

February 22, 2022

VIA E-MAIL: stephen.lecce@pc.ola.org

The Honorable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
5th floor, 438 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Lecce

We are writing on behalf of 200,000 educators in Ontario's publicly funded education system to offer our expertise and service as the government prepares to implement de-streaming in Ontario schools.

As the organizations representing Ontario teachers, education workers, and other school staff, we remain deeply committed to eliminating racism, discrimination, and all systemic barriers in our schools and society. We acknowledge the varied and systemic ways that inequalities are produced and re-produced in our social institutions, and will continue to advocate for, and support, efforts to address inequities in our classrooms, our publicly funded education system, and our broader communities.

To this end, the government's announcement on November 10 that the Grade 9 curriculum would be de-streamed starting in the 2022-23 school year presents a welcomed and unique opportunity. We have been raising concerns for many years about how streaming has led to students being "labelled," creating barriers for them along their educational journey. We appreciate that the government has acknowledged these factors.

However, announcing an end to streaming is only a first step in this process. The government cannot simply tick a box, change course codes, and assume their work is done. Without proper consideration or investment to address the many issues at a systemic level, the transition to a de-streamed curriculum could inadvertently exacerbate existing problems and prove counterproductive to improving equity and diversity in Ontario's publicly funded schools. This would do a disservice to students and risk jeopardizing the success of any de-streaming efforts.

As the front-line educators in Ontario's publicly funded education system, we are acutely aware of the need to take a comprehensive and holistic approach to implementing de-streaming in a way that involves meaningful collaboration with education experts and community stakeholders and establishes a robust suite of resources and supports for students and educators. We are best situated to provide expertise on the structural, pedagogical, and cultural changes that will be necessary to address in order to realize the vision of a de-streamed curriculum.

For these reasons, we urge you to **immediately convene a De-streaming Implementation Work Group**. This multi-stakeholder work group should inform, develop, and monitor a robust implementation strategy. In addition to government officials, this work group should involve people from different regions of the province and include representatives from:

- teacher and education worker unions;
- principals and trustee associations;
- parent groups;
- student organizations;
- community advocacy groups.

Ontario's classrooms are among the most diverse in the world. Every student deserves the opportunity to realize their potential and de-streaming can play an important role in realizing this objective. In order to achieve real results, to move beyond exercises in performative equity, we must bring to bear a range of experiences and perspectives. Our students deserve nothing less. We look forward to hearing from you about establishing a **De-streaming Implementation Work Group**.

Yours truly,

Karen Brown, President
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

Barb Dobrowolski, President
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

Karen Littlewood, President
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation

Anne Vinet-Roy, présidente
Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens