

FSL for School Administrators
FROM AWARENESS to ACTION

From Awareness to Action is a professional learning publication to support school administrators in the strengthening of French as a Second Language.



ISSUE 9 De-streaming in the FSL Classroom

IN THIS ISSUE

the focus is on highlighting the role of administrators in supporting FSL instruction in the de-streamed classroom.

WHY DE-STREAMING?

As of September 2022, all Grade 9 core courses* are single streamed including Grade 9 French. The impetus for de-streaming is the dismantling of inequitable practices. Research has proven that students in the applied stream are significantly less likely to graduate and pursue postsecondary education. “Researchers and practitioners around the world have long critiqued the practice of streaming on the grounds that it perpetuates inequities along race and class lines, as students placed in lower-ability streams encounter lower expectations and simplified curriculum.” (Rubin & Noguera, 2004; Oakes, 1985; Oakes, 2015) (**De-streaming in Ontario: History, Evidence, and Educator Reflections**)

To ensure the success of students in the de-streamed classroom, the following elements must be considered: culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy; students' strengths, interest and needs; an understanding of modifications and accommodations and UDL (Universal Design for Learning, i.e., low floor/high ceiling tasks); the implementation of differentiation; assessment and evaluation that aligns with [Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools](#); the effective integration of technology; a profound understanding of curriculum; and a constructivist approach to learning. The next question is what does this look like in the French Second Language classroom?

WHAT'S MY ROLE?

WHAT'S MY ROLE? As an administrator, one of your crucial roles is to promote the inclusion of all students in French Second Language instruction. Similar to the emphasis on equity, diversity, and inclusion that is driving de-streaming, the inclusion of all students in the opportunity to learn an additional language is essential in a country where plurilingualism is valued. Along with language acquisition, students benefit from engaging in increased problem-solving, an understanding of diverse cultures, and the ability to better compete in the global job market. The importance and benefits of French second language learning for all learners is highlighted by the Ontario Ministry of Education at **French as a Second Language programs**.

SUPPORTING MY FSL TEACHERS

In support of educators, the response to de-streaming must be pedagogical. Teachers require more tools in their arsenal of strategies to address the varied needs of the students in their classrooms.

1. Teachers must deeply understand their curriculum through uncovering the big ideas (overall expectations in **The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9 to 12: French as a Second Language, Core French, Extended French, French Immersion** which describe in general terms the goals of the course for each strand are consistent across grades and pathways) and by determining multiple entry points for students to achieve those essential understandings.
2. Educators must also possess a profound understanding of the students in their classrooms, their strengths, interests, and the areas in which they require support, modifications, and/or accommodations. (Including **Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs**) Culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy must be at the forefront of school-wide goals, foci, and look fors. Students engage with learning when they see themselves reflected in the classroom, tasks, reading material, and the school community overall. (**Capacity Building: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy**)

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3. In the de-streamed classroom, FSL teachers need to lean on the tenets of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) with an emphasis on learning goals, success criteria, and 'I can' statements as they build lessons around this framework (**FSL: A guide to Reflective Practice for Core French Teachers, Module 6 Learner Autonomy and Metacognition**). Through the common language of the CEFR, grammar is taught in context, and learning goals are authentic with meaningful targeted language objectives (**Grammar in Action**). Finally, tasks must be action-oriented and focused on real-life situation (**From Communicative to Action-Oriented**).

Administrators need to engage FSL teachers in professional learning on de-streaming and discuss with them where their pedagogical strengths and next steps lie. Many FSL educators work in isolation so fostering dialogue between educators, which sometimes means between schools, will assist them with programming for the diverse needs of the students in the Grade 9 single-streamed French classroom.

**Grade 9 Open Level Core French (FSF1O) for students with little or no background in Core French, is not a de-streamed course.*

What's My Role?

As administrators, you are the advocate for all students, especially those who are marginalized, to ensure that all pathways are made available to them. You must equally be a proponent of French Second Language learning as an indispensable puzzle piece of students' postsecondary pathway mapping.



One article to read, one quote to consider, one link to click...

1. "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. However, ending streaming in schools effectively necessitates more than just combining students with varying educational needs into a single classroom. It requires a careful multi-year strategy developed collaboratively between education and community stakeholders that includes:
 - a commitment to a long-term cultural and pedagogical shift informed by principles of equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression;
 - investment in meaningful supports and training for educators; and
 - ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure sustained success."
 Tianna Thompson, **PATHWAY TO DE-STREAMING: Levelling the stacked deck requires hard work and proper support.**
2. "The Ontario equity and inclusive education strategy focuses on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education, and identifying and eliminating discriminatory biases, systemic barriers, and power dynamics that limit the ability of students to learn, grow, and contribute to society. Antidiscrimination education continues to be an important and integral component of the strategy, (p. 45, The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9 to 12: French as a Second Language, Core French, Extended French, French Immersion)."