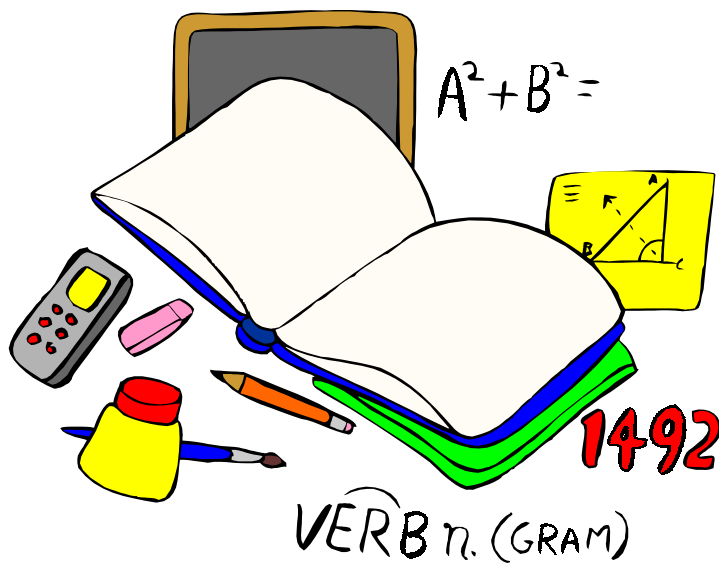




# Grade 3 and Grade 6 EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics 2002-2003

## Overview of Results



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# **Grade 3 and Grade 6 EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics 2002-2003**

## **Overview of Results**

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October 2003

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# Grade 3 and Grade 6 EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics 2002-2003

## Introduction

This report contains an overview of the 2002-2003 Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) provincial assessment in reading, writing, and mathematics for grades 3 and 6. It brings together the information regarding what EQAO has learned over the past year about student learning in Ontario. Copies of the full *Provincial Report* can be downloaded from EQAO's web site, which is located at [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com).

## Who is EQAO?

EQAO is an independent, arm's length agency of the provincial government that provides parents, teachers, and the public with reliable and valid information about student achievement. EQAO also makes recommendations for improvement which educators, parents, policy makers and others in the education community can use to improve learning and teaching.

EQAO conducts a range of province-wide assessments. The grade 3 assessment has been in place for six years. It involves all students, occurs annually, and provides information on what students have learned in reading, writing, and mathematics. In 1998-1999, EQAO introduced an annual grade 6 assessment that measures student achievement in the same three subject areas.

These assessments provide both individual and system data on student achievement. Parents receive an *Individual Student Report* and schools and school boards produce local reports for parents and their communities.

## What was the assessment?

The grade 3 and grade 6 assessments measure how well students have met the provincial expectations in *The Ontario Curriculum*. The grade 3 and grade 6 assessment covers knowledge and skills in reading, writing, and mathematics that students are expected to have acquired by the end of the school year. These two assessments were administered in May 2003.

In the reading assessment, students read a variety of materials including both fiction and non-fiction. Students were assessed on how well they could use various reading strategies and conventions and how effectively they could understand concepts, make inferences, and connect ideas.

In the writing assessment, students were asked to use a range of forms and to write for different purposes. They completed two pieces of written work. Students were assessed on how well they could use writing strategies and language conventions and how effectively they could understand assigned tasks, organize ideas and communicate with a reader.

In the mathematics assessment, students were asked to solve problems, apply concepts and procedures, and explain how they arrived at their answers. The assessments also tested students' knowledge and skills in the five strands of mathematics: Number Sense and Numeration, Geometry and Spatial Sense, Measurement, Patterning and Algebra, and Data Management and Probability.

### **Who participated in the assessment?**

All Peel grade 3 (9,598) and grade 6 (9,569) students participated in the assessment during regular classes. Exemptions were permitted only where students would be unable to respond to the assessment in any way and/or where they would be adversely affected as a result of participation. Exemptions were made only with the written informed consent of the parent(s) or guardian(s). In specific circumstances, teachers were allowed to provide certain kinds of assistance to students with special needs. Three percent of Peel grade 3 students and 2% of grade 6 students were exempted in all three subject areas.

### **How was student work marked?**

EQAO reports on student achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics using a four-level scale. The four levels describe how well students performed in each subject area. EQAO has aligned its four levels of achievement to those of the *Ontario Student Report Card*.

Marking was done in July 2003 by specially trained principals and teachers. EQAO developed scoring scales by taking the four achievement levels established by the Ministry and applying them to actual student work. Markers used EQAO's scales to score student work. The scoring was monitored to ensure that it was objective, consistent, and reliable.

The Ministry of Education has set *Level 3* as the provincial standard for grades 3 and 6. *Level 1* identifies achievement that falls much below the provincial standard. *Level 2* identifies achievement that is approaching the provincial standard. *Level 4* identifies achievement that surpasses the provincial standard.

## **Are EQAO results comparable from year-to-year?**

Results from the first grade 3 assessments (1996-1997) cannot be compared directly with those from the second (1997-1998), third (1998-1999), fourth (1999-2000), fifth (2000-2001), sixth (2001-2002), and seventh (2002-2003) administration of the assessments. Only the overall reading and mathematics scores from the 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002, and 2002-2003 assessments can be compared from year-to-year. This year's overall writing scores can be compared to scores from 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and last year's results (2001-2002). The overall writing scores from previous years cannot be compared.

This year's grade 6 reading and mathematics scores can be compared to 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 administrations of the assessments. This year's overall writing results can be compared to scores from 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002.

## Some key messages about the EQAO assessments

- ✓ EQAO urges principals to ensure that school councils are fully informed about the assessment and are encouraged to play an active role in reviewing and updating the school's Action Plan for Improvement.
- ✓ EQAO encourages schools and school boards to include strategies in their Action Plans for Improvement that will help both boys and girls improve their achievement.
- ✓ Parents, educators, policy-makers and the public should use the overall results to measure improvements in student achievement over time.
- ✓ EQAO encourages schools and school boards to be proactive in reporting results to parents and their communities.
- ✓ The achievement data must be interpreted in relation to contextual data that schools and school boards have gathered. Education Quality Indicators Program (EQUIP) will help greatly in this regard.
- ✓ Teachers and principals should use samples of student work, provided by EQAO anchor papers and Ministry exemplar documents, to help students and parents understand what work at Level 3 and 4 looks like.
- ✓ School boards should provide opportunities for teachers and principals to share assessment expertise and successful assessment practices.
- ✓ EQAO's four levels of achievement are closely aligned with those in the *Ontario Student Report Card*.

# Grade 3 and Grade 6 EQAO Assessment Peel and Provincial Board Results 2002-2003

## Background Characteristics

- 9,598 Peel grade 3 students in 134 schools participated in the EQAO testing: 3% were fully exempt from the assessment in all three subjects.
- Of those students who took the test, 12% were receiving special education support (excluding gifted and enhanced learning students) and 24% were enrolled in an ESL program.
- 9,569 Peel grade 6 students in 89 schools participated in the EQAO testing: 2% were fully exempt from the assessment in all three subjects.
- Of those students who took the test, 13% were receiving special education support (excluding gifted and enhanced learning students) and 9% were enrolled in an ESL program.

## Student Achievement

Grade 3 and 6 student achievement results for Peel and the Province are presented in Tables 1 and 2 for reading, writing, and mathematics. The percent of students performing at Levels 2, 3, 4 and Levels 3, 4 are presented for each subject area. Table 3 presents the results of the comparison of student achievement scores between Peel and the Province. Table 4 presents the results of the comparison of Grade 3 student achievement scores from 1998-1999 to 2002-2003. Table 5 presents the results of the comparison of grade 6 student achievement scores from 1998-1999 to 2002-2003.

Table 6 presents the gender comparisons for grades 3 and 6 and Table 7 presents a gender gap analysis from 1997-1998 to 2002-2003. Table 8 presents the ESL and non ESL student comparisons for grades 3 and 6 and Table 9 presents an ESL gap analysis from 1997-1998 to 2002-2003. Table 10 presents the Special Education student comparisons for grades 3 and 6 and Table 11 presents a Special Education gap analysis from 1997-1998 to 2002-2003. Table 12 presents the comparison of the grade 3 French Immersion student achievement scores between Peel and the province.

Achievement results in this report are expressed as the number of students achieving at each level as a percentage of all of the students in the grade, including students who were exempted and those who took part in the assessment but did not provide enough information for their responses to be scored. An additional designation was added to the marking and reporting scale and is referred to as *Not Enough Evidence for Level 1* (NE Level 1).

This method of reporting is EQAO's primary method of reporting because publicly funded schools are accountable for the achievement and progress of all students. Schools and school boards are required to use this method to ensure consistency of reporting across the province.

The overall achievement results in reading, writing, and mathematics reported for both the Peel Board and the province may not add to 100%, due to rounding errors.

**TABLE 1**

**EQAO 2002-2003 Results: Peel and Provincial Comparisons - Grade 3**

(Method 1 - Includes Exemption, No Data, Not Enough Information to Score, Not Enough Evidence for Level 1 Categories)

	Exempt		No Data		Not Enough Information to Score		Not Enough Evidence for Level 1		Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4	
	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel
Reading	6%	3%	1%	<1%	8%	5%	<1%	<1%	9%	9%	28%	29%	45%	48%	5%	5%
Writing	4%	3%	1%	<1%	5%	3%	<1%	<1%	7%	2%	27%	34%	47%	50%	9%	8%
Mathematics	4%	3%	1%	<1%	7%	5%	<1%	<1%	4%	4%	27%	25%	47%	50%	10%	12%
	Levels 2, 3, 4		Levels 3, 4													
	Province	Peel	Province	Peel												
Reading	78%	82%	50%	53%												
Writing	88%	92%	55%	58%												
Mathematics	84%	87%	57%	62%												

**When compared to the province:**

- Peel students in grade 3 scored above the provincial average in Levels 2, 3, 4 and Levels 3, 4, for reading, writing and mathematics.

**TABLE 2**

**EQAO 2002-2003 Results: Peel and Provincial Comparisons - Grade 6**

(Method 1 - Includes Exemption, No Data, Not Enough Information to Score, Not Enough Evidence for Level 1 Categories)

	Exempt		No Data		Not Enough Information to Score		Not Enough Evidence for Level 1		Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4	
	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel	Province	Peel
Reading	4%	2%	1%	<1%	5%	5%	<1%	<1%	7%	7%	27%	27%	47%	48%	9%	11%
Writing	4%	2%	1%	<1%	3%	3%	<1%	<1%	5%	6%	33%	34%	43%	43%	10%	12%
Mathematics	4%	2%	1%	<1%	6%	6%	<1%	<1%	8%	8%	28%	28%	41%	42%	12%	14%

	Levels 2, 3, 4		Levels 3, 4	
	Province	Peel	Province	Peel
Reading	83%	85%	56%	58%
Writing	87%	89%	54%	55%
Mathematics	81%	83%	53%	55%

**When compared to the province:**

- Peel students in grade 6 scored above the provincial average in Levels 2, 3, 4 and Levels 3, 4, for reading. Peel students in grade 6 scored the same as the province in writing and mathematics.

## TABLE 3

### EQAO 2002-2003 Results: Peel and Provincial Comparisons - Grade 3 and 6

(Method 1 - Includes Exemption, No Data, Not Enough Information to Score, Not Enough Evidence for Level 1 Categories)

	GRADE 3			GRADE 6		
	Province	Levels 3, 4		Province	Levels 3, 4	
		Peel	Comparison		Peel	Comparison
Reading	50%	53%	+3%	56%	58%	+2%
Writing	55%	58%	+3%	54%	55%	+1%
Mathematics	57%	62%	+5%	53%	55%	+2%

#### When compared to the province:

- Peel students in grade 3 scored above the Provincial average in reading, writing, and mathematics
- Peel students in grade 6 scored above the Provincial average in reading, writing and mathematics.

#### For Grade 3 (Levels 3,4)

Peel students scored:

3% higher in reading

3% higher in writing

5% higher in mathematics

#### For Grade 6 (Levels 3,4)

Peel students scored:

2% higher in reading

1% higher in writing

2% higher in mathematics

## TABLE 4

### EQAO 2002-2003 Results:

#### Peel Comparisons of Change in Scores from 1998-1999 to 2002-2003 School Years - Grade 3

(Method 1 - Includes Exemption, No Data, Not Enough Information to Score, Not Enough Evidence for Level 1 Categories)

#### Levels 3, 4

	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	Previous Year Comparison	5-year Comparison
Reading	53%	58%	57%	56%	53%	-3%	+0%
*Writing	—	57%	58%	60%	58%	-2%	—
Mathematics	66%	67%	70%	67%	62%	-5%	-4%

**\*Note:** The writing scores cannot be directly compared from year-to-year since the two tests have not been equated, with the exception of 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002, and 2002-2003 where the two tests have been equated. The reading and mathematics scores have been adjusted mathematically to allow for direct comparisons from year-to-year.

#### When compared to last year's results:

- Peel students scored 3% lower in 2002-2003 for reading when compared to 2001-2002.
- Peel students scored 2% lower in 2002-2003 for writing when compared to 2001-2002.
- Peel students scored 5% lower in 2002-2003 for mathematics when compared to 2001-2002.

#### When compared to 1998-1999 results (5 year trends) Peel students scored:

- the same in reading
- 4% lower in mathematics

## TABLE 5

### EQAO 2002-2003 Results:

#### Peel Comparisons of Change in Scores from 1998-1999 to 2002-2003 School Years - Grade 6

(Method 1 - Includes Exemption, No Data, Not Enough Information to Score, Not Enough Evidence for Level 1 Categories)

#### Levels 3, 4

	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	Previous Year Comparison	5 Year Comparison
Reading	53%	58%	60%	58%	58%	0%	+5%
*Writing	—	53%	55%	54%	55%	+1	—
Mathematics	50%	59%	57%	55%	55%	0%	+5%

\*Note: The overall writing scores were only equated for 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002, and 2002-2003; hence, 5-year comparisons cannot be made.

#### When compared to last years results:

- Peel students' reading scores did not differ from last year.
- Peel students scored 1% higher in 2002-2003 for writing when compared to 2001-2002.
- Peel students' mathematics scores did not differ from last year.

#### When compared to 1998-1999 results (five year trends) Peel students scored:

- 5% higher in reading
- 5% higher in mathematics

## TABLE 6

### EQAO 2002-2003 Results: Peel Gender Comparisons - Grade 3 and Grade 6

(Method 1 - Includes Exemption, No Data, Not Enough Information to Score, Not Enough Evidence for Level 1 Categories)

	GRADE 3			GRADE 6		
	Boys	Girls	Levels 3, 4 Comparison	Boys	Girls	Levels 3, 4 Comparison
Reading	48%	60%	+12%	52%	65%	+13%
Writing	50%	66%	+16%	46%	64%	+18%
Mathematics	61%	63%	+2%	54%	57%	+3%

**TABLE 7****Gender Gap Analysis - Grade 3 and Grade 6  
Extent to which Girls Outperform Boys in Levels 3,4**

		1997- 1998	1998- 1999	1999- 2000	2000- 2001	2001 2002	2002 2003
	Reading	+9%	+9%	+12%	+11%	+10%	+12%
<b>Grade 3</b>	Writing	—	—	+14%	+14%	+18%	+16%
	Mathematics	+6%	+1%	+2%	+2%	0%	+2%
	Reading	—	+18%	+18%	+15%	+17%	+13%
<b>Grade 6</b>	Writing	—	—	+20%	+20%	+22%	+18%
	Mathematics	—	+3%	+6%	+2%	+2%	+3%

- Girls outperform boys in all test areas in grades 3 and 6.
- The gender gap in achievement gets bigger between grade 3 and grade 6 for reading, and writing.
- The gender gap in achievement in each test area since 1997-1998, within grade 3 and grade 6, has remained the same.

## TABLE 8

### EQAO 2002-2003 Results:

### Peel ESL and Non ESL Student Comparisons: Grade 3 and Grade 6

(Method 1 - Includes Exemption, No Data, Not Enough Information to Score, Not Enough Evidence for Level 1 Categories)

	GRADE 3			GRADE 6		
	ESL Students	Levels 3, 4 Non ESL Students	Comparison	ESL Students	Levels 3, 4 Non ESL Students	Comparison
Reading	33%	60%	+27%	34%	61%	+27%
Writing	42%	63%	+21%	30%	57%	+27%
Mathematics	51%	66%	+15%	43%	57%	+14%

**TABLE 9****ESL Gap Analysis- Grade 3 and Grade 6  
Extent to which Non-ESL Students Outperform ESL Students in Levels 3,4**

		1997- 1998	1998- 1999	1999- 2000	2000- 2001	2001- 2002	2002- 2003
<b>Grade 3</b>	Reading	+29%	+31%	+35%	+29%	+30%	+27%
	Writing	—	—	+31%	+25%	+26%	+21%
	Mathematics	+19%	+23%	+25%	+16%	+21%	+15%
<b>Grade 6</b>	Reading	—	+36%	+38%	+41%	+34%	+27%
	Writing	—	—	+37%	+38%	+31%	+27%
	Mathematics	—	+19%	+29%	+27%	+20%	+14%

- **Non-ESL students significantly outperform ESL students in all test areas in all grades.**
- The gap in achievement gets bigger between grade 3 and grade 6 for reading and writing.
- The grade 3 and grade 6 ESL student performance improved over last year. For grade 3, the gap between ESL and non-ESL students was reduced by 3% in reading, 5% in writing and 6% in mathematics. For grade 6, the gap between ESL and non-ESL students was reduced by 7% in reading, 4% in writing and 6% in mathematics.

**TABLE 10**

**EQAO 2002-2003 Results:  
Peel Special Education and Non Special Education Student Comparisons -  
Grade 3 and Grade 6**

(Method 1 - Includes Exemption, No Data, Not Enough Information to Score, Not Enough Evidence for Level 1 Categories)

	<b>GRADE 3</b>			<b>GRADE 6</b>		
	<b>Receiving Special Education</b>	<b>Levels 3, 4 Not Receiving Special Education</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	<b>Receiving Special Education</b>	<b>Levels 3, 4 Not Receiving Special Education</b>	<b>Comparison</b>
Reading	19%	58%	+39%	20%	64%	+44%
Writing	16%	63%	+47%	13%	61%	+48%
Mathematics	31%	66%	+35%	20%	61%	+41%

**TABLE 11**

**Special Education Gap Analysis- Grade 3 and Grade 6**  
**Extent to which Non-Special Education Students Outperform Special Education Students in Levels 3,4**

		1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
<b>Grade 3</b>	Reading	+41%	+43%	+47%	+46%	+39%	+39%
	Writing	—	—	+49%	+40%	+48%	+47%
	Mathematics	+32%	+39%	+43%	+44%	+36%	+35%
<b>Grade 6</b>	Reading	—	+46%	+50%	+43%	+48%	+44%
	Writing	—	—	+48%	+44%	+48%	+48%
	Mathematics	—	+43%	+48%	+42%	+45%	+41%

- **Non-Special Education students significantly outperform Special Education students in all test areas in all grades.**
- The grade 6 Special Education student performance improved slightly in reading and mathematics over last year. The gap between Special Education and non-Special Education students was reduced by 4% in reading and 4% in mathematics.

## TABLE 12

### EQAO 2002-2003 Results:

### Comparisons for Peel and Provincial: French Immersion Students \* - Grade 3

(Method 1 - Includes Exemption, No Data, Not Enough Information to Score, Not Enough Evidence for Level 1 Categories)

	Levels 3, 4		
	Provincial French Immersion Students	Peel French Immersion Students	Comparison
Reading	55%	61%	+6%
Writing	64%	67%	+3%
Mathematics	60%	65%	+5%

\* These results include French Immersion students who wrote the reading, writing, and mathematics components of the assessment in English

#### When compared to the province:

- Peel French Immersion students in grade 3 scored significantly higher than Provincial French Immersion students (who wrote the test in English) for reading, writing and mathematics.

#### Peel French Immersion students scored:

- 6% higher in reading
- 3% higher in writing
- 5% higher in mathematics

# Summary of Results, 2002-2003

## 1. Peel and Provincial Results

- Peel grade 3 students scored above the provincial average in reading (+3%), writing (+3%), and mathematics (+5%)
- Peel grade 6 students scored above the provincial average in reading (+2%), writing (+1%), and mathematics (+2%)

## 2. Yearly Comparisons (Peel)

- Grade 3 students scored 3% lower in reading when compared to last year
- Grade 3 students scored 2% lower in writing when compared to last year
- Grade 3 students scored 5% lower in mathematics when compared to last year
- Grade 6 students' reading results were identical to last year
- Grade 6 students scored 1% higher in writing when compared to last year
- Grade 6 students' mathematics results were identical to last year

## 3. Five Year Comparisons (Grade 3)

- Grade 3 students' reading results were identical to 1998-1999
- Grade 3 students scored 4% lower in mathematics since 1998-1999

### Five Year Comparisons (Grade 6)

- Grade 6 students scored 5% higher in reading since 1998-1999
- Grade 6 students scored 5% higher in mathematics since 1998-1999

## 5(a). Gender (Peel)

- Grade 3 girls scored significantly higher than boys in reading (+12%) and writing (+16%)
- Grade 3 girls scored higher than boys in mathematics (+2%)
- Grade 6 girls scored significantly higher than boys in reading (+13%) and writing (+18%)
- Grade 6 girls scored higher than boys in mathematics (+3%)

## (b). Gender Gap Analysis

- Girls outperform boys in all test areas in both grades
- The gender gap in achievement gets bigger between grade 3 and grade 6 for reading and writing
- The gender gap in achievement in each test area since 1997-1998, within grade 3 and grade 6, has remained the same

## 6(a). ESL (Peel)

- Grade 3 non ESL students scored significantly higher than ESL students in reading (+27%), writing (+21%), and mathematics (+15%)
- Grade 6 non ESL students scored significantly higher than ESL students in reading (+27%), writing (+27%), and mathematics (+14%)

**(b). ESL Gap Analysis**

- Non-ESL students significantly outperform ESL students in all test areas in both grades
- The gap in achievement gets bigger between grade 3 and grade 6 for reading and writing
- The grade 3 and grade 6 ESL student performance improved over last year. For grade 3, the gap between ESL and non-ESL students was reduced by 3% in reading, 5% in writing and 6% in mathematics. For grade 6, the gap between ESL and non-ESL students was reduced by 7% in reading, 4% in writing and 6% in mathematics.

**7(a). Special Education Support (Peel)**

- Grade 3 students who were not receiving Special Education support scored significantly higher than students who were receiving Special Education support in reading (+39%), writing (+47%), and mathematics (+35%)
- Grade 6 students who were not receiving Special Education support scored significantly higher than students who were receiving Special Education support in reading (+44%), writing (+48%), and mathematics (+41%)

**(b). Special Education Gap Analysis**

- Non-Special Education students significantly outperform Special Education students in all test areas in both grades
- The grade 6 Special Education student performance improved slightly in reading and mathematics over last year. The gap between Special Education and non-Special Education students was reduced by 4% in reading and 4% in mathematics.

**8. French Immersion (Peel) (Levels 3,4)**

- Peel French Immersion students in Grade 3 scored higher than Provincial French Immersion students (who wrote the test in English) for reading (+6%), writing (+3%), and mathematics (+5%)

## **EQAO Key Recommendations**

### **EQAO makes the following recommendations:**

- 1) Each school, with the involvement of teachers, students and parents, design and implement school-wide initiatives to ensure student achievement of the provincial curriculum expectations in literacy and numeracy.
- 2) School councils closely monitor student achievement and take an active role in school improvement.
- 3) School boards establish school board improvement teams to review historical student achievement and contextual data to develop action plans for meeting school targets for achievement of the Ontario Curriculum standards in literacy and numeracy and to develop strategies that target areas and groups in need of additional support and improvement.
- 4) The faculties of education assist pre-service teachers in developing an awareness and understanding of the links among curriculum, teaching practices and assessment. Pre-service teachers must have exposure to a wide variety of assessment formats, including large-scale performance-based assessment.
- 5) The Ontario College of Teachers ensure a balance of courses on core competencies through Professional Learning Program providers, to allow teachers across the province ample opportunities for professional development that focuses on the relationships among curriculum, teaching practices and assessment, which are essential to teaching and learning.
- 6) The Ministry of Education use the Grade 3 and Grade 6 provincial assessment data accumulated over the past six years, to further support literacy and numeracy, especially through the Early Reading and Early Math strategies, at the board, school and classroom levels.