



From the Director's Desk....

Changes in Mathematics Instruction

October 30, 2018

The Ontario government recently released two documents to support mathematics instruction in K-12 education:

- [Focusing on the Fundamentals of Math: A Teacher's Guide](#), and
- [A Parent's Guide to the Fundamentals of Math](#)

These documents were released to assist teachers and school boards with refocusing mathematics instruction on the fundamentals of math, in addition to problem solving (often referred to as discovery or inquiry mathematics).

As outlined in the introductions of the teacher and parent guides, the Ministry of Education is refocusing mathematics instruction on the fundamentals of math, including a renewed focus on numbers. Math instruction in Ontario elementary classrooms will:

- *Continue to build students' procedural knowledge and skills in mathematics, and to think mathematically;*
- *Use the expectations in *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Mathematics, 2005* that deal with the 'Number Sense and Numeration' strand and expectations that relate to number properties in the 'Patterning and Algebra' strand;*
- *Emphasize concepts, including addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication, which will support the development of more advanced skills, including algebra, and working with integers and decimals;*
- *Focus on understanding numbers to improve students' speed and accuracy of mathematical calculations – mentally, on paper, or by using a calculator, and perform mathematical procedures with ease; and*
- *Ensure students have a strong foundation in mathematical concepts and skills that will prepare them for success in high school, and ensure that they have a set of essential skills for employment and responsible citizenship in the future.*

The principles underlying the Ontario mathematics curriculum, as outlined in [The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Mathematics, 2005](#), on pages 3 and 4, remain the same, including:

- *Incorporating mathematical activities that are practical and relevant to students;*
- *Developing mathematical understanding, problem-solving skills, and related technological skills that students can apply in their daily lives and, eventually, in the workplace;*
- *Challenging all students by including expectations that require them to use higher-order thinking;*
- *Giving students opportunities to investigate ideas and concepts through problem solving and guiding them carefully into an understanding of the mathematical principles;*
- *Promoting a balanced program in mathematics, including the acquisition of operational skills as an important focus of the curriculum;*
- *Learning math concepts by means of the seven essential mathematical processes - problem solving, reasoning and proving, reflecting, selecting tools and computational strategies, connecting, representing, and communicating.*

Bluewater District School Board remains committed to its vision of *Preparing Our Students Today for the World of Tomorrow*.

Contact information

For further information, please contact Alana Murray, Director of Education.