



Committee of the Whole Meeting

Date: Monday, January 12, 2026.

Time: **6:00 p.m.**

** Committee of the Whole In Camera, if necessary, will precede or follow the Board Meeting, as appropriate.*

Location: 1st floor Board Room, Catholic Education Centre, 35 Weber Street West, Kitchener

Attendees: **Board of Trustees:**

Linda Cuff, Kathy Doherty-Masters, Winston Francis, David Guerin, Renée Kraft (Chair), Marisa Phillips, Robert Sikora, Conrad Stanley, Tracey Weiler (Vice-Chair)

Student Representatives:

Rebecca Girolametto, Jace Krysko

Senior Administration:

Patrick Eby, Gerald Foran, Shesh Maharaj, Paul Mendonça, Judy Merkel, Kerry Pomfret, Jennifer Ritsma, Annalisa Varano

Special Resource:

Recording Secretary:

Stephanie Medeiros

ITEM	Who	Agenda Section	Method & Outcome
1. Call to Order	Board Chair		
1.1 Opening Prayer & Memorials	Board of Trustees	--	--
1.2 Territorial Acknowledgement I (we) would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather today is the land traditionally cared for by the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Neutral People. I (we) also acknowledge the enduring presence and deep traditional knowledge, laws and philosophies of the Indigenous People with whom we share this land today.	Board Chair	--	--
1.3 Approval of Agenda	Board of Trustees		Approval
1.4 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest 1.4.1 From the current meeting 1.4.2 From a previous public or in-camera meeting	Individual Trustees		
1.5 Items for Action:			
2. Consent Agenda: Director of Education			

ITEM (e.g.: operational matters from the Ministry of Education that the Board is required to do; update on the system)	Who	Agenda Section	Method & Outcome
3. Consent Agenda: Board (Minutes of meetings)			
3.1 Approval of Minutes of Regular and Special Meetings 3.1.1 Committee of the Whole Minutes – Nov 10, 2025	Board of Trustees	pp. 4-7	Approval
4. Delegations			
5. Advice from the CEO 5.1 Leadership Strategy Update 5.2 EQAO 5.3 Literacy Report	P. Eby J. Ritsma P. Eby/J. Ritsma	pp. 8-19 pp. 20-31 pp. 32-41	Information Information Information
6. Ownership Linkage (Communication with the External Environment related to Board's Annual Agenda; ownership communication) 6.1 Linkages Activity 6.2 Pastoral Care Activity	Trustees Trustees	-- --	Discussion Discussion
7. Reports from Board Committees/Task Forces			
8. Board Education (at the request of the Board) 8.1 OCSTA/CCSTA Communications OCSTA/CCSTA Communications Link	Board of Trustees	Link	Information
8.2 Trustee Work Plan – January 8.3 Work of the Board – Progress Update	Chair Chair	-- pp. 42	Discussion Discussion
9. Policy Discussion (Based on Annual Plan of Board Work)			
10. Assurance of Successful Board Performance (monitoring) 10.1 Draft OCSTA Resolutions review	Chair	pp. 43-50	Discussion
11. Assurance of Successful Director of Education Performance (monitoring)			
12. Potential Agenda Items/Shared Concerns/Report on Trustee Inquiries			
13. Announcements			
13.1 Upcoming Meetings/Events (all scheduled for the Catholic Education Centre unless otherwise indicated): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jan 16 – PA day (Elementary) • Jan 16-17 – OCSTA Trustee Seminar (Toronto) • Jan 14 – CPIC Meeting • Jan 19 – Governance Committee • Jan 26 – Board of Trustees • Jan 30 – PA day (Secondary) • Feb 4 – SEAC Meeting • Feb 9 – Committee of the Whole 	Chair	--	Information

ITEM	Who	Agenda Section	Method & Outcome
14. Items for the Next Meeting Agenda	Trustees		
14.1 Board of Trustees Meeting: (January 26, 2026)	Chair	--	Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report on Properties & Major Construction Projects • Estimates Budget Plan • FSL • Healthy Active Living • RNEF School Listing Update • New MYSP presentation • Board Policy I 001 Ends • Board Policy II 006 Celebration of Excellence • Board Policy III 002 Unity of Control • Monitoring Report IV 13 – Leadership • OCSTA Resolutions • Student Trustee Report • Chair of the Board Report • Director's Report 			
15. Adjournment/ Confirm decisions made tonight	Director of Education		
15.1 Confirm Decisions	Recording Secretary	--	Information
16. Closing Prayer			
16.1 Closing Prayer	All		
17. Motion to Adjourn	Board of Trustees	Motion	Approval

CLOSING PRAYER

O Risen Lord, you have entrusted us with the responsibility to help form a new generation of disciples and apostles through the gift of our Catholic schools.

As disciples of Christ, may we educate and nurture hope in all learners to realize their full potential to transform God's world.

May our Catholic schools truly be at the heart of the community, fostering success for each by providing a place for all.

May we and all whom we lead be discerning believers formed in the Catholic faith community; effective communicators; reflective and creative thinkers; self-directed, responsible, life-long learners; collaborative contributors; caring family members; and responsible citizens.

Grant us the wisdom of your Spirit so that we might always be faithful to our responsibilities. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Rev. Charlie Fedy, CR and the Board of Trustees, 2010



Committee of the Whole Meeting

A public meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held Monday, November 10, 2025, 1st floor Board Room, Catholic Education Centre, 35 Weber Street West, Kitchener.

Trustees Present:

Linda Cuff, Kathy Doherty-Masters, Winston Francis, David Guerin, Renée Kraft (Chair), Marisa Phillips, Robert Sikora, Conrad Stanley, Tracey Weiler (Vice-Chair)

Student Trustees Present:

Rebecca Girolametto, Jace Krysko

Administrative Officials Present:

Patrick Eby, Gerald Foran, Shesh Maharaj, Paul Mendonça, Judy Merkel, Kerry Pomfret, Jennifer Ritsma, Annalisa Varano

Special Resources For The Meeting:

Regrets:

Absent:

Recorder:

Stephanie Medeiros, Executive Administrative Assistant

NOTE ON VOTING: Under Board by-law 4.7, when a decision is reached by consensus, the minutes of the Meeting shall indicate a decision by consensus with the notation in the minutes that consensus means the decision was supported by all Trustees present and eligible to vote on a matter. Under Board by-law 4.11 Whenever a vote is required, every Trustee present when a vote is taken, including the Chair but excluding any Trustee who has declared a direct or indirect pecuniary interest as required by the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, shall vote on all questions on which the Trustee is entitled to vote and abstentions are not permitted.

1. Call to Order:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

1.1 Opening Prayer & Memorials

Opening prayer led by Trustee Guerin.

1.2 Territorial Acknowledgement

Territorial Acknowledgment declared by Chair Kraft.

1.3 Approval of Agenda

Chair Kraft motioned for approval of the agenda.

2025-xx -- It was moved by Trustee Cuff and seconded by Trustee Sikora:

THAT the agenda for Monday, November 10, 2025, be now approved.

--- Carried by consensus

1.4 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

1.4.1 From the current meeting – NIL

1.4.2 From a previous public or in-camera meeting – NIL

1.5 Items for Action - NIL

2. Consent Agenda: Director of Education (e.g., day-to-day operational matters from the Ministry of Education that the board is required to do)

3. Consent Agenda: Board of Trustees (Minutes of meetings)

3.1 Approval of Minutes of Regular and Special Meetings

3.1.1 Committee of the Whole Minutes – Oct 6, 2025

Chair Kraft motioned for approval of the consent agenda. Trustee Stanley proposed an amendment to relocate the sentence concerning 'excellence' from item 5.2 to item 5.1. in the October 6, 2025, minutes.

2025-26 -- It was moved by Trustee Phillips and seconded by Trustee Sikora:

THAT the Consent Agenda: Board of Trustees and the recommendations contained therein be now approved, as amended.

--- Carried by consensus.

4. Delegations

5. Advice From the CEO

5.1 Equity Action Plan

Director Varano introduced Lynn Garrioch, Senior Manager of Equity Services, to present the new five-year Equity Action Plan. The presentation highlighted the plan's foundations in Catholic social teaching, its five key pillars, and its alignment with the board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) and Pastoral Plan. Additionally, it covered the specific goals associated with each pillar and the accountability framework. Trustees asked clarifying questions.

5.2 Math Action Achievement Plan (MAAP)

Superintendent Ritsma presented the Math Action Achievement Plan report, which outlined key areas such as priority schools, curriculum implementation, professional development and data collections. The report included a review of strategies at the board, school, and classroom levels. Additionally, it addressed the reporting framework for the 2025-26 academic year. Trustees asked clarifying questions.

5.3 Multi-Language Learner (MLL)

Superintendent Mendonça introduced Barb McCourt, Student Achievement Consultant for Multilingual Learners, to present the Multi-Language Learner report. The presentation highlighted the top ten countries of origin for students born outside Canada, as well as the ten most spoken languages at home within the board. It also covered the services provided by the Newcomer Reception Center and the YMCA Settlement Workers in schools, along with various support initiatives in both elementary and secondary. Additionally, the report addressed assessment and academic placement processes. Trustees provided comments.

6. Ownership Linkage (Communication with the External Environment)

6.1 Linkages Activity

Trustee Sikora provided an update on the Linkages Activity, highlighting St. Louis Graduations and acknowledging recent congratulatory letters, including those for the new Bishop, as well as for various new appointments and awards. Additionally, upcoming events were reviewed.

6.2 Pastoral Care Activity

Trustee Guerin shared an update on the Pastoral Care initiatives, highlighting the involvement of priests in the Board meetings and discussing plans for the upcoming Spiritual Retreat.

7. Reports From Board Committees/Task Forces

8. Board Education (at the request of the Board)

8.1 OCSTA/CCSTA Communications

Chair Kraft briefly discussed OCSTA/CCSTA Communications.

8.2 Workshop on Meeting Procedures

Chair Kraft welcomed Atul Kapur, Certified Professional Parliamentarian and educator in Parliamentary Procedure to lead the Workshop on Meeting Procedures. The session covered key aspects of Robert's Rules of Order most relevant to school board meetings, including guidelines on motions, decision-making processes, and maintaining decorum. Trustees asked clarifying questions.

2025-27 -- It was moved by Trustee Sikora and seconded by Trustee Weiler:

That the meeting be extended past 3 hours.

--Carried by consensus

8.3 Trustee Work Plan - October review

Chair Kraft noted the Trustee Work Plan for the month of November.

9. Policy Discussion

10. Assurance of Successful Board Performance

10.1 OCSTA Resolutions

Vice-Chair Weiler announced that the OCSTA Resolutions are now open for recommendations and emphasized the deadline for submission and will oversee the planning of the resolutions brought forward by Trustees. Additionally, Vice-Chair Weiler expressed an intention to establish an ADHOC Committee to assist with the work of the Board and will draft 'Terms of Reference.' A potential motion at the next meeting to initiate this committee was also suggested.

11. Assurance of Successful Director of Education Performance

12. Potential Agenda Items

13. Announcements (all scheduled for the Catholic Education Centre unless otherwise indicated)

13.1 Upcoming Meetings/Events

Chair noted upcoming events.

14. Items for the Next Meeting Agenda/Pending Items

14.1 Chair noted upcoming items on the next agenda.

15. Adjournment – Confirm decisions made tonight.

15.1 Confirm Decisions

The Recording Secretary confirmed the meeting decisions.

16. Closing Prayer

16.1 Closing prayer led by all.

17. Motion to Adjourn

**2025-28 -- It was moved by Trustee Sikora and seconded by Trustee Stanley:
THAT the meeting be now adjourned. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 9:26 p.m.**

Chair of the Board

Secretary



Date: January 12, 2026
To: Board of Trustees
From: Director of Education
Subject: Board Leadership Strategy 2025-2026

Type of Report: Decision-Making
 Monitoring
 Incidental Information concerning day-to-day operations

Type of Information: Information for Board of Trustees Decision-Making
 Monitoring Information of Board Policy **XX XXX**
 Information only of day-to-day operational matters delegated to the CEO

Origin: (cite Education Act and/or Board Policy or other legislation)

- Board Policy I 001 – Ends
- Ontario Leadership Strategy
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/threeYear.html>

Policy Statement and/or Education Act/other Legislation citation:

- Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario -
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/excellent.html>
- Board Leadership Development Strategy (BLDS) -
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/BLDS2012Manual.pdf>

Alignment to the MYSP:

Learning

- Support multiple pathways & tools for success
- Accelerate excellence & innovation while building transferable, future-ready skills
- Engage students as co-creators in their learning
- Transform learning through leadership & staff support & development

Serving

- Celebrate & promote our distinct Catholic identity
- Develop faith & live gospel values
- Strengthen connections between home, school, & parish
- Connect faith formation to learning

Belonging

- Create safe, welcoming environments that reflect our diversity
- Promote a sense of mattering & dignity
- Foster equitable, inclusive, & barrier-free learning & work environments
- Engage families & build community partnerships

Background/Comments:

The Ontario Leadership Strategy was developed in 2008-2009 to foster leadership of the highest possible quality in schools and school boards. The WCDSB maintains that our goals mirror the goals of the OLS – that is, to:

- attract candidates who demonstrate excellence for leadership roles;
- develop personal leadership resources in individuals and promote effective leadership practices to have the greatest possible impact on student achievement and well-being; and
- develop leadership capacity and coherence within the system to strengthen the ability to deliver on education priorities.

Although the Ministry does not fund leadership programs, Waterloo Catholic continues to prioritize leadership development to ensure that we are supporting and developing aspiring leaders in our organization. The Board Leadership Development Strategy Goals for the Waterloo Catholic District School Board are the following:

Overall Goal:

To develop leadership capacity to support the achievement of goals outlined in the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYS) and the Student Achievement Plan (SAP).

Goal One:

Create and promote leadership opportunities that engage all school and system leaders to strengthen staff capacity for instructional and spiritual leadership, to enhance organizational effectiveness, and to support succession planning as defined by research, Strong Districts and their Leadership and the Ontario Catholic Leadership Framework.

Goal Two:

School and system leaders in the WCDSB will develop the capacity to appropriately respond to the needs of learners by fostering a holistic view of student learning that encourages shepherd, servant and steward leadership.

Goal Three:

Create and provide opportunities for enhancing leadership capacity for the entire system by engaging in active professional lifelong learning, equity training, faith formation, mentorship, and coaching.

Waterloo Catholic District School Board Leadership 2025-2026

Strategic leadership planning for the 2025/2026 school year has been responsive to the ever-shifting landscape that has shaped our most recent experiences. For this school year, our comprehensive leadership strategy is structured around the following robust offerings which include:

- Strengthening Catholic Leadership: Cultivating Growth, Navigating Conflict, and Nurturing Well-Being - presented by Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario
- Catholic Leadership Program: Part I, II and III
- Leadership Identification Program: Call to Lead
- Information to Transformation Program
- When Faith Meets Pedagogy
- Crucial Conversations Training
- Math Lead Teacher (MLT) – Leadership Work in the Schools
- New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)
- Induction Series and Mentorship Program for Newly Appointed Administrators
- Vice Principal 'In Waiting' and 'In Training' - Training Needs and Opportunities
- CPCO Principal's Qualification Part I and II
- Human Resource Training for Administrators
- Experiential Professional Learning for Guidance Educators in the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Pathway
- Innovation and Deep Learning
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Tackling Racism in Education (November 17th PA Day)
- Midframes for Belonging, Identities and Equity (Book study) – K-12 Family of Schools

Strengthening Catholic Leadership: Cultivating Growth, Navigating Conflict, and Nurturing Well-Being (CPCO)

This full-day workshop is designed to support both newly appointed and experienced Catholic school Principals and Vice Principals, offering a valuable opportunity to deepen skills, refresh essential practices, and navigate the complex demands of school leadership.

Exploring both leadership and management components, participants will be guided through essential areas such as policies, procedures, and current regulations –all integral to effective school leadership. Insights into the day-to-day realities of the role, including decision-making, documentation, and the relational components of leading a school will be examined. Attention will also be given to the well-being of leaders, recognizing the importance of sustaining personal resilience and balance.

By the end of the day, participants will leave with:

- A stronger understanding of the policies and frameworks that guide school administration
- Practical tools and strategies for navigating early leadership challenges
- A deeper sense of personal leadership style and values
- Strategies to elevate the role of well-being
- Connections with peers and colleagues for ongoing support

Catholic Leadership Program 2025-2026

[Program Overview](#): The Catholic Leadership Program is a three-part program focused on nurturing the development of our leaders, ensuring that the explicit focus of their development efforts is consistent with the leadership practices described in the Ontario Leadership Framework.

[Part I: A Call to Leadership through discernment](#) ~ Participants learn to develop their leadership skills within a Catholic education system.

[**Part II: Exploring the Call to Leadership**](#) ~ Participants will continue to discern their call to leadership within a Catholic education system.

[**Part III: Answering the Call**](#) ~ Participants will reflect on their leadership skills and their capacity to affect change.

Year	Part I Registration	Part II Registration	Part III Registration	Totals
2021-2022	27	15	21	63
2022-2023	25	15	14	54
2023-2024	52	20	14	86
2024-2025	25	45	18	88
2025-2026	39	22	39	100

Leadership Identification Program (LIP) for Teachers Aspiring to School Leadership 2025-2026

The Leadership Identification Program (LIP) focuses on teachers who are considering applications to become Vice Principals and Principals. Delivered multiple times throughout the year, interested candidates are invited to an information session to learn about our Catholic leadership process and opportunities to become Vice Principals and Principals.

New Leadership Identification Process:

- Information Session and Portfolio Workshop
- Application through Apply to Education
- Portfolio (digital) Development
- Assessment Activities
 - 30-minute Written Case Study
 - 20- minute Portfolio Presentation
 - 40-minute Interview

Information to Transformation Program

The *Information to Transformation* Program offered by The Partners in Catholic Education is a leadership program that focuses on faith formation for emerging leaders across the Diocese of Hamilton. We have just wrapped up the sixth intake of the *From Information to Transformation* Faith Formation

Program. Once again Waterloo Catholic was well represented, sending the largest cohort of all the partner boards involved with our Diocese. Five Waterloo Catholic educators embarked on this faith formation journey which started in May 2024 and concluded this past October 2025. The *Information to Transformation* program recognizes that Catholic leadership requires us to reflect on our inheritance – our stories, our history and our spiritualities. This program is designed to build a foundation in theological reflection, nurture personal faith life, and form and shape an underlying ecclesiology to bring to your work as an emerging leader in the WCDSB. Our graduates from this year's program includes Christina Rodgers (St. Gregory), Shane Pereira Garza (St. Benedict)



FROM INFORMATION TO Transformation



FROM INFORMATION TO TRANSFORMATION A program presented by the partners in Catholic Education in the Diocese of Hamilton to deepen, celebrate and live your faith every day.

Engagement between modules will be facilitated in small groups and supported by a program mentor.

Consider joining us for this inspiring, rewarding, and transformative program experience focused on leadership and faith formation; designed to build a foundation of theological reflection, nurture a personal faith life, and form and shape an underlying ecclesiology to bring to your work as emerging leaders in Catholic institutions.

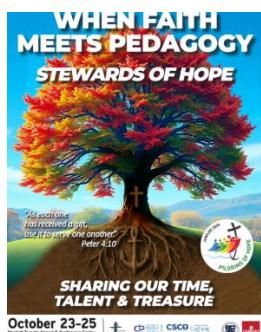
"WE NEED SAINTS IN JEANS AND TENNIS SHOES."



Amanda Phillips (Religion and Program Head, St. David) Andrea Murree (St. John) and Tom Mandich, our newest secondary VP (St. Benedict).

We are excited to continue promoting the Information to Transformation Catholic Leadership Initiative to all WCDSB staff as we begin recruiting participants for the next cohort, scheduled for 2026–2027.

When Faith Meets Pedagogy



When Faith Meets Pedagogy is sponsored by the Catholic Curriculum Corporation, and it is Canada's largest gathering of Catholic educators. From October 24–25, 2025, approximately 25 WCDSB staff attended the WFMP Conference. Held at the Delta Hotels Marriott Toronto Airport & Conference Centre, participants had the opportunity to build and sustain the Catholic capacity of educators through the development and provision of high-quality Catholic curriculum, resources, support and professional development.

This year's guest speaker was Danielle Campeau. Danielle is an award-winning keynote speaker, mental health expert, and coach celebrated for her leadership, resilience, and ability to foster meaningful connections. A Paralympian and recipient of prestigious honors including the Order of Ontario and Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, she brings over 20 years of experience as a thought leader and resiliency advocate. Her personal journey, initially diagnosed with muscular dystrophy and later with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA-LED), drives her commitment to disability rights and empowering individuals to discover their strengths and achieve success. Combining humor, deep insights, and a strong Catholic faith, Danielle inspires audiences to embrace resilience and unlock their full potential.



One thousand conference participants had the opportunity to attend engaging workshops and celebrate Mass on Friday morning with the Most Rev. Ronald P. Fabbro, CSB, Bishop of London as Celebrant. On Thursday, October 23, approximately 50 students, and their Chaplain leaders, representing all the high schools of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board attended the WFMP Youth Forum, joining nearly 1,300 Catholic secondary-school leaders from across the province. This inspiring event is dedicated to deepening faith, strengthening leadership, and fostering meaningful connections among youth. Award-winning keynote speaker, Paralympian, and mental health expert Danielle Campo McLeod shared her powerful spiritual journey of resilience and empowerment, encouraging students to discover their strengths, embrace connection, and pursue their own "gold medal moments."

Crucial Conversations Training

[Crucial Conversations](#) is entering the second year of a three-year plan that provides administrators and human resource staff with the opportunity to participate in a two-day training. During the 2024–

25 school year, 25 staff completed the training and for the 2025-26 school year, 25 staff will be offered this opportunity once again. Our facilitators intend to deliver the training in the spring. Crucial Conversations gives people the skills to step *into* disagreement—rather than over or around it—and turn disagreement into dialogue for improved relationships and results.

Math Lead Teacher (MLT) – Leadership Work in the Schools

The MLT program is a shared leadership approach to building math knowledge for teaching. This after school math professional learning series for math leadership is our solution to building capacity in pedagogical moves in math instruction and to develop leaders within our system. Our monthly Math Lead Teacher learning sessions build capacity of curriculum content and deepens understanding of high impact instructional practices to develop future leaders through math facilitators leading learning at each school site.

- Math Lead Teachers led two PD Day days at their school site with resources and materials shared through MLT
- MLTs share resources, math learning and high impact practices back at their schools through staff and divisional meetings.

Last year, after school Math Lead Teacher sessions were incredibly well attended. 72% of schools attended 6 or more sessions of the 8 MLT sessions. The MLT Feedback indicated highly positive responses to the learning experiences with the math content, format, and structure of the sessions.

Structure of Math Lead Teacher session each month	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree		Strongly Agree	Support for MLTs and level of comfort facilitating the Math PD days in November & March				Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree		Strongly Agree
Learning objectives were clear for each monthly session.		3.0%		18.2%	78.8%		The MLT sessions adequately supported me in preparing the materials for the Math PD days.				15.2%	48.5%	36.4%			
The content was organized, well planned and easy to share.			3.0%	24.2%	72.7%		I felt comfortable and confident facilitating the math learning on the Math PD days.		6.1%	12.1%	51.5%	30.3%				

New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)

One to One Mentor Matching

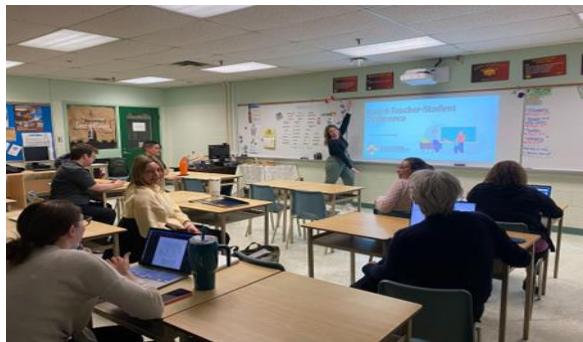
Experienced teachers are called to be transformational leaders in our school communities by serving as a one-to-one mentor. This cornerstone of the NTIP program invites veteran teachers to step into a powerful leadership role as stewards of teaching excellence. By guiding our new teachers, they directly shape the future of our profession, model high-impact instructional practices, and influence student achievement system-wide. Mentorship is one of the most profound ways to lead from within the classroom and leave a lasting legacy in our schools. [NTIP Mentor Guide](#)



NTIP Liaison- Group Mentors

Teachers are stepping forward as visible leaders of professional learning in our schools by serving as NTIP liaisons. This volunteer role empowers passionate expert teachers to facilitate monthly professional development sessions that build collaborative and innovative school cultures. We currently have liaisons positioned at 15 elementary schools and four high schools and will continue to recruit at more schools. NTIP liaisons are elevating instructional practices through peer leadership.

NTIP Mentor/Coach- School Based Coaching



Our mentor/coach is an essential pillar of our mentoring program. Engaging in school visits, they contribute to new teachers' continuous professional development. These visits serve as a unique opportunity for fostering connections, promoting collaboration, and providing support as new teachers advance their professional journey. They conduct School visits to have collaborative conversations, model instructional strategies, collaborate on planning and provide classroom management advice.

Model Teacher

Teachers are being asked to answer the call to lead by opening their classroom as a living laboratory of excellence. As a model teacher, they become a go-to leader for effective practice, demonstrating powerful instructional strategies and facilitating reflective debrief conversations. This role showcases their expertise while directly developing the skills and confidence of new colleagues—an authentic and impactful way to lead teacher growth every day.



Ongoing Foundational PD Opportunities

The NTIP program needs to be responsive to the needs of the NTIP teachers it is serving. Throughout the course of the year NTIP offers PD sessions/workshops on a variety of topics. These topics are scheduled based on the natural demands of teaching throughout the school year and the areas of interest shared by the NTIP teachers themselves. Teachers volunteer to lead and run sessions, for example Richelle Kocher is running our Advent Learning Liturgy to help teachers prepare for Advent.



NTIP Steering Committee

Teachers from across the WCDSB, from Kindergarten to grade 12, have volunteered to help lead and directly shape system-wide induction practices to onboard our new teachers. This year, volunteers are collaborating to revolutionize the critical first-month onboarding experience—researching grade-specific demands and co-creating resources that will give every new teacher a strong start. Committee members are exercising strategic leadership to drive innovation in teacher support and play a pivotal role in building strong foundational practices that will drive our new teachers classrooms for years to come.

Induction Series and Mentorship Program for Newly Appointed Administrators

The [Induction and Mentorship Program](#) focuses on newly appointed Vice Principals and Principals who are in their first or second year of their position. For the 2025-26 school year, 31 administrators are participating as mentees in the program and 11 experienced Principals are participating as mentors/coaches. Each mentor has been paired with three mentees and during monthly meetings, groups focus on school level leadership, policy and processes, managing conflict and instructional leadership, all through the lens of the WCDSB's Pastoral Theme – Listen to Understand. All participants in the Induction and Mentorship Program also come together three times in the school to review learning and reflect upon leadership growth and development.

Vice Principal 'In Waiting' and 'In Training' - Needs and Opportunities

Principal leads developed and delivered a full day workshop in August 2025 for candidates currently serving in new roles and for those in the Vice Principal and Principal pool and awaiting placement. This session and accompanying resources were developed to support these leaders in understanding key logistical processes identified as being instrumental in supporting a successful transition to the role. This session focused on specific training elements of the position including:

- ASPEN for Administrators
- Safe Schools
- EasyConnect and Staffing
- Transportation
- Compliant Scheduling
- Communication
- Special Education Processes and Support Staff Roles
- Investigations
- Teacher Performance Appraisals
- Startup Procedures
- School Budgets
- Duty to Report

CPCO Principal's Qualification Part I and II

As a result of the continued success of our Leadership Strategy, our board continues to provide the Principal's Qualification Program through the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario.

To date, the WCDSB is proud to have 33 teachers (not in currently leadership roles) that have gained their Principal Qualifications Part 1 and an additional 59 that have earned their PQP Part 2, a promising outlook for leadership succession.

New candidates have enrolled in the CPCO PQP Online program this year and WCDSB continues to subsidize Part 1 and 2 candidates with \$500 towards program costs.

Human Resource Training for Administrators

On August 21, 2025, the Human Resource Services Department hosted a full-day professional development session for all administrators. The event featured a carousel-style format, offering focused presentations on the following key topics:

1. Student and Staff Safety: Best Practices
2. Performance Management: Best Practices and When to Seek Support
3. Unfilled Positions Strategy: Triage Approaches and Effective Use of EasyConnect/Edge 4

To further support administrators in their leadership roles, Human Resource Services also distributed the annual start-up communication package. This resource includes a series of concise, “at-a-glance” reference documents outlining procedures for reporting missed planning time, tracking additional supervision minutes, addressing health and safety and ergonomic concerns, and identifying the appropriate HR contacts for assistance.

Experiential Professional Learning for Guidance Educators in the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Pathway

The Ministry of Education has committed funding to provide all guidance teacher-counsellors—elementary *Student Success Consultants* and secondary guidance staff—with opportunities to participate in experiential professional learning. These experiences are designed to help educators develop a deeper understanding of the skilled trades and apprenticeship pathway, as well as the benefits of the skilled trades as a career. Staff participation enables them to better promote the skilled trades as a viable and valuable pathway for all students. This school year marks the third year of a three-year commitment to these opportunities by the Ministry of Education. For the 2025-26 school year, the planning team has organized eleven professional learning sessions for guidance educators, collaboratively coordinated through the Business and Education Partnership of Waterloo Region (BEP), Ontario Council for Technology Education (OCTE), Ontario School Counsellors Association (OSCA), Conestoga College, Skills Ontario, Merit Ontario, and local trade union partners.

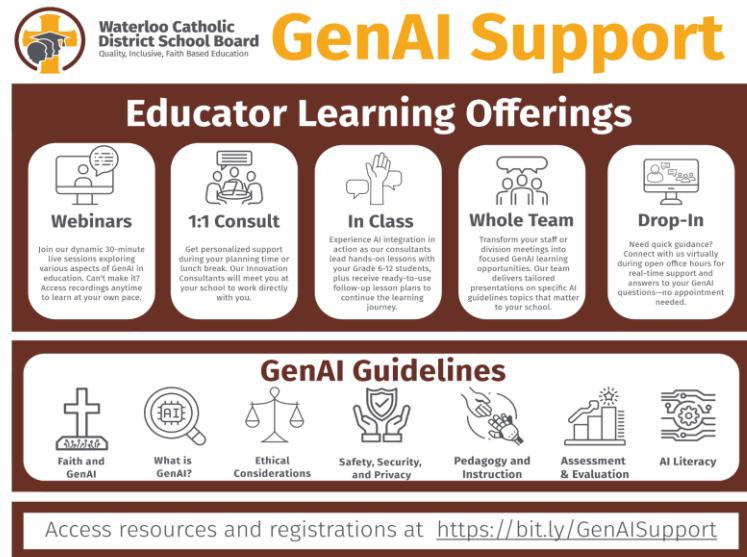
Innovation and Deep Learning

Staff across the Waterloo Catholic District School Board are demonstrating remarkable growth as leaders in Catholic education through their engagement with innovation initiatives grounded in Deep Learning. By working with robotics, esports, artificial intelligence, partnerships, and collaborative professional learning opportunities, educators are strengthening transferable skills in students while living out our Catholic Graduate Expectations. These initiatives provide staff with purposeful opportunities to lead with curiosity, compassion, and courage. Teachers are increasingly taking on roles as facilitators, mentors, and co-designers of learning experiences that reflect Gospel values using Deep Learning as the catalyst for this.

This culture of innovation is creating clear and measurable impact for our students. Learners across the system are benefiting from classrooms that emphasize collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and authentic problem solving. Robotics competitions, Minecraft and Mario Kart esports programs, and hands-on STREAM activities invite students to develop the OCSGEs and Ontario Transferable

Skills. Educators are modelling responsible and ethical use of emerging technologies, guiding students to navigate the digital world with discernment and integrity. Through these initiatives, students experience a sense of belonging, purpose, and agency, which supports achievement and well-being.

The WCDSB innovation ecosystem is creating a sustainable pathway for leadership development. Staff who take part in these programs build confidence, contribute to system-wide professional learning, and lead colleagues in refining practice. This collective capacity building ensures that innovation is not an add-on, but a way of living our mission as a Catholic school board. It strengthens our commitment to preparing future-ready graduates who are rooted in faith, resilient, and equipped to contribute to a changing world.



GenAI Support

Educator Learning Offerings

- Webinars**: Join our dynamic 30-minute live sessions on various aspects of GenAI in education. Can't make it? Access recordings anytime to learn at your own pace.
- 1:1 Consult**: Get personalized support during your free time or lunch break. Our Innovation Consultants will meet you at your school to work directly with you.
- In Class**: Experience AI integration in action as our consultants lead hands-on lessons with your Grade 6-12 students, plus receive ready-to-use follow-up lesson plans to continue the learning journey.
- Whole Team**: Transform your staff or division meetings into focused GenAI learning opportunities. Our team delivers tailored presentations on specific AI guidelines topics that matter to your school.
- Drop-In**: Need quick guidance? Connect with us virtually during open office hours for real-time support and answers—no appointment needed.

GenAI Guidelines

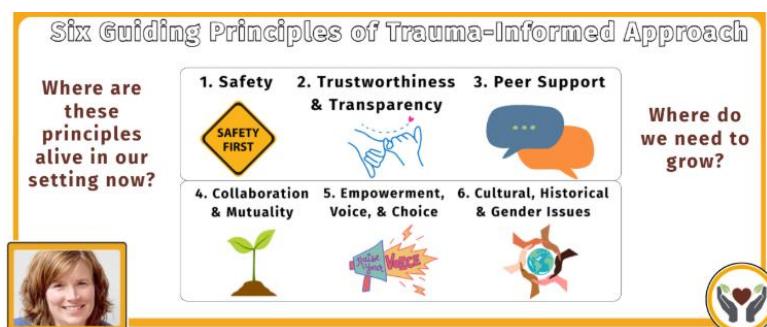
- Faith and GenAI
- What is GenAI?
- Ethical Considerations
- Safety, Security, and Privacy
- Pedagogy and Instruction
- Assessment & Evaluation
- AI Literacy

Access resources and registrations at <https://bit.ly/GenAISupport>

Mental Health and Wellbeing

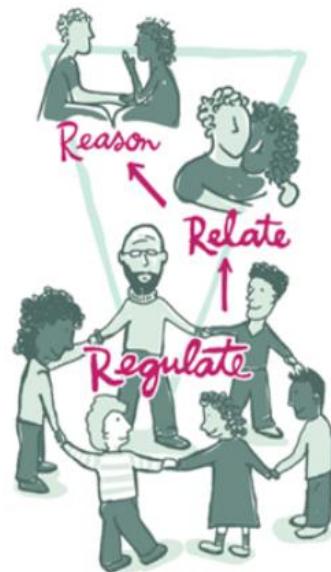
Trauma-Informed Practice

WCDSB staff continue to learn about trauma, how the social determinants of health shape students' experiences in our schools, and how educators can respond in ways that promote safety, dignity, and connection. Grounded in research and aligned with the WCDSB Mental Health & Addictions Strategy, all staff have been provided with a ministry-required exploration of the six trauma-informed principles — safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, empowerment, and cultural humility. Practical classroom strategies and system-level considerations supported educators in building inclusive, mentally healthy environments where every learner feels seen and supported. As a next step, administrators will meet in their Family of Schools groups with trauma-informed expert Dr. Kristen McLeod to deepen their understanding and plan for implementation within their school contexts.



Systemwide Regulation-Focused Learning (Fall–December 2025)

WCDSB continues to strengthen regulation-focused practice across the system through consistent professional learning delivered across staff groups, including 62 NTIP teachers, 51 Literacy & Wellbeing participants, 50 Mental Health & Wellbeing Champions, 25 Secondary Program Heads, and all Administrators, Program Services, and Student Services staff. This coordinated approach builds shared language and reinforces the use of our three-pillar framework alongside core regulation strategies such as the Regulate–Relate–Reason model. In December 2025, the session *Preventing and Responding to Student Dysregulation from a Trauma-Informed Lens* was presented to all administrators, emphasizing that dysregulation is a stress response—rather than misbehavior—and that calm, steady adult responses protect dignity, support safety, and model co-regulation for peers. Administrators explored Tier 1 trauma-informed practices, predictable routines, co-regulation language, and post-incident class supports that help create caring, faith-based learning environments where all students can re-engage and thrive. This systemwide work strengthened alignment with the Mental Health & Addictions Strategy 2025–2028 and continues to build a common foundation for regulation and well-being across WCDSB schools.

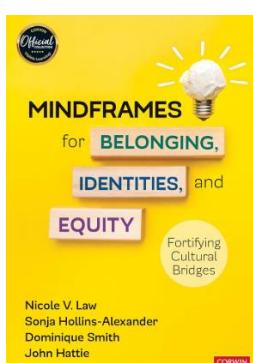


Adapted from Dr. Bruce Perry's Sequence of Engagement

Tackling Racism in Education (November 17th PA Day)

This interactive professional development session was designed to support leaders, managers, and staff in deepening their understanding of systemic racism, with a focused lens on antisemitism, Islamophobia, anti-Asian, anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in educational settings. Participants engaged in reflective dialogue, case study analysis, and collaborative problem-solving to identify and challenge oppressive practices within their schools. The session explored historical and contemporary contexts, amplified voices from affected communities, and provided practical tools for fostering equity, accountability, and culturally responsive leadership. By the end of the session, participants left with actionable strategies to create safer, more inclusive learning environments for all students and safer, more inclusive work environments for staff.

Midframes for Belonging, Identities and Equity (Book Study) – K-12 Family of Schools



This year, all superintendents and principals have been given the book "Mindframes for Belonging, Identities and Equity" by Nicole Law, Sonja Hollins-Alexander, Dominique Smith and John Hattie. Each family of schools superintendent is working through the same [Book Study](#), using the [Navigation Deck](#) which provides an outline and workbook to help guide and shape the discussions each month.

Recommendation:

This report is for the information of the Board.

Prepared/Reviewed By:

Annalisa Varano
Director of Education

Patrick Eby
Superintendent of Learning

*4.2 DIRECTOR Monitoring Reports: Where the Board receives from the CEO a monitoring report that flows from a responsibility delegated to the Director under Board Policy – except where approval is required by the Board on a matter delegated by policy to the Board – the minutes of the Meeting at which the Report is received shall expressly provide that the Board has received and approved of the Report as an action consistent with the authority delegated to the CEO, subject in all instances to what otherwise actually occurred.



Date: January 12, 2026
To: Board of Trustees
From: Director of Education
Subject: 2024-25 EQAO Achievement Summary Report

Type of Report: Decision-Making
 Monitoring
 Incidental Information concerning day-to-day operations

Type of Information: Information for Board of Trustees Decision-Making
 Monitoring Information of Board Policy **XX XXX**
 Information only of day-to-day operational matters delegated to the CEO

Origin: (cite Education Act and/or Board Policy or other legislation)

Education Act Section 169. (1)

- Every Board shall; (a) promote student achievement and well-being; (b) ensure effective stewardship of the board's resources; (c) deliver effective and appropriate education programs to its pupils; (f) develop a multi-year plan aimed at achieving the goals of student achievement and well-being, positive school climate, inclusive and accepting schools, stewardship of resources, and effective and appropriate education programs to its pupils
- Education Quality and Accountability Office Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 11, April 1, 2024 – (e-Laws currency date)

Policy Statement and/or Education Act/other Legislation citation:

- [Growing success: assessment, evaluation, and reporting in Ontario's schools, kindergarten to Grade 12](#) – Grades 1 to 12 (2010); Mathematics addendum (grades 1 to 8) (2020), Language addendum, grades 1 to 8 (2023) and Mathematics addendum, Grade 9 (2024)
- Multi-Project Agreement 2025 G1: Math Achievement Action Plan (Board Math Lead(s), School Math
- Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023, S.O. 2023, c. 11 - Bill 98 & PPM 119 Equity & Inclusion (2013)
- [Public Schools, School Boards and the Ministry of Education – Access and Reporting](#)

Alignment to the MYSP:

Learning

- Support multiple pathways & tools for success
- Accelerate excellence & innovation while building transferable, future-ready skills
- Engage students as co-creators in their learning
- Transform learning through leadership & staff support & development

Serving

- Celebrate & promote our distinct Catholic identity
- Develop faith & live gospel values

- Strengthen connections between home, school, & parish
- Connect faith formation to learning

Belonging

- Create safe, welcoming environments that reflect our diversity
- Promote a sense of mattering & dignity
- Foster equitable, inclusive, & barrier-free learning & work environments
- Engage families & build community partnerships

Background/Comments:

PURPOSE:

This report will highlight the board and provincial Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) data from the 2024-25 assessments, which marks the fourth year of reporting on student achievement results of EQAO's digitalized and modernized provincial assessments. (Note: EQAO data was publicly released on December 3rd, 2025-[Provincial results](#).)

CONTEXT:

Results from 2024-2025 are provided along those from the three previous years to show trends in achievement and attitudes over the past four years. Such analyses of results contribute to a better understanding of student learning over time.

The results in Grades 3, 6, 9 and OSSLT highlight the importance of continuing the work through the [Literacy Achievement Action Plan](#) and the [Math Achievement Action Plan](#).

QUICK FACTS:

- Grade 3 Assessments indicate that **75%** of students in Reading, **65%** of students in Writing, and **65%** of students in Mathematics met or exceeded the provincial standard.
- Grade 6 Assessments indicate that **84%** of students in Reading, **82%** of students in Writing, and **53%** of students in Mathematics met or exceeded the provincial standard.
- Grade 9 Assessment for Mathematics indicates that **53%** of the Board's Grade 9 students met or exceeded the provincial standard in Math.
- OSSLT results indicate that **92%** of the Board's fully participating, and first-time eligible secondary students who wrote the OSSLT successfully completed the assessment. OSSLT is based on the expectations for reading and writing across all core subjects in the Ontario Curriculum, up to the end of Grade 9.

TERMS:

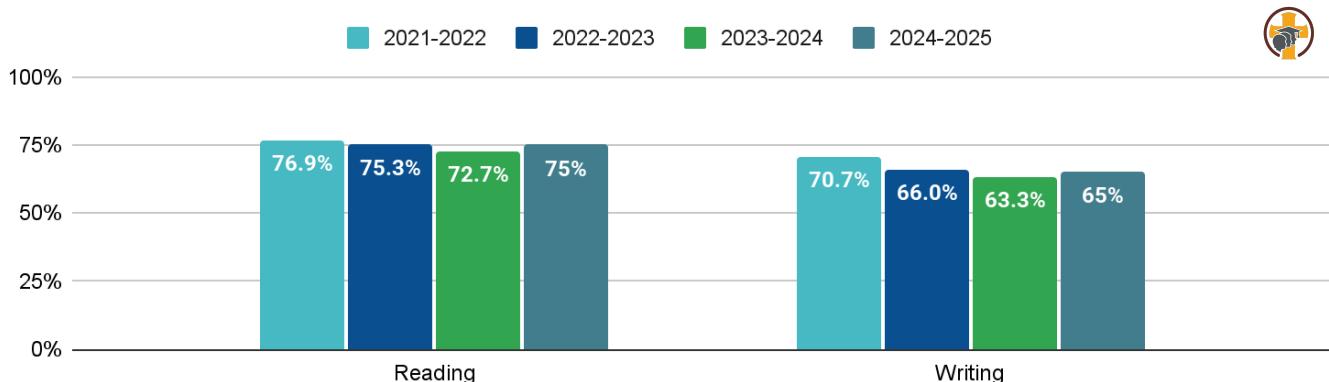
Provincial Standard: The provincial standard (Level 3, B or 75%) is not used to determine whether a student "fails" or "passes"; the provincial standard is simply a target level of achievement established by the government.

Fully Participating (FP) Students: Students who took part in the assessment by answering at least one question in each session and, as a result, have data (excludes "no data," "exempt" and "absent" categories).

1. [Language | Literacy Grades 3, 6 and OSSLT](#)
2. [Mathematics Grades 3, 6 and 9](#)
3. [Strategies for Continued Improvement](#)

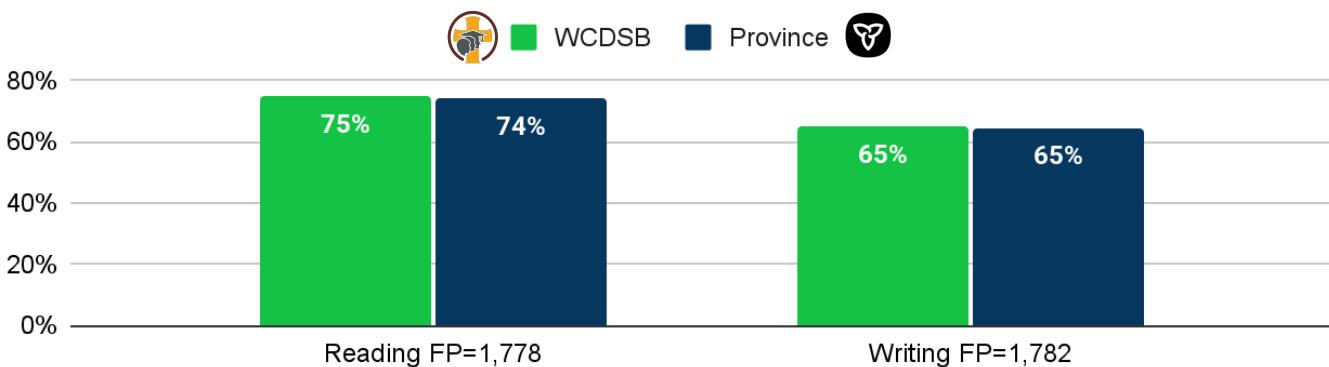
LANGUAGE | LITERACY Grades 3, 6 and OSSLT

PRIMARY, GRADE 3, Board Comparison Over Time (2022 - 2025) | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



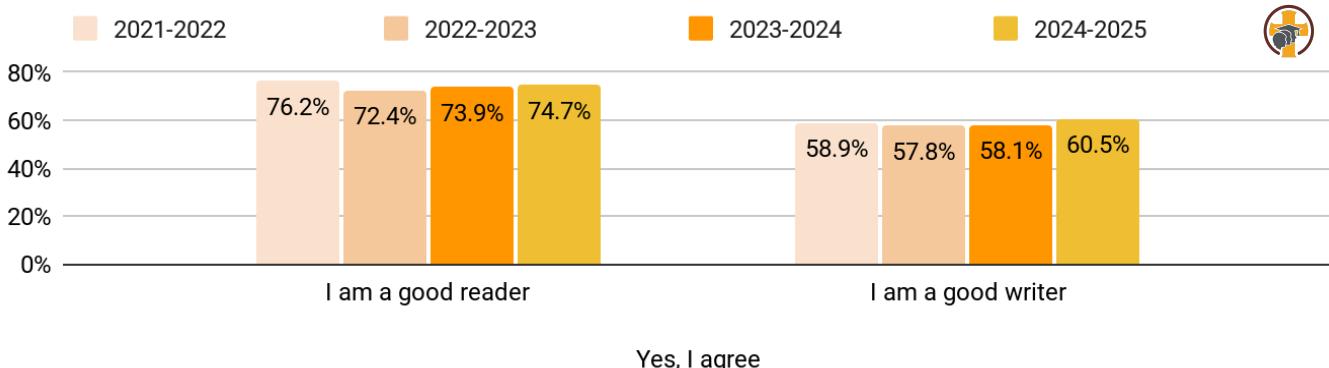
- 75% Grade 3 students met the provincial standard in reading (increase of 2.3% over 2023-24)
- 65% Grade 3 students met the provincial standard in writing (increase of 1.7% over 2023-24).

2025 PRIMARY, GRADE 3, Board Level Results Compared to Provincial Results | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑

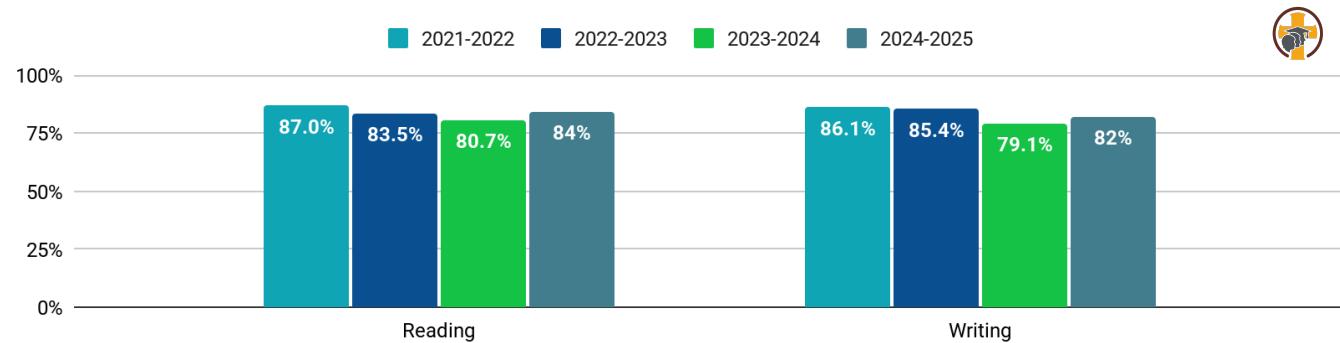


- 75% of WCDSB Grade 3 students met or exceeded the provincial standards in reading. The percentage of WCDSB students who achieved level 3 or 4 in reading exceeded the provincial average by 1%.
- 65% of WCDSB Grade 3 students met or exceeded the provincial standards in writing. The percentage of WCDSB students who achieved level 3 or 4 followed the provincial average.

PRIMARY, GRADE 3, BOARD Confidence Survey Data | Reading & Writing | Over Time

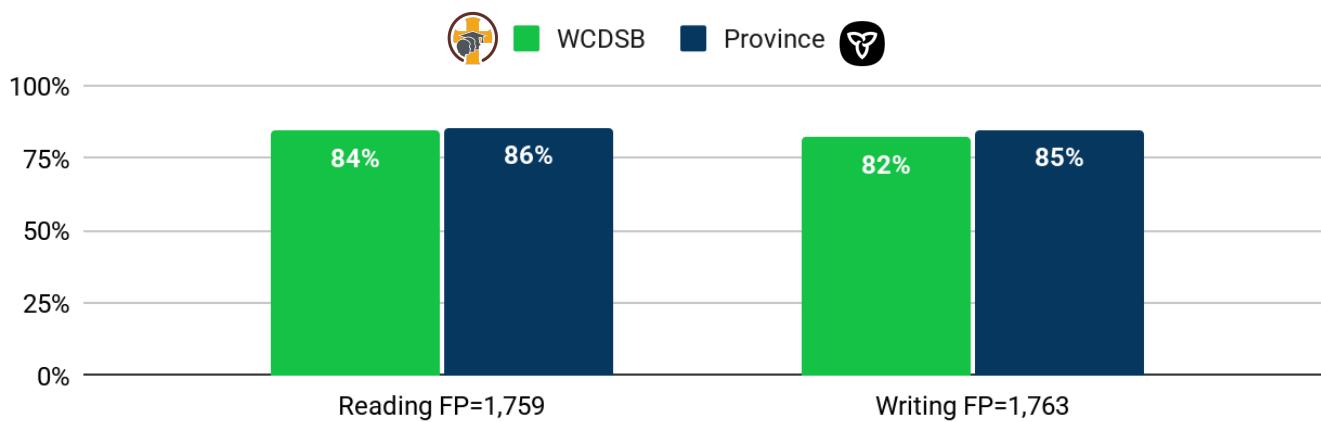


JUNIOR, GRADE 6, Board Comparison Over Time (2022 - 2025) | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



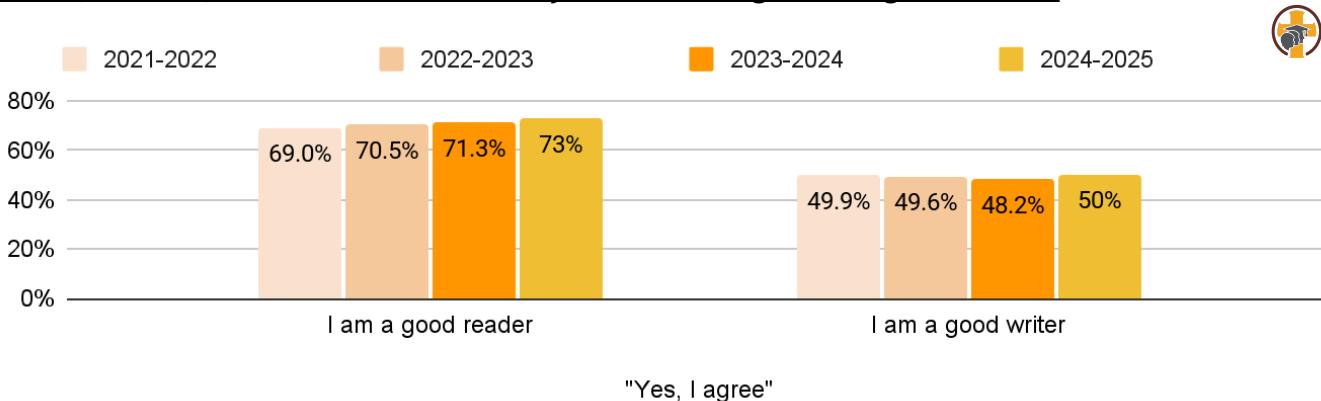
- 84% Grade 6 students met the provincial standard in reading (increase of 3.3% over 2023-24).
- 82% Grade 6 students met the provincial standard in writing (increase of 2.7% over 2023-24).

2025 JUNIOR, GRADE 6, Board Level Results Compared to Provincial Results | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



- 84% of WCDSB Grade 6 students met or exceeded the provincial standards in reading
The percentage of WCDSB students who achieved level 3 or 4 in reading was lower than the provincial average by 2%
- 82% of WCDSB Grade 6 students met or exceeded the provincial standards in writing
The percentage of WCDSB students who achieved level 3 or 4 in writing was lower than the provincial average by 3%

JUNIOR, GRADE 6, BOARD Confidence Survey Data | Reading & Writing | Over Time

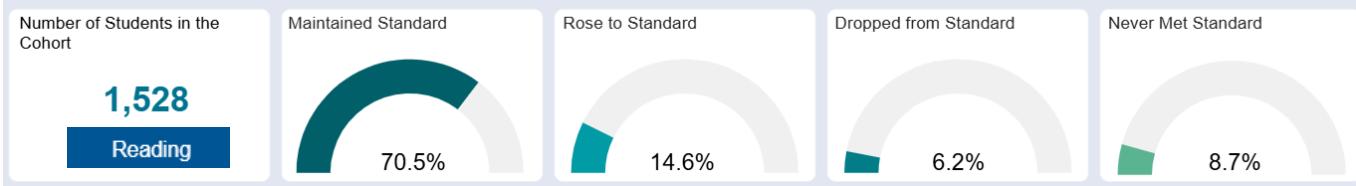




COHORT DATA | Reading & Writing | Primary to Junior

EQAO tracked the progress of students who wrote the primary-division assessment in 2022, when they were in Grade 3, and the junior-division assessment 2025, when they were in Grade 6.

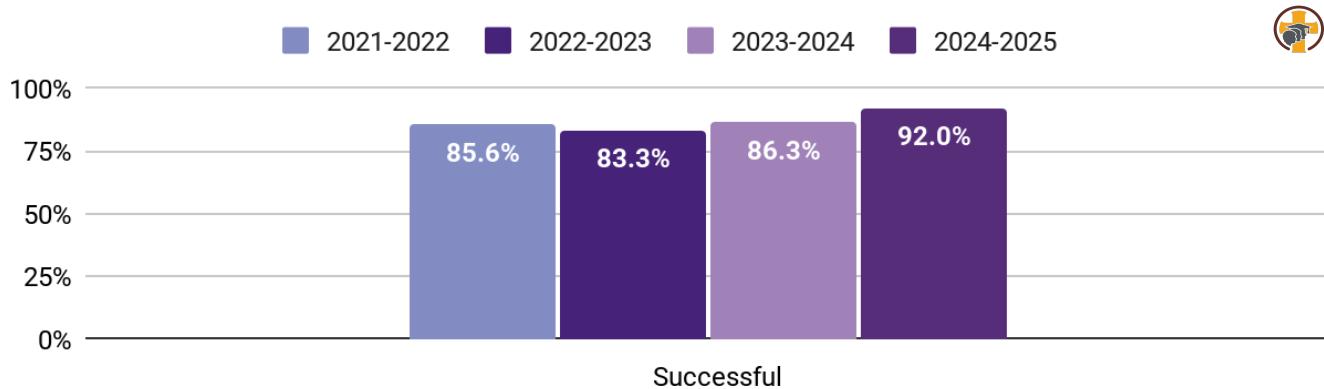
Board-Level Results for Fully Participating Students in the Cohort



Board-Level Results for Fully Participating Students in the Cohort

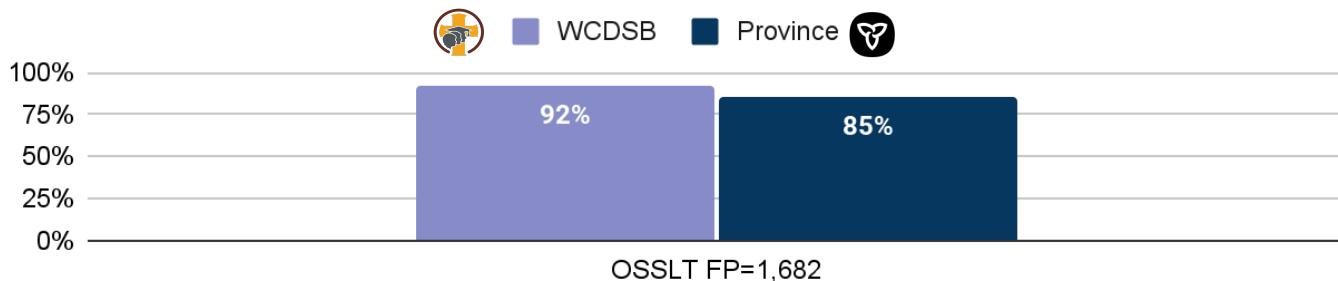


ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERACY TEST (OSSLT) | Board Comparison Over Time (2022-2025) | Provincial Standard



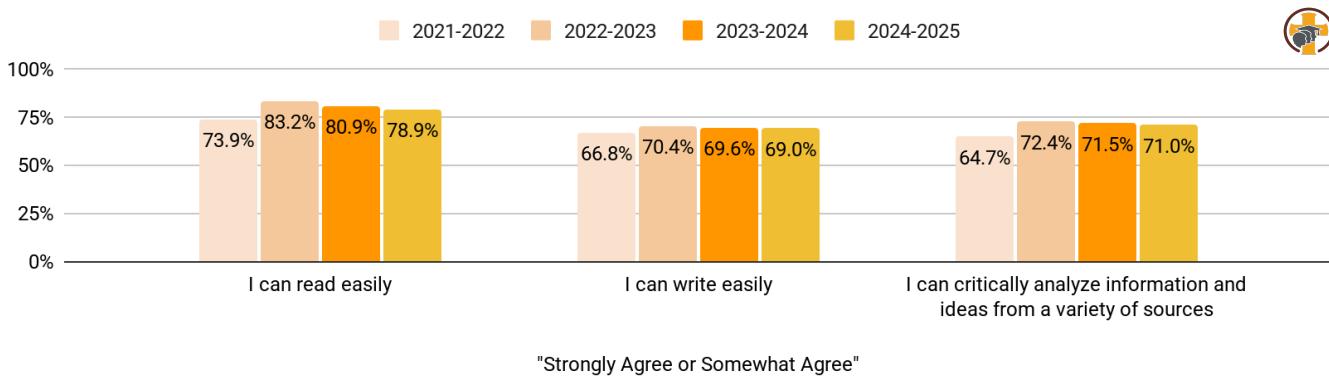
- 92% of Grade 10 first-time eligible students were successful when completing the OSSLT. The percentage of WCDSB students who were successful increased by 5.7% from 2023-24.

2025 OSSLT Board Level Results Compared to Provincial Results | | Provincial Standard



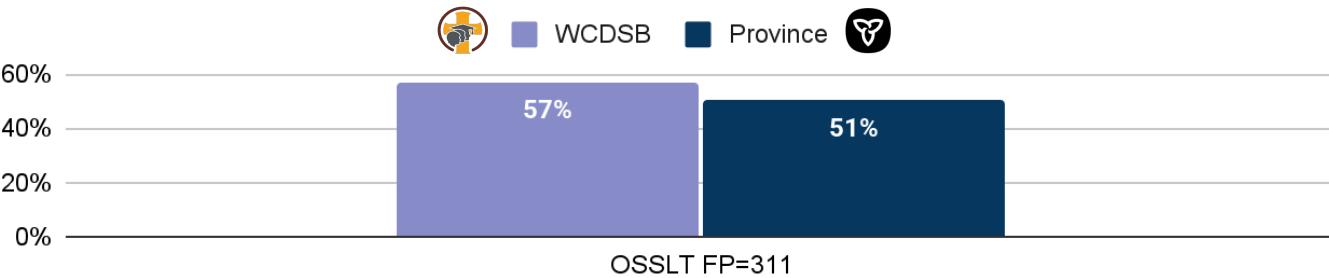
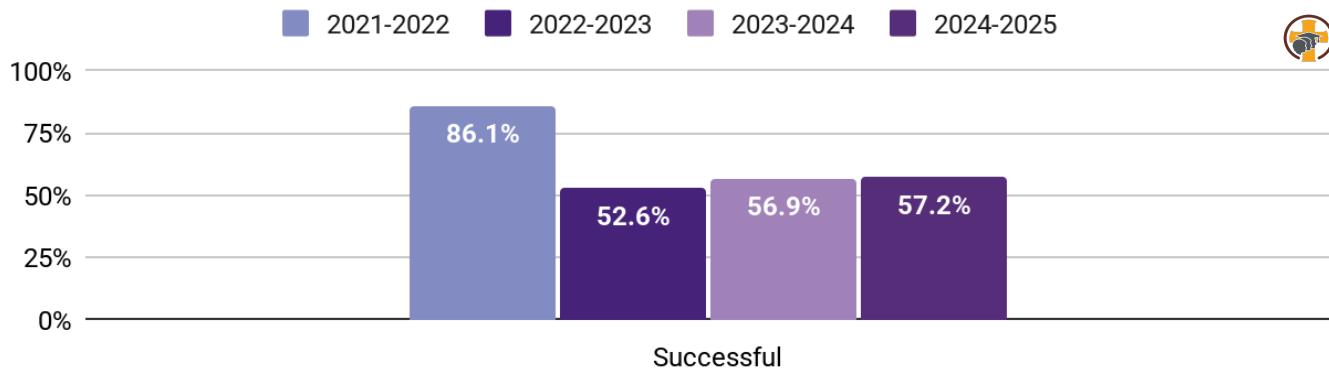
- 92% of WCDSB Grade 10 first-time eligible students were successful when completing the OSSLT. The percentage of WCDSB students who were successful exceeded the provincial average by 7%

OSSLT BOARD Confidence Survey Data | Over Time



OSSLT PE Board Level Results Over Time (2022-2025) and Comparison to Provincial Results

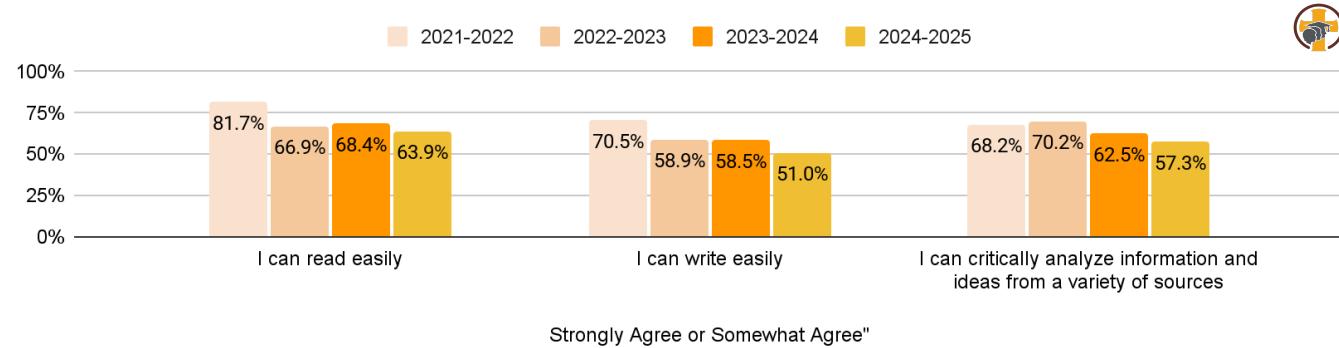
Note: Previously Eligible = (PE)



- 57.2% of previously eligible students were successful when completing the OSSLT. The percentage of WCDSB students who were successful in 2023-24 was also 57%.
- The percentage of WCDSB students who were successful exceeded the provincial average by 6.7% .

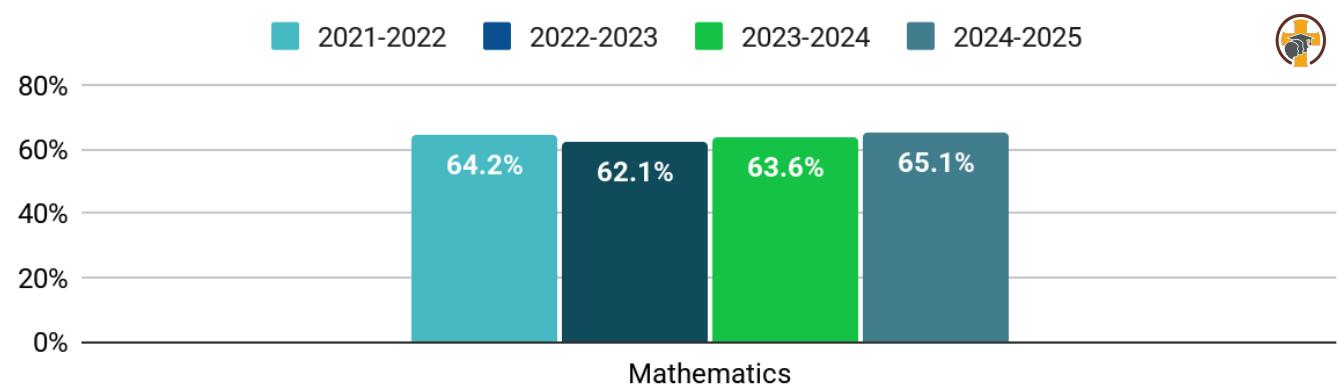
NOTE: In the 2021-2022 school year, previously eligible students included the Grade 11 students who were unable to write the OSSLT in Grade 10 due to the pause on EQAO assessments. For this reason, 2021-2022 results are not comparable to subsequent years.

OSSLT BOARD Confidence Survey Data (PE) | Over Time | Note: Previously Eligible = (PE)



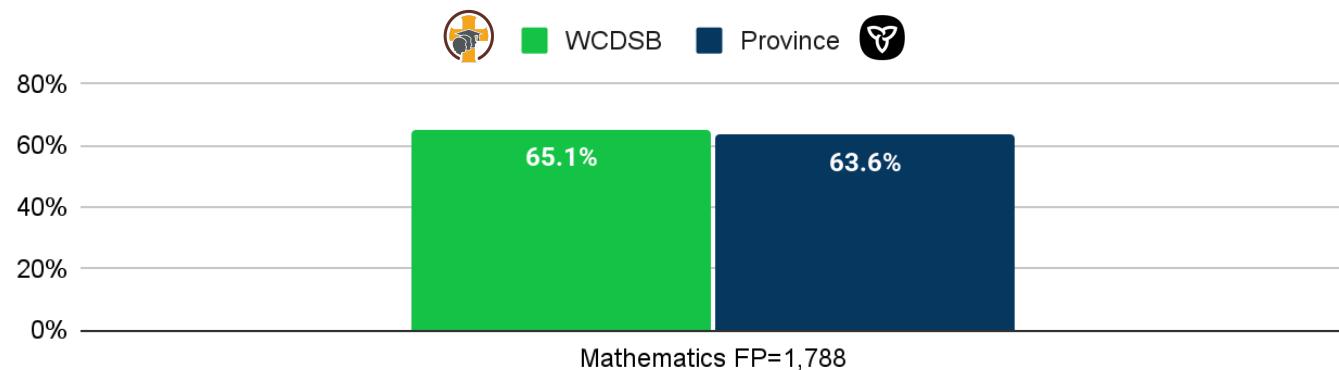
MATHEMATICS Grades 3, 6 and 9

PRIMARY, GRADE 3, Board Comparison Over Time (2022 - 2025) | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



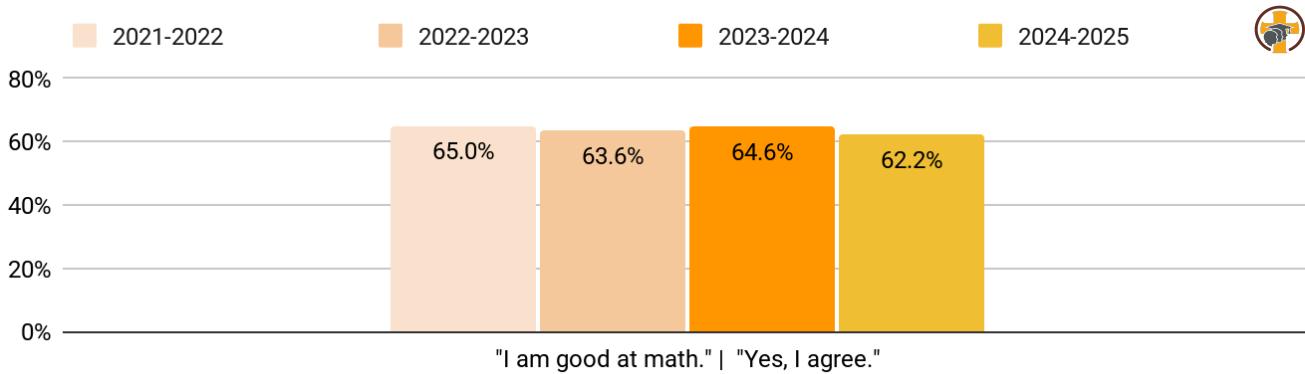
- 65% Grade 3 students met the provincial standard in math (increase of 1.5% over 2023-24).

2025 PRIMARY, GRADE 3, Board Level Results Compared to Provincial Results | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑

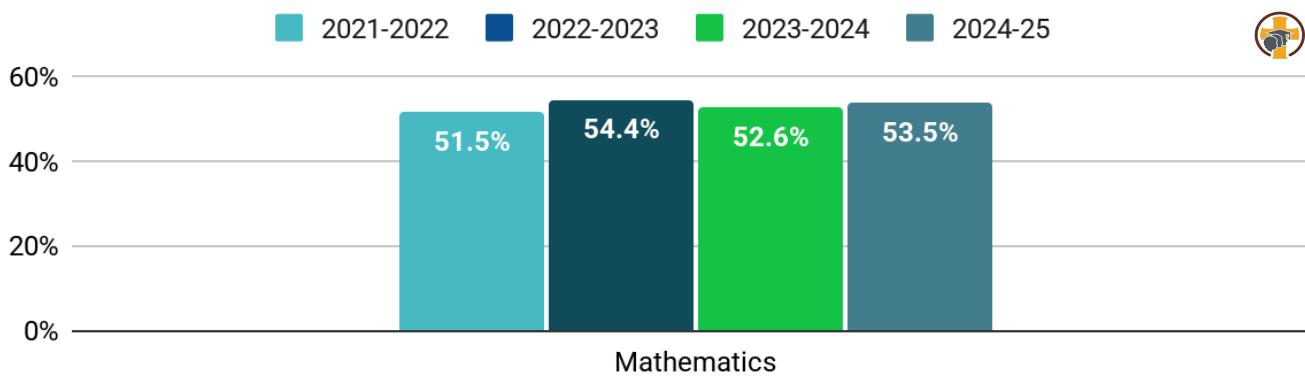


- 65% of WCDSB Grade 3 students met or exceeded the provincial standards in math. The percentage of WCDSB students who achieved level 3 or 4 in math exceeded the provincial average by 1.5%

PRIMARY, GRADE 3, BOARD Confidence Survey Data | Mathematics | Over Time

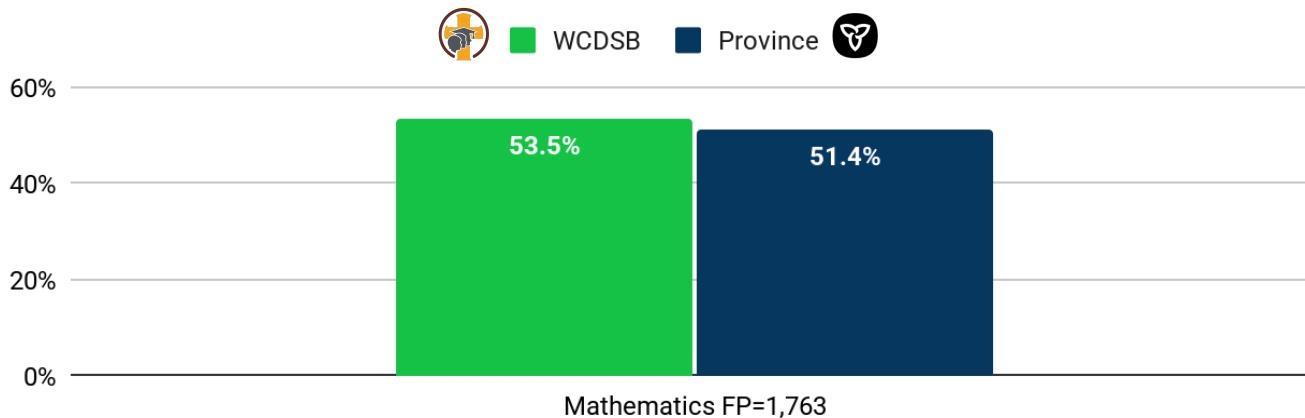


JUNIOR, GRADE 6, Board Comparison Over Time (2022 - 2025) | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



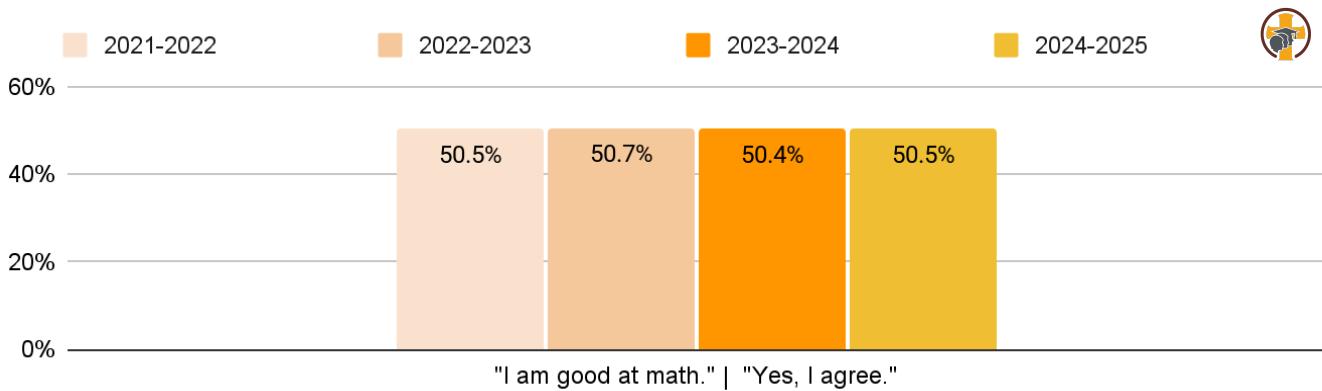
- 53.5% Grade 6 students met the provincial standard in math (increase of 0.9% over 2023-24)

2025 JUNIOR, GRADE 6, Board Level Results Compared to Provincial Results | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



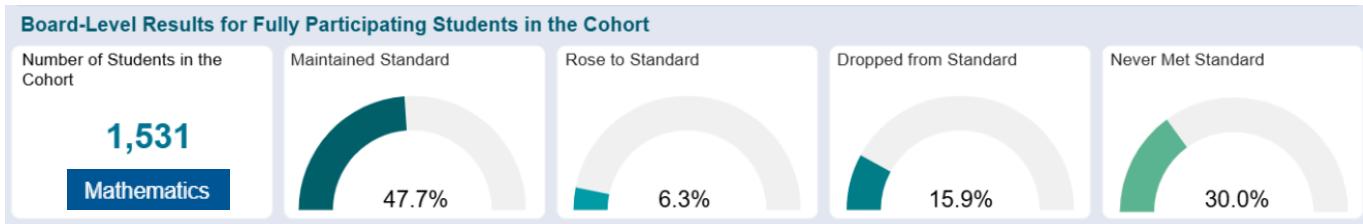
- 53% of WCDSB Grade 6 students met or exceeded the provincial standards in math
The percentage of WCDSB students who achieved level 3 or 4 in math exceeded the provincial average by 2.1%

JUNIOR, GRADE 6, BOARD Confidence Survey Data | Mathematics | Over Time

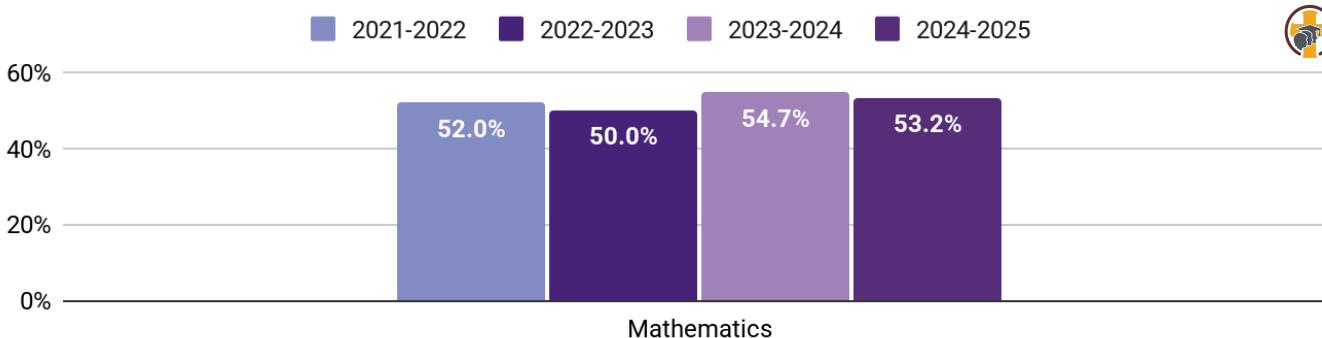


COHORT DATA | Mathematics | Primary to Junior

EQAO tracked the progress of students who wrote the primary-division assessment in 2022, when they were in Grade 3, and the junior-division assessment 2025, when they were in Grade 6.

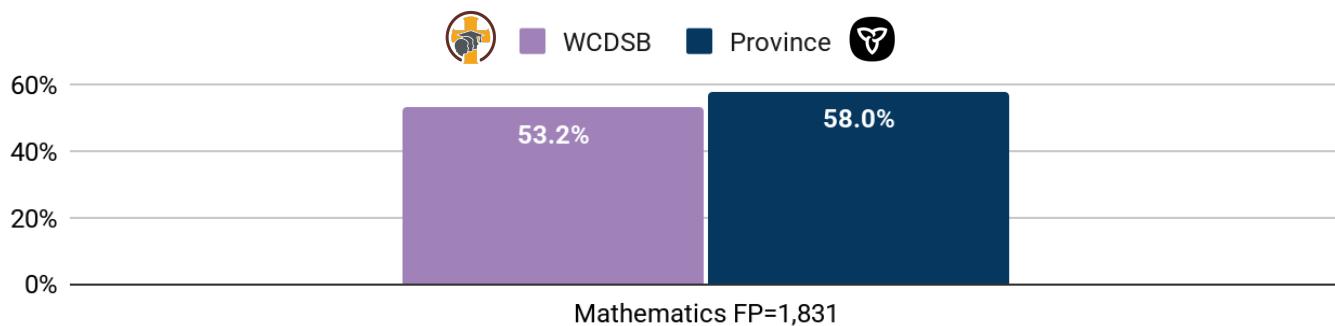


GRADE 9, Board Comparison Over Time (2022-25) | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



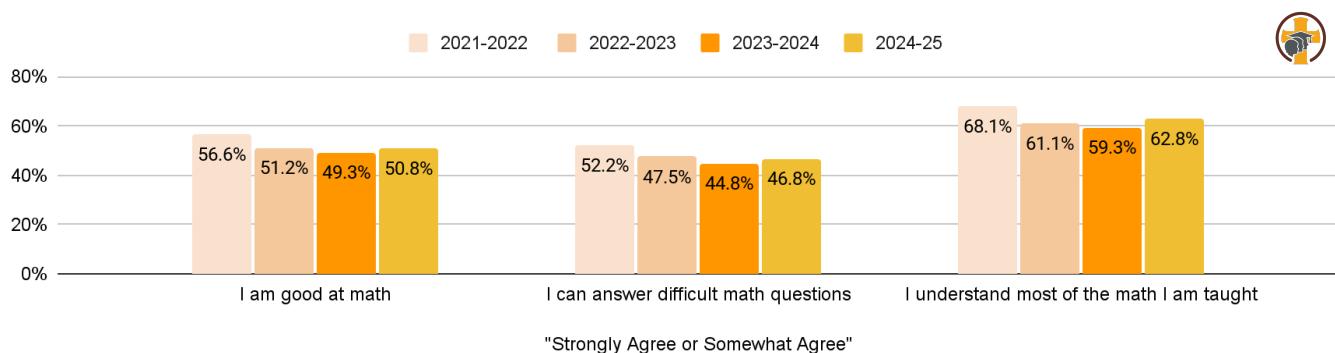
- 53.2% of Grade 9 students met the provincial standard in math (54.7% met the standard in 2023-24).

2025 GRADE 9, Board Level Results Compared to Provincial Results | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



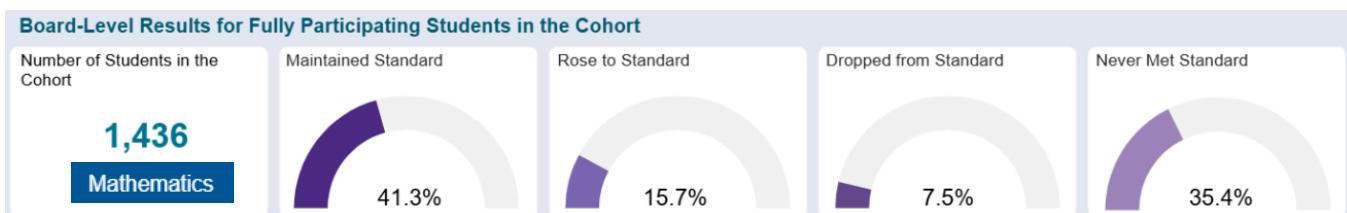
- 53.2% of WCDSB Grade 9 students met or exceeded the provincial standard in math. The percentage of WCDSB students who achieved level 3 or 4 in math was lower than the provincial average by 4.8%

GRADE 9, BOARD Confidence Survey Data | Mathematics | Over Time



COHORT DATA | Mathematics | Junior to Grade 9

EQAO tracked the progress of students who wrote the junior-division assessment in 2022, when they were in Grade 6, and the mathematics assessment in 2025, when they were in Grade 9.



Strategies for Continued Improvement

- Utilize the data platform enCOMPASS for all educators – allowing them to triangulate historical and real-time achievement data from multiple sources within a single student profile, to pinpoint the individual learning needs of each student across Language and Mathematics
- Immediate update of current (in-the-moment) data in school SAPs (Student Achievement Plan)

Mathematics

- Increased focus on Math Coaching for Priority Schools identified by the ministry of education and math coaching to board-identified schools targeting expectations through the use of Teaching Sprints
- Implementation of the Math Achievement Action Plan 2025-26
- Build the capacity of Math-Lead Teachers in every school (1-2 teachers per elementary school)
- Support for sustained use of thoughtfully developed long range plan pacing guides (plans for learning) for grades 1-8 teachers to ensure curriculum fidelity
- Continue with MOCK EQAO for grades 3 & 6 across all schools mid-year to close gaps and provided focussed next steps moving towards the EQAO assessment window in May-June
- System resource (Mathology) interventions as part of the A1 to A2 process through math tracker groups
- Resource support in partnership with Special Education for Tier 3 intervention programming (Key Math)
- Continue with MOCK EQAO assessments in Grade 9 to align Gap Closing measures
- Continue to implement Entry & Exit Math Assessments for ALL grades K-9 on a digital platform - to identify areas of need early in the academic year
- Continue to offer GLS10M (Grade 9 Math prep course) to support gap closing prior to taking the de-streamed math course
- Offer 100% subsidized Mathematics Additional Qualifications (AQ) courses instructed through WCDSB

Language/Literacy

- Ongoing professional learning for K-12 educators focusing on curriculum-aligned learning and assessment in language and literacy across the grades
- Spaced practice using EQAO-type tasks with a focus on vocabulary, making connections, making inferences, and developing/organizing ideas
- Differentiated instruction and universal design for learning supporting multiple pathways
- EQAO practice tests
- Early Reading Screening (ERS) for all kindergarten (year 2) - grade 2 students to support early identification/intervention for students at-risk for early reading difficulties
- Literacy Special Assignment Teachers (LSAT) supporting a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction, early screening, and reading interventions to support multiple pathways
- Community partnership with Strong Start to support early foundational skill development
- Professional learning and resources to support responsive language interventions across the grades that serve the strengths and needs of our learners to support multiple pathways
- WCDSB OSSLT resources and supports (D2L) is a new digital platform that provides students and staff with structured OSSLT preparation, including e-assessment navigation practice and cross-curricular quizzes that mirror OSSLT expectations.
- Literacy programming alignment with Grade 9 ENL1W (de-streamed English) and ESL programming to explicitly incorporate OSSLT-aligned literacy and digital skills, strengthening readiness for the e-assessment. This may also include Grade 9 Mock OSSLT testing.
- Continue with targeted small-group Instruction in reading, writing, and digital assessment skills for students at risk of being unsuccessful, as identified through report card data, Cat-4 Level 17, mock OSSLT data, and fall administration results
- Continue lunch and after-school sessions offering additional support with key literacy skills

- Library partnerships to ensure students have access to quality texts that are personally and culturally relevant and represent cross-curricular learning at home and in the classroom to promote a sense of belonging, mattering, and dignity

Recommendation:

This report is for the information of the Board.

Prepared/Reviewed By:

Annalisa Varano
Director of Education

Jennifer Ritsma
Superintendent of Learning

Patrick Eby
Superintendent of Learning

Petra LeDuc
Board Math Learn, K-12 Mathematics Coordinator

Kimberley DeGasperis
Literacy Consultant K-6

Amy Healy
Literacy Consultant 7-12

Sarah Gonzalez Day
Mathematics Consultant 7-12

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Date: January 12, 2026
To: Board of Trustees
From: Director of Education
Subject: Literacy Strategy Report

Type of Report: Decision-Making
 Monitoring
 Incidental Information concerning day-to-day operations

Type of Information: Information for Board of Trustees Decision-Making
 Monitoring Information of Board Policy **XX XXX**
 Information only of day-to-day operational matters delegated to the CEO

Origin: (cite Education Act and/or Board Policy or other legislation)

- Education Act Section 169. (1)
Every Board shall; (a) promote student achievement and well-being; (b) ensure effective stewardship of the board's resources; (c) deliver effective and appropriate education programs to its pupils; (d) develop a multi-year plan aimed at achieving the goals of student achievement and well-being, positive school climate, inclusive and accepting schools, stewardship of resources, and effective and appropriate education programs to its pupils
- Education Quality and Accountability Office Act, 1996

Policy Statement and/or Education Act/other Legislation citation:

- [Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – Grades 1 to 12, 2010](#)
- [The Ontario Language Curriculum, Grade 1-8, 2023](#)
- [The Ontario Language Curriculum, Grade 9 English De-streamed, 2023](#)
- [Growing Success, Language Addendum, 2023](#)
- [The Kindergarten Program, 2016](#)
- [Growing Success, the Kindergarten Addendum, 2016](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 168, 2023](#)

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Background/Comments:

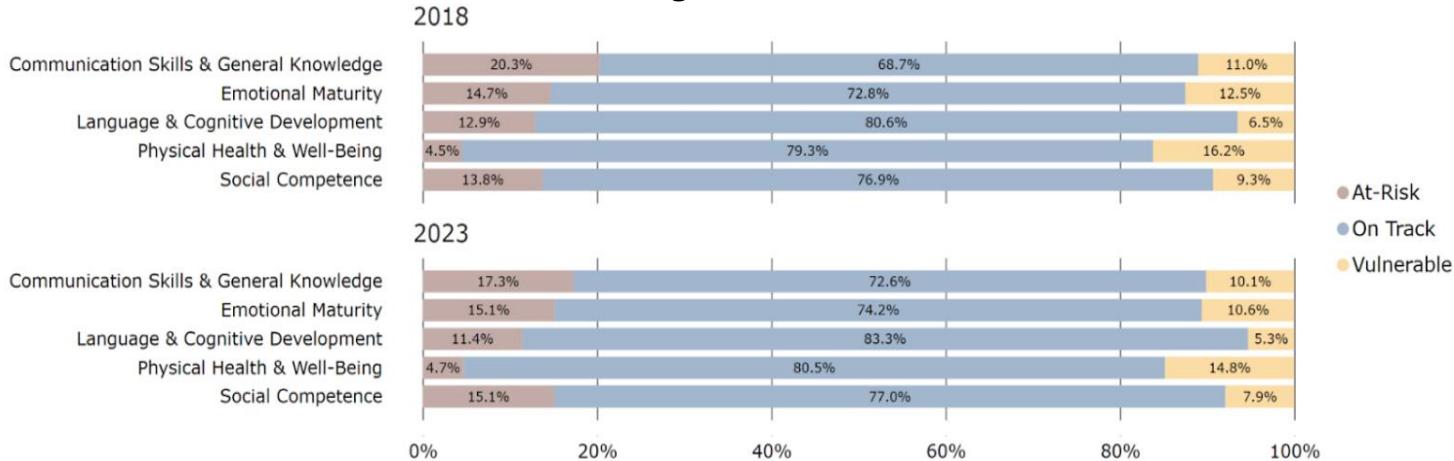
The purpose of this report is to provide an update on student learning in language and literacy by highlighting student achievement across the grades. To ensure every student is actively engaged in co-creating their own learning, and reaching their full potential, we continue with curriculum implementation strategies focused on supporting and developing our educators in providing: interconnected and cross-curricular learning, culturally responsive pedagogies, updated assessment and evaluation practices, early reading screening, and responsive instruction/intervention. Multiple sources of student achievement data are triangulated at the system level to understand the strengths and next steps across our elementary and secondary schools in language and literacy instruction and are used to make decisions about professional learning initiatives and resource allocations. MYSP indicators (data sources) highlighted in this report include: Early Development Instrument (EDI), Elementary Report Card, EQAO, Secondary Report Card, and OSSLT.

Early Development Instrument (EDI):

EDI is a valid and reliable measurement tool of developmental status completed on individual children between 3.5 and 6.5 years of age. This report highlights the results at Waterloo Catholic District School Board for the last two EDI cycles occurring in 2018 and 2023. Although all domains impact student achievement, for the purpose of this report, the following areas specific to language development can be noted:

- Communication Skills and General Knowledge: 3% decrease in the proportion of students in the “At-Risk” category; 0.9% decrease in the proportion of students scoring in the “Vulnerable” category; and 3.9% increase in the proportion of students scoring in the “On Track” category
- Language & Cognitive Development: 1.5% decrease in the proportion of students scoring in the “At-Risk” category; 1.2% decrease in the proportion of students scoring in the “Vulnerable” category; and 2.7% increase in the proportion of students scoring in the “On Track” category

Early Development Instrument (EDI), % of Vulnerable Students By Domain, 2018 and 2023 Kindergarten



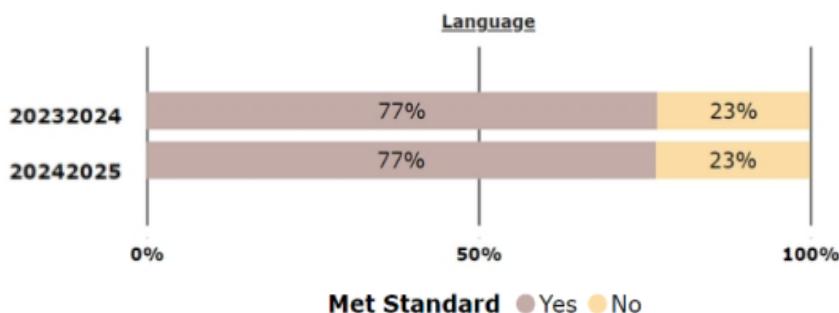
☒ Transform learning through leadership & staff support & development

Ongoing professional development is provided to kindergarten educators with a focus on building emergent literacy skills in the context of play, read alouds, and small group instruction with a variety of relatable and meaningful texts. Updated assessment tools provide opportunities to engage students in their own learning and early screening supports multiple pathways for success with early identification and intervention for students at-risk for reading difficulties. The student-family-educator partnership is leveraged to accelerate the development of emergent literacy skills and enhance a love of reading at school and at home.

Elementary Report Card:

The primary goal of assessment and evaluation is to enhance student learning. Students are assessed based on predetermined criteria across four standardized levels of achievement (e.g., Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4). Evidence of student achievement is gathered over time through observations, conversations, and products. With the updated [Language Curriculum, 1-8](#) and [Language Addendum, Grades 1-8, 2023](#) we have shifted from individual marks for Reading, Writing, and Media Literacy in 2022/2023 to one Language mark beginning in 2023/2024. One mark in Language represents the integrated learning across the strands for each reporting period and provides WCDSB with a new baseline of achievement. The graph below shows the proportion of grade 1-8 students meeting provincial standards on the final report card over the past two years.

Proportion of Grade 1-8 Students Who Met Standard (e.g., 70+% or Level 3+) on Their Final Report Card in 2023/2024 and 2024/2025



Transform learning through leadership & staff support & development

In September 2023, the Ontario Ministry of Education released an updated Language curriculum for both the elementary and secondary panels. In response, the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) has implemented a comprehensive, system-wide plan to support effective and sustained curriculum adoption focused on the support and development of our literacy team, educators, and administrators which include the following:

Professional Development

- Ongoing professional development for the Literacy Team, including Ministry-led webinars, International Literacy Association webinars, OnLit webinars, and book clubs.
- Targeted professional learning for administrators and educators delivered through administrator meetings, Family of Schools meetings, staff and division meetings, and professional development days.
- Classroom-embedded support through modeled lessons, co-teaching, and debriefing, with a focus on both whole-class, small-group instruction, and one on one support.

Curriculum-Aligned Resources and Instructional Supports

The board continues to expand and refine its collection of curriculum-aligned, evidence-based literacy resources to support interconnected, cross-curricular learning, culturally responsive pedagogy, responsive instruction, and intervention. Long-range plans have been developed to support curriculum implementation across the grades. Partnerships with the Learning Commons continue to provide educators and students with a variety of diverse texts that are relatable and inspiring, with cross-curricular connections. *StaffNet: Language & Literacy* continues to provide educators with a digital space to access resources for instruction.

Resources currently in use include:

Long Range Plans, Curriculum-aligned phonics scope and sequence for the early grades, *Know Your Code*, *Bug Club Morphology*, *Morpheme Magic*, *Word Ladders*, *Teaching Intermediate Phonics*, *Equipped for Reading Success*, *Phonics A to Z*, *Tier 2 Word-Level Reading Intervention*, *The Next Steps in Literacy Instruction*, *Lexia PowerUp*, *Tiered Fluency Instruction*, *Choice and Agency in the Writing Workshop*, *Write to Read*, *Shake Up Shared Reading*, *Better Reading Now*, *Reading Strategies 2.0*, *Writing Strategies*, *Under One Sun*, Curriculum Kits, *The Phonics Companion*, *Bug Club Decodable Text Sets*, *Read to Know Text Sets*, and culturally responsive/cross-curricular Book Clubs offered in partnership with the Learning Commons.

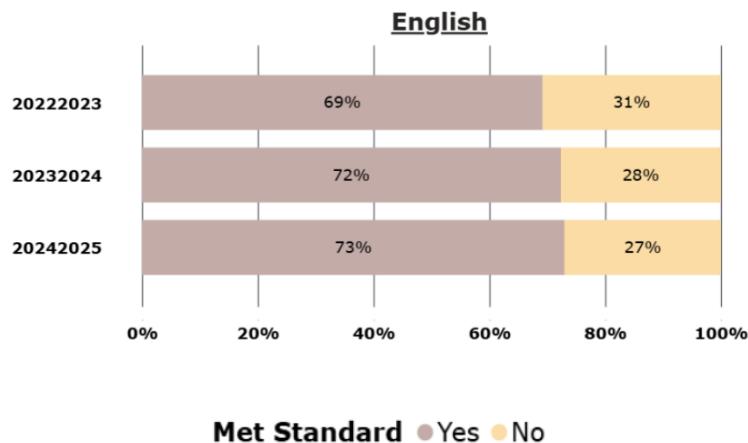
Assessment and Evaluation Enhancements

Ongoing updates to assessment tools focusing on assessment *for* and *as* learning better reflect the expectations of the revised curriculum and help educators to know the strengths and needs of their students while actively engaging students in the learning process. Assessment of learning strategies using ongoing observations, conversations, and products provides continued support with the implementation of the Ministry's shift to a single Language mark on the Grades 1–8 provincial report card. Expansion of assessment and evaluation resources continues to be available through StaffNet, providing educators with access to curriculum-aligned assessment tools that support high-impact instructional strategies, aligning with up-to-date assessment guidelines.

Secondary Report Card:

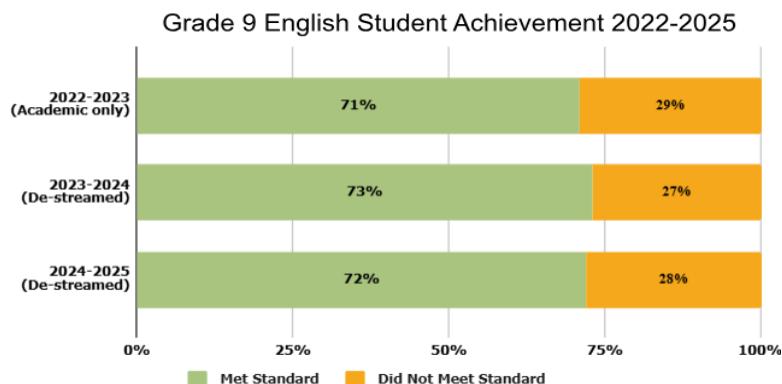
In 2022-2023, Grade 9 English (ENG1D) moved to Academic only, and in 2023-2024, the new [Grade 9 De-streamed English course](#) (ENL1W) was introduced. Grade 10 Applied and Academic English curriculum remains unchanged (2007); however, curriculum updates are forthcoming.

Proportion of Grade 9-10 Students Who Met Standard (e.g., 70+% or Level 3+) On Their Final Report Card in 2022-2025



Key Strategies to Support the Grade 9 De-streamed English Course (ENL1W)

- Cross-Panel Professional Development Opportunities:** Strengthen the Grade 7-8-9 language continuum through cross-panel collaboration, specifically focusing on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and shared instructional practices in writing.
- Building Culturally Relevant and Responsive Classroom Libraries:** Continued support in developing classroom libraries using the WCDSB Text Selection Toolkit to ensure diverse, identity-affirming texts to foster a love of reading.
- High Impact Instructional Strategies:** Continued professional development learning opportunities on effective whole-class and small-group structured literacy approaches, including *Thinking Classroom* pedagogy and utilizing Lexia PowerUp resources.
- Lexia PowerUp:** Lexia PowerUp licenses provided for all Grade 9 & 10 locally developed enrolled students to help close essential literacy gaps with the hope of success in the pathway change to de-streamed English.



The Grade 9 English student achievement data from 2022-2025 demonstrates overall stability in student performance, with a consistent majority of students meeting the provincial standard. Overall, the data reflects steady performance during a significant period of curriculum and structural change with the introduction of the new [Grade 9 De-streamed English course](#) (ENL1W) in 2023-2024, highlighting both successful implementation and ongoing areas for support.

Responsive Instruction/Intervention K-8

Within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), we maintain high expectations for our students while supporting multiple pathways for success when students are at risk for early reading difficulties with the following:

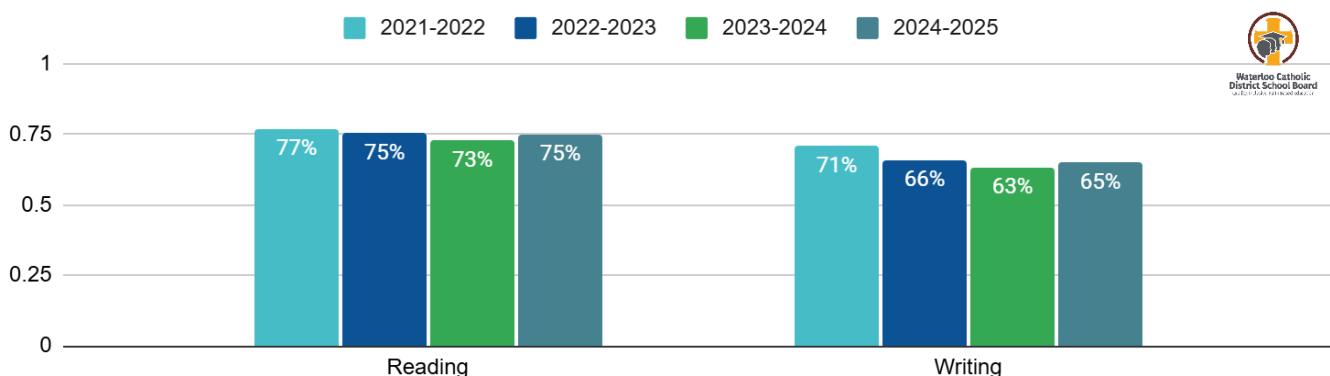
- **Early Reading Screening (ERS):** In September 2023, the Ontario Ministry of Education released [Policy/Program Memorandum 168, 2023](#), requiring Ontario's publicly funded schools to complete annual early reading screenings for all students in kindergarten (year 2), through grade 2 to identify who might be at-risk for early reading difficulties and is used to inform educators as they provide students with responsive instruction and intervention. System implementation includes the following:
 - Annual professional development for new educators focusing on the administration of the ERS.
 - Data collection and data flow (Acadience dashboard, Aspen, Compass for Success, and PowerBI).
 - Communicating results on the Kindergarten Communication of Learning (COL) and Elementary Provincial Report Card for term 1 and term 2.
 - Eight Literacy Special Assignment Teachers (LSATs) provide side-by-side training and release time for screening from September - November 15th.
 - Continued professional development focusing on data interpretation (identifying who might be at-risk for early reading difficulties), responsive instruction/intervention in the classroom for students struggling with early foundational skills.
- **Reading Intervention Groups:** In 2024/2025, Literacy Special Assignment Teachers (LSATs) provided reading intervention to 393 students in kindergarten - grade 3. Significant growth in learning was documented across all foundational skills, and 90% of students increased their overall reading composite score on the ERS, with 12% meeting benchmark.
- **Kindergarten Emergent Literacy Intervention (KELI):** In January 2026, kindergarten teams at 12 elementary schools will engage their year 1 students with interactive read-alouds to build emergent literacy skills. Educators will use observation guides to document growth in learning over time. Early intervention will provide strong foundational skills for later reading and writing.
- **Repeated Reading:** Educators are learning how to use repeated reading strategies to build literacy skills, especially for students who are not yet reading fluently. An oral reading fluency assessment tool is being developed in Compass for Success (CFS) to document growth in learning over time and across grades to support the continuity of learning.

- **Gap Closing-Know Your Code:** In the spring of 2025, grade 3-6 educators were provided with professional development on using *Know Your Code* as a resource for gap closing with lessons focused on early foundational skills in age and grade-appropriate contexts.
- Our community partnership with **Strong Start** provides kindergarten to grade five students with extra practice in developing foundational skills while working one-on-one with a trained volunteer in the school. Last year, 427 students participated in this program across 32 elementary schools. Overall, 95% of students made considerable, excellent, or outstanding gains. The full report can be referenced here: [Strong Start Assessment Results Report, 2024/2025.](#)
- **Supporting Intermediate Literacy Project (Grades 7 and 8):** In Spring 2024, WCDSB launched a pilot using Lexia PowerUp to address literacy gaps in word study, grammar, and comprehension. Building on the success of the initial implementation, the board has expanded this work into a two-year intermediate literacy project grounded in evidence-based practices. The initiative now includes 1,600 Lexia licenses across 18 schools, supporting real-time, differentiated instruction to facilitate a shift in language programming, emphasizing whole-group and small-group instruction, targeted intervention, and the integration of Lexia PowerUp alongside WCDSB-approved resources. Highlights from Year 1 of the Supporting Intermediate Literacy Project include:
 - Significant growth in skill development with 93% of Grade 7-8 students improving at least **two** Lexia PowerUp zones since the start of the pilot when meeting usage requirements.
 - Improved academic achievement with 47.3% of participating Grade 7 & 8 students increasing their Language report card achievement from Term 1 to Term 2.
 - Development of a centralized resource hub **Supporting Intermediate Literacy** featuring curated, evidence-based resources to support targeted literacy development for all students.
 - Strong educator support for continued use with 88% of surveyed educators recommending continued use of Lexia PowerUp online citing exceptional gains in closing literacy gaps, the program is student centered and engaging, and helps educators identify areas for targeted instruction.

EQAO Assessment, Elementary (Grades 3 and 6): **SAP Goal 1.1 Improve Students' Literacy Learning and Achievement**

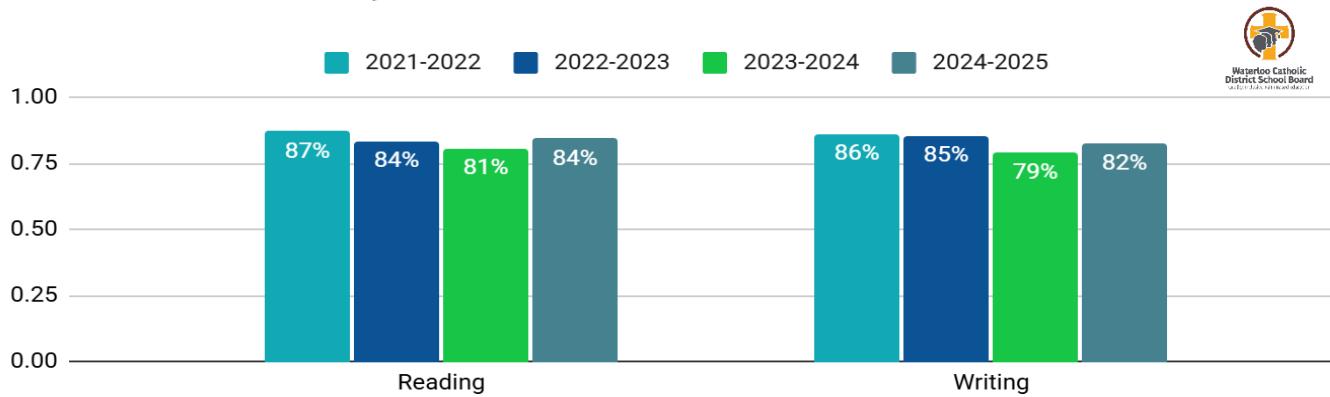
The Education Quality and Accountability Office is an independent government body that oversees reading, writing, and mathematics tests that Ontario students complete in grades 3, 6, 9, and 10. EQAO offers independent data in relation to the learning expectations outlined in the Ontario curriculum. In 2024/2025, WCDSB EQAO student achievement data in Language increased for students in Grade 3 and 6 for both Reading and Writing. Trends in student achievement, as measured by EQAO, over the past four years can be referenced in the graphs below.

PRIMARY, GRADE 3, Board Comparison Over Time (2022 - 2025) | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



- 75% Grade 3 students met the provincial standard in reading (increase of 2.3% over 2023-24), exceeding the provincial average by 1%.
- 65% Grade 3 students met the provincial standard in writing (increase of 1.7% over 2023-24), following the provincial average.

JUNIOR, GRADE 6, Board Comparison Over Time (2022 - 2025) | Prov. Std. Level 3 & ↑



- 84% Grade 6 students met the provincial standard in reading (increase of 3% over 2023-24). This was lower than the provincial average by 2%.
- 82% Grade 6 students met the provincial standard in writing (increase of 3% over 2023-24). This was lower than the provincial average by 3%.

Key Strategies to Support Success on EQAO-Grade 3 and 6

- **Professional Development:** Dedicated professional development to support the curriculum-aligned literacy components of EQAO assessments, delivered through professional development days, after-school learning sessions, and individualized school-based support.
- **Spaced Practice:** Classroom instruction where students have multiple opportunities to build vocabulary and cross-curricular knowledge using relatable and inspiring texts, to improve

reading comprehension, critical thinking, and develop and organize ideas for writing using EQAO-type tasks.

- **Supporting Students on an IEP for Language and Multilingual Learners:** Professional development focusing on strategies and tools to support our students who have an IEP in Language and students who are multilingual learners, with a focus on explicit instruction, deliberate practice, learning goals, feedback, graphic organizers, and technology to leverage student learning.
- **Practice E-Assessment:** EQAO's updated practice e-assessment is used to develop navigation skills and provide real-time feedback on multi-select and open-response questions.

OSSLT Assessment (Grade 10):

SAP Goal 1.1 Improve Students' Literacy Learning and Achievement

OSSLT: The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) is based on the expectations for reading and writing across all core subjects in the Ontario Curriculum, up to the end of Grade 9. Students are first-time eligible to complete the e-assessment in their Grade 10 academic year. WCDSB provides students with opportunities to successfully complete the e-assessment in both the fall and spring administrations. Successful completion of the OSSLT is an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) requirement.

ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERACY TEST (OSSLT) | Board Comparison Over Time (2022-2025) | Provincial Standard



- 92% of Grade 10 first-time eligible students were successful when completing the OSSLT. The percentage of WCDSB students who were successful increased by 5.7% from 2023-24.
- The percentage of WCDSB students who were successful exceeded the provincial average by 7%.

Key Strategies to Support Success on OSSLT:

- **Literacy Programming Alignment:** Grade 9 ENL1W (de-streamed English) and ESL programming to explicitly incorporate OSSLT-aligned literacy and digital skills to strengthen readiness for the e-assessment. This may also include **Grade 9 Mock OSSLT** testing.
- **Practice E-Assessment:** EQAO's updated practice e-assessment is used to develop navigation skills and provide real-time feedback on multiple-select and written responses.

- **New WCDSB OSSLT Resources and Supports D2L Platform:** A new digital platform provides students and staff with structured OSSLT preparation, including e-assessment navigation practice and cross-curricular quizzes that mirror OSSLT expectations.
- **OSSLT Homework and Support Clubs:** Lunch and after-school sessions offer additional support with key literacy skills, including comprehension, summarizing, and opinion writing.
- **Targeted Small-Group Instruction:** Students at risk of being unsuccessful - identified through report card data, Cat-4 Level 17, mock OSSLT data, and fall administration results - receive focused support in reading, writing, and digital assessment skills.

These strategies create a well-rounded, inclusive program aiming to improve students' readiness and success for the OSSLT.

Recommendation:

This report is for the information of the Board.

Prepared/Reviewed By:

Annalisa Varano
Director of Education

Jennifer Ritsma
Superintendent of Learning

Patrick Eby
Superintendent of Learning

Kim DeGasperis
Student Achievement Consultant, Literacy, K-6

Amy Healy
Student Achievement Consultant, Literacy 7-12

*4.2 DIRECTOR Monitoring Reports: Where the Board receives from the CEO a monitoring report that flows from a responsibility delegated to the Director under Board Policy – except where approval is required by the Board on a matter delegated by policy to the Board – the minutes of the Meeting at which the Report is received shall expressly provide that the Board has received and approved of the Report as an action consistent with the authority delegated to the CEO, subject in all instances to what otherwise actually occurred.

Board Policy II 003 -- Board Job Description

"Progress of the work of the Board reviewed in January"

	Key Action / Objective	Status
Priority 1: Governance Education	Continue to educate ourselves on governance best practices	Workshop on Meeting Procedures in November 2025
	Attend OCSTA events for training	5 Trustees attended OCSTA regional seminar in September 6 trustees attending OCSTA seminar on January 16/17, 2026
Priority 2: Advocacy	Lead advocacy initiatives through OCSTA resolutions	In Progress. Submissions will be approved to be sent on January 27 th board meeting
Priority 3: Community Outreach	Continue with community outreach at school and community events	Events regularly attended by Trustees; including WCDSB High School awards nights, St. Louis graduations, Feast of St. Jerome, 2025 Diocesan Celebration of Catholic Education, Dinner with Niigaan Sinclair, Kitchener State of the City, Notre Dame Open House, School Commissioning and many more school events
Priority 4: Policy Review	Review policies as per school year annual cycle	Ongoing at board meetings – see policy review schedule 2025/26
	Ensure governance committee reviews all policies sent for committee review	First governance meeting for this year held in October 2025
	Governance committee brings recommendations back to full board for approval	Ongoing

Moved by: Tracey Weiler

Waterloo CDSB

Seconded by:

Topic: **Sustainable Funding for Student Success and Achievement: Graduation Coaches Core Funding**

Whereas: The Ministry of Education is responsible for ensuring that all students in Ontario have access to the resources necessary to achieve foundational academic standards and successfully complete secondary school, and

Whereas: The presence of Graduation Coaches provides critical, personalized mentorship for at-risk students, significantly increasing credit accumulation and secondary school completion rates, and

Whereas: Current funding levels often lack the long-term predictability required for school boards to maintain these essential student success positions beyond temporary grant cycles.

Therefore, be it Resolved that: The Ministry of Education formally integrate funding for **Graduation Coaches** into Core Funding to ensure these high-impact roles are permanently staffed and available to support student success across all Ontario school boards.

Moved by: Tracey Weiler

Waterloo CDSB

Seconded by: Marisa Phillips

Topic: **Sustainable Funding for Student Success and Achievement: Math Special Assignment Teachers**

Whereas: The Ministry of Education is responsible for ensuring that all students in Ontario have access to the resources necessary to achieve foundational academic standards, and

Whereas: The Ministry has demonstrated the value of specialized instructional support through the funding of Literacy Special Assignment Teachers (LSATs), who work directly in classrooms alongside teachers to deliver Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions, and

Whereas: Students require equivalent targeted support in mathematics to address persistent learning gaps and build foundational numeracy skills, yet no parallel funding exists for Math Special Assignment Teachers to provide the same level of classroom-embedded, expert instructional support, and

Whereas: Math Special Assignment Teachers working directly with classroom teachers and students would significantly enhance teacher capacity in high-yield instructional strategies while simultaneously supporting student achievement in mathematics, and

Whereas: With the growth across many school boards in Ontario, there are many more students that need these supports.

Therefore, be it Resolved that: The Ministry of Education establish much needed **stable, dedicated funding** for Math Special Assignment Teachers, mirroring the existing LSAT model, to ensure equitable access to expert mathematics instruction and intervention across all Ontario school boards.

Moved by: Tracey Weiler

Waterloo CDSB

Seconded by:

Topic: **Ensuring Fiscal Sustainability through Inflation-Indexed School Board Funding**

Whereas: The province provides a 2% increase each year to offset expenses associated with non-personnel operating costs, and

Whereas: Non-personnel operating costs for school boards have steadily increased over several years, especially those related to school operations and IT, and

Whereas: Canada's inflation rate has exceeded 2% every year since 2020, and

Whereas: Inflation varies significantly across sectors, with certain commodities and services—such as electricity and natural gas—rising by 6% to 10%, and

Whereas: Payroll taxes, especially CPP, have increased each year with no associated grant adjustments by the province to account for these increases, and

Whereas: Payroll taxes and costs associated with operating schools are not discretionary, and

Whereas: School boards must reduce spending on programs and services supporting teaching and learning to offset these unfunded costs.

Therefore, be it resolved that: The Ministry of Education immediately adjust funding to (1) indemnify school boards from absorbing costs associated with payroll tax increases, and (2) ensure the true cost of non-personnel related expenditures does not result in the diversion of funds from direct classroom instruction and student supports.

Moved by: Tracey Weiler

Waterloo CDSB

Seconded by: Marisa Phillips

Topic: **Increased Funding for Devices used by Students**

Whereas: One-time pandemic funding enabled many school boards to deploy devices to students to support continuity of teaching and learning while schools were closed, and

Whereas: These devices are at the end of their useful lives, and

Whereas: Students and families now rely on the technology provided by school boards to complete their school work, and

Whereas: The funding model for technology has not changed to reflect students' current needs, despite substantial increases in technology procurement and maintenance costs, and

Whereas: The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario issued a recommendation in their 2018 report "School Board – IT Systems and Technology in the Classroom", that the province should develop a strategy that sets out the minimum standards for classroom technology in all schools, and

Whereas: School boards have varying device to student ratios as there is no minimum standard for technology in schools, and this has created an inequity in access to technology between school boards, and

Whereas: The Ministry of Education has mandated that school boards purchase their technology through Supply Ontario to ensure pricing, quality, and device choices are low, consistent, and predictable.

Therefore, be it resolved that: The Ministry of Education (1) sets out standards for classroom technology for all school boards, and (2) provides funding to each school board based on a formula that considers:

- Supply Ontario average student device cost
- Expected useful life of each device
- School board enrolment
- The minimum standards for classroom technology determined by the Ministry's standards

Moved by: Tracey Weiler

Waterloo CDSB

Seconded by: Marisa Phillips

Topic: **Integrating Summer Special Education Supports into the Core Education Fund**

Whereas: School Boards are very appreciative of the Responsive Education Program (REP) funding the Ministry of Education has provided school boards over the past five years for Summer Learning for Students with Special Education Needs, and

Whereas: This funding has allowed for intentional programming with measurable gains for our most vulnerable learners within our schools, and

Whereas: It has provided much-needed resources, transition programs, and additional staffing for students with special education needs over the summer months, and

Whereas: It has supported students with special education needs in transitioning successfully into their schools at the start of the new school year, and

Whereas: School Boards have been able to hire additional special education staff for existing summer learning programs which in turn has allowed for prioritizing registration for students who have an individual education plan (IEP), and

Whereas: We anticipate that our students will continue to benefit from this additional funding and support each year; however, with the growth in many school boards in Ontario, there are many more students that additionally need these supports.

Therefore, be it Resolved that: Therefore, in an effort to support our most vulnerable learners within our schools, we request the much needed funding for the Summer Learning for Students with Special Education Needs be moved into the Core Education Fund for Special Education.

Moved by: Tracey Weiler

Waterloo CDSB

Seconded by:

Topic: Providing funding to staff “Developmental Disabilities Student Transitions – Project SEARCH”

Whereas: The Ministry of Education's Project SEARCH transition-to-work program is a valuable partnership initiative between school boards, industry/business, and community organizations designed to support students with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Whereas: This one-year employment preparation program is entirely workplace-embedded, with the principal outcome being employment or employment readiness for participating students.

Whereas: Project SEARCH has demonstrated measurable success, with program graduates securing employment at host sites and other local organizations upon completion.

Whereas: The absence of direct funding to school boards or community partners for Project SEARCH staffing is jeopardizing program sustainability, as community organizations can no longer commit resources to provide essential job skills trainers.

Whereas: Without stable funding for staffing, Project SEARCH programs across Ontario are at risk of discontinuation, eliminating critical employment pathways for vulnerable learners.

Therefore, be it Resolved that: The Ministry of Education provide dedicated funding to school boards to staff each Project SEARCH program with a **Classroom Teacher and a Job Skills Trainer or Educational Assistant**, ensuring program sustainability and equitable access to employment preparation for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

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Moved by: Kathy Doherty-Masters

Waterloo CDSB

Seconded by: Tracey Weiler

Topic: **Support for Permanent Core Funding of the Special Education Needs Transition Navigator**

Whereas: The Special Education Needs Transition Navigator role assists boards, school staff, students, and families with long-term planning and coordinated transitions for exceptional students, ensuring continuity of care and support, and

Whereas: The Ministry of Education's Policy and Program Memorandum No. 156 (PPM 156) requires that transition plans be personalized, detailed, and specific, and that parents/guardians be consulted as part of the planning process, and

Whereas the Transition Navigator role has proven, in its relatively short existence, to be highly effective in supporting vulnerable students and families, strengthening collaboration among schools, boards, and community partners, and improving outcomes for students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and

Whereas: Ontario continues to see an increase in the number and complexity of students with IEPs, intensifying the need for consistent, specialized transition support, particularly following secondary school, and

Whereas: School boards require stable, predictable, and ongoing funding in order to plan responsibly, retain skilled staff, and provide equitable services across their communities, and

Whereas: reliance on time-limited or temporary funding undermines long-term planning and creates uncertainty for boards, staff, students, and families, and

Whereas: permanent funding for Special Education Needs Transition Navigators aligns with the Catholic Graduate Expectation of being **A Caring Family Member**, who "exercises compassion and respect for the dignity of all," particularly those who are most vulnerable.

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA) advocates to the Ministry of Education for the Special Education Needs Transition Navigator funding to be made **permanent and incorporated into core Special Education funding**; and

Be It Further Resolved that OCSTA petition the Ministry of Education to recognize the Transition Navigator role as an essential component of comprehensive special education programming, necessary to meet legislative requirements, ministry policy, and the growing needs of students with special education needs and their families.

Moved by: Tracey Weiler

Waterloo CDSB

Seconded by:

Topic: **Sustainable Funding for Short-Term Staffing Pressures**

Whereas: Effective teaching and learning can only take place when teachers and support staff are in classrooms every day to support students, and

Whereas: Increased absenteeism amongst front line staff has required school boards to spend more each year on replacing staff, and

Whereas: The province has encouraged school boards to make use of absence management programs to contain costs associated with absenteeism, and

Whereas: The effectiveness of school boards' absence management programs is limited by the provisions contained in centrally negotiated sick leave programs, and

Whereas: School boards spend hundreds of millions of dollars in excess of the funding provided for absenteeism each year, and

Whereas: This funding pressure requires school boards to limit spending on programs and services most needed by students.

Therefore, be it resolved that: The Ministry of Education immediately provide **supplemental interim funding** to offset the disproportionate costs of short-term coverage, ensuring that school boards are not forced to maintain classroom continuity at the direct expense of other critical student supports and essential services.