

WATERLOO REGION

LBS Program Data and Analysis Report for 2016/17

Literacy Services Planning Statistical Report

October 2017



Table of Contents

Statistical Report Waterloo LSP	2
Total Learners by Age.....	3
Learners by Level of Education	3
Learners by Source of Income.....	4
Top Referrals In	5
Referrals Out to Other Programs	6
Referrals Out to Community Resources	7
2017 EQAO Results – Waterloo Region.....	8
Overall Achievement in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test	9
The Results by English Course Type.....	9
Waterloo Region Results for the Grade 10 Literacy Test	10
Waterloo Region Reading, Writing and Math Results Grade 3 and Grade 6	10
Math Results for Grade 9 Students.....	12
EQAO Results for Schools Rated Low and High by the Province	13
Impact of Class Size on EQAO Results	16
Impact on LBS	17

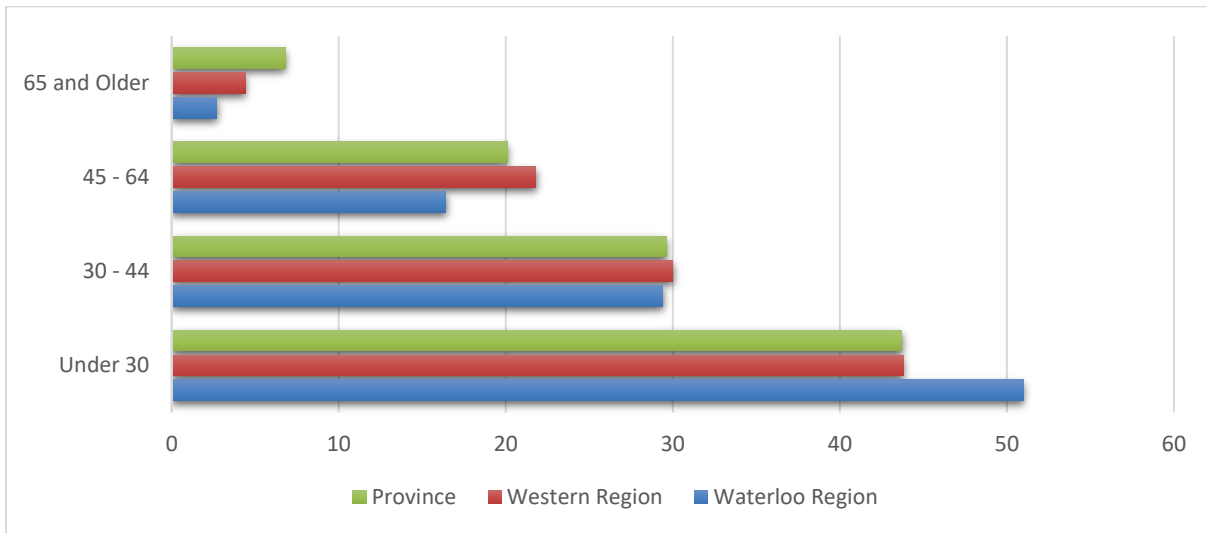
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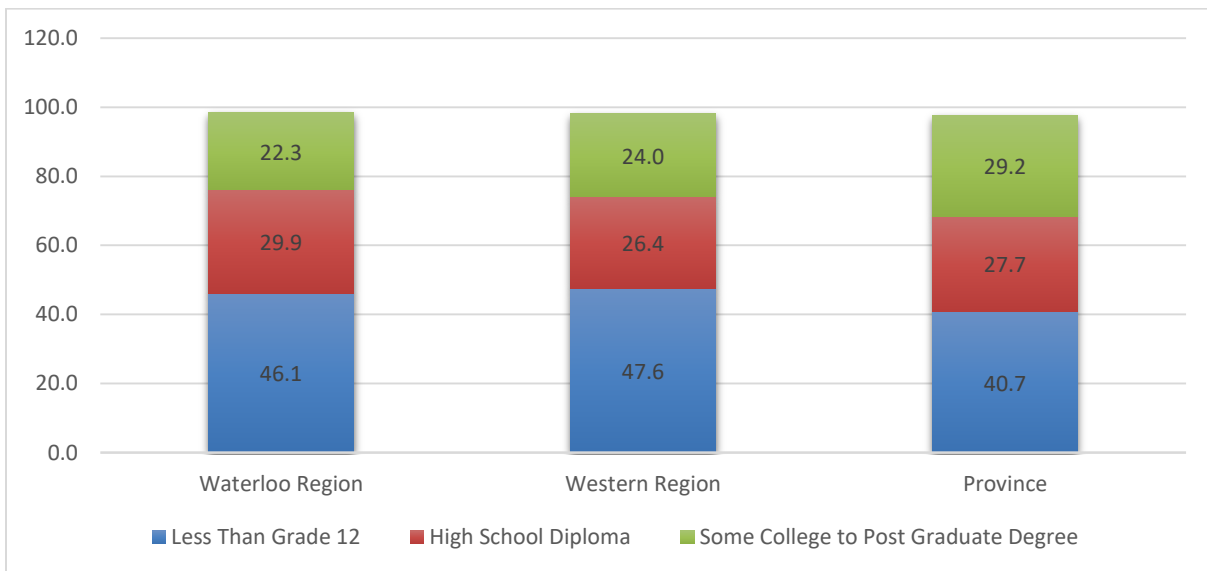
STATISTICAL REPORT WATERLOO LSP

Total Learners by Age



As the charts show, Waterloo Region has significantly more learners under the age of 30 in their programs than the West and the Province. The 45 – 64 range is the target for Service Quality Standard (SQS) and is just not a demographic that is accessing our literacy programs in Waterloo Region. Focus from the Ministry has been on programs like Youth Jobs Connection and literacy has been encouraged to support this initiative. This does mean that the SQS for Suitability really needs to look at what is the targeted age range?

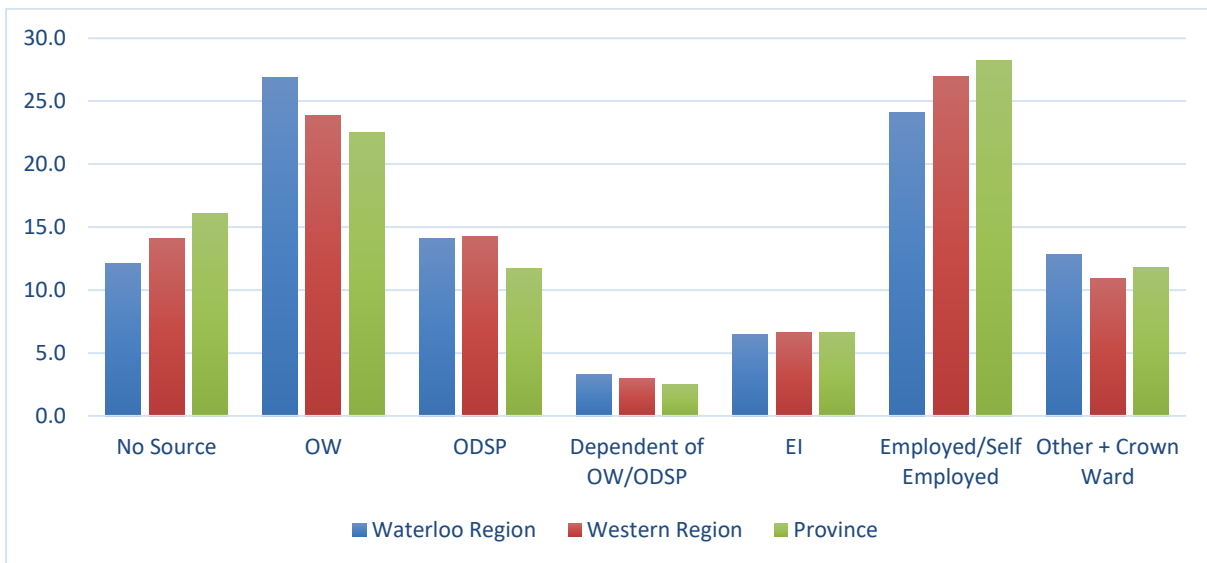
Learners by Level of Education



We definitely serve more individuals that do have a Grade 12 compared to the Western Region and the province. This however does match what is happening within EQAO and our school boards (see EQAO report), as we have one of the lowest scores for applied math and literacy within the province.

Conversely, when it comes to individuals who have some college or education up to a post-graduate degree, we serve less of these learners than the West and significantly less than the provincial average. It does mean that suitability is a focus....we are not taking on clients that should be within ESL programming, unless it truly is a need.

Learners by Source of Income



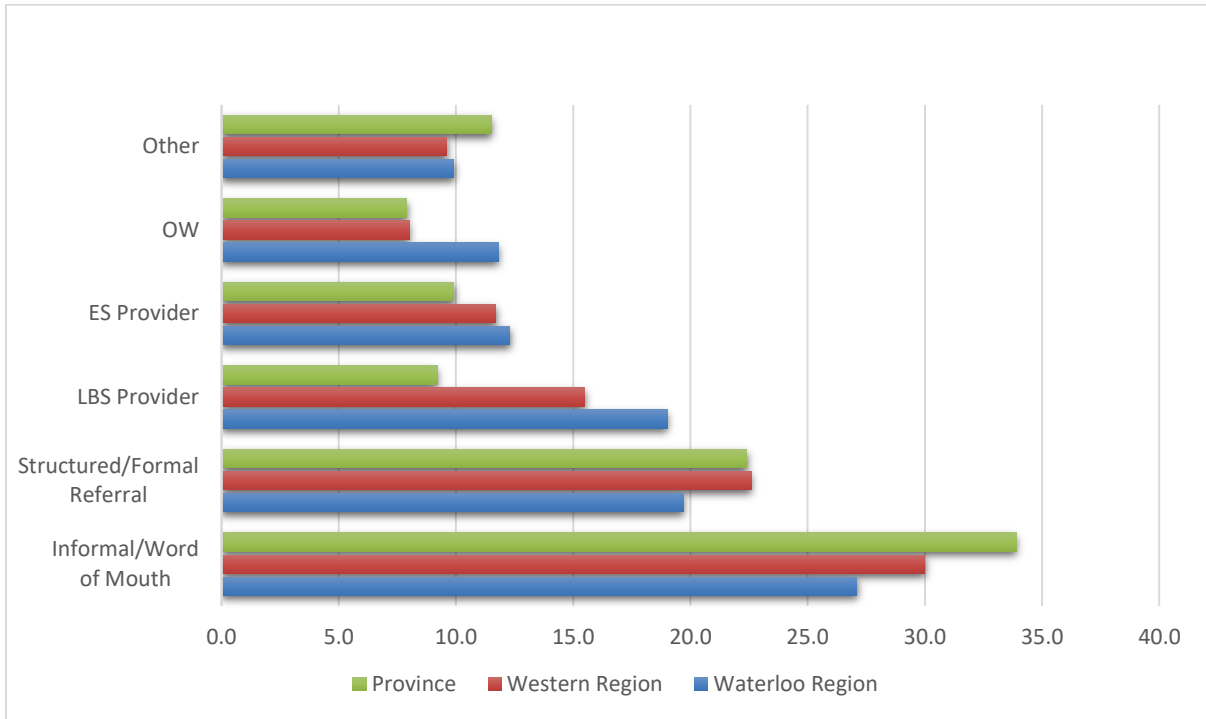
In Waterloo Region we have an excellent relationship with Ontario Works (OW) and always show a larger number of OW clients in our programs compared to the West and province. Project READ is also contracted to provide centralized assessment for OW clients which helps to keep these numbers above the rest of the province.

The Western Region as a whole is better at attracting ODSP clients into our upgrading programs. We know that OW and ODSP represents some of the most vulnerable people in the province and it is an important mandate to provide services to these individuals.

What is significant is the fact that Waterloo Region providers are good at serving the individuals who are the farthest away from employment. We serve less individuals in our programs who are already employed as compared to the West and the province.

Crown Wards are a group we have not tapped into and yet workers are telling us they are there. We're going to focus more of an effort on finding them for the coming year. We currently have one of the higher percentages of Crown Wards in our programs, but the number is still less than 1% of our learners served.

Top Referrals In

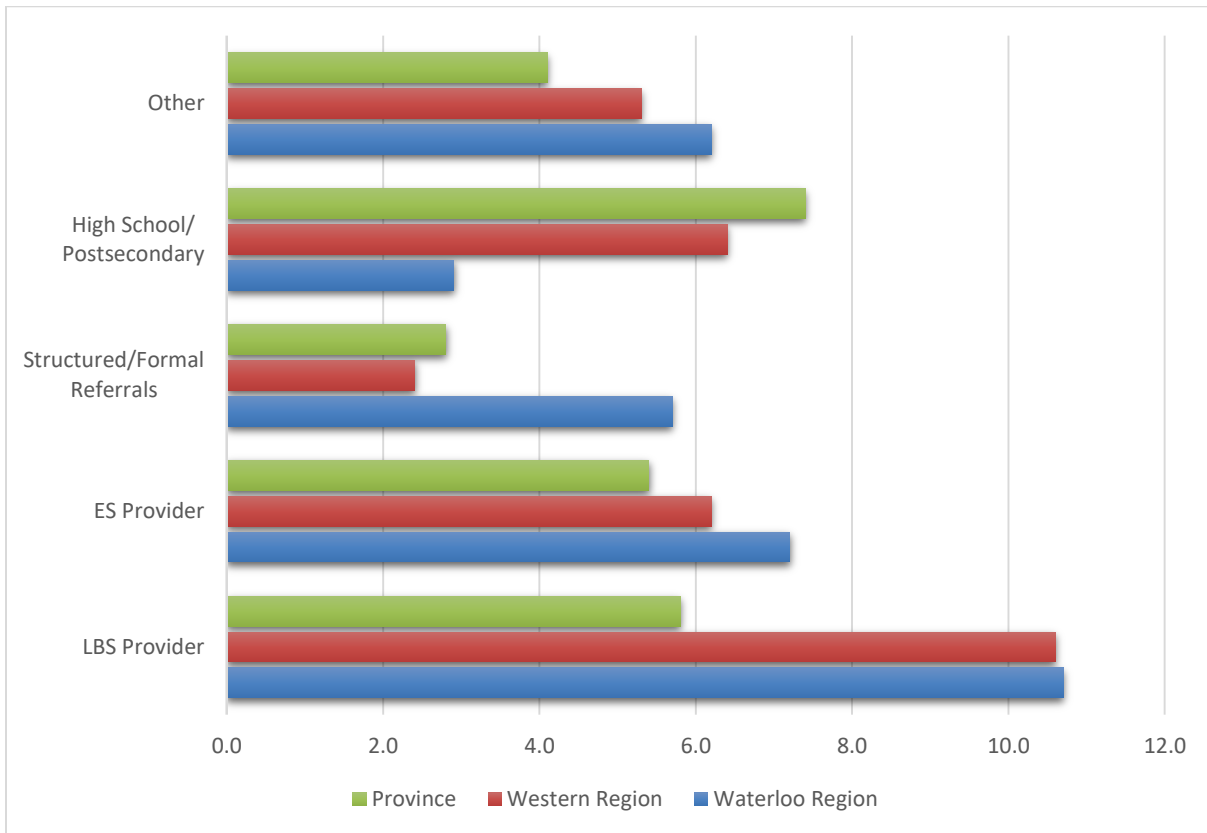


In Waterloo Region, out of our top 5 Referral In points, 2 do not count towards SQS – Service Coordination percentages. These are informal/word of mouth and LBS provider. While we are lower than the West and province in informal referrals we are higher on referrals from LBS providers in the West and significantly higher than the province. It seems to be a disconnect between what is asked of us within Literacy Service Planning. In Service Planning we are talking about common understanding of assessment and referral protocols between LBS programs, but when an LBS program refers to another LBS program for a learner to progress it does not count towards the agencies Service Coordination numbers. While a referral out to another LBS agency does count. This does seem to be a bit of a problem when it comes to the programs serving higher level learners as they will have more individuals referred to them as being the last LBS agency on the learning spectrum.

It is important to note the number of referrals from Employment Service (ES) providers in Waterloo Region is higher than the West and the province. This is up 2% from last year's figures and shows the work that Waterloo Region LBS programs and support organization have put into working with ES.

These figures once again highlight the important relationship that Waterloo Region literacy providers have with OW. We are significantly higher for referrals in from OW than the West and the province.

Referrals Out to Other Programs

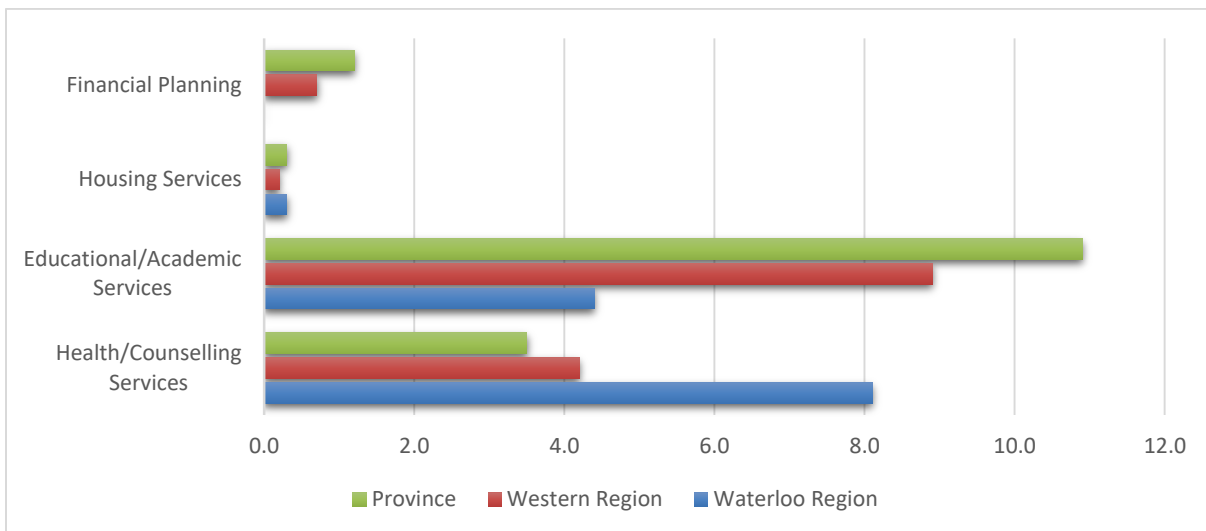


We also do more referrals to ES providers in Waterloo Region than the West and the province. Once again, it shows the efforts that have been put into service coordination in our region.

We also wanted to show where we aren't meeting the same percentages as the West and province and that's in referrals to Highschool and Postsecondary. This perhaps is something that hasn't been captured within EOIS statistics or maybe we need to focus on these goal paths more. It's hard to understand when over 40% of the learners in our programs show post secondary as their goal path. Statistically the results are unclear.

For other referrals that also count towards SQS Waterloo Region is doing well as compared to the West and the province. This continues to show in the overall numbers for referrals out to other programs.

Referrals Out to Community Resources



As can be seen there is only one category where we excel at referring to community resources and that's around mental health at almost double the percent for the West and more than double the percent for the province.

Overall, we are only referring 12.9% of our learners to other community resources while the West is at 15.2% and the province is at 17.1%. Our learners do need other supports and I do believe that practitioners are referring them, but perhaps it is not being captured within the EOIS data. Many of these referrals happen off the side of the desk between practitioners/tutors and learners. We believe the Sarah Delicate Training we're providing will help practitioners to understand why they need to be more diligent about tracking these numbers.

2016/17 was a strong year for literacy programs in Waterloo Region. There were no increases in funding for that year, yet we had 1,036 learners move through the programs to exit. We've increased our referrals between LBS and ES programs to surpass other regions that may have more multi-service centres. We do struggle with suitability, but just looking at client status that counts towards SQS, in Waterloo Region, the only one we can really impact is "Persons with Disabilities" and our percentages there are higher than the West and are 40% higher than the province. Waterloo Region does not have a large Francophone or Indigenous population. We had a deaf literacy program in the late 1990's that shut down due to such a small number of learners (less than 5)....so for us to actually have 6 deaf learners within our programs is quite an achievement.

2017/18 has opened up many opportunities with increases in funding to the frontline literacy programs. It will be interesting to see what the ½ year increase does statistically for Service Quality Standards.

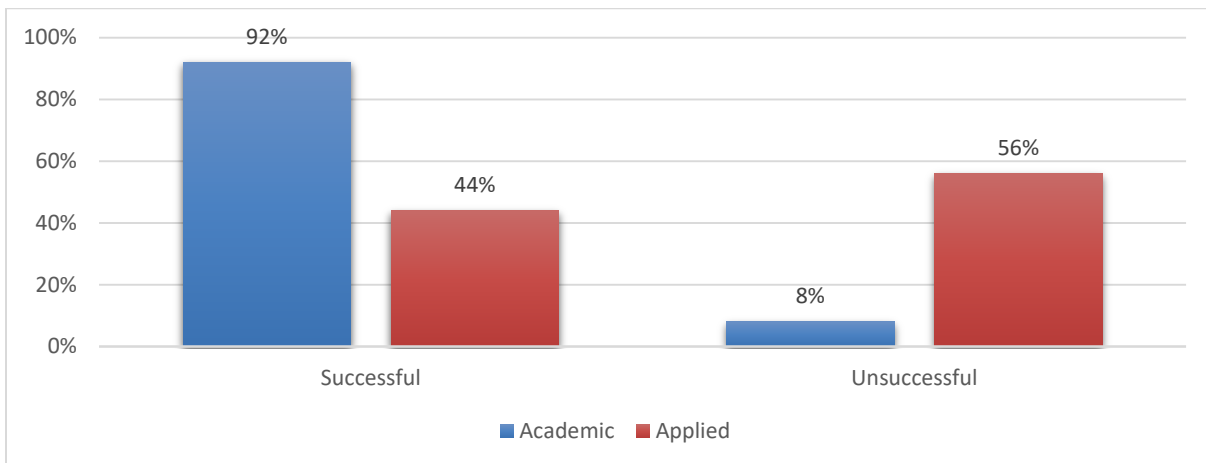
2017 EQAO RESULTS – WATERLOO REGION

“EQAO is an independent agency that creates and administers [large-scale assessments](#) to measure Ontario students’ achievement in reading, writing and math at key stages of their education. All EQAO assessments are developed by Ontario educators to align with [The Ontario Curriculum](#). The assessments evaluate student achievement objectively and in relation to a common provincial standard.”¹

Overall Achievement in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Provincially 19% of students taking the Grade 10 literacy test did not reach the provincial standard.

The Results by English Course Type

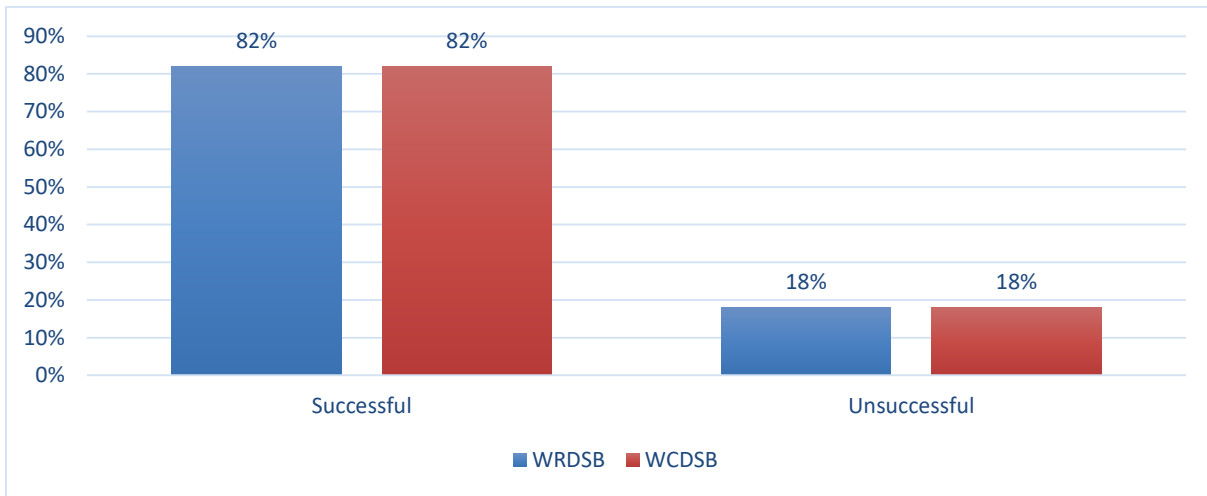


It is concerning that 8% of the academic path Grade 10 students did not reach the provincial standard in literacy. These are the youth that are usually planning to go to University.

Our educational system is failing when it comes to the Applied learners. When more than half the applied English students aren’t reaching the Grade 10 literacy standard (a test that is below what we in adult literacy would consider to be “literate”), this is a problem. Educators aren’t to blame, we have a system where no one is held back, so if they’re missing the basics due to a variety of reasons (one strong reason is lack of support at home due to parents not having these skills either) there is not extra time for them to gain/learn/reinforce these skills. It’s not like these children are suddenly going to get Grade 2 reading skills in Grade 8. This also shows why we have to raise the literacy levels of parents. If we don’t, children starting school without the basic literacy skills others have learned since birth are at a disadvantage. Even with many wonderful interventions, if the parents cannot support the learning due to a lack of skills themselves, the child may make a few steps forward, but they will eventually slide back. Literacy problems are cyclical and if you don’t use the skills you learn (through interventions and school), they will disappear.

¹ <http://www.eqao.com/en/about-eqao/about-the-agency>

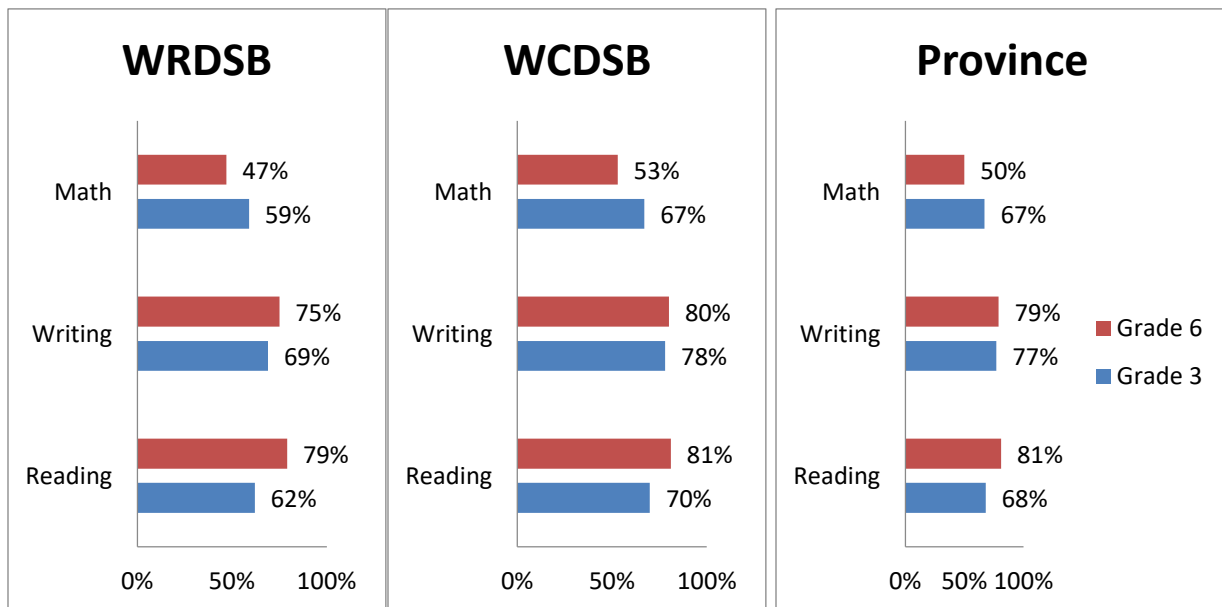
Waterloo Region Results for the Grade 10 Literacy Test



Both our school boards are just above the provincial average by 1%. The numbers have stayed consistent for the last 5 years, sometimes moving to 83%. This still means that 18% of our Grade 10 students and others who are qualified to take the test cannot reach the provincial standard at the age of 15 or older.

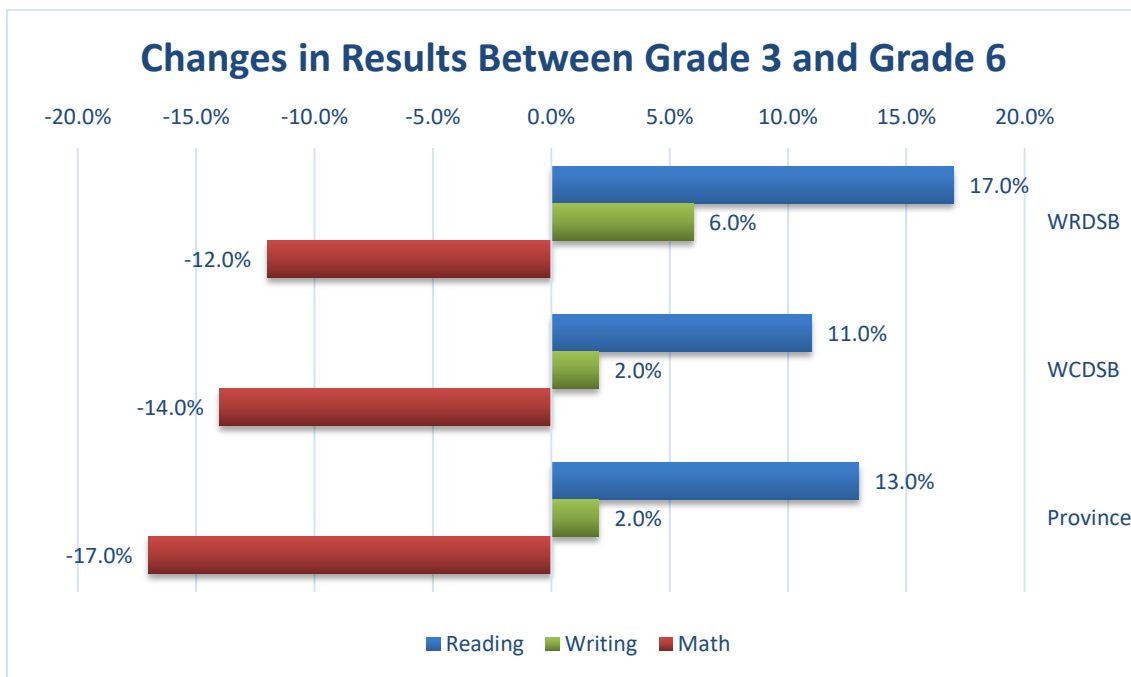
Waterloo Region Reading, Writing and Math Results Grade 3 and Grade 6

These results show the increase or loss of skill from Grade 3 in 2013/14 to Grade 6 in 2016/17



The Waterloo Catholic District School Board has significantly higher levels of success in the 3 core competencies. However, let's look at the percentage increases and decreases for the two school boards:

- Reading** **WRDSB increase of 17%** from Grade 3 to Grade 6
WCDSB increase of 11% from Grade 3 to Grade 6
Province increase of 13% from Grade 3 to Grade 6
- Writing** **WRDSB increase of 6%** from Grade 3 to Grade 6
WCDSB increase of 2% from Grade 3 to Grade 6
Province increase of 2% from Grade 3 to Grade 6
- Math** **WRDSB decrease of 12%** from Grade 3 to Grade 6
WCDSB decrease of 14% from Grade 3 to Grade 6
Province decrease of 17% from Grade 3 to Grade 6

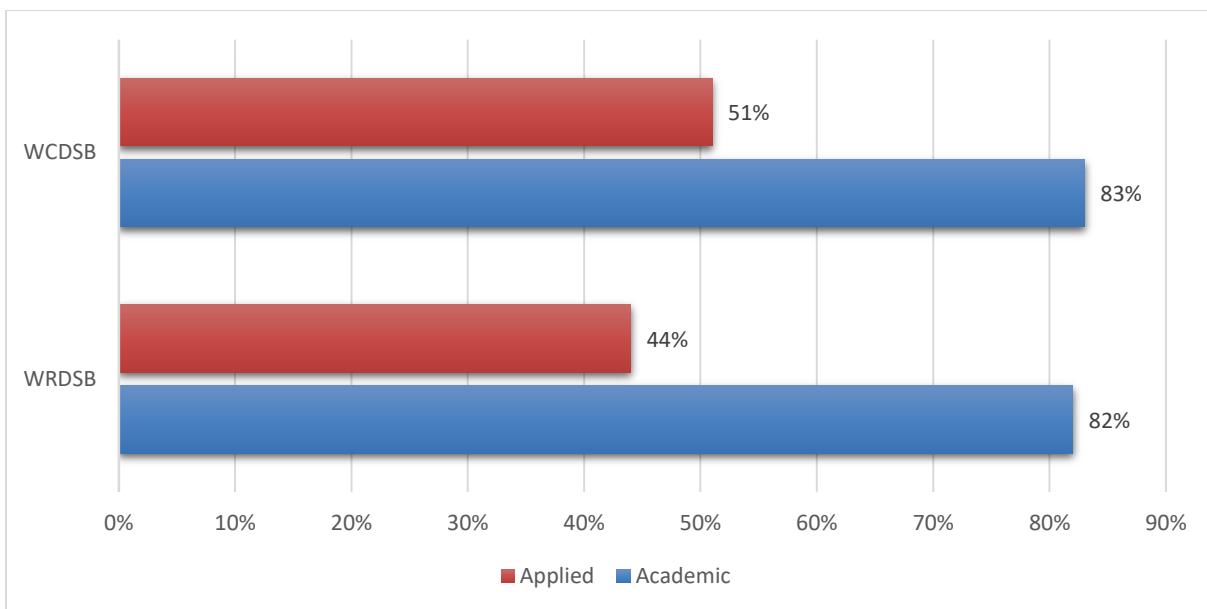


The WRDSB had larger increases and less of a decrease in math skills from Grade 3 to 6. The main problem is that both school boards had significant decreases in Math success from Grade 3 to 6.

It is also concerning to note that 38% of WRDSB and 30% of WCDSB Grade 3 children are not meeting the provincial standard in reading. A student not reading at his or her grade level by the end of the third grade is **four times less likely to graduate** from high school. They are six times less likely to graduate from high school if they also live in low-income households. A [2009 study](#) by researchers at Northwestern University found that high school dropouts were **63 times more likely to be incarcerated** than college graduates. These statistics affect us all and emphasize why adult literacy programs are so important and in continued demand.

To this end it is concerning enough to then look at the math results for grade 9 students.

Math Results for Grade 9 Students.



These results are a key indicator as to why we have a number of youth entering our programs requiring math skills to get employment or move into college level programming. They also indicate that we will continue to need to serve youth in adult literacy programming as these low numbers for applied learners have been consistently low for over 5 years.

This is not unique to our region, as the provincial number of Grade 9 Academic students who are successful is 83% and the Applied students who are successful is 45%. There is a problem within our education system and curriculum in Ontario that is not working for math.

One high school within the WCDSB has been recognized for improving their math results by looking at the data and making some changes. While some work has involved more teaching to the test, St. Mary's Catholic High School in Kitchener came up with this way to make math more understandable to the students:

"To increase the engagement of some students, St. Mary's offers a special mathematics class with a sports focus. A Grade 9 student states: "I like how we worked together in class to solve problems. This made mathematics interesting because the teachers made connections to real-life activities and were always there to help us. I didn't see math as relevant at first and couldn't do it, but now I like it and feel more confident.""²

EQAO Results for Schools Rated Low and High by the Province

These schools represent a mix between the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) and the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB)

Lower Scoring Schools:

Grade 3 - 2016/17 year

School	Number of Students	Number of Classes	Reading	Writing	Math
Parkway PS	16	2	32%	42%	39%
Chalmers Street PS	52	4	43%	35%	37%
Rockway PS	35	3	48%	43%	35%
Howard Robertson PS	55	4	36%	31%	27%
Average	Average # of Students per class = 12.2		39.8%	37.8%	34.5%

² http://www.eqao.com/en/Our_Data_in_Action/case_studies/Pages/St-Marys-HS-832103.aspx

Lower Scoring Schools:

Grade 6 – 2016/17 year

School	Number of Students	Number of Classes	Reading	Writing	Math
Parkway PS	20	1	62%	50%	10%
Chalmers Street PS	48	2	64%	51%	27%
Rockway PS	20	1	60%	48%	18%
Howard Robertson PS	44	2	64%	54%	30%
Average	Average # of Students per class = 22		62.5%	50.8%	21.3%

Higher Scoring Schools

Grade 3 - 2016/17 year

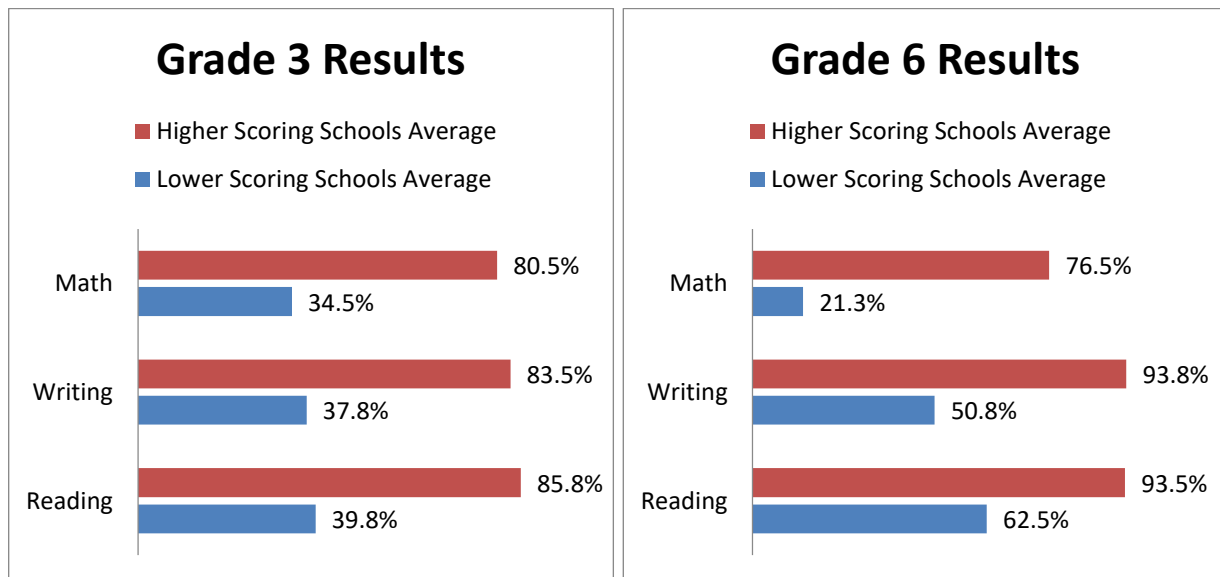
School	Number of Students	Number of Classes	Reading	Writing	Math
St Teresa Sep S	21	2	86%	84%	89%
Laurelwood PS	70	5	88%	87%	84%
Millen Woods PS	52	5	75%	78%	68%
St. Nicholas Catholic ES	36	3	94%	85%	81%
Average	Average # of Students per class = 11.9		85.8%	83.5%	80.5%

Higher Scoring Schools

Grade 6 – 2016/17 year

School	Number of Students	Number of Classes	Reading	Writing	Math
St Teresa Sep S	25	2	94%	92%	75%
Laurelwood PS	83	4	93%	93%	82%
Millen Woods PS	64	3	91%	96%	72%
St. Nicholas Catholic ES	58	2	96%	94%	77%
Average	Average # of Students per class = 20.9		93.5%	93.8%	76.5%

Statistics are improving for schools in the more impoverished areas and schools in the wealthier neighbourhoods.



In Grade 3 there is a distinct difference between the low and high schools at

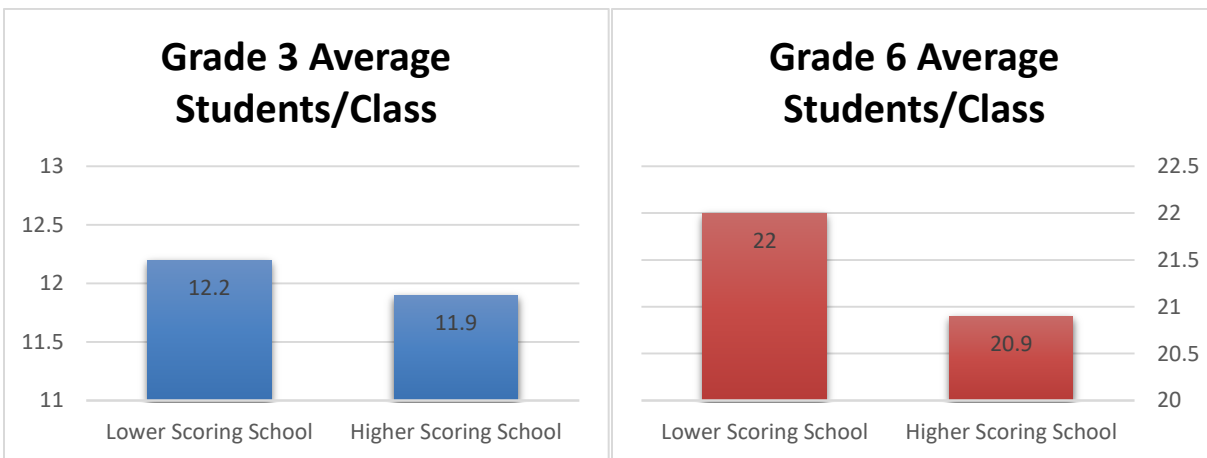
- Reading 46.0%
- Writing 45.7%
- Math 46.0%

In Grade 6 the difference is becoming less, but only slightly in math

- Reading 31.0%
- Writing 43.0%
- Math 55.2%

The issue is it is almost impossible to make up the difference before these children enter high school. Grade 6 children in the more impoverished neighbourhoods have over 78% not meeting the provincial standard in math.

Impact of Class Size on EQAO Results



It's not about the class size, it's about these children missing the necessary skills to enter school and to receive the supports at home. Also if children are not held back during the early years in elementary school to really learn the missing pieces...those missing pieces are going to affect the rest of their school years. It is also obvious that math is something the schools struggle to teach at the elementary level. Not all teachers are comfortable with math, but it is expected that they will all teach it. Who would ask a person who is not comfortable with driving to teach others to drive? Who would hire a financial advisor that struggles with math concepts? It's another flaw within the system.

Unfortunately, we cannot solve this problem, but we can be aware that we will continue to be serving youth and mostly higher need youth that come from poverty within our programs for at least the next 10 years.

IMPACT ON LBS

These stats show that LBS programs are going to be needed for quite awhile. The 4 year investment strategy is key, but without guarantees after the election we may end up back where we started. It is recommended that:

- Programs prepare for the continued number of youth accessing LBS programs for upgrading in their math skills for apprenticeship, retail work, etc.
- The current Ministry create a 3 year contract with LBS programs with the increases in funding included in those contracts
- We need to look at creating a specialized tutoring program for these youth before the graduate from high school to help them gain the applied skills in math and literacy that they need to be successful after graduation