



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Teaching strategies cited in RCCDSB success in Secondary EQAO results**

The success of RCCDSB high school students in the provincial Education Quality and Accountability Office's (EQAO) 2017-2018 assessment of mathematics and literacy skills is a result of a clear focus on improved teaching strategies, says RCCDSB senior staff.

RCCDSB students outscored the provincial average in all three secondary categories of the EQAO annual assessment. The Grade 9 Applied Mathematics results are particularly noteworthy, with RCCDSB students scoring 74% compared with 45% for the province. The Grade 9 Academic Math score was 89% compared with a provincial grade of 84%. In the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test for Grade 10 students, the RCCDSB score was 81% compared to 79% for the province.

"Just as mathematics and literacy skills are areas of concern province-wide," said Director of Education Jaimie Perry, "at RCCDSB we are working on several strategies to improve our students' competencies in these areas. The results of the EQAO are good indicators of our success, and that's encouraging. We know that these results reflect our focus on helping students succeed every day through the expertise of our teachers."

Brennan Trainor, principal at St. Joseph's Catholic High School in Renfrew, agreed. "While we always recognize that the EQAO Grade 9 Math assessment and the OSSLT are snapshots in time, their results nonetheless help to provide our staff with data on how to shape our instruction in math and literacy. To be recognized by EQAO as a school that is outperforming the province in areas of secondary literacy and numeracy, is a motivational tool. Our staff and students are proud to be heading in a positive academic direction."

At Bishop Smith Catholic High School in Pembroke, Principal Clint Young, in collaboration with Vice-Principals Erik Lemke and Sally Douglas who oversee the EQAO testing, said their staff, too, used the results of EQAO testing to provide learning strategies. "Each year at BSCH, both our math department and literacy team dig into EQAO data to determine strengths and needs of our students. Once needs are established, teachers explore a variety of questions and strategies that may help to strengthen students' understanding in specific areas, further helping them move forward with a deeper knowledge of the curriculum. Students are also provided with opportunities to solve rich problems on a daily basis, helping them to become confident problem solvers; a very useful skill when writing assessments like EQAO."

Principal Young added, "Our staff and students continue to be proud of the success we have had on these standardized tests, but our ultimate goal is that our teachers continue to focus on refining their own pedagogical practices in order to improve student learning."

Board Chair Dave Howard congratulated RCCDSB staff on their efforts. "These EQAO results reflect the high quality of education provided at our two RCCDSB high schools," he said. "My fellow trustees and I are indeed proud not only of our students, but of our teachers and senior staff who have built an excellent environment for academic achievement and personal growth."

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