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Parents praised for involvement at school

From page 1.

student population enrolled in English as a second language courses.

"We couldn't do it without strong teachers. We are very fortunate to have a committed staff and parent body that has a tremendous level of support for the school," Mr. La Touche said.

But teachers at William Berzcy don't have to contend with some of the socioeconomic issues that exist at some other schools, Mr. La Touche.

Despite the stellar marks, such as 98 per cent of students being at the provincial standard or better in Grade 3 mathematics, Mr. La Touche does not believe in sitting back and relaxing.

"I think the moment that you say, 'This is good enough' — that's a dangerous position to be in."

At Roy H. Crosby Public School in Markham, test scores were all in the high 80s and low 90s — something principal Corey Trute attributed to parental involvement.

"I'm very proud of our students and staff and very pleased that we're in a parental community that wants to be involved," Mr. Trute said.

"We always want to try to narrow the gap between high achieving and low achieving students, by trying to find support for them," Mr. Trute said.

The picture was not so rosy at every school, with those in the northern end of the region continuing to score poorly.

At Jersey Public School, while dramatic improvements were made in reading, writing and mathematics in Grade 3, the scores in Grade 6 declined by the same margin.

Only 22 per cent of students tested are at the provincial standard in reading and writing and 24 per cent in mathematics.

The results show the school is improving, Jersey principal Gord Wagner said.

Jersey has been focusing on primary grades, so results have improved in Grade 3. Test scores will be used to tailor the teaching focus this year, Mr. Wagner said.

Before the results were released, Mr. Wagner had already held staff meetings stressing the focus should be writing in junior grades.

He noted this year's numbers aren't the worst the school has ever recorded.

"The board is identifying that Georgina has a set of particular circumstances that do need to be considered," Mr. Wagner said.

Dr. Lyn Sharratt, superintendent of curriculum and institutional services for the public board acknowledged there are pockets of the board's schools that are not performing well.

"I think what we've tried to do is not dwell on that," Ms Sharratt said. "The last thing we want to do is alienate a particular community. We have pockets of schools not doing well in all areas."



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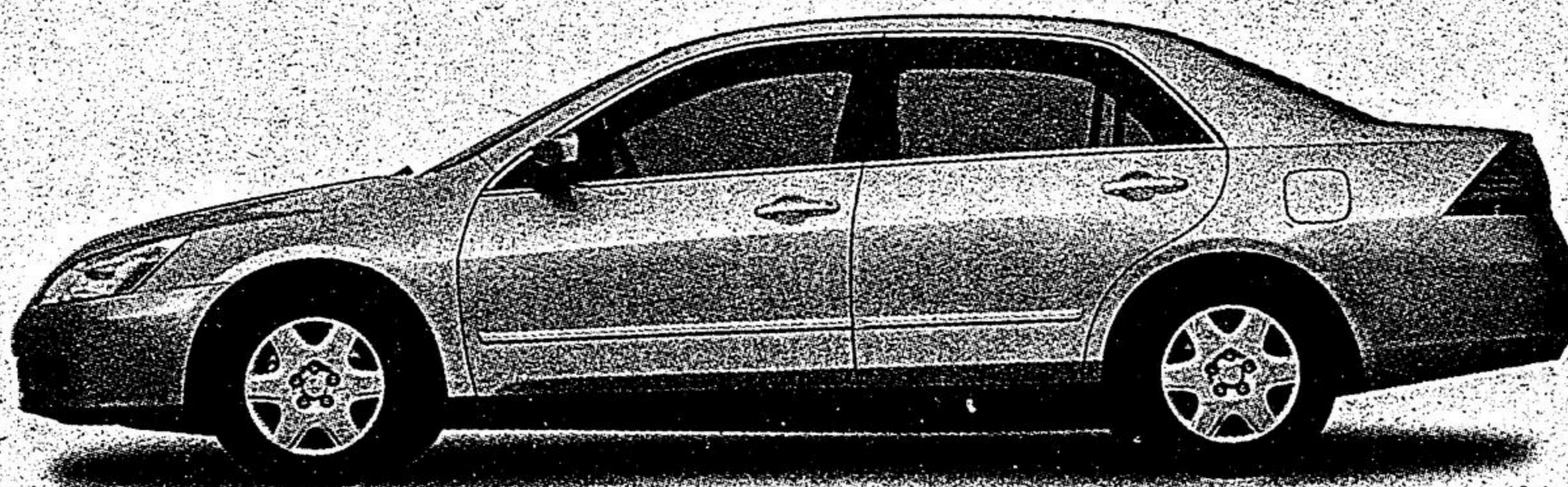
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