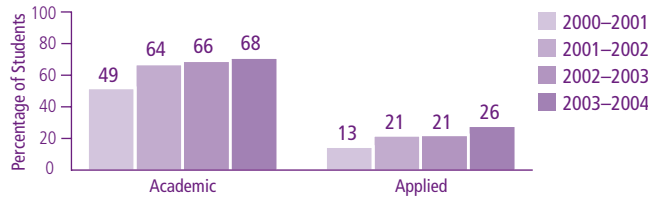
Grade 6 Mathematics



### Grade 9

Ontario students continue to show progress in EQAO's Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics for the 2003–2004 school year. The assessment measures students' achievement of the *Ontario Curriculum* expectations relating to mathematics that they are expected to learn by the end of Grade 9. In both the academic and the applied mathematics courses, the percentage of students performing at or above the provincial standard increased over the previous year. EQAO's assessment played an important role in identifying the need for changes to the Grade 9 applied curriculum, which the government will be introducing in September 2005. Approximately 160 000 English- and French-language students wrote the 2003–2004 assessment.

### Percentage of Students at or Above the Provincial Standard



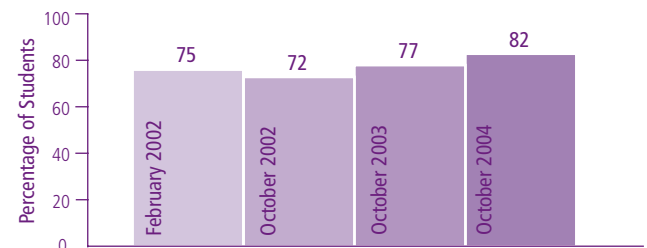
*Students in applied courses also improved their [EQAO] scores this year—a credit to their hard work and the support of their parents, teachers and education experts .... However, more work clearly needs to be done .... The new curriculum will be ready for September 2005, one year earlier than planned.*

Ministry of Education News Release, November 25, 2004

### Grade 10

There has been a positive trend in the percentage of students passing the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) over the past four years. The OSSLT is administered to determine whether students have met the minimum standard for the reading and writing skills outlined in *The Ontario Curriculum* up to the end of Grade 9. Approximately 193 000 English- and French-language students wrote the test in October 2004.

### Results over Time: Successful Fully Participating Students



*No matter what career path you choose, literacy is always important so you can communicate your ideas properly.*

Grade 10 Student

## National and International Assessments

EQAO coordinates Ontario's participation in national and international assessments. The agency's responsibilities include communicating with schools, analyzing the results at the provincial level and reporting on Ontario's performance. National and international assessment results provide information that can help set education priorities within provinces and across countries as well as provide valuable input to aid in improvement planning.

**Good Information.**

**Good Assessments.**

**Good for Kids!**



## Assessments for Learning

### Ensuring Quality Assessments

The agency's Ensuring Quality Assessments initiative, which concluded in November 2004, affirmed many of EQAO's practices and provided insights for enhancements that will maintain Ontario's assessment program at a level that the review panel described as "best of class." Building on this strong foundation, EQAO began refining its student testing program during the 2004–2005 school year in ways that will benefit educators, parents and students.

The enhancements reinforce links to the curriculum and allow for specific feedback on student performance. The time students spend taking the tests will be reduced for all grades. Students in Grades 3 and 6 will be assessed later in the school year, enabling teachers to cover more of the curriculum before the test period.

Ontario teachers continue to assist in many phases of the process, including item writing and review, scoring guide validation and scoring of student work. Finally, to maintain EQAO's leading edge, a panel of measurement experts meets quarterly to advise the agency on psychometric methodologies and practices.

### Helping Teachers and Schools

Schools and boards received ready-to-use reports with helpful graphics to keep their communities informed of how students are performing in their schools. The reports also assist teachers in deciding where to focus attention to help students.

This year, an outreach program was launched to provide schools with details on the many uses of EQAO data and to provide an opportunity for EQAO to hear directly from teachers and principals about areas for future enhancements to the program.

### Celebrating School Success Stories

EQAO profiled a number of stories from local school communities to show how data are used to support student achievement and to showcase the many successful learning environments in schools across the province. Some of the key themes that emerged from these stories were

- leadership, tutoring and targeted learning strategies
- a school-wide focus on literacy
- the use of EQAO data and resources to guide instruction
- the need for a strong literacy committee or team
- making literacy a priority and using a cross-curricular approach
- board support for professional development and literacy and numeracy programs
- strong professional learning communities focused on literacy and numeracy skills

### Looking Forward

EQAO will begin electronically collecting student data directly from school board systems. This process will reduce paperwork and administrative requirements for schools and allow EQAO to report student achievement results more quickly following each assessment.

## Upcoming Assessment Dates, 2005 – 2006

### Elementary

- **May 23 – June 9, 2006:**  
Grade 3 and Grade 6 assessments are administered

### Secondary

- **January 5 – 25, 2006:**  
Grade 9 assessment is administered to Semester 1 students
- **March 29, 2006:**  
OSSLT is administered
- **May 23 – June 21, 2006:**  
Grade 9 assessment is administered to Semester 2 and full-year students

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***Literacy and numeracy are priorities. The board is putting a significant amount of money and training into these areas.***

Jack McCue, Principal  
St. Joseph's Catholic Secondary School,  
Cornwall

Catholic District School Board  
of Eastern Ontario

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## Statement of Revenues and Expenditures and Accumulated Surplus Year Ended March 31, 2005

	2005	2004
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Ministry of Education		
Base allocation payments	\$ 30,802,870	\$ 44,071,729
Other revenue	676,104	499,830
	<b>31,478,974</b>	<b>44,571,559</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Service and rental	24,326,654	28,468,179
Salary, wages and benefits	8,576,052	8,378,763
Transportation and communication	2,408,452	1,913,451
Supplies and equipment	414,204	354,345
	<b>35,725,362</b>	<b>39,114,738</b>
<b>EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUE</b> (Note 3)	<b>(4,246,388)</b>	<b>5,456,821</b>
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	6,037,957	581,136
<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS - END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 1,791,569</b>	<b>\$ 6,037,957</b>

## Statement of Financial Position March 31, 2005

	2005	2004
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash	\$ 6,215,330	\$ 11,529,602
Accounts receivable	351,047	233,386
Capital assets (Note 4)	368,394	195,793
	<b>\$ 6,934,771</b>	<b>\$ 11,958,781</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND ACCUMULATED SURPLUS</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 5,143,202	\$ 5,920,824
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS	1,791,569	6,037,957
	<b>\$ 6,934,771</b>	<b>\$ 11,958,781</b>

Note 3: In fiscal 2004/2005, the Agency was approved to receive \$47.5 million in base allocation payments from the Ministry of Education. This base allocation was reduced as a result of the Agency strategically making use of the carried forward cash balance from March 31, 2004 to meet cash flow needs. As a result, the Agency is reporting excess expenditures over revenue for the period ending March 31, 2005.

Note 4: Table of Capital Assets provided within full audited statements

Full, [audited financial statements are available](http://www.eqao.com) on the EQAO Web site, [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com), or by request at 1-888-327-7377.

## Chair (appointed February 2005)

Charles E. Pascal

## Former Chair (2002–2004) and continuing member

Jerry G. Ponikvar

## Members

Bette M. Stephenson

John Martel

Martin Cugelman

Beverley J. Oda\*

Nancy A. Elgie

Krystyna Rudko

Dominic Giroux

Doretta Wilson

## Chief Executive Officer

Marguerite Jackson

\* resigned mid-term

## Values

- EQAO values student learning above all other interests.
- EQAO values information that has the potential to bring about constructive change and improvement.
- EQAO values the dedication and expertise of Ontario's educators and works in partnership with them in all of its activities.
- EQAO values the delivery of its programs and services with equivalent quality in both English and French.

## About EQAO

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) is an arm's-length agency of the government of Ontario with a mandate to evaluate and report on the quality of education in Ontario schools. It is governed by a board of directors appointed to represent the community. EQAO administers several province-wide tests, which yield individual, school, school board and provincial data on student achievement.



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