

HPEDSB can't keep up with province for EQAO

By Sarah Sobanski

Fewer students are meeting provincial standards in the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board.

The board saw decreases in six out of seven assessments by the Education Quality and Accountability Office for the 2016-'17 school year, according to reports released Sept. 20. It didn't meet provincial student averages in any of its assessments.

EQAO assesses reading, writing and mathematics for Grades 3 and 6 students. It also looks at applied and academic mathematics for Grade 9 students.

The percentage of Grade 3 students meeting or exceeding provincial standards saw a two per cent increase from last school year in reading. The increase in reading to 61 per cent still falls 13 per cent below the percentage of children meeting standards across the province at 74 per cent.

"We believe in our students' abilities and have confidence in our teachers who are striving to help all students achieve provincial standards in all grades and pathways," superintendent of education for the board Cathy Portt said **in a press release by the board on the results**. "We are committed to preparing all students for graduation, for their chosen career pathway and for life-long learning."

The board also saw four per cent fewer students meeting standards in writing and three per cent less meeting standards in mathematics. Compared with students across the province, 16 per cent fewer students meet standards of writing and 15 per cent in mathematics. That's 57 per cent of students meeting standards in writing and 47 per cent meeting standards in math.

Last year to this year, Grade 6 students dropped five per cent in reading, three per cent in writing and two per cent in math.

Comparing them with the province: 67 per cent of students meet or exceed standards in reading to 81 per cent in the province, 62 per cent meet standards in writing to 79 per cent and 32 per cent meet standards in math to 50 per cent.

Students also fell in both applied and academic Grade 9 mathematics. In applied, students are down 10 per cent to 41 per cent meeting or exceeding provincial standards. In academic the fall was shorter, only four per cent to 76 per cent.

Up against the province, applied students are close to average. Forty-four per cent of students across the province met or exceeded expectations in applied math. Academic students are seven per cent behind, 83 per cent of students meet or exceed provincial standards across the province.

There were 1,077 Grade 3 students, 1,002 Grade 6 students and 429 Grade 9 students in the 2016-'17 school year.