Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board

Grade Nine De-Streaming for KPR Families

What is Streaming?

Academic streaming is the process of separating students into different levels or pathways based on their perceived ability and/or prior academic achievement.

» Although other provinces in Canada no longer stream Grade 9 students, Ontario continued this practice until recently, streaming students into either Academic, Applied, or Locally Developed pathways.

What is De-Streaming?

De-Streaming removes the different levels or pathways in the Grade 9 program. All students take their courses at the same level — just as they did from Kindergarten to Grade 8. These inclusive Grade 9 courses are designed to reduce gaps in student achievement — particularly among groups of students who have been and/or continue to be disadvantaged.

» De-streaming is part of the Ontario Ministry of Education's action plan to address systemic racism and discrimination.

» De-streaming seeks to break down barriers for those students who have been historically and are currently being disadvantaged including, but not limited to: First Nations, Metis and Inuit students; Black and racialized students; students from low-income households; students with disabilities; and, students with special education needs.

» De-streaming means students entering Grade 9 across the province of Ontario as of September 2022 will no longer be separated into different streams. Students will take a combination of the inclusive compulsory courses (De-Streamed Mathematics, De-Streamed Science, Academic English, Academic Geography, and Academic French as a Second Language) and the inclusive Open Level elective courses.

» Inclusive Grade 9 courses are intended to create more equitable outcomes and increase student motivation and engagement, in order to ensure that all learners have an equal opportunity to succeed, thrive, and reach their full potential.

Why are Courses Being De-Streamed?

Regardless of their backgrounds and perceived abilities, all students benefit from learning together in a diverse group. As well, all students deserve more time to grow and mature before making important decisions about their post-secondary pathway.

» Research suggests student achievement outcomes increase when students learn together with students of all abilities and interests and when teachers have high and appropriate expectations for all students.

» Statistics show that students in the Applied stream are more often from a lower socioeconomic status, racialized, and/or identified with special education needs.

» Skilled trades employers have indicated that students need to have a stronger understanding of literacy and numeracy basics as well as critical thinking and problem-solving skills — all of which are further developed for students through the inclusive, de-streamed program.

» International research recommends that school systems eliminate streaming for students under the age of 15 to ensure that post-secondary pathway options are kept open for students until they have enough experience to make decisions about their futures.

» Students and parents have stated that they consider pathway selection in Grade 8 to be too early and students say they would like to experience high school before selecting a pathway.

What Courses are Being De-Streamed?

The five core subjects (Science, Mathematics, English, Geography and French) are now delivered to students in Grade 9 at the same level.

» The inclusive Grade 9 program eliminates streaming pathway choices for Science, Mathematics, English, Geography, and French as a Second Language (Core French, Extended French, and French Immersion).

» A new curriculum for Grade 9 Mathematics was released by the Ontario Ministry of Education for implementation in September 2021 and in Science for implementation in September 2022. The Grade 9 Mathematics and Science curricula were re-designed to help students to acquire and develop the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in today's rapidly changing world.

» English, Geography, and French courses in Grade 9 use the Academic curriculum expectations, but courses are now intended to be delivered in ways that are more accessible to all students, appeal to a variety of learning styles, and provide authentic connections to students' identities and experiences.

How Does De-Streaming Affect Locally Developed Courses?

Locally Developed courses in English, Mathematics, and Science will continue to be offered to students who require a modified curriculum in these areas.

» Locally Developed courses in English, Mathematics, and Science will continue to be offered to Grade 9 students at KPR to support the needs of some students who have been receiving significantly modified curriculum content in Grade 8 and whose learner profiles suggest a need for additional literacy and numeracy support. These courses accommodate educational and/or career preparation needs that are not met in other courses.

» Students who complete Locally Developed courses in Grade 9 and 10 will continue to be prepared to go into Grade 11 Workplace courses, which lead to employment and/or apprenticeship opportunities after high school.

> “The implementation of inclusive education principles in education influences all aspects of school life. It promotes a school climate that encourages all students to work to high levels of achievement, affirms the worth of all students, and helps students strengthen their sense of identity and develop a positive self-image. It encourages staff and students alike to value and show respect for diversity in the school and the broader society. Inclusive education promotes equity, healthy relationships, and active, responsible citizenship.”
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> *Ontario Ministry of Education (2021), Considerations for Program Planning: Human Rights, Equity and Inclusive Education*

» The decision to take Locally Developed courses in high school (when a student in Grade 8 has been receiving a modified curriculum) should be made by families and students in consultation with school administration and special education resource teachers as part of transition planning from Grade 8 to Grade 9.

» Students who wish to pursue a post-secondary program at college or university should be aware that Locally Developed courses meet the criteria for admission in only a limited number of post-secondary programs.

What Supports Will Be Provided to Students Within the Inclusive De-Streamed Grade Nine Program?

Many supports will be available to students including all prior IEP accommodations. In addition to in-class help, students may receive support from the Special Education Resource Team, the Student Success Team, and/or the Guidance Department at the school level. Extra-help sessions may also be provided.

» Classroom teachers will offer support to students by ensuring multiple entry points for learning, by centering students' needs and identities in the development and delivery of lessons, and by offering a variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in ways that are reflective of students' learning styles and preferences.

» Teachers will continue to implement the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students who have special education needs and will continue to work collaboratively with the Special Education Resource Team and the Student Success Team to offer supports for individual students as needed.

» Strong partnerships between home and school will continue to be essential to ensure student success. Parents/guardians can nurture this relationship through early and ongoing communication with their student's subject teachers.

» Additional school supports may include guidance counsellors, special education resource teachers, as well as the Vice Principal and/or Principal.

» All schools have a student success program to assist students who are struggling academically.

» Schools may also offer additional, individualized supports for students such as extra help sessions.

For more information about de-streaming at KPR, contact your school's administration or guidance department.

> “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.”
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> *Ontario Ministry of Education (2021), Modernizing Grade 9 Math Education in Ontario Schools*

References:

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