



REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES April 27, 2021

Deb Crawford, Director of Education

SUBJECT: De-Streaming Grade 9 Mathematics Update

PREPARED BY: Scott Johnson, Superintendent of Education

BACKGROUND:

Ontario's Ministry of Education is committed to addressing systemic discrimination and helping to break down barriers for Indigenous, Black, and racialized students, students from low-income households, and students with disabilities and other students with special education needs so that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed, thrive, and reach their full potential.

Aligned with this commitment, the ministry is developing a comprehensive plan to end streaming into Academic and Applied courses, beginning in Grade 9, and replace them with courses that meet student needs and keep future pathway options open for all students. The ministry will support de-streaming of Grade 9 beginning with Mathematics. As of September 2021, Academic and Applied Mathematics courses will no longer be offered for students entering Grade 9. Locally Developed Compulsory Credit Courses will continue to be offered.

Ontario's vision for de-streaming is to address policies and practices that negatively impact students so that all students are supported to be prepared for the senior program in secondary school, have equity of access to pursue any postsecondary pathway they choose, and to be successful in their future careers.

The objectives for de-streaming are as follows:

- 1) Phase out Grade 9 Academic and Applied (streamed) courses and phase in Grade 9 de-streamed courses and support students to be successful in de-streamed courses.
- 2) Dismantle the systemic discrimination associated with streamed Grade 9 courses that has contributed to the marginalization of some students, including Black, Indigenous and racialized students, students from low-income households, and students with disabilities and other students with special education needs.
- 3) Remove barriers and support more students to graduate from secondary school and pursue post-secondary education pathways of their choice.

The Ministry has three main goals for de-streaming, which have been informed by a review of research on successful de-streaming initiatives over the last thirty years.

**REPORT:
De-Streaming Grade 9 Mathematics Update**

The three goals are:

- 1) Cultural shifts in schools and boards to identify and dismantle systemic discrimination and structural inequities.
- 2) Increased educator capacity for effective culturally responsive instruction, assessment and evaluation in de-streamed classes.
- 3) Increased student engagement, achievement and well-being.

In Ontario, Academic and Applied course types or “streams” have been in place since 1999. The original intention behind Applied courses was to provide a different pedagogical approach to learning. However, over time, the Applied course type has become perceived as less academically rigorous and has negatively impacted certain marginalized groups. Students in the Applied course type stream are limited in the courses they can take in later grades, which in turn limits their access to post-secondary pathways (*see Appendix A*).

The Ministry of Education has just provided SCCDSB with a \$25,000 TPA to effectively support the implementation of the gr 9 de-streamed mathematics program. The TPA allows our system to use the funds for programming for:

- Grade 8 students with learning gaps in math;
- Grade 8 and 9 transition teams to develop targeted transition plans for vulnerable and underserved Grade 8 students;
- Planning for Indigenous students who are transitioning from federally funded First Nations elementary schools to provincially funded secondary schools; and
- Targeted outreach to students who are disengaged.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *De-Streaming Grade 9 Mathematics Update* for information.

Appendix A
Planning for Gr 9 De-streaming in Mathematics

Scott Johnson
Superintendent of Education
St Clair Catholic DSB
scott.johnson@sccdsb.net

Systemic Bias



Ontario
Human Rights Commission
Commission ontarienne des
droits de la personne

[English](#) | [Français](#)



[YOUR RIGHTS](#) [CODE GROUNDS](#) [SOCIAL AREAS](#) [EDUCATION & OUTREACH](#) [OUR WORK](#)

[Home](#) » [Racism and racial discrimination: Systemic discrimination \(fact sheet\)](#)

Racism and racial discrimination: Systemic discrimination (fact sheet)

[+ show tags](#)

Racial discrimination can result from individual behaviour as well as because of the unintended and often unconscious consequences of a discriminatory system. This is known as systemic discrimination.

Systemic discrimination can be described as patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate disadvantage for racialized persons.

The Commission is very concerned about systemic discrimination. Assessing and tackling systemic discrimination can be complex. Nevertheless, the Commission expects organizations to be aware that their "normal way of doing things" may be having a negative impact on racialized persons.

Destreaming in Grade 9 Math: Sept 2021

History of Academic Streaming in Ontario


Toronto

Ontario to end 'discriminatory' practice of academic streaming in Grade 9

[f](#) [t](#) [e](#) [v](#) [i](#)

Will also ban suspensions for young students - both disproportionately affect Black students, studies found

CBC News · Posted: Jul 06, 2020 9:12 AM ET | Last Updated: July 6



Ontario Minister of Education Stephen Lecce called academic streaming 'systemic, racist' and 'discriminatory' in an interview with the Toronto Star published this morning. (Christopher Katsarow/The Canadian Press)

Toronto

Ontario's effort to scrap streaming will begin with math courses in 2021

[f](#) [t](#) [e](#) [v](#) [i](#)

Education Minister Stephen Lecce says the province's math curriculum will be the 1st to be de-streamed

The Canadian Press · Posted: Jul 09, 2020 2:52 PM ET | Last Updated: July 9



Research shows students from racialized communities, low-income households and other marginalized groups are more likely to be steered away from academic courses, which in turn affects everything from graduation rates to employment prospects later in life. (Carlos Caetano/Shutterstock)

Destreaming in Ontario: History, Evidence and Educator Reflections

[f](#) Jackie Pichette, Fiona Deller and Julia Colyar [t](#) October 30, 2020

Report [DOWNLOAD](#)

Destreaming in Ontario high schools should be expanded to all core subjects in Grades 9 and 10

Ontario is the only province in the country that separates students into academic and non-academic streams as early as Grade 9. Evidence from both Ontario and international contexts has shown this practice disadvantages many students, especially racialized and lower-income students. Although a recent announcement by the Ontario government of their commitment to ending streaming for Grade 9 math is a positive start, a new report published by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) calls for destreaming for all Grade 9 and 10 core subjects so every student has the full selection of Grade 11 course offerings. The report also provides a series of recommendations to improve the success of destreaming initiatives.

Unintended Consequences

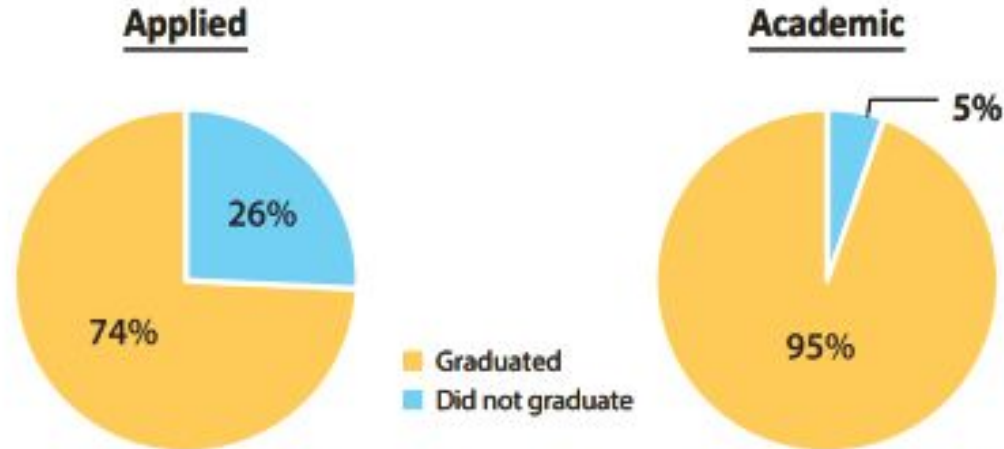
FIGURE 2

Demographic characteristics of Ontario schools
with the highest and lowest percentage of students in Grade 9 Applied Math

Demographic characteristics by school (averages)	10% of schools with highest levels of applied math enrolment	Provincial average	10% of schools with lowest levels of applied math enrolment
Applied students	58%	32%	10%
Family income	\$61,720	\$84,440	\$112,420
Households living in poverty (LICO) ¹⁹	18.2%	12.8%	14.8%
Parents without high-school diploma	14.2%	8.3%	5.6%
Parents with university education	15.9%	25.2%	43.2%
Recent immigrants (arrived in Canada within 5 years)	5.5%	4.5%	6.6%
Immigrants	14.1%	13.8%	21.2%
English Language Learners	9%	3.9%	4.6%
Aboriginal students	4.8%	2.9%	1.3%

Unintended Consequences

Five Year Graduation Rate for Students Enrolled in Grade 9 Applied Math and Language Courses

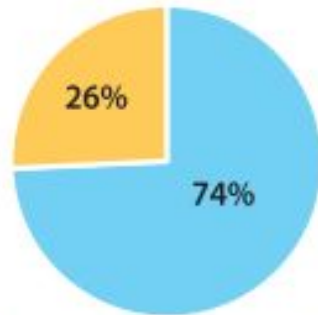


Source: As reported by schools in Ontario School Information System (OnSIS), 2010-2011 to 2014-2015.

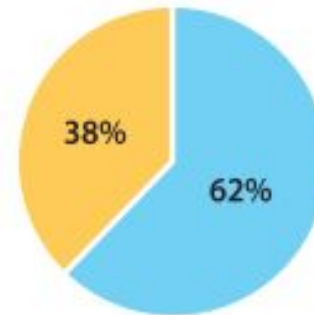
Unintended Consequences

Unintended Equity Outcomes: Percentage of Enrolment Records in Academic and Applied Grade 9 Mathematics Course

Schools in higher-income communities



Schools in lower-income communities



■ Academic
■ Applied

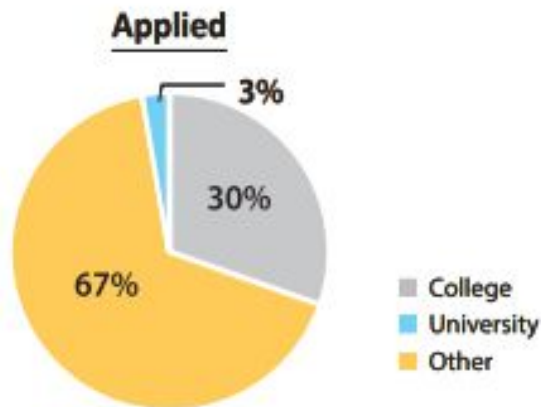
Source: As reported by schools in Ontario School Information System (OnSIS), 2014-2015: Tax Filer (Statistics Canada TI Family File), 2013.

Please note: High-income and low-income schools are grouped based on the estimated LIM 50 (low-income measure aligned with Poverty Reduction Strategy indicators) for each school according to the upper and lower quartiles (i.e., the percentage of school community population below LIM 50 is 16.76% or less in high-income schools and 27.57% or more in low-income schools).

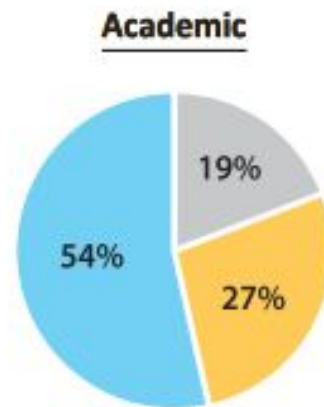
Unintended Consequences

Where do Students go After High School?

Percentage of Students who Enrolled in Grade 9 Applied Math and Language Courses and Registered Directly to College or University



Percentage of Students who Enrolled in Grade 9 Academic Math and Language Courses and Registered Directly to College or University



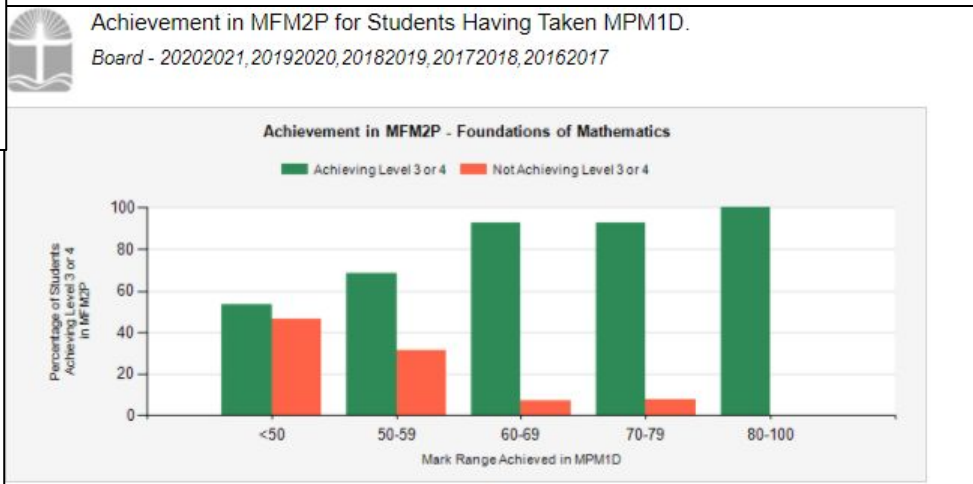
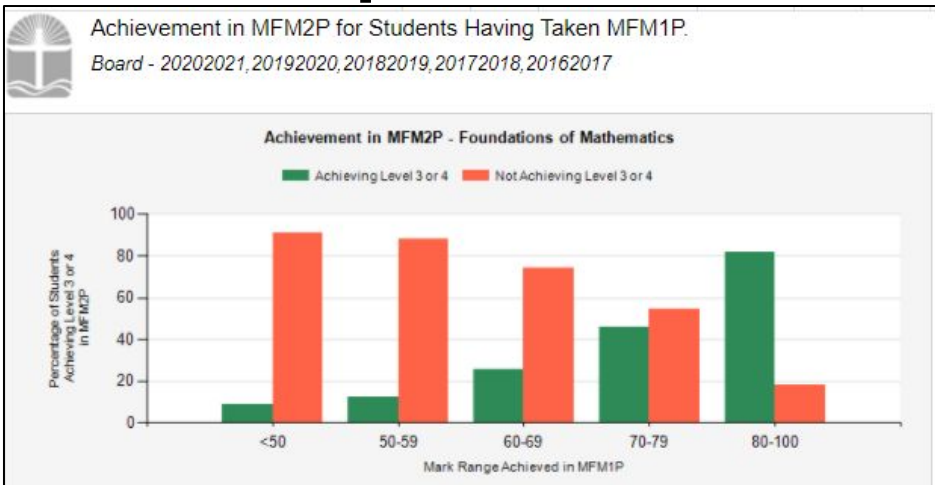
Source: College and university registrations as reported by the Ontario College Application Service (OCAS) and Ontario University Application Centre (OUAC), 2010-2011 to 2015-2016.

Unintended Consequences

Ontario Statistics

- There are significantly lower transition rates to post-secondary education for students who take mostly Applied courses compared to those who take mostly Academic courses in Grade 9.
- 59% of students who took the Grade 9 Applied mathematics course transitioned into post-secondary education within 7 years, compared to 88% of students who took the Academic course.²

Preparation for Grade 10 Applied Math



Changing Secondary Curriculum

Introduction

Ontario's Ministry of Education is committed to addressing systemic discrimination and helping to break down barriers for Indigenous, Black, and racialized students, students from low-income households, and students with disabilities and other students with special education needs so that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed, thrive, and reach their full potential¹.

As part of this commitment, the ministry is developing a comprehensive plan to remove Academic and Applied courses (de-streaming) in Grade 9 and issue revised curriculum policy with de-streamed courses that meet the needs of all students and support all future education pathway options.

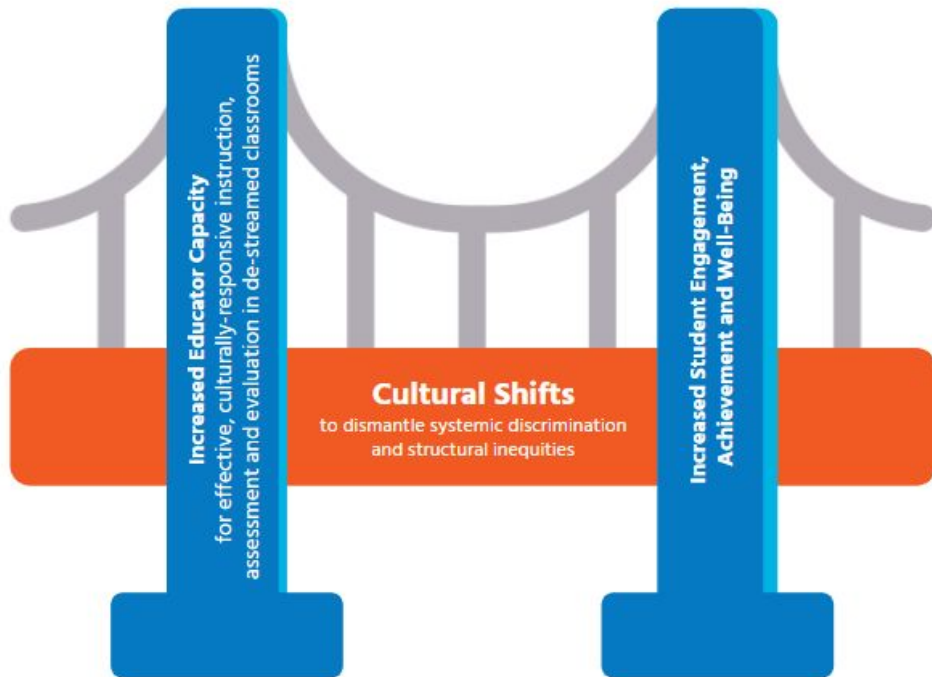
Destreaming in Grade 9 Math: Sept 2021

Goals of De-streaming

This work includes three goals related to de-streaming Grade 9:

1. **Cultural Shifts in Schools and Boards** to identify and dismantle systemic discrimination and structural inequities
2. **Increased Educator Capacity** for effective culturally-responsive instruction, assessment, and evaluation in de-streamed, multi-level classrooms
3. **Increased Student Engagement, Achievement, and Well-Being**

Destreaming in Grade 9 Math: Sept 2021





Spring 2018 – Volume IV • Issue 6
ISSN 1922-2394 (PDF)

in conversation

Achieving Excellence: Weaving together Student Achievement, Equity, and Well-Being

In Conversation with Kahontakwas Diane Longboat, Nouman Ashraf, and Carl James

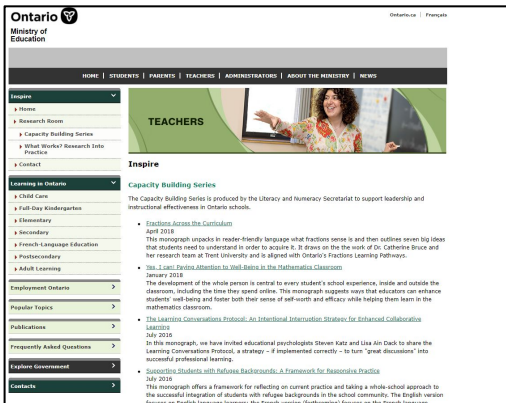
As we move toward realizing the promise of *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario*, I am pleased and gratified to see the innovative work being done in districts and in schools across the province. Living as we do in one of the world's most diverse jurisdictions, it is clear that your efforts are having a significant impact on the lives of Ontario children, youth, their families and their communities and are also serving as a model of excellence for the world.

In support of that work, this issue of *In Conversation* features Kahontakwas Diane Longboat, Nouman Ashraf, and Carl James, three thought leaders who recognize the deep and inseparable connections between and among student achievement, equity, and well-being. They are profoundly committed to building and deepening our understanding about their relevance in the context of education and about how they can serve as powerful levers to strengthen community and enrich society as a whole.

conversations motivate us to re-examine our relationships within and outside school walls. They remind us to expand our understanding of children and youth and the personal stories that inform their lives. More importantly, they call on us to acknowledge ourselves as deep and continuous learners.

In this essential role as learning leaders, our capacity to ask questions, to reflect on our own biases and assumptions, to admit that we don't always have the answers, and to become authentic listeners, becomes a necessary asset.

Leadership requires courage and the ability to step outside of our own comfort zone. These informative and inspiring interviews provide us with many practical approaches to finding this courage within ourselves to discover and act on a new depth in the teaching, learning, and leading process. I believe you will find this issue as engaging and challenging as I have, and hope that you will consider how these valuable insights can inform your own professional practice.



“Regardless of their racial and ethnic background, educators can be successful in teaching across racial and ethnic differences if they develop the knowledge and skills to do so (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Milner, 2010) ... Teachers must affirm and communicate to students a space of solidarity embodied in statements such as ‘I see you. I value you. I appreciate your differences. I am committed to understanding your needs. I believe in your potential. I want to support you.’ (Howard, 2017).”

~ Source: **Confronting Inequity/Unconscious Bias Hurts** (Milner IV, 2018)

Some Notable Facts from the **Children’s Mental Health Ontario Group** regarding Equity:

- Black youth are significantly under-represented in mental health and treatment-oriented services and overrepresented in containment-focused facilities.
- First Nation youth die by suicide about 5 to 6 times more often than Indigenous youth.
- LGBTQ youth face approximately 14 times the risk of suicide and substance abuse than heterosexual peers.
- Youth living in the lowest-income neighbourhoods had the highest rates of suicide, emergency department visits for deliberate self-harm, acute care mental health service use, and treated prevalence of schizophrenia.

Culturally responsive educators share a particular set of dispositions and skills – a mindset that enables them to work creatively and effectively to support all students in diverse settings. Characteristics of this mindset as outlined by **Villegas and Lucas** (2012) are:

1. Socio-cultural consciousness: Have an awareness of how socio-cultural structures impact individual experiences and opportunities.
2. High expectations: Hold positive and affirming views of all students of all backgrounds.
3. Desire to make a difference: See themselves as change agents working toward more equity.

~ Source: **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Towards Equity and Inclusivity in Ontario Schools** (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013)

Realizing the Promise of Diversity

ONTARIO'S EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION STRATEGY

2009

Respect Differences?

Challenging the Common Guidelines in Social Justice Education

Özlem Sensoy and Robin DiAngelo

Abstract

In social justice education, it is common to establish guidelines for classroom discussions. We examine the limits of these guidelines in achieving the goals of social justice education, arguing that they are not responsive to power relations. Rather than creating a supportive space for dialogue, these guidelines actually can interfere with achieving social justice education goals. We also describe our efforts to engage alternative strategies for responding to power in the social justice classroom.

Submit a response to this article

Submit online at democracyeducationjournal.org/home

Read responses to this article online

<http://democracyeducationjournal.org/home/vol22/iss2/1>

Creating a democratic atmosphere in which everyone participates means both putting ourselves forward and including others. To do this we must understand the dynamics rooted in issues of power, and do things which counter them. (Adapted to Stowell, 2002)

Imagine . . .

You are teaching a required teacher education course on social justice in one of its many forms (e.g., cultural diversity and social justice, multicultural education, or diversity in education). Typical of the teacher education student demographic in the United States and Canada, the majority of your class of 30 is White women who grew up in liberal, middle-class suburban contexts. Only a small percentage of the class represents other identities along lines of race, class, gender, ability, etc.

Knowing that the majority of students are new to discussions of social justice and seeking to create a supportive and democratic space that will encourage participation, you introduce a few standard discussion guidelines:

- Speak for yourself instead of generalizing—use I statements.
- Respect differences—everyone's opinion matters.
- Challenge ideas not people.
- Stay open and engaged—be responsible for your own learning.

You ask students if they would like to add any additional guidelines to the list, and they suggest the following:

- Don't judge.
- Assume good intentions.
- Don't attack people who disagree with you.
- Treat others as you would like to be treated.

- Don't take things personally.
- Laugh with anyone, but laugh at no one.

After some discussion and clarification (e.g. "Treat others as you would like to be treated" is modified to "Treat others as they would like to be treated," and "don't judge" is modified to "hold your judgments lightly"), everyone votes in agreement with the guidelines, and you post them on the wall or course website.

In subsequent weeks, several dynamics familiar to social justice educators begin to manifest. Students in dominant group positions (e.g., male, White, cisgender, able-bodied) repeatedly raise a range of objections to scholarly evidence that they have privilege by virtue of their social positions. Further, these students dominate the discussion and continue to use terms and phrases that you have repeatedly explained are problematic (e.g., colored people, Orientals, that's retarded, and that's ghetto). In response, other students are becoming triggered or withdrawn. From week to week, you notice that tensions increase in the classroom. And if you—as the instructor—represent a visibly minoritized group within academia (e.g., female, transgender, person of Color, person with a visible disability), you sense that dominant students are invalidating you in ways they would not invalidate other instructors, and you are struggling to maintain your legitimacy as you try to facilitate these difficult dynamics.

ÖZLEM SENSOY is an associate professor in education at Simon Fraser University. Robin DiAngelo is an associate professor in education at Westfield State University. Together, they are the authors of *Is Everyone Really Equal? An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education* (Teachers College Press, 2012).

Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan



2017

SCCDSB Creating Supports for De-streaming

- Learner Profile
- Grade 8 teacher and high school meeting
- Head Start Summer Program
- Link program
- Free After school tutoring in secondary school
- GLE10 General learning strategies course
- Summer and Fall PD opportunities to build capacity of gr 9 teachers
- Summer engagement for disengaged students leaving gr 8
- Summer engagement for First Nations students leaving gr 8