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19 Mike Forgie of the streaking Stouffville Spirit accepts scholarship to Michigan university.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EVENT: Whitchurch Guides' Breakfast with Santa
WHEN: Sunday, Dec. 15, 9 to 11 a.m.
WHERE: Ballantrae Community Centre, Aurora Rd.



17 A trifle English: Some history and recipes on a fine Christmas dessert.

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Stouffville Tribune

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TO REACH US: (905) 640-2612

Students have improved but....

EQAO results slightly better than last year

BY MITCHELL BROWN
 Staff Writer

Students in York Region's public schools have improved their reading, writing and math skills, but officials say there's still cause for concern.

A report released last week by the Education Quality and Accountability Office shows Ontario's Grade 3, 6 and 9 students did slightly better in their EQAO exams during the 2001-02 school year.

In York Region, 62 per cent of participating Grade 3 students met or exceeded the provincial standard in reading, 68 per cent in writing and 73 per cent in mathematics.

That compares to province-wide results of, respectively, 53 per cent, 59 per cent and 61 per cent.

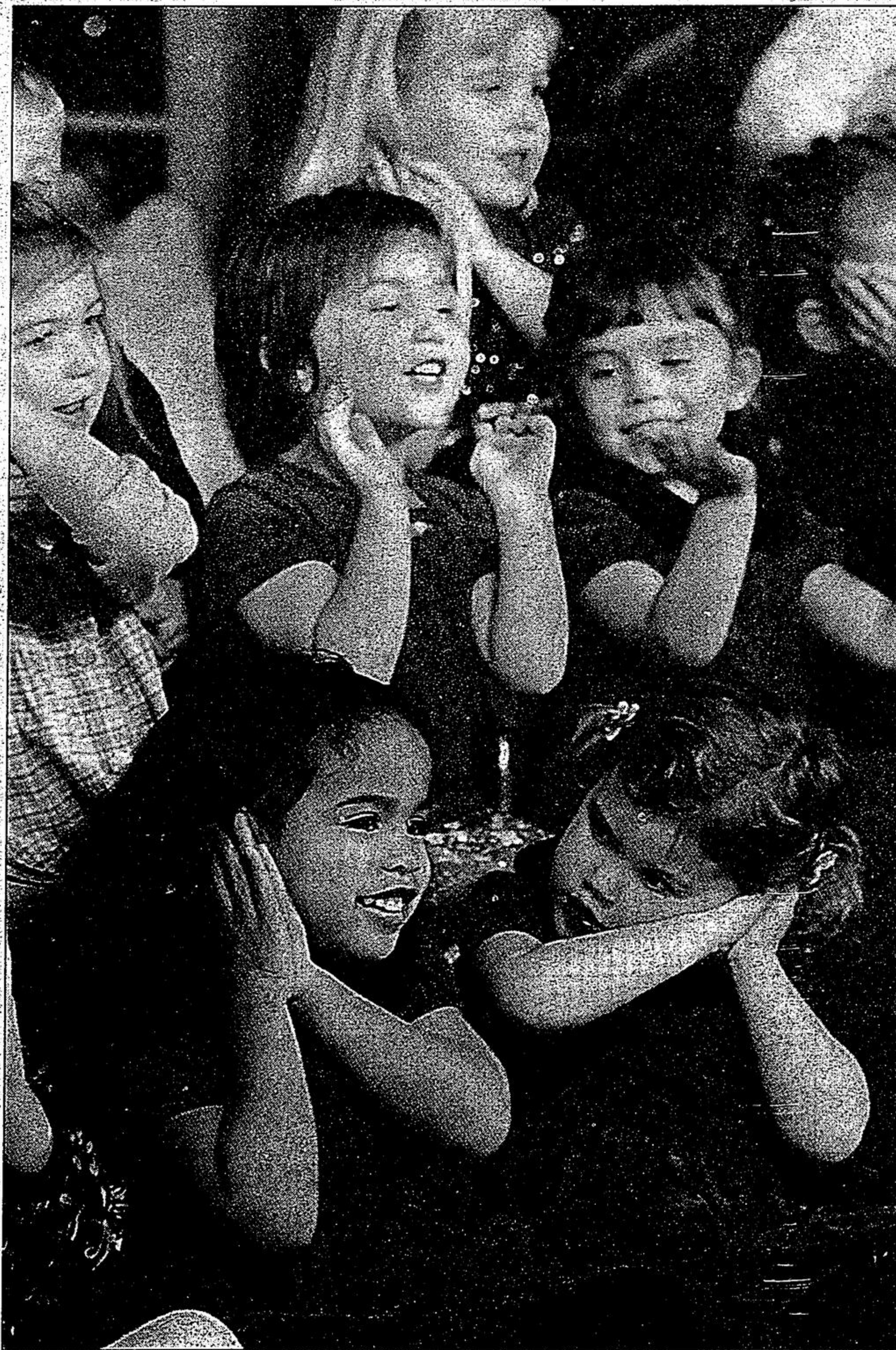
Grade 6 students also fared well, with 70 per cent passing the reading portion, 67 per cent in writing and 73 per cent in mathematics.

Provincially, the results were 58 per cent for reading and 56 per cent for both writing and mathematics.

In Grade 9, however, the numbers looked slightly different.

While 71 per cent of Grade 9 students in the academic stream passed the math assessment — an improvement of 9 percentage points over last year — only 21

All together now



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Nicolette Didone (front left) and Hayley Peters (right) and their classmates from My First School pre-school in Stouffville have a show of hands during their annual Christmas concert at Latham Hall in Stouffville Memorial Park on Tuesday evening.

Town could lose 16 from fire dept.

MPPs reject bill to allow full-time firefighters to volunteer

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
 Staff Writer

Public safety will not be jeopardized if 16 volunteer firefighters, known as double-hatters, are cut from the Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire Department, union and town officials are both insisting.

Concerns were raised after the Volunteer Firefighters Employment Protection Act, also known as Bill 30, was defeated at Queen's Park on Wednesday.

Bill 30 was designed to protect those full-time firefighters who also serve on volunteer fire departments in their home communities. These firefighters, who are paid by the hour for their "volunteer work", are known as double-hatters.

The defeat surprised firefighters, Oak Ridges MPP and Minister of Tourism and Recreation Frank Klees, International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 4152 president John Winters and Mayor Wayne Emmerson.

A timetable for dismissing the double-hatters on the Whitchurch-Stouffville department has not been set.

Mr. Klees called the defeat of Bill 30 "offensive" and "an attack on personal freedom" since career firefighters face expulsion from their unions and possible dismissal from their jobs for volunteering.

The IAFF union bars the double-hatter practice on the grounds that members, tired from working both jobs, could pose a safety

See MPP page 11.

See MORE, page 8.

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