

Monday, October 18, 2004

Dear Parents:

The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) will be administered across the province on the **mornings of October 27th and 28th, 2004**. All students who were registered in Grade 9 in September 2000 or thereafter and who are working toward a secondary school diploma are required to successfully complete the OSSLT or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) as part of their diploma requirements.

Students, who were unsuccessful on previous tests, will have the opportunity to retake the test during the October 2004 administration. Because both reading and writing tasks are incorporated throughout the test, all students will write the entire test. A student's record of successful completion of either the reading or writing component from previous sittings will not be affected by the outcome of the October test.

There are a variety of materials available to help students prepare for the OSSLT on the EQAO Web site (www.eqao.com). You are invited to review these materials along with your son or daughter. As well, please review the flyer on how to help you child prepare for the test that accompanies this letter.

Students will participate in information sessions at their school regarding the OSSLT before the administration. The administration of the test will take two-and-a-half hours each morning, including time for breaks and instructions. The two-day schedule is designed to give students enough time to demonstrate the full range of their knowledge and skills.

Support is available to students with special needs or students who are enrolled in either an English as a Second Language (ESL) or an English Literacy Development (ELD) credit course. Under certain conditions, a student's participation in the test may be deferred or a student may be exempted from the test. Please refer to the *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals, and Exemptions* for details on the support that is available. This guide is available on EQAO's Web site at www.eqao.com. You can also get further information from the school.

Participating students will receive an Individual Student Report (ISR) from EQAO to let them know whether or not they were successful on the test. Successful students and their parents will be reassured that these students are "on track" in their literacy skill development. Unsuccessful students will receive detailed feedback on their strengths and areas where they need to improve. This report will assist the school in providing the necessary help.

Your support will help. Please reschedule any appointments that conflict with the test schedule. Students should also come to school having had a good breakfast, on time, well rested, and encouraged to do their best. We recognize that some students find testing stressful; however, there should be no surprises for students on this test. The school will provide information the students need and answer questions they have before the test starts.

Together, parents and teachers can create positive attitudes and promote student success on the OSSLT.

Sincerely,

Ms. N. Vaitonis
Principal