

# School Profile 2005-2006



OTTAWA-CARLETON  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## Merivale High School

Grades 9 to 12 (semestered)



1755 Merivale Rd.  
Nepean, Ontario  
K2G 1E2

Phone: 224-1807  
Fax: 224-1416

School hours:  
8:05 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.

[www.merivalehighschool.org](http://www.merivalehighschool.org)

*Principal*  
Gail Lyon

*Vice Principals*  
Sheilaeagh MacDonald  
Mark Harris  
Tony Mikhael

*Office Administrator*  
Patricia Clark

*Chief Custodian*  
Dalton LaRose

*School Council Chair*  
Cameron Barrington

*Superintendent of Instruction*  
Peter Gamwell

*School Trustee*  
Alex Getty

*Chair of the Board*  
Lynn Graham

*Director of Education/  
Secretary of the Board*  
Lorne M. Rachlis

*General Board Information*  
(613) 721-1820

[www.ocdsb.edu.on.ca](http://www.ocdsb.edu.on.ca)

### Our School

Merivale High School is a progressive learning community that balances tradition and the ability to embrace change. We have an inclusive, dynamic school culture and a forty year old tradition of promoting excellence in academics, athletics, and the arts. Our dedicated and energetic staff is committed to providing a stimulating and caring environment where all students are challenged to reach their potential. We emphasize developing creative and critical thinkers, responsible citizens, and life long learners.

Our curricular programs include:

University	College
Apprenticeship	Gifted
French Immersion	Extended French

Our extensive extracurricular programs include: sports teams (water, court and field), intramural program, junior and senior bands, dramatic and musical productions, arts club, audio-visual club, Junior Achievement, a multicultural club, and a dynamic Students' Council.

### Our Students

We are proud of our students' many and varied achievements.

- Gold medal winners (Six at Regional MusicFest): Junior & Senior concert bands
- Provincial awards for journalistic excellence: Newspaper; Yearbook (Four Toronto Star awards)
- Regional Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards: Junior Achievement Program (Winners of 2004-2005 Titan competition)
- Winner of CHEO poster contest for the last two years
- Winner of Ottawa Hospital graphic competition
- Winner of Exposé Smoking Cessation contest in mass media division
- Municipal Arts and Technology Exhibition
- Host of Board wide Model United Nations Symposium
- Dynamic Multicultural Festival
- 47% of our graduates were Ontario Scholars
- 90% of our graduating students proceeded to post-secondary studies

### Our Staff

Merivale students are served by a caring, dedicated, and student-centered staff.

- 85 teachers
- 15 administrative and support staff
- Classroom tutors
- OCRI volunteers
- Early Intervention staff
- Rideauwood Counsellor
- OCDSB Psychologist
- OCDSB Social Worker
- Spiritual Counsellor
- Cultural Liaison Counsellor
- University of Ottawa and Algonquin Interns

*The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board challenges all students to achieve personal excellence in learning and responsible citizenship within a safe, equitable, diverse and caring environment.*

# Our Community

## Parents and Community

Our School Council provides a forum for the school community to express views on the operations, programs, and services of the school, and to stay informed about educational issues and school activities. Our Council works with the School Board and Ministry to discuss educational changes and challenges. In addition, the Council provides advice to the principal on relevant educational issues, and promotes the interests of the school and students. Participation in School Council is welcomed and encouraged.

Our community partners include Centraires Concert Band, YM/YWCA, Carleton University, Algonquin College, and EDS Canada. In addition, Merivale participates in programs run by Expose, and Let's Talk Science (university based science demonstrations).



## Mission Statement

Honouring the diversity of our talents, Merivale H.S. strives to realize and appreciate the essential unity of all, as citizens in an ever-changing world.



# Programs and Services

## Academic Programs

We are a fully composite secondary school.

- Rigorous academic programs for all pathways (gifted, university, college and workplace)
- Unique programming for the intellectually gifted
- Award winning music program (including Steel Drums)
- Innovative technical programs (communication, transportation, construction & information technology)
- Complete French Immersion program
- Dynamic arts and photography courses
- Inclusive Learning Support and Student Success Initiatives
- Career, educational and personal counselling
- Extensive cooperative education program
- Challenging outdoor education and personal fitness programs
- Popular and practical culinary studies
- Comprehensive graphic design program
- Unique interdisciplinary courses in Leadership and Journalism

## Clubs and Activities

Merivale students have access to an exceptional range of co-curricular activities:

### Clubs

- Art
- MINT/Environment
- Political Issues
- Audio-Visual
- Travel
- Debating
- Reach For The Top
- EARTHCare Initiative
- Tutoring
- Lego Robotics

### Sports

- Track & Field
- Hockey
- Badminton
- Football
- Basketball
- Curling
- Hockey
- Swimming/Water Polo

- Creative Writing
- Student Ambassadors
- Common Ground
- Drama
- Ski & Snowboard
- Sears Festival
- Book Blast
- Junior Achievement
- Knitting Circle
- United Colours

- Baseball
- Volleyball
- Soccer
- Rugby
- Ultimate
- Field
- Cross Country Running
- Golf

## Special Education and ESL Programs

Merivale High School is proud to house one of the OCDSB Gifted Centres, offering programming for the intellectually gifted in both English and French Immersion.

The learning needs of other exceptional students are met in

- Learning Strategies classes
- Individual and small group support
- Literacy classes
- MHS does not have an ESL program.



- Fully serviced library, with a walk-in computer lab for internet
- Learning support centre
- One foods lab, seven science labs, and seven computer labs
- Updated technology facilities for transportation, construction, communication and design programs

## Facilities and Resources

Ongoing upgrading and maintenance of our physical facility is a major focus for our school community. Our newly renovated science labs, the creation of additional technology, drama, and music classrooms, and the upgrading of the library demonstrate our commitment to provide the optimum learning environment for our students.

- Music facilities with individual practice rooms
- Two drama studios, two arts studios, and a photography lab

## Safe Schools Initiatives

Code of Behaviour

- developed with input from staff, students, and School Council
- reviewed annually

### Peer Mediators

- support students
- provide mediation services
- offer strategies for effective conflict resolution
- counsels individual students and staff
- provides information and advice
- liaison with School Resource Officer – Ottawa Police Service

## Classroom Organization

Merivale High School operates on a semestered basis with a two day rotating timetable. The daily schedule runs from 8:05 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. offering four 75-minute classes each day.

Our band programs operate outside the regular day schedule and run all year long.

# Achievement and School Improvement Planning

## Measures of Student Achievement and Success

Ontario Scholar Awards (over 80%) were awarded to 112 graduates and OCDSB Silver Medal Awards (over 90%) to 39. Many graduates earned scholarships in the \$1000 - \$10,000 range and eight of our students won prestigious President's or Chancellor's Scholarships to major Canadian universities. Fifteen MHS students earned Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top Scholarships and one of ten CMA (Certified Management Accountants) scholarships awarded in Ontario went to a MHS student. We value our students' contributions to their peers in providing mediation, tutoring, coaching, and leadership on athletic, music and student councils in the school, and their additional commitments to the wider community at large.

Merivale H.S. students have consistently excelled in the University of Waterloo Math and Chemistry contests, Provincial Accounting contests, and French Public Speaking contests. They have been selected for the Shad Valley summer science project. Major American athletic scholarships in men's hockey, women's basketball and rowing have been earned by our students. Two MHS students have won the prestigious Queens University High School Debating Tournament, and a number of our drama students have won the top award at the Sears Drama Festival. In terms of the provincial literacy testing, Merivale has consistently scored above both board and provincial averages.

## School Improvement Plans and Initiatives

### Merivale's Mission Statement

Honouring the diversity of our talents, Merivale H.S. strives to realize and appreciate the essential unity of all, as citizens in an ever changing world.

### Merivale's School Objectives

Merivale H.S. provides a safe, caring, and challenging learning environment which provides students with the opportunity to:

- acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for post-secondary education and the world of work
- foster independent creative and critical thinking
- develop a sense of personal responsibility as citizens of a community
- foster a commitment to life long learning
- develop an appreciation of their culture, their community, and their country

### Merivale's School Improvement Plans and Initiatives

The focus of our School Improvement Plan is literacy, numeracy and facility upgrade. As such, we are committed to:

- improving literacy and numeracy skills for all students
- reviewing Board-wide and EQAO examination results to develop intervention strategies to improve student learning
- conducting departmental reviews following each report card to assess, develop and implement new initiatives
- working with staff on the continued implementation of new assessment and evaluation practices of Secondary School Reform
- focusing on improved communication between home, school and our local community
- continuing to upgrade and modernize our physical facility
- providing on-going professional development for staff to better meet the needs of all students



# Leadership Recognition

**“Leadership in the OCDSB is the demonstration of personal initiative to achieve a positive outcome.”**

## **Students:**

Promoting student leadership is an integral part of our school community's vision. Students' Council, Athletic Council, Music Council and Drama Council are examples of student led organizations that enhance the quality of life at our school. Merivale students participate in a number of fundraising activities designed to encourage community involvement and foster responsible citizenship. These include the Grind, Jump for Heart, Blood donor clinics for Canadian Blood Services, Toy Mountain, Tsunami relief (raised over \$6000 dollars), the Thanksgiving Canned Food Drive and various athletic initiatives to support medical organizations such as the Ottawa Hospital Foundation (e.g. two hundred Merivale students volunteered their time at the National Capital Marathon).

- In addition to informal recognition on a regular basis, we also acknowledge student contributions in our classrooms, school announcements, newsletters, assemblies, our monthly Sundae School meetings, our principal's report to school council, and end-of-year awards ceremonies. We consult with Students' Council on a regular basis when doing long term planning.

## **Staff:**

Our staff members have a wealth of professional qualifications including Bachelors and Masters degrees in Arts, Fine Arts, Physical Education and Sciences, as well as additional qualifications in Special Education, English as a Second Language, Music, Visual Arts, Guidance, and Computers in Education. This year MHS teacher awards include the Patrick O'Brien Outstanding High School Teacher Award (Carleton University), Paul Menton Center Appreciations Award (Carleton University) and an Arts Appreciation award (from the Board). They actively participate in numerous Board-wide professional development activities in literacy and numeracy; we recognize their initiative by providing and supporting opportunities for further professional growth. We also recognize staff leadership via personal interactions with one another, letters of thanks, the "three stars" awards during staff meetings, school announcements, school newsletters, assemblies, performance appraisals, and our principal's report to school council.

## **Parents/Guardians/Volunteers:**

Merivale is a school community that thrives on the contributions of parents and volunteers. Our volunteers have contributed countless hours of support in diverse capacities such as coaching, tutoring, library support, working in classrooms (i.e. special education and French language support), supervising field trips, and planning school related events such as career fairs and the fortieth reunion. As invaluable partners, we continue to thank our volunteers on an on-going basis, and look for opportunities to acknowledge them through our school announcements, newspaper and our principal's report to school council.

## **Community:**

Merivale is surrounded by a supportive business community. A large number of local businesses regularly contribute prizes to support school activities (i.e. the Tsunami relief effort, Grade 9 Orientation Day, etc.). Local grocery stores and restaurants provide ongoing support for student and staff initiatives. Organizers of the National Capital Marathon recently contributed \$1500 towards our physical education programs. We recognize our community partners through our school announcements, school newsletters, school web site, principal's report to school council, and thank you cards. We also invite them to School Council, to student run initiatives, to awards ceremonies, and to our Cooperative Education appreciation breakfast.

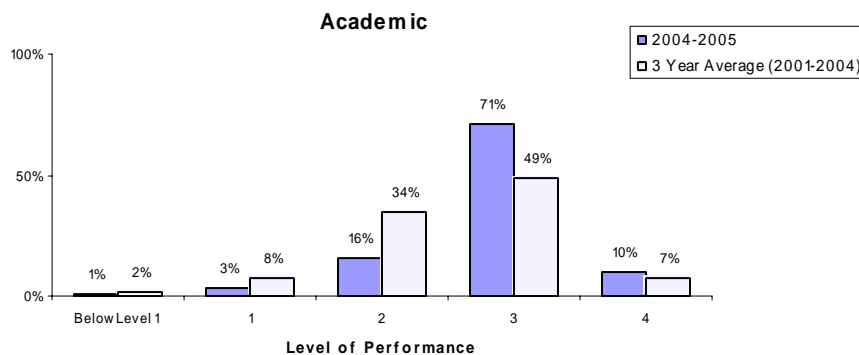
# Results of EQAO Grade 9 Assessment

Each year, students participate in the province-wide assessment of mathematics. This assessment by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) is given at the end of the academic and applied courses in January and/or June, depending on whether or not a school is semestered. The assessment is only one of the many ways that teachers measure student performance. Results on this assessment may not reflect a student's achievement during the entire school year. The same is true for the school-level results reported below; they should be interpreted in the context of other information, some of which is available in the school profile.

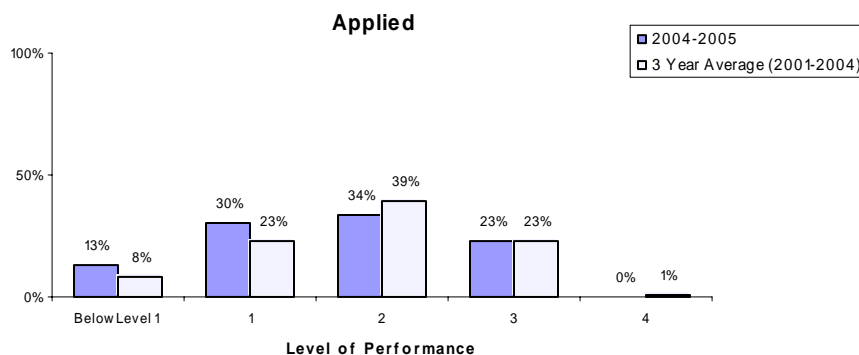
The following table describes grade 9 students in this school for 2004-2005 testing:

	Number of Students	Exempt	No data	Receiving Special Education support (excluding gifted)	ESL	Only/mostly speak language other than English at home	Speaks as often in English as another language at home
Academic	168	0%	1%	7%	0%	8%	17%
Applied	56	0%	5%	52%	0%	2%	8%

Please note that year-to-year comparisons of results should be treated with caution, since for example, the students participating are different. In small schools, the achievement of a few students can have a large effect on the percentages reported for each level of performance. Results for participating students are shown below:



The percentages of grade 9 students achieving at Levels 3 and 4 were; *Board* 75% *Province* 69%



The percentages of grade 9 students achieving at Levels 3 and 4 were; *Board* 28% *Province* 29%

# Results of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

## About the Test

The Ontario Ministry of Education has mandated that the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) be given to Grade 10 students province-wide to determine if they can successfully demonstrate the reading and writing skills that apply to all subject areas in the provincial curriculum up to the end of Grade 9.

The OSSLT is developed by the Education Quality and Accountability Office. It includes texts, questions, and tasks that vary in level of difficulty. In the reading section, students read a number of short passages and respond to questions involving multiple-choice, short-answer, and short-answer with explanation. In the writing section, students write a summary, a paragraph, a short report, and a series of paragraphs supporting an opinion. Up to and including the 2004 administration, the test has taken place over two days (2.5 hours per day) in October; effective next year, the OSSLT will be moved to the spring, and will be condensed to take place on a single day (2.5 hours in total).

Receiving a secondary school diploma depends on passing the OSSLT—i.e., this is a “credentialling test.” Exemptions and deferrals are given only under certain circumstances. Students who are not successful on the test are able to attempt it again, in a future administration, or enroll in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC).

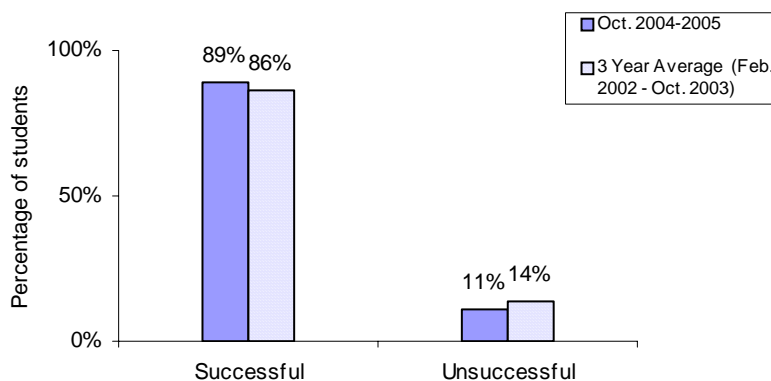
## The Results

EQAO reports results only in terms of whether or not the student passed/was successful on the test, rather than levels of student performance. Students are considered to have completed the test successfully only if they have passed both the reading and writing sections. The results for this school, compared to the board (OCDSB) and the province, are shown below for the 2004-2005 academic year.

**Method 1:** All first-time eligible students (i.e., not exempt) are included in the results.

	Number of first-time eligible students	% Deferred	% Absent	Receiving Special Education support (excluding gifted)	ESL/ELD	Only/mostly speak language other than English at home	Speaks as often in English as another language at home
Merivale HS	295	4%	1%	13%	0%	10%	15%

**Method 2:** Only those first-time eligible students who *fully participated* in the testing (i.e., not deferred or absent) are included.



Percentages of grade 10 students who were *Successful*: Board % 87 Province % 82

## Next Steps

Students who do not complete the test successfully will be provided with appropriate remedial help. Such remediation will be guided by individual student diagnostic feedback provided by EQAO. Each school will continue with its own school improvement plans concerning literacy.

The Board and schools will be providing a variety of strategies to assist in supporting students, including:

- Reaching Higher – Supports for Student Achievement in Literacy (workshops and resources for grade 6,7,8 and 9 teachers to help students with low literacy skills)
- Academy of Reading – Computer-Based Skills Course
- English Literacy Skills – Grade 11 Open Course
- Workshops for teachers to promote best practices in reading and writing instruction, balanced literacy, and literacy across the curriculum
- Sage Youth (volunteers to assist students with reading)
- Workshops for teachers of grades 7, 8, and 9 to introduce the requirements of the OSSLT

Percentages may not add to 100, due to rounding.

# Results of District-wide Assessments

In 2004-2005, all schools fully participated in testing for the ENG4U, ENG4C, MCR3U and MCF3M District-wide evaluation projects.

These projects aim to create consistent evaluation of student performance by providing:

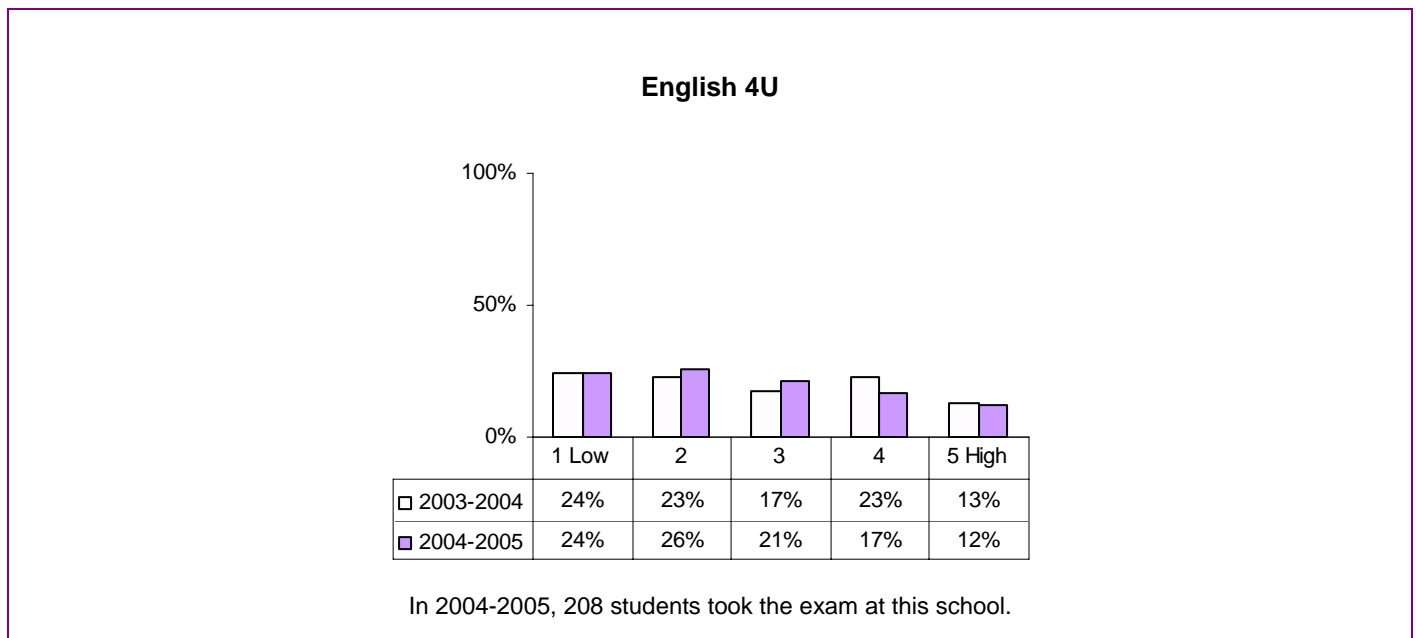
- a common examination;
- a detailed marking scheme for the examination;
- conference marking;
- exemplar booklets to show students and teachers the criteria for, and examples of, successful performance;
- workshops for teachers; and
- reports of school and Board results.

Quintiles divide the marks of all students who took an examination into five equal groups. This means that one-fifth (20%) of all students who took an examination scored in each quintile. For semestered schools, results in the January and June exams have been combined for reporting purposes.

The following charts show the percentages of our participating students whose marks fall within each of the five quintiles. The closer to 20% of students a school has in each quintile, the closer the school's results are to the results for all students in the Board. Please note that in small schools, the achievement of a few students can have a large effect on the percentages reported in each quintile.

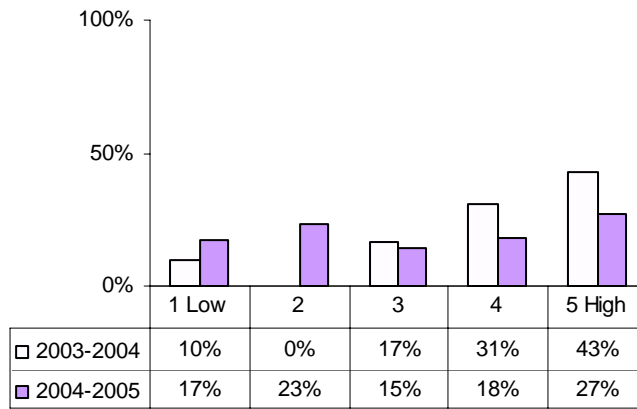
Heads of English and Mathematics would be pleased to discuss examination preparation, procedures, and marking with those who are interested. Please contact the school for further information.

Results by quintiles for participating students are shown below:



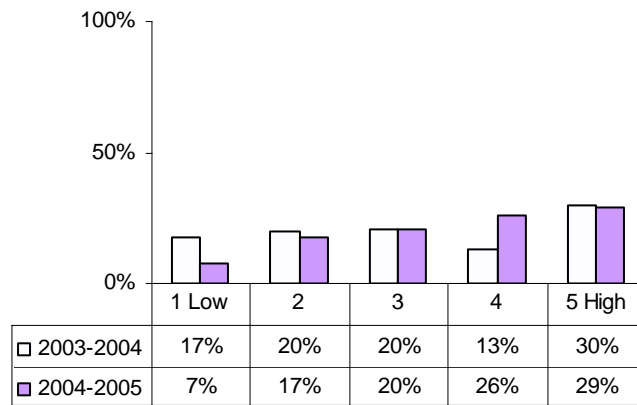


### English 4C



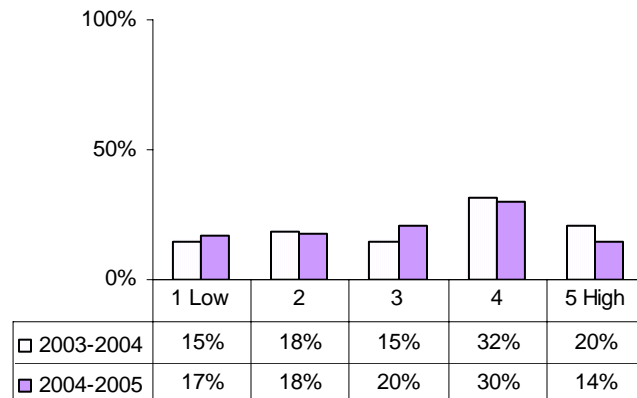
In 2004-2005, 82 students took the exam at this school.

### Mathematics MCR3U



In 2004-2005, 122 students took the exam at this school.

### Mathematics MCF3M



In 2004-2005, 83 students took the exam at this school.