



Sept. 23, 2015

High school students ahead of provincial literacy curve

(Windsor, Ontario, Sept. 23, 2015) – Secondary students throughout the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board continue to remain ahead of the rest of Ontario in literacy by exceeding provincial curriculum expectations.

According to Education Quality and Accountability Office results announced this morning, 87 per cent of Grade 10 students in WECDSB schools were successful on the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test, which they wrote last March. The provincial success rate was 82 per cent.

“We’ve made a real commitment to improving the literacy skills of all our students,” said Director of Education Paul Picard. “Literacy is not left solely to the realm of literature and language classrooms. We’ve directed all our teachers, from science and math to business or technical education, to place a much greater emphasis on improving literacy, and it’s clear that strategy is paying dividends. Seven of our eight high schools have exceeded the provincial average.”

Although WECDSB students scored five per cent higher than the provincial mark, this year’s results still represent a three per cent decline from last year’s average of 90 per cent.

“We fully expect that there may be peaks and valleys from year to year, but it’s important to note that we’ve been on a consistently upward trend since 2011, and that our rates have been well over 80 per cent for the last five years,” said Board Chair Barb Holland. “I’m confident that our administrators will be taking a close look at the data and using it to develop new strategies that will improve the literacy skills of all our students.”

Holland said she was also pleased that the board rate of students who deferred writing the test until Grade 11 had also decreased by two per cent from last year.

“Even though there are more students writing the test in Grade 10, our success rate has remained above the provincial average, which is a very encouraging sign,” she said. “As a board we’ve worked hard to make sure that at those schools where deferral rates are higher, we have strategies in place to make sure our students are getting the literacy support they need in order to be successful.”

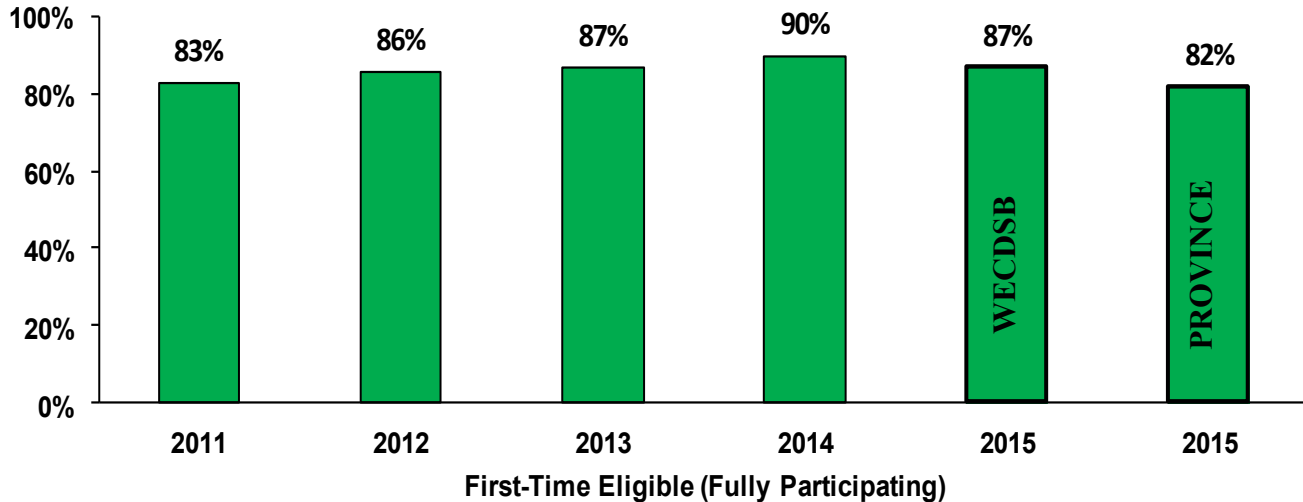
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Highlights of EQAO Results Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), 2015

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



For first-time eligible (fully participating) students, **87%** were successful on the OSSLT. Our success rates for first-time eligible (fully participating) students have consistently been well over 80% for 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 **5%**. Seven out of eight of our secondary schools **exceeded** the provincial success rate.
- The percentage of students deferred for 2015 was 11%, which is a 2% decrease from the previous year.
- A significant number of Students with Special Education Needs and English Language Learners continue to be successful on the OSSLT.
- When tracking the cohort from the Grade 6 EQAO assessment for reading, 75% percent of the students who met the provincial standard (Level 3 and 4) in Grade 6 were successful on the OSSLT. In writing, 73% of the students who met the provincial standard (Level 3 and 4) in Grade 6 were successful on the OSSLT.

~ 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 (OSSLT).