

EQAO/OSSLT Accessibility

Mar. 13, 07

In December 2006 John Lubert, representing the Provincial Schools Branch, and Jeryl Phillips, President of ASET met with EQAO to discuss an initiative to provide the OSSLT in accessible formats to Ontario students using assistive technology as an accommodation in Provincial testing situations.

The goals of the project included:

- Ensuring equity of access and equality of opportunity for all Ontario students receiving accommodations for testing provided by the EQAO office.
- Creating efficiencies and reducing duplications in boards' time and resources required by the testing.
- Supporting the Universal Design for Instruction initiative espoused by "Education for All".

With the support and guidance of the Provincial Schools Branch and ASET, a pilot project was conducted with 26 schools from 8 different boards and authorities. On the basis of the feedback from the pilot, a decision was made to offer this year's test in all requested accessible formats.

Boards will now receive the OSSLT transcribed into the formats needed, ready to be used with text-to-speech software. This will eliminate the need for board staff in individual schools across the province to convert a hard copy for their students. It also levels the playing field for students who receive text-to-speech as an assistive technology accommodation by guaranteeing that they all will be working with the same high quality transcription.