

What's Changing as a Result . . .

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) scores in Grades 3 and 6 are steadily rising and the vast majority of schools are exhibiting most of these key elements:

- A clear focus on student achievement
- Effective use of student data to drive plans for improvement
- More team planning
- More effective use of research-based instructional practices
- Better-trained teachers
- Increased morale, optimism, motivation and confidence in our education goals and action plans

"Excellence in public education is essential to building the strong society we all want, and the strong economy we all depend on. Every child deserves the very best education."

The Honourable Sandra Pupatello,
Minister of Education



Working Together to Improve Student Achievement

The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat provides high-quality professional development to administrators, school leaders and teachers through conferences, workshops, summer programs, webcasts and publications.

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- The Secretariat Webcast Learning Series

www.curriculum.org

- Inspire: The Journal of Literacy and Numeracy for Ontario

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For more information about Secretariat events, publications and resources, please contact us at:

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The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat

Our goal is to ensure all students achieve a high level of literacy, numeracy and comprehension by age 12.

Progress towards this goal will be achieved when 75 per cent of 12-year-olds meet the provincial standard on province-wide reading, writing and math testing by 2008.



The Government's Action Plan to Reach the Goal Includes . . .

- Creating a Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat that will ensure schools, teachers and students are getting the supports they need
- Reducing class sizes to 20 students in the junior kindergarten to Grade 3 years
- Amending the curriculum to put a clear focus on reading, writing and math and the development of comprehension skills
- Sending specially trained experts into struggling schools

The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat Concentrates on . . .

- Working with boards to set ambitious student achievement targets and develop improvement plans with clearly defined strategies
- Engaging boards in identifying initiatives to improve student achievement and providing the resources to implement precise improvement strategies
- Providing professional development to improve instructional effectiveness
- Conducting research and sharing evidence on effective instructional practices for raising student achievement
- Collaborating with principals' councils, teachers' federations, faculties of education and other agencies to build the capacity of the education system for continuous improvement
- Sharing successful practices within and among school districts

"Making public education the best education is the single most important thing we can do together to build a bright and promising future for all of us."

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty,
Premier of Ontario

A Shared Responsibility

Strong literacy skills are critical to a child's education. Mathematics, music, drama, art, geography, history, the humanities . . . a child's progress in each of these subjects is unleashed to its fullest potential by our efforts in literacy. And because literacy and numeracy are the basic building blocks of education, there is a sense of urgency about The Secretariat's mission.

A lot is at stake for a new generation.

In 2004, the Ontario Ministry of Education launched a comprehensive effort to help students acquire a solid foundation in literacy and numeracy. New resources were allotted to reducing class sizes in the primary grades, additional specialist teachers, professional development in effective teaching strategies, support for struggling schools through innovation funds – and expert co-ordination of these many promising initiatives through the creation of a new provincial body, The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat.

The Secretariat is organized into seven regional and five central teams of Student Achievement Officers under the direction of a Chief Student Achievement Officer. Working with the education community, these highly skilled curriculum specialists and instructional leaders are putting in place the necessary strategies and supports needed to reach the Government's goal for Ontario schoolchildren – namely, to have 75 per cent of 12-year-olds meet the provincial standard (level 3) on province-wide reading, writing and math tests by 2008.



What We Have Done to Date

There is a high level of motivation, enthusiasm and commitment in the field. We are confident we will achieve our goal within the established timeline based on:

- The direct, hands-on program support and capacity-building initiatives of The Secretariat's Student Achievement Officers
- The ambitious targets and improvement plans that have been established by school boards
- The promising research-informed strategies that are being implemented at all levels of the public school system
- The commitment of teachers, principals and superintendents to improve instructional effectiveness in literacy and numeracy
- The professional development and research networks that are being created by our key partners, including principals' councils, universities, teachers' federations and faculties of education
- The intervention strategies that are being implemented by The Secretariat in co-operation with school boards and families of schools
- The direct support for students (tutoring, summer and after-school programs)

The EQAO reports achievement levels for 12-year-olds in Ontario schools (at level 3 or higher) as follows:

	English-Language Schools			French-Language Schools			
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	
Reading	56%	58%	63%	58%	63%	67%	Reading
Writing	54%	54%	59%	63%	68%	70%	Writing
Mathematics	53%	57%	60%	66%	70%	74%	Mathematics

With the outstanding commitment of supervisory officers, school principals, school teachers and support staff who have undertaken school improvement initiatives to raise student achievement even higher, we are continuing to work towards our goal of having 75 per cent of 12-year-olds meet the provincial standard by 2008.



Future Directions

Starting in 2006–07

- We are supporting the **Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership (OFIP)** to provide interventions for over 350 schools that are facing challenges (based on three-year trends in EQAO results at Grade 3 and 6).
- We are incorporating the successful strategies of the **Turnaround Teams Program** in helping struggling schools.

“The Secretariat gives us a rare opportunity to work together to achieve good things on behalf of children, families and communities.”

Ben Levin,
Deputy Minister of Education

- We are launching the **Schools on the Move: Lighthouse Program** to provide schools and districts with opportunities to learn from schools that are using successful, evidenced-based practices in literacy and numeracy and are demonstrating improvement in student achievement.
- We are developing a **Statistical Neighbours** analytical tool for data about school performance in a range of contexts. This analysis can assist in identifying schools that are making student achievement gains in challenging contexts and facilitate the sharing of successful practices with schools that are still struggling to improve.
- We are supporting an **Equity Agenda** like never before in order to raise the bar and close the achievement gap for students in all of our communities.

“Ontario's educators are committed to a strong public education system. They are working tirelessly to improve the achievement of all students, regardless of background.”

Avis Glaze,
Chief Student Achievement Officer of Ontario & CEO,
The Literacy Numeracy Secretariat of Ontario