



**Leading the Implementation of the
Revised Ontario Language Curriculum,
Grades 1 to 8: Supporting Diverse Learners
November 28, 2023**



How's it going for you today?

In partnership with

CATHOLIC
PRINCIPALS'
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Land Acknowledgement



Land Acknowledgement

The land has always provided and sustained life and will continue to do so for years to come. As staff of the principals' associations, we are aware that we live, work and derive benefit from the ancestral lands that have always been home to the Anishinaabek and the Omushkego Peoples, the inherent right-holders of these territories. As a partner in public education, I have a duty to learn, understand and redress the historical and ongoing impacts of colonialism. Individually and collectively, we have a responsibility to reconcile our relationship with the land, the Anishinaabek Peoples and the Omushkego Peoples.

I acknowledge that I am on the traditional territory of nations within nations including the Anishnaabe, the Ojibwe and the Michi Saagiig, land which continues to be home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

I am grateful for the enduring presence of Indigenous peoples as past, present and future caretakers of these lands on which I work and play.

I am committed to continue to deepen my understanding and learning about my role and how I can work toward decolonization as an individual and as part of a community. I am grateful to those who are my teachers and my partners.

Webinar Team

Linda Ford-DeCunha - Project Lead, OPC

Teresa Paoli - Project Lead, CPCO

Andrea Fraser (Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic
District School Board)

Sharon Knights (Durham District School Board)

Stacey Rickman - Curriculum Expert



welcome

Session Goals

Gain a deeper understanding of key changes in the Ontario Language Curriculum, Grades 1 to 8 (2023), with a focus on:

- Program planning for students with special education needs
- Program planning for English language learners
- Integrated and cross-curricular Learning

Consider culturally responsive leadership practices within a critical inquiry approach to support implementation of key changes.

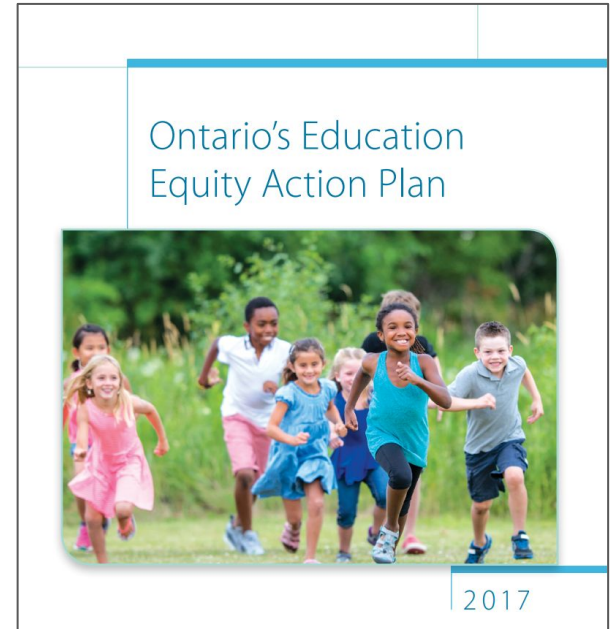


Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusive Education

Ontario's education system, at all levels, must respect diversity, promote inclusive education, and **work towards identifying and eliminating barriers to equal treatment in education that limit the ability of students to learn, grow, and contribute to society.**

Discriminatory biases, harassment, non-inclusive environments, lack of accommodation, systemic barriers, power dynamics, societal poverty, and racism make it difficult for students to acquire the skills they need to be successful, competitive, and productive members of society.

[Program Planning \(gov.on.ca\)](https://www.gov.on.ca)



[Ontario's
Education Equity
Action Plan](#)

Leading the Implementation of Ontario's Revised Language Curriculum



Webinar 1: October 16, 10:00 a.m. EDT

Vision and Goals, Program Planning, and Instructional Approaches

Webinar 2: November 28, 10:00 a.m. EST

Supporting Diverse Learners

Webinar 3: January 24, 10:00 a.m. EST

Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning

Leading the Implementation of Ontario's Revised Language Curriculum



Podcast: *How will I Lead the Implementation of the Language Curriculum at My School?*
Featuring Usha James (Critical Thinking Consortium)

Episode 1

Getting Started: Engaging Staff through a Critical Inquiry Approach

Episode 2

Continuing the Work: Leadership Moves for a Critical Inquiry Approach

How will I lead the implementation of the language curriculum?

"When a team of individuals share the belief that through their unified efforts they can overcome challenges and produce intended results, groups are more effective... In schools, when educators believe in their combined ability to influence student outcomes, there are significantly higher levels of academic achievement."

[The Power of Collective Efficacy \(ascd.org\)](https://www.ascd.org)



Leading the Implementation of the Ontario's Revised Language Curriculum



Key Changes – Introduction

- The curriculum emphasizes the foundational knowledge and skills in both oral and written language that are necessary to support more complex skills such as critical thinking and problem solving.
- The curriculum provides educators with a comprehensive guide to supporting the development and growth of these essential knowledge and skills for every student.



Leadership Moves

Provide guidance on how to navigate the online curriculum site and how/where to access information (e.g., grade references, resources, glossary and available downloads).

Engage staff in reading and reviewing the "Program Planning" section of the curriculum (Planning Considerations, Cross-curricular and Integrated Learning, Transferable Skills). Gather feedback on confirmed knowledge, new learning, and questions/wonderings.

Review the curriculum [Key Changes chart \(Ministry of Education\)](#) with staff. Collect feedback to inform your next steps (areas which align with current practice and those which require new learning to shift in practice).

Create a literacy leadership team and co-construct an initial plan of action. Ensure the team includes voices from each division, special education, English Language Learners, Kindergarten. Leverage current teacher leadership and expertise, including the Teacher Librarians. Ensure the plan includes a cross-curricular approach to literacy.

Consider how your current professional learning structures (e.g., staff meetings) could be maximized to support curriculum learning and implementation.

Incorporate literacy-focused goals (student centered) in your School Learning Plan.

Take time to review and discuss the [Effective early reading instruction: a guide for teachers \(ep.on.ca\)](#) with all primary educators.

With the leadership team, review [Language, Grades 1 to 8: a guide for parents \(gov.on.ca\)](#) and determine initial steps to engage parents/guardians/school community.

Sample Questions for Staff Inquiry

"Where" does the new curriculum introduce the most new learning for our team? How might we prioritize professional learning goals within achievable steps, allowing time to reflect on shifts in practice through student learning outcomes and student feedback? What will success "look like" and "sound like" for our students?

What types of learning opportunities would be most helpful for our school to support implementation of the new curriculum?

In what ways could we offer educator collaborative learning opportunities? What could these opportunities look like?

How might we differentiate content and utilize principles of universal design for learning and culturally responsive and relevant practices to support/advance educator learning?

How will we leverage the diverse expertise and knowledge of our staff to offer varied and responsive professional learning opportunities? Who else (e.g., central team) could support our school-based learning and planning?

How will we ensure equitable and inclusive access to educator learning? How will we identify and address barriers to learning?

How will we gather feedback from our staff to ensure the professional learning context, supports and structures are responsive to educators and their students?

How will we ensure that parents/guardians are informed of the new curriculum changes and have opportunities to work collaboratively with our school staff as valued partners in their child's education?



Examples of Evidence of Impact in School/Classrooms

Collaborative structures (e.g., Literacy Lead team, divisional and grade teams) are organized.

Educators have been provided with opportunities to share input to inform school planning and professional learning goals.

Initial school/classroom goals are centered on improving student experiences and learning outcomes.

Professional learning opportunities (e.g., staff meeting sessions) are scheduled with initial learning goals and success criteria determined.

Expertise of current staff has been determined. Other supporting central staff have been contacted for consultation/support.

A collaborative culture of learning is emerging whereby educators are:
-seeking opportunities to co-plan and co-learn
-demonstrating a learning stance by asking questions, beginning to reflect on initial shifts in programming/assessment, challenging one another to consider diverse and divergent perspectives.

Schools engage with parents/guardians throughout the new curriculum implementation.

Ontario Curriculum and Resources

Curriculum Assessment and Evaluation Resources Parents

Key Changes – Language, Grades 1 to 8

[View the curriculum](#)

Curriculum Context

Is this page helpful?

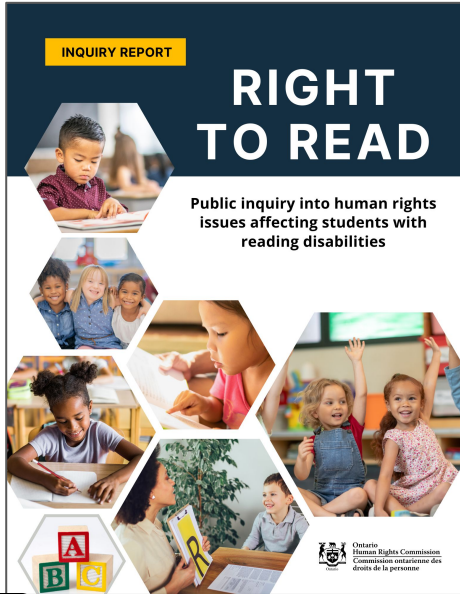
Yes No

Topic	What's new in 2023?
Introduction	The curriculum emphasizes the foundational knowledge and skills in both

Key Changes Document:
[Language \(2023\) \(gov.on.ca\)](#)



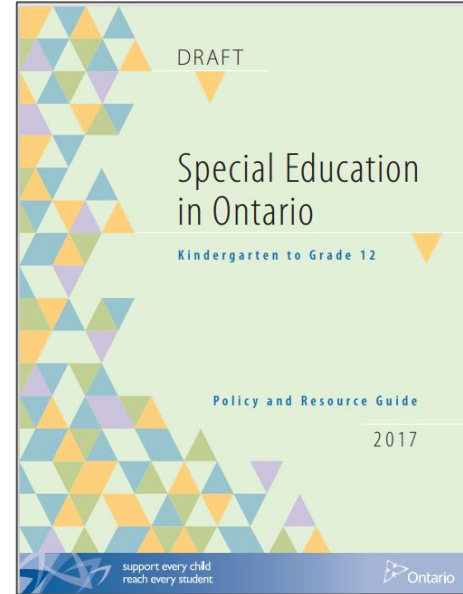
Human Rights Commission's Right to Read Report (2022)



SCAN ME



[Right to Read Inquiry Report | Ontario Human Rights Commission \(ohrc.on.ca\)](https://www.ohrc.on.ca/right-to-read)



[Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Resource Guide](https://www.ontario.ca/govt/special-education)



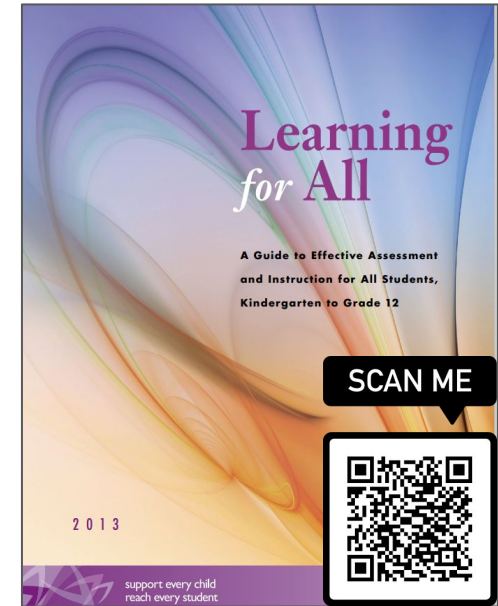
SCAN ME

Program Planning for Students with Special Education Needs

Classroom teachers are the key educators of students with special education needs and students with disabilities. They have a responsibility to create the conditions necessary to support *all* students in their learning, and they work collaboratively with special education teachers and other educators, where appropriate, to achieve this goal.

Ontario Language Curriculum, 2023

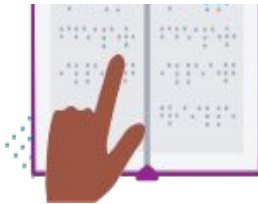
More information on planning for and assessing students with special education needs can be found in the “[Planning for Students with Special Education Needs](#)” of “[Considerations for Program Planning](#)”.



[Learning for All – A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2013 \(ontario.ca\)](#)

Principles for Supporting Students with Special Education Needs (continued)

- Language and literacy instruction is **based on an asset-oriented pedagogical model** that draws on the valuable funds of knowledge and the various identities, abilities, resources, and experiences that all students bring to their language and literacy learning.
- **Early and ongoing assessment** of students' language and literacy skills is important for providing instruction that prevents later learning difficulties.
- **Engagement of multimodalities** when interacting with a variety of texts, including culturally responsive texts.



Principles for Supporting Students with Special Education Needs (continued 2)

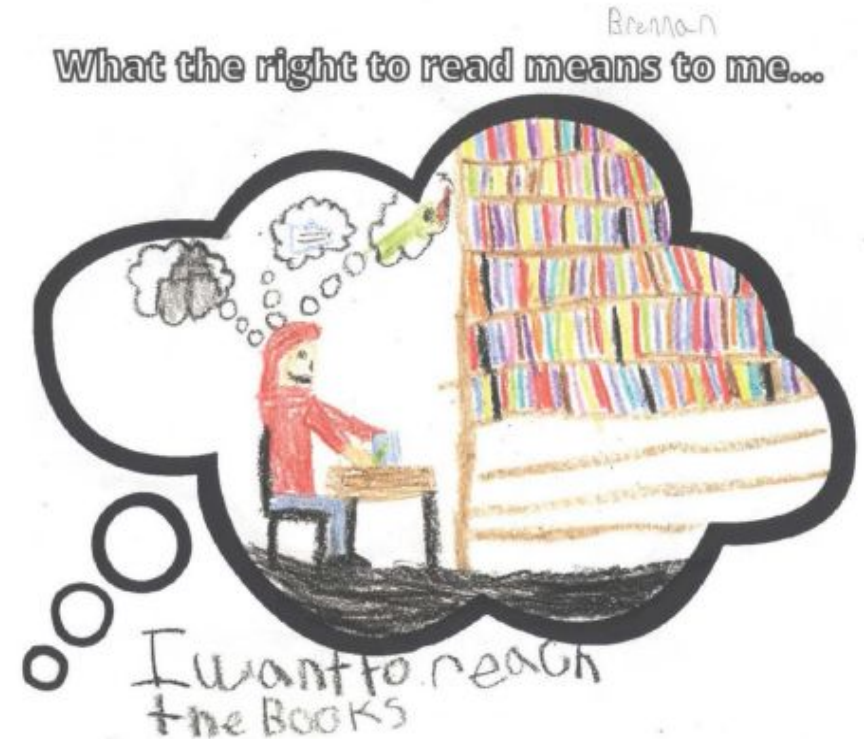
- **Combining** pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and technological knowledge with a detailed knowledge of how individual students develop language and literacy skills, and of their strengths and interests, to design effective learning experiences.
- **Implementing evidence-based approaches** to address each student's specific areas of learning growth and need, monitor their progress, build their self-efficacy, and meet their Individual Education Plan goals, where applicable.



An Effective Language and Literacy Environment and Program

Students have opportunities to

- communicate their wants, needs, thoughts, and opinions to others; to ask and respond to questions; and to demonstrate their learning using a variety of modes of communication and
- develop critical thinking skills in literacy by building foundational knowledge and skills.



About the artist: This artwork was submitted by a student, Brennan, who attended one of the Right to Read inquiry public hearings.

An Effective Language and Literacy Environment and Program (continued)...

A word cloud of terms related to language and literacy instruction. The words are arranged in a circular pattern and include: coaching, opportunities, explicitly, teach, direct, using, to, and, systematically, providing, practice, descriptive, foundational, many, skills, instruction, for, guided, and knowledge.

coaching
opportunities
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to
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foundational
many
skills
instruction
for
guided
knowledge

An Effective Language and Literacy Environment and Program (continued 2)...

- **Considers students' individual use of language and communication modalities**

Use of American Sign Language (ASL), Braille, or Augmentative and Alternative Communications Systems.

- **Provides required instructional, environmental, and/or assessment accommodations and/or modifications as specified in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

Accommodations may include the use of learning tools such as sound walls and visual dictionaries, augmentative and alternative communication devices, and access to assistive technology such as text-to-speech and speech-to-text programs.

An Effective Language and Literacy Environment and Program (continued 3)

Teaches the foundational knowledge and skills of receptive and expressive communication while providing opportunities for students to practise specific and scaffolded grade-level skills in social situations

Engaging in reciprocal interaction with others, verbally or nonverbally.

Supports students in the development of executive function skills

through scaffolding, modelling, and practicing the use of organizational tools, ensuring directions and explanations of strategies are clear and explicit.

SCAN ME

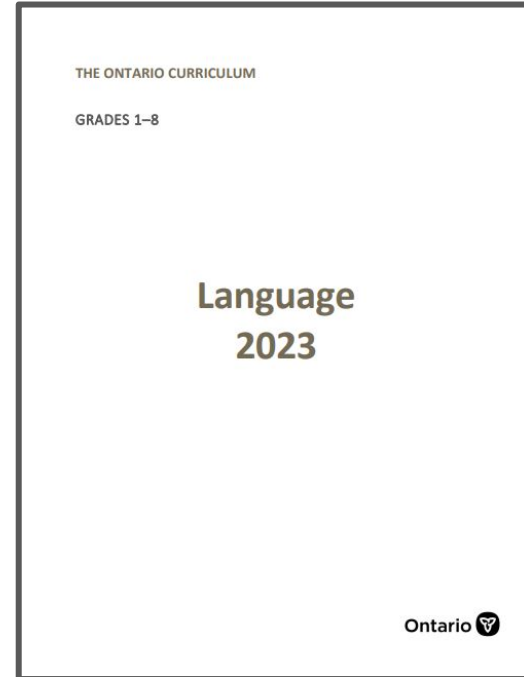


Voices from the Field

As you reflect on the shifts within the new curriculum, **what do you feel will make a difference for students with special education needs?**

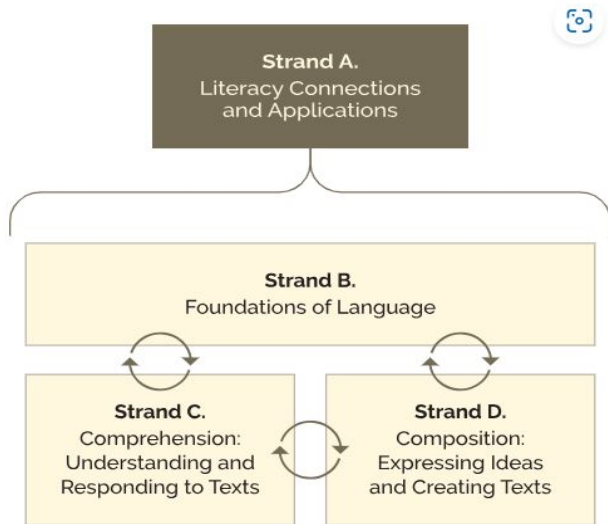
Curriculum Writing Team Member:

Stacey Rickman



[Language \(gov.on.ca\)](https://www.ontario.ca/education/curriculum)

Voices from the Field



Supporting Diverse Learners

Supporting "diverse learners" necessitates at every tier a reflection on how the very structure or tier may operate as a barrier to some students. This involves **intentionally addressing systemic barriers to learning.**



An Effective Language and Literacy Environment and Program...

Students in the gaps often - due to systemic circumstances beyond schooling - have varying capacities to engage in that "home practice and reinforcement beyond the classroom" for a variety of social, economic, and political reasons.

What are the systemic barriers that prevent schools from partnering effectively with families (barriers on both sides: school and families)? How can we adequately address these barriers to support partnering with families and communities?

Program Planning for Students with Special Education Needs: Leadership Moves



Principal Andrea Fraser
Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic
District School Board

- Take time to review the elements of an effective language and literacy environment and program as outlined in the curriculum. Develop a shared understanding of the importance of both critical thinking and executive functioning
- Revisit the curriculum section specific to the tiered approaches [Language \(gov.on.ca\)](https://www.gov.on.ca). Emphasize the importance of implementing evidence-informed instruction within tier one as a means to decrease the need for tier two and three supports.

Leadership Moves



Leadership Moves

Principals:

- Establish conditions where educators have permission to not know, to be imperfect, and model this through their own actions and openness to learning.
- Search out and welcome diverse ideas, opinions and evidence – that shape a “both/and” rather than “either/or thinking.”
- Recognize the importance of building shared understanding.
- Unpack preconceptions, including their own, by making them explicit and transparent.
- Build in regularly scheduled time for collective conversations and learning. They recognize the value of informal, just-in-time, focused learning conversations.

Program Planning for Students with Special Education Needs: Inquiry Questions

- How will we **leverage differentiated instruction, universal design** for learning and tiered support to create inclusive classroom environments for students with special education needs?
- How will we ensure an **asset-based approach** to literacy instruction and assessment/evaluation?



Program Planning for Students with Special Education Needs: Evidence of Impact

- Classroom lessons/tasks incorporate opportunities for student use of **varying language and communication modalities**. Students have access to the tools and strategies needed to support their literacy learning (e.g., assistive devices, computer options, large-size font, sound walls, visual dictionaries, etc.).
- **Student data and staff feedback is informing** professional learning opportunities specific to supporting literacy learning for students with special education needs.



Program Planning for English Language Learners

English language learners are culturally and linguistically diverse students who are working to achieve the language curriculum expectations while they are acquiring English-language proficiency.

[Program Planning \(gov.on.ca\)](https://www.gov.on.ca)



SCAN ME



Program Planning for English Language Learners (continued)

- Pedagogical approaches are multimodal and facilitate **translanguaging**.
- Cross-linguistic learning contexts enable students to draw on their languages, digital media, visuals, and mediating devices to develop metalinguistic awareness and to further their development and engagement in language and literacy learning.
- Differentiated instruction is essential in supporting English language learners, who face the dual challenge of learning new conceptual knowledge while acquiring English-language proficiency.



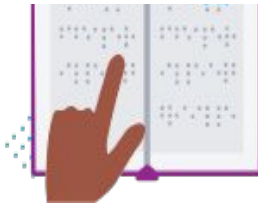
Program Planning for English Language Learners (continued 2)



Culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy (CRRP) recognizes students' various cultural and linguistic identities as critical resources in language and literacy instruction and learning. Knowledge of English language learners' strengths, interests, and identities, including their social and cultural backgrounds, is important. These *funds of knowledge* are historically and culturally developed skills and assets that are central to creating a richer and more meaningful learning experience for all students and promoting a socially and linguistically inclusive learning environment.

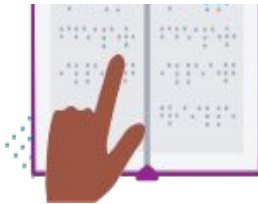
Program Planning for English Language Learners (continued 3)

- An initial assessment of newcomer students' level of English-language proficiency is required in Ontario schools.
- Working with students and their families and with available community supports allows students to create relevant and real-life learning contexts and tasks.



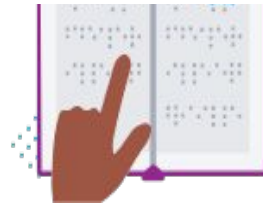
Program Planning for English Language Learners (continued 4)

- **open and parallel tasks** to allow for multiple entry points for learning
- **co-learning and multiple opportunities for practice** (e.g., with partners or in small groups)
- access to the language of instruction during oral, written, and multimodal instruction and assessment, during questioning, and when encountering texts, learning tasks, and other activities in the language program
- strategically planned oral language activities (e.g., **“think-pair-share”**, **“turn-and-talk”**, and **“adding on”**) to express their ideas and engage in literacy discourse



Program Planning for English Language Learners (continued 5)

- develop both everyday and academic vocabulary, including domain-specific vocabulary **in context**
- **practise using sentence frames** adapted to their English-language proficiency levels to communicate their understanding, ask questions, express their ideas, and explain their thinking
- use a **variety** of concrete and/or digital learning tools and engage **multimodalities** to demonstrate their learning and thinking through a range of representations and in multiple languages



Program Planning for English Language Learners (continued 6)

Strategies used to **differentiate instruction and assessment** for English language learners also benefit many other learners in the classroom, since programming is focused on leveraging all students' strengths, meeting learners where they are in their learning, being aware of the language demands (e.g., the academic vocabulary) in the program, and **making learning and thinking visible**.



Shared Responsibility

Collaboration with administrators and other teachers, particularly English as a Second Language (ESL)/ English Language Development (ELD) teachers and relevant community representatives, where possible, **contributes to creating equitable outcomes** for English language learners. Additional information on planning for and assessing English language learners can be found in the “[Planning for English Language Learners](#)” subsection of “[Considerations for Program Planning](#)”.



English Language Learners: School Leadership Practices

WHAT ARE SOME **leadership moves** you have used/will you use to support curriculum implementation with a focus on English language learners?



Cross-Curricular and Integrated Learning

In **cross-curricular learning**, students are provided with opportunities to learn and use related content and/or skills in two or more subjects.

In **integrated learning**, students are provided with opportunities to meet *expectations from two or more subjects* within a single unit, lesson, or activity.



Integrated Learning

For example:

In each grade, there are **language and science and technology expectations** that focus on learning about and making connections to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit knowledge systems and perspectives.



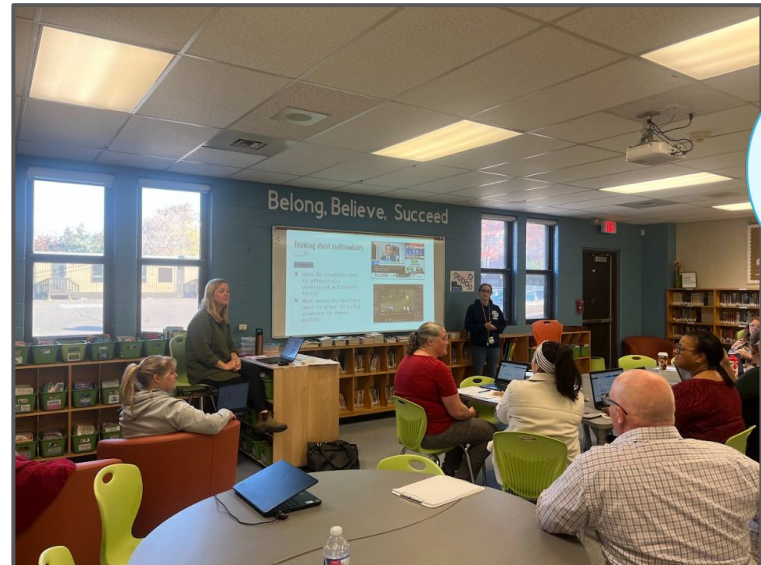
Cross-Curricular and Integrated Learning: Leadership Moves



**Principal Sharon Knights,
Durham District School Board**

Cross-Curricular and Integrated Learning: Leadership Moves

- Setting up the conditions for staff learning and collaboration (structures, staff leadership, central staff support)
- Provide opportunities for staff to engage in co-planning to explore the development of lessons and learning units/clusters which integrate the language strands effectively (to scaffold learning for staff)



Cross-Curricular and Integrated Learning: Leadership Moves



- Establishing school goals specific to implementation of cross-curricular and integrated learning opportunities

Cross-Curricular and Integrated Learning: Inquiry Questions

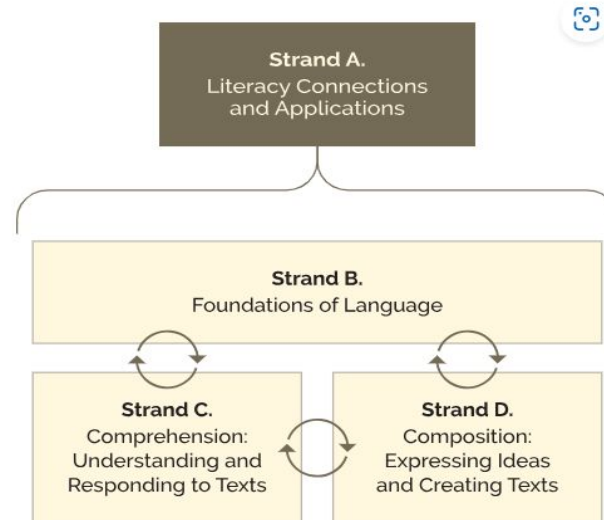
What types of learning opportunities would be most helpful for our school team? In what ways could we offer educator **collaborative learning opportunities**? What could these opportunities look like?

How will we **leverage the diverse expertise and knowledge of our staff** to offer varied and responsive professional learning opportunities? Who else (e.g., central team) could support our school-based learning and planning?



Cross-Curricular and Integrated Learning: Inquiry Questions

How will the **shift in strand structure**, with a focus on the interconnectedness of the strands, change our approach to short-term and long-term planning? Assessment? Evaluation?



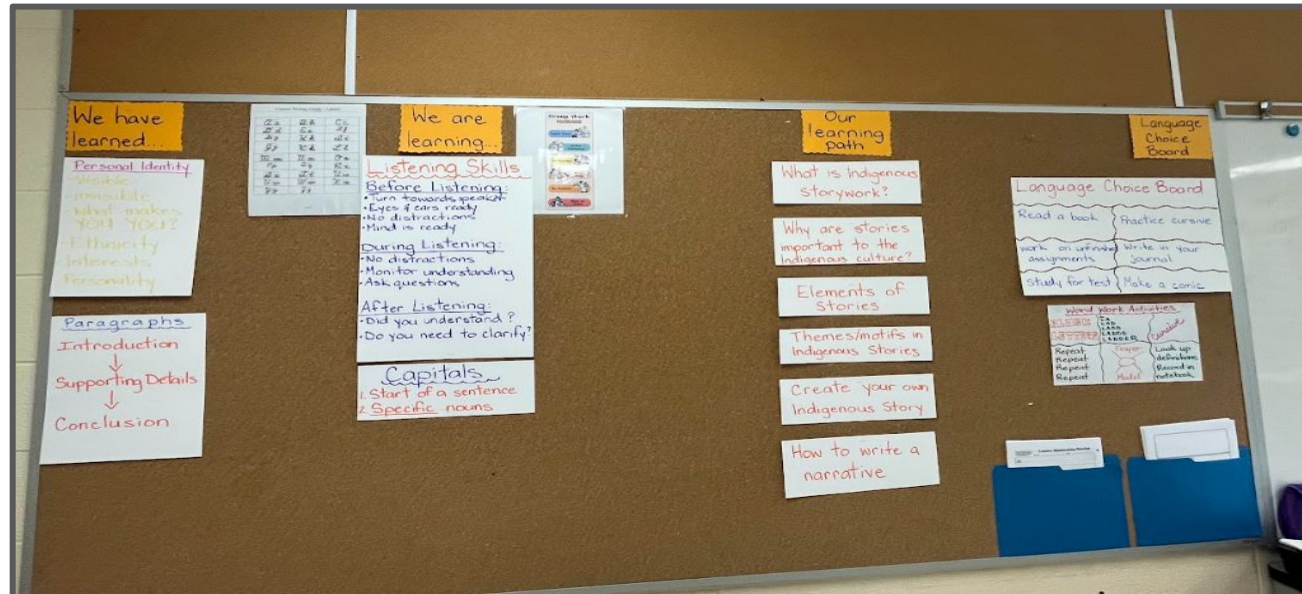
Cross-Curricular and Integrated Learning: Evidence of Impact

- Professional learning opportunities are scheduled with **initial learning goals and success criteria determined.**
- **Collaborative structures** to support co-planning and co-teaching are underway.
- **Expertise of current staff** has been determined and other supporting central staff have been contacted for consultation/support.



Cross-Curricular and Integrated Learning: Evidence of Impact

- Classroom lessons, learning goals, and success criteria **reflect integration of all four language strands.**
- Cross-curricular and integrated learning is beginning, with a focus on **vocabulary development in all grades.**





See you next time

January 24th, 2024 - 10:00 a.m. EST

Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning



We appreciate your feedback. Please scan this code to complete a short survey.

Contact us and follow us on X and LinkedIn



Association des directions et directions
adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes



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Council of Ontario
(CPCO)

www.cpco.on.ca

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Ontario Principals' Council
(OPC)

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