

Under embargo until 10 a.m., Sept. 24, 2014

Leading the way

Secondary students show remarkable EQAO increases

(Windsor, Ontario, Sept. 24, 2014) – Secondary students throughout the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board continue to improve in math and literacy while consistently meeting or exceeding provincial curriculum expectations, according to Director of Education Paul Picard.

“Year over year, our students advance in these critical areas, and this year, they’ve outperformed provincial averages in every category,” Picard said. “That’s a testament to the teachers and administrators throughout our entire board who have committed to making student achievement Job One.”

According to results from Education Quality and Accountability Office for 2013-14, 91 per cent of students enrolled in Grade 9 academic math achieved at or above the provincial standard, representing a five per cent increase over last year, and a 14 per cent increase over the past six years. Students in this category exceeded the provincial achievement level by six per cent.

At the applied math level, 54 per cent of students achieved at or above the provincial standard – the same as last year – but still exceeded the provincial achievement level by seven per cent. Students in this category have improved by 18 per cent over the last six years.

Most encouraging about the results are the increases in scores students have seen since their Grade 6 EQAO math assessments, according to David Petro, the board’s math and science consultant. Of the 91 per cent of academic students who met the standard, 14 per cent were below in Grade 6 but rose to standard in Grade 9, he said. Of the 54 per cent who achieved provincial standard in Grade 9, 34 per cent were below in Grade 6.

“In just about every school, we’ve seen huge jumps from Grade 6 to Grade 9,” said Petro, who closely tracks cohorts of students as they move up through the system. “That means we are directly helping students in their mathematical learning, not only in Grade 9, but in Grades 7 and 8 as well. We know that we’re making a difference over time.”

In the area of literacy, 90 per cent of students who wrote the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test were successful, marking the highest success rate for the board in the last six years. The success rate is a three per cent increase over last year, and exceeds the Ontario success rate by seven per cent.

The improvement may be attributable to a specific initiative that made literacy a priority for all secondary teachers, regardless of discipline, according to Elisa Houston, the board’s English, language, and literacy consultant.

“Whether they were teaching science, geography or English, we emphasized that literacy is everyone’s responsibility,” she said.

Board chairperson Barb Holland was pleased with the results, but acknowledged there is still work to be done, especially in the area of applied math.

“Our students are our top priority and we need to do everything we can to make certain they are substantially prepared with the right skill sets by the time they graduate,” she said. “We’ve heard from many in the post-secondary sector that some students arrive at their institutions unprepared for the rigors of post-secondary education, but we’re making great strides in correcting that trend. We have extremely dedicated teachers and administrators, and we have a great amount of confidence in their ability to use proven methods in their classrooms to help students achieve their desired learning outcomes.”

See link below for a background story on interventions used at specific schools to improve EQAO results:

<http://www.wecdsb.on.ca/pdf/news/2014/09242014.pdf>

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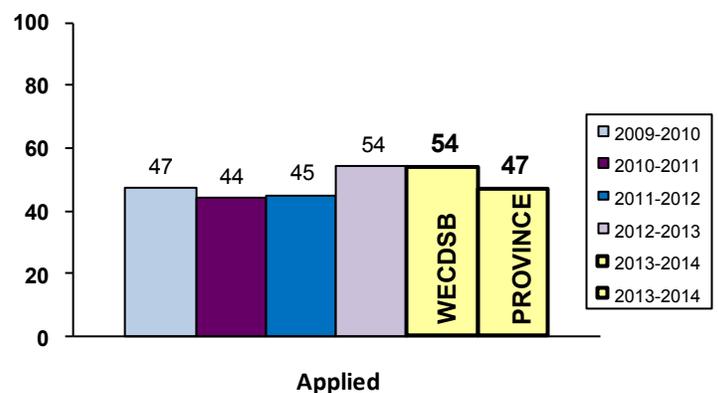
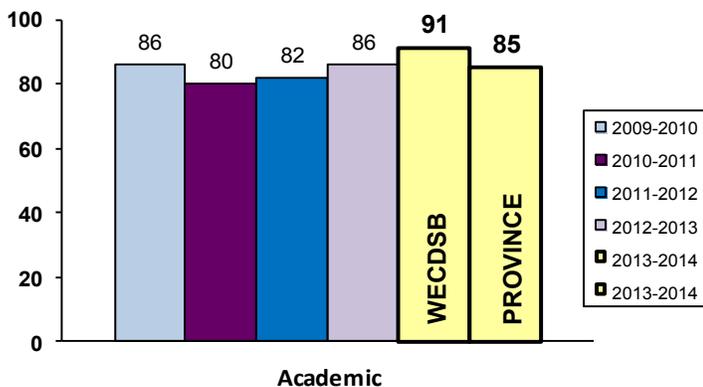


Highlights of EQAO Results (2013-2014) Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

EQAO Results for All Students, Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics

- 1,162 students who were enrolled in the academic course and 511 students who were enrolled in the applied course wrote the 2013-2014 Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics.
- The assessment measures the Mathematics skills *The Ontario Curriculum* expects students to have learned by the end of Grade 9. Separate versions of the assessment are administered to students in the academic and applied courses.

Percentage of Students At or Above the Provincial Standard (Levels 3 and 4) Over Time



The percentage of students enrolled in the Grade 9 academic course who achieved the provincial standard (Levels 3 and 4) is **91%**, which is an **increase of 5%**. There has been an increasing trend over time for students enrolled in the academic course. The percentage of students enrolled in the Grade 9 applied course who achieved the provincial standard (Levels 3 and 4) is **54%**, which is the **same** as last year.

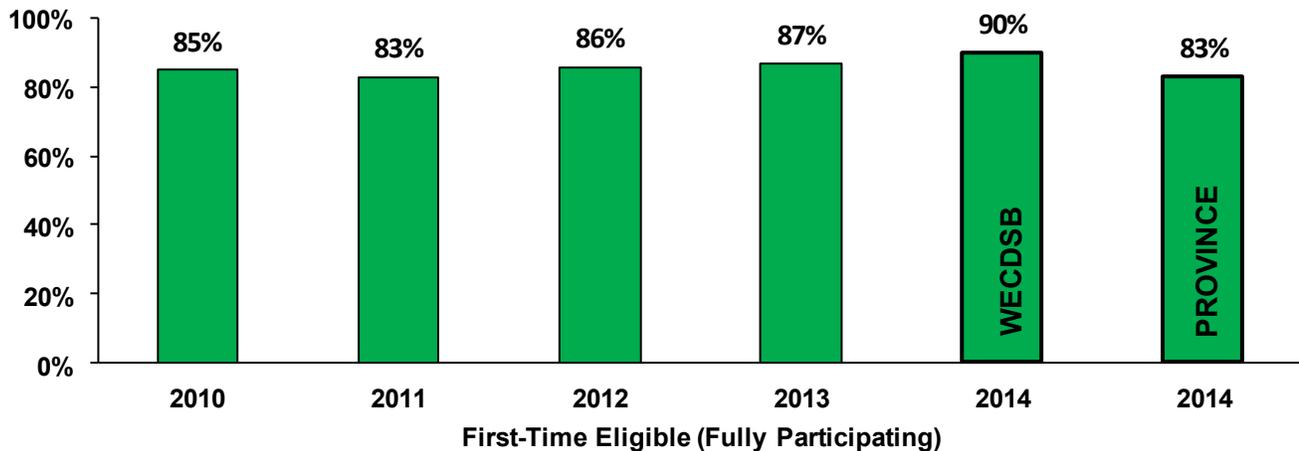
- The percentage of WECD SB students enrolled in the Grade 9 academic course who achieved the provincial standard (Levels 3 and 4) **exceeded** the provincial average by **6%**. WECD SB students enrolled in the Grade 9 applied course who achieved the provincial standard (Levels 3 and 4) **exceeded** the provincial average by **7%**.
- The percentage of both Students with Special Education Needs and English Language Learners (ELL) enrolled in the Grade 9 academic course, who met the provincial standard (Levels 3 and 4), increased over last year. This has been a trend for both groups of students over the past three years in the academic course.
- There was no gender gap for males and females enrolled in the Grade 9 academic course, however the gender gap favoured males in the Grade 9 applied course.
- When tracking cohorts (same group of students) in the Grade 9 academic course, 15% of the students who did not achieve the provincial standard (Levels 3 and 4) in Grade 6 met the provincial standard (Levels 3 and 4) in Grade 9. In the Grade 9 applied course, 35% of the students who did not meet the provincial standard (Levels 3 and 4) in Grade 6 met the provincial standard (Levels 3 and 4) in Grade 9.



Highlights of EQAO Results Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), 2014

Success Rates for First-Time Eligible (Fully Participating) Students, OSSLT

- Of all first-time eligible students, 86% fully participated in the 2014 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT).



The success rate for first-time (fully participating) students who wrote the OSSLT is **90%**, which is an **increase of 3%**. This is the highest success rate for first-time eligible (fully participating) students over the past five years.

- The success rate for WECDSB first-time eligible (fully participating) students who wrote the OSSLT **exceeded** the provincial success rate by **7%**.
- The success rate for first-time eligible (fully participating) Students with Special Education Needs and English Language Learners (ELL) improved over last year's results. This has been an increasing trend for both groups over the past few years.
- The gender gap for first-time eligible (fully participating) students is 5%. The success rate for females is 92% and 87% for males.

~ The purpose of the Ontario Secondary Literacy Test is (OSSLT) is to determine whether a student has the literacy (reading and writing) skills required to meet the standard for understanding reading selections and communicating in a variety of writing forms expected by the Ontario Curriculum across subjects up to the end of Grade 9.

~ Successful completion of the test or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course is one of the 32 requirements for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Students who do not pass the OSSLT have another opportunity to write the test or to participate in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC).