



Student Performance on the April 2009 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Highlights of Student Performance

Background information

The April 2009 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) results report on two groups of students: “first-time eligible students” and “previously eligible students.” First-time eligible students are students who entered Grade 9 during the 2007/2008 school year and any others who were placed in this cohort.

Previously eligible students were eligible to write the test in April 2009 if they were not successful during a previous administration of the test, or were absent or deferred from a previous administration. Students who are not successful must successfully complete the Literacy Test or, alternatively, the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) – which is one of thirty-two requirements of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

YCDSB Highlights of the Results of the 2008-2009 Literacy Test

- 4,125 students wrote the test for the first time; 91% of these students were successful.
- 543 students retook the test; 64% of these students were successful.
- Both first-time eligible students and students who retook the test wrote the OSSLT on April 2, 2009.
- Of the 4,236 students who were eligible to take the test for the first time, 97% actually wrote the test and the remainder were absent on the day of the test or were deferred from writing the test. The percentage of students participating in the test has remained fairly stable over the past six years.
- When all first-time eligible students are factored into the overall success rate for the 2007/2008 Grade 9 cohort (i.e., students who actually wrote the test and students who were absent or deferred) the percentage of students who were successful is 88%. (*Deferrals are granted by school principals to students who are not ready to write the literacy test.*)
- Since the first administration of the Literacy test in 2002, the success rate for first-time eligible students who actually wrote the test has increased by 14% for the Board compared to 10% for the province.

First-Time Eligible Students: Historical Data

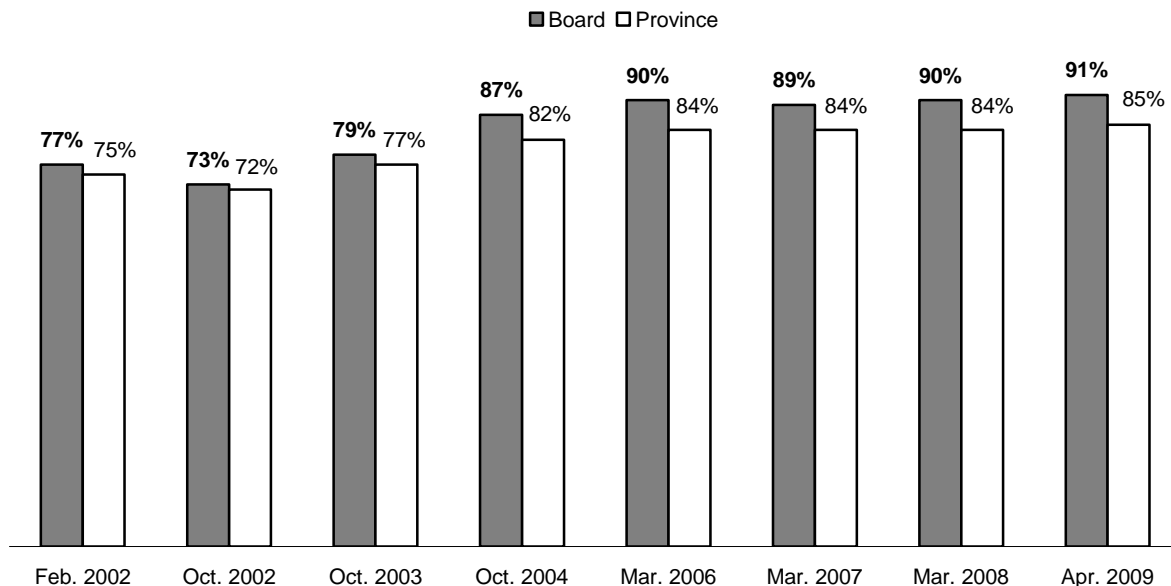
Assessment results from the April 2009 administration of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)¹ indicate that ninety-one percent (91%) of first-time eligible students in the Board and eighty-five percent (85%) of first-time eligible students across the province who fully participated in the test were successful. These results represent an increase of +1% for both the Board and the province since the previous administration of the Literacy Test.

Results from the last five (5) administrations of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test indicate that there has been an increase of 4% for first-time eligible students in the Board compared to an increase of 3% for students across the province. Please refer to Table 1 and the chart provided below.

Table 1: Results for Fully Participating² First-Time Eligible (FTE) students in the Board and across the province who were successful on the Literacy Test since its first administration

Fully Participating Students	Board	Province
Apr. 2009	91%	85%
Mar. 2008	90%	84%
Mar. 2007	89%	84%
Mar. 2006	90%	84%
Oct. 2004	87%	82%
Oct. 2003	79%	77%
Oct. 2002	73%	72%
Feb. 2002	77%	75%

Historical Achievement of Fully Participating FTE Students who were Successful



¹ The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) released the OSSLT results on June 3rd, 2009.

² Results for Fully Participating First-Time Eligible Students are based on all students in the cohort who are working to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and excludes those students who were absent or deferred from writing the test.

First-Time Eligible Students: Contextual Information

1. Results for Fully Participating Students - More first-time eligible students attending York Catholic schools who **actually wrote the test** were successful on the Literacy Test (91%) compared to students attending schools across the province (85%). There was a small increase in achievement for first time eligible students attending schools in the York Catholic District School Board (+1%) and the province (+1%).
2. Results for All Eligible Students - Of the students who were **eligible to write the test**, 88% of students in the Board were successful, maintaining the high rate of success achieved over the past few years. Across the province, 79% of eligible students were successful. Results for all eligible students includes those who were absent or deferred from writing the test.
3. The same proportion of first-time eligible students in York Catholic was absent (1%) or deferred (1%) from writing the previous five administrations of the test.
4. More female students who wrote the test (93%) were successful compared to male students (89%). The gap was narrowed as males experienced an increase of +2% from the previous year while there was no change in performance for females.
5. The success rate for students with an IEP only who received accommodations to write the test improved from the previous year (+5%). There was a decrease from the previous year for students with special needs {excluding gifted} (-2%) and for students with an IEP & IPRC who were accommodated (-6%).

Note: Please refer to Table 2 on the following page.

6. This year, English language learners who wrote the Literacy test experienced a high rate of growth and were able to narrow the gap with other students (ELLs 84%; Other Students 91%). The growth from the previous year was +16% for English language learners and +1% for students in the Board.
7. As in previous administrations of the test, a larger proportion of students enrolled in an academic English course successfully completed the Literacy Test compared to students enrolled in other English courses. Students enrolled in the various English courses experienced growth from the previous year with the exception of students taking a locally developed compulsory credit English course. Students taking a locally developed English course experienced a significant decline in achievement from the previous year (-29%). Students taking academic English experienced the smallest rate of growth while students taking an ESL/ELD English course experienced the largest increase in achievement.

<u>English Course</u>	Success Rate	Percent Change
Academic:	97%	+1%
Applied:	67%	+7%
Locally Developed:	11%	-29%
ESL/ELD:	81%	+20%

Table 2: Results for First-Time Eligible Students in the Board who were successful on the Literacy Test by Contextual Information

First-Time Eligible Students	Absent	Deferred	All Students³	Fully Participating⁴
Eligible Students (<i>N</i> = 4,236)	1% (+0%)	1% (+0%)	88% (+0%)	91% (+1%)
Females (<i>N</i> = 2,022)	1% (+0%)	1% (+0%)	91% (+0%)	93% (+0%)
Males (<i>N</i> = 2,214)	1% (+0%)	2% (+0%)	86% (+2%)	89% (+2%)
English Language Learners (<i>N</i> = 93)	1% (+1%)	32% (+1%)	56% (+9%)	84% (+16%)
Students with Special Education Needs (excluding gifted) (<i>N</i> = 474)	2% (+0%)	4% (+0%)	54% (-2%)	57% (-2%)
Students with Special Education Needs Receiving Accommodations (IEP Only) (<i>N</i> = 133)	2% (+0%)	0% (+0%)	56% (+5%)	57% (+5%)
Students with Special Education Needs Receiving Accommodations (IEP and IPRC) (<i>N</i> = 303)	3% (+1%)	0% (+0%)	56% (-6%)	57% (-6%)
Academic Level English (<i>N</i> = 3,379)	1% (+0%)	<1% (+0%)	96% (+0%)	97% (+1%)
Applied Level English (<i>N</i> = 714)	3% (+1%)	2% (+1%)	63% (+5%)	67% (+7%)
Locally Developed English (<i>N</i> = 58)	3% (+0%)	21% (+4%)	9% (-23%)	11% (-29%)
Taking ESL/ELD Course (<i>N</i> = 80)	1% (+1%)	40% (+3%)	48% (+10%)	81% (+20%)

³ Results for All Students are based on eligible students from the 2007/2008 Grade 9 cohort who are working to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and include students who were absent, as well as, those who were deferred from writing the test.

⁴ Results for Fully Participating are based on students in the 2007/2008 Grade 9 cohort who actually wrote the test and are working to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). These results exclude students who were absent or deferred from writing the test.

Performance Targets for First-Time Eligible Students

In 2009, over ninety-percent of fully participating first-time eligible students in York Catholic District School Board were successful on the Literacy test. For the April 2009 administration of the Literacy test, the Board established a target of +2% for fully participating students. An increase in the rate of success was also predicted for each student sub-group. The predicted rate of growth and the actual increase are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3: OSSLT Performance Targets Predicted for First-Time Eligible Students

First-time Eligible Students	Predicted Target	Actual Increase	Actual Results
Fully Participating Students	+2%	+1%	91%
Females	+2%	+0%	93%
Males	+2%	+2%	89%
Students with Special Education Needs	+2%	-2%	57%
English Language Learners	+2%	+16%	84%
In an Academic English Course	+1%	+1%	97%
In an Applied English Course	+2%	+7%	67%
In a Locally Developed English Course	+3%	-29%	11%

Of the groups of students who demonstrated improvement from the previous administration of the OSSLT, four groups met or exceeded the performance targets:

- Male students;
- English language learners;
- Students in academic English;
- Students in applied English.

Previously Eligible Students: Achievement Highlights

1. Approximately two-thirds of the students in the York Catholic District School Board (64%) and more than half of the students across the province (54%) who were required to retake the test and actually did were successful on the most recent administration of the Literacy test.
2. The OSSLT results for students in York Catholic who were previously eligible (i.e., students who entered Grade 9 prior to 2007/2008 and who were previously unsuccessful on the test) indicate an increase in the success rate for the Board (+1%) and the province (+3%).
3. There was a decrease of 1% in the proportion of previously eligible students in York Catholic who were absent from the previous administration of the test (2008: 5%; 2009: 4%).
4. Approximately a fifth of previously eligible students in York Catholic (22%) were enrolled in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC). This represents an increase of 3% from the previous year.
5. Sixty-seven percent of the previously eligible students in York Catholic (543 / 815), who were eligible to re-write the test, actually re-wrote it:
 - Seventy-seven (77) students were exempted from writing the Literacy test, as they were no longer working to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).
 - Thirty (30) students were absent on the day the test was administered.
 - Sixty-five (65) students were deferred from writing the test.
 - One hundred and seventy-seven (177) students were fulfilling the diploma requirement through the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC). (The OSSLC is a full-credit course that was developed by the Ministry of Education to give students an alternative method of demonstrating their literacy skills. The option to take the course is given to students who were previously unsuccessful on the Literacy Test.)

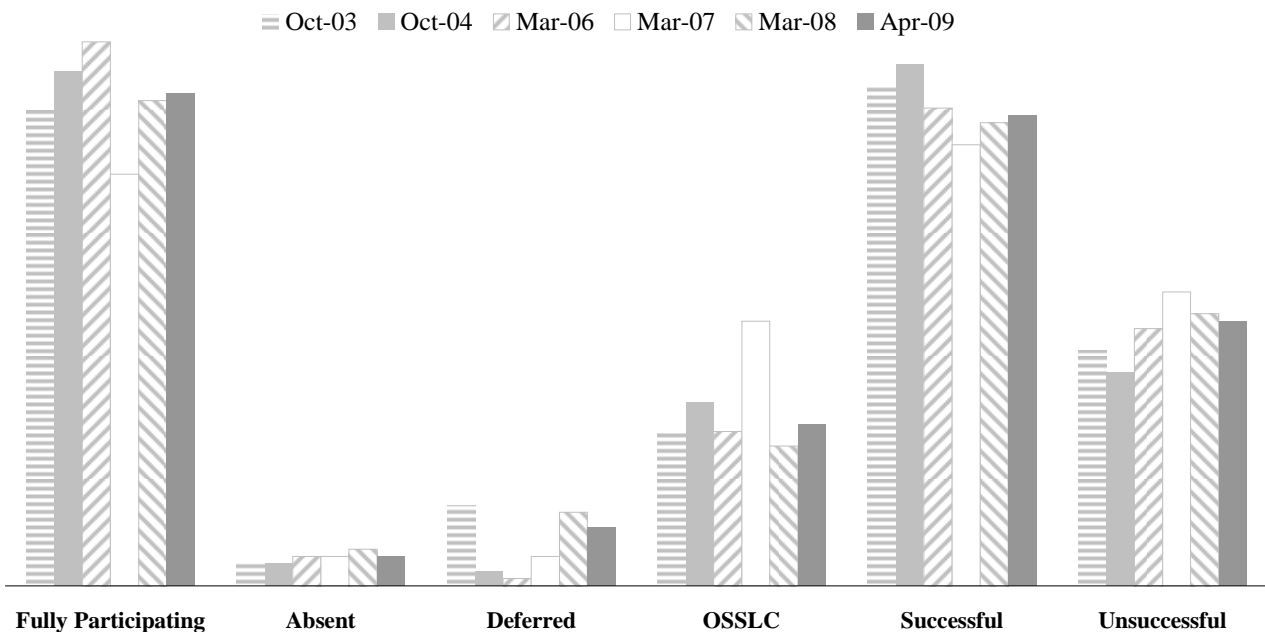
Note: Please refer to Table 4 on the following page for an overview of student performance over time for previously eligible students.

Previously Eligible Students: Historical Data

Table 4: Results for Previously Eligible students in York Catholic since the implementation of the OSSLC in the 2003-2004 school year

Previously Eligible	October 2003	October 2004	March 2006	March 2007	March 2008	April 2009	1-Year Growth
Fully Participating	65%	70%	74%	56%	66%	67%	+1%
Absent	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	-1%
Deferred	11%	2%	1%	4%	10%	8%	-2%
OSSLC	21%	25%	21%	36%	19%	22%	+3%
Successful	68%	71%	65%	60%	63%	64%	+1%
Unsuccessful	32%	29%	35%	40%	37%	36%	-1%

OSSLT results for students who retook the Literacy test or who were absent or deferred from a previous administration



Previously Eligible Students: Contextual Information

Results for Previously Eligible students indicated the following:

- More females who rewrote the test (67%) were successful compared to males (62%). The gap was narrowed as males experienced an increase in achievement (+4%) while the performance for females declined (-3%) from the previous year.
- More than half of the English language learners were successful this year (58%). These results represent a decrease in performance from the previous year (-6%).
- The success rate for previously eligible students with special education needs and students with an IEP & IPRC who received accommodations to write the test improved from the previous year (+2% and +5 respectively). There was a decrease from the previous year for previously eligible students with an IEP only who were accommodated (-8%). Please refer to Table 5 below.

Table 5: Results for Previously Eligible Students in the Board by Contextual Information

Previously Eligible Students	Absent	Deferred	OSSLC	All Students ⁵	Fully Participating ⁶
Previously Eligible Students (<i>N</i> = 815)	4% (-1%)	8% (-2%)	22% (+3%)	42% (+0%)	64% (+1%)
Females (<i>N</i> = 307)	4% (+0%)	7% (-5%)	21% (+2%)	45% (-1%)	67% (-3%)
Males (<i>N</i> = 508)	4% (-1%)	8% (-2%)	22% (+3%)	41% (+2%)	62% (+4%)
English Language Learners (<i>N</i> = 126)	4% (+2%)	17% (-14%)	12% (-3%)	39% (+6%)	58% (-6%)
Students with Special Education Needs (excluding gifted) (<i>N</i> = 274)	1% (-2%)	11% (+0%)	23% (+5%)	33% (+0%)	51% (+2%)
Students Receiving Accommodations (IEP Only) (<i>N</i> = 63)	2% (+2%)	0% (+0%)	0% (+0%)	41% (-9%)	42% (-8%)
Students Receiving Accommodations (IEP and IPRC) (<i>N</i> = 111)	3% (+0%)	0% (+0%)	0% (+0%)	55% (+6%)	56% (+5%)

⁵ Results for All Students are based on previously eligible students who are working to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and include students who were absent, as well as, those who were deferred from writing the test.

⁶ Results for Fully Participating are based on previously eligible students who actually wrote the test and are working to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). These results exclude students who were absent or deferred from writing the test.

Appendix
