



Education Quality and Accountability Office

Business Plan 2024–2027

December 31, 2023



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Executive Summary

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) is a board-governed agency of the Government of Ontario that contributes to the quality and accountability of Ontario’s publicly funded education system. EQAO develops and administers large-scale assessments that produce objective and reliable information to support student success. EQAO data are a snapshot that shows whether students are meeting *Ontario Curriculum* expectations in reading, writing and mathematics at key stages of their education. This data is an important indicator of student learning that adds to the available knowledge about how Ontario students are doing, and it helps with improvement planning at the student, school, school board and provincial levels.

As an evidence-based research-informed organization, EQAO is focused on empowering all of its partners, including educators, parents, guardians, policy-makers and the public at large, with the insights and information they need to support student learning and improve student outcomes. Throughout its work, the agency is committed to anti-racism, equity, diversity and inclusion, and it continuously strives to enhance its high-quality large-scale assessment program.

The agency’s accountability framework for its kindergarten–Grade 12 (K–12) program includes online assessments of all students across the province in both mathematics and literacy in the primary and junior divisions (administered in Grades 3 and 6 respectively), in mathematics for students in Grades 9 and in cross-curricular literacy for students in Grade 10. The assessments are conducted in English and French in a variety of formats that accommodate students’ learning and accessibility needs.

This business plan sets out the agency’s activities for the 2024–2027 fiscal period in alignment with the strategic direction established by the EQAO board of directors. EQAO shares with its partners, its board of directors and the Ministry of Education a desire to continue to modernize the agency’s assessments and processes. Over the next three years, the agency will be guided by the following strategic direction, as approved by the EQAO board of directors:

- Ensure assessments contribute to enhancing student achievement and improving Ontario’s education system.
- Support partners in using EQAO data to improve student learning.
- Continue to modernize the agency within budget.

As part of its work, the agency will continue to strengthen its large-scale assessments and enhance its IT operations and key business functions, including its reporting approach, as well as its privacy and security practice.

EQAO’s continued modernization will fulfill its mandate by contributing more effectively to education quality and accountability for all students across Ontario. This vision places Ontario K–12 students at the centre of the assessment program; it leverages technology effectively and maximizes the use of data to inform decision making to improve learning and achievement.

Introduction

Established in 1996, EQAO has distinguished itself as an organization that provides valuable services to the people of Ontario by measuring the effectiveness of the publicly funded education system and supporting student learning.

Mission

Working with the education community to support the success and well-being of all students, EQAO is dedicated to enhancing the quality and accountability of the education system in Ontario.

Mandate

In accordance with the 2020 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Ministry of Education and EQAO, the following legislated objects serve as the agency's mandate:

- to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of elementary and secondary school education
- to develop tests and require or undertake the administering and marking of tests of pupils in elementary and secondary schools¹
- to develop systems for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of elementary and secondary school education
- to research and collect information on assessing academic achievement
- to evaluate the public accountability of school boards and to collect information on strategies for improving that accountability
- to report to the public and to the Minister of Education on the results of tests and generally on the quality and effectiveness of elementary and secondary school education and on the public accountability of school boards
- to make recommendations, in its reports to the public and to the Minister of Education, on any matter related to the quality or effectiveness of elementary and secondary school education or to the public accountability of boards

¹ According to the *EQAO Act* (1996), "test" means "any method of assessing the academic achievement of elementary and secondary school pupils." ("test") 1996, c. 11, s. 1; 1997, c. 31, s. 148 (1); 2017, c. 34, Sched. 46, s. 12 (1)."; retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/96e11#:~:text=1.,in%20elementary%20and%20secondary%20schools>

Expectations Set Out in the Letter of Direction

The Letter of Direction received on November 9, 2023, from the Honorable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, outlines the direction for 2024–2025 for EQAO as follows:

- “continuing the implementation of digitized and adaptive assessments for the Primary and Junior Divisions, the Grade 9 Math assessment and Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test in an accessible manner;
- supporting the government’s commitment to building students’ foundational skills by providing assessment data to support improvement planning and accountability, including the reporting system that allows for the visualization and analysis of EQAO data by school boards and
- working closely with the Ministry and the Community Services I&IT Cluster to manage and address IT and system-related risks, including privacy risks.”²

The general direction for agency operations for the coming year relates to competitiveness, sustainability and expenditure management, operating within budget while looking for revenue generation and complying with supply chain, realty and compensation directives; transparency and accountability by fulfilling government direction, responding to audits findings, and identifying appropriate skills for efficient board functioning; risk management; workforce/labour management that optimizes service delivery while diligently managing operational funding and workforce size; diversity and inclusion that promotes an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace; data collection, sharing and use that facilitates outcome-based reporting and better service delivery; digital delivery and customer service that meets government-wide service standards while aiming to deliver services in all situations³.

Values

- EQAO values giving all students the opportunity to reach their highest possible level of achievement.
- EQAO values its role as a service to educators, parents, guardians, students, government and the public in support of teaching and learning in the classroom.
- EQAO values credible evidence that informs professional practice and focuses attention on interventions that improve student success.
- EQAO values research that informs large-scale assessment and classroom practice.

² Ontario Ministry of Education. (2023). EQAO Letter of Direction

³ Ibid

- EQAO values the dedication and expertise of Ontario’s educators, their involvement in all aspects of the assessment process and the positive difference their efforts make in student outcomes.
- EQAO values the delivery of its programs and services with equivalent quality in both English and French.

Governance Framework

EQAO is governed by a board of directors appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. As outlined in the *EQAO Act* (1996), seven to nine directors may be appointed to the board for a term specified by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. EQAO was established to measure the effectiveness of the publicly funded education system and deliver assessment programs that yield objective and reliable information about student achievement.

The agency board is accountable, through the chair, to the Minister of Education. It is responsible for establishing the agency’s strategic direction and setting associated goals and objectives according to its mandate, which is defined by the *EQAO Act*, the MOU (2020) and the applicable policies and directives established by the Minister of Education and the Management Board of Cabinet.

The board of directors keeps the agency accountable to the people of Ontario by maintaining its arm’s-length relationship with the provincial government, by setting strategic policy direction for achieving its mandate, by setting priorities for attaining excellence in the delivery of Ontario’s large-scale assessment program and by communicating with the public and the education community.

The board chair is accountable to the minister and provides leadership to the agency by keeping the minister informed; by submitting, on behalf of the agency board, a business plan and an annual report; and by carrying out the roles and responsibilities assigned to the chair by the Management Board of Cabinet directives, the *EQAO Act*, the MOU and the board’s governance policies. The chair also ensures the integrity of the board’s processes, represents the board to outside parties and, in accordance with the *Public Services of Ontario Act* (PSOA), serves as the ethics executive of the agency for all appointees.

The board meets regularly and conducts business according to the *EQAO Act*, EQAO’s bylaws, the MOU and the PSOA. The Audit and Finance Committee supports the board in ensuring that EQAO exercises due diligence in maintaining an effective financial-control framework. The Governance and Nominating Committee is responsible for the review of governance policies over a three-year cycle, ensuring compliance with the governance policies, overseeing the professional development plans for board members and helping with the process of nominating new members to the board. The Analytics, Reporting and Communications Committee identifies analytics, reporting and communications priorities and develops related policies for board approval to advance the strategic plan and guide staff in its implementation.

EQAO’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the board’s connection to EQAO’s operations. The CEO is accountable to the agency’s board for overseeing the management and operations of the agency as well as for supervising the agency’s staff, and for carrying out the roles and responsibilities assigned by the board, the *EQAO Act*, the MOU and the applicable agency

directives set out by the Management Board of Cabinet. Under the PSOA, the CEO serves as the ethics executive for all staff.

Staff members of the agency are accountable to the CEO for carrying out the roles and responsibilities assigned to them by the CEO and articulated in the annual business plan and in their performance plans.

Strategic Direction

EQAO shares with its partners, its board of directors and the Ministry of Education a desire to continue to modernize the agency’s assessments and processes. During the three-year business cycle covered by this plan, the agency will be guided by the following strategic direction as established by the EQAO board of directors:

- Strategic Direction 1: Ensure assessments contribute to enhancing student achievement and improving Ontario’s education system.
- Strategic Direction 2: Support partners in using EQAO data to improve student learning.
- Strategic Direction 3: Continue to modernize the agency within budget.

Strategic Direction #1	Strategic Direction #2	Strategic Direction #3
<p><i>Goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the assessments are conducted efficiently and effectively to maximize student engagement and benefit. • Continue to improve the assessments and analysis of the results to reflect the identities of Ontario’s students. • Incorporate student voice to ensure relevant and effective assessments. • Analyze best practices in large-scale assessments nationally and internationally to improve student achievement. 	<p><i>Goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the engagement of those in the education system in the understanding of how productive use of EQAO data and reporting can improve instructional classroom practice and student learning. • Support interested parties in analyzing and integrating EQAO data with other data that focuses on interventions that enhance student learning and well-being. • Educate the public on the purpose and use of EQAO data by school districts and schools/educators to create the contexts for high levels of achievement and well-being for students. 	<p><i>Goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align resource allocation to maximize the impact of the agency modernization. • Continue to develop data analytics to support school board and provincial education system improvements. • Continue to nurture an inclusive organizational culture through authentic and ongoing professional learning and employee engagement.

Overview of Current and Future Programs and Activities

Digitalization and Modernization

EQAO's modernized assessment program enables an effective and efficient response to the needs of the province on matters of education quality and accountability. EQAO strives for continuous improvement on its journey to support positive student outcomes in a fast-changing digital world. The agency's goal is to allow students who take our assessments to demonstrate their full understanding of the curriculum. From its assessment results, EQAO gathers information and data that sheds light on how Ontario's public education system is performing.

The agency aims to provide evidence-informed insights into student learning to facilitate the improvement and success of Ontario students. Modernization at EQAO is a multi-faceted and multi-year initiative that focuses on five distinct areas:

- large-scale assessments,
- reports,
- research,
- engagement with Ontarians and
- supporting equity, diversity and inclusion in education.

In partnership with the Ministry of Education and school boards, EQAO will maximize the usefulness of the information supplied through large-scale assessments. EQAO will continue to share data, support research based on its data and release insights and interactive reports that are pivotal in moving the education community forward. Classrooms increasingly rely on digital tools for teaching and learning. To reflect these realities, EQAO digitalized Ontario's large-scale assessment program. Computer adaptive testing is an important component of EQAO's modernized assessments and a useful tool to meet students where they are in their learning development.

Multi-Stage Computer Adaptive Tests

Multi-stage computer adaptive tests (msCATs) are a form of computer testing that adapts to a student's level of proficiency according to the student's achievement on a set of items (called a module). Such tests present many benefits to students, parents and guardians, and educators. These include adapting to student proficiency and providing good measurement across the scale of student

achievement. The administration of msCATs takes place in a digital environment that offers flexibility in scheduling while maintaining security and providing automated reports for timely and detailed feedback.

Provincial K–12 Assessments

The agency’s assessments moved to a digital format in 2021. The current K–12 assessment program is outlined in the following table:

Assessment	Grade	Subjects
Primary division	Grade 3	Reading, writing, mathematics
Junior division	Grade 6	Reading, writing, mathematics
Grade 9	Grade 9	Mathematics
OSSLT	Grade 10	Literacy

All students in Grades 10 and 11 as well as non-graduating students, including those who are learning remotely, must work toward the literacy graduation requirement by participating in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) or completing the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC).

Student Questionnaire Data

EQAO student questionnaires gather valuable information on aspects of student learning and achievement. The agency will continue to collect data on attitudes toward math and literacy, as well as on student perceptions of their learning environment. This contextual data can be used to identify trends and guide decision making toward the improvement of education at the student, school, board and provincial levels.

Mathematics Proficiency Test (MPT)

On November 28, 2023, the Ontario Court of Appeal (“ONCA”) overturned a Divisional Court decision deeming Ontario’s Math Proficiency Test (“MPT”), constitutional and not contrary to s 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (“Charter”). As consequence of this decision, the two regulations governing the MPT (Regulation 271/19, *Proficiency in Mathematics*, under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*, and Regulation 272/19, *Objects of the Office*, under the *Education Quality and Accountability Office*

Act, 1996) are again in effect.

The regulations outline the two main components of the test:

- mathematics curriculum component assesses test-takers' knowledge of mathematics content based on *The Ontario Curriculum* (Grades 3 to 9), which will comprise 70% of the test.
- pedagogy component that measures pedagogical elements reflected in Ministry of Education policies (e.g., *Growing Success*), which will make up the remaining 30% of the test.

The test has been designed as a computer-based assessment with multiple-choice type questions. Test takers must attain a minimum score of 70% on both components of the test to be successful. Future administrations of the MPT will be responsive to changes in the education sector and determined in partnership with the Ministry of Education, with advisement from the OCT and faculties of education.

EQAO is working closely with the Ministry of Education and its other partners on the requirements of operationalizing the reinstated MPT.

National and International Assessments

EQAO coordinates the administration of four large-scale national and international assessments on behalf of the Government of Ontario every three to five years: the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

During the 2024–2027 business cycle, EQAO will support Ontario’s participation in the national and international assessments as determined by the Ministry of Education.

Assessment	Partner Organization	Approximate Age/Grade	Subjects
TIMSS	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement	Grade 4 & Grade 8	Mathematics, science
PIRLS	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement	Grade 4	Reading
PCAP	Council of Ministers of Education, Canada	Grade 8	Reading, mathematics, science
PISA	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	15-year-olds	Reading, mathematics, science

Research

The fourth object of the *EQAO Act* (1996) places research and collecting information on assessing academic achievement as one of the agency’s pillars. EQAO recognizes the need for a continued focus on research to help support the assessments in order to enhance learning outcomes at the individual, classroom, school and system levels. At EQAO, we believe discussions about education quality need to be evidence-informed and grounded in research. As EQAO looks to the future, it will continue to build on its digital assessment program in consultation with its partners across the province. The agency will also continue to adapt and enhance its reporting models so that the education sector has access to actionable insights based on the agency’s data in a timely manner.

Research Framework

EQAO has established the [#DataInAction Research Framework](#), which is aimed at ensuring EQAO data are used for improving student learning. Under this lens, EQAO accepts research proposals that leverage our data or seek to collaborate with the agency to further student achievement (see [#DataInAction 2.0: Research Priorities and Approaches](#)).

EQAO's Statistical Standards

EQAO aligns with Statistics Canada in recognizing statistical standards as a set of rules that describe how data are collected and how statistics and results are produced and shared. EQAO's statistical standards are used to provide data insights on specific topics and on the learning experiences of groups of students. The standards also ensure consistency in data quality over time.

EQAO's Data Quality Framework

[EQAO's Data Quality Framework](#) provides systematic and methodological rigour to the agency's data quality validation processes. EQAO's data quality processes use clearly defined guidelines, business rules, methodologies and protocols to ensure that data quality is maintained at all stages of its program, including the collection, processing and analyzing of educational data, and the reporting and sharing of results.

Supporting Research Through EQAO Data

EQAO understands the importance of partnering to fulfill our research mandate. Currently, EQAO's research partners include the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Unity Health Toronto and the Hospital for Sick Children. Our common research projects include an examination of the learning continuum of Ontario students to “understand trajectories of student learning and well-being—from early childhood to adolescence” and a study of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on student outcomes.⁴

School Support and Outreach

EQAO's School Support and Outreach team works collaboratively with school boards, educators, teachers in training, qualifying principals, student groups and parents and guardians to support the use of EQAO's data, research and digital assessment platform.

⁴ The Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University. (2022). The Offord Centre and EQAO collaborating to understand student trajectories. Retrieved from <https://edi.offordcentre.com/?s=EQAO>

Over the next year, this team will continue to provide webinars to help school boards and schools use EQAO data and resources (e.g., training for board IT staff about network readiness for the e-assessment platform and for principals and consultants about leveraging EQAO's reporting tool for school and board improvement planning).

Information Technology

In collaboration with the Community Services, I&IT Cluster (CSC) and Information Technology Services (ITS), the agency will continue to review and optimize its I&IT operations at the Guelph Data Centre.

Resources Needed to Meet Goals and Objectives

Financial Resources

Continued optimization of the EQAO assessments, strengthening of its I&IT ecosystem, engaging with Ontarians and enhanced mining of the agency's data are some of the goals that have been planned consistently with the current level of funding received from the government.

Human Resources

EQAO's new assessment-related technologies and the demands of a rapidly changing world put pressure on the skill sets required to meet the agency's obligations under the new strategic directions. The agency will continue to review its staffing needs, and plan accordingly to ensure the agency's human resources allow for the successful accomplishment of its modernization goals.

Environmental Scan

As countries have moved back to in-person education following the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus is now on addressing the effects of the pandemic on students. From a large-scale assessment perspective, jurisdictions also increasingly moved into standardized digital modes of assessing students mixed with methods of evaluation that ensure the individual learning experience of the student is also reflected.

External Factors

International Outlook on Assessments

The following are summaries of education systems and of digital assessment practices in some jurisdictions around the world.

Ireland

Together with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), Ireland’s Ministry of Education determines the curriculum for both primary and *post-primary* (secondary) schools.⁵ Post-primary school is divided in two stages: Junior Cycle (ages 12–15) and Senior Cycle (ages 16–18). Primary schools are obliged to administer standardized tests of English reading, Irish reading (for Irish medium schools) and mathematics.⁶ The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement takes place at the end of the cycle. For the Senior Cycle, during their final two years, students have the choice of taking one of three programs, “each leading to a state examination: Established Leaving Certificate; Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and Leaving Certificate Applied.”⁷ The NCCA develops guidelines for schools on how to assess their students and also develops the standardized testing at the primary and post-primary levels in both paper and online formats.⁸ The NCCA also develops research on learning and teaching activities. The NCCA launched, in October 2023, the new Primary Mathematics Curriculum.

Denmark

Education in Denmark is structured in the continuum primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and higher education, with an additional system of adult and continuing education. Students receive their education in Danish. However, English is a mandatory subject, especially in upper secondary school.⁹ Regarding curriculum development, “the Ministry of Children and Education is responsible for setting up the framework for curricula at primary and secondary level. However, the contents of the courses are finalised by the teachers themselves, with their pupils.”¹⁰ To help identify the student’s learning needs, the Danish education system

⁵ Citizen Information—Government of Ireland. (2023). Curriculum in primary schools, retrieved from <https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/education/primary-and-post-primary-education/going-to-primary-school/primary-school-curriculum/>

⁶ National Council for Curriculum and Assessment—NCCA. (2023). Primary standardised testing, retrieved from https://ncca.ie/media/5355/primary_standardised_testing.pdf

⁷ Citizen Information—Government of Ireland. (2023). Overview of the Irish Education System, retrieved from <https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/education/the-irish-education-system/overview-of-the-irish-education-system/>

⁸ Irish Department of Education. (2023). Standardised testing 2023, retrieved from <https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/bd6d8-standardised-testing-2023/>

⁹ Ministry of Higher Education and Science of Denmark. (2023). The Danish education system: general organization and administration, retrieved from <https://ufm.dk/en/education/the-danish-education-system/general-organisation-and-administration>

¹⁰ Ibid

has a series of mandatory evaluations, including a first grade screening for reading difficulties (compulsory starting 2025–2026); first grade risk-testing for dyslexia; language assessment in kindergarten (compulsory starting 2024–2025); screening for high-ability pupils in the first grade (compulsory starting 2024–2025); “Meddelelsesbog’—a mandatory dialogue-tool for messages between the school, parents and pupils; and a Dialogue on progress between schools and municipalities” and a National Test.¹¹ National testing is expected to come into effect for the primary and secondary cycles in 2026–2027. The following temporary national tests are in place from 2022–2023 to 2026–2027: “testing of Danish (literacy performance) in 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th and 8th grade and of Mathematics in form levels 2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th grade.”¹²

New York State (United States)

The New York Board of Regents supervises all educational “activities within the State, presiding over The University of New York and the New York State Education Department.”¹³ The Office of State Assessment coordinates, develops and implements New York State’s testing program. The tests examine the students’ knowledge and skills as directed in the State’s learning standards and gauge how schools and districts meet the State’s targets in its accountability system and legislation.¹⁴ The tests are digital and assess learning in English, English as a second language, mathematics and, since 2019, global history and geography.¹⁵ In June 2022, statewide computer-based testing (CBT) was implemented “for the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests and the Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Tests. In Spring 2024, all students in Grades 5 and 8 will be required to take ELA, mathematics, and science Tests via CBT.”¹⁶

¹¹ Ministry of Higher Education and Science of Denmark. (2023). Test, Evaluation and Development of Education, retrieved from <https://eng.uvm.dk/primary-and-lower-secondary-education/the-folkeskole/test--evaluation-and-development-of-education>

¹² Ibid

¹³ New York State Education Department. (2023). Board of Regents, retrieved from <https://www.regents.nysed.gov/>

¹⁴ New York State Education Department. (2023). NYSED test development process, retrieved from: <https://www.nysed.gov/state-assessment/nysed-test-development-process>

¹⁵ New York State Education Department. (2023). Timeline of New York State assessments, retrieved from <https://www.nysed.gov/state-assessment/timeline-new-york-state-assessments>

¹⁶ New York State. (2023). 2023–24 Elementary- and intermediate-level testing schedule, retrieved from <https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/state-assessment/ei-test-schedule-2024.pdf>

National Outlook

Alberta

In the 2022–2023 school year, the literacy and numeracy assessments became compulsory province-wide for students in Grades 2 and 3 (followed by the also compulsory assessments for students in Grade 1, which were completed in January 2023). Alberta school authorities “are required to administer literacy and numeracy screening assessments selected from an approved list on [New.LearnAlberta.ca](https://www.learnalberta.ca).”¹⁷ Additionally, in September 2023, the Alberta government launched the K–6 Curriculum for French; French Immersion; Science; English, Arts and Literature; Mathematics; and Physical Education & Wellness.¹⁸ The government of Alberta also implemented the [New.LearnAlberta](https://www.learnalberta.ca) platform as a complement to the [LearnAlberta.ca](https://www.learnalberta.ca) platform (which houses Alberta’s programs of study developed prior 2021). The new platform provides information and resources catered to parents and guardians as well as to school authorities, school leaders and teachers of the new K–6 curriculum. This virtual set of resources includes a student learning hub, a curriculum implementation hub, an e-tutoring hub and other resources related to the new curriculum.

British Columbia

On July 1, 2023, the government of British Columbia made available the [K–12 Student Reporting Policy](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/student-reporting). The policy provides direction on requirements for reporting of student outcomes, ensuring clear and concise communication of both learning achievements and learning gaps. It also “requires Student Self-Assessment of Core Competencies and Student Goal Setting as part of the reporting process.”¹⁹ The policy views learning in a continuum rather than a quality to be evaluated at the end of a term or cycle and is the outcome of extensive consultation with various education partners. For K–9, the policy requires the use of the Provincial Proficiency Scale, which provides a means for grading the student’s progress relative to learning outcomes. For Grades 10–12, letter grades and percentages are the expected means for measuring progress. For Grades 10–12, “a graduation status update is required on the Summary of Learning at the end of the year.”²⁰

Specific to standardized testing, the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) is British Columbia’s program to assess literacy and

¹⁷ Government of Alberta. (2023). Early years assessments—overview, retrieved from <https://www.alberta.ca/early-years-assessments#:~:text=In%202022%2F23%20literacy%20and,on%20New.LearnAlberta.ca>.

¹⁸ Government of Alberta. (2023). Welcome to new LearnAlberta, retrieved from <https://curriculum.learnalberta.ca/home/en>

¹⁹ Government of British Columbia. (2023), K-12 Student Reporting Policy, retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/student-reporting>

²⁰ Ibid

numeracy outcomes in Grades 4 and 7. In 2023–2024, FSAs were administered between October 2 and November 10, 2023, with the final deadline for scoring activities on November 24, 2023.²¹ BC’s graduation requirements include testing of numeracy in Grade 10 (introduced in 2018) and of literacy in Grades 10 (introduced in 2019–2020) and 12 (introduced in 2021–2022).²²

Newfoundland and Labrador

In October 2023, the Department of Education of the government of Newfoundland and Labrador launched the [Guidelines for Comprehensive Assessment](#), which outline a “multimethod assessment approach that involves educators with specialized training in assessment, collecting and analyzing data specific to a students’ learning profile.”²³ A comprehensive assessment includes interviews with students, parents/guardians and educators; students’ evaluation in various school settings as well as formal and/or informal assessment of different variables, including cognitive ability, speech and language, achievement; social-emotional development; and behaviour.²⁴ The guideline also provides specific direction for design and reporting of standardized testing.

Ontario Outlook

In August 2023, the Ontario government launched the Math Achievement Action Plan. Leveraging EQAO’s data and framed by the Taking Action in Mathematics Framework, education partners will respond to the following priorities:

- Priority Action 1: Ensuring fidelity of curriculum implementation, including the intentional use of proven strategies that support academic math achievement.
- Priority Action 2: Engaging in ongoing learning on mathematics content knowledge for teaching.
- Priority Action 3: Knowing the mathematics learner, and ensuring mathematical tasks, interventions and supports are relevant and responsive.

Also in the summer of 2023, the Ontario government issued new elementary language and *Français* curricula, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8, Language* (2023) and *Le curriculum de l'Ontario, de la 1re à la 8e année, Français, 2023*, as well as new de-

²¹ Government of British Columbia, (2023), Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA), retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/program-management/assessment/foundation-skills-assessment>

²² Government of British Columbia. (2023). Graduation assessments, retrieved from <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/provincial/assessment>

²³ Department of Education—Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. (2023). Guidelines for comprehensive assessment.

²⁴ Ibid

streamed Grade 9 English (ENL1W) and *Français* (FRL1W) courses. These new curricula and courses include new areas of learning, including a focus on foundational knowledge and skills; transferable skills; digital media literacy; applications, connections and contributions of diverse voices, experiences and perspectives including those of First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals. Additionally, the revised Grade 6 social studies curriculum, which is part of Ontario’s continued modernization of the curriculum, was implemented in September 2023.

September 2023 also marked the second year of EQAO’s reporting on the results of its digitalized and modernized provincial assessments. The assessments have been made available to schools and boards across Ontario. Math achievement is trending upward across all grade levels in both English and French, including by between two and five percentage points in Grade 6 and Grade 9 math. At the same time, literacy achievement is stable or has increased across grade levels, including on the OSSLT among first-time eligible Grade 10 students. Similar to those in other Canadian jurisdictions, EQAO results show stability and moderate gains, which could stem from the fact that students are back in the classroom without disruption and from targeted supports focused on improving literacy and math competencies.

Also in September 2023, the Ontario government announced an initiative to support learning among Indigenous communities in the north of Ontario. Through the [Connected North](#) program, Indigenous communities will have remote access to learning experiences unavailable directly in their communities. The Connected North program “is anticipated to deliver at least 1,100 learning sessions to 55 schools in Ontario.”²⁵ Sessions are expected to provide “virtual field trips to museum galleries and aquariums to enhance learning; visits by Indigenous role models sharing culture, learning and career journeys to build hope and pride; [and] expert sessions held in STEM, arts and languages that enhance curriculum learning.”²⁶

Additionally, the Ontario government is “introducing new and expanded mandatory learning about the Holocaust in the compulsory Grade 10 History course added to community partnerships that provide resources for students and educator training to expand learning on fundamental Canadian values, including the importance of safeguarding democracy from extreme and harmful ideologies.”²⁷

²⁵ Ontario Government. (2023). Connecting the north: Ontario supporting Indigenous communities, retrieved from <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1003577/connecting-the-north-ontario-supporting-indigenous-communities>

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Ontario Government. (2023). Ontario strengthening Holocaust education in high schools, retrieved from <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1003724/ontario-strengthening-holocaust-education-in-high-schools>

Addressing Systemic Barriers

As part of the Ontario Public Service, EQAO lives its values of inclusivity, integrity and public service excellence and is committed to upholding anti-racism, equity, diversity and inclusion throughout its internal and external activities and policies. The agency is developing a multi-year plan through which the agency will aim to identify, manage and rectify inequities and systemic barriers that may affect both agency staff and the students it serves. The agency will also develop initiatives focused specifically on the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and on the assessment-related needs of Indigenous and equity-deserving communities.

EQAO believes that these measures will help foster an organizational culture where everyone feels a sense of inclusion and belonging and that this culture will continue to be reflected in the agency's work to support students and the education system in Ontario.

Internal Factors

EQAO is in a time of transition and change that impacts the work that the agency does and how it is completed. Organizational assessment and change management as they apply to people, processes and technology are integral to the success of the agency's modernization efforts.

In October 2023, following the release of EQAO's provincial data from its assessments administered during the 2022–2023 school year, EQAO made available the second set of school and school board assessment results of its digital assessments. More than 580 000 students across the province completed EQAO assessments at the elementary and secondary levels of the English- and French-language school systems during the 2022–2023 school year. EQAO's new platform leverages interactive and user-friendly dashboards for educators, parents, guardians and the public to access assessment and questionnaire data at the provincial and local levels.

Staffing, Human Resources and Compensation Strategy

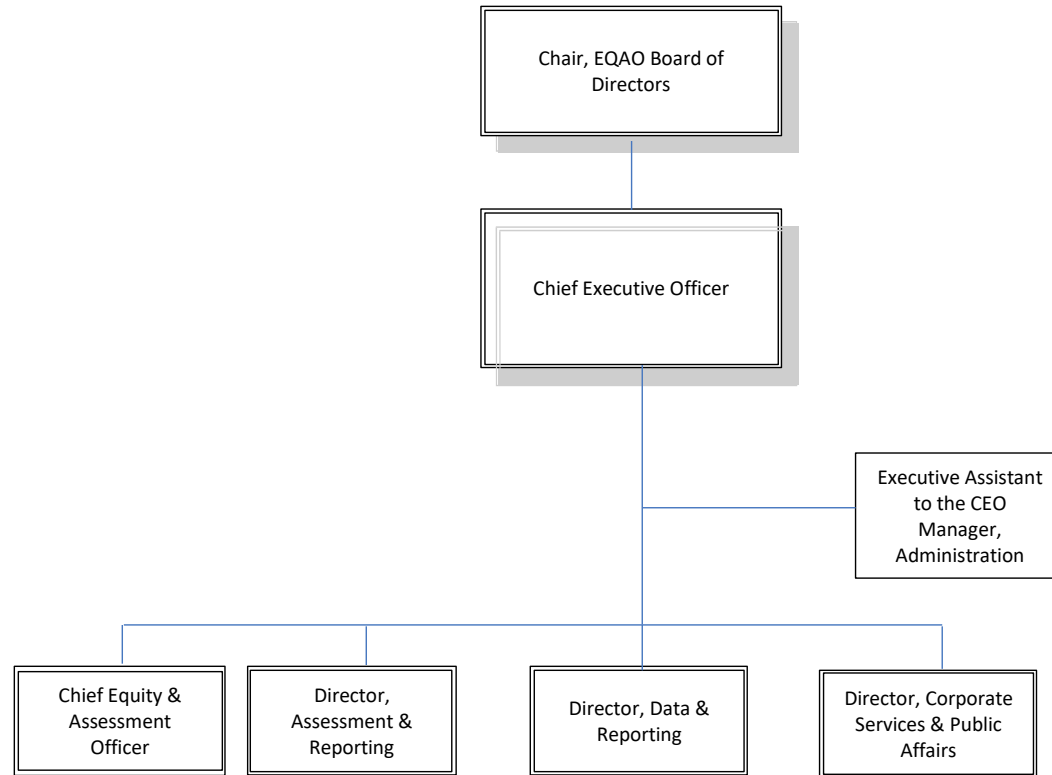
EQAO benefits from staff with a high level of commitment to their work. The agency staff are part of the OPSEU and AMAPCEO bargaining units. EQAO follows the OPS process for classification, recruitment and other HR functions in alignment with the OPS *Employment Policy*. Compensation is based on OPS salary ranges for the respective bargaining units. Each year, educators are seconded from school boards to assist in the development and scoring of the assessments. EQAO will continue to rely on educators across the province for their expertise for the scoring of the open-response questions on its digital assessments.

The agency will continue to review its staffing and ensure the appropriate levels and structures are in place to achieve its strategic goals. Any decisions about human resource changes will need to be discussed and planned appropriately to ensure they remain within government policy and the provisions of labour agreements.

The key priority for the agency is to ensure it has the skill sets and succession plans to meet its mandated obligations. EQAO also has contracts with vendors to support staff in carrying out the agency's work. The vendors are contracted using a transparent tendering and evaluation process that aligns with Ontario Public Service directives and is carefully overseen by EQAO management and staff, who are accountable to the CEO. As outlined in its MOU, the agency also coordinates with Ministry divisions for specific support in areas such as cyber security and enterprise architecture.

The agency's high-level organizational chart is as follows:

Education Quality and Accountability Office
as of November 2023



Outcome- and Output-Based Performance Measures and Targets

The performance measures below are focused on the 2023–2024 fiscal year and are in accordance with the strategic priorities that set direction for the agency’s next business cycle.

Strategic Priority 1: Ensure assessments contribute to enhancing student achievement and improving Ontario’s education system.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
A. Ensure that the assessments are conducted efficiently and effectively to maximize student engagement and benefit.	✓ Develop high-quality assessments that accurately measure student performance in alignment with large-scale assessment standards.	✓ Develop, deliver, score, analyze and report annually on the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics, the OSSLT/TPCL and the Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Primary and Junior Divisions.
B. Continue to improve the assessments and analysis of the results to reflect the identities of Ontario’s students.	✓ Ensure that assessment design and the evaluation of students’ learning align with their needs and individualities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Work with the Ministry of Education to establish a pathway for EQAO to provide identity-based reports. ✓ Report on how the agency has incorporated diverse student identities into the assessment and reporting program.
C. Incorporate student voice to ensure relevant and effective assessments.	✓ Ensure students’ perspectives are considered and incorporated, as appropriate, into the assessment design, implementation and reporting.	✓ Report on results of EQAO committees, surveys, questionnaires and focus groups that allow students’ voices to improve EQAO assessments.
D. Analyze best practices in large-scale assessments nationally and internationally to improve student achievement.	✓ Improve EQAO assessments by embedding evidence of national and international best practices in assessment development, analysis and reporting.	✓ Undertake research based on other jurisdictions’ experiences in the evolution of large-scale assessment (design, administration, reporting and analysis) and implement recommendations as appropriate.

Strategic Priority 2: Support partners in using EQAO data to improve student learning.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<p>A. Strengthen the engagement of those in the education community in the understanding of how productive use of EQAO data and reporting can improve instructional classroom practice and student learning.</p>	<p>✓ Engage educational partners through outreach activities to promote how EQAO data can inform continuous improvement in the school system.</p>	<p>✓ Communicate with partners in education and provide data-informed resources, including learning modules, research reports, webinars, videos and other appropriate materials to promote the richness of EQAO data and its role in improving student learning.</p>
<p>B. Support interested parties in analyzing and integrating EQAO data with other data that focuses on interventions that enhance student learning and well-being.</p>	<p>✓ Establish an accessible and responsive data framework to foster collaboration with interested parties.</p>	<p>✓ Report on analyses and publications with or by partners on the use of EQAO data to improve student well-being and learning experience.</p>
<p>C. Educate the public on the purpose and use of EQAO data by school districts and schools/educators to create the contexts for high levels of achievement and well-being for students.</p>	<p>✓ Develop communications products and undertake agency activities geared toward informing the public about the value and role of EQAO and its data in Ontario.</p>	<p>✓ Report on the activities and communications products released to inform and educate the public on the value of EQAO assessments and data.</p>

Strategic Priority 3: Continue to modernize the agency within budget.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<p>A. Align resource allocation to maximize the impact of the agency modernization.</p>	<p>✓ Ensure effective, efficient and equitable governance, project management and business practices.</p>	<p>✓ Maintain agency operations in alignment with EQAO’s governance, policy framework, established processes and government directives.</p>
	<p>✓ Ensure financial and acquisition accountability in alignment with OPS-wide standards.</p>	<p>✓ Maintain accurate and timely financial reports in accordance with Public Sector Accounting Board guidelines and have them validated by an external audit process.</p> <p>✓ Monitor and report expenditures every month and conduct an analysis of variances every quarter at a minimum.</p> <p>✓ Align acquisitions with all applicable OPS procurement directives.</p>
	<p>✓ Ensure IT infrastructure and privacy and security posture are in alignment with applicable government standards.</p>	<p>✓ Strengthen the agency’s I&IT infrastructure, policies and related privacy and security posture in collaboration with CSC and ITS.</p>
<p>B. Continue to develop data analytics to support school board and provincial education system improvements.</p>	<p>✓ Continue to deliver enhanced results using engaging and actionable reporting methods.</p>	<p>✓ Report on the enhancements to the agency’s reporting platforms and channels based on feedback from education partners.</p>
<p>C. Continue to nurture an inclusive organizational culture through authentic and ongoing professional learning and employee engagement.</p>	<p>✓ Foster a strong organizational culture founded on a sense of inclusion and belonging.</p>	<p>✓ Develop and offer activities and events that further promote a strong organizational culture, employee engagement, belonging and excellence.</p> <p>✓ Create and/or update job descriptions to better reflect the work that is part of the modernization mandate.</p>

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide training and professional development to up-skill EQAO's employees to address changes in the way we do our business.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monitor and maintain facilities as necessary to ensure a safe and healthy workplace environment for all staff and contribute to promoting overall employee wellness.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Implement and report on internal components of the multi-year equity, diversity and inclusion plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Report on progress on the internal components of the multi-year equity, diversity and inclusion plan.

Financial Budget (\$M)

Program Area	2023–2024 Projected	2024–2025 Projected	2025–2026 Projected	2026–2027 Projected
Grades 3 & 6 (Reading, Writing & Mathematics)	8.42	8.42	8.42	8.42
Grade 9	5.70	5.70	5.70	5.70
Ontario Secondary School Literary Test	7.66	7.66	7.66	7.66
Mathematics Proficiency Test	0.30	1.00	1.00	1.00
Transformation	2.17	1.47	1.47	1.47
Operating	4.08	4.08	4.08	4.08
Total EQAO Program Operating Expenses	28.33	28.33	28.33	28.33
National/International Program (funded separately by Ministry)	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Total Expenses Including National/International	28.93	28.93	28.93	28.93
Ministry Allocation for EQAO Operating Expenses	28.33	28.33	28.33	28.33
Total Funding excluding National/International & National/International Program Funded Separately	28.33	28.33	28.33	28.33
Total Funding including National/International & National/International Program Funded Separately	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Total Funding including National/International & National/International Program Funded Separately	28.93	28.93	28.93	28.93
Capital Assets	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25

NOTES/ASSUMPTIONS:

- Payroll projections are based on current positions and ratified collective agreements.
- National/International costs are dependent on Ministry decisions regarding Ontario's participation in these assessments and are funded separately by the Ministry on a cost-recovery basis for the agency.
- Additional funding changes may arise as a result of operational direction provided to the agency by the Ministry of Education.

Realty

According to the *EQAO Act* (1996), the agency may not acquire, hold or dispose of an interest in real property, other than a leasehold interest, without first obtaining the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. EQAO must comply with the Management Board of Cabinet Realty Directive and the Ministry of Government Services' Realty Policy when acquiring space for accommodation and program purposes. The EQAO office is leased at 2 Carlton Street, Suite 1200, Toronto, Ontario.

Information Technology and Electronic Service Delivery Plan

EQAO relies on technology to carry out its core business practices and services, including the delivery of assessments and the collection, processing and storage of its data. There has been a focus on establishing resilient IT infrastructure and systems, such as the I&IT controls and privacy and security safeguards that EQAO has added to its operating model. EQAO provides eligible Ontario school board and school employees with secure access to their students' achievement results and questionnaire data, as well as resources designed to support student learning. In 2024 EQAO will continue to explore ways to provide quality data and results through means that are reliable, secure and easy to access.

As the agency moves forward through the next business cycles, it will continue to leverage Ministry expertise in the areas of enterprise architecture and cyber security to ensure its programs adhere to the government's technical standards (GO-ITS).

Initiatives Involving Third Parties

EQAO actively works with its educational partners to ensure its assessment data are used to enhance educational instruction, support improved student achievement and increase the quality and effectiveness of Ontario's public education system.

To ensure the successful delivery of its programs, the agency is reliant on third parties for some functions of its operations. Key examples are the delivery of digital assessments once EQAO has developed the content, and the reporting of some of its data to parents and guardians, educators and students.

When using third parties, the agency undertakes the appropriate independent privacy and security assessments and consults key ministry units such as Cyber Security and the CSC for their expertise. These actions help the agency ensure secure and reliable service delivery in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, the *OPS Procurement Directive* and the applicable sections of the government of Ontario's Information Technology Standards (GO-ITS).

As EQAO modernizes, it recognizes the need for thinking that engages expertise both internal and external to the agency. For this reason, EQAO has a Modernization in Measurement Advisory Panel (MMAP) that shares knowledge and expertise to support the agency in meeting its digitalization and modernization objectives while ensuring strong methodologies, analytics and knowledge-sharing approaches. The MMAP is composed of interdisciplinary experts, including practitioners, researchers and scholars in fields related to large-scale assessment.

EQAO engages Ontario educators in every step of the assessment cycle, from development to administration to the scoring of

open-response items. Throughout its work, EQAO collaborates with French- and English-language educators from across the province in various activities. It is open to provincial, national and international partnerships in a manner that is mutually beneficial.

EQAO's Advisory Committee provides advice and recommendations on assessment activities to the agency. Committee members represent the Ministry of Education, directors of education, parents and guardians, principals, trustees, supervisory officers, teachers' federations and education research organizations. Ad hoc committees will be established for short-term consultation on specific activities.

EQAO's Student Engagement Committee is a group of elementary and secondary students that provides a space to listen to students' voices offering feedback, advice and lived experience to the agency. Committee members represent a diverse range of schools and communities across Ontario. Their input helps ensure EQAO's digitalization and modernization reflects the needs of students. Students are the focus of EQAO's work, and the agency values learners' perspectives.

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee reviews materials for all EQAO assessments. Its members have knowledge and expertise in the areas of diversity, culture, language acquisition and special education, and they independently review and then discuss all new assessment items, reading passages and other content to ensure equity, cultural relevance and accessibility to all students.

On behalf of Ontario, EQAO also partners with the following national and international organizations:

- the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development—to administer the Programme for International Student Assessment
- the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada—to administer the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program
- the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement—to administer the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

EQAO is also committed to implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action related to education. In response, the agency has established the following: the First Nations Collaborative Council, the Métis Network and the Inuit Network. These three groups serve as collaborative and advisory bodies to ensure assessments and reporting are enhanced in their authenticity, cultural relevance and responsiveness to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

Implementation Plan

The strategic directions, goals and objectives, along with the Ministry of Education's letter of direction, direct the agency's

implementation plan and provide guidance on the sequencing and dependencies that need to be considered in its work. The agency's focus during the 2024–2025 fiscal year will be on optimizing its processes of modernization of key programs and operations as well as enhancing assessment development with an accessibility lens in the following ways:

Digital Assessment Administration

The agency will continue to enhance its digital assessment program and ensure adherence to large-scale assessment best practices. Also, the agency's approach to language assessment has been reviewed and updated to align with the new language curriculum. The agency will also continue to listen to all voices across Ontario, especially those of Indigenous communities and of other historically marginalized communities.

The updated OSSLT and Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics user guides were made available in 2023, and the new primary and junior user guide will be released in early 2024. These online user guides provide direction and information to school administrators, teachers and IT professionals.

The agency is motivated to continue leveraging technology to enhance its digital assessment program that is focused on the present and future needs of students in Ontario. The following activities highlight additional modernization activities expected to be carried out by the end of the business cycle:

1. Continue to improve assessment administration and content in support of students and educators.
2. Continue to enhance data reporting models through the use of data visualization tools.
3. Continue to share data with schools and school boards through a secure and reliable system aligning with OPS-wide standards for user authentication and identity management.
4. Continue to strengthen the agency's I & IT privacy and security program by undertaking and acting on recommendations from privacy impact and threat and risk assessments.
5. Update business architecture to support program and process improvements and future change initiatives.
6. Reinforce mechanisms for participation of different voices across Ontario, including those of Indigenous communities.

Communications Plan

Context

EQAO is a board-governed agency that contributes to the quality and accountability of Ontario's publicly funded education system. As an evidence-based research-informed organization, EQAO is focused on empowering various partners, including educators,

parents and guardians, policy makers and the public at large, with the insights and information needed to support student learning and improve student outcomes.

Strategy

Through its communications materials, EQAO seeks to increase awareness and understanding of the agency and the information it provides, to share the results of its evaluations broadly and to engage meaningfully with its audiences concerning the appropriate and optimal use of its information to support growth in student achievement and contribute to public accountability in education. EQAO's strategy is based on the concept of integrated communications (i.e., leveraging multiple channels to convey information to key audiences).

Communications Channels

In keeping with the MOU, EQAO acknowledges its responsibility to engage in collaboration with the Ministry of Education on public matters affecting the work of the agency and/or the Ministry.

EQAO uses its website as a central disseminator of information to all audiences. EQAO's website is periodically reviewed to ensure it meets applicable policy guidelines and regulations, including the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the Open Government initiative. The website provides comprehensive information about the agency and its services. It also contains interactive dashboards to allow users to view assessment results easily, electronic versions of assessment result reports, sample assessments, assessment administration guides and other resources. As the agency modernizes its programs, it will continue to share information, resources and insights through its website. The agency also has an information centre dedicated to responding to inquiries through a toll-free telephone number and e-mail.

EQAO also leverages social media as a way of sharing information and engaging directly with audiences. As the agency modernizes, social media is important to providing resources and insights to key audiences.

The increased visibility of EQAO data and information will allow the agency to engage effectively with its audience and to better support students and the public education system in Ontario.

Risk Identification, Assessment and Mitigation Strategies

EQAO undertakes a risk review process and reports risks to the Ministry of Education each year. As a part of the agency's Enterprise Risk Management framework, EQAO reviews its risks on a quarterly basis. The following section summarizes the agency's most relevant risks.

Disruption Before, During or After Administration

The risk of an IT failure (at a school, or with the agency's digital testing platform) impacting students before, during or after administration is a risk to EQAO's operations. Digital assessment also presents cyber threats that must be actively managed. To address this risk, the agency has identified the following mitigation strategies:

- Privacy and security assessments of the vendor system have been undertaken in conjunction with ITS and the CSC. All "high" and "critical" recommendations have been implemented. Security assessments will continue annually, and privacy assessments will continue every two years or with any substantial change to the data collected.
- The agency has established technical support and virtual situation room processes to identify, escalate and resolve issues quickly. EQAO engages regularly with school board I&IT leads to promote the sharing of information.
- The assessments employ a cloud environment, which mitigates capacity and cybersecurity risk better than an on-premises model.
- EQAO ensures the development and maintenance of the agency's business architecture (e.g., business function model, business process model, users and roles, data flows and user journeys).
- The agency has conducted technical readiness activities with school boards. These are repeated annually as required.
- The agency will continue to provide flexible administration windows to ease the technical load on the solution, administration and infrastructure.
- EQAO has standard procedures for testing the e-assessment system prior to the start of administration windows.
- Pre-approved messaging is developed to speed up responsiveness to unforeseen events.

Delays in Public Reporting and/or Individual Student Reporting

There is a risk of a delay in reporting results to the Ministry and the public if delays are experienced during administration, scoring and/or data validation. EQAO has implemented the following controls to minimize delays:

- rigorous testing and quality assurance of all new processes
- monitoring activities against reporting schedules and addressing issues appropriately
- continuously reviewing and implementing process improvements to minimize reoccurrence of issues and streamline reporting
- communicating any delay to Ministry and all education partners

Meeting Public's or Partners' Expectations

Lack of understanding of the role of the agency and the value of the data it collects in support of student achievement has the potential to impact the agency's operations negatively. The initiatives below will help EQAO increase understanding among its education partners and support schools and school boards:

- Clearly communicate the purpose of EQAO assessments, and support parents and guardians, the general public and the education community in leveraging the agency's information for student and system improvement.
- Maintain an updated communications plan that includes strategies to address negative media reporting.
- Monitor media daily and respond to significant issues as appropriate.
- Build the capacity of the education community through outreach and agency initiatives focused on the benefits and appropriate use of EQAO data for improvement planning.
- Maintain a collaborative relationship with the Ministry to address knowledge, policy and practice related to student learning in the province.
- Work with the Ministry to provide timely information to the education community to support its work toward student achievement and keep its members apprised of EQAO activities.

Human Resources

With the onset of digital assessments, there is a risk that some agency employees may not have the skill set to deliver on their new responsibilities, and position descriptions may be out of date. Strategies to mitigate this risk include,

- creating and/or updating job descriptions to better reflect the work that is part of the modernization mandate.
- providing training and professional development to up-skill EQAO's employees to address changes in the way we do our business, to ensure the agency surpasses the status quo.



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