

# Errors means school ranking can be re-examined

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Staff Writer

Any York Region school can apply to have its ranking reviewed in light of questionable results discovered for at least 10 Ontario schools in the Fraser Institute report card.

The Vancouver-based think tank analyzed academic programs at 815 Ontario high schools, both public and private, and provided rankings for 568. Its report was released last week amid local con-

cerns that the narrow focus of the criteria does little to provide parents with a overall picture of a school.

On Monday, the Institute pulled the rankings from its web site after serious errors were found in the data provided by the Ministry of Education in at least 10 cases. The inaccuracies were noticed by the individual schools, spokesperson Peter Cowley said.

"The only way for us to proceed is if a school believes its data is

incorrect, let us know and we'll have the Ministry review it. For us to go to the Ministry and say 'tell me all these files are right,' well, there's no way to do that."

He would not admit the possibility that the integrity of all the research may now be suspect if it's based on erroneous or missing information.

"I have no reason to believe the (rest of the data) from the Ministry of Education is anything other than solid," Cowley said.

"The Ministry has all the data, supplied by every school and that makes every school comparable. I have to rely on that data — I can't go to every school, I haven't got the resources to do it, and the data itself would not be comparable."

York Region District School Board spokesperson Ross Virgo said a board-wide review would not be requested, but any school with concerns is free to ask for an individual analysis.

Chris Cable, spokesperson for

the Catholic board, said it doesn't seem so unusual now that only two Catholic high schools were rated, despite the fact information was submitted by all schools.

"This puts it into perspective. We were very confused as to why only two schools were ranked when every school complies with Ministry requests for information. We're pushing ahead to find out what happened, but this might shed a little light on that," Cable said.

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