

Calculator Use

Calculators can be very contentious topics for many parents - and even educators - even though the use of calculators encouraged throughout the Ontario curriculum.

Read an excerpt from the Grade 1-8 Math curriculum document that discusses the role of calculators. You can access this excerpt by [clicking here](#).

Discuss:

- How might distinguishing between operation sense and computations inform conversations on this topic?
- What about distinguishing between basic facts and computations?
- In what situations and for what learning goals could you see calculators being an important tool for promoting learning?
- When might you not have students use a calculator?
- What would you say to a parent who was concerned that you were using calculators in your classroom. Consider specific examples of tasks that would clarify your points

Share your recommendations about what messages could be communicated to parents and colleagues that have concerns of calculator use in classroom math instruction.

Please:

- Be mindful that we are all completing this document together so be careful not to delete the work of others.
- Identify you and/or your team's contributions with your name.
For example, **Happy Valley Middle School**: We're thinking...

Key points to make regarding calculator use:

Kathryn @NCDSB- I think children need to be exposed to a variety of ways to solve problems and when they understand the "why" behind operations, I think they should know how to use a calculator. If they don't- they won't know how to use one properly. I think it is another tool for the toolbox but there are many other tools that need to be explored and developed first- mental math, different computational strategies, etc.

BHJMS: Children need basic understanding of simple addition and subtraction facts. They

need to understand what they are doing before they use a calculator. Calculators should not be the only tool used to do math. Children should be able to explain the process they used on the calculator to demonstrate their understanding. Calculators can be used to solve multi-step problems.

DSB1- conceptual understanding is a critical first step. The calculator is a tool to use in support of the math. Interesting times given the access to technology students have now!