

ONTARIO SCHOOLS



KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12

*POLICY AND
PROGRAM
REQUIREMENTS*

2 0 1 6

support every child
reach every student



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Une publication équivalente est disponible en français sous le titre suivant : *Les écoles de l'Ontario de la maternelle et du jardin d'enfants à la 12^e année : Politiques et programmes, 2016.*

This publication is available on the Ministry of Education's website, at www.ontario.ca/edu.

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Preface

Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements, 2016 (OS) sets out the requirements of the Ministry of Education that govern the policies and programs of all publicly funded elementary and secondary English-language schools in Ontario.¹ OS is intended for school² and school board³ administrators, but will also be of interest within the broader educational community.

This document supersedes the 2011 edition of OS. It is an update of that edition, reflecting all changes and developments in ministry policy and programs (including the release of updated policy or program documents) that have occurred in the intervening years. An asterisk is used in the table of contents to identify sections in this document that refer to policies and programs introduced or revised after 2011, and “New” appears in the margin alongside the relevant passages in the text. (Revisions made to improve clarity, completeness, or flow that do not communicate policy or program updates are *not* identified.)

The earlier predecessor of *Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements* was the document *Ontario Secondary Schools, Grades 9–12: Program and Diploma Requirements* [OSS], published in 1999.

OS consolidates in one document the broad range of policies and programs that affect the educational experience of students in Ontario schools from Kindergarten to Grade 12. It reflects the continuity of education policy governing programs for all students, from entry to school to graduation. Part One of the document outlines the policy and program requirements that pertain to both elementary and secondary schools, and Part Two focuses on the policy and program requirements that apply only to secondary schools.

Many of the policy and program requirements outlined in OS are described in detail in other, dedicated policy documents. In such cases, OS gives a brief description of the policy or program requirements in question, and provides

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1. An equivalent document is available in French for use by administrators in French-language school boards. That document outlines two additional policies that apply only to French-language school boards – the *aménagement linguistique* policy and the policy on admission to French-language schools.
 2. The term *school* is used in this document to refer to elementary and secondary schools, Provincial Schools, and Demonstration Schools.
 3. The terms *school board* and *board* are used in this document to refer to district school boards and to those school authorities that offer elementary and/or secondary school programs.

references to the relevant documents (see, for example, section 1.2, “Environmental Education”). Policies that are not represented in separate documents are described fully in the present document (see, for example, section 6.1, “The Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)”).

Where appropriate, active links to relevant legislation, regulations, policy/program memoranda,⁴ and/or policy documents are provided at the end of a text section. Resources identified in policy documents as necessary to support implementation are also included. Where possible, a link is provided to the main page, on the ministry website, for the policy or program area that is the topic of the text section.

4. For a complete list of active and revoked policy/program memoranda (PPMs), see www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm.html.

Part One

Policy and Program Requirements for Elementary and Secondary Schools

Part One outlines the policy and program requirements that pertain to both elementary and secondary schools in Ontario, from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

1.1 Healthy, Safe, and Accepting Schools

Creating, fostering, and sustaining healthy, safe, and accepting learning environments is essential to the positive cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of learners and contributes to their well-being and learning. Actively promoting and supporting positive student behaviour, relationships, and healthy living through a whole-school approach will foster positive school climates in which all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted.

1.1.1 Daily Physical Activity (DPA)

All elementary students, including students with special education needs, must have a minimum of twenty minutes of sustained moderate to vigorous physical activity each school day during instructional time. (This requirement is included as an expectation in the elementary health and physical education curriculum.) The goal of daily physical activity (DPA) is to enable all elementary students to improve or maintain their physical fitness and their overall health and wellness, and to enhance their learning opportunities. School boards are responsible for monitoring the implementation of DPA. School boards and principals should also take appropriate action to ensure that parents are kept informed of their children's participation in these activities.

PPM No. 138, "Daily Physical Activity in Elementary Schools, Grades 1–8" (October 6, 2005)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm138.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/dpa.html

1.1.2 School Food and Beverage Policy

The school food and beverage policy, including nutrition standards, outlines system-wide requirements for the sale of food and beverages in Ontario elementary and secondary schools. The policy applies to all food and beverages sold on school premises for school purposes in all venues (e.g., cafeterias, vending machines, tuck shops/canteens) and programs (e.g., catered lunch programs), and at all events (e.g., bake sales, sporting events).

The school principal, in consultation with the school council, may designate up to ten days (or fewer, as determined by the school board) during the school year as special-event days on which food and beverages sold in schools would be exempt from the nutrition standards.

PPM No. 150, "School Food and Beverage Policy" (October 4, 2010)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm150.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/policy.html

1.1.3 Anaphylaxis Policy: Sabrina's Law

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that can be life threatening. School boards are required to establish and maintain an anaphylaxis policy that includes the following: regular training for staff and others who are in direct contact with students on a regular basis; strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents; and a communication plan for sharing information with parents, students, and employees. The board's policy must also require every school principal to develop an individual plan for each student who has an anaphylactic allergy, ensure that parents and students are asked at registration to provide information about life-threatening allergies the student may have, and maintain a file for each anaphylactic student relating to current treatment and including other relevant information.

Sabrina's Law, 2005, S.O. 2005, Chapter 7
www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05s07

Main page on the ministry website:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/anaphylaxis.html

NEW

1.1.4 Asthma Policy: Ryan's Law

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease of the airways. When in the presence of triggers, the airways react by narrowing, which can make breathing difficult. School boards are required to establish and maintain an asthma policy, which must include, among other things, strategies to reduce risk of exposure to asthma triggers, a communication plan for the dissemination of information on asthma, regular training on recognizing asthma symptoms and managing asthma exacerbations, a requirement that every school principal develop an individual plan for each pupil who has asthma, and a requirement that every school principal maintain a file for each pupil with asthma.

Ryan's Law, 2015, S.O. 2015, Chapter 3

www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/15r03

Main page on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/anaphylaxis.html

NEW

1.1.5 School Board Policies on Concussion

Research demonstrates that a concussion can have a significant impact on a student – cognitively, physically, emotionally, and socially. As set out in PPM No. 158, “School Board Policies on Concussion,” the Ministry of Education expects all school boards to develop and maintain a policy on concussion. PPM No. 158 outlines the ministry’s expectations regarding the components of a board’s policy on concussion, which are to include strategies to develop awareness of the seriousness of concussions; strategies for the prevention and identification of concussions; management procedures for diagnosed concussions; and training for board and school staff.

PPM No. 158 applies to all publicly funded elementary and secondary schools, including extended-day programs operated by school boards as part of the Kindergarten program.

PPM No. 158, “School Board Policies on Concussion” (March 19, 2014)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/158.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/concussion.html

1.1.6 The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct

PPM No. 128 outlines the provincial Code of Conduct. The code sets clear standards of behaviour that apply not only to students but to all individuals involved in the publicly funded school system – parents, volunteers, teachers, other school staff, community partners, and the police – whether they are on school property, on school buses, or at school-related events or activities, or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate. The provincial Code of Conduct promotes respect within the learning environment and the teaching environment and sets clear provincial standards for behaviour.

School boards are required to have in place codes of conduct that are consistent with the provincial Code of Conduct. School boards are required to inform students, parents, and members of the school community about the terms of both the provincial Code of Conduct and their own codes of conduct. School boards may require principals to develop additional codes of conduct designed expressly for their school. These codes must clearly set out what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour for all members of the school community, and must also be consistent with the school board's code of conduct.

PPM No. 128, "The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct"
(December 5, 2012)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.pdf

1.1.7 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

Progressive discipline is a whole-school approach to dealing with inappropriate student behaviour. The approach utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences to reinforce positive behaviour while helping students make good choices. A progressive discipline approach includes the use of early and ongoing intervention strategies to address inappropriate behaviour promptly and consistently. This approach requires educators to combine intervention and disciplinary measures with provisions to enable students to continue their education. Students should be given opportunities to learn from the choices they make. Schools are expected to actively engage parents in the progressive discipline approach.

PPM No. 145 requires boards to develop and implement a board policy on progressive discipline that supports positive student behaviour. Boards are expected to establish performance indicators for monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating the effectiveness of board policies and procedures related to progressive discipline, and to review these policies and procedures on a regular basis and revise them as needed.

In some circumstances, short-term suspension may be a useful tool. In the case of a serious incident involving a student, a long-term suspension (more than five days) or expulsion, which is further along the continuum of progressive discipline, may be the response that is required. (See section 1.1.9 for more on school boards' responsibilities to students under these circumstances.)

PPM No. 145, "Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour"
(December 5, 2012)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.pdf

1.1.8 Bullying Prevention and Intervention

School boards are required to establish policies and guidelines on bullying prevention and intervention. Providing students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate is a responsibility that school boards and schools share. Bullying prevention and intervention policies help schools foster a positive learning and teaching environment that supports academic achievement for all students and that helps students reach their full potential.

Boards are required to provide programs, interventions, and other supports for students who have been bullied, students who have witnessed incidents of bullying, and students who have engaged in bullying.

Every board must also establish a bullying prevention and intervention plan for the schools of the board, and must require that all schools implement the board's plan. When establishing their plan, boards must solicit the views of students, teachers, principals, and other staff of the board, volunteers working in the schools, parents of the students, school councils, and the local community.

PPM No. 144, "Bullying Prevention and Intervention" (December 5, 2012)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.pdf

NEW

1.1.9 School Board Programs for Students on Long-Term Suspension and Expelled Students

School boards are required to provide programming for students who are on long-term suspension or who have been expelled so that these students have the opportunity to continue their education. Under PPM Nos. 141 and 142, resources that are dedicated to programs for students on long-term suspension or expelled

students may also be used to benefit students who have not been suspended/expelled but who have shown behaviours that, if unchanged, could lead to a suspension/expulsion (however, the needs of students on long-term suspension and those who have been expelled remain the priority). (See section 1.1.7 for more on progressive discipline.)

PPM No. 141, "School Board Programs for Students on Long-term Suspension"
(December 5, 2012)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/141.pdf

PPM No. 142, "School Board Programs for Expelled Students" (December 5, 2012)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/142.pdf

1.1.10 Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol

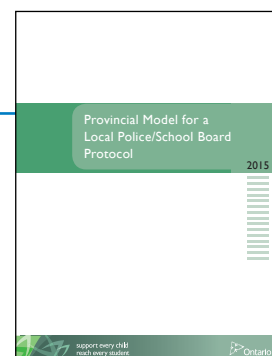
Police play a vital role in supporting and enhancing the efforts of schools and their communities to make schools safe places in which to learn and work. In addition to responding to and investigating school-related incidents, police are essential partners in the prevention of crime and violence in schools.

School boards and police services are required to work together to develop local police/school board protocols to ensure a shared understanding of the respective roles, procedures, and decision-making authority of the two parties in preserving and promoting school safety. The *Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol* identifies the elements that must be included in such protocols and sets out requirements for related procedures, such as notifying police of school-related occurrences, investigating incidents involving suspension or expulsion at the same time that police investigations of those incidents are under way, and contacting parents when students are to be interviewed by police. The document also sets out provincial policy for developing and maintaining lockdown procedures and bomb threat procedures for elementary and secondary schools.

NEW

Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol (2015)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/protocol/locprote.pdf



1.1.11 Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education

Boards are required to report the total number of violent incidents, as defined in PPM No. 120, on an annual basis to the Ministry of Education through the Ontario School Information System (OnSIS). *All* violent incidents that occur on school premises during school-run programs must be reported to the ministry, whether the incident was committed by a student of the school or by any other person.

Boards must follow the direction provided in the document *Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol* with respect to notifying police of school-related incidents (see section 1.1.10).

Boards are also required to collect and analyse data on the nature of violent incidents to support the development of board policies and to inform board and school improvement plans.

PPM No. 120, "Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education" (May 16, 2011)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm120.pdf

For legislative requirements relating to sections 1.1.6–1.1.11 above, refer to:
Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.2, Part XIII: Behaviour, Discipline and Safety
www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02#BK546

O. Reg. 472/07, "Behaviour, Discipline and Safety of Pupils"
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/070472

1.2 Environmental Education

Environmental education is education about the environment, for the environment, and in the environment that promotes an understanding of, rich and active experience in, and an appreciation for the dynamic interactions of:

- ◆ the Earth's physical and biological systems;
- ◆ the dependency of our social and economic systems on these natural systems;
- ◆ the scientific and human dimensions of environmental issues;
- ◆ the positive and negative consequences, both intended and unintended, of the interactions between human-created and natural systems.

Ontario Ministry of Education, *Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future: Report of the Working Group on Environmental Education* (June 2007), p. 6

The document *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools* offers school boards and schools an approach to environmental education that recognizes the needs of all Ontario

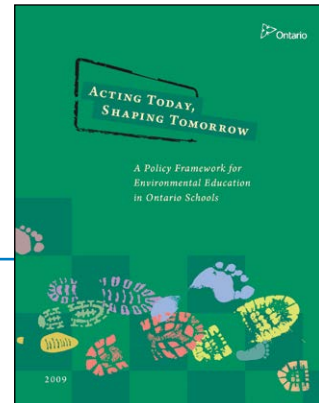
students and promotes environmental responsibility in the operations of all levels of the education system. School boards, in collaboration with their community partners, are expected to revise or develop an environmental education policy that reflects their local circumstances. This policy facilitates the implementation of programs and curriculum initiatives to deepen and broaden student learning about the environment, and will help guide school boards in their efforts to put environmentally responsible practices in place.

Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools (2009)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/enviroed/ShapeTomorrow.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/enviroed/education.html



1.3 Equity and Inclusive Education

The Ontario education system is based on a vision of an equitable and inclusive system where all students, parents, and other members of the school community are welcomed and respected; where every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning; and where all staff and students value diversity and demonstrate respect for others and a commitment to establishing a just, caring society.

All school boards are required to implement and monitor an equity and inclusive education policy in accordance with the requirements set out in PPM No. 119, in the policy document *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*, and in the document *Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation*. Ontario's equity and inclusive education strategy is designed to recognize diversity and promote inclusive education in all Ontario schools. It calls for upholding human rights by identifying and addressing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to students' learning and development, to enable all students to succeed to their highest potential and contribute to society.

School boards are required to embed the principles of equity and inclusive education in all aspects of their operations, including policy development, programming, and practices related to research, curriculum resources, instruction, and assessment. Schools are expected to provide students and staff with authentic and relevant opportunities to learn about diverse histories, cultures, and perspectives

and to enable students and school community members to see themselves represented in the curriculum, resources, programs, and culture of the school. Students need to feel engaged in and empowered by what they are learning, supported by teachers and staff, and welcomed in their learning environment.

PPM No. 119, "Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools" (April 22, 2013)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.pdf

Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (2009)

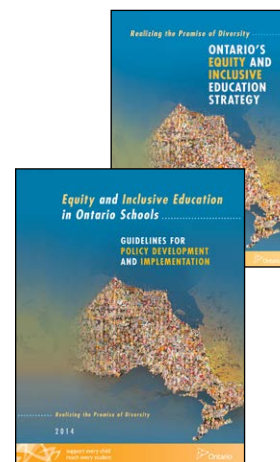
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf

Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (2014)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html



1.3.1 Parent Engagement

Ontario's parent engagement policy, set out in *Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools*, is an essential component of Ontario's equity and inclusive education strategy. It formally recognizes and supports the vision of Ontario schools as places of partnership and inclusion, where all students, parents, and other members of the school community are welcomed and respected. The policy outlines the vision for parent involvement and sets out strategies to support parent engagement. It includes an action plan for schools, boards, and the ministry, and showcases some of the many exemplary practices that are being employed across the province. The policy also sets new directions to help ensure that all partners will have the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to build positive partnerships in support of student achievement and well-being.

Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools (2010)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/PE_Policy2010.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/policy.html



1.3.1.1 School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees (PICs)

Ontario Regulation 612/00 mandates school boards to establish school councils and parent involvement committees (PICs) to engage parents and benefit from their advice at the school and board levels.

The purpose of school councils is, through the active participation of parents, to improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. A school council's primary means of achieving its purpose is to make recommendations (in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00) to the principal of the school and to the board that established the council.

The purpose of parent involvement committees is to support, encourage, and enhance parent engagement at the board level in order to improve student achievement and well-being. A parent involvement committee of a board will achieve its purpose by providing information and advice on parent engagement to the board, communicating with and supporting school councils in the board's schools, and undertaking activities to help parents of students of the board support their children's learning at home and at school.

O. Reg. 612/00, "School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees"
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/000612

1.3.2 Student Voice

The term *student voice* refers to expressions of students' points of view about things that matter in school. Schools and school boards can invite and encourage students to participate in creating and contributing to their learning community. A variety of strategies and practices are employed by schools and school boards to listen to and work in partnership with students in order to strengthen student engagement, a precondition for learning. Like parent engagement, student voice is an essential component of Ontario's equity and inclusive education strategy.

Schools and school boards consult with students when developing local policies and procedures to implement ministry policies, such as those outlined in *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools* (2009) (see section 1.2) and the *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (2007) (see section 1.4).

In addition, school boards are required under the Education Act to have at least one and not more than three elected student trustees who work with their boards to represent the interests of students in the last two years of the intermediate division and in the senior division. Student trustees are not board members but do have many of the same rights and responsibilities.

Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.2, Section 55, "Student Trustees"
www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02#BK72

O. Reg. 7/07, "Student Trustees"
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/070007

NEW

1.4 Indigenous Education

The *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (2007) and the *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework Implementation Plan* (2014) focus on improving student achievement and well-being among First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students; closing the achievement gap between Indigenous students and all students; and ensuring that all students in Ontario have a knowledge and appreciation of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit cultures, histories, traditions, and perspectives.

The ministry and boards continue to advance the goals of the framework and of the framework implementation plan through meaningful collaboration with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students, parents, communities, and organizations, and with Indigenous partners and key education stakeholders. School boards carry out the framework implementation plan through their own planning and through the implementation of targeted strategies and actions identified in their board action plan on First Nation, Métis, and Inuit education.

The Ontario curriculum includes learning across all disciplines that school boards can build on to engage First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students and strengthen their pride in the rich heritage of Indigenous peoples and their contributions to Canadian society. These learning opportunities are designed to foster a strengthened sense of cultural identity among Indigenous students. The Ontario curriculum also provides opportunities for all students to learn about Indigenous cultures, histories, and perspectives, and to study Native languages.

Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework Implementation Plan (2014)

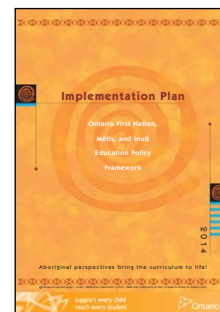
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/OFNIImplementationPlan.pdf

Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2007)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/fnmiFramework.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/policy.html



1.5 Financial Literacy Education

The document *A Sound Investment: Financial Literacy Education in Ontario Schools* (p. 4) sets out the vision for financial literacy education:

Ontario students will have the skills and knowledge to take responsibility for managing their personal financial well-being with confidence, competence, and a compassionate awareness of the world around them.

There is a growing recognition that the education system has a vital role to play in preparing young people to take their place as informed, engaged, and knowledgeable citizens in the global economy. Financial literacy education can provide the preparation Ontario students need to make informed decisions and choices in a complex and fast-changing financial world.

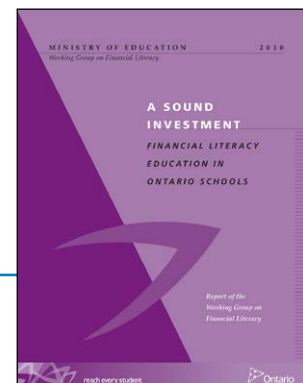
Because making informed decisions about economic and financial matters has become an increasingly complex undertaking in the modern world, students need to build knowledge and skills in a wide variety of areas. In addition to learning about the specifics of saving, spending, borrowing, and investing, students need to develop broader skills in problem solving, inquiry, decision making, critical thinking, and critical literacy related to financial issues, so that they can analyse and manage the risks that accompany various financial choices. They also need to develop an understanding of world economic forces and the effects of those forces at the local, national, and global level. In order to make wise choices, they will need to understand how such forces affect their own and their families' economic and financial circumstances. Finally, to become responsible citizens in the global economy, they will need to understand the social, environmental, and ethical implications of their own choices as consumers. For all of these reasons, financial literacy is an essential component of the education of Ontario students – one that can help ensure that Ontarians will continue to prosper in the future.

A Sound Investment: Financial Literacy Education in Ontario Schools (2010)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/Financial_Literacy_Eng.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/surveyliteracy.html



1.6 Collaborative Professionalism

Collaborative professionalism in Ontario's education system, as articulated in PPM No. 159, is defined as “professionals – at all levels of the education system – working together, sharing knowledge, skills, and experience to improve student achievement and [the] well-being of both students and staff”. The memorandum reflects the commitment, on the part all education partners, to optimize conditions for learning, working, and leading in Ontario schools.

Collaborative professionalism thrives when:

- ◆ leadership capacity is developed at all levels of the system;
- ◆ all voices, perspectives, and roles are included;
- ◆ both formal and informal leadership and learning are recognized and supported;
- ◆ leadership is shared and engages and empowers all;
- ◆ a trusting environment that promotes professional learning is fostered.

Education partners are expected to work together to identify opportunities for collaboration, and to build on promising collaborative practices across the province.

PPM No. 159, “Collaborative Professionalism” (May 31, 2016)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm159.pdf

NEW

2.1 The Kindergarten Program

As of September 2014, the Kindergarten program has been available to all four- and five-year-olds attending publicly funded schools in Ontario. The program is child-centred and developmentally appropriate, offering a full day of integrated play- and inquiry-based learning. The program includes a core day program during regular school hours and, where there is sufficient demand, a before- and after-school program, which is operated on a cost-recovery basis.

For information on assessment, evaluation, and reporting of children's growth in learning in Kindergarten, see sections 2.3 and 2.3.1.

Main page on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten/informationforeducators.html

2.1.1 The Core Day Program

The Kindergarten Program (2016) replaces *The Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten Program* (Draft Version, 2010–11).

The goals of the program are to:

- ◆ establish a strong foundation for the early years by providing young children with an integrated day of learning;
- ◆ provide a play- and inquiry-based learning environment;
- ◆ help children make a smoother transition to Grade 1;
- ◆ improve children's prospects for success in school and in their lives beyond school.

Learning in the play- and inquiry-based Kindergarten program is organized around four frames that support and align with the integrated way in which children's learning naturally occurs. These frames focus on the aspects of learning that

are critical to young children's development: Belonging and Contributing, Self-Regulation and Well-Being, Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours, and Problem Solving and Innovating.

The Kindergarten Program (2016)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/kindergarten.html



2.1.2 The Before- and After-School Program for Four- and Five-Year-Olds

The before- and after-school program for four- and five-year-olds aligns with the core Kindergarten program and is offered on the school site to provide children with a consistent experience throughout their day. It may be delivered either by the school board directly (sometimes referred to as an “extended-day program”) or by a licensed child care provider under an agreement with the school board.

School boards are encouraged to use *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* to guide programming for their before- and after-school program / extended-day program. Before- and after-school programs operated by a licensed child care provider are required to be in compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, and the minister's policy statement made under the Act, which identifies *How Does Learning Happen?* as the provincial framework that guides programming and pedagogy in licensed child care programs.

Minister's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy made under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

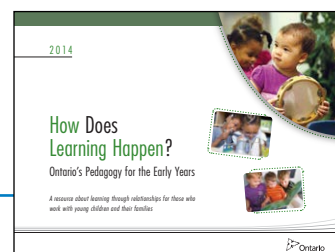
www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/programCCEYA.pdf

Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, S.O. 2014, Chapter 11, Schedule 1

www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/14c11

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf



2.2 The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1 to 12

The Ontario curriculum outlines the knowledge and skills that students are expected to develop and demonstrate in their class work, on tests, and in various other activities through which achievement is assessed and evaluated (see section 2.3).

All elementary curriculum expectations from each relevant curriculum policy document for a grade, and all secondary curriculum expectations for a course, must be accounted for when planning the classroom program. (Changes to the curriculum expectations may be made for English language learners and students with special education needs; see section 3.1.2, “Modified Curriculum Expectations”, and section 3.3.1, “Accommodations, Modifications, and Alternative Expectations”.)

In English-language elementary schools, learning programs must include the following disciplines: the arts; French as a second language (core French; boards may also offer extended or immersion French); health and physical education; language; mathematics; science and technology; and social studies (in Grades 1 to 6) and history and geography (in Grades 7 and 8). Native languages may also be offered, in accordance with the relevant curriculum policy document. While the elementary curriculum does not mandate the study of international languages, parents may request international language courses for their children (see section 2.5.3). In addition, schools may offer experiential learning programs involving job shadowing and job twinning for students in Grades 7 and 8 (see section 8.3). School boards must ensure that all elementary students, including students with special education needs, have a minimum of twenty minutes of sustained moderate to vigorous physical activity each school day during instructional time (see section 1.1.1).

NEW

In addition, with the release in 2016 of PPM No. 160, “Protected Time for Daily Mathematics Instruction, Grades 1 to 8”, school boards are expected to protect a block of time during every school day for teachers in Grades 1 to 8 to focus on effective mathematics instruction. School boards are to protect 300 minutes per five-day cycle – preferably in daily blocks of sixty minutes, with a minimum of forty minutes per block – for this purpose. Focused instructional time provides the opportunity for educators to nurture a community and culture of math practice and problem solving, both of which help students develop their skills. Educators are expected to continue to embed mathematics skills across all areas of the curriculum, as they have done in the past.

The courses that may be offered in English-language secondary schools are described in the curriculum policy documents for the various disciplines⁵ (see also section 7.2). Courses that integrate more than one subject/discipline may also be developed, in accordance with the curriculum policy document for interdisciplinary studies. Schools may also offer, in accordance with the relevant policies of the Ministry of Education, locally developed courses, dual credit courses, and alternative (non-credit) courses (see sections 7.3.1, 7.3.3, and 7.4), which are not outlined in the curriculum policy documents. All Ontario curriculum courses and locally developed courses may be offered through the cooperative education mode of

5. The disciplines at the secondary level are as follows: the arts; business studies; Canadian and world studies; classical studies and international languages; computer studies; English; English as a second language and English literacy development; French as a second language; guidance and career education; health and physical education; mathematics; Native languages; Native studies; science; social sciences and humanities; and technological education.

delivery (see section 8.1). Schools may offer other experiential learning programs, as described in sections 8.2 and 8.3, as well as specialized programs, as described in section 9. By successfully completing courses based on the Ontario curriculum policy documents, and other ministry-authorized courses, students earn credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (see section 6).

NEW

In addition to the curriculum expectations, teachers must address the learning skills and work habits described in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools* (see section 2.3). They must also ensure that their programs clearly reflect ministry policy related to healthy, safe, and accepting schools (see section 1.1), environmental education (see section 1.2), equity and inclusive education (see section 1.3), Indigenous education (see section 1.4), financial literacy education (see section 1.5), English language learners (see section 3.1), students with special education needs (see section 3.3), and knowledge and skills relevant to education and career/life planning (see section 2.4.1).

Elementary and secondary schools may make opportunities available to their students through e-learning as described in section 10.1. As described in section 10.2, schools may also offer continuing education programs of interest to learners of all ages.

In Roman Catholic separate school boards, learning programs also include religious education programs and courses. For information on religious education courses in secondary schools, see section 7.3.2.

Elementary curriculum policy documents on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/subjects.html

PPM No. 160, "Protected Time for Daily Mathematics Instruction, Grades 1 to 8"
(September 19, 2016)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm160.pdf

Secondary curriculum policy documents on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/subjects.html

Course codes on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/list/commoncc/cc.html

2.2.1 Textbooks and Supplementary Resources

A textbook is defined as a comprehensive learning resource, intended for use by an entire class or group of students, that is in print or electronic form, or that consists of any combination of print, electronic, and non-print materials collectively designed to support a substantial portion (85%) of the Ontario curriculum expectations for a

specific grade and subject in elementary school, or for a course in secondary school, or a substantial portion (85%) of the expectations in the four frames of the Ontario Kindergarten program. A textbook must also support the philosophy and intent of the curriculum policy for the subject or course and grade.

A supplementary resource is defined as a resource that supports only a limited number of expectations, or the expectations in a single strand, as outlined in the curriculum policy document for a specific subject or course or in the frames of the Kindergarten program. Such a resource may be intended for use by an entire class or by a group of students. Examples are levelled texts, novels, dictionaries, atlases, computer software, and instructional guides.

The Trillium List contains the titles of those textbooks that are approved by the ministry for use in Ontario schools. The textbooks on the Trillium List have been subjected to a rigorous evaluation to ensure that they conform to ministry standards. School boards are responsible for selecting textbooks for use in their schools from the Trillium List. School boards have the sole responsibility for the selection and evaluation of supplementary resources.

The Trillium List:
www.trilliumlist.ca

2.3 Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting

Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools (2010) outlines the policies and practices for the assessment, evaluation, and reporting of the achievement of curriculum expectations and the development of learning skills and work habits for all students in Grades 1 to 12 in Ontario schools. The policy is based on seven fundamental principles designed to ensure that assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices and procedures:

- ◆ are fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;
- ◆ support all students, including students with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction, and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;
- ◆ are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;
- ◆ are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;
- ◆ are ongoing, varied in nature, and administered over a period of time to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;

- ♦ provide ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement;
- ♦ develop students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning.

The document clarifies policy related both to students' demonstration of specific learning skills and work habits (responsibility, organization, independent work, collaboration, initiative, self-regulation) and to their achievement of curriculum expectations. It provides a thorough outline of policy related to performance standards, to the role of assessment in the improvement of student learning, to evaluation and reporting procedures, and to considerations pertaining to students with special education needs and students who are learning English. It also includes policies for reporting student achievement demonstrated through e-learning and the credit-recovery process.

NEW

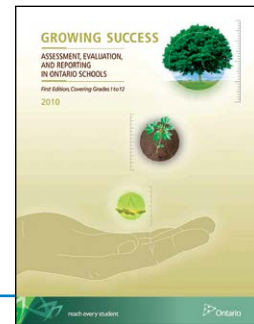
Growing Success – The Kindergarten Addendum: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools (2016) sets out the policy for assessment, evaluation, and reporting for Kindergarten and relates it to the policy for Grades 1 to 12, as described in *Growing Success* (2010). The assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy for Kindergarten aligns with the content, philosophy, and intent of *The Kindergarten Program* (2016) (see section 2.1).

Like *Growing Success* (2010), *The Kindergarten Addendum* emphasizes the importance of assessment *for* learning and assessment *as* learning – including the use of descriptive feedback and the development of self- and peer-assessment skills and individual goal-setting skills – in promoting growth in learning. In Kindergarten, the strategy of “noticing and naming the learning” provides a link to the more formal development of learning goals and success criteria in Grades 1 to 12. The addendum also notes that self-regulation skills, which are integrated and assessed as part of the learning expectations in Kindergarten, are fundamental to the development of learning skills and work habits in the elementary and secondary grades. *Growing Success – The Kindergarten Addendum* outlines policy with respect to evaluation and reporting in Kindergarten and includes templates for the Kindergarten Communication of Learning reports (see section 2.3.1).

The policy also recognizes that children enter Kindergarten at different stages of development and with diverse backgrounds and experiences, and that they will also leave Kindergarten demonstrating variations in growth and learning in relation to the expectations.

Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12 (2010)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf

Growing Success – The Kindergarten Addendum: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools (2016)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growingSuccessAddendum.pdf



NEW

2.3.1 The Provincial Report Cards and the Kindergarten Communications of Learning

Student achievement of the curriculum expectations and the learning skills and work habits must be communicated formally to students and parents by means of the Elementary Provincial Report Card, Grades 1–6 and Grades 7 and 8, and the Provincial Report Card, Grades 9–12. The Elementary Progress Report Card, to be used during the fall of the school year in Grades 1–6 and Grades 7 and 8, is designed to show the student’s development of the learning skills and work habits and the progress students are making towards achievement of the curriculum expectations.

For children in Kindergarten, key learning, growth in learning, and next steps in relation to the overall expectations are reported in the Kindergarten Communication of Learning reports.

Policy on reporting student achievement in Grades 1–12, along with the templates for the Provincial Report Cards and instructions for filling out the report cards, is included in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12* (2010). Policy on reporting children’s key learning, growth in learning, and next steps in Kindergarten is covered in *Growing Success – The Kindergarten Addendum: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools* (2016), which includes templates for the Kindergarten Communication of Learning: Initial Observations report, issued at the end of the first reporting period, and the Kindergarten Communication of Learning report, issued at the end of the second and third reporting periods.

Elementary and secondary report card templates and Kindergarten Communication of Learning templates on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/forms/report/card/reportCard.html

2.4 The Guidance and Career Education Program

Under the direction of the principal, each school will develop and implement a guidance and career education program. The goals of this Kindergarten to Grade 12 program are to assist students in acquiring the knowledge and skills required to learn effectively, live and work cooperatively and productively with a wide range of people, and set and pursue education and career/life goals.

The guidance and career education program has three areas of learning – student development (i.e., the development of habits and skills necessary for learning), interpersonal development (i.e., the development of the knowledge and skills needed in getting along with others), and career development (i.e., the development of the knowledge and skills needed to set short-term and long-term goals in planning for the future).

Two of the three areas of learning – student development and interpersonal development – are integrated within the learning skills and work habits described in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12* (2010). For each of the learning skills and work habits, the document provides examples of associated behaviours, which are designed to guide teachers in the instruction, assessment, and evaluation of learning skills and work habits.

The third area of learning – career development – is discussed in *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools – Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2013).

NEW

2.4.1 The Education and Career/Life Planning Program

Creating Pathways to Success sets out the career development policy for Ontario schools. Under the direction of the principal and with the assistance of key staff and students, every elementary and secondary school will develop, document, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive education and career/life planning program to help students achieve their personal goals and become competent, successful, and contributing members of society.

The goals of the education and career/life planning program are to:

- ◆ ensure that students develop the knowledge and skills they need to make informed education and career/life choices through the effective application of a four-step inquiry process;
- ◆ provide opportunities for this learning both in and outside the classroom;
- ◆ engage parents and the broader community in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the program to support students in their learning.

From Kindergarten to Grade 12, students develop knowledge and skills related to education and career/life planning through an inquiry process built on four areas of learning – Knowing Yourself, Exploring Opportunities, Making Decisions and

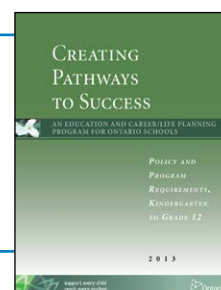
Setting Goals, and Achieving Goals and Making Transitions. Students develop competencies in these areas by participating in learning opportunities related to the curriculum, through school-wide activities, and through activities in the community.

As part of the education and career/life planning program, a process must be in place at every school to support students in documenting and reflecting on their learning in education and career/life planning through the use of the “All About Me” portfolio (for students in Kindergarten to Grade 6) and a *web-based* Individual Pathways Plan (IPP – for students in Grades 7 to 12).

In Grades 7 to 12, education and career/life planning involves preparation for key transitions, including the transition from elementary to secondary school, from Grade 10 to Grade 11, and from secondary school to students’ initial postsecondary destinations.

Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools – Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (2013)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/cps/CreatingPathwaysSuccess.pdf



2.5 Additional Programs and Program Considerations

2.5.1 Combined Classes (Multigrade, Multitype)

In some schools, it may not be feasible to offer separate classes for every grade in elementary schools, or all course grades and/or types in secondary schools. In such cases, a single class may be organized to serve more than one group of students across grades or course types. In such combined classes, the expectations and the assessment and evaluation procedures for each grade or type of course must be clearly outlined.

2.5.2 Promotion from Grade 8 to Grade 9

Students who have successfully completed Grade 8 will be promoted from elementary school and admitted to a secondary school.

Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.2, Part II, subsection 41 (1)
www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02#BK46

2.5.2.1 *Reach-Ahead Opportunities for Elementary School Students*

Under exceptional circumstances, an individual student in Grade 8, with parental consent, may be given permission by the principal of a secondary school to “reach ahead” to take secondary school courses, either during the school year or in the summer prior to entering Grade 9.

The principal of the elementary school and the principal of the secondary school will decide, on a case-by-case basis, whether “reaching ahead” to take a secondary school course is in the best interest of the student. The principal of the secondary school will assume responsibility for evaluating the student’s achievement and for granting and recording the credit.

Students in Grade 8 may also have the opportunity to reach ahead to start earning community involvement hours prior to entering Grade 9 (see section 6.1.4).

2.5.3 International Language Programs for Elementary School Students

Boards may offer, as subjects, international languages – that is, modern languages other than English or French – to students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 through continuing education (see section 10.2 for more information on continuing education). If a board receives written requests from parents, on behalf of twenty-three students or more, for the establishment of a program in an international language, the board must establish the program requested. Boards may enter into agreements with other boards to provide the requested program. Boards must deliver the program for the duration of the school year, provided that at least ten students attend the first class and that at least one student continues to attend for the duration of the year. If, at the end of the year, there are fewer than twenty-three students enrolled in the program, the board may discontinue the program.

International language classes may be held during the school day (but outside regular instructional time – for example, at lunch) at a school site used by the board, or after school or on weekends at a school or at a location that is not a school site. A student may attend classes in one or more languages. During the school year, a student may attend international language classes for no more than two and one-half hours per week. During the summer, a student may attend such classes for a maximum of two and one-half hours per day.

School boards establishing international language classes must accept full responsibility for staff, curriculum, and supervision of the classes.

Regulation 285, “Continuing Education”, R.R.O. 1990, Part II
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900285

2.6 Languages of Instruction, and Programming

Canada's two official languages, English and French, are the languages of instruction in English-language and French-language schools across Ontario. American Sign Language (ASL) and Quebec Sign Language (QSL) may also be used as languages of instruction.

2.6.1 English-Language Schools

It is essential for all students in English-language schools to graduate with the ability to use the language of instruction effectively for thinking, learning, and communicating. English is therefore a required subject, and learning opportunities to promote facility in English are to be integrated into the curriculum in all subject areas.

English is taught in each grade in elementary school, and students in secondary schools are required to earn four credits in English (one for each grade) and to meet the provincial secondary school literacy graduation requirement (see sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.3). For English language learners, schools will offer programs and courses to help them develop proficiency in the language of instruction (see section 3.1).

French is also taught in the English-language schools of Ontario to provide students with the opportunity to become bilingual in the two official languages of Canada. The study of French as a second language is compulsory in elementary school from Grade 4 to Grade 8, and secondary school students are required to earn at least one credit in French as a second language to graduate. Students may also count two additional French credits as compulsory credits towards their diploma. The mandatory French requirement can be met through core French programs, which involve the study of the French language, or through French immersion and extended French programs, in which French is not only taught as a subject but also serves as the language of instruction in other subjects. Schools must offer at least core French programs from Grade 4 to the end of Grade 12. The delivery of French immersion and extended French programs is optional.

2.6.2 French-Language Schools

In addition to fostering academic achievement and supporting bilingualism in the two official languages of Canada, the education provided in French-language schools is intended to enhance students' bond with the French-language communities of Ontario and to support the development of their sense of cultural identity. (For more information, see *Ontario's Aménagement Linguistique Policy for French-Language Education*, 2005.)

Students study French as a subject from Kindergarten to Grade 12, and they must start the study of English as a subject by Grade 5. The requirements regarding the language of instruction and the other official language of Canada in French-language

schools mirror those in English-language schools (see the French version of this document for details).

2.6.3 American Sign Language

For the instruction of students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, English-language school boards may provide instruction using American Sign Language (ASL). If there are a number of students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing in a school, boards may provide bilingual classes for these students in which both English and ASL are used as languages of instruction.

Regulation 298, "Operation of Schools – General", R.R.O. 1990, Section 32
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900298

3.1 English Language Learners (ELLs)

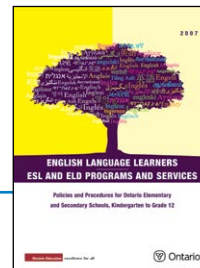
English language learners are students whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English that is significantly different from the variety used for instruction in Ontario's schools, and who may require focused educational supports to assist them in attaining proficiency in English. These students may be Canadian born or recently arrived from other countries. They come from diverse backgrounds and school experiences, and have a wide variety of strengths and needs.

Boards must ensure that programs and supports are in place for these students as they develop proficiency in English. Boards and schools should implement program models that take into consideration the number of English language learners in the board/school.

Learning opportunities to enable English language learners to develop proficiency in English are to be integrated into the curriculum in all subject areas. All teachers share in the responsibility for the English language development of these students. Teachers must adapt the instructional program to address students' different levels of proficiency in English and help these students adjust to a new linguistic, cultural, and educational environment. Appropriate adaptations include both modifications (see section 3.1.2) and accommodations such as specific teaching strategies. At the secondary level, English language learners may also need to take English as a second language (ESL) and/or English literacy development (ELD) courses.

School boards will implement programs and services that will enable English language learners to continue their education while learning English.

Board and school requirements are outlined in the policy document *English Language Learners / ESL and ELD Programs and Services: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12*.



3.1.1 Placement

A student's level of proficiency in English will not influence the choice of grade placement. In elementary schools, English language learners will be placed with an age-appropriate group. In secondary schools, placement in a grade or in specific subjects will depend upon the student's prior education, background in specific subject areas, and aspirations. English language learners should be placed in a grade-level or subject-specific classroom for at least part of each day.

Final decisions regarding placement are made by the principal in consultation with the student, staff, and parents. The principal will communicate the placement decision, and the rationale for the placement, to the student and parents.

See also section 4.3, "Student Transfers".

3.1.2 Modified Curriculum Expectations

Modification of some or all of the curriculum expectations may be required to support English language learners, especially those who are in the early stages of learning English or those who have had limited prior schooling.

At the secondary level, when modifications are made to support English language needs, the principal will consult with the classroom teacher to determine the integrity of the credit for credit-granting purposes.

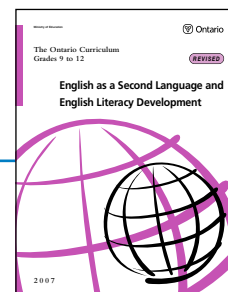
3.1.3 English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Literacy Development (ELD)

English as a second language (ESL) courses are intended to help English language learners develop proficiency in the language of instruction so that they can succeed in all subject areas at school, and later in postsecondary studies, including apprenticeship programs, and/or in the workplace. English literacy development (ELD) courses are intended to provide students who had limited access to education prior to admission to an Ontario secondary school with an accelerated literacy program to give them the foundation needed for further study and for employment.

Courses are to be developed, for credit, from the ESL/ELD curriculum policy document, which outlines the program in ESL and ELD. A student entering the Ontario secondary school system at any grade level may be given credit for a

maximum of 3 ESL/ELD credits towards the 4 compulsory English credits required for graduation. The remaining compulsory English credit(s) will be earned at the Grade 12 level.

The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development (2007)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/esl912currb.pdf



3.2 Students Deemed to Be at Risk

3.2.1 Students Deemed to Be at Risk in Secondary School

Boards must ensure that every secondary school has a Student Success team and a Student Success teacher to work in collaboration with school staff to support students who are struggling with their secondary school program and are at risk of not graduating. The Student Success team will include, at a minimum, the Student Success teacher and representation from administration, guidance, and special education. The inclusion of other members such as classroom teachers, child and youth workers, social workers, and attendance counsellors will be determined by local needs.

The responsibilities of the Student Success team for students considered to be at risk in secondary school include:

- ◆ monitoring and tracking individual students' progress;
- ◆ providing direct support for differentiated instruction to meet the learning needs of students and to improve their achievement, promote their retention, and support significant transitions;
- ◆ ensuring that students have opportunities to engage meaningfully in their own learning;
- ◆ supporting students in their education and career/life planning;
- ◆ supporting school-wide efforts to improve outcomes for students struggling with their secondary school program;
- ◆ re-engaging early school leavers;
- ◆ working with parents and the community to support student success.

NEW

3.2.2 Transition from Grade 8 to Grade 9

The Student Success team in each secondary school is responsible for the implementation of strategies that promote a smooth transition from Grade 8 to Grade 9

for students who may struggle with the secondary school program.⁶ These strategies include the following:

- ◆ developing a process for sharing student information between elementary and secondary schools, subject to rules relating to privacy and disclosure;
- ◆ creating student profiles that highlight each student's strengths and interests, as well as the student's learning, social, and emotional needs;
- ◆ providing assistance during orientation and other pre-entry activities;
- ◆ providing individualized timetabling and putting in place appropriate support strategies and interventions, based on student strengths and needs, that will be sustained beyond the orientation period;
- ◆ identifying advocates and mentors for students requiring additional support;
- ◆ ensuring ongoing tracking and monitoring of student progress by the Student Success team.

To the extent possible, timetabling strategies that address the particular needs of students' Individual Pathways Plans should be communicated to students and parents and, as appropriate, should be put in place for students who may have difficulty with their Grade 9 program. Some examples of such timetabling strategies include the following:

- ◆ delaying some compulsory courses until the second semester or until Grade 10;
- ◆ considering substitutions for compulsory credit requirements;
- ◆ scheduling mathematics and/or English and/or science over the full school year and/or for 220 hours in order to allow the student more time to achieve the expectations of the one-credit course;
- ◆ ensuring that the student's timetable includes a range of courses that the student finds interesting and engaging and that are appropriate to the student's learning needs.

See also section 2.4.1, "The Education and Career/Life Planning Program, Kindergarten to Grade 12".

3.2.3 Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL)

Although most students will attend and successfully complete secondary school, a small number of students are at risk of leaving school early for a wide variety of reasons. If the various retention and engagement strategies that schools and boards have applied are not successful, Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) may be used to meet the needs of these students. The goal is to help them maintain a connection to learning and to support their continued progress towards graduation or achievement of other educational and personal goals.

6. Under Section 41 of the Education Act, a student who does not successfully complete Grade 8 and is not promoted from elementary school may apply for admission to a secondary school. The student will be admitted to the secondary school if the principal of the secondary school is satisfied that the student is capable of undertaking the work of the school.

Ontario Regulation 374/10, “Supervised Alternative Learning and Other Excusals from Attendance at School”, came into effect on February 1, 2011. The regulation authorizes the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee of a board to excuse students of compulsory school age who are at least fourteen years old from attending school while they continue to participate in learning under the supervision of the board or a school of the board. An eligible student may continue in SAL for multiple years, but renewal of the student’s program must be authorized by the committee annually.

Key features of SAL under Ontario Regulation 374/10 include the following:

- ◆ A Supervised Alternative Learning Plan (SALP) is required for each student.
- ◆ Timelines and procedures are specified for stages in the SAL process.
- ◆ A primary contact at the school or board is identified who will monitor the student’s progress at least once per month.
- ◆ A transition plan is required to support the student’s transition to his/her next steps after SAL.

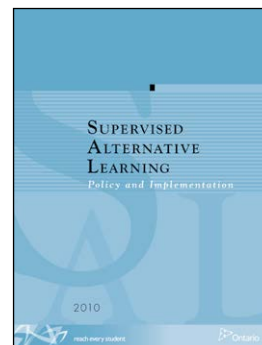
A parent, a student sixteen years of age or over who has withdrawn from parental control, or a principal may make a request for SAL. While in SAL, students can participate in a variety of learning activities, which can include: taking courses and/or training; counselling; earning certifications; volunteer work; other work; and developing job-search skills and the various Essential Skills, work habits, and life skills that will help them lead productive adult lives. The principal is responsible for ensuring that venues off school property have been visited and found appropriate, or are already known and considered appropriate, before the student starts the part of the program that occurs off school property. As much as possible, opportunities to earn credits should be included in the student’s program. Some students will eventually graduate or otherwise continue their education as adults.

Part-time study for up to a year is allowed for sixteen- and seventeen-year-old students for compassionate reasons, with the principal’s approval and without having to go through the SAL process.

O. Reg. 374/10, “Supervised Alternative Learning and Other Excusals from Attendance at School”
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/100374

Supervised Alternative Learning: Policy and Implementation (2010)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/SAL2011English.pdf

Main page on ministry website:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/alternative.html



3.3 Students with Special Education Needs

For the purposes of this document, the term *students with special education needs* includes all students who are receiving special education programs and services, whether or not they have been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC).

Students who have behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical, or multiple exceptionalities may require a special education program and/or services to benefit fully from their school experience. Such students may be referred to an IPRC set up by the school board. Students identified by an IPRC must be provided with appropriate special education programs and/or services designed to build on their strengths and meet their needs. In addition, the principal of the students' school must ensure that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is prepared and maintained for these students.

Access to special education programs and services need not be limited to students identified through the IPRC process. Boards may provide special education programs and/or services to meet students' educational needs and prepare an IEP even if the student has not been identified as exceptional.

The process for identifying a student as exceptional and determining a placement for that student is set out in Ontario Regulation 181/98.

School boards must establish a special education advisory committee in accordance with Ontario Regulation 464/97. They must also maintain the special education plan of the board in accordance with Regulation 306.

Categories and definitions of exceptionalities may be found in Part A of the document *Special Education: A Guide for Educators, 2001* (available in print)

"The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee" on the ministry website:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/identifi.html

O. Reg. 181/98, "Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils"
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/980181

PPM No.1, "Ontario Schools for the Blind and Deaf as Resource Centres" (April 2, 1986)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/1.html

PPM No. 11, "Early Identification of Children's Learning Needs" (1982)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/11.html

PPM No. 59, "Psychological Testing and Assessment of Pupils" (October 11, 1982)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/59.html

PPM No. 76C, "Alternative Educational Programs and Services for Deaf, Blind, and Deaf-Blind Exceptional Pupils" (October 4, 1991)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/76c.html

PPM No. 81, "Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings" (July 19, 1984)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/81.html

PPM No. 149, "Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals" (September 25, 2009)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm149.pdf

O. Reg. 464/97, "Special Education Advisory Committees"
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/970464

Regulation 306, "Special Education Programs and Services", R.R.O. 1990
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900306

Main page on the ministry website:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/speced.html

3.3.1 Accommodations, Modifications, and Alternative Expectations

Students with special education needs should be given every opportunity to achieve the curriculum expectations set out in the Ontario curriculum policy documents. This may require that the student be provided with accommodations, and/or modifications to the curriculum expectations, and/or alternative expectations developed as part of an alternative program or course.

Accommodations (such as specific teaching strategies and assistive technology) allow a student access to the subject or course without any changes to the knowledge and skills the student is expected to demonstrate (see section 3.3.2).

Modifications are changes made to the grade-level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs. Modifications may include the use of expectations at a different grade level and/or an increase or decrease in the number and/or complexity of expectations relative to the curriculum expectations for the regular grade level. At the secondary level, the principal will determine whether achievement of the modified expectations constitutes successful completion of the course, and will decide whether the student will be eligible to receive a credit for the course. The principal will communicate his or her decision to the parents and the student.

Alternative expectations are developed to help students with special education needs acquire knowledge and skills that are not represented in the Ontario curriculum. Because they are not part of a subject or course outlined in the provincial curriculum documents, alternative expectations are considered to constitute alternative programs or alternative courses (see section 7.4). At the secondary level, the student will not be granted a credit for the successful completion of a course that consists of alternative expectations.

3.3.2 The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) identifies the student's specific learning expectations and outlines how the school will address these expectations through appropriate accommodations, modifications, and/or alternative programs/courses, as well as specific instructional and assessment strategies. The IEP is updated on a regular basis as the student's strengths and needs change.

An IEP must include at least the following:

- ◆ a specific outline of the student's strengths and needs and educational expectations;
- ◆ an outline of the special education programs and services that the student is to receive; and
- ◆ a statement of the methods by which the student's progress will be assessed.

O. Reg. 181/98, "Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils", Sections 6, 7, and 8
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/980181

"The Individual Education Plan Process" on the ministry website:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/individu.html

NEW

3.3.3 Supporting Students with Learning Disabilities

In August 2014, the ministry released revised PPM No. 8, "Identification of and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities", with the implementation date of January 2015. The revised memorandum reflects advances in research and current effective practices.

PPM No. 8 provides the ministry's definition of *learning disability*, which must be used by Identification, Placement, and Review Committees (IPRCs) in the identification of students with learning disabilities. The memorandum also sets out requirements for school boards with respect to the identification of and program planning for students with learning disabilities.

The program planning section of PPM No. 8 applies to:

- ◆ students who have been identified as exceptional by an IPRC;
- ◆ students who have not been identified by an IPRC but who demonstrate difficulties in learning and who would benefit from special education programs and/or services that are appropriate for students with learning disabilities.

The revised memorandum reiterates that the determining factor for the provision of a special education program or services is not a specific diagnosed or undiagnosed condition but rather the needs of the individual student, based on the assessment of his or her strengths and needs. Special education programs may be delivered through a range of placements.

PPM No. 8, "Identification of and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities" (August 26, 2014)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm8.pdf

NEW

3.3.4 Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

PPM No. 140, "Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)", May 17, 2007, directs school boards to use applied behaviour analysis (ABA) methods when working with students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), where appropriate, in accordance with students' Individual Education Plans. ABA, which uses methods based on scientific principles of learning and behaviour to build useful repertoires of behaviour and reduce problematic ones, has been found to benefit the achievement of students with ASD.

PPM No. 140 also requires principals to ensure that a plan is in place to help students with ASD with the various transitions they experience (see section 3.3.5).

The ministry is implementing a wide range of measures to support school boards in increasing the capacity of school teams, principals, teachers, and teachers' assistants, to incorporate ABA methods.

PPM No. 140, "Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)" (May 17, 2007)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/140.html

3.3.5 Transition Planning for Students with Special Education Needs

Students make various transitions in various contexts: upon entry to school; between activities and settings in the classroom or between classrooms; between grades; from school to school or from an outside agency or facility to a school; from elementary to secondary school; and from secondary school to the next appropriate pathway.

Ontario Regulation 181/98 sets out requirements for transition plans for exceptional students aged fourteen or older (except students identified solely as gifted), to help them make the transition to appropriate postsecondary endeavours, such as work, further education, and/or community living.

PPM No. 156, “Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs”, came into effect in September 2014. It requires that school boards develop transition plans for *all* students who have an IEP, whether or not they have been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) and including those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness. At the discretion of the board, a transition plan may also be developed for students who receive a special education program and/or services but do not have an IEP and have not been identified as exceptional.

PPM No. 140, “Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)”, May 17, 2007, states that school board staff must plan for the transition of students with autism spectrum disorders between one activity/setting and another.

Various sources of information can be useful when developing transition plans. Such sources may include the “All About Me” portfolios and Individual Pathways Plans that are required as part of the education and career/life planning program outlined in *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools – Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (see section 2.4).

The document entitled *Guidelines for Educational Programs for Students in Government Approved Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional (CTCC) Facilities* (2016–17) outlines how the facility and the board that is providing the educational program can work together to create transition plans for students in these facilities. For more information about these guidelines and supporting the students to whom they apply, see section 3.5.

The principal is responsible for ensuring coordination and development of transition plans.

O. Reg. 181/98, "Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils"
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/980181

PPM No. 156, "Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs"
(February 1, 2013)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm156.pdf

*Guidelines for Educational Programs for Students in Government Approved Care
and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional (CTCC) Facilities (2016–17)*
<https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Section%2023.htm>

3.4 Provincial and Demonstration Schools

Provincial Schools and Demonstration Schools are operated by the Ministry of Education to provide education for students who are Deaf, blind, or deafblind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

Admittance to a Provincial School for students who are Deaf, blind, or deafblind is determined by a Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296.

Application for admission to a Demonstration School is made on behalf of students by the school board, with parental consent. The Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities (PCLD) determines whether a student is eligible for admission.

Ministry website for Provincial Schools and Demonstration Schools:
www.psbnet.ca/eng/index.html

Regulation 296, "Ontario Schools for the Blind and the Deaf", R.R.O. 1990
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900296

3.5 Education Programs for Students in Care and/or Treatment, Custody, and Correctional (CTCC) Facilities

Education programs for students in care and/or treatment, custody, and correctional (CTCC) facilities are developed through a formalized partnership between a school board and the facility. The school board is responsible for designing and delivering the educational programming, including providing teachers and, in some cases, educational assistants. The partnering facility is responsible for the treatment component.

The ministry believes that the education goals of school-age students should continue to be supported when students are required to attend government-approved facilities for care, treatment, or rehabilitative purposes. To the extent possible, these students should attend regular or special education classes in local schools. However, in cases where students cannot attend local schools because of their need for care, treatment, or rehabilitation, suitable educational programs that recognize the primacy of the care, treatment, and rehabilitation needs may be provided by the school board within the care and/or treatment, custody, and correctional facility.

It is a fundamental belief that all students can succeed when given the appropriate supports. Educators who work in CTCC educational programs cannot develop these programs in isolation. To support student success, arrangements for the provision of such educational programs should be developed jointly by the staff of CTCC facilities or agencies and school board personnel.

Guidelines for Educational Programs for Students in Government Approved Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional (CTCC) Facilities (2016–17) provides direction to school boards regarding the approval and delivery of educational programs for students who are clients of government-approved CTCC facilities. These guidelines consolidate and replace the following documents:

- ◆ *Guidelines 2005–06 for Approval of Educational Programs for Pupils in Government Approved Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional Facilities*
- ◆ PPM No. 85, “Educational Programs for Pupils in Government Approved Care and/or Treatment Facilities” (January 20, 1986)
- ◆ *Essential Elements for Education Programs for Pupils in Government-Approved Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional Facilities* (February 2009)

The guidelines will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, providing the ministry with the medium to support the transformation of CTCC education programs in the coming years.

For information on creating transition plans for students in CTCC facilities who have special education needs, see section 3.3.5, “Transition Planning for Students with Special Education Needs”.

Guidelines for Educational Programs for Students in Government Approved Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional (CTCC) Facilities (2016–17)
<https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Section%2023.htm>

4

Student Records, Attendance, and Transfers

4.1 Student Records

4.1.1 The Ontario Student Record (OSR)

The Ontario Student Record (OSR) is the record of a student's educational progress through schools in Ontario. Principals are required to collect information for inclusion in the OSR for each student enrolled in the school and to establish, maintain, retain, transfer, and dispose of the OSR. The OSR is an ongoing record and will be transferred if the student transfers to another school in Ontario.

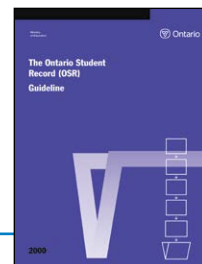
The Ontario Student Record (OSR) Guideline sets out the policies with regard to the establishment of the OSR; the responsibility for the OSR; the components of the OSR; the access to the OSR; the use and maintenance of the OSR; the transfer of the OSR; the retention, storage, and destruction of information in the OSR; and the correction or removal of information in the OSR.

The Ontario Student Record (OSR) Guideline (2000)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/osr/osr.pdf

Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.2, Section 266: Pupil Records

www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02#BK438



4.1.2 The Ontario Student Transcript (OST)

The Ontario Student Transcript (OST) is a comprehensive record of all course work and diploma requirements achieved by a student. An OST must be established for each student enrolled in an Ontario secondary school course, whether or not he or she is taking the course for credit. All information recorded on the transcript must be kept up to date, either in print or electronic form, and must be copied onto an official OST form when a printed copy is required. Upon the

student's graduation or retirement, a current and accurate copy of the student's OST must be stored in the OSR folder.

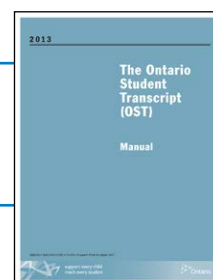
The transcript will include the following information:

- ◆ the student's achievement in Grades 9 and 10, with percentage grades obtained and credits earned for successfully completed credit courses;
 - ◆ a list of all Grade 11 and 12 courses completed or attempted by the student, with the percentage grades earned and the credits gained;
- Note:*
- ◆ Only one credit will be granted for a course that a student has successfully completed twice.
 - ◆ If a student withdraws from a course within five instructional days following the issue of the first provincial report card in a semestered school or five instructional days following the issue of the second provincial report card in a non-semestered school, the withdrawal is not recorded on the OST.
- ◆ confirmation that the student has completed the community involvement requirement;
 - ◆ confirmation that the student has completed the provincial secondary school literacy requirement;
 - ◆ confirmation that a student in a Specialist High Skills Major has completed all the requirements (see section 9.2).

The transcript may also contain special indicators such as identification of any course that has been substituted for one that is a diploma requirement (see section 6.2) and an indication of any extraordinary circumstances affecting the student's achievement in a Grade 11 or 12 course.

The Ontario Student Transcript (OST) Manual provides the information and guidelines required for the establishment, maintenance, issue, and storage of the Ontario Student Transcript. It also outlines the procedures that apply to the recording of information in various situations.

The Ontario Student Transcript (OST) Manual (2013)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/ost/ost2013.pdf



4.2 Student Attendance

Students who are six years old on or before the first day of school are required to attend school until they reach the age of eighteen or graduate. School boards offer a full day of learning to four- and five-year-olds (see section 2.1), but parents are not required to send their child to school until the child reaches the age of six.

Regular attendance at school is critical for the student's learning. To encourage regular attendance by students, schools will ensure that students and their parents are informed about the school's policy on attendance. Where, in the principal's judgement, a student's frequent absences from school are jeopardizing his or her success, school staff should meet with the student and the parents to explain the potential consequences of the absences and discuss steps to be taken to improve attendance.

Part-time study for up to a year is allowed for sixteen- and seventeen-year-old students for compassionate reasons, with the principal's approval, as outlined in Ontario Regulation 374/10.

Students of compulsory school age whose absence is reported to the school board attendance counsellor will have the reason for their absence investigated.

See also section 3.2.3, "Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL)".

Enrolment Registers and Instructions

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/forms.html

Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.2, Section 21: Compulsory Attendance

www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02#BK27

O. Reg. 374/10, "Supervised Alternative Learning and Other Excusals from Attendance at School"

www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/100374

4.2.1 Safe Arrivals: Elementary School Program

A safe-arrival program is a system of procedures that are carried out in conjunction with daily school attendance taking. Parents are responsible for their children's safety. Safe-arrival programs are a mechanism that parents and schools can use to account for any student's unexplained failure to arrive at school. In order to promote the safety of our students, each school board must have policies and procedures in place for the implementation of a safe-arrival program in each elementary school.

PPM No. 123, "Safe Arrivals" (February 2, 1999)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/123.html

4.2.2 Home Schooling

A student is receiving home schooling if he or she is excused from compulsory attendance because the parents are providing satisfactory instruction at home.

When parents give a board written notification of their intent to provide home schooling for their child, the board should consider the child to be excused from attendance at school. The board should accept the written notification of the parents each year as evidence that the parents are providing satisfactory instruction at home. The board should send a letter each year to the parents, acknowledging the notification. If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the child is not receiving satisfactory instruction at home, the board should take steps to determine whether the instruction is satisfactory.

See also section 4.3.2, “Students Transferring from Home Schooling, a Non-Inspected Private School, or a School outside Ontario”.

PPM No. 131, “Home Schooling” (June 17, 2002)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/131.html

4.3 Student Transfers

4.3.1 Students Transferring between Schools within Ontario

Elementary school students who transfer from one Ontario elementary school to another will be placed in the appropriate grade by the principal, based on the information in the student’s Provincial Report Card and in the student’s Ontario Student Record. This placement decision is also informed by other relevant documentation, such as the Individual Education Plan, as well as consultation with parents and the student.

Secondary school students who transfer from one Ontario secondary school to another will have their credits (as recorded on their Ontario Student Transcript) transferred with them, along with information on their progress towards meeting graduation requirements (i.e., whether they have met the literacy graduation requirement; their accumulated community involvement hours). The principal of the receiving school may award credit for work started in the previous school but completed in the receiving school. Where this work cannot be completed in the receiving school, the receiving principal may, after consultation with the principal of the sending school, award a partial credit in recognition of the student’s achievement of some of the course expectations.

If a student transfers from a French-language to an English-language secondary school, he or she must successfully complete at least one compulsory Grade 12 English course in order to meet graduation requirements. If a student transfers from an English-language to a French-language secondary school, he or she must successfully complete at least one compulsory Grade 12 français course. A student who transfers before having met the literacy graduation requirement will have to meet the requirement in the language of instruction of the new school (see section 6.1.3.1).

4.3.2 Students Transferring from Home Schooling, a Non-Inspected Private School, or a School outside Ontario

Elementary school students who transfer from home schooling, a non-inspected private school, or a school outside Ontario will be placed in an age-appropriate grade by the principal of the receiving school. This placement decision is informed by documentation – including report cards, other assessment materials, attendance records, and any other relevant documentation – as well as consultation with parents and the student.

For secondary students who are transferring from home schooling, a non-inspected private school, or a school outside Ontario, the principal of the receiving school will, in the process of deciding where the student should be placed, determine as equitably as possible the total credit equivalency of the student's previous learning and the number of compulsory and optional credits still to be earned. The credit equivalency total and the number of compulsory credits included will be entered on the student's Ontario Student Transcript. Students will have to meet the provincial secondary school literacy requirement. Principals will determine the number of hours of community involvement activities the student will have to complete (see Appendix 2).

Final decisions regarding placement are made by the principal in consultation with the student, staff, and parents. The principal will communicate the placement decision, and the rationale for the placement, to the student and parents. The principal should note the results of his or her assessment and the reasons for the decision in the student's Ontario Student Record (see section 4.1.1).

See also section 7.2.5, "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)".

5

School and Board Information: Admissions, Publishing, and Sharing

5.1 Admission to School

School boards are required to admit students who are qualified to be resident pupils of the board as defined in the Education Act. The specific requirements for a student to become a resident pupil of a Roman Catholic separate school board or of a French-language school board (public or separate) are outlined in this section (below) and section 5.1.1, respectively. (Note that Roman Catholic separate school boards and French-language school boards have the discretion to accept students whose parents do not meet the qualifications described here.)

To be admitted to an elementary school of an English-language public school board, a student, along with his or her parent (or parents), must live in the area of jurisdiction of the board, and the parent (or parents) must not be supporters of a Roman Catholic school board or a French-language school board. To be admitted to an elementary school of an English-language Roman Catholic separate school board, a student, along with his or her parent (or parents), must live in the area of jurisdiction of the board, and the parent (or parents) must be Roman Catholic and support the English-language Roman Catholic separate school board.

At the secondary level, students may attend a school of either the public or separate school board in the jurisdiction in which they are living. The school board that the parents support is irrelevant for the purposes of the right to attend secondary school.

For more detailed information about school admissions, see Part II of the Education Act.

Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.2, Elementary Resident Pupil Qualifications
www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02#BK39

Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.2, Secondary Resident Pupil Qualifications
www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02#BK42

5.1.1 Admission to a French-Language School Board

Parents who hold rights under Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms are entitled to have their children receive elementary and/or secondary school instruction in French. A parent holds Section 23 rights if he or she is a Canadian citizen *and*:

- ♦ if the first language he or she learned and still understands is French *or*
- ♦ if he or she received elementary school instruction in French in Canada *or*
- ♦ if any of his or her children have received or are receiving elementary or secondary school instruction in French in Canada.

Parents who do not meet these criteria may request admission for their child to a school in a French-language school board. An admissions committee of the board will review the request and make a decision. (For more information, see PPM No. 148, “Policies Governing Admission to French-Language Schools in Ontario”, April 22, 2009.)

5.1.1.1 Information to Be Provided by English-Language School Boards

English-language school boards will ensure that:

- ♦ French-speaking parents are informed of their right to enrol their child in a French-language school if they qualify under Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- ♦ parents who do not meet Section 23 criteria but who come from countries where the language of public administration or schooling is French are informed that their children may be admitted to Ontario’s French-language schools by an admissions committee.

5.2 Elementary Schools: Information for Selecting a Secondary School

In order to make an informed decision concerning their selection of a secondary school, students in Grade 8 and their parents require information about their board’s secondary school program offerings. In addition, they may need access to the guidance personnel and/or other appropriate staff of a particular secondary school or schools so that they can receive assistance with educational planning.

Boards must distribute information on programs available in the secondary schools in their jurisdiction to each Grade 8 student and his or her parents.

Boards must also inform Grade 8 students and their parents about how to contact guidance personnel and/or other appropriate personnel in the secondary schools in their jurisdiction.

School boards must ensure that Grade 8 students and their parents have access to this information before decisions regarding program and/or school selection have to be made every year.

5.3 Secondary Schools

5.3.1 The School Program and Course Calendar

Each secondary school will publish annually a school program and course calendar in print or electronic form that provides students and their parents with detailed and up-to-date information on diploma requirements, programs, and courses available both in the school and in the board. A board may choose to publish individual calendars for each of its secondary schools or one board-wide calendar that provides specific information for each secondary school.

The program and course calendar must provide information about the following:

The School

- ◆ the importance and value of completing a secondary education and the school's commitment to reach every student to help him or her achieve a successful outcome from the secondary school experience
- ◆ the requirement to remain in secondary school until the student has reached the age of eighteen or obtained an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)
- ◆ the school's overall goals and philosophy
- ◆ school organization, including the school's terms, reporting periods, and timetable organization
- ◆ the school's expectations regarding students' responsibilities, achievement, and attendance
- ◆ the school's Code of Conduct and the board's Safe Schools policy

Diploma and Certificates

- ◆ the requirements for the OSSD, including:
 - ◇ compulsory credit requirements
 - ◇ optional credit requirements
 - ◇ the provincial secondary school literacy requirement, including:
 - ★ the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test
 - ★ the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course
 - ★ the adjudication process
 - ★ accommodations, special provisions, deferrals, and exemptions
 - ◇ the community involvement requirements and procedures
 - ◇ substitution policy for compulsory credit requirements

- ◆ the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Certificate, including:
 - ◇ compulsory and optional credit requirements
 - ◇ substitution policy for the compulsory credit requirements
- ◆ the Certificate of Accomplishment

Curriculum

- ◆ all courses offered in the school and related information, including:
 - ◇ the definition of a credit
 - ◇ definitions of the types of courses available in the Ontario curriculum
 - ◇ an explanation of the course coding system
 - ◇ descriptions of all courses offered by the school, including courses that are not part of the Ontario curriculum, such as locally developed courses (compulsory and optional)
 - ◇ how to gain access to outlines of the courses of study
 - ◇ how to gain access to Ontario curriculum policy documents
 - ◇ descriptions of programs, such as school-work programs, the Specialist High Skills Major, and dual credit programs
 - ◇ descriptions of experiential learning programs such as cooperative education, the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, and job shadowing
 - ◇ policy regarding student withdrawal from courses in Grades 11 and 12
 - ◇ procedures related to changing course types
 - ◇ the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition processes for both equivalency and challenge
 - ◇ information about other ways of earning credits through learning opportunities such as e-learning, the Independent Learning Centre, and continuing education courses for credit
 - ◇ information on evaluation and examination policies
 - ◇ information on reporting procedures, including the Provincial Report Card and the Ontario Student Transcript

Supports and Resources

- ◆ the types of school supports and resources that are available, including:
 - ◇ supports related to guidance and to education and career/life planning, including the Individual Pathways Plan
 - ◇ strategies and resources for students and parents to support education planning and the course selection process
 - ◇ intervention strategies, supports, and programs, such as credit recovery opportunities, Student Success teacher support, and Grade 8 to 9 transition programs for students at risk of not graduating
 - ◇ supports for English language learners
 - ◇ computer labs and resource centre/library
 - ◇ community resources

Special Education

- ◆ provision of special education, including:
 - ◇ an explanation of accommodations provided
 - ◇ an explanation of modifications of curriculum expectations
 - ◇ the availability of alternative (non-credit) courses
 - ◇ the role of the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee process and the Individual Education Plan
 - ◇ the role of the board's Special Education Advisory Committee
 - ◇ how to obtain the board's special education parent guide and learn about special education policies and procedures

Board-wide Programs

- ◆ board-wide programs, including their location and how to gain admission to:
 - ◇ all alternative schools and programs available in the board, including schools with alternative organizational structures (e.g., year-round schools)
 - ◇ specialized programs and schools (e.g., French immersion programs, Specialist High Skills Major programs)
 - ◇ continuing education programs such as summer school and night school

5.3.2 Outlines of Courses of Study

The principal of a secondary school will retain on file up-to-date copies of the outlines of all of the courses of study for courses offered at the school. These course outlines must be available at the school for parents and students to examine.

Course outlines in the secondary school will include at least the following information:

- ◆ the name of the ministry's curriculum policy document(s) from which the outline of the course of study has been developed
- ◆ the name of the board, school, and department, as well as the names of the department head, the classroom program developers or teachers, and the dates of development and revision
- ◆ the course title, course type, grade, course code, and credit value
- ◆ the prerequisite(s) if any
- ◆ the overall curriculum expectations
- ◆ an outline of the course content, including unit titles in the sequence in which the material will be studied
- ◆ teaching strategies appropriate to the course type (i.e., strategies reflecting the appropriate balance of theoretical components and practical applications for the particular type of course) and teaching strategies appropriate to the range of students' learning needs

- ◆ strategies for the assessment and evaluation of student performance appropriate to the course type and to the range of students' learning needs
- ◆ a description of how the course incorporates, as appropriate, considerations for program planning that align with ministry and board policy and initiatives (e.g., planning related to: students with special education needs; English language learners; environmental education; equity and inclusive education; financial literacy education; the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit education policy framework; the role of information and communications technology; education and career/life planning; cooperative education; and health and safety)
- ◆ the names of the textbook(s) and resource materials that are essential to the course

Information regarding access to the course outlines and to curriculum policy documents will be included in the school's program/course calendar.

Part Two

Policy and Program Requirements for Secondary Schools

Part Two of this document sets out the policies and program requirements that apply only to secondary schools in Ontario, including the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

6

Diploma and Certificate Requirements and Related Procedures

6.1 The Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)

The requirements for earning an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) under OS are as follows:

- ♦ students must earn a minimum of 30 credits, including 18 compulsory credits and 12 optional credits;
- ♦ students must meet the provincial secondary school literacy requirement; and
- ♦ students must complete 40 hours of community involvement activities.

Students who successfully complete a Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program as part of the requirements for their OSSD will receive a diploma with an SHSM red seal (see section 9.2)

To determine the diploma requirements for students transferring between schools within Ontario, including those transferring between English- and French-language schools, see section 4.3.1. To determine the diploma requirements for students transferring from home schooling, from a non-inspected private school, or from a school outside Ontario, see Appendix 2 and also section 4.3.2. To determine the requirements for students who began their secondary program prior to the 1999–2000 school year, see Appendix 1.

6.1.1 Compulsory Credits (total of 18)

In order to obtain the Ontario Secondary School Diploma, students must earn a total of 18 compulsory credits. The courses that students can take to meet the compulsory credit requirements are described in the curriculum policy documents for the various disciplines (see section 2.2). The compulsory credits are to be distributed as shown in the following table.

COMPULSORY CREDITS (TOTAL OF 18)

4 credits in English (1 credit per grade)

- The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) may be used to meet either the Grade 11 or the Grade 12 English compulsory credit requirement.
- The Grade 11 Contemporary Aboriginal Voices course may be used to meet the Grade 11 English compulsory credit requirement.
- For English language learners, the requirement may be met through earning a maximum of 3 credits in English as a second language (ESL) or English literacy development (ELD); the fourth credit must be a Grade 12 compulsory English course.

3 credits in mathematics (at least 1 credit in Grade 11 or 12)

2 credits in science

1 credit in the arts

- The Grade 9 Expressing Aboriginal Cultures course may be used to meet the compulsory credit requirement in the arts.

1 credit in Canadian geography (Grade 9)

1 credit in Canadian history (Grade 10)

1 credit in French as a second language

- Students who have taken Native languages in place of French as a second language in elementary school may use a Level 1 or 2 Native language course to meet the compulsory credit requirement for French as a second language.

1 credit in health and physical education

0.5 credit in career studies

0.5 credit in civics

3 additional credits, consisting of 1 credit from each of the following groups:

Group 1: English (including the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course), French as a second language, classical languages, international languages, Native languages, Canadian and world studies, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies, social sciences and humanities, guidance and career education, cooperative education

Group 2: French as a second language, the arts, business studies, health and physical education, cooperative education

Group 3: French as a second language, science (Grade 11 or 12), computer studies, technological education, cooperative education

Note: The following conditions apply to selections from the above three groups:

- A maximum of 2 credits in French as a second language may count as additional compulsory credits, 1 credit from Group 1, and 1 credit from either Group 2 or Group 3.
- A maximum of 2 credits in cooperative education may count as additional compulsory credits, selected from any of Groups 1, 2, or 3.

While the school board and principal may recommend that students take certain courses in addition to the required subjects, they may not identify additional subjects or courses as compulsory requirements towards the earning of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

See also section 6.2, “Substitutions for Compulsory Credit Requirements” and section 7.3.1, “Locally Developed Courses”.

6.1.2 Optional Credits (total of 12)

In addition to the 18 compulsory credits, students must earn 12 optional credits. Students earn these credits by successfully completing courses that they have selected from the courses listed as available in their school’s program and course calendar.

6.1.3 The Secondary School Literacy Graduation Requirement

All students are required to meet the secondary school literacy graduation requirement in order to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). The requirement is based on the expectations for reading and writing throughout the Ontario curriculum up to and including Grade 9. The purpose of the secondary school literacy graduation requirement is to determine whether students have the skills in reading and writing that they will need to succeed in school, at work, and in daily life.

To meet this requirement, students are expected to take and successfully complete the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) in Grade 10 in accordance with the policies outlined in section 6.1.3.1. Once students have successfully completed the OSSLT, they may not retake it.

Students who do not successfully complete the OSSLT will have additional opportunities to meet the literacy graduation requirement in accordance with the policies pertaining to the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (see section 6.1.3.1), the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) (see section 6.1.3.2), or the adjudication process (see section 6.1.3.3).

Mature students⁷ have the option to enrol directly in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course without first attempting the OSSLT. They may still elect to meet the literacy graduation requirement by successfully completing the OSSLT.

7. A mature student is a student who is at least eighteen years of age on or before December 31 of the school year in which he or she registers in an Ontario secondary school program; who was not enrolled as a regular day school student for a period of at least one school year immediately preceding his or her registration in a secondary school program (for mature students, a school year is a period of no less than ten consecutive months immediately preceding the student’s return to school); and who is enrolled in a secondary program for the purpose of obtaining an OSSD.

Students whose Individual Education Plan (IEP) indicates that the student is not working towards the attainment of the OSSD may, with parental consent and the approval of the principal, be exempted from writing the OSSLT or taking the OSSLC (see Appendix 3, Section 4).

Students who are working towards the OSSD under *Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions (Grades 7–12/OACs): Program and Diploma Requirements*, rev. ed., 1989 (OSIS) and students who are working towards an earlier diploma, such as the Secondary School Graduation Diploma, are not required to meet the literacy graduation requirement.

6.1.3.1 The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) is the usual method for assessing the literacy skills of students in Ontario for the purpose of determining whether they meet the provincial secondary school literacy requirement for graduation. The test thus identifies students who have demonstrated the required skills in literacy as well as those who have not demonstrated the required skills and will need to do further work. The test identifies the specific areas in which these latter students need remediation.

The test is scheduled by and administered through the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) once each year, usually in the spring.

Students will usually take the OSSLT in the school year following the school year in which they enter Grade 9, unless a deferral is granted by the principal. Deferrals are granted in accordance with the policies described in Appendix 3, Section 3.

Students who do not successfully complete the OSSLT will have opportunities to retake the test in subsequent years, on dates scheduled by the EQAO. Once students have successfully completed the OSSLT, they may not retake it.

Students who are English language learners may be entitled to special provisions as outlined in Appendix 3, Section 2. For students with special education needs, accommodations specified in the student's IEP must be available on the day of the test (see Appendix 3, Section 1). For students for whom required accommodations were not available on the day the OSSLT was administered, see section 6.1.3.2.

A student will take the OSSLT in the language of instruction of the school in which he or she is enrolled at the time the test is administered. School boards should ensure that this policy is made known to students and to parents of students who are planning to transfer from the English-language system to the French-language system, or vice versa, and who have not yet fulfilled the literacy graduation requirement. A student who has successfully completed the OSSLT in either English or French at the student's previous board is considered to have

met the literacy graduation requirement and will not have to retake the test in the other language after transferring to the receiving board.

School boards are required to provide remedial assistance for students who do not complete the test successfully. This remedial assistance should be designed to help students improve their skills so that they are better prepared to retake the literacy test. For example, a board could offer a credit course on learning strategies (see the guidance and career education curriculum policy document) or one on literacy skills (see the English curriculum policy document) for these students.

For students who entered Grade 9 in the 1999–2000 school year, successful completion of the test was not required. However, for those students who took the field test of the OSSLT in 2000–2001, failed the test, and chose to retake the OSSLT in October 2001, successful completion of the provincial literacy graduation requirement became a diploma requirement.

6.1.3.2 The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC)

Policy requirements for taking the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) are contained in the curriculum policy document *The Ontario Curriculum: English – The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC), Grade 12*. Students who pass the course are considered to have met the literacy graduation requirement.

The reading and writing competencies required by the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) form the instructional and assessment core of the course. The course differs from other courses in that it outlines specific requirements for evaluation in order to ensure alignment with the requirements of the OSSLT.

If a student has had two opportunities to take the OSSLT and has failed it at least once, the student is eligible to enrol in the OSSLC. Principals have the discretion to allow a student to enrol in the OSSLC before he or she has had a second opportunity to take the OSSLT, if the principal determines that it is in the best educational interest of the student. Mature students may enrol directly in the OSSLC, as specified above in section 6.1.3.

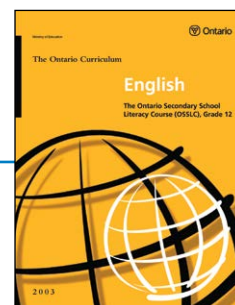
The credit earned for successfully completing the OSSLC may also be used to meet the Grade 11 or the Grade 12 compulsory credit requirement in English or to meet the Group 1 compulsory credit requirement for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. A student cannot be granted credit for the OSSLC through the challenge process from the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition policy (see section 7.2.5).

For students with special education needs, accommodations specified in the student's IEP must be available to the student throughout the course. However, because achievement of the expectations in this course represents fulfilment of

the literacy requirement for graduation, no modifications of the expectations are permitted.

Students who were receiving special education programs and/or services and had an IEP documenting accommodations required during the taking of the OSSLT may be eligible to enrol directly in the OSSLC if the required accommodations were not available on the day the OSSLT was administered. (The accommodations must be in accordance with those outlined in Appendix 3, Section 1, under the subheading “Permitted Accommodations”.) In such cases, the student must have been present to take the test but the required accommodations, or a reasonable alternative to them, were unavailable to the student during the whole test or part of the test. (Students who find themselves in these circumstances in June of their graduating year may be eligible for the adjudication process established by their school board; see section 6.1.3.3.)

The Ontario Curriculum: English – The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC), Grade 12 (2003)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/english12curr.pdf



6.1.3.3 The Adjudication Process

School boards may establish adjudication panels at the end of the school year to provide students with an additional opportunity to meet the literacy graduation requirement. The process is designed for students who, through no fault of their own, have not been able to take advantage of the normal opportunities to write the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) and/or students who have not been able to enrol in or complete the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) because of unforeseen circumstances. Every spring, the ministry sends boards the procedures and timelines for the adjudication process for that school year.

Students who are *otherwise eligible to graduate in June of a given school year* are eligible for adjudication to obtain their graduation literacy requirement if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- ◆ The student was never able to write the test because of illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstances.
- ◆ The student was eligible to enrol in the OSSLC, but the student’s school did not offer the OSSLC or make arrangements for the student to take the OSSLC in another school.
- ◆ The student was enrolled in the OSSLC but, as a result of illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstances, was not able to complete the OSSLC.

- ◆ The student was receiving special education programs and/or services and had an IEP documenting required accommodations when taking the OSSLT. (The accommodations must be in accordance with those outlined in Appendix 3, Section 1, under the subheading “Permitted Accommodations”.) In that school year or in the previous school year, the student was present to take the test, but, because of unforeseen circumstances, the required accommodations, or a reasonable alternative to them, were not available to the student on the day the OSSLT was administered during the whole test or part of the test.

“The Literacy Graduation Requirement – Adjudication Application Form”
on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/may2015/OSSLT2015requirement.pdf

6.1.4 The 40-Hour Community Involvement Requirement

Students must complete a minimum of 40 hours of community involvement activities as part of the diploma requirements. The purpose of this requirement is to encourage students to develop an awareness and understanding of civic responsibility and of the role they can play and the contributions they can make in supporting and strengthening their communities. Students will plan and select their community involvement activities in consultation with their parents and as part of the Individual Pathways Plan process (see section 2.4).

Although this diploma requirement applies to students in Grades 9 to 12, students in Grade 8 will now be able to start accumulating community involvement hours in the summer before they enter Grade 9. (The details to support implementation of this change will be in a forthcoming revision of PPM No. 124a.)

For mature students,⁸ principals will determine the number of hours of community involvement activities required.

PPM No. 124a includes the policy and procedures as well as sample documents relating to the 40-hour community involvement diploma requirement.

PPM No. 124a, “Ontario Secondary School Diploma Requirement: Community Involvement Activities in English-Language Schools” (April 27, 1999)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/124a.html

8. See footnote 7 for a definition of *mature student*.

6.2 Substitutions for Compulsory Credit Requirements

In order to provide the flexibility to tailor an individual student's program to the student's needs and to support his or her progress through secondary school, principals may substitute up to three compulsory credits with courses from other subject areas specified in the list of compulsory credit requirements (including Groups 1, 2 and 3) outlined in section 6.1.1. Substitutions should be made to promote and enhance student learning or to respond to special needs and interests.

Two half-credit courses may be used through substitution to meet one compulsory credit requirement (counted as one substitution); one full-credit course may be used through substitution to meet the two compulsory half-credit requirements of civics and career studies (also counted as one substitution).

The decision to substitute one course for another for a student should be made only if the student's educational interests are best served by such a substitution. If a parent or an adult student (a student who is eighteen years of age or older) requests a substitution, the principal will determine whether the substitution should be made. A principal may also initiate consideration of whether a substitution should be made. The principal will make his or her decision in consultation with the parent or the adult student and appropriate school staff. In all cases where the parent or the adult student disagrees with the decision of the principal, the parent or the adult student may ask the appropriate supervisory officer to review the matter.

The following are limitations on substitutions for compulsory credits:

- ◆ English as a second language and English literacy development courses may not be used to substitute for a compulsory credit. (They may be used, however, to meet the compulsory credit requirements for three English credits in accordance with section 6.1.1.)
- ◆ No more than one learning strategies course, from the guidance and career education curriculum policy document, may be used through substitution to meet a compulsory credit requirement.
- ◆ Credits earned for cooperative education courses may not be used through substitution to meet compulsory credit requirements.
- ◆ A locally developed compulsory credit (LDCC) course may not be used as a substitute for a compulsory credit; it may be used only to meet the compulsory credit requirement that it has been designed to meet (see section 7.3.1).

Each substitution will be noted on the student's Ontario Student Transcript.

6.3 The Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC)

The Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) will be granted, on request, to students who are leaving secondary school upon reaching the age of eighteen without having met the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. To be granted an OSSC, a student must have earned a minimum of 14 credits, distributed as follows.

7 required compulsory credits

- ◆ 2 credits in English
- ◆ 1 credit in mathematics
- ◆ 1 credit in science
- ◆ 1 credit in Canadian history or Canadian geography
- ◆ 1 credit in health and physical education
- ◆ 1 credit in the arts, computer studies, or technological education

7 required optional credits

- ◆ 7 credits selected by the student from available courses

The provisions for making substitutions for compulsory credits described in section 6.2 also apply to the Ontario Secondary School Certificate.

6.4 The Certificate of Accomplishment

Students who are leaving secondary school upon reaching the age of eighteen without having met the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma or the Ontario Secondary School Certificate may be granted a Certificate of Accomplishment. The Certificate of Accomplishment may be a useful means of recognizing achievement for students who plan to take certain kinds of further training, or who plan to find employment directly after leaving school. The Certificate of Accomplishment is to be accompanied by the student's Ontario Student Transcript. For students who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a copy of the IEP may be included.

Students who return to school to complete additional credit and non-credit courses (including courses with modified or alternative expectations in special education programs) will have their transcript updated accordingly but will not be issued a new Certificate of Accomplishment. The Ontario Secondary School Diploma or Ontario Secondary School Certificate will be granted when the returning student has fulfilled the appropriate requirements.

6.5 The Granting of the Diploma and Certificates

On the recommendation of the principal, the Minister of Education grants diplomas and certificates at any time during the year to students who have successfully completed the necessary requirements.

Where a student has completed the requirements through private study, night school or summer school, or e-learning, the diploma or certificate will be issued by the principal of the school that holds the student's Ontario Student Record when the final credit is earned. If the final credit is earned through the Independent Learning Centre (see section 10.5), the student may choose to have the diploma or certificate issued by the director of the Independent Learning Centre or the principal of the school last attended. The person issuing the diploma or certificate will submit the necessary report to the Ministry of Education.

6.6 The Ontario Scholar Program

The Ontario Scholar Program recognizes students who have earned an Ontario Secondary School Diploma in the current or previous school year and who have attained an aggregate of at least 480 marks in any combination of ministry-approved courses that provide a total of 6 credits. Upon the recommendation of their principal, these graduating students receive a certificate from the Minister of Education.

The list of ministry-approved courses and the conditions for the granting of this award are given in PPM No. 53.

PPM No. 53, "Ontario Scholar Program" (April 14, 2009)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm53.pdf

The secondary school program is designed to provide all students with the fundamental knowledge and skills they will need in any area of endeavour as well as the opportunity to specialize in and/or explore areas related to their postsecondary goals and personal interests. This program keeps options open for students in the earlier grades and prepares them in senior grades for their postsecondary destinations, including apprenticeship training, college, community living, university, or the workplace.

Course selection for students under the age of eighteen must be made with parental approval, except in the case of sixteen- or seventeen-year-old students who have withdrawn from parental control. Students are supported in making informed decisions about their secondary school program through the development of their Individual Pathways Plan (see section 2.4).

7.1 Secondary School Credits

A credit is granted in recognition of the successful completion (that is, completion with a final percentage mark of 50 per cent or higher) of a course that has been scheduled for a minimum of 110 hours. Credits are granted by a principal on behalf of the Minister of Education for courses that have been developed or authorized by the ministry. A half-credit may be granted for each 55-hour part of a 110-hour ministry-developed course *in accordance with the policy outlined in the curriculum policy documents*. Most courses are offered as single-credit courses. Some courses, such as technological education, interdisciplinary studies, and cooperative education courses, may be offered as multiple-credit courses.

For the purpose of granting a credit, *scheduled time* is defined as the time during which students participate in planned learning activities designed to lead to the achievement of the curriculum expectations of a course. Planned learning activities include interaction between the teacher and the student and assigned individual or group work (other than homework) related to the achievement of the learning expectations in the course. Planned learning activities will be delivered through

classroom or e-learning instruction and activities and/or through community placements related to work experience and cooperative education.

7.2 Secondary School Courses in the Ontario Curriculum

Secondary school courses in the Ontario curriculum are organized by discipline, grade, and course type. Course types offered in Grades 9 and 10 (academic and applied courses, open courses) differ from those offered in Grades 11 and 12 (destination-related courses, open courses) (see sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2).

In the current Ontario curriculum, there is a clear distinction between applied and academic courses in Grades 9 and 10, as well as among the various destination courses in Grades 11 and 12. Open courses in Grades 9 to 12 are also distinct from other course types. Depending on the subject and/or discipline, students may earn credit for the successful completion of more than one course in the same subject at any given grade level.

All schools will offer both a sufficient number of courses and courses of appropriate types to enable students to meet the diploma requirements. Schools are not expected to offer all courses in all course types, but must provide a range of choices appropriate to the needs and interests of their students.

7.2.1 Grade 9 and 10 Courses

The following three types of courses are offered in Grades 9 and 10:

- ♦ **Academic** courses develop students' knowledge and skills through the study of theory and abstract problems. These courses focus on the essential concepts of a subject and explore related concepts as well. They incorporate practical applications as appropriate.
- ♦ **Applied** courses focus on the essential concepts of a subject and develop students' knowledge and skills through practical applications and concrete examples. Familiar situations are used to illustrate ideas, and students are given more opportunities to experience hands-on applications of the concepts and theories they study.
- ♦ **Open** courses, which comprise a set of expectations that are appropriate for all students, are designed to broaden students' knowledge and skills in subjects that reflect their interests and prepare them for active and rewarding participation in society. They are not designed with the specific requirements of university, college, or the workplace in mind.

In Grades 9 and 10, students will select an appropriate combination of academic, applied, and open courses in order to add to their knowledge and skills, explore their interests, and determine the type of educational program they are best suited to undertake in Grades 11 and 12. When selecting their courses in Grades 9 and 10, students are not expected to make binding decisions about a particular educational

or career pathway; however, they should try to ensure that they have the prerequisites required for future courses they plan to take (see section 7.2.3).

In order to meet the needs of their student community, school boards must offer both academic and applied courses in the following curriculum areas: English, mathematics, science, history, geography, and French as a second language.

7.2.2 Grade 11 and 12 Courses

The following five types of courses are offered in Grades 11 and 12:

- ♦ **College preparation** courses are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to meet the entrance requirements for most college programs or for admission to specific apprenticeship or other training programs.
- ♦ **University preparation** courses are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to meet the entrance requirements for university programs.
- ♦ **University/college preparation** courses are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to meet the entrance requirements for specific programs offered at universities and colleges.
- ♦ **Workplace preparation** courses are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to meet the expectations of employers, if they plan to enter the workforce directly after graduation, or the requirements for admission to certain apprenticeship or other training programs.
- ♦ **Open** courses, which comprise a set of expectations that are appropriate for all students, are designed to broaden students' knowledge and skills in subjects that reflect their interests and prepare them for active and rewarding participation in society. They are not designed with the specific requirements of university, college, or the workplace in mind.

In Grades 11 and 12, students will focus increasingly on their individual interests and will identify and prepare for their postsecondary pathways. In these grades there are also increased opportunities for learning experiences beyond the school, including cooperative education, work experience, and specialized programs such as the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, Specialist High Skills Major programs, and school-work transition programs (see sections 8 and 9).

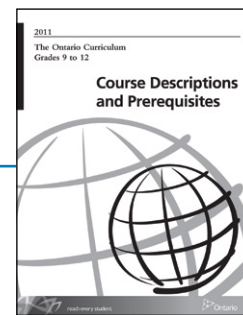
School boards are required to ensure that students in Grades 11 and 12 have access to an appropriate destination-related course in at least English, mathematics, and science, in accordance with the course types included in the curriculum policy documents for these disciplines.

7.2.3 Course Prerequisites

Courses in Grades 10, 11, and 12 may have prerequisites for enrolment. All prerequisite courses are identified in ministry curriculum policy documents, and no courses apart from these may be identified as prerequisites. Schools must provide parents and students with clear and accurate information about prerequisites. If a parent or an adult student (a student who is eighteen years of age or older) requests that a prerequisite be waived, the principal will determine whether or not the prerequisite should be waived. A principal may also initiate consideration of whether a prerequisite should be waived. The principal will make his or her decision in consultation with the parent or the adult student and appropriate school staff. In cases where the parent or the adult student disagrees with the decision of the principal, the parent or the adult student may ask the appropriate supervisory officer to review the matter.

The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: Course Descriptions and Prerequisites (2011)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/secondary/descript/descri9e.pdf



7.2.4 Procedures for Students Who Wish to Change Course Types

Some students may change their educational goals as they proceed through secondary school. When they decide to embark on a new pathway, they may find that they have not completed all of the prerequisite courses they need. Schools must make provisions to allow students to make such changes of direction and must clearly describe these provisions in their school program/course calendar.

In most cases, a student may enrol in a different type of course in a given subject in Grade 10 than the type he or she completed in Grade 9, although doing so may require additional preparation, as recommended by the principal. In the case of mathematics, however, the sole prerequisite for the Grade 10 academic mathematics course is the Grade 9 academic mathematics course, so a student who is planning to move from the Grade 9 applied mathematics course to the Grade 10 academic mathematics course must take either the designated transfer course or the Grade 9 academic mathematics course.

In Grades 10 to 12, a student may change to a different type of course in a given subject provided that the student has taken any course specified as a prerequisite for that course. If the student has not done so, he or she may take one of the specified prerequisite courses through summer school, night school, e-learning, the Independent Learning Centre, or independent study (see section 10).

If the principal believes that a student can be successful in a particular course without having taken the specified prerequisite course, the principal may waive the prerequisite.

7.2.5 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside Ontario secondary school classrooms. Through a formal evaluation and accreditation process known as Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), students enrolled in Ontario secondary schools, including the Independent Learning Centre and inspected private schools that choose to implement PLAR, may have their skills and knowledge evaluated against the overall expectations outlined in provincial curriculum policy documents in order to earn credits towards the secondary school diploma. PLAR procedures are carried out under the direction of the school principal, who grants the credits.

The PLAR process developed by a school board in compliance with ministry policy involves two components: challenge and equivalency. The challenge process is the process whereby students' prior learning is assessed for the purpose of granting credit for a course developed from a provincial curriculum policy document. The equivalency process involves the assessment of credentials from other jurisdictions.

7.2.5.1 *Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Regular Day School Students*

Because young people benefit in many ways from the learning experiences offered in secondary school, PLAR has a specific, limited function in the Ontario secondary school program. For regular day school students, a maximum of 4 credits may be granted through the challenge process for Grade 10, 11, and 12 courses; or for Levels 1, 2, and 3 in classical languages and international languages courses; and for Levels 3, 4, and 5 in Native languages courses. No more than 2 of these credits may be granted in one discipline.⁹

For students who are transferring from home schooling, a non-inspected private school, or a school outside Ontario, principals will grant equivalency credits for placement purposes based on their evaluation of the student's previous learning (see section 4.3.2 and Appendix 2).

PLAR procedures must also be available to exceptional students. Assessment strategies must be adapted for this group in keeping with their special needs; for example, extra time might be allowed for the completion of work, or a quiet environment might be provided for activities. While PLAR may be of benefit to some gifted students, it is not intended to be used as a replacement for or alternative to enriched or other special programs for gifted students.

9. The term *discipline* refers to the subject area covered by any one curriculum policy document. All courses in that document are considered to belong to that discipline.

PPM No. 129 outlines in detail the PLAR policy and requirements that apply to regular day school students.¹⁰

PPM No. 129, "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): Implementation in Ontario Secondary Schools" (July 6, 2001)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/129.html

7.2.5.2 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students¹¹

Because of the broader life experience of mature students, the requirements concerning the application of PLAR procedures are different for them than for regular day school students. Principals will determine the number of credits, including compulsory credits, that a mature student needs in order to meet the credit requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). At the discretion of the principal, up to 16 Grade 9 and 10 equivalency credits may be granted to a mature student following an individual assessment.

Mature students may earn 10 of the 14 remaining Grade 11 and 12 credits needed to meet diploma requirements in three ways: (1) they may demonstrate achievement of the required secondary school curriculum expectations and receive credit through the challenge process; (2) they may present education and/or training credentials for assessment through the equivalency process; or (3) they may take the courses. It should be noted that Levels 2 and 3 in both classical languages and international languages are equivalent to Grades 11 and 12, respectively, and that Levels 4 and 5 in Native languages are equivalent to Grades 11 and 12, respectively.

Mature students must earn a minimum of 4 Grade 11 and 12 credits by taking the course at a secondary school (or through any of the options outlined in section 10). Mature students who have previously accumulated 26 or more credits towards the diploma must successfully complete the required number of courses to bring their total number of credits up to 30 before they will be eligible to receive the OSSD.

Mature students working towards the OSSD under OS must also satisfy the diploma requirements with regard to the provincial secondary school literacy requirement. Principals will determine the number of hours of community involvement activities that a mature student will have to complete.

10. A regular day school student is a student, other than a mature student, who is enrolled in a regular day school program. A student enrolled only in continuing education and/or correspondence courses is not considered a regular day school student.

11. See footnote 7 for a definition of *mature student*.

PPM No. 132 outlines in detail the PLAR policy and requirements for mature students.

PPM No. 132, "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students: Implementation in Ontario Secondary Schools" (May 7, 2003)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/132.html

7.3 Other Courses and Programs Authorized for Credit

7.3.1 Locally Developed Courses

Locally developed courses are courses that may be developed by a board for students in a particular school or region to accommodate educational and/or career preparation needs that are not met through courses within the provincial curriculum policy documents. Such courses require the approval of the ministry, with the exception of religious education courses developed by Roman Catholic schools boards in accordance with section 7.3.2.1. The document *Guide to Locally Developed Courses, Grades 9 to 12: Development and Approval Procedures* outlines the development and approval requirements and procedures for these courses.

Boards may develop courses locally that can be counted as optional credits in Grades 9 to 12 in any discipline.

Boards may develop locally and offer one Grade 9 course in English, in mathematics, in science, and in French as a second language, and one Grade 10 course in English, in mathematics, in science, and in Canadian history that can be counted as a compulsory credit in that discipline. A student may count no more than seven such locally developed courses as compulsory credits. Students who successfully complete eight locally developed compulsory credit courses may count the eighth course as an optional credit.

Seven locally developed compulsory credit courses have been approved by the ministry for use by school boards across the province: Grades 9 and 10 English, Grades 9 and 10 mathematics, Grades 9 and 10 science, and Grade 10 Canadian history. These courses are identified in the prerequisite charts of the relevant curriculum policy documents, and the courses to which they might lead are also specified in those charts. Boards wishing to offer these courses must still go through the approval process outlined in the document *Guide to Locally Developed Courses*, but the process will be expedited for these specific courses.

Locally developed compulsory credit courses may be used only to meet the compulsory credit requirements that they have been designed to meet; they may not be used as substitutions for courses that meet any other compulsory credit requirements (see section 6.2).

If universities, colleges, and/or employers recognize a board's Grade 11 or 12 locally developed course for admission purposes, this information must be stated clearly in the board's program and course calendar. It must also be made clear to students that some postsecondary institutions or employers may not recognize a locally developed course.

The policy for locally developed courses also applies to inspected private schools.

Guide to Locally Developed Courses, Grades 9 to 12: Development and Approval Procedures (2004)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/secondary/localdev/locdeve.pdf

7.3.2 Religious Education Courses

Credits earned for the religious education courses that are outlined in sections 7.3.2.1 and 7.3.2.2 may be counted towards the 12 optional credits required for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

7.3.2.1 Roman Catholic Schools

Roman Catholic school boards are responsible for developing credit courses in religious education. A Roman Catholic board that develops such courses does not have to seek approval for them from the ministry. Students may earn up to 4 credits in religious education.

7.3.2.2 Inspected Private Schools

Credit courses may be developed in religious education by inspected private schools. Students may earn up to 4 credits in religious education. These locally developed religious education courses require the approval of the ministry (see section 7.3.1).

7.3.3 Dual Credit Programs

Dual credit programs are ministry-approved programs that allow students, while they are still in secondary school, to take college or apprenticeship courses that count towards both their Ontario Secondary School Diploma and a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree, or a Certificate of Apprenticeship.

Students may earn up to 4 optional credits for college-delivered dual credit courses. Students may not use college-delivered dual credits to meet compulsory credit requirements or to satisfy the related course requirement for a cooperative education program.

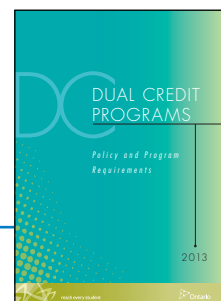
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Dual credit programs must be developed and implemented in accordance with ministry policy as outlined in *Dual Credit Programs: Policy and Program Requirements* (2013).

Note: A maximum of 4 credits earned through a dual credit program *or* through a combination of a dual credit program and a program in music taken outside the school and awarded through Option One (see section 7.3.4) may be used to meet the optional credit requirement for the OSSD.

Dual Credit Programs: Policy and Program Requirements (2013)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentsuccess/DualCreditPro.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/morestudentsuccess/dualcredit.html



7.3.4 Programs in Music Taken outside the School

A student may be awarded a maximum of 2 credits for music programs taken outside the school through one or both of the following options:

- ◆ **Option One:** For music programs completed outside the school as identified in Appendix 4, the principal of a secondary school may award a maximum of 2 university/college preparation credits (1 Grade 11 credit and 1 Grade 12 credit) towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. These credits may be awarded in addition to any other music credits earned in school through successful completion of Ontario curriculum courses. The course titles and course codes for these credits are as follows: “Music – External (Conservatory), AMX3M” and “Music – External (Conservatory), AMX4M”. The credits will be awarded upon presentation of the official forms or certificates documenting the required achievement. These credits are optional credits; they *may not* be used to meet the compulsory credit requirement in the arts or the additional compulsory credit requirement for Group 2.

Note:

- ◆ Students may not use these credits to satisfy the related course requirement for a cooperative education program.
- ◆ A student awarded 2 music credits in this manner may not earn additional Grade 10 to 12 music credits through the Prior Learning and Assessment (PLAR) challenge or equivalency processes.

- ❖ A maximum of 4 credits earned through a combination of a dual credit program and a program in music taken outside the school may be used to meet the optional credit requirement for the OSSD.
- ❖ **Option Two:** Students may be awarded music credits (a maximum of 2 credits, in Grades 10 to 12) through the PLAR challenge process, as defined in section 7.2.5. Music credits granted through the PLAR process may be used to meet the compulsory credit requirement in the arts or the additional compulsory credit requirement for Group 2. They may also be used to satisfy the related course requirement for a cooperative education program.

7.4 Alternative (Non-Credit) Courses

Alternative (non-credit) courses are individualized courses, documented in a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), that comprise alternative expectations – that is, expectations not found in the Ontario curriculum (see section 3.3.1). These courses are usually designed to prepare students for daily living, including employment (supported or independent) and/or community living. (Course codes for alternative (non-credit) courses begin with “K”.)

“Course Codes for Alternative (Non-Credit) Courses” on the ministry website:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/altCredit_Different.html

7.5 Procedures for Students Who Fail to Meet Course Expectations

Where a student does not achieve the curriculum expectations of a course, the principal and teaching staff, in consultation with the parents and the student, will determine what type of program would best enable the student to meet the expectations and earn credit for the course. Students should be allowed to repeat only the material relating to the expectations not achieved, providing that the eligibility requirements for credit recovery are met. Alternatively, the student may repeat the entire course.

A student who fails or withdraws from a compulsory credit course should be informed of the consequences for meeting diploma requirements. The program options available to meet the requirements should be outlined, and possible alternative courses identified.

For procedures related to the recording of course attempts and withdrawals, see *The Ontario Student Transcript (OST) Manual* (2013).

7.5.1 Credit Recovery

Boards and schools should make credit recovery programs available to their students. These programs are designed to help regular day school students successfully demonstrate any unmet expectations of a course they have completed but for which they have received a failing grade. A credit (or credits) for a course must be recovered within two years from the time the student fails the course. Students may work on recovering more than one credit at a time through the credit recovery process, and there is no limit on the number of credits a student may recover.

Credit recovery may be delivered as part of the regular day school program and/or at summer school. Instruction must be delivered by a qualified teacher. Credit recovery programs may accommodate continuous intake and may be delivered through e-learning. Procedures and requirements governing the operation of credit recovery programs are outlined in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12*.

Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12 (2010)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf

7.6 Specialized Schools

Some school boards may wish to establish schools that specialize in areas such as the arts, business studies, the environment, languages, pure and applied sciences, or technological education. A secondary school may offer programs in subjects in which there is small enrolment – for example, programs in some languages – and these programs may serve several schools. A secondary school should not specialize to the point where it cannot offer the full range of courses that students need in order to obtain a secondary school diploma.

7.6.1 Alternative Schools

School boards may establish alternative schools to provide an option for some students who have educational needs that cannot be met in their existing schools, and/or to respond to needs expressed in the community.

Experiential learning programs may be part of the delivery of the curriculum in all disciplines. Such programs provide students with opportunities to see how their classroom learning applies in a workplace setting and allow them to explore a career of interest as they plan a pathway through secondary school to their postsecondary destination. Experiential learning programs include job shadowing and job twinning, which may start in Grades 7 and 8, and work experience and cooperative education, which are offered in secondary school.

For students who are fourteen years of age or older and who are participating in experiential learning programs involving more than one day at the workplace, a Work Education Agreement form must be completed to ensure Workplace Safety and Insurance coverage. For details concerning coverage, procedures, benefits, and claims, see PPM No. 76A.

PPM No. 76A, "Workplace Safety and Insurance Coverage for Students in Work Education Programs" (September 27, 2000)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/76a.html

8.1 Cooperative Education

Cooperative education programs allow students to earn secondary school credits while completing a work placement in the community. These programs complement students' academic programs and are valuable for all students, whatever their postsecondary destination.

A cooperative education program comprises, at a minimum, one cooperative education course and its related course on which the cooperative education course is based. Any course from an Ontario curriculum policy document or any ministry-approved locally developed course may serve as the related course for a cooperative education program.

In their cooperative education program, students may earn a minimum of one and a maximum of two cooperative education credits for each related course, whether it is a full- or half-credit course. If the related course is a multiple-credit course, a student may earn a maximum of two co-op credits for each credit earned in the related course.

The cooperative education course consists of a classroom component and a placement component. The classroom component includes pre-placement sessions and classroom integration sessions. The pre-placement sessions prepare students for the workplace and include instruction in areas of key importance, such as health and safety. The classroom integration sessions provide opportunities for students to reflect on and reinforce their learning in the workplace as the program progresses. A personalized placement learning plan (PPLP) must be developed for all students in a cooperative education program. A student's progress in achieving the curriculum expectations and in meeting the requirements identified in the PPLP must be assessed and evaluated by a teacher through regular workplace monitoring meetings with the student and the student's workplace supervisor.

School boards must ensure that cooperative education programs are available to all interested students who are considered ready to undertake learning in the workplace, including students with special education needs. Boards should also ensure that the programs are offered through a variety of delivery models, such as full-day programs, half-day programs, programs that allow for continuous intake, summer school programs, and night school programs, in order to meet the range of needs of the students and their local community.

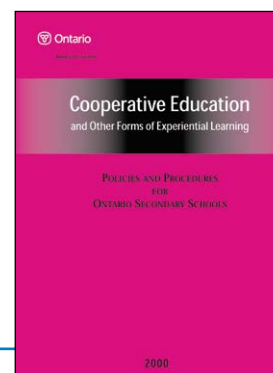
All cooperative education programs must be developed and implemented in accordance with ministry policy as outlined in *Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Secondary Schools*.

Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Secondary Schools (2000)
(A revised edition is in development.)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/secondary/coop/cooped.pdf

Main page for "Expansion of Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning" on the ministry website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentssuccess/expansion.html



8.2 Work Experience

Work experience is a component of a course that provides students with a learning opportunity in the workplace for a limited period of time – from one to four weeks. Some requirements for work experience mirror those for cooperative education programs.

Student preparation must include instruction related to job-readiness skills, health and safety procedures in the workplace, and school and placement expectations. A work experience learning plan (WELP) based on the curriculum expectations of the unit(s) in which the work experience occurs must be developed in collaboration with the participating placement supervisor. Students should be monitored at least once at their placement to ensure that their learning is consistent with the WELP. Students should be provided with opportunities to analyse their work experience and integrate it with their in-school learning.

Work experience placements must comply with the placement assessment criteria outlined in *Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Secondary Schools* (2000).

8.3 Job Shadowing and Job Twinning

Job shadowing and job twinning may be offered to students from Grade 7 to Grade 12 as part of curriculum delivery and as part of the career development program. Job shadowing allows a student to spend one-half to one day (or, in some cases, up to three days) observing a worker in a specific occupation. Job twinning provides the opportunity for the student to observe a cooperative education student at his or her placement for one-half to one day.

The preparation of students for job shadowing and job twinning should include instruction related to workplace expectations and health and safety requirements. Students should be given the opportunity to reflect on their experience and the learning that has occurred.

Schools are responsible for ensuring the selection of appropriate placements in safe work environments. A Work Education Agreement form must be completed for a job shadowing or job twinning experience that lasts for more than one day if the student is fourteen years of age or older. If the student is under fourteen years of age or if the job shadowing or job twinning experience lasts one day or less, these experiences should be treated as field trips.

Schools and school boards may develop specialized programs to address the needs of groups of students with a particular curriculum or career interest. Such programs assist students in making the transition to postsecondary destinations (apprenticeship training, college, community living, university, or the workplace).

Specialized programs are intended primarily for students in Grades 11 and 12, but may also be designed to meet the needs of students in Grades 9 and 10.

Specialized programs may be helpful for meeting the needs outlined in the Individual Education Plans and related transition plans of students identified as exceptional. Such programs may focus on the development of students' special strengths, for example, and may also be effective in helping students achieve their educational and career goals. Modifications to the curriculum expectations, as well as requirements for the provision of specialized services and other accommodations, may be built into a student's program.

School boards must provide specialized programs for students intending to go directly into the workforce after secondary school in order to assist them with this transition.

9.1 School-Work Transition Programs

School-work transition programs give students the opportunity to complete high school graduation or certificate requirements; develop Essential Skills and work habits as described in the Ontario Skills Passport, as well as industry-specific skills; and obtain experience in the workplace. Employers must be involved in the development and delivery of school-work transition programs.

School boards must establish procedures for developing and implementing their school-work transition programs. These programs must be developed and implemented in accordance with the following requirements:

- ◆ Students will earn credits to meet diploma or certificate requirements while taking these programs.
- ◆ Programs will prepare students to proceed directly from high school to employment or self-employment.
- ◆ Programs will combine in-school and work-based education and training through job shadowing, work experience, and cooperative education, and will allow students to take further specialized training in order to gain additional certification.
- ◆ Programs will emphasize the acquisition of the Essential Skills and work habits outlined in the Ontario Skills Passport (OSP); these skills are to be developed in both the in-school and the out-of-school contexts. Students' development of the Essential Skills and work habits will be tracked and documented using the OSP.
- ◆ Programs must consist of an appropriate combination of courses that will prepare students to meet the requirements of a specific economic sector or an apprenticeship program.
- ◆ School boards must establish and coordinate partnerships with employers in order to provide students with appropriate work placements and to ensure that programs reflect actual workplace expectations.
- ◆ School-work transition programs and eligibility requirements must be described in school course calendars.

In communities where local work-based opportunities are limited, school boards should develop and implement strategies to make use of available technologies such as the Internet, e-mail, and audio and video conferencing in order to increase students' access to relevant workplace experiences.

Website featuring the Ontario Skills Passport:
www.skills.edu.gov.on.ca



9.2 Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Programs

Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs are ministry-approved, specialized, career-focused programs that allow students to acquire technical knowledge and skills in specific economic sectors while meeting the requirements of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Boards and schools may offer only the Specialist High Skills Major programs for which they have ministry approval. A school approved to offer an SHSM program must offer the program in all four pathways: apprenticeship training, college, university, and the workplace.

Each Specialist High Skills Major program consists of the following five required components, as defined in the document *Specialist High Skills Major: Policy and Implementation Guide*:

- ◆ a defined bundle of credits consisting of 8 to 10 Grade 11 and Grade 12 credits, including 2 cooperative education credits;
- ◆ certification and training recognized within the sector;
- ◆ experiential learning and career exploration activities appropriate to the sector;
- ◆ reach-ahead experiences connected to the student's postsecondary plans;
- ◆ Essential Skills and work habits required in the sector and recorded in the Ontario Skills Passport.

Students who complete the requirements for the OSSD and for an SHSM will receive an OSSD embossed with a red "Specialist High Skills Major" seal. Credits earned towards an SHSM are indicated on the Provincial Report Card, and completion of an SHSM program is recorded on the Ontario Student Transcript. In addition, students receive an SHSM Record outlining their achievement with respect to the five required components, and a copy of that record is filed in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR).

Students who do not complete all the requirements for an SHSM or who transfer to another school before completing the SHSM program should receive a copy of their SHSM Record with the notation "Partially Completed". A copy will also be filed in the student's OSR.

Specialist High Skills Major programs must be developed and implemented in accordance with the requirements outlined in *Specialist High Skills Major: Policy and Implementation Guide*.

Specialist High Skills Major: Policy and Implementation Guide (2016)
www.edu.gov.on.ca/morestudentsuccess/SHSMBinder.pdf

Main page on the ministry website:
www.ontario.ca/shsm



9.3 The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) is a specialized program that enables students who are sixteen years of age or older to meet diploma

requirements while participating in a cooperative education program in an apprenticeship occupation. All students participating in an OYAP must have completed 16 credits towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and be enrolled as full-time students. An OYAP student may have the opportunity to become a registered apprentice while attending secondary school.

The requirements for the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and the policies and procedures for the earning of the cooperative education credits are outlined in the document *Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning* and in the OYAP guidelines established by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

In addition to providing students with on-the-job training through cooperative education, an Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program may provide opportunities for selected students to pursue the in-school training required for completion of Apprenticeship Level 1. This training may be made available to students in three ways:

1. as part of a secondary school multiple-credit technological education course in which the Level 1 Apprenticeship In-School Curriculum Standards are embedded (see the curriculum policy document for technological education);
 - ❖ *Note:* Students successfully completing such a course will be eligible to write a Level 1 Apprenticeship in-school curriculum exemption test. A student who achieves at least a 70 per cent average on the exemption test will be exempt from the Level 1 Apprenticeship in-school curriculum requirement if he or she takes Level 2 within two years of the granting of the exemption.
2. as part of a dual credit program in which students receive both the Level 1 Apprenticeship certification and optional credit(s) towards their OSSD (see section 7.3.3);
3. as part of a Level 1 Apprenticeship training program delivered by an approved delivery agent in the community.
 - ❖ *Note:* Students successfully completing a Level 1 Apprenticeship training program as outlined in option 3 will receive the Level 1 Apprenticeship certification but will not be eligible to receive credits towards their OSSD.

For a comprehensive explanation of the various routes that students may take to explore and complete apprenticeship training, see the document *Pathways to Apprenticeship: Options for Secondary School Students*, a joint publication between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Secondary Schools (2000)
(A revised edition is in development.)

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/secondary/coop/cooped.pdf

Main page for “Expansion of Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning” on the Ministry of Education website:

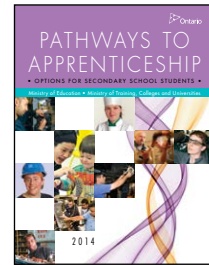
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentsuccess/expansion.html

OYAP administration guidelines on the website of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (formerly the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities):

www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/apprentices/oyap.html

Main page for OYAP on the Ministry of Education website:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentsuccess/oyap.html



NEW

10.1

E-Learning

The transformation of learning and teaching in physical and virtual environments that has been enabled by technology provides innovative opportunities that expand what, how, when, and where students learn.

Blended learning refers to the use of digital learning resources in a physical classroom setting where students are face to face with one another and with their teacher. Blended learning can involve the use of either just a few digital resources or a wide range of tools, games, and other digital resources to support learning.

In contrast, in *e-learning*, credit courses in Grades 9 to 12 are delivered online to students. E-learning includes the use of digital learning resources in a virtual classroom setting, where there is a distance between the e-learning teacher and the students and/or among students. The distance may be related to location (i.e., when students from different locations are enrolled in the same e-learning course) or time (i.e., when students from one location are enrolled in the same course but access it during different periods of the day). The e-learning teacher may provide students with face-to-face or real-time support (e.g., orientation, tutorials, remediation) as part of the virtual learning experience.

For any credit course delivered online, all of the curriculum expectations for the course must be accounted for (see section 2.2), and assessment, evaluation, and reporting must be done in accordance with policies outlined in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12* (2010) (see section 2.3).

Boards are responsible for all aspects of the delivery of e-learning (e.g., hiring only teachers certified through the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), registering students, granting credits, and ensuring that e-learning teachers perform duties that are comparable to those performed by a teacher in a physical classroom setting).

10.1.1 Opportunities Available through e-Learning Ontario

The Ministry of Education provides a virtual learning environment (VLE) to support technology-enabled learning (i.e., both blended learning and e-learning). Part of the VLE is the provincially licensed Learning Management System, which integrates communication, assessment, and content management. Students and educators can move seamlessly between sending and receiving information; sharing and discussing thinking; accessing and engaging in learning opportunities; and demonstrating and documenting learning. In the VLE more generally, students and educators are able to access content aligned with the curriculum, ministry-licensed software and web services, game-based digital resources, professional learning modules, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) challenges, and credit-recovery resources.

The ministry also offers school boards access to thousands of digital learning resources in the Ontario Educational Resource Bank (OERB) to support learning in all grades, from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

School boards retain full responsibility for the delivery of blended learning and e-learning at the local level. They determine the degree of access to the VLE and the OERB that they provide to their teachers and students and are responsible for issuing user identifications and passwords to access both platforms.

To be eligible for blended learning or e-learning through the VLE and OERB, students must be registered in a provincially funded school. Permission to take e-learning courses must be given by a student's home school, and the student must apply and enrol through his or her home school. The student remains a student of his or her home school even if the e-learning courses are delivered by teachers in another school or school board. The schedule for reporting marks will be that of the school delivering the e-learning courses.

e-Learning Ontario on the ministry website:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/elearning/

10.2 Continuing Education

Continuing education supports learners of all ages by offering credit and non-credit learning opportunities outside the regular day school program and during the summer. These include:

- ◆ credit courses for adolescent and adult learners;
- ◆ international language programs for elementary school students (see section 2.5.3);

- ◆ remedial opportunities for students in Grades 7 and up to improve their literacy and mathematics skills;
- ◆ general-interest community programs and workshops for learners of all ages;
- ◆ literacy upgrading programs for adults offered by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (formerly the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities);
- ◆ English as a second language / French as a second language programs for adults offered by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.

A statement of the student's achievement in all credit courses delivered through continuing education will be issued to the student by the principal of the continuing education school. The student's achievement will also be reported to the principal of the school that holds the student's Ontario Student Record for recording on the Ontario Student Transcript (see section 4.1.2).

Regulation 285, "Continuing Education", R.R.O. 1990
www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900285

Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.2, subsection 41 (6)
www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02#BK46

10.2.1 Adult Education

Adult education offered by school boards provides opportunities for adults to return to complete their Ontario Secondary School Diploma and/or to complete specific courses required for entry into postsecondary institutions and apprenticeship programs. Flexible programming offered full-time or part-time during the day or in the evening allows adults to learn while fulfilling other obligations that may include working and parenting. Courses may be offered in modules or quadesters of approximately six to eight weeks and may take place in adult learning centres, centres for continuing education, adult high schools, and secondary schools.

10.2.2 Summer School

School boards may offer summer school programs, through continuing education, to elementary, secondary, and adult students. The terms of admission to a course offered through summer school will be determined by the board that operates the summer school. A summer school program may not begin until after the last school day in the school year and must end before the first school day of the following school year.

School boards may wish to offer courses for credit through summer school to meet a variety of student needs. For example, summer courses may be offered for credit in order to:

- ◆ enable students to take additional credit courses;
- ◆ allow students to retake courses they have not successfully completed during the school year or courses in which they wish to improve their achievement;
- ◆ allow students to achieve a credit through credit recovery of a course that they have not successfully completed during the school year (see section 7.5.1);
- ◆ enable students to complete required components of specialized programs (e.g., Specialist High Skills Major programs).

Summer school credit courses must fulfil the same credit requirements as courses offered during the regular school year, including the requirement that each one-credit course be scheduled for 110 hours.

Boards may also offer non-credit summer school courses and programs to address elementary and secondary students' remedial needs and interests.

On or before the last day of August, a statement of the student's achievement will be issued to the student by the principal of the summer school. Where the course(s) are for credit, the achievement will also be reported to the principal of the school that holds the student's Ontario Student Record for recording on the Ontario Student Transcript.

10.2.3 Evening Credit Courses

A school board may offer evening credit courses, through continuing education, to regular day school students and to adults who need to complete requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma and/or for entry into postsecondary institutions and apprenticeship training.

To be considered for admission to a continuing education course offered for credit in the evening, a regular day school student must provide:

- ◆ a statement signed by the day school principal indicating that there has been consultation with the student regarding enrolment in the course and that the student has been granted permission to enrol in the course;
- ◆ evidence of parental approval, if the student is under the age of eighteen (unless the student is sixteen or seventeen years old and has withdrawn from parental control).

The scheduled time in any evening continuing education course taken for credit will not be less than 90 hours. It is the responsibility of the principal of the continuing education program to ensure that each course contains the amount

of work that would ordinarily be completed in the time scheduled for the course in a day school program. A statement of the student's achievement will be issued to the student by the principal of the night school and reported to the principal of the school that holds the student's Ontario Student Record for recording on the Ontario Student Transcript.

10.3 Independent Study

Independent study is an arrangement by which a student is excused from attending some or all classes in a course in order to study independently but under the supervision of a teacher. Courses delivered through the Independent Learning Centre (see section 10.5) may form part of independent study.

There is no restriction on the number of periods that a teacher may allow for independent study within any given course. The teacher of the course is responsible for assigning components of the course, suggesting available resources, evaluating the achievement of the student, and ensuring that the total work involved is equivalent to that expected in the time scheduled for the course. Students are expected to demonstrate achievement of the overall curriculum expectations of the course.

The principal will record the student's achievement on the Ontario Student Transcript.

10.4 Private Study

A student may be permitted to take one or more courses through private study in one of two circumstances: (1) if the student is deemed to have a valid reason for not attending classes; or (2) if the school does not offer the course(s). The school must be willing to monitor the student's progress and evaluate his or her work. Courses offered through the Independent Learning Centre (see section 10.5) may form part of a student's private study program.

A student who wishes to apply for private study should submit an application as early in the school year as possible – normally not later than the first school day in September (the beginning of semester 1) if the student intends to complete the course by January 31, or not later than the first school day in February (or the beginning of semester 2) if the student intends to complete the course by June 30. The application will be submitted to the principal of the secondary school that will be monitoring the student's learning.

When a student has taken a course through private study, the principal will record the student's achievement on the Ontario Student Transcript.

10.5 The Independent Learning Centre (ILC)

Secondary school credit courses are available through the Independent Learning Centre (ILC). Courses offered will be courses from the curriculum policy documents and will enable students to fulfil the requirements for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. ILC courses follow a blended learning model, combining print and online components with support from secondary school teachers certified through the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). When a student has taken a Grade 11 or 12 ILC course, or successfully completed a Grade 9 or 10 ILC course, the principal of the school that holds the student's Ontario Student Record will record his or her achievement on the Ontario Student Transcript. Information about eligibility, enrolment procedures, and course offerings may be found at the ILC website.

Independent Learning Centre website:
www.ilc.org/index-main.php

10.5.1 General Educational Development (GED) Testing

General Educational Development (GED) testing is for adults who have not graduated from high school. The Independent Learning Centre is the exclusive provider of GED testing in Ontario.

10.6 Private Schools

Students who attend a private school in Ontario that offers courses for credit towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma and that is inspected by the Ministry of Education may be eligible to earn the diploma, provided that they fulfil all diploma requirements. All credits achieved will be recorded on the Ontario Student Transcript.

In some cases, students registered in a publicly funded school may concurrently obtain credits granted through an inspected private school. In these cases, the principal of the publicly funded school will record the credit with the notation "P" in the "Notes" column on the student's Ontario Student Transcript.

APPENDIX 1

Summary of Diploma Requirements, 1974 to 1999

Requirements for the secondary school graduation diploma (SSGD) under Circular H.S.1, 1974–1984

Note: The following table and all of the notes are taken from and refer to *Circular H.S.1, 1979–81*.

Students who began their secondary school program between 1974 and the beginning of the 1984–85 school year may work towards the SSGD under Circular H.S.1. (They may also work towards the OSSD under OS.)

Minimum number of credits	School year* in which the student began the first year of a secondary school program				Notes
	1974–75 1975–76 1976–77	1977–78	1978–79	1979–80 1980–81 1981–82 1982–83 1983–84	
For an SSGD including, within this total, the following:	27	27	27	27	Students should be encouraged to enrich their programs by taking more than the minimum 27 credit courses.
• from each area of study	3	3	3	3	<i>Areas of study:</i> Communications, Social and Environmental Studies, Pure and Applied Sciences, and Arts
• from English studies	4	2	2		Courses in English language and literature that have as their major purpose the development of skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking
• from Canadian studies	2				Courses that have as their major purpose a study of some aspect of Canadian society, be it historical, environmental, cultural, economic, political, geographic, or sociological
In required subjects: <i>Intermediate division:</i> • English (or anglais) • mathematics • science • Canadian history • Canadian geography • Canadian history or Canadian history and Canadian geography <i>Senior division:</i> • English (or anglais)	}	2	2	2	Students in occupational programs require a minimum of 4 credits, 2 of which must be in English. <i>See Appendix A in Circular H.S.1 for further information</i>
		2	2	2	
		1	1	1	
			1	1	
			1	1	
		2 or 1 each			
				2	

* In this document, the school year is considered as beginning on September 1 of one year and ending on August 31 of the following year.

Requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) under OSIS, 1984–1999

Note: The following table and all of the notes are taken from and refer to *Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions (Grades 7–12/OACs): Program and Diploma Requirements, 1989* (OSIS).

Students who began their secondary school program between 1984 and the beginning of the 1999–2000 school year* may work towards the OSSD under OSIS or OS.

Minimum number of credits		Notes
For an OSSD including, within this total, the following:	30	Students may choose to take more than 30 credits, especially students who are incorporating OACs into their programs.
In required subjects:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The listing of subjects under areas of study no longer applies. The principal may grant a substitution for up to 2 compulsory credits, and up to 4 compulsory credits for students identified as exceptional.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English (or français) 	5	The 5 compulsory credits in English (or français) will include at least 2 credits from Grade 11, 12, and/or OACs. See Appendix B in OSIS, 1989, for further information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> French as a second language (or anglais) 	1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mathematics 	2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> science 	2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canadian geography 	1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canadian history 	1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> additional social science (Senior) 	1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arts 	1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> business studies or technological studies 	1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> physical and health education 	1	

* In this document, the school year is considered as beginning on September 1 of one year and ending on August 31 of the following year.

APPENDIX 2

Guide to Determining Diploma Requirements for Students Transferring into Ontario Secondary Schools

For regular day school students who are transferring from home schooling, a non-inspected private school, or a school outside Ontario, principals will grant equivalency credits for placement purposes through the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process, based on their evaluation of the student's previous learning (see section 7.2.5.1). Equivalency credits will be recorded on the student's Ontario Student Transcript. (For information about determining equivalency credits for mature students, see section 7.2.5.2, "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students".)

Principals will use the following table as a guide to determine the number of credits and additional graduation requirements that a student must complete to qualify for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) under OS.

Requirements to qualify for the OSSD, where the student has normally completed:

	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	More than Grade 11
Number of years successfully completed in a secondary school program	1	2	3	more than 3
Minimum number of credits, in total, still to be earned towards the OSSD	22	14	7	4
Minimum number of compulsory credits still to be earned and requirements to be met:				
• English	3	2	1	1 ^a
• mathematics	2	1	0	0
• science	1	0	0	0
Literacy graduation requirement	Required	Required	Required	Required
Community involvement ^b	40 hours	–	–	–

a. The compulsory English credit for Grade 12 is required if its equivalent has not already been earned.

b. The principal will determine the number of hours of community involvement required for students who have successfully completed two or more years in a secondary school program.

In addition to the requirements identified above, principals will ensure that the following requirements are met:

- ◆ A student who has no previous Ontario credits but who has successfully completed more than three years of secondary school is required to earn a minimum of 4 credits in Grade 11 or Grade 12 courses before being recommended for the OSSD under OS.
- ◆ A student who has successfully completed more than three years of secondary school education, has previously earned at least 3 Ontario credits, and has returned to the Ontario educational system may qualify for the OSSD under OS by completing a minimum of 1 Grade 11 or Grade 12 credit.

APPENDIX 3

The Secondary School Literacy Graduation Requirement: Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals, and Exemptions

As outlined in Part Two, section 6.1.3, of this document, all students are required to meet the secondary school literacy graduation requirement in order to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). To meet this requirement, a student must successfully complete the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC), or the adjudication process.

In this appendix, information about accommodations for students with special education needs is provided in section 1; special provisions for English language learners are discussed in section 2; rules that apply to deferrals of the OSSLT are outlined in section 3; and rules that apply to exemptions from the literacy graduation requirement are outlined in section 4.

SECTION 1

Accommodations for Students with Special Education Needs Pertaining to the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course

School boards must provide accommodations¹² that enable students with special education needs to participate in the educational setting. Necessary accommodations must be made to ensure that students who are receiving special education programs and services and who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) have a fair and equal opportunity to successfully complete the OSSLT or the OSSLC.

Accommodations change only *the way* in which the OSSLT is administered or the OSSLC is taught, or the way in which the student responds to the components of the test or the course. They do not alter the content of the test or the expectations of the course or affect the validity or reliability of the test or the evaluation of student learning in the course.

Accommodations needed for the test or course may be challenging to implement; consequently, careful planning will be required on the part of the principal.

To qualify for accommodations during the test or the course, a student must have an IEP that outlines accommodations to be provided during the test or course that

12. As explained in Part One, section 3.3.1, an accommodation is a support given to a student to assist him or her in achieving the learning expectations set out in the Ontario curriculum.

are also necessary for and consistent with regular classroom practices and that are provided for all of his or her assessments. (The student may be, but does not have to be, formally identified as an exceptional student by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) in order to have an IEP.)

PROCEDURES FOR MAKING ACCOMMODATIONS

It is important that certain basic procedures be followed in planning and making accommodations so that these may be of maximum benefit to the student.

Decisions about accommodations must:

- ◆ always be made on an individual student basis;
- ◆ be made by the principal in consultation with the student, parents (if the student is under the age of eighteen), and appropriate staff (including special education and professional support services staff, where appropriate);
- ◆ be made prior to the taking of the OSSLT or enrolling in the OSSLC;
- ◆ take into consideration all accommodations included in the student's IEP that are also permitted in accordance with this appendix and with the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) document entitled *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions* (see the subsection "Permitted Accommodations", below) and be consistent with regular classroom practice, including assessments;
- ◆ be clearly communicated in writing to the parents, or directly to the adult student,¹³ in advance of the writing of the test or enrolment in the course;
- ◆ be recorded, with all pertinent details, on the Student Data Collection System provided by the EQAO for students writing the OSSLT.

PERMITTED ACCOMMODATIONS

The accommodations that may be necessary in order to give students with special education needs the best possible opportunity to successfully complete the OSSLT or the OSSLC may take several forms. In each case, the accommodation used must normally be specified in the student's IEP. Details about the accommodations that may be provided for the OSSLT and the process for seeking accommodations are outlined in the EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*.

Accommodations that are permitted by the EQAO for the OSSLT include the following:

- ◆ adjustments to the environment in which the test is administered;
- ◆ adjustments in the time allowed for the test;
- ◆ changes/adjustments to the format of the test (e.g., alternative forms of print);
- ◆ changes/adjustments to the format of responses.

13. An adult student is a student who is eighteen years of age or older.

Note that clarification of instructions for both the reading and the writing components of the OSSLT is permitted for all students *before the commencement* of the test. Such clarification is not considered to be an accommodation.

If an accommodation that is described in a student's IEP is also one that is permitted in accordance with the EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*, the principal must ensure that the accommodation is available to the student during the OSSLT.

If an accommodation that might be necessary is not included in the student's IEP, or if the student doesn't have an IEP but the provision of an accommodation might be necessary, a request for special consideration may be submitted as described in the following subsection, "Requests for Special Consideration of Accommodations".

Accommodations other than those listed in the EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions* will be given consideration by the EQAO upon receipt of a request, as outlined in the following subsection.

See also, below, the subsection "Human Resources Required for the Implementation of Accommodations during Administration of the OSSLT".

REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations That Are Listed in the EQAO Guide

When a parent, adult student, or principal identifies the need for an accommodation that is listed in the EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*, one of the following procedures applies, as appropriate:

- ◆ If the accommodation is not described in the student's IEP, the parent, adult student, or principal may submit a request for consideration to the appropriate supervisory officer. The decision of the supervisory officer is final.
- ◆ If the student does not have an IEP because he or she recently transferred into the school from another jurisdiction, the parent, adult student, or principal may make a request for accommodations to the appropriate supervisory officer. The decision of the supervisory officer is final.
- ◆ If, owing to temporary circumstances, a student who would not normally require accommodations requires one or more in order to take the test or the course, the principal may grant permission for use of any appropriate accommodations that are permitted in the EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*. If the principal determines that it is not possible to provide an accommodation that will allow the student to take the test, a deferral should be considered. Where the parent or adult student

disagrees with the decision of the principal, he or she may make an appeal to the appropriate supervisory officer. The decision of the supervisory officer is final.

For students in Provincial and Demonstration Schools, the request must be made to the appropriate superintendent. The decision of the superintendent is final.

For students in approved education programs in care and/or treatment, custody, and correctional facilities, the request must be made to the appropriate supervisory officer. The decision of the supervisory officer is final.

For students in ministry-inspected private schools and Native schools, the request must be made to the Chief Assessment Officer of the EQAO. The decision of the Chief Assessment Officer is final.

Accommodations That Are NOT Listed in the EQAO Guide

When a parent, adult student, or principal identifies a need for an accommodation:

- ◆ that is not listed in the *EQAO Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions* or that involves more than double the time allowed for the test,
- ◆ that conforms to the definition of accommodations in the guide, and
- ◆ that is described in the student's IEP,

then the parent, adult student, or principal must submit the request for consideration to the Chief Assessment Officer of the EQAO. The decision of the Chief Assessment Officer is final.

HUMAN RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS DURING ADMINISTRATION OF THE OSSLT

Any person who is engaged to assist with the accommodations of one or more students and who is not a teacher must work under the direct supervision of a teacher. Only adult persons who are not relatives of students writing the test may provide assistance in these circumstances. It is important that such individuals be given training and that the guidelines below be followed:

- ◆ The role of individuals who assist with the implementation of accommodations for students with special education needs is to ensure that the student is properly supervised during the administration of the test and that the accommodations are appropriately implemented.
- ◆ These individuals shall not provide students with any assistance that would compromise the validity of the test; that is, they shall not provide assistance that helps students to understand the questions or to formulate their answers, or give any instructions or suggestions (for example, suggestions about pacing their work) not given to all students writing the test.

- ◆ It is generally an advantage if the student knows the person who assists with the implementation of accommodations. However, as noted above, the person must not be a relative.
- ◆ All non-teaching personnel providing assistance with the implementation of accommodations will be required to adhere to the same security provisions and other guidelines for the administration of the OSSLT as the teachers and principals involved in its administration.
- ◆ The role of the scribe is to print or type the student's dictated answers to questions. The scribe must not in any way help the student to formulate answers to the questions. In the course of the test, the scribe:
 - ◆ must not give any assistance or suggestions relating to the content of the test;
 - ◆ must not give advice related to the order of the questions or the time to be spent on them;
 - ◆ must print or type the student's answers *exactly as they are dictated by the student*;
 - ◆ may read back what has been recorded, at the student's request;
 - ◆ may enter student responses to multiple-choice questions on the Student Answer Sheet;
 - ◆ must adhere to the EQAO policy on the duty to report child abuse, as prescribed in the *EQAO Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*.
- ◆ Prompters are allowed for students with severe attention difficulties. Since the sole purpose of the prompts is to draw the attention of a student who has been distracted back to the test, prompts are considered process-related aids that do not affect the integrity or validity of the student's performance on the test. Additional details will be provided by the EQAO.

For complete instructions, please refer to the *EQAO Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*.

SECTION 2

Special Provisions for English Language Learners Pertaining to the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Special provisions are adjustments to the setting and/or timing for writing the test for English language learners (for the definition of English language learners, see Part One, section 3.1, of this document). They do not affect the validity or reliability of the test.

Special provisions for English language learners may be provided for the test if the principal deems such provisions to be in the best educational interest of the student.

Decisions about special provisions must:

- ◆ always be made on an individual student basis;
- ◆ be made by the principal in consultation with the student, parents (if the student is under the age of eighteen), and appropriate staff;
- ◆ be made prior to the taking of the OSSLT;
- ◆ conform to the permitted special provisions outlined in the EQAO document entitled *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions*;
- ◆ be clearly communicated in writing to the parents, or directly to the adult student, in advance of the writing of the test;
- ◆ be recorded, with all pertinent details, on the Student Data Collection System provided by the EQAO for students writing the OSSLT.

SECTION 3

Deferrals of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Deferrals are intended for students who are working towards an OSSD and who have not yet acquired a level of proficiency in English that would allow them to successfully complete the test. Such students could include:

- ◆ students who have been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) and who would not be able to participate in the test even if all accommodations were provided;
- ◆ students who are English language learners and have not yet acquired a level of proficiency in English sufficient for participation in the test;
- ◆ students who have not been successful in acquiring the reading and writing skills appropriate to Grade 9.

Deferrals may also be granted to students who are unable to write the test at the scheduled time owing to illness,¹⁴ injury, or other extenuating circumstances or to students who are new to the school and cannot be provided with the appropriate accommodations in time. Documentation must be submitted to the principal of the school in such cases.

Deferrals are to be granted to students before the test, on an individual basis. The following procedures should be applied:

- ◆ A request for a deferral may be made by either a parent (or the student, if the student is an adult) or the school, as long as both parties have been consulted. Such requests are made in writing to the principal. The principal may grant the deferral.

14. To clarify, if, for example, students have long-term illnesses and are not registered to write the test, they can be granted a deferral. Where students are registered to write the test but experience illness or injury that keeps them from writing it at the scheduled time, they will be deemed to be absent.

- ◆ A principal may also initiate consideration of a deferral with the parent or adult student.
- ◆ The principal will make his or her decision in consultation with the parent or adult student and appropriate school staff. In cases of disagreement, the parent or adult student may ask the appropriate supervisory officer to review the matter. The decision of the supervisory officer is final.
- ◆ The writing of the test may be deferred only to the time of the next scheduled test. Students who are granted a deferral will write the test at the next scheduled sitting, as prescribed by the EQAO.
- ◆ If an additional deferral is required, the principal must review the request again with the parent or adult student and appropriate school staff. While there is no limit on the number of deferrals that may be granted, the parent or adult student must be advised that a deferral will result in fewer opportunities to retake the test and that successful completion of the test, successful completion of the OSSLC, or successful completion of the adjudication process is a diploma requirement. Students should be encouraged to write the test so that the school may have an indication of their strengths and needs and be able to develop an appropriate program and/or appropriate forms of support to prepare them for their next attempt.
- ◆ The decision to defer must be entered, with all pertinent details, in the Student Data Collection System provided by the EQAO.
- ◆ All documentation related to the decision to grant a deferral must be kept in the student's Ontario Student Record.

SECTION 4

Exemptions from the Literacy Graduation Requirement

To be eligible for an exemption, a student must have an IEP. The IEP must include documentation to support an exemption from the literacy graduation requirement and *a clear indication that the student is not working towards an OSSD*. Both parental consent and the approval of the principal are required for an exemption.

Exemptions are to be provided to students on an individual basis. The following procedures should be applied:

- ◆ As part of the IEP development process, the principal decides, on the basis of the student's learning expectations and in consultation with the parent or adult student (a student who is eighteen years of age or older), whether the student is working towards the OSSD.
- ◆ If it is decided that the student is not working towards the OSSD, the principal also decides, again in consultation with the parent or adult student, whether to grant the student an exemption from writing the OSSLT or taking the OSSLC.
- ◆ The final decision must be communicated in writing to the parent or adult student as part of the IEP development process.

- ◆ In cases of disagreement, where the principal decides that the student should be exempted from writing the test or taking the course but the parent or adult student disagrees with this decision, the student must be allowed to write the test or take the course. Where the principal decides that the student should write the test or take the course but the parent or adult student disagrees with this decision, the matter will be referred to the appropriate supervisory officer. The supervisory officer's decision is final.
- ◆ Where it is determined that an exemption does not apply and that the student who has an IEP and who is receiving a special education program and special education services is to take the test or the course, the principal must ensure that the student has a fair and equal opportunity to successfully complete the test or the course. The necessary accommodations will be provided in accordance with the policies outlined in sections 6.1.3.1 and 6.1.3.2 and Appendix 3, section 1, above.
- ◆ If the learning expectations contained in the student's IEP are revised at some point and the student begins to work towards the OSSD, he or she must successfully complete the OSSLT, the OSSLC, or the adjudication process in order to be eligible to receive the diploma.
- ◆ All documentation related to the decision to grant an exemption from taking the test or the course must be kept in the student's Ontario Student Record.

Education Quality and Accountability Office, *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions: Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)*.

Available on the EQAO website, at www.eqao.com, under Educator Resources.

APPENDIX 4

Music Certificates Accepted for Credits

1. A maximum of 1 Grade 11 university/college preparation music credit may be awarded towards the OSSD for the successful completion of one of the following:
 - ◆ Grade VII Practical and Intermediate Rudiments (formerly Grade I Rudiments) of the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto
 - ◆ Grade VII Practical and Grade III Theory of Conservatory Canada, London, Ontario
 - ◆ Collegial I Practical and Collegial I Theory of any conservatory of music in the province of Quebec
 - ◆ Grade V Practical and Grade III Theory of Trinity College London, England
 - ◆ Grade VII Practical and Grade VI Theory of the Royal Schools of Music, London, England
2. A maximum of 1 Grade 12 university/college preparation music credit may be awarded towards the OSSD for the successful completion of one of the following:
 - ◆ Grade VIII Practical and Advanced Rudiments (formerly Grade II Rudiments) of the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto
 - ◆ Grade VIII Practical and Grade IV Theory of Conservatory Canada, London, Ontario
 - ◆ Collegial II Practical and Collegial II Theory of any conservatory of music in the province of Quebec
 - ◆ Grade VI Practical and Grade IV Theory of Trinity College London, England
 - ◆ Grade VIII Practical and Grade VIII Theory of the Royal Schools of Music, London, England

Notes:

- ◆ The term *practical* refers to any musical instrument on which performance is examined. It includes voice (i.e., singing), but not speech arts.
- ◆ The mark credited to the student is calculated by averaging the marks that the student has earned in the practical component *and* in rudiments or theory, as the case may be.



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