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School boards release EQAO results

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The Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) released their Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) results for 2022-2023.

EQAO analyzes critical areas of the quality and effectiveness of Ontario's elementary and secondary public education. To enhance student learning and positive student outcomes, EQAO examines students' literacy (reading and writing) and numeracy (mathematics) skills. The test occurs for students in grades 3, 6, and 9.

UGDSB's main takeaway from this year's results is that many Upper Grand students performed at or above the provincial average for the grade 6 level. Whereas DPCDSB has consistently shown strong performance in the elementary EQAO assessments, with a significant percentage of students achieving or exceeding the provincial standard (Levels 3 or 4) in Grades 3 and 6 reading and writing assessments.

As of 2022, the EQAO format has shifted to an online test. The changes in the EQAO format beg the question of the reliability of comparing the paper version of the assessment with the online version. As Megan Sicoli, UGDSB administrative officer, put it, ?it is not the same assessment.?

After COVID-19 interrupted the EQAO testing, the DPCDSB results showed that grade 3 students' literacy decreased. The EQAO results from pre-COVID-19 (2018?2019) and post-COVID-19 (2022?2023) show a common trend of grade three students' literacy declining, no longer achieving the provincial standard, with writing lowering by -6% and reading by -3%. However, there was shown to be an increase in grade 6 literacy: +3% in reading and +2% in writing.

DPCDSB mathematic results for grade three students have remained stable; with both the 2018?2019 and 2022?2023 tests, 60% of students achieved the provincial standard. In contrast, sixth-grade students have declined in mathematics by -1% from 2018?2019 to 2022?2023.

When comparing the school board's EQAO results to the Ontario EQAO results, both school boards have established areas for improvement. ?The 2022-2023 results confirm the UGDSB's data, indicating a need to focus on improving skills in literacy and math in the early years,? said Sicoli.

?The area we need to improve the most is mathematics, and while DPCDSB students have demonstrated improvement in mathematics achievement compared to 2021?2022, DPCDSB continues to dedicate a wide range of support to schools to focus on improving learning in this key subject area for all students,? said Nancy Marshall, DPCDSB communications officer.

UGDSB plans to improve the EQAO results by supporting the ?early year? students in grades 1 and 2, with early reading teachers bettering young students' understanding of text. Additionally, ?The Upper Grand District School Board is committed to the core priority of Foundational Education and Student Achievement as outlined in the Multi-Year Plan and realizing VISION 2026,? said Sicoli.

The DPCDSB says it is reviewing the results in order to improve them and is committed to sticking to the Ministry of Education's curriculum and guidelines.

When looking at the results from the 2022-2023 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), it is worth noting the achievement of local Grade 10 students. DPCDSB students achieved an 86% success rate, and UGDSB students achieved an 88% success rate, surpassing the provincial average of 85%.

?It is important to note that EQAO/OSSLT are snapshots in time, and each represents just one piece of achievement data,? said Marshall.