

**EDUCATION:** York Region students performing at or above provincial level

# Grade 3 scores acceptable

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STAFF WRITER

The majority of York Region students performed above the provincial average in Grade 3 reading, writing and math tests, according to results released yesterday.

Of the nearly 5,000 York Region public school students who took the tests, at least 51 per cent reached level three in all three subjects — considered the acceptable level of achievement by the province.

That's about 10 per cent above the provincial average at that level.

And when level two — considered to be "approaching" acceptable levels — is added to those scores, 85 per cent met or came close to the provincial expectations.

Students who achieve level three demonstrate general knowledge and understanding of the material. At level two, some knowledge and understanding is shown.

York separate school students also performed well on the reading and writing tests, with 53 per cent or higher reaching level three in those subjects.

Just 45 per cent of the separate board students hit level three in math, but 41 per cent reached at least level two in that subject.

Public board director Bill Hogarth was pleased with his board's results.

"Our students and their teachers are to be congratulated," he said in a statement Friday. "These results clearly demonstrate their steadfast individual and collective commitment to improvement."



**BILL HOGARTH**  
Teachers and students to be congratulated

Officials praised the revised test created this year by the provincial Education Quality and Accountability Office. But they cautioned the results of the revised test shouldn't be compared to last year.

"The testing this year was shorter, clearer, and based on newly introduced Ontario curriculum," said Sharon Craigen, superintendent of curriculum at the public board.

"We're delighted by the results and what they will mean to our students' self-confidence. But we can't compare this year's scores to our '97 results. The tests were very different."

Craigen also warned against trying to rank schools based on the test scores.

"This is one test, one measure of dozens that teachers use to assess and evaluate student progress," she said. "Schools should neither be crowned nor condemned on the basis of their EQAO scores."

The EQAO is an arms-length agency whose mandate is to ensure accountability and help improve quality of education in Ontario.

The agency administered the tests last May based on a curriculum unit called Inventions, Investigations and Discoveries. The test lasted three hours a day for five days, compared to 10 days of testing in April of the previous year.

Students were asked to read a variety of materials and answer questions about what they read.

In the writing test, they were asked to use a range of forms and write for different purposes.

For math, the children had to show their understanding of problem solving, procedures, concepts and communication skills.

Parents received their child's individual results last week. School reports will be presented at the public board Nov. 26 and at the separate board Nov. 24.

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