



## EQAO TESTING – ADVICE TO MEMBERS

Standardized testing is not something new for students in Ontario. Elementary and secondary students have taken part in testing at all levels – provincially, nationally and internationally for many years. We have witnessed an increase in the amount of testing that occurs in our schools over the past several years. This is largely due to the political initiatives of a government that views standardized tests as tools to monitor a few select variables.

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) was established by the government to accomplish its mandate of designing new tests for Grades 3, 6, 9, 10 in reading, writing and mathematics, managing their administration, reporting the results to the public and collecting data that can help determine the effectiveness of the education system in Ontario.

From the onset, the testing has created raised levels of anxiety for students, parents, teachers and school boards.

From security issues, to timeline issues, to validity issues, the EQAO has faced a great deal of controversy and criticism over the course of the past several years. Despite this it continues to prepare each year for another round of testing.

It is important to note that students' results on these tests are NOT a comment on teacher performance in the classroom. While teachers in Grades 3 and 6 may feel highly pressured to “deliver” high test results so that their class and school fare well on these tests, ETFO urges its members not to succumb to this pressure. Poor score results on these tests are usually the result of multiple factors far beyond the teacher's control.

If the rules surrounding test administration are not followed properly, a teacher may be accused of improperly administering the test, intervening, or assisting students improperly in order to influence test results, or even changing students' answers on the test.

It is important to note that such allegations, if proved, can result in severe disciplinary measures against a teacher and an allegation of professional misconduct at the Ontario College of Teachers.

Some recent cases have alleged:

1. the teacher erased answers and substituted the correct answers;
2. the teacher provided students with inappropriate resource material;
3. the teacher provided the students with the answers by writing information on the black board;
4. the teacher spoke to and inappropriately “coached” student answers;
5. the teacher had received an advance copy of the real test and provided it as practice to the students prior to the test or sent it home as homework; and
6. the teacher gave back test booklets to students to redo sections of the test.

The allegations were raised as a result of children reporting to their parents incidents surrounding the testing.



When the EQAO receives test results, it searches for “anomalous” results or problems. This could mean similar wrong answers, similar erasures, or many identical right answers on problems that do not lend themselves to the same answers. A suspicion of inappropriate application of the test may result in a prolonged investigation by the EQAO and the school board involving the teacher’s actions.

Some reminders about EQAO testing:

1. before you begin preparing students for the test, read the Administration Guide describing what you can and can’t do around the testing;
2. be sure that you understand the directions on the classroom materials that are instructional in nature;
3. be sure that you understand how the test is to be administered, and how materials are to be safeguarded;
4. do not modify or adjust the administration of the assessment in any way. If you are asked to do so ask your principal for a copy of the memo from EQAO outlining the change;
5. attend any seminars available related to test administration and ask questions if you don’t understand your role and the role of students;
6. do not assist your students unless you are permitted to do so under the EQAO’s direction, be clear about the assistance you may provide;
7. never change any students’ answers on an EQAO test;
8. never provide answers to students during testing;
9. follow the specific policies and procedures for accommodations and exemptions outlined in EQAO’s guide and record these on the Student Information Form (SIF); and
10. if you have concerns about the accuracy of the advice or instructions you are receiving from the administration, consult your local ETFO office or staff in PRS.

The EQAO Administration and Accommodation Guide can be found by visiting the EQAO homepage at [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com).

**REMEMBER, THESE TESTS ARE NOT A REFLECTION OF YOUR PERFORMANCE AS A TEACHER.**

**If you have any questions or concerns about EQAO Testing, please contact your local ETFO president or Professional Relations staff in PRS at 1-888-838-3836 or 416- 962-3836.**

ST:RW:JM:KH:PD:SM  
Revised December 2018  
Volume #55



Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario  
Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'élémentaire de l'Ontario  
136 Isabella Street, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 0B5  
Telephone: 416-962-3836 Toll free: 1-888-838-3836 Fax: 416-642-2424 Website: [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca)