



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

**The York Catholic District School Board  
320 Bloomington Road West • Aurora • L4G 3G8  
(905) 713-2711, (416) 221-5050**

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Contact: Chris Cable, Communications Manager  
905-713-2711, ext. 3003  
cell: 416-414-9913

### **York Catholic Students Continue to Be Among Tops in Provincial Literacy Test**

Results released today by the Education Quality & Accountability Office (EQAO) show that 90% of York Catholic students who wrote the 2006 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) for the first time were successful. This compares to 84% provincially, and it's also a 3% improvement for York Catholic students over last year's results.

The Test measures students' reading and writing skills based on language expectations common to all subjects in the provincial curriculum, up to the end of Grade 9. Students must pass both the reading and writing components to successfully complete the Test. The Test is administered in Grade 10 and provides opportunities for students who do not pass to improve their skills and retake the Test in later years.

Since the OSSLT was first introduced in 2002, York Catholic students have shown significant gains – from a 77% success rate in 2002 to the current 90% -- or an increase of 13% since the test was first introduced.

#### **Highlights of York Catholic Results:**

- We are still seeing more girls than boys achieving success on the OSSLT, however boys showed more success over last year – a 9% improvement rate for boys verses a 6% improvement rate for girls.
- The success rate for English as a Second Language students increased by 9%.
- Applied Level English students showed greater improvements than their Academic Level counterparts – a 7% improvement rate for Applied students verses a 2% improvement rate for Academic.
- Of the York Catholic students who were required to retake the test, 75% of them were successful this time out – as compared to 55% of the students provincially who retook the test.

“We applaud the organization of our schools in preparing for the test. Our already high scores and continued upward trend is a testament to the collaboration among teachers and partnerships with parents,” said Superintendent of Curriculum & Assessment, Debra Cormier. “As a Board,

we made a commitment to prepare our students for success on the OSSLT,” said Cormier. A number of strategies were put in place at a number of York Catholic secondary schools including:

- specialty literacy classes – i.e. every Tuesday, for 20 minutes, all classes were involved in cross curriculum literacy activities
- in November, parents of Grade 9 and 10 students met with the Board’s Literacy Consultants who provided parents with strategies on how to assist their children at home
- Special Education students received additional support – and on testing day, some Special Education students used computer assistive technology (Kurzweill)
- the Board purchased literature and classroom resources targeted to boys
- some schools brought in Grade 10 students on Saturdays in March to focus on literacy preparation
- the Board purchased the “Don’t Panic” workbook for Grade 10 students and used it as the foundation for their preparation

Over 4,000 Grade 10 York Catholic students wrote the OSSLT in March 2006.

<b>Fully Participating</b>	<b>% of York Catholic Students Successful</b>	<b>% of Students in Province Successful</b>
<b>March 2006</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>84%</b>
Oct. 2004	87%	82%
Oct. 2003	79%	77%
Oct. 2002	73%	72%
Feb. 2002	77%	75%

<b>School – Fully Participating Students –2006 OSSLT</b>	<b>% Successful</b>	<b>+ / - % Comparison to Last Year</b>
Brother Andre	90%	+ 1%
Fr. Michael McGivney	87%	+ 2%
Holy Cross	88%	+ 6%
Cardinal Carter	91%	+ 3%
Our Lady of the Lake	91%	+ 13%
Sacred Heart	91%	+ 2%
St. Augustine	97%	+ 2%
St. Elizabeth	90%	+ 4%
St. Jean de Brebeuf	85%	n/a
St. Joan of Arc	82%	+ 7%
St. Robert	93%	+ 1%
Fr. Bressani	88%	0%
St. Theresa of Lisieux	96%	+ 2%

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