



# **Student Performance on the March 2011 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test**

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OSSLT RESULTS RELEASED BY EQAO ON JUNE 14, 2011

# Highlights of Student Performance

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## Background information

The March 2011 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 2009-2010 school year and any others who were placed in this cohort.

Previously eligible students were eligible to write the test in March 2011 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).

### Highlights of Achievement on the 2010-2011 Literacy Test

- Of the 4,474 students who were eligible to take the test for the first time, 98% 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 seven years.
- Of the 4,365 students who actually wrote the test for the first time, 88% of these students were successful.
- When all first-time eligible students are factored into the overall success rate for the 2009-2010 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 86%. (*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 +11% for the Board compared to +8% for the province.
- Of the 589 students who rewrote the test, 63% of these students were successful.
- Both first-time eligible students and students who retook the test wrote the OSSLT on March 31, 2011.

# First-Time Eligible Students: Historical Context

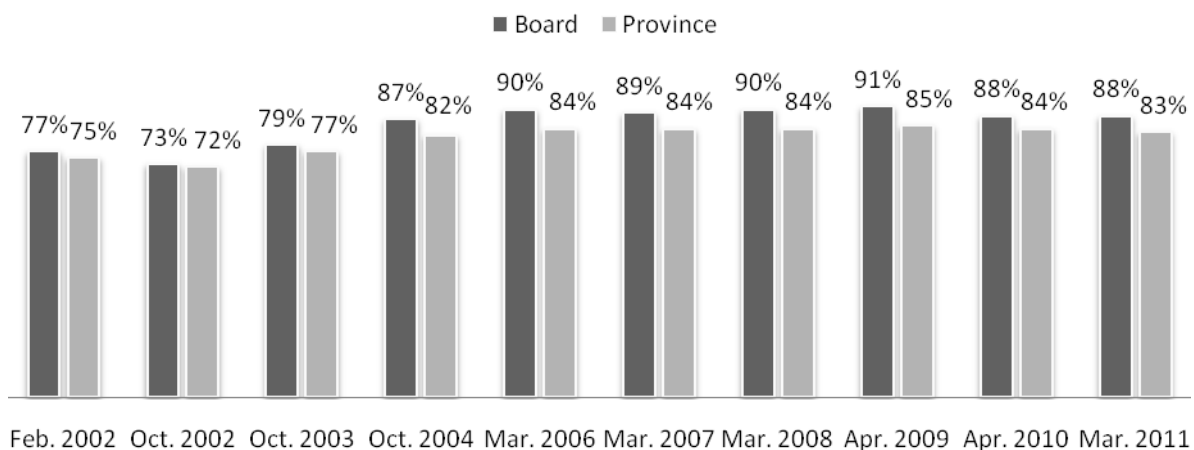
Assessment results from the March 2011 administration of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)<sup>1</sup> indicate that eighty-eight percent (88%) of first-time eligible students in the Board and eighty-three percent (83%) of first-time eligible students across the province who fully participated in the test were successful. These results represent no change for the Board (+0%) and a small decrease in achievement for the province (-1%) since the previous administration of the Literacy Test.

Results since the first administration of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test indicate an increase of +11% in the proportion of first-time eligible students in the Board passing the Literacy Test compared to an increase of +8% for students attending schools across the province. Over the last five administrations of the test, both the Board and the province experienced a decline of one percentage point. Please refer to Table 1 and the chart below.

Table 1: Results for Fully Participating<sup>2</sup> 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
<b>Mar. 2011</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>83%</b>
Apr. 2010	88%	84%
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%

## Fully Participating FTE Students who were Successful



<sup>1</sup> The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) released the OSSLT results on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> 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

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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 (88%) compared to students attending schools across the province (83%). There was no change in performance for first time eligible students attending schools in the York Catholic District School Board (+0%) and a small decrease in achievement in the province (-1%). Over the last three years, there has been a small but steady decline in the performance of students attending schools across the province.
2. Results for All Eligible Students - Of the students who were *eligible to write the test*, 86% of students in the Board were successful, maintaining a fairly similar rate of success (-1%) compared to the previous year. 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 six (6) administrations of the test.
4. More female students who wrote the test (90%) were successful compared to male students (85%). The achievement gap narrowed this year as males maintained their level of performance from the previous year while females experienced a decline in performance of -2%.
5. This year, there were more students with special education needs {excluding gifted} writing the test compared to the previous year and these students (+5%) experienced an increase in achievement. Students who were accommodated with an IEP only (+8%) and those with an IEP & IPRC (+4%) also experienced an increase in achievement.

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

6. There were fewer English language learners who wrote the Literacy test compared to the previous year and these students maintained their level of performance from the previous year (+0%).
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 taking academic English experienced a small increase in achievement from the previous year (+1%). For the second year in a row, students taking a locally developed compulsory credit English course (+17%) experienced an increase in student performance. Students taking applied English (-4%) and students in an ESL/ELD English course (-8%) experienced decreases in achievement from the previous year. This is the second year of declining performance for both groups of students.

<u>English Course</u>	Success Rate	Percent Change
Academic:	96%	+1%
Applied:	52%	-4%
Locally Developed:	34%	+17%
ESL/ELD:	48%	-8%

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

<b>First-Time Eligible Students</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Deferred</b>	<b>All Students<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Fully Participating<sup>4</sup></b>
<b>Eligible Students</b> ( <i>N</i> = 4,474)	1% (+0%)	1% (+0%)	86% (-1%)	<b>88% (+0%)</b>
<b>Females</b> ( <i>N</i> = 2,194)	1% (+0%)	1% (+0%)	88% (-2%)	<b>90% (-2%)</b>
<b>Males</b> ( <i>N</i> = 2,280)	1% (+0%)	2% (+1%)	83% (+0%)	<b>85% (+0%)</b>
<b>English Language Learners</b> ( <i>N</i> = 74)	3% (+3%)	15% (-1%)	50% (-1%)	<b>61% (+0%)</b>
<b>Students with Special Education Needs (excluding gifted)</b> ( <i>N</i> = 615)	2% (+0%)	6% (+3%)	52% (+2%)	<b>57% (+5%)</b>
<b>Students with Special Education Needs Receiving Accommodations (IEP Only)</b> ( <i>N</i> = 170)	2% (+0%)	0% (+0%)	61% (+8%)	<b>62% (+8%)</b>
<b>Students with Special Education Needs Receiving Accommodations (IEP and IPRC)</b> ( <i>N</i> = 376)	2% (-1%)	0% (+0%)	54% (+4%)	<b>55% (+4%)</b>
<b>Academic Level English</b> ( <i>N</i> = 3,621)	1% (+0%)	<1% (+0%)	95% (+1%)	<b>96% (+1%)</b>
<b>Applied Level English</b> ( <i>N</i> = 699)	1% (-1%)	3% (+2%)	49% (-5%)	<b>52% (-4%)</b>
<b>Locally Developed English</b> ( <i>N</i> = 55)	4% (-3%)	27% (+12%)	24% (+11%)	<b>34% (+17%)</b>
<b>Taking ESL/ELD Course</b> ( <i>N</i> = 61)	3% (+3%)	25% (-1%)	34% (-8%)	<b>48% (-8%)</b>

<sup>3</sup> Results for All Students are based on eligible students from the 2009-2010 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.

<sup>4</sup> Results for Fully Participating are based on students in the 2009-2010 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.

## Previously Eligible Students: Achievement Highlights

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1. Approximately half of the students in the York Catholic District School Board (63%) and across the province (49%) 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 2009-2010 and who were previously unsuccessful on the test) represent an increase in the success rate for the Board (+9%) and a decrease from the previous year for students across the province (-2%).
3. There was a decrease (-2%) in the proportion of previously eligible students in York Catholic who were absent on the day that the test was administered.
4. Less than one fifth of previously eligible students in York Catholic (17%) were enrolled in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC). This represents a decrease from the previous year (-2%).
5. Seventy percent of the previously eligible students in York Catholic (589 / 837), who were eligible to re-write the test, actually re-wrote it:
  - One hundred and twenty-three (123) students were exempted from writing the Literacy test, as they were no longer working to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).
  - Twenty-six (26) students were absent on the day the test was administered.
  - Eighty-one (81) students were deferred from writing the test.
  - One hundred and forty-one students (141) 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.)

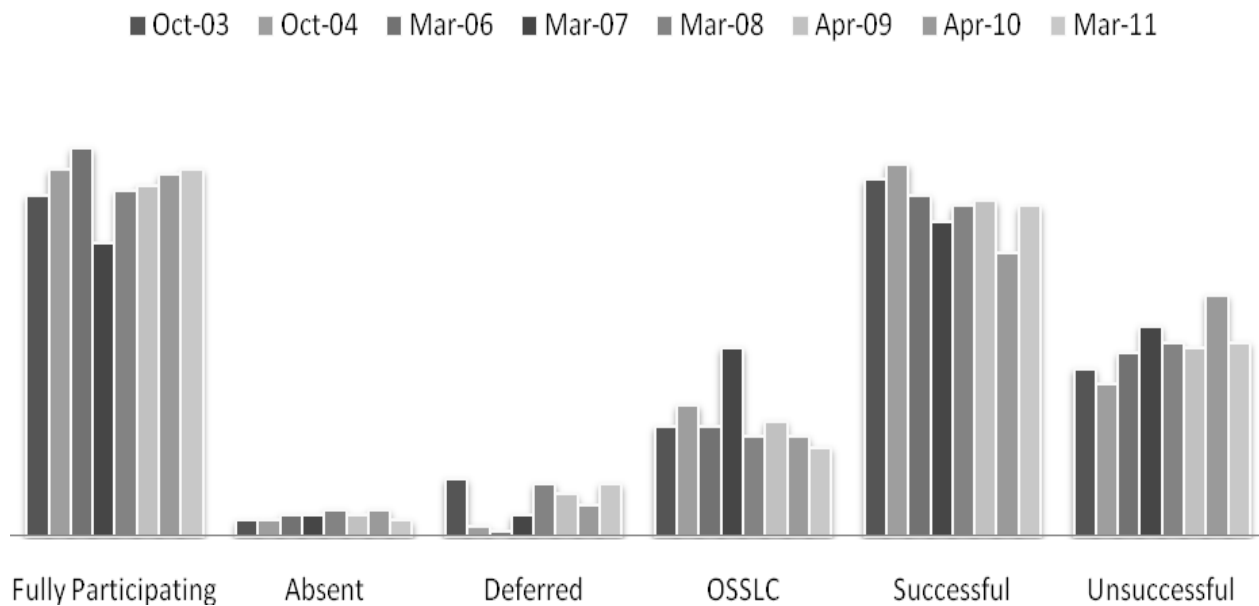
Note: Please refer to Table 3 on the following page for an overview of student performance over time for previously eligible students.

# Previously Eligible Students: Historical Data

Table 3: 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	April 2010	March 2011	1-Year Growth
<b>Fully Participating</b>	65%	70%	74%	56%	66%	67%	69%	<b>70%</b>	<b>+1%</b>
<b>Absent</b>	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	<b>3%</b>	<b>-2%</b>
<b>Deferred</b>	11%	2%	1%	4%	10%	8%	6%	<b>10%</b>	<b>+4%</b>
<b>OSSLC</b>	21%	25%	21%	36%	19%	22%	19%	<b>17%</b>	<b>-2%</b>
<b>Successful</b>	68%	71%	65%	60%	63%	64%	54%	<b>63%</b>	<b>+9%</b>
<b>Unsuccessful</b>	32%	29%	35%	40%	37%	36%	46%	<b>37%</b>	<b>-9%</b>

## OSSLT Historical Outcomes for Previously Eligible Students



## Previously Eligible Students: Contextual Information

Results for Previously Eligible students indicated the following:

- More females who actually rewrote the test (66%) were successful compared to males (61%). The performance for both females (+3%) and males (+12%) increased from the previous year and significantly reduced the gender achievement gap.
- More than half of the English language learners who re-wrote the test were successful this year (63%). These results represent a significant increase in performance from the previous year (+19%).
- The success rate for previously eligible students with special education needs {excluding gifted students} (+8%), as well as students with an IEP (+2%) and students with an IEP and IPRC (+9%) who were accommodated to write the test improved from the previous year. Please refer to Table 4 below.

Table 4: Results for Previously Eligible Students in the Board by Contextual Information, March 2011

Previously Eligible Students	Absent	Deferred	OSSLC	All Students <sup>5</sup>	Fully Participating <sup>6</sup>
<b>Previously Eligible Students</b> ( <i>N</i> = 837)	3% (-2%)	10% (+4%)	17% (-2%)	44% (+6%)	<b>63% (+9%)</b>
<b>Females</b> ( <i>N</i> = 310)	2% (-3%)	11% (+4%)	17% (+0%)	46% (+2%)	<b>66% (+3%)</b>
<b>Males</b> ( <i>N</i> = 527)	4% (-2%)	9% (+4%)	17% (-4%)	43% (+10%)	<b>61% (+12%)</b>
<b>English Language Learners</b> ( <i>N</i> = 133)	1% (+0%)	14% (-1%)	15% (+1%)	44% (+13%)	<b>63% (+19%)</b>
<b>Students with Special Education Needs (excluding gifted)</b> ( <i>N</i> = 324)	3% (+0%)	14% (+9%)	21% (+1%)	33% (+1%)	<b>53% (+8%)</b>
<b>Students Receiving Accommodations (IEP Only)</b> ( <i>N</i> = 51)	2% (-1%)	0% (+0%)	0% (+0%)	45% (+2%)	<b>46% (+2%)</b>
<b>Students Receiving Accommodations (IEP and IPRC)</b> ( <i>N</i> = 147)	5% (+1%)	0% (+0%)	0% (+0%)	52% (+8%)	<b>55% (+9%)</b>

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> 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.