

In some jurisdictions, students, parents and teachers are surveyed about their satisfaction with their school and their principal, and schools report on students' participation in extra-curricular activities, attendance and punctuality.

The education system is held accountable for its results, but we have had little discussion about what kind of results we're looking for beyond test score targets in grade 3, 6 and 9, and graduation rates.

In order to measure for a broader range of factors, we must first decide what our goals are for our education system. What kinds of students do we want to graduate? What knowledge and skills do we want them to possess, and are there some qualities we want them to have? Once we have reached a general consensus on a broad range of goals, then, and only then, we will be able to develop a set of criteria for measuring our progress.

measuring success

from The Annual Report on Ontario's Public Schools 2008

OECD results for 15-year-olds in 2006		
Science	Math	Reading
1. Finland	1. Chinese Taipei	1. Korea
2. Hong Kong	2. Finland	2. Finland
3. Canada	3. Hong Kong	3. Hong Kong
4. Taiwan	4. Korea	4. Canada
5. Estonia	5. Netherlands	5. New Zealand
6. Japan	6. Switzerland	6. Ireland
12. Germany	7. Canada	18. United Kingdom
19. Ireland	25. United Kingdom	23. France
28. United States	35. United States	33. Italy

These results are taken from tests of students in 57 OECD countries—the tests measure a standard set of knowledge and skills.

The full report is available at www.peopleforeducation.com.



People for Education is a registered charity working to support public education in Ontario's English, French and Catholic schools.

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Education

BECAUSE EDUCATION MATTERS MOST

measuring success

In Ontario, the government focuses on test scores and graduation rates as the two measures of success in provincial education policy.

In other jurisdictions, a broader range of measures are used to assess the health of the education system, including participation in post-secondary education, the gap between the highest

performing and the lowest performing students, and the effects of students' socio-economic status on their chances for success.

Canada and Ontario perform among the top countries in the world by any of these measures.

How Canada compares

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) research shows that Canadian students are in the top ranks in reading, writing, mathematics and science. While the following statistics are for all of Canada, Ontario students achieve consistently at or above the Canadian average.

□ In Canada, 84% of adults aged 25 to 64 have high school diplomas. In the 24-to-34 age group, this level of attainment rises to 91%. The OECD average is 67%.

□ In reading, Canadian 15-year-olds rank 4th across 57 OECD countries, compared to the UK which ranks 18th.

□ In science, Canadian students were 3rd, compared to the U.S. which ranked 29th.

□ In mathematics, Canadians

How Ontario measures up

- Ontario has more university graduates as a percentage of the population than any other province in Canada.
- Canada has more post-secondary graduates, as a percentage of the population, than any other country in the world.
- Among all the English-speaking provinces, in testing of a random representative sample of 13-year-olds, Ontario came first in math, reading and writing, and second in science.
- Ontario and Canada rank among the top OECD countries in having reduced the impact of family income on students' success.
- Only 13% of Canadians identify themselves as non-readers, compared to 43% of Americans.

ranked 7th, compared to France (23rd) and the U.S (35th).

□ Canada has the third lowest proportion of students performing at the lowest level on mathematics, and has among the narrowest gaps between high and low performing students.

95% of Ontario students attend public schools

The percentage of students who attend public schools in the province has remained relatively steady over the years for which data is available. In 2001, 4.8% of Ontario students attended private schools. By 2005, that number had increased marginally to 5.2%.

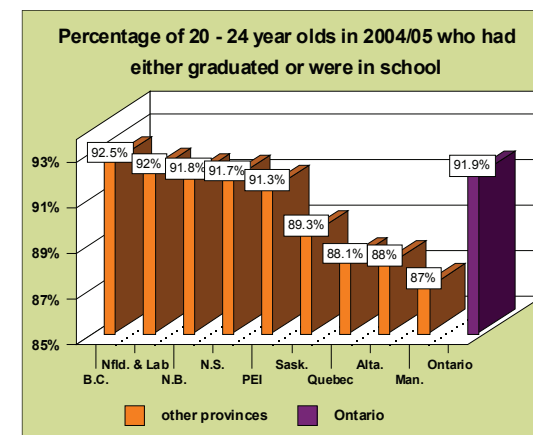
OECD research has found that, in international testing, when the socio-economic background of students and schools was taken into account, public schools scored 12 points higher overall than private schools.

Standardized test scores

In Ontario, students in Grades 3, 6, and 9 write standardized tests in reading, writing and math administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). Grades are recorded in levels, with Level 1 representing a low passing

grade. Ontario sets Level 3, (70% to 79% or "B") as the provincial standard. In Alberta the provincial standard is measured as a simple "pass" or 50%+.

In 2006/07, with the exception of Grade 9 Applied Mathematics, over 90% of students passed all EQAO tests.



Statistics Canada data shows that 92% of Ontario students graduate from secondary school, compared to 88% of students in Alberta.

Other measures

The EQAO also surveys students for attitudinal information, but it does not publicize the results widely. Data is collected on how much students read and how much they enjoy it, on whether they think of themselves as good at math, and on their participation in activities outside of school.