



Welcome

By Marguerite Jackson, Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the first issue of *EQAO Connects* for 2012. EQAO's School Support and Outreach team will be on the road throughout February and March providing a series of regional workshops and learning forums for board staff and elementary school teams.

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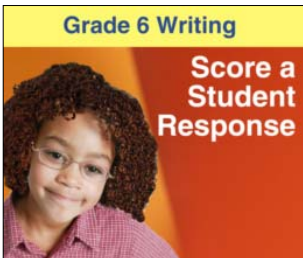


Spotlight on the Dr. Bette M. Stephenson Recognition of Achievement Program

Recognizing schools that have put data to good use

EQAO results are not the end of the learning process but rather the beginning, as many educators like to say. If EQAO has been considered a catalyst for increased student success in Ontario, it is not only because the agency has provided objective and reliable evidence that helps complete the picture of student learning, but also because this evidence has been used as an important tool to drive purposeful improvement at the individual, school, school board and provincial levels.

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How Would You Score This?

Try Your Hand at Scoring a Student Response!

Take a look at the following student response to a grade 6 writing question. How would you score it?

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Counting the EQAO Grade 9 Mathematics Assessment for Course Marks Makes a Difference in Student Results

FEEDBACK

Your comments matter!

[Tell us](#) what YOU think about this issue and EQAO Connects.



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Welcome to the first issue of *EQAO Connects* for 2012. EQAO's School Support and Outreach team will be on the road throughout February and March providing a series of regional workshops and learning forums for board staff and elementary school teams. These workshops will present helpful enhancements to EQAO reports and data files, which have been requested by principals to better meet their needs. Through these workshops, we will continue to help school and school board staff integrate EQAO data into their improvement planning. Such activities, of course, express the power of good information. By gathering information from every student, the provincial assessments provide an essential foundation of data that all partners in the education system rely on to plan for student progress at the local and provincial levels.

The feature article of this issue of *EQAO Connects* speaks specifically about this, focusing on the positive impact that provincial assessment data can have on a school's improvement planning and ultimately on student learning. It shines a spotlight on the 22 schools that received the Dr. Bette M. Stephenson Recognition of Achievement in 2011 for having made effective use of EQAO data to support their students' progress. In this article, you will find a link to hear directly from the school staff at these schools, as well as a video message from Dr. Stephenson, former minister of both Education and Colleges and Universities and director emeritus of EQAO's Board of Directors, in honour of whom the recognition program was established. I trust that you, as educators, will enjoy reading about the data-based strategies your peers have devised to support student achievement.



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Helping Ontario schools integrate EQAO data into their improvement planning is at the heart of EQAO's priorities. Every year, the agency's School Support and Outreach team provides workshops and presentations, and makes school visits across the province, involving more than 3000 practising teachers, vice-principals and principals. These workshops and visits are opportunities for EQAO to help educators learn from their school data and collect strategies from schools that have been putting provincial assessment data to good use. In 2009, EQAO launched the Dr. Bette M. Stephenson Recognition of Achievement Program to recognize the good work done by such schools. In 2011, 22 elementary and secondary schools from across Ontario received this distinction.

Established in honour of Dr. Bette M. Stephenson, former minister of both Education and Colleges and Universities from 1978 to 1985 and director emeritus of EQAO's Board of Directors, the recognition program acknowledges publicly funded schools from across

Ontario that have been making effective use of EQAO data and information from other sources to enhance and support the progress of their students.

“Solid and reliable information on student achievement is crucial to helping educators improve student learning.”

— Dr. Bette M. Stephenson



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The program was named after Dr. Stephenson because of her lifelong commitment to education and public service and her pivotal role as founding member of EQAO in 1996. As the current chair of EQAO's Board of Directors, Brian Desbiens, commented: "[Dr. Stephenson] was instrumental in bringing the agency to its focus on improved learning outcomes for students." Who better than Dr. Stephenson to embody the raison d'être of the recognition program and the notion that data, if used effectively, can drive purposeful improvement that can translate into enhanced student learning?

“As a member of the EQAO Board, which she joined at its inception, [Dr. Stephenson] was instrumental in bringing the agency to its focus on improved learning outcomes for students.”

— Dr. Brian Desbiens, Chair,
EQAO Board of Directors



The Dr. Bette M. Stephenson recipient schools are also emblematic of this notion. The 2011 recipients are at various stages in their journey of learning, but all have made a commitment to improving the literacy and numeracy skills of their students. The schools recognized are not necessarily the ones with the highest provincial assessment results; however, they are representative of all the great schools throughout the province that have adopted an action plan based on their unique circumstances and have made notable improvements, as demonstrated by the positive trend of their results over time. "I'm really pleased that so many schools have used assessment information and have demonstrated positive student results," Dr. Stephenson has said. "I am delighted such schools [have been] recognized. They should be celebrated throughout the province."

The following observations were made during EQAO's visits to schools throughout the province, including the schools that have been recognized:

Elementary schools:

- Principals and teachers have become more adept at using results from EQAO assessments and other data as a reference point to identify the educational needs of all students and to guide their interventions for students as necessary.
- Throughout the province, there has been a strong emphasis on the early identification and support of at-risk students.
- Elementary teachers are committed to the creation of a positive school climate with high expectations for all students. They work in collaborative teams to improve overall achievement.

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- Initiatives by schools to engage parents have resulted in an increase in parental involvement, which has had a positive impact on student success.
- The use of technology to support the delivery of curriculum has contributed to improved student engagement.

Secondary schools:

Grade 9 and OSSLT

- Principals and teachers have become more adept at using EQAO assessment results and other data as a reference point to identify the educational needs of all students and to guide their instructional and assessment practices.
- Initiatives by schools to engage parents have resulted in an increase in parental involvement, which has had a positive impact on student success.

Grade 9

- Cross-panel communication and data sharing among Grades 7, 8 and 9 teachers have had a positive impact on the achievement of elementary students as they transition to the high school mathematics program.
- A variety of in-school tutoring programs to support mathematics learning have contributed to improved student achievement.
- The use of technology to support the delivery of curriculum has contributed to increased student engagement.
- Teamwork and collaboration within the mathematics department facilitate the consistent

delivery of instruction and assessment for the benefit of students.

OSSLT

- Secondary school teachers, regardless of the subject they are teaching, are increasingly committed to being teachers of literacy, as demonstrated by their efforts to work in collaborative teams to improve student literacy achievement.
- The networking of secondary schools with their feeder schools to analyze EQAO and classroom data, engage in moderated marking, and share and refine instructional and assessment practices has contributed to improved student learning.

Today, using student performance data has become an integral part of school improvement planning in Ontario schools. Of the more than 3400 elementary school principals surveyed by the agency in 2011, 96% said that they used EQAO results and questionnaire data to guide school improvement initiatives for reading, writing and mathematics.

As Arnprior District High School Principal Neil Farmer, whose school was among the 2011 recipients, put it when EQAO visited his school: "EQAO data either reaffirms what you have been doing or makes you rethink what you have to do, what direction you have to take"—a view that Dr. Stephenson would strongly support. It embodies her belief in creating a strong culture of assessment that informs evidence-based decision making in order to bring about positive outcomes for all students.

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2011 School Recipients

Arnprior District High School
Renfrew County District School Board

David Lewis Public School
Toronto District School Board

Eastdale Collegiate and Vocational Institute
Durham District School Board

École catholique Saints-Martyrs-Canadiens
Conseil scolaire catholique de district des Grandes Rivières

École élémentaire L'Harmonie
Conseil scolaire Viamonde

École élémentaire publique Rose des Vents
Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario

École secondaire catholique Garneau
Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est

École secondaire catholique Sainte-Famille
Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud

École secondaire Macdonald-Cartier
Conseil scolaire public du Grand Nord de l'Ontario

École St-Thomas d'Aquin
Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord

Harrowsmith Public School
Limestone District School Board

Kenollie Public School
Peel District School Board

Masonville Public School
Thames Valley District School Board

Mother Teresa Catholic School
Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board

Neil McNeil Catholic High School
Toronto Catholic District School Board

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School
Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board

Pinewood Public School
Keewatin-Patricia District School Board

Riverdale Collegiate Institute
Toronto District School Board

Shakespeare Public School
Avon Maitland District School Board

St. Jean de Brebeuf Catholic High School
York Catholic District School Board

St. John Fisher Catholic School
St. Clair Catholic District School Board

St. Theresa Catholic Secondary School
Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board

To find out more

EQAO's Web site provides additional information about the 2011 recipients of the Dr. Bette M. Stephenson Recognition of Achievement.

Read their [school stories](#), and [watch their speeches](#) to listen to what they have to say.

Also available are Dr. Bette M. Stephenson's [video message](#) acknowledging the 2011 recipients, and the [tribute video](#) done in her honour.

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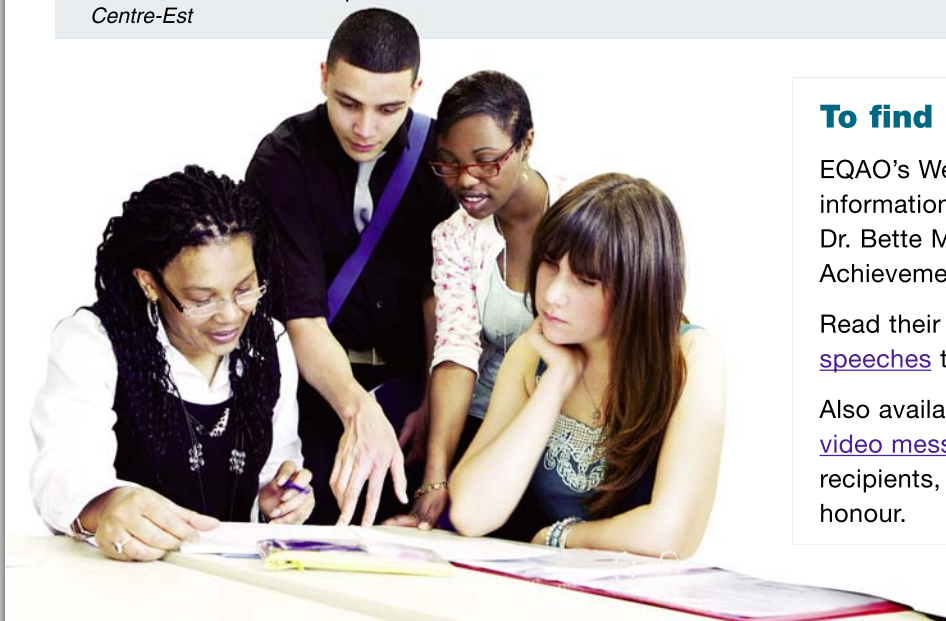
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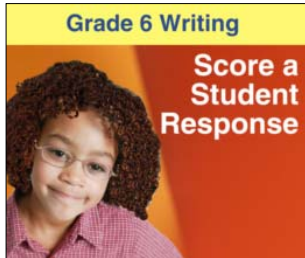
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How Would You Score This?

Try your hand at scoring a student response!

Short writing prompt: Write a report to inform your class about the importance of being physically active.

Being physically active means to do exercise. Doing exercise means to be healthy.

Being physically active can be anything. You can jog, walk, run, daskipping. All these thing help give your heart a workout.

When you exercise, you burn off calories which you get by eating junk food like cake, burgers and donuts. That's way you should eat healthy food and exercise.

Being physically active can help you look, be, and feel healthy. I + can increase your years of life and you will be less likely to get sick.

Doing physical activities means to be fit.

1. Read the short writing prompt and student response from the 2010–2011 Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Junior Division.
2. Use the short writing rubric to determine how you would score the student response for topic development.
3. Click the score codes to find out whether you are right and to see examples of student work at each of the codes.

Check out [additional examples](#) from past years' assessments.

Note: Both short and long writing responses are also assessed on use of language conventions.

Short Writing Rubric

Code	Description
10	Response is not developed; ideas and information are limited and unclear. Organization* is random with no links between ideas. Response has a limited relationship to the assigned task.**
20	Response is minimally developed with few ideas and little information. Organization* is minimal with weak links between ideas. Response is partly related to the assigned task.**
30	Response has a clear focus, adequately developed with ideas and supporting details. Organization* is simple or mechanical with adequate links between ideas. Response is clearly related to the assigned task.**
40	Response has a clear focus, well-developed with sufficient specific and relevant ideas and supporting details. Organization* is logical and coherent with effective links between ideas. Response has a thorough relationship to the assigned task.**

*Organization refers to the sequencing of information and events. The links may be explicit (e.g., transition words) or implicit (the right information at the right time).

**Task refers to form, purpose and audience.

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