



Public Statement

Response to Statement by the Minister of Education

December 3, 2025

Today, Ontario's Minister of Education announced the establishment of an advisory body to review the province's approach to student assessment in response to Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) results. The new advisory body will be made up of two members, who will be appointed early next year.

The Ontario Principals' Council, representing 5,400 elementary and secondary principals and vice-principals across Ontario's 31 public school boards, supports any credible review of the education system that seeks to improve outcomes for students. However, we have concerns about today's announcement.

Various factors impact the assessment results of EQAO testing.

- There are inadequate academic supports for all students. Today, more and more of our students require individual attention, learning plans and assistance in the classroom, yet those supports are unavailable. Despite the best efforts of educators, some students cannot reach provincial standards in the current learning environment.
- There must be consideration given to equity in the assessment process. Standardized tests may not always consider factors such as ethnicity, race and disabilities (including learning disabilities).
- Ongoing and critical staff shortages continue to lead to a rotation of teachers and educational assistants for students, leading to inconsistent learning environments.
- While teaching and learning is supposed to be the primary goal of schools, today's educators are expected to wear many hats including health professional, nurse, mental health advisor, counsellor and attendance officer. Learning cannot be successful in an environment where the physical, emotional and mental health needs of students are not being met.

The consultation process needs to be transparent, robust and inclusive of all education workers, with principals – who run, manage and are legislatively responsible for school operations every day – serving as the “implementation drivers” in the province.

While we do not know the make-up of the advisory body, **decisions regarding learning and assessment need to be led by experts;** that is, educators who work in this field. They should not be decided solely by external or interest-based organizations.

Before the Minister starts paying such “experts” \$1,500 per day to do this work – money that will come directly from the ministry’s budget – we urge him to

- acknowledge and consider all factors that impact assessment results
- commit to funding the true needs of all students, so everyone has a chance to reach their full potential
- take advantage of the expertise in the sector right now – especially that of principals – instead of relying on external consultants to critique work that they do not have the training, background or expertise to be doing.