



NEWS NEWS NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

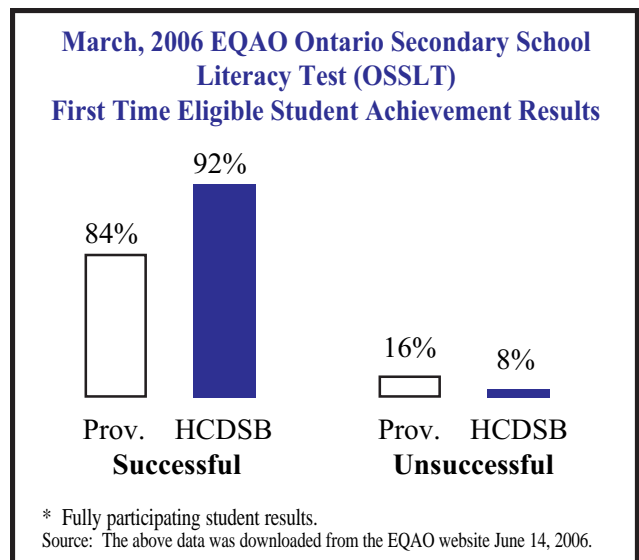
HALTON CATHOLIC BOARD RELEASES BOARD AND INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERACY TEST RESULTS

The Halton Catholic District School Board released today its Board and individual school results for eligible students, who wrote for the first time, the *Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)*, which was conducted in March, 2006 by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO).

"The Halton Catholic District School Board celebrates the success of all of our students and each of our secondary schools. Our students continue to demonstrate high achievement in this provincial assessment, as evidenced by the 5% increase (Fully Participating category) in the number of students who successfully completed the *OSSLT* in March, 2006, as compared to October, 2004," states Lou Piovesan, Director of Education. "It is through the collaborative and combined efforts of our elementary and secondary teachers, support staff, students, parents, administration and Board personnel, embracing the Ministry of Education initiatives which focus on literacy, that the Halton Catholic District School Board is able to achieve results above the provincial average on the *OSSLT*," continues Lou Piovesan.

Overall, the results indicate that a significantly greater percentage of the Board's secondary school students, compared to the province, successfully completed the *OSSLT*. In the group of students who wrote the test for the first time (i.e., students who entered Grade 9 in 2004), 91% of the 2,173 students *who were eligible to write the test* (All Students category) did so successfully and 92% of the 2,143 students *who completed the test* (Fully Participating category) did so successfully, as outlined in the attached chart at the end of this release.

"The results attained by our students in this provincial assessment are due to a variety of factors," explains Rick MacDonald, Superintendent of Education (Curriculum Services). "Our Board's commitment to foundational literacy skills across the curriculum, continuous staff development and providing appropriate resources to support student learning are accountable for this outstanding achievement. Our dedicated staff work diligently to ensure that student needs are met and our students are to be congratulated on their very significant achievement. As well, the positive and interactive relationship between the parent communities and our schools is an important influence that is also reflected in these excellent results."



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(OSSLT Results March, 2006 - Halton Catholic District School Board cont'd)

The *OSSLT* is based on the expectations for reading and writing across all core subjects in *The Ontario Curriculum* up to the end of grade 9. Successful completion of the *OSSLT* is one of the requirements leading to an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. The test is marked on a successful/unsuccessful basis according to criteria established by EQAO. Students must successfully complete both the reading and writing components of the test to be considered successful. Students who are deemed unsuccessful in their attempt (i.e., wrote the *OSSLT* but did not pass or did not fully participate in the *OSSLT* due to absence or deferral) are eligible to retake the test during future administrations and/or participate in the *Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC)*. The *OSSLC* is offered at numerous sites throughout the Halton Catholic District School Board.

The EQAO Individual Student Reports are used by school staff to identify students who may want to participate in the remedial assistance program and/or register in the *Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC)*.

The Halton Catholic District School Board has initiated the following supports to provide students, parents/guardians and teachers with strategies for improving literacy skills:

- Literacy Remediation Program, an after school non-credit program where school staff work with students to improve their reading and writing skills;
- *Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC)*, Grade 12 English credit focusing on the literacy strands of reading, writing and understanding and assessing growth in literacy;
- Board-wide family of schools Literacy Teams with representation from each elementary and secondary school to support the continued development of literacy skills. The objective of these teams is to update intermediate and secondary teachers on information regarding adolescent literacy and to share information about resources, instruction, and assessment practices used in families of schools;
- Support materials for students in preparation of the *OSSLT*;
- Support services and materials for students enrolled in English as a Second Language/English Literacy Development classes;
- In-service modules for professional development focusing on literacy strategies in all subject areas;
- A variety of learning strategies courses for special needs students who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP);
- Board School Improvement Plan supporting continuous improvement in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics from K-12;

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(OSSLT Results March, 2006 - Halton Catholic District School Board cont'd)

- Ongoing opportunities for staff development;
- Professional development materials available at the Board's Educational Resource Centre lending library for staff;
- A parent resource document, *Learning to Read and Write: The Home/School Connection*, to support reading and writing in the home.

The Halton Catholic District School Board is confident that our strong commitment to literacy skills development will continue to be reflected in the high performance of all of our students.

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About the Halton Catholic District School Board

The Halton Catholic District School Board, a provincial leader in student achievement in literacy and numeracy, as well as in Special Education, provides the best of Catholic education to more than 28,000 students of all ages at 45 faith-centred learning communities in Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville. Committed to servant leadership, continuous school improvement planning and the preservation of the enduring gift of Catholic education, the Board is an exciting and dynamic system in which to learn, grow and work.

Believing In You . . . Believing In Us

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HALTON CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD				
ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERACY TEST (OSSLT)				
FIRST TIME ELIGIBLE STUDENTS ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS				
2006 March				
Achievement Level	Category Reported	Did not Write	Percent	
			Unsuccessful	Successful
Province	All Students	3	15	79
Halton Catholic District School Board	All Students	1	8	91
Assumption	All Students	*	6	91
Bishop Reding	All Students	*	8	90
Christ the King	All Students	*	10	88
Holy Trinity	All Students	*	7	92
Notre Dame	All Students	*	5	95
St Ignatius of Loyola	All Students	*	8	90
St Thomas Aquinas	All Students	*	12	87
Province	Fully Participating	na	16	84
Halton Catholic District School Board	Fully Participating	na	8	92
Assumption	Fully Participating	na	7	93
Bishop Reding	Fully Participating	na	8	92
Christ the King	Fully Participating	na	10	90
Holy Trinity	Fully Participating	na	7	93
Notre Dame	Fully Participating	na	5	95
St Ignatius of Loyola	Fully Participating	na	8	92
St Thomas Aquinas	Fully Participating	na	12	88
All Students: This category provides a percentage breakdown of all students in the cohort who are working toward an OSSD. The only students excluded from the percentages in this category are those who were not working toward an OSSD and were therefore exempted.				
Fully Participating: This category provides a percentage breakdown of those students who fully participated in the OSSLT. Students are considered to have fully participated if they were present on both days of the administration.				
* To protect against the disclosure of personal information associated with individual student results, a series of suppression rules are implemented for the public release of OSSLT results. Statistics have been suppressed where the number of respondents is so low that individual results could be determined from the aggregate value.				
Source: EQAO data -- June 14, 2006				