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Excellence of Manitoba's public education system affirmed by PISA

Every three years, starting in 1997, 15 year old Canadian students participate in PISA, a global test that is designed to measure what these students know and can do, in reading, math and science. The test has been created by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (or OECD) and most recently, in 2018, included over 500,000 students across 79 nations.

In the latest test, approximately 22,440 students participated across 804 schools in Canada's ten provinces. The major subject tested by PISA in 2018 was reading, with other test questions focused on science and mathematics. This latest round, Manitoba also participated in a financial literacy option along with six other provinces.

"Canada remains the top English-speaking nation in the global rankings and Manitoba is a proud contributor to this important outcome", stated Alan Campbell, president of the Manitoba School Boards Association. In Manitoba, 2,332 students wrote the latest PISA test. "Manitoba's students' skills and abilities places our province within the world's top achievers, as based on the OECD average score", affirmed president Campbell.

The 2018 PISA test shows that this fact remains true across reading, science and mathematics. In terms of average score, Manitoba's 15 year olds achieved an average (or "mean") score of 494 in reading, 482 in mathematics, and 489 in science. This is very comparable to the scores achieved by Manitoba students in 2015, when science was the major subject tested.

"The results are clear— Manitoba's student performance has not worsened over the past three years", explained president Campbell. "The difference between the current and last round of PISA in reading, math and science is ten points or less. These changes are regarded by the OECD as stable over time."

There are no right or wrong scores on a PISA test. The way that students answer questions on the test show us how much a student knows or what they can do, according to their overall level of ability or proficiency. The scores also show us where we need to focus so that, as public school boards and partners with the government of Manitoba in leading a quality education system, we can continue to collaborate to help students build upon their skills by the time they graduate from high school.

"At the end of the day, PISA 2018 shows us that Manitoba's academic achievement remains among the envy of the world and our students deserve to be celebrated", concluded President Campbell.

Backgrounder Fact Sheet: <http://www.mbschoolboards.ca/documents/Advocacy/PISA%202018.pdf>

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