

# HIGHLIGHTS OF PROVINCIAL ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS

## GRADE 3 AND GRADE 6 ASSESSMENTS OF READING, WRITING AND MATHEMATICS, 2001–2002

### IMPROVEMENT SLOW BUT STEADY

- Grade 3 students continue to show slow but steady improvement in reading and writing over the past five years of the assessment.
- Following a significant improvement in achievement between the first and second years of the assessment, Grade 3 students' mathematics achievement has remained relatively stable.
- Following slow but steady improvements in achievement over the first three years of the assessment, the achievement of Grade 6 students in reading, writing and mathematics has remained stable.
- In Grades 3 and 6 reading and writing, girls significantly outperformed boys.
- In Grades 3 and 6 mathematics, the achievement of girls was slightly better than that of boys.

### FACTS ABOUT THE GRADE 3 AND GRADE 6 ASSESSMENTS

- The Grade 3 and Grade 6 assessments are based on *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8*.
- This year's Grade 3 and Grade 6 assessments took place between May 9 and May 23, 2002. The principal and teachers in each school chose the exact dates. Students participated in the assessment for up to two hours per day over five days.
- Approximately 139 000 English-language students participated in the Grade 3 assessment.
- Approximately 145 000 English-language students participated in the Grade 6 assessment.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS (ENGLISH-LANGUAGE STUDENTS)

EQAO reports achievement results using a four-level scale. This scale is based on *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8* and sets Level 3 as the provincial standard. The Ministry of Education describes Level 3 as "a high level of achievement."

### Method 1: (includes all students)

- ☆ In Grade 3, half the students achieved the provincial standard in reading (50%); more than half achieved the provincial standard in writing (55%) and mathematics (58%).
- ☆ In Grade 6, more than half the students achieved the provincial standard in reading (55%), writing (53%) and mathematics (54%).

### Method 2: (includes students who completed the test)

- ☆ In Grade 3, more than half the students achieved the provincial standard in reading (53%), writing (59%) and mathematics (61%).
- ☆ In Grade 6, more than half the students achieved the provincial standard in reading (58%), writing (56%) and mathematics (56%).

## GRADE 3 AND GRADE 6 ASSESSMENTS SUPPORT QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Each assessment covers the knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics that students are expected to have acquired by the end of the grade being assessed. The assessments contain performance-based activities requiring written responses, and multiple-choice questions. This combination of question types allows students to demonstrate both the depth and the scope of their learning and provides a variety of ways for students to demonstrate what they know and what they can do.
- The marking is done by certified educators.
- All Ontario Grade 3 and Grade 6 students in publicly funded schools are expected to participate in the assessments.

## THE GRADE 3 AND GRADE 6 ASSESSMENTS HELP STUDENTS IMPROVE

Students with special needs and those in English-as-a-Second-Language programs may be permitted one or more accommodations during the assessment. Meeting their accommodation needs ensures that they can demonstrate their skills on the Grade 3 and Grade 6 assessments.

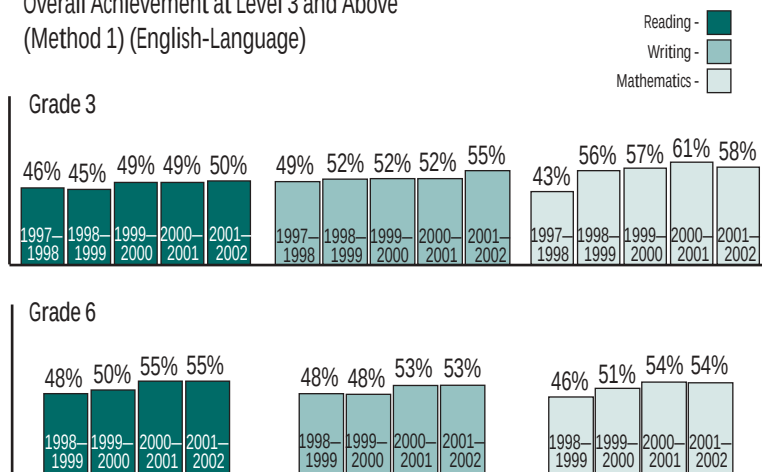
EQAO provides an Individual Student Report for each student, containing reading, writing and mathematics achievement information. The report gives students, parents and teachers information they can use for improvement planning.

Each year, school boards are required to develop and submit improvement plans to EQAO. The plans outline how teachers, principals and senior board staff will change conditions for students, to promote improved achievement.

### Data Comparison Over Time

The Grade 3 and Grade 6 assessments are administered every May. The Grade 3 assessment was administered for the first time during the 1996–1997 school year. The Grade 6 assessment was administered for the first time during the 1998–1999 school year.

#### Overall Achievement at Level 3 and Above (Method 1) (English-Language)



**USING THE RESULTS** — It is important to emphasize that the Grade 3 and Grade 6 assessment results should be used to improve teaching and learning, not to rank schools. Ranking provides no information about why scores are high or low, and it invites simplistic and misleading comparisons that ignore the particular circumstances affecting achievement in each school. Ranking tends to distract people from addressing the more critical issue of how to improve learning for all students.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

EQAO recommends

- that **school boards** carefully review their improvement plans in relation to the board data that they have accumulated over the past five years from the Grade 3 and Grade 6 provincial assessments and revise their improvement plans, using the *EQAO Guide to School and Board Improvement Planning, April 2002*.
- that **school boards** examine the assessment results from all of their schools and identify those that are improving, in order to identify factors that relate to improvement and to share that information to develop improvement strategies board-wide.
- that **school boards** and **schools** analyze all achievement and background information in planning for improvement and identify strategies that assist students in need of additional support and improvement.
- that **principals**, with support from **boards** and the **Ministry of Education**, provide teachers with opportunities for professional development in assessment literacy and, in particular, in using assessment data along with best practices to develop strategies for improvement.

For more detailed information and results, please visit  
the EQAO Web site ([www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com)).