

### **0.3 - Introduction to Focusing on the Fundamentals**

Mishaal: In mathematics, there are some ideas that are just so important and foundational to future success that students really do have to master them. *Focusing on the Fundamentals - A Teacher's Guide* recognizes that the concepts of numbers and operations underpin the mathematics that we teach and learn.

Maude: Although the teacher's guide doesn't introduce new content, it does help focus student learning and connect specific expectations of key math concepts and skills for students in our current mathematics curriculum for grades 1 to 8. You may find that some concepts in the teacher's guide are described differently than in the curriculum expectations. These reflect slight variations between the current English-Language and French-Language mathematics curricula.

Mishaal: However, as described in *Growing Success*, the assessment and evaluation of students' work will continue to be based on the overall expectations of current curriculum documents.

Mayde: When diving into *Focusing on the Fundamentals: A Teacher Guide* you will find a continuum of concepts and skills - all centering on number and operations - that are critical for students to master. Working towards automaticity of these concepts, or "the ability to use skills or perform mathematical procedures with little or no mental effort" is something we all need to strive towards.

Mishaal: Knowing what these concepts are and where students first encounter them will support teachers in the secondary grades, as well as frame 'what is to come' for our Kindergarten and Early Childhood Educator teams.

Maude: As we move forward, it is crucial that as educators we reflect upon the work we are doing in our classrooms and schools to support the development of these fundamental math concepts and skills.

Mishaal: While it is not possible to focus on these ideas in isolation from developing conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, adaptive

reasoning, productive disposition, and strategic competence, we have to ask ourselves, “what is guiding our work?”...

Maude: and also, “how do we shift our work to ensure what is guiding us is the right thing towards mastery?” You may see many connections to the work that you have already been doing, however, it is important to reflect on the intentions behind this work.