

# Media Release



For immediate release

## OTF, Affiliates call for immediate suspension of EQAO's online literacy test pilot

**TORONTO, March 12, 2021** — Ontario's publicly funded education system should not be subjected to a poorly timed experiment in large-scale, online assessment, especially during a pandemic. Yet, the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) is forging ahead with plans to administer the Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT). EQAO has indicated that a field test version of the online OSSLT will be administered between March and June 2021 to students in face-to-face, in-school settings.

For all intents and purposes, EQAO will harness the results of the field test to gauge the effectiveness of its digital platform. "We can think of no compelling reason why staff and students should be subjected to a brand new, digital, large-scale assessment platform while they are still trying to cope with far more pressing life and learning challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic," states Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) President, Parker Robinson.

Teachers and educators continue to be mindful of the mental health and wellbeing of their students and remain committed to trying to mitigate learning loss and closing gaps in learning, among other consequences of the ongoing pandemic. To that end, OTF and its Affiliates have consistently and persistently underscored the fact that EQAO's online OSSLT field test is an unnecessary distraction and burden for students who are required to take the assessment and for staff who are tasked with administering it.

In recognition of current realities, OTF and its Affiliates, l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO), the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA), and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF), call on Minister of Education Stephen Lecce to

- 1. announce the immediate suspension of the administration of the 2021 Grade 10 OSSLT, and**
- 2. order the cessation of any other initiatives designed to measure the performance of Ontario's publicly funded education system while it is operating in a state of duress without adequate support from the provincial government.**

The Ontario Teachers' Federation is the advocate for the teaching profession in Ontario and for its 160,000 teachers. OTF members are full-time, part-time and occasional teachers in all the publicly funded schools in the province—elementary, secondary, public, Catholic and francophone.

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