

CASE | Coalition for Alternatives to Streaming in Education

December 14, 2018

Submission to the Ministry of Education - Education Reform Consultation

Provided by the Coalition for Alternatives to Streaming in Education (CASE)

The Coalition for Alternatives to Streaming in Education (CASE) is a diverse group of organizations, community groups and individuals committed to promoting student success and to ending the practice of streaming in public schools. For the last five years, we have worked to engage communities, parents and youth most affected by streaming in education by understanding the impacts it's had on their lives and raising awareness on the inefficiencies and high costs tied to this practice.

The Ministry of Education is seeking feedback on a range of topics related to the education system in Ontario. In our submission to the government, CASE has decided to focus on the following topics: standardized testing, elements for a parents bill of rights, and ensuring that students graduate high school with important life and job skills through destreaming.

1. Reform standardized testing to better support student achievement.

International research cautions against the use of standardized testing. Standardized testing may compromise student learning experiences by overemphasizing teaching and learning solely for the test. More so, standardized testing distracts creative learning and overall progress (Zhao, 2014). CASE believes that standard test results should never be the sole determiner of a student placement in applied or academic level courses.

2. Include early involvement and accessible information on streaming in the

Parents Bill of Rights. All parents have the right to be informed about decisions that impact their children's futures. Research has shown that parents must navigate a complex system with little information and support to understand

high school pathways (Social Planning Toronto, 2017). Information should be easily accessible, in plain language and widely available.

- 3. Destream education** so that all students graduate with important life skills and job skills. While the academic stream works to prepare students for post-secondary education, students in the applied stream have lower prospects for furthering their education and finding employment after graduating. Currently, students in the applied stream have little access to marketable job skills, and lack quality education in fields of science and mathematics, making them less suited to pursue STEM jobs. Destreaming education would ensure that all students graduate high school with a high-quality education that prepares them to be economically secure and contributing members of our society.

In 1999, the Progressive Conservative Government of Ontario made efforts to eradicate streaming, however, the practice still continues to be upheld in Ontario. To create a more efficient system in which all students graduate with the skills they need to achieve economic prosperity, de-streaming efforts need to be made more effective.

Thank you for considering these recommendations and listening to the voice of the community to improve public education.

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