

What **FAMILIES** Want To Know About **DE-STREAMING** and Inclusive Grade 9

What is Streaming?

- Academic streaming describes the process of dividing students into differentiated groups based on their perceived academic ability and/or prior achievement.
- Ontario was the only province that had streaming for English, Science, Geography, History and French in Grade 9. The course types for these streamed Grade 9 courses were Academic, Applied, and Locally Developed.

What is De-streaming?

- De-streaming means that students will no longer be separated into Academic and Applied Streams. Students will take a combination of courses made up of De-streamed, Academic and Open level courses. Locally developed courses will still be available for some students as well.
- In De-streamed classrooms, there will be a distinct shift in pedagogical practices and assessment to ensure improved equitable outcomes for all students.
- De-streamed, Academic and Open courses will prepare students for university, college, apprenticeship and workplace pathways, providing more post-secondary options for our students.





De-streaming can serve to provide full and equitable access to programs of study aligned with students' interests and career aspirations - regardless of race, class, ability or language."

Tianna Follwell & Sam Andrey, Ontario 360 (2021)

Why are courses being De-streamed?

- Research indicates that there is a disproportionate number of racialized students in applied level classes in Ontario.
- Ontario students and parents have indicated that they consider course type selection in Grade 8 to be too early. By De-streaming Grade 9, students and families have an additional year of high school to decide on a particular pathway and keep course options open. This will support all students while preparing them for senior secondary courses that allow them to pursue post-secondary education pathways (apprenticeship, college or university) of their choice.
- Research has also shown that students benefit from learning in groups of students of varied abilities and interests in which teachers have high and appropriate expectations for all students and a clear understanding that all students can be successful.
- De-streaming is one step towards addressing systemic discrimination and helping to break down barriers for Indigenous, Black, and racialized students, students from low-income households, students with disabilities, and students with special education needs to maintain equitable opportunities for future pathway options for all students.
- In September 2021, Grade 9 Math was De-streamed and the Ministry provided a new curriculum for this course.
- In September 2022, Grade 9 Science will be De-streamed. The Ministry will be providing a new curriculum for this course.
- In September 2022, the Ministry of Education will remove all Applied courses in Grade 9. Only Grade 9 De-streamed, Academic, Open, or Locally Developed course options will be offered. These courses will form the DDSB's Inclusive Grade 9 Program.

What is the Inclusive Grade 9 Program?

- The Inclusive Grade 9 program eliminates the streaming pathways of Applied and Academic and is designed to address harm created by streaming our students. The courses will provide a variety of ways for students to share their thinking, explore content, and bring their voice into the curriculum. As a result, courses should be more accessible for all students, providing connections to students' identities, learning styles, and thereby, engaging more learners with curricular content.
- Inclusive Grade 9 courses will create more equitable outcomes for our students, increase motivation and engagement and contribute to the overall success of our students.

What is the difference between Inclusive Academic, Inclusive De-streamed and Inclusive Open Grade 9 Courses?

- **Inclusive Grade 9 Academic** uses the Academic curriculum expectations.
- **Inclusive Grade 9 De-streamed** uses the new De-streamed curriculum expectations.
- **Inclusive Grade 9 Open** uses the open curriculum and allows students to keep their options open regarding post-secondary opportunities.
- All of the courses are grounded in Universal Design for Learning, including a focus on Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy, Differentiated Instruction, Assessment and Evaluation and classroom supports for all students.



Is there somewhere we can go for help if I or my child have questions about course selection?

- Grade 8 Teachers, Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs), and Pathway Counsellors are all available to assist with the selection of courses for Inclusive Grade 9.
- High Schools will also have information evenings to assist Grade 8 students with transition planning and Guidance Counsellors are always ready to support current and incoming students.

Will Locally Developed courses be offered?

- Yes - Inclusive Locally Developed courses support the needs of some students who have been receiving significantly modified curriculum content in Grade 8. These courses accommodate educational and/or career preparation needs that are not met through other courses. Students who complete Inclusive Locally Developed courses in Grade 9 and 10 are being prepared to go directly into Grade 11 Workplace courses, which lead to employment and/or apprenticeship opportunities after high school.
- Inclusive Locally Developed Courses will be offered in Grade 9 at some schools in the areas of English, Math, Science and/or Geography.
- Students who are pursuing a college or university program should be aware that Inclusive Locally Developed and/or Open courses do not meet the criteria for admission to these post-secondary institutions.



When consulting about Inclusive Locally Developed courses, what questions should I ask?

Streaming contributes to racial and class-based imbalance by limiting social and economic mobility of certain groups.

Brunello & Checchi (2007)

- It's important that the decision to take Inclusive Locally Developed courses be made in consultation with the school (Administration, Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), Central Facilitators, etc.), the family, and the student, as part of meaningful transition planning for all students.
- Families are encouraged to ask:
 - At what grade level is my child able to work independently without modifications (changes made to the grade level expectations)?
 - What is the long-term impact on my future course selections?
 - Is there flexibility in changing course types?

What supports will be provided to students within the Inclusive Grade 9 program?

- Support will be offered from the classroom teacher by ensuring multiple entry points for learning, centring students' needs, and offering a variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in various ways that are reflective of students' learning styles and preferences.
- Each school offers additional, individualized supports for their students which may include extra help sessions, access to tutoring, and student success opportunities.

What if my student is struggling in Grade 9?

- Developing a relationship with your child's teacher(s) through early and ongoing communication is essential to ensure academic success. Families are encouraged to communicate directly with the subject teacher. Your child's guidance counsellors, academic resource teacher, as well as vice principal and/or principal, can also be a source of support.
- All secondary schools have a student success program to support students who are struggling academically.

NOTE: The DDSB also offers summer school programming that focuses on numeracy or literacy fundamentals to help prepare students for high school.

How does Inclusive Grade 9 impact my child with an I.E.P.?

- Teachers will continue to implement the Individual Education Plan for students who have Special Education needs.
- Teachers will continue to work collaboratively with the school's Inclusive Education team to support students.

Where can I read more information or research about De-streaming and Inclusive Grade 9 courses?

More information about streaming can be found on the following websites:

- [Restacking the Deck](#)
- [How to End Streaming in Ontario Schools](#)



Ending early streaming in secondary school means that Grade 9 students will continue to learn together in the same class. This will keep options open for all students to pursue postsecondary education and training in any pathway they choose, including skilled trades.

Ontario Ministry of Education, 2021

References:

- Brunello, G., & Checchi, D. (2007). *Does school tracking affect equality of opportunity? New international evidence*. *Economic Policy*, 22(52), 781-861.
- Follwell, T., & Andry, S. (2021). *How to End Streaming in Ontario Schools*. <https://on360.ca/policy-papers/how-to-end-streaming-in-ontario-schools/>
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- York Region District School Board. (2021) What Families Want to Know About De-streaming. <https://www2.yrdsb.ca/schools-programs/de-streaming>