Mission
To advance student achievement and well-being through public education, which motivates learners, fosters inclusion, inspires innovation and builds community.

Vision
To be a leader in a public education by empowering all students to become engaged and caring citizens of the world.

Values
Our School Board operates based on a set of values which guides our actions:

Inclusivity
We demonstrate equity and inclusivity in all that we do. We demand an environment in which all students, staff, parents and our community feel valued and have a sense of belonging. We expect empathy, mutual respect and understanding to be demonstrated in our words and actions.

Relationships
We value positive, meaningful relationships with students, staff, parents and our community. We value diversity of opinion, sincere dialogue and community engagement.

Innovation
We continuously strive to provide the best educational programs for all students. We empower staff and students to take initiative and to be innovative leaders.

Engagement
We encourage active participation in all learning and activities by creating an environment that engages students, staff, parents and our community.

Responsibility
We are individually and collectively responsible for creating the best possible school community to support the achievement and well-being of all individuals. We are responsible for the delivery of effective and sustainable educational programs and stewardship of Board resources.

Optimism
We approach all situations with optimism. We cultivate confidence and resiliency in all students and staff.
This guide provides important information about the York Region District School Board. Please take it to someone who can explain it to you.
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This guide provides important information about the York Region District School Board and our schools. It includes information about:

- Who to contact if you have a question or a concern.
- School life, such as busing, homework and parent engagement.
- Health and safety.
- Board policies and procedures.

**HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?**

The Board is committed to increasing confidence in public education through accountability and transparency. Many policies, procedures and processes have been developed to help support students, parents/guardians and the community.

If you would like to learn more about a school, the Board or public education in Ontario, you can:

- Contact school staff.
- Visit the school website.
- Visit the Board website at [www.yrdsb.ca](http://www.yrdsb.ca).
- Connect with the Board through:
  - Twitter: [@YRDSB](http://twitter.com/YRDSB)
  - YouTube: [YRDSBMedia](http://youtube.com/YRDSBMedia)
  - LinkedIn: [York Region District School Board](http://linkedin.com/YRDSB)
  - Board App: [YRDSB Mobile](http://appstore.com/YRDSB)
- Contact the Board directly using the contact information on the back of this guide.
- Contact your local trustee.
- Visit the Ministry of Education website at [www.ontario.ca/education](http://www.ontario.ca/education).

**I HAVE A CONCERN. WHO DO I CONTACT?**

Most situations can be resolved with dialogue and co-operation. Please follow these steps when addressing a concern:

**For school matters:**

1. Arrange a meeting with the appropriate staff member.
2. If further assistance is required, the school principal or designate may be contacted to review the matter, mediate and help facilitate the process.
3. Contact the superintendent of schools if the matter remains unresolved.

**For non-school related concerns**, contact the superintendent responsible for the service department identified on the back page of this guide.

If the matter remains unresolved and you feel strongly that the situation requires further consideration, you may refer to Board Policy and Procedure #267.0.
Supporting Community Concerns or contact Board and Trustee Services (ext. 2217) where your concern will be reviewed. The matter may be directed for further review.

Members of the community may contact their local trustee at any time.

You may involve a friend or advocate if it makes you feel more comfortable. **Interpretation assistance will be provided wherever possible.**

You may choose to request access to Board information under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. For more information about this, see the section on Information Access and Privacy Protection.
QUICK FACTS

Students
York Region District School Board is the third largest school district in Ontario, with over 123,000 students in 176 elementary schools and 32 secondary schools. Our students consistently perform above provincial average and the Board is one of the top achievers in Ontario.

Our Communities
York Region District School Board serves nine municipalities:

- Aurora
- East Gwillimbury
- Georgina
- King
- Markham
- Newmarket
- Richmond Hill
- Vaughan
- Whitchurch-Stouffville

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

York Region District School Board has 12 trustees representing all areas of York Region. They are elected by English public school supporters for a four-year term.

The Board of Trustees has a number of important roles and responsibilities, including:

- Communicating with the public.
- Setting policy for the operation of all public schools in York Region.
- Participating on various Board and Advisory committees.
- Setting an annual budget.
- Establishing a Multi-Year Plan to guide system direction.
- Overseeing the hiring and performance of the Director of Education.
- Advocating for quality public education.

Trustees are committed to open dialogue with the community. The Board encourages you to express your views on policy issues and Board governance. You are also welcome to attend and observe any public Board, Advisory or Board Committee meeting. Meeting dates, times and locations are available on the Board website.

For more information about your local trustee, Board, Advisory and Board Committee meetings or the Multi-Year Plan, visit the Board website or contact Board and Trustee Services.
ABOUT THE BOARD

Trustees

Chair:
Anna DeBartolo
Vaughan
Wards 1 & 2

Vice-Chair:
Peter Adams-Luchowski
Aurora and King

Loralea Carruthers
East Gwillimbury
and Whitchurch-Stouffville

Nancy Elgie
Georgina

Juanita Nathan
Markham
Wards 7 & 8

Billy Pang
Markham
Wards 2, 3 & 6

Allan Tam
Markham
Wards 4 & 5

Martin Van Beek
Newmarket

Carol Chan
Richmond Hill
Wards 3, 5 & 6

Corrie McBain
Richmond Hill
Wards 1, 2 & 4

Linda Aversa
Vaughan
Wards 3 & 4

Susan Geller
Vaughan
Ward 5
Markham
Ward 1
Student Trustees
Student trustees act as a link between the school community and the Board. They are elected each year by students in partnership with the York Region Presidents’ Council, a council consisting of all student council presidents in York Region public secondary schools.

Student trustees:
• Sit at the Board table and provide a monthly report.
• Give the student population a meaningful voice in Board discussions.
• Act as a channel for information and ideas to flow between trustees, staff and the student body.
• Work at the provincial level through the Ontario Student Trustees’ Association to maintain a fair and equitable system of education province wide.

More information about the student trustees is available at www.yrdsb.ca/studenttrustees or in Board Policy and Procedure #221.0, Student Trustees. Connect with the student trustees on Twitter @YRDSB_students.

The student trustees for the 2016-2017 school year are:

Mustafa Ismail
mustafa.ismail@yrdsb.ca
Tommy Douglas Secondary School

Claire Zhou
claire.zhou@yrdsb.ca
Bayview Secondary School

BOARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures govern the operation of the Board and our schools. All Board policies and related procedures are available on the Board website or through the school office.

Open dialogue and feedback on policies and procedures are encouraged. Policies and procedures are reviewed on a four-year cycle to ensure they remain current. This review process includes seeking feedback from staff and community members.

All policies and procedures available for comment are posted on the Board website and sent to the chair(s) of each school council, to be shared with members of the school community.
Questions about the implementation of any policy and/or procedure should be discussed with the school principal. If you still feel that a policy or procedure needs to be revised, parents/guardians may propose recommended changes through their school council. Feedback should outline clearly the specific section(s) of the policy or procedure in which you are not comfortable, identify the reason(s) for your concern and suggest specific alternate wording to reflect your position.

Board Policy and Procedure #285.0, Policies, Procedures and Supporting Documents outlines the policy and procedure review process. Questions or comments can be addressed to Board and Trustee Services at policy.committee@yrdsb.ca.
ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to provide original evidence of their learning and appropriately acknowledge the work of others. The consequences for cheating or plagiarism could include: contact with parents/guardians, referral to administration, disciplinary action, re-doing the task or a portion of the task, or a mark of zero in the absence of original work.

Cheating is the attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an academic evaluation, which may misrepresent the demonstration of a student’s learning or the learning of others. Forms of cheating include, but are not limited to:

• Copying from another student or permitting another student to copy material.
• Using aids, materials and assistance which are not approved by the teacher.
• Obtaining an unauthorized copy of a test or examination prior to the date and time of writing.
• Changing a grade/percentage mark of an evaluation.
• Preparing work, in whole or in part, with the expectation that this work will be submitted by another student for evaluation.
• Offering for sale or at no charge assignments, in whole or in part, with the expectation that these works will be submitted by a student for evaluation.
• Unauthorized entry into a computer file for the purpose of using, reading, changing or deleting its contents, or the unauthorized transfer, in whole or part, of files for academic gain.

Plagiarism refers to representing someone else’s ideas, writing or other intellectual property as one’s own. Any use of the work of others, whether published, unpublished or posted electronically, attributed or anonymous, must include proper acknowledgement. Plagiarism hinders learning and the development of learning skills and work habits. Forms of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the use of the following without appropriate reference or citation:

• Someone else’s written and/or spoken idea, theory or opinion.
• Misrepresenting co-authored or collaboratively created work as one’s own.
• Music, drawings, designs, dance, photography and other artistic or technical work created by someone else.
• Reproductions of tables, graphs or any other graphic element produced by someone else.
• Facts and information that are not generally known.
• An unusual or distinctive phrase, a specialized term, a computer code, or quantitative data.
• Paraphrase or summary.
• Unauthorized entry into a computer file for the purpose of using, reading, changing or deleting its contents, or the unauthorized transfer in whole or part of files for academic gain.
• Copying from the Internet without giving proper acknowledgement to the source.
• Submitting work prepared, in whole or in part, by another person or source and representing that work.
• Downloading research papers in whole or in part, and submitting the paper as original work as one’s own.

For more information, see Board Policy #305.0, Assessment, Evaluation and Communication of Student Learning and Achievement and its related procedures.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Board is committed to providing accessibility to persons with disabilities, consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity. If you need assistance accessing Board services, speak to a member of the school or department staff and provide them with specific information on how they can assist you.

If you require an alternative format for Board information or materials on the Board website, please contact Corporate Communications at communications@yrdsb.ca.

For more information, see Board Policy #407.0, Accessibility and its related procedures.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are valuable opportunities to distribute information, build school spirit and recognize achievements. Students are expected to:
• attend
• remain for the whole assembly
• pay attention
• be respectful

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Report Cards

Elementary school students will receive:
• one progress report card in November
• one provincial report card in January/February
• one provincial report card in June

On the progress report card, teachers will indicate if a student is:
• progressing very well
• progressing well
• progressing with difficulty
Secondary school students will receive two provincial report cards each semester. An interim report is also issued after the first six weeks of instruction.

Assessment and Evaluation
Students are important partners in the assessment process. They will receive support to:
- Understand what they need to know and do to reach the provincial standard.
- Set goals for growth.
- Build on their strengths, use their learning preferences and focus on their areas of need to achieve success.

Teachers will support students in a variety of ways, including:
- Sharing learning goals and success criteria.
- Showing samples of student work.
- Providing opportunities to receive, give and use descriptive feedback.
- Teaching students to set their own goals and monitor growth in relation to learning goals and success criteria.

Students are responsible for providing evidence of learning within the timeframe specified by the teacher, and in a form approved by the teacher. There will be consequences for not completing assignments, missing tests or assignments, cheating or plagiarizing. It is important that students strive to achieve their best and provide teachers with original and authentic evidence of their learning.

To be fair, transparent and equitable for everyone, the Board has policies on late and missed assignments, and dealing with cheating and plagiarizing.

Achievement of curriculum expectations will be assessed and evaluated using the achievement chart categories. The four categories of achievement are:
- knowledge and understanding
- thinking
- communication
- application

Learning Skills and Work Habits
These learning skills and work habits will be taught and assessed throughout the school year:
- responsibility
- organization
- independent work
- collaboration
- initiative
- self-regulation

Learning skills and work habits will be reported on report cards using the following scale:

E = Excellent       G = Good       S = Satisfactory       N = Needs Improvement
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<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Mark</th>
<th>Level</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>80-100%</td>
<td>Level 4 – The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with a high degree of effectiveness. Achievement surpasses the provincial standard. This does not mean that the student has achieved expectations beyond those specified for the grade/course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>Level 3 – The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with considerable effectiveness. This represents the provincial standard for achievement. Parents/guardians of students achieving at level 3 can be confident that their children will be prepared for work in subsequent grades or courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>Level 2 – The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with some effectiveness. Achievement approaches the provincial standard. Students performing at this level need to work on identified learning gaps to ensure future success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-59%</td>
<td>Level 1 – The student demonstrates the specified knowledge and skills with limited effectiveness. Achievement falls much below the provincial standard. Students must work at significantly improving learning in specific areas if they are to be successful in the next grade/course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R/ Below D</td>
<td>Below 50%</td>
<td>The student has not demonstrated the required knowledge and skills. Extensive remediation is required. Note: A student in Grades 9-12 whose achievement is below 50% at the end of a course will not obtain a credit for the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td>Insufficient evidence to assign a letter grade or percentage mark. Note: This only applies to Grades 1-10.</td>
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Where can I learn more?
- Information about student assessment and Board Policy #305.0 Assessment, Evaluation and Communication of Student Learning, and its related procedures are available on the Board website.
- Visit [www.ontario.ca/education](http://www.ontario.ca/education) to view:
  - The Ministry of Education Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools (Grades 1-12), which sets out requirements for the assessment, evaluation and reporting of student learning.
  - Ministry of Education curriculum documents, which outline learning expectations for each subject.
ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance affects school success and is expected of all students. It is important that parents/guardians and school staff work together to ensure regular attendance.

Parents/guardians are expected to:

• Notify the school as soon as possible if your child will be absent or late.
• Provide medical documentation to substantiate your child's illnesses if requested by the principal.
• Ensure the school is aware that you approve all absences from school.
• Provide a note for your child (under the age of 18 years) when they need to leave school early for an appointment.
• Report to the office if you are picking your child up from school during the school day.

Late Arrivals
If an elementary student arrives to school after the entry bell, in the morning or after lunch, they are considered late and must go to the office for an admit slip. If your child is significantly late (more than 5-10 minutes) then the principal may determine your child is absent, not late.

If a secondary student arrives late for class, they should report to the attendance office.

Chronic Lates/Absences
If a student is chronically late or absent without reason, parents/guardians will be notified by the school. The school social worker may be consulted if attendance patterns are affecting academic achievement. This may result in regular contact with the student and family to encourage improved attendance.

BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING OR INTIMIDATION

Every student has a right to learn in a safe, caring and supportive environment. Our schools are actively engaged in bullying awareness, intervention and prevention.

What is bullying?
Bullying, cyberbullying and intimidation are combinations of power and aggression. They usually occur when a student maliciously oppresses, harasses or intimidates another student verbally, physically or psychologically. Bullying also occurs through the use of technology.

What happens if a student bullies another student?
Instances of bullying, cyberbullying or intimidation are dealt with under Board Policy #668.0, Caring and Safe Schools, and its related procedures. You can find information on this policy in the section on Safety and on the Board website.
Cyberbullying is misconduct carried out over the Internet and may be subject to school discipline whether carried out at school, at home or elsewhere if it affects the school climate.

**Who can I talk to if I am being bullied?**

Students are encouraged to talk to a parent/guardian, school staff member or trusted friend about any incident of bullying, harassment or intimidation by other students. If there is severe violence or threat of harm, we recommend students or their parents/guardians contact the local police immediately for assistance.

You can also:

- Use the Board’s Report It! tool on our website.
- Get in touch with Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or www.kidshelpphone.ca.
BUSING (TRANSPORTATION)

For information on bus routes, stop locations, times, late arrivals, cancellation, eligibility, registering a complaint, safety and general information, please visit www.schoolbuscity.com or contact the York Region Student Transportation Services School Bus Information Line at 1-877-330-3001.

Eligibility
A student’s eligibility to ride the school bus may change according to his or her grade and distance from home to school:

- All students in Grades JK-3 who live within 1.2 km of their school are not eligible for transportation.
- All students in Grades 4-8 who live within 1.6 km of their school are not eligible for transportation.
- All students in Grades 9-12 who live within a transit-served area are not eligible for transportation.

Weather Conditions
Transportation will be canceled by 6:30 a.m. if road conditions are unsafe or are expected to deteriorate significantly by the time students are to be bused home.

Schools will remain open unless otherwise stated, even when buses have been cancelled.

To find out if transportation is cancelled, check:

- the YRDSB website
- the @YRDSB Twitter account
- the Student Transportation Services’ (STS) website at www.schoolbuscity.com or hotline: 1-877-330-3001
- school websites
- radio and television media outlets

At all times, students should be aware of somewhere else they can go if bus services are cancelled or delayed, or if schools are forced to close due to an emergency. If buses are cancelled on a day when exams are scheduled, exams will be cancelled at all schools for that day. Those exams will be rescheduled on the same day across York Region. Remaining exams will occur as originally scheduled.

Bus Safety
Students riding school buses must:

- Be at the bus stop five minutes before your scheduled pick up.
- Keep well away from the road until the bus has stopped. Do not go toward the bus until it has stopped.
- Watch for the bus driver’s signal before crossing the road. Look both ways and then cross the road.
- Get on the bus quickly using the handrail and go directly to your seat.
- Stay seated while the bus is in motion.
• Not eat or drink on the bus.
• Keep the aisle clear of books, knapsacks, lunch bags and other items.
• Keep windows closed unless the driver lets you open them. Never put your hands, arms, head or legs out of the window.
• Never throw anything inside the bus or out of the window.
• Talk quietly so you do not distract the driver.
• Use respectful language.

Shouting, horseplay and fighting are strictly prohibited. Students engaging in these activities will have their bus privileges suspended. It is expected that all students will treat buses as an extension of the school and that behaviour on the buses will be consistent with school rules and policies.

**Where can I learn more?**

• Visit [www.schoolbuscity.com](http://www.schoolbuscity.com) or contact Student Transportation Services of York Region Information Line at 1-877-330-3001.
• See Board Policy and Procedure #680.0, Student Transportation.

**CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**

We believe that the development of good character is a shared responsibility of students, staff, families and the extended community. When all members of society embrace opportunities to model, teach, promote and celebrate good character, we build and strengthen learning and working communities that are caring, safe, respectful and inclusive.

We focus on 10 character attributes selected through community consultation:

- respect
- responsibility
- honesty
- empathy
- fairness
- initiative
- perseverance
- integrity
- courage
- optimism

For more information, read Board Policy and Procedure #380.0, Character Development.

**CHILD CARE**

Many schools have child care centres or offer before and after school programs in the school. For more information, speak to staff in the school office, visit your school’s website or see the child care section of the Board website, under Parents, for a complete list of school locations.
COMBINED CLASSES

Schools use various criteria when considering students for a combined class, including learning styles, social skills and academic needs. Schools work to create a positive learning environment that will support the needs of all students in all classrooms.

Each student’s placement is carefully considered. The teacher provides programs appropriate for each grade in a combined class. Students will be taught and assessed based on the curriculum for their grade. Some of the benefits of combined classes for students include:

- Building leadership abilities as they work together and learn from one another.
- Developing decision-making skills and independent learning skills.
- Learning in an environment that reflects more diverse ideas and opinions helps expand students’ perspectives.

To learn more about combined classrooms, you can also visit the Ministry of Education website at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/combinedclassrooms.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Communication with parents/guardians beyond the normal reporting cycle is important. Schools use a variety of ways to communicate with you throughout the year. A few examples are:

- school agenda
- school and classroom newsletters
- phone calls home
- email
- school and classroom websites
- school and classroom blogs or Twitter accounts
- periodic announcements or letters

Parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate with their child’s teacher. Ask the teacher what method of communication is preferred. Parents/guardians are welcome to request an interpreter to assist with some communication with their child’s school, such as interviews and meetings.

Canada’s Anti-spam Legislation (CASL)

Canada’s Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) affects how schools, staff and school councils communicate electronically to parents/guardians. CASL prohibits the sending of any type of electronic message that is commercial in nature unless the recipient has provided consent first. Examples of commercial electronic messages include requests for money such as registration fees, pizza days, field trips, fundraising initiatives, school photos and others.
CASL does not apply to electronic messages that are for informational purposes (e.g. student progress or attendance information, notice of a community/school council meeting, etc.). It also does not apply to commercial messages sent out in hard copy formats.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to your school’s commercial electronic messages, parents/guardians should visit their child’s school website and submit a valid email address.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT HOURS

Secondary students must complete at least 40 hours of community involvement activities to graduate. Some schools and programs require additional hours. Students may begin to accumulate community involvement hours in the summer after Grade 8. Community involvement encourages students to develop an understanding of civic responsibility and the role they can play in supporting and strengthening the community.

This requirement must be completed outside the regular instructional day. Each student must submit a record of his or her community involvement activities to the school. The Notification and Completion of Community Involvement Hours Form is available at the school and on the Board website.

For more information, visit www.yrdsb.ca/communityinvolvement or see Board Policy and Procedure #620.0 Community Involvement Hours.

COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE

If a child turns six years of age before September, then they must start school that year. If they do not turn six years until after September, then they do not have to start school until the following September.

Students must stay in school or in another educational program until they turn 18 years (if their birthday falls before the end of June) or until the school year ends in June (if their 18th birthday falls after June).

Students may remain in school until June of the year in which they turn 21.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Board offers a number of programs to support learning that continues beyond the regular school day, beyond school age and beyond the regular classroom. These programs include:

• After School Programs (Literacy and Numeracy Grades 7 -10)
• Elementary Summer Learning - Grade 7 and 8 Literacy/Numeracy and Grade 8 Reach Ahead
• Summer Institute
• Boyd Archaeological Field School
• Summer Mentorship
• Night School – Credit Courses
• Night School e-Learning – Credit Courses
• Secondary Summer School – Credit Courses, including co-op
• Secondary Summer School e-Learning – Credit Courses
• International Languages Programs
• Adult Day School - Credit Courses
• Personal Support Worker (PSW) Program

In partnership with federal and provincial governments, the Board also offers:
• English as a Second Language (ESL) courses for adult learners.
• ESL Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC).
• Citizenship classes for those preparing to go through the process of becoming a Canadian Citizen.
• Literacy Basic Skills (LBS) programs for those interested in upgrading or acquiring essential work related skills. Computer courses and individual programming are available through this program.
Where can I learn more?

- To learn more about Adult ESL/ELD, visit the Board website or call Uplands Community Learning Centre at 905-731-9557.
- For information about any of the continuing education programs, visit www.yrdsb.ca/continuingeducation, call 905-884-3434 or see Board Policy and Procedure #325.0 Continuing Education.

DRESS CODE

Each school has its own dress code. Students are expected to dress appropriately to demonstrate respect for self and others at all times. For more information, see Board Policy and Procedure #635.0, Student Dress Code and speak to your school.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)/ENGLISH LITERACY DEVELOPMENT (ELD)

The Board provides a variety of services and programs for English language learners (ELLs) to support student achievement and help students develop their English language proficiency. The type of supports provided will depend on many factors, including the student’s level of English language proficiency.

English language learners are students whose first language is not English or is a version of English different from that used in Ontario schools. There are two programs that support English language learners:

- **English as a Second Language (ESL)** for students who have had the opportunity to develop age-appropriate literacy skills in their first language.
- **English Literacy Development (ELD)** for students who have had limited opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in any language. Students may have had limited access to education.

In elementary school, classroom teachers support English language development alongside curriculum learning. ELLs may also be supported by an ESL teacher:

- within the classroom
- in a tutorial setting
- in a replacement program

English language learners are entitled to accommodations and/or modifications in their learning program based on their English proficiency.

In secondary school, ELLs can access ESL or ELD courses and receive support from content course teachers through accommodations and modifications.

For more information, speak to your school principal or visit the Board website.
Adult Programs
For information about Adult ESL/ELD programs, please see the information under Continuing Education, visit the Board website or call Uplands Community Learning Centre at 905-731-9557.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Board believes that all learners, leaders and community members have a shared responsibility for minimizing their effect on the environment and for taking an active role in its protection. Schools are encouraged to engage in environmentally responsible practices and demonstrate a commitment to reducing their ecological footprint. One way schools may do this is by participating in the Ontario EcoSchools Program, an environmental education and certification program for Grades K-12. Learn more at www.ontarioecoschools.org.

What is my school doing?
Different schools implement different programs and activities. Some of these activities include litterless or boomerang lunch programs, lights and monitors off campaigns, reusable beverage container campaigns to help eliminate single-use drink containers, walk to school programs and school ground greening activities (tree planting/building outdoor classrooms). Please visit your school website or speak with the principal to find out what your school is doing.

EQAO ASSESSMENTS

Students across Ontario write provincial assessments of their reading, writing and mathematics skills at key stages in their education:

• Grade 3 reading, writing and mathematics
• Grade 6 reading, writing and mathematics
• Grade 9 mathematics
• Grade 10 literacy – the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

The tests are administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), an arm’s-length agency of the Ministry of Education. EQAO distributes an individual report to each student who writes the tests and posts school, board and provincial results on its website at www.eqao.com.

EQUITY AND INCLUSIVITY

The Board is committed to ensuring equitable and inclusive learning environments for all students, staff, parents/guardians and community members. All members of our school communities are expected to uphold the Seven Guiding Principles of Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy. The strategy is available on the Ministry of Education website at www.ontario.ca/education.
Equity and inclusive education:
- Is a foundation of excellence.
- Meets individual needs.
- Identifies and eliminates barriers.
- Promotes a sense of belonging.
- Involves the broad community.
- Builds on and enhances previous and existing initiatives.
- Is demonstrated throughout the system.

Through these guiding principles the Board strives to achieve an equitable and inclusive school climate, where all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable and accepted. We want all staff and students to value diversity and to demonstrate respect for others and a commitment to establishing a just, caring society.

For more information, see Board Policy #261.0, Equity and Inclusivity, and its related procedures.

**Diversity**
Diversity is the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status (Ministry of Education Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation – 2014, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools).

**Equity**
Equity is a condition or state of fair, inclusive and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences (Ministry of Education Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation – 2014, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools).

**Inclusive Education**
Inclusive education is based on the principle of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected (Ministry of Education Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation – 2014, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools).

**EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Schools may offer a variety of extra-curricular activities – out-of-class programs or activities supervised by the school that provide curriculum-related learning and character-building experiences. These activities are voluntary, not part of the regular school curriculum, not assessed and students do not earn credits. Extra-curricular activities may vary from school to school depending on student and staff interests.
They may include house-league teams, clubs of interest, or instrumental and vocal music activities.

**Athletics**

*Elementary School*

The York Region Elementary School Athletic Association (YRESAA) is responsible for five Board-sanctioned sports:

- cross-country
- basketball
- volleyball
- badminton
- track and field

There is no cost to students for participation on YRESAA school teams, except for any transportation costs incurred by the school. More information is available on the Board website.

*Secondary School*

The York Region Athletic Association (YRAA) offers student athletes opportunities to enhance their educational experience through a variety of high school sports.

As a member of the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSAA), the YRAA follows the OFSAA Transfer Policy. This policy applies to all students in Ontario when they transfer from one secondary school to another. The policy outlines the criteria that determine a student’s eligibility to participate in school sport.

For more information, visit [www.yraa.com](http://www.yraa.com). For details on the transfer policy, see the documents section of the website.

Students participating in extra-curricular athletics will be asked to complete the Informed Consent Agreement – Sports and Emergency Contact Information forms.

**Spectator Behaviour**

All spectators at school athletic events are expected to:

- Treat the premises, students, staff and players of the host school and officials with respect and courtesy.
- Abide by the decisions of the officials whether or not they are in favour of your team.
- Respond politely to the requests of officials and staff.
- Remain in the areas designated for spectators and leave the playing surface clear at all times.
- Be polite and courteous and use only appropriate language.
- Refrain from any behaviour that might distract the athletes or officials or interfere with the progress of the game.
• Applaud good plays and never make derogatory remarks about the officials, players or coaches of the other teams.
• Be under the supervision of an adult, if an elementary school student.

Please respect the privacy rights of friends, neighbours and colleagues should you take photographs or videos at school events. Please refrain from publicly posting images and personal information of others on social media without their permission.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips support curriculum and provide students with educational experiences that enhance classroom learning. Field trips could be one day, short-term overnight or extended field trips.

Students do not pay for mandatory field trips. We strive to include all students in non-mandatory field trips. Non-mandatory field trips have a cost associated with them. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure no student is excluded from participating. Speak to your child’s teacher if you have a concern. Students who are unable to go on a trip are expected to be at school where they will do work associated with the regular program.

For more information, see Board Policy #642.0, Field Trips and related procedures.

FIRST NATION, MÉTIS AND INUIT STUDENTS

The Board is committed to providing supports to ensure that all students of First Nation, Métis and Inuit ancestry have opportunities to be successful.

Self-Identification
Students already attending a school in the Board can complete a Self-Identification Form available through the school or on the Board website. Students can identify their ancestry on their School Registration Form when they register. Students who self-identify can benefit from:
• Culturally specific learning opportunities or activities, such as conferences, events or student leadership opportunities.
• Additional support for academic achievement and well-being, including support staff designated to meet First Nation, Métis and Inuit student needs.
• Communication between schools, First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education staff, students and their families.
• Connections to post-secondary institutions, community groups, service providers and other partners.

For more information, see the Board website and Board Policy and Procedure #601.0, Supports for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students.
GUIDANCE DEPARTMENTS

The guidance departments in secondary schools offer a number of services, including:

• Supporting students in academic planning and course selection, and enrolment in summer school and e-learning.
• Supporting students in all pathways and program planning throughout secondary school.
• Providing information about post-secondary and career pathways.
• Supporting students in establishing effective study habits, exam preparation and life skills such as stress management, conflict resolution and problem solving.
• Providing support in applying for post-secondary education and training, and scholarships.
• Providing personal and crisis counselling and referrals to community resources.
• Supporting students in their completion of all secondary school diploma requirements.

For more information and resources, visit the Board website or the school guidance department.
HOMEWORK

Homework refers to learning activities that occur outside normal classroom time and enable students to practise skills, consolidate knowledge and skills, and prepare for the next class.

Each school has a homework policy that supports student learning and recognizes the importance of personal and family well-being. Each school is responsible for determining the appropriate homework expectations for each grade level and communicating this expectation to teachers, students and parents/guardians.

Students are expected to:
• Work with parents/guardians and teachers to develop and implement strategies to complete homework.
• Communicate with the teacher in advance if completing homework by the due date is not possible.
• Make every effort to complete homework assignments to the best of their ability by the due date and submit their homework to their teacher.
• Recognize that attention to homework is essential to academic success and will impact overall performance.
• Recognize that homework tasks can be used as a source of assessment data to focus their learning.
• Establish a homework routine.
• Locate and organize all the necessary materials and resources.
• Request clarification or assistance when necessary.
• Record assignments daily.
• Accept consequences if homework assignments are not completed.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to:
• Provide daily reading and oral language opportunities for their child. Families are encouraged to use their first language to speak with children about what they are thinking, reading, writing and learning.
• Provide a suitable environment for study.
• Support their child in all learning activities.
• Inquire regularly about assigned homework.
• Provide as much notice as possible to the school and their child’s teachers when their child is going to be away for extended periods of time.
• Consult the classroom teacher if problems or questions arise.

For more information, see Board Policy and Procedure #320.0 Homework.
Math Homework Help
All students in Grades 7 to 10 can access free, online math tutoring from a certified Ontario math teacher. Students also have access to resources such as interactive tutorials, commonly asked question videos and a glossary.

Homework Help is free, live and anonymous. Chats take place Sunday to Thursday evenings from 5:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Other resources are available online 24/7.

How do I register?
Students need their Ontario Education Number and date of birth to register. It is recommended that students use an anonymous username and password when registering.

To learn more and to register, visit the Board website or https://homeworkhelp.ilc.org/. This resource is a partnership between the Ministry of Education and TVO's Independent Learning Centre.

INFORMATION ACCESS AND PRIVACY PROTECTION

Students and parents/guardians can request access to information held by the Board by contacting the school principal. While a student is under the age of 18, the parent/guardian retains the right to access their child’s information. In cases where a 16 or 17-year-old student declares independence, parents/guardians retain right of access to the Ontario Student Record. The administrator will provide you with the information you request if you are legally entitled to receive a copy of it.

You have the right to make a formal request for information under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

You may make a request by completing a request form available on the Board website, or by writing a letter or e-mail describing exactly what information you want. Completed requests must include a $5.00 application fee paid by cash, credit card or cheque payable to the York Region District School Board. Your request should be sent to the attention of:

Information Access and Privacy Office
York Region District School Board
60 Wellington Street West
Aurora, Ontario, L4G 3H2

For more information, see Board Policy and Procedure #158.0, Information Access and Privacy Protection. See also the section on Student Personal Information in this guide.
MEDIA VISITS TO SCHOOLS

Schools cooperate with the media and other organizations, within reason, to encourage the celebration of school and student achievements.

If the media is attending a school, but not focusing specifically on individual students, the school will try to notify parents/guardians in advance. We recognize that some parents/guardians may not wish their child to be recorded. Please advise your school principal if this is the case.

If media wish to interview, photograph or profile your child specifically in the school, the principal will seek your consent.

For more information, please see the section on Student Personal Information in this guide.

OFFICE INDEX CARDS

The Office Index Card is a record containing important information for each student. The card or a similar record will be sent home at the start of each school year so the content can be revised as necessary. Please return this record even if there are no changes to the information.

If any of your information changes throughout the school year, such as your home telephone number or custodial rights, it is critical you inform the school.

ONTARIO EDUCATION NUMBER

Each student in Ontario has a student identification number assigned by the Ministry of Education. This number is known as the Ontario Education Number (OEN). To learn more about the OEN and how it is used, visit the Ministry of Education website at www.ontario.ca/education.

ONTARIO STUDENT RECORDS

An Ontario Student Record (OSR) is the ongoing, confidential record of a student’s educational progress through elementary and secondary schools in Ontario. The OSR is filed at the student’s school. If a student transfers to another school in Ontario, the OSR is transferred to the new school.

A student’s OSR can be accessed by:

• the student
• parents/guardians of students under 18
• parents/guardians of students over 18 if the student has signed the Consent for Information Sharing - Students at the Age of Majority
• anyone else identified in writing by the student or parents/guardians
You may make an appointment with the school administrator to see the OSR. You may also request the correction or removal of OSR content subject to the approval of school administration. The OSR contains information from all elementary and secondary schools a student has attended.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parents/guardians are our most important partners in educating our students. Good schools become better schools when they are strongly connected with parents/guardians as part of the learning community.

We are committed to supporting parent engagement across the district and identifying and removing barriers to parent involvement in schools. We value family and community engagement and recognizes the positive effect this has on student achievement and well-being.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to talk with their children about their experiences at school every day. This discussion can involve what they learned at school, any homework that was assigned, making connections between their learning and everyday experiences at home and at school in addition to asking questions about their social experiences at school (who their friends are, extra-curricular involvement).

Parents/guardians can engage with their children’s learning in many ways, including:

At Home

• Providing a quiet place for your child to read and/or complete homework.
• Reviewing homework, assignments and any communication from the teacher daily.
• Communicating with your child’s teacher(s) frequently (ask your child’s teacher(s) what method of communication is preferred).
• Asking questions about your child’s progress (academically and socially).
• Attending or arranging meetings to review your child’s progress and achievement.
• Reading to your child and listening to your child read, including reading in your child’s first language, and asking questions before, during and after reading.
• Playing learning games.
• Telling/sharing stories, including stories in your child’s first language.
• Talking to your child about his/her day at school (ask him/her what they learned and encourage your child to set goals for improvement).
• Asking questions about school that have a response other than yes or no.
• Encouraging your child to share their ideas and interests and ask questions at home and school.
• Supervising your child while they are on the Internet to ensure online safety.
At School
• Getting involved with the school council.
• Volunteering to read to students or listen to students read.
• Playing learning games with groups of students.
• Preparing materials for classroom use.
• Advocating for your child by sharing your child’s strengths and needs.
• Assisting with supervising students on field trips.
• Assisting in classrooms or the library.
• Assisting with lunches or milk programs.
• Creating bulletin boards.
• Welcoming new families and students to your school as an ambassador.
• Assisting with interpreting.

For more information, see:
• Board Policy #238.0, Parent, Family and Community Engagement, available on the Board website.
• The section in this guide on School Councils.
• The section in this guide on Volunteering in Schools.
• The parents section on the Board website.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

The school and the Board are not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen personal items. You can reduce the risk by leaving valuable items at home. Always secure items.

PETS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

A reminder to parents/guardians who walk their pets to school:
• All dogs must be on a leash and kept outside the school.
• Consider leaving your pets at home. Larger animals sometimes intimidate smaller children.
• Fenced in Kindergarten play areas are off limits to pets.
• Excrement must be removed by pet owners. Please help keep our property clean and healthy.

This does not apply to service animals.

RECESS – ELEMENTARY

All students are expected to go out for recess and lunch hour, weather permitting. If a student is well enough to attend school, then he or she will benefit from short periods of outdoor exercise. Schools do not have supervised health room facilities. Recess, entry and dismissal times, and lunch time are supervised. Students should dress comfortably and appropriately according to weather conditions.
Recess Playground Expectations
Each school’s code of conduct outlines acceptable behaviour for students. During playground time, the code of conduct applies and includes the following:
• Harmful behaviour toward others is not acceptable (e.g. play fighting, piggybacks, pushing, rock/stone/sand/snowball throwing, etc.).
• Show respect for students, staff members, visitors and volunteers.
• Swearing is not permitted.
• Spitting is not acceptable, whether playing sports or not.
• All students are responsible for keeping school property clean and tidy.
• Students must only play in designated areas.
• Only Kindergarten students are allowed in the Kindergarten play area.
• Tag games and ball games are prohibited on playground climbers.

Research in Schools
The Board conducts research in schools as part of its efforts to advance student achievement and well-being, and to meet Ministry of Education requirements. The research is used to support decision-making and planning in the Board and includes:
• Conducting school climate surveys and gathering information about the experiences and opinions of students, parents/guardians, staff and community members.
• Analyzing student achievement data.
• Evaluating the effectiveness of programs and services.
• Providing reports of demographic data.

The Board also considers requests from institutions, agencies, staff members or other individuals to conduct research in its schools and departments. For more information, see Policy and Procedure #108.0, External Research.

School Council
Education is a partnership involving parents/guardians, students, teachers, principals, community and school boards.

The school council provides advice on school matters and helps to strengthen the important relationship between schools, parents/guardians and their communities. The council includes parents/guardians, school staff and community members.

Getting involved gives you the opportunity to be part of a team working to ensure a high quality of education. All parents/guardians and members of the school community are welcome to attend school council meetings.

How do I join?
At the beginning of the school year, all parents/guardians have the opportunity to become a voting member of council. If you are interested, or would like to nominate someone, fill out the School Council Nomination Form available from the school.
Where can I learn more about school councils?
- Speak to school office staff or the principal.
- Visit the school website.
- Visit the parent section on the Board website.
- Watch the school council video and see the handbook on the Board website.
- Read Policy and Procedure #262.0, School Councils available on the Board website.

SCHOOL FEES

Under Ministry of Education guidelines, schools do not charge fees for supplies related to coursework required for graduation, with the exception of regional programs. Fees may be charged for enhanced materials — voluntary enrichments beyond what is needed to meet curriculum expectations. For more information, see Policy and Procedure #671.0, School/Student Fees.
Activity Fee (Secondary Schools)
This fee supports activities that strengthen the sense of community in secondary schools, including school spirit events, team transportation, dances and guest speakers. Your support helps schools to continue providing a range of opportunities for students and the school community.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are expected to show respect for school property and materials at all times. Students, together with their parents/guardians, are responsible for ensuring that school items are returned in good condition. Textbooks, lockers, desks and chairs should not be vandalized (e.g., writing inside school books, torn pages, holes in desks, etc.). Lost or damaged textbooks, library books or other school materials are the responsibility of the student. Restitution will be expected and outlined by each school.

For information on school information technology resources, see the Use of Technology section in this guide.

SECONDARY SCHOOL

Resources for Students
On the student pages of the Board website, www.yrdsb.ca/students, students can explore how to:
• Evaluate their options.
• Build their skills.
• Create a plan.
• Choose courses, including course descriptions and prerequisites.
• Get support.

Elementary to Secondary School Transition
There are many people who are available to provide support throughout the transition to secondary school.

Students will select courses for Grade 9 when they are in Grade 8. To assist in course selection it is important to be aware of course pathways (applied, academic, open, locally developed), compulsory credits and pathways beyond secondary school. You can find more information about secondary school in this section and in the student section of the Board website at www.yrdsb.ca/students.

Individual Pathways Plan
Beginning in Grade 7, students will create an Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) – using Career Cruising and start recording:
• What they have learned about themselves; their skills, strengths, interests and learning styles.
• Opportunities available to them, including experiences that help to inform the choices they make now and for the future.
• Their goals.
• Plans to achieve their goals.

Students will also be able to research potential education and career opportunities as they explore post-secondary options. Students will review and revise this plan at least twice a year.

What is Career Cruising?
Career Cruising is an interactive career guidance and pathways planning tool for people of all ages. This tool can help students:
• Explore different career options.
• Manage course selection online.
• Plan pathways to meet the requirements for their desired career path.

Students are directed to specific access by their grade level. Students from Grade 8 onward will make course selections through the Course Planner module on the Career Cruising site. Career Cruising is also used for summer and night school course registration. For more information, visit the student section of the Board website.

Course Selection
Using Career Cruising, students select courses in February for the following September. Students, with their parents/guardians, are responsible for ensuring they select courses that meet diploma and post-secondary requirements.

Students must take four courses a semester until they have 24 credits. When they have 24 credits, they may take three courses per semester.

Review the compulsory credits chart under Program and Diploma Requirements in this section of the guide. Choose a course pathway based on personal learning styles:

Applied Courses: Students develop knowledge and skills through practical application, understanding of essential concepts and exploration of related concepts. Students are working at or above grade level.

Academic Courses: Students develop knowledge and skills through study of theory and abstract problems, understanding of essential and related concepts and practical application as appropriate. Students are working at or above grade level.

Open Courses: Are for all students and selected as electives, in addition to compulsories. These courses are designed to broaden knowledge and skills in subjects that reflect student interests.
Locally Developed Courses: Provide a guided approach to learning using practical examples and concrete objects. To be eligible for these courses, students are working below grade level in Math, English and Science and are recommended for this programming by their school principal. For further information, contact the guidance department in your secondary school.

The student section of the Board website also has information that can help students make decisions about courses and their career path.

34 Credit Threshold
Students are encouraged to complete secondary school within 34 credits. While you are enrolled in your first four consecutive years of secondary school, you may go beyond 34 credits. Going beyond the 34 credit threshold is possible through:

- E-learning
- Night School
- Summer School
- Independent Learning Centres
- Adult Day School

The 34 Credit Threshold does not apply:

- If you have an Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- If you are not enrolled in secondary school.
- To English as a Second Language (ESL) core language courses and/or English Literacy Development (ELD) core language courses.

If you have questions about course selection, speak with the school’s guidance counsellor or go to: www.yrdsb.ca/students.

Pathways Programs
Which pathway will you choose? Students, you will soon make choices about what you want to try when you finish secondary school.

- Will you pursue post-secondary education through apprenticeship, college, university or global learning opportunities?
- Will you enter the workplace directly after high school?

You may want to consider opening doors to your future. For example:

- Registering for a Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM), gaining industry-recognized certification, skills and training while in secondary school. All secondary schools in the Board now have SHSM programs (www.yrdsb.ca/SHSM).
- Getting a head start on an apprenticeship in a skilled trade by participating in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) (www.yrdsb.ca/oyap).
- Getting a head start on a variety of college courses while still in secondary school. Dual Credit Courses/Programs let you receive both a college and a secondary school credit (www.yrdsb.ca/dualcredits).
Participating in the **Exploring Opportunities Programs** (EOP), a specialized opportunity starting in Grade 11 for students interested in the trades and technologies who want to explore workplace or apprenticeship pathways ([www.yrdsb.ca/exploringopportunities](http://www.yrdsb.ca/exploringopportunities)).

- Participating in **Cooperative Education Programs**, working at a job placement while attending secondary school and earning credit for it ([www.yrdsb.ca/co-op](http://www.yrdsb.ca/co-op)).

- Participating in the **skills competitions** available each year ([www.skillsontario.com](http://www.skillsontario.com)). Ask your teacher for more information.

Rewarding jobs await you in all sectors of our economy, no matter what path you choose. Ensuring you have the right skills is essential. Start yourself on your path now by talking with your family, friends, guidance counsellors and teachers.

Check out some of your dream jobs at [www.careercruising.com](http://www.careercruising.com) or [www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/postsecondary/careerplanning](http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/postsecondary/careerplanning).

**Final Evaluations/Examinations**

All secondary students must participate in the final summative assessment(s). These assessments make up the final evaluation representing 30 per cent of the student's report card grade. Students are expected to complete all final summative assessments at the place, date and time indicated by the teacher and by the examination schedule provided by the school. Students cannot leave early for vacations, employment or other activities such as summer camps during the examination schedule.

When examination schedules are distributed, it is the student's responsibility to report any conflicts to the vice-principal in charge of examinations before the deadline stated on the schedule. An examination conflict is defined as having two exams scheduled at the same time or having three exams on the same day.

In the case of extenuating circumstances (e.g. bereavement, court appearance or when a student is unable to write an exam because of illness explicitly stated on a medical certificate), the principal will decide, in consultation with the subject teacher, the most appropriate method to determine the student's final standing in the course. This may include an opportunity for the student to participate in the portion missed. Documentation supporting an absence must be presented in all cases.

In the case of an unexcused absence, a zero may be assigned for the missed portion of the final evaluation assessment and used in determining the final percentage mark on the report card.

For more information, see Board Policy #305.0, Assessment, Evaluation and Communication of Student Learning and Achievement, and its related procedures.
Program and Diploma Requirements
Students must earn the following compulsory credits (total of 18) to obtain the Ontario Secondary School Diploma:

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 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, Native 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 Groups 1, 2 or 3.
Students may choose to earn an enhanced Red Seal Ontario Secondary School Diploma with a Specialist High Skills Major Designation. To learn more, visit [www.yrdsb.ca/SHSM](http://www.yrdsb.ca/SHSM).

**Transcripts and Full Disclosure**
Withdrawals and failures from Grade 9 and 10 courses are not recorded on the Ontario Student Transcript.

If a student withdraws from a Grade 11 or 12 course within five instructional days after the formal report card is issued, then the course will not be recorded on the transcript.

If a student withdraws from a Grade 11 or 12 course more than five days after the reporting period, a withdrawal (W) is entered in the credit column. The student’s mark at the time of withdrawal is recorded as a percentage in the achievement column of the transcript.

In addition, if a student repeats a course, each attempt and the mark will be recorded in the transcript with only one credit granted. The course with the lower mark will have an “R” entered in the credit column. If you have questions about this, speak to a guidance counsellor or the principal.

**SOCIAL WORKERS**

Each school has a social worker. Social workers support students referred to them by staff members. Services to students may include one-to-one counselling for issues related to their social emotional health.

According to the Child and Family Services Act, children over the age of 12 may consent to their own treatment. Parent/guardian consent is required for all social work referrals unless the student is over the age of 12 and has a specific and valid reason why parental consent should not be sought.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

We recognize that students develop and learn in different ways and that some students will require special education programs and services, tailored to meet their individual needs.

All students in our schools, regardless of background or ability, will have the opportunity to develop the skills, attitudes and knowledge required to live up to their full potential. Our classrooms and staff will assist them in growing into capable, caring, responsible and active citizens.
We are committed to providing the most appropriate educational opportunities for all students. For students with special needs, we are committed to:

- Believing all students can learn.
- Providing programs and services wherever possible in home schools.
- Providing a range of placement options.
- Providing a focus on inclusive practices in our schools as an integral part of school culture.
- Developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that focus on improved student learning.
- Providing appropriate accommodations and modifications as required.
- Developing learning communities that promote respect for differences, diversity and inclusivity.
- Recognizing, valuing and validating all students.
- Inviting and supporting students to be active participants in all aspects of school activity.
- Creating environments for all staff, students, parents/guardians and other partners to focus on shared understandings of common goals.

To learn more about Individual Education Plans and Identification, Placement and Review Committees, visit the programs section on the Board website. For more information about available programs or services for your child, please contact your child's teacher or principal.

**Intervention Strategies**

By closely monitoring the learning process for each student, the teacher is able to identify the assessment strategies necessary to support student success. The teacher can select a variety of strategies to support different learning styles, provide alternative approaches to learning, adjust pace or depth, or provide one-on-one or small group instruction. A teacher’s plan for intervention considers:

- Student strengths, needs, abilities and interests.
- Learning styles and preferences.
- The length of time needed for instruction and assessment, for practice and for feedback.
- Student and parent/guardian roles and responsibilities.
- Resources and alternate strategies to support learning.
- The roles that others can play to support the student’s needs.

**In-School Team**

When a teacher needs support to plan more extensive interventions, he or she may request an In-School Team meeting. The purpose of the team meeting is to collaboratively explore additional interventions or assistance that may be required for student success. This school-based team can provide:

- Consultation on curriculum interventions.
- Planning for and co-ordination of services for the student.
- Access to additional school, community, regional or area services.
Members of the In-School Team can include Student Services staff from the Area Interdisciplinary Team and may include:

- Blind and Low Vision Services
- Area Special Education Resource Teacher
- Intervention Support Worker
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- Physical and Occupational Therapy Services
- Psychological Services
- Social Work and Attendance Services
- Complex Needs Staff
- Speech-Language Pathology Services
- Work Experience Program

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Student leadership, voice and involvement are important to establishing thriving learning environments for each student.

Policy and Procedure #672.0, Student Leadership and Student Voice outline our commitment to ensuring the student voice is heard and considered in decision making at the elementary, secondary and board levels. For more information about how the Student Leadership and Student Voice policy is being implemented at your child’s school, please contact the principal.

Student Council

Each secondary school has a democratically elected student council that represents the student body and works to improve school spirit and community. The council also generally runs a number of activities that benefit students.

Elementary schools may have a student council or an alternative elementary student leadership group that works to improve school community, promotes student engagement and acts as a link between school administration and the school.

The York Region Presidents’ Council brings together school council members from all Board secondary schools to work with student trustees to voice concerns and enhance cooperation among student councils.

For more information about student trustees, visit the Board of Trustees section of this guide or the student trustee website at www.yrdsb.ca/studenttrustees.
STUDENT PERSONAL INFORMATION

All students and their parents/guardians are expected to sign the Policy Agreement Form to acknowledge that they have read and understand this information.

Schools routinely collect, use and release student personal information in keeping with the Education Act and other laws.

All activities, programs and technologies that collect, use or release student personal information are assessed to ensure student privacy is protected. To provide students with Board-sanctioned educational services and programs, schools will use your child’s information to:

• Administer events such as commencement, assemblies and science fairs.
• Support school and student safety and administer a safe arrival and departure program.
• Facilitate student use of video conferencing and similar educational tools.
• Recognize student achievement by communicating within the school community.
• Develop and use teaching materials, including teaching videos.

Student information may be released, consistent with the purpose of the original collection or required by law, to:

• the Ministry of Education to support its policies and programs
• transportation providers to administer transportation services
• commercial photographers to take class and individual photos
• outside researchers, where approved by the Board
• the school community by publishing non-sensitive information in yearbooks
• insurers to make insurance claims, administer insurance coverage
• probation officers
• college and university application centres to assist student application process
• child and family services agencies
• the Medical Officer of Health
• other school boards (e.g. for student transfers)
• the broader community through official school or Board websites/social media accounts (e.g. photos of students and/or their work)

Your express consent will be sought for the following disclosures of personal information:

• for individual student interviews by media
• to school councils
• to the general public (e.g. displays at public libraries that identify students)
• to lawyers and other representatives of parents/guardians
• to health service providers working outside of a student’s school
• to the York Region Athletic Association and the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations
• electronic newsletters, classroom websites and classroom social media accounts

Please note that these are not exhaustive lists.

Please respect the privacy rights of friends, neighbours and colleagues if you record or photograph personal information at school events. Please refrain from publicly posting images and information of others on social media without their permission.

For more information, see:
• The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) which establishes rules ensuring safe and secure information management practices.
• Board Policy and Procedure #158.0, Information Access and Privacy Protection.

STUDENT SUCCESS

The goal of the Student Success Strategy is to ensure all students in Grades 7-12 have the learning opportunities and supports they need to be successful in secondary school and beyond. With a focus on student engagement, Student Success provides new and relevant learning opportunities that build on students’ interests and strengths, as well as their learning needs.

Every secondary school in the Board has a student success teacher who:
• Acts as a student advocate and mentor to ensure the success of all students.
• Supports students through key transition points from elementary to secondary school.
• Works in partnership with classroom teachers to support students who are experiencing academic and social/emotional challenges.
• Keeps students on track for graduation through educational pathway and career planning, goal setting and ongoing monitoring of student marks, assignments, due dates, attendance and attitudes.

For more information about the student success program, please contact the student success teacher at your secondary school or visit: www.yrdsb.ca/studentsuccess.
TECHNOLOGY USE

All students and their parents/guardians are expected to read the Use of Technology Agreement and sign the Policy Agreement Form to acknowledge that they have read, understand and will support the conditions/rules concerning the use of school/Board and personal technology as it supports learning.

This agreement is designed to ensure a safe and supportive school environment as well as ensure network integrity.

The term school/Board technology as used in this document refers to, but is not limited to, computer networks, stand-alone computers, handheld devices, peripheral devices, digital media and memory storage devices while in schools, using Board-provisioned networks or tools and/or interacting with other students or Board staff.

For more information, see Board Policy and Procedure #194.0, Use of Technology and related procedures.

Use of Technology Agreement

Primary Students Use of Technology Agreement (Kindergarten to Grade 3)

When using technology, students are accountable for:
- Following the Board Policy #668.0 Caring and Safe Schools and the school code of conduct.
- Always having permission before using school technology.
- Treating school technology with respect.
- Only visiting Internet websites as directed by the teacher.
- Being respectful when writing messages to anyone while using technology.
- Telling a teacher right away if something is wrong with the computer.
- Telling a teacher right away if something they see on the computer screen makes them uncomfortable.
- Sharing the computer fairly if they are working with a partner.
- Only using their own login.
- Never sharing their passwords with anyone other than their teacher or parents/guardians.

Junior/Intermediate/Senior Students Use of Technology Agreement (Grade 4 to 12)

When using technology, students are accountable for:
- Following the Board Policy #668.0 Caring and Safe Schools and the school code of conduct.
- Treating technology with respect.
- Being respectful when writing messages to anyone while using technology.
- Respecting others’ privacy and personal information, including passwords.
- Keeping personal information private (e.g. not publishing photos, names, addresses or phone numbers on the Internet).
• Using technology responsibly for educational purposes as assigned by a teacher.
• Respecting information/media obtained on the Internet by incorporating all references in a bibliography, footnote or other form of citation.
• Reporting known technical, safety or security problems.
• Reporting inappropriate or uncomfortable situations involving technology to a staff member.
• Only using their own login.
• Never sharing passwords with anyone other than teachers or parents/guardians.

Staff may access Board-provisioned student accounts and communications for assessment purposes, to maintain system integrity, and to ensure that students are using the system responsibly and safely. As a result, students should not expect that stored files or messages are private.

Consequences for actions which contravene Board Policy #668.0, Caring and Safe Schools; Board Policy #194.0, Use of Technology; related procedures; and the student code of conduct may range from withdrawal of privileges to suspension from school.

TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS

Individuals no longer enrolled in a York Region District School Board school who may be thinking of returning to school or need proof of graduation for employment or other purposes are to order a transcript and other school records using the form on the Board website. You do not have to visit the last school attended unless updates are needed to your academic record.

USE OF NON-BOARD ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Each school has its own guidelines about electronic devices. At a minimum, cell phones and other personal communication devices must be turned off and kept out of sight during all instructional periods, except with the clear permission of the principal or the classroom teacher.

Discussions will take place in our classrooms throughout the year about the effect of digital footprints and how a positive attitude towards using technology supports collaboration, learning and productivity.

Camera and/or video functions on mobile devices are not permitted for use on school property without clear permission from the principal or teacher. Infractions will be dealt with as student discipline, under Board Policy #668.0, Caring and Safe Schools and its related procedures.

Check with the school’s main office to find out if students may bring electronic devices into the classroom, use them in school, or if they must leave these items in
their backpacks/lockers. There are exceptions for students who need specific devices as per their Individual Education Plan, such as voice recorders and other mobile technology. The use of these tools is managed by Board staff.

At no time may electronic devices be used in washrooms or change rooms. Students are responsible for the care and security of their personal devices. The school is not responsible for any damage, loss or theft.

VACATION

Family vacations during school days can have a significant effect on student learning. If your child will miss more than 15 consecutive days of school, you must complete the Request for Vacation Form available through the school. Without the completed form, your child may be removed from the school’s rolls and might not be accommodated at their home school when they return from vacation.

Before withdrawal for any vacation not on the school calendar, check with your school office to find out what effect a long vacation may have on your child’s progress. You may ask the homeroom teacher to provide a course of study. Students may be responsible for completing modified assignments upon their return to school.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

All visitors (including parents/guardians) must:
- Use the main entrance of the school, buzzing to enter all elementary schools.
- Check in at the main office when they arrive.
- Only visit classrooms with permission.
- Follow the direction of the principal at all times.

The office staff will get important messages and materials to your child.

WALKING TO SCHOOL

Walking to school:
- Keeps students active.
- Builds friendships.
- Improves air quality and the environment with fewer cars on the road.
- Creates safer routes with less traffic.
- Helps prepare students for learning.
WORKING OR VOLUNTEERING DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Students may only be employed or volunteer during school hours if they are in a cooperative education or Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) program that allows them to do so.

The SAL program allows students to have flexible programs to meet their academic and life goals. A program might include attending classes, taking job training, counselling or any other activity that addresses their needs and is approved by the Board.

VOLUNTEERS IN OUR SCHOOLS

There are many opportunities to get involved. Please contact your child's teacher for more information. All volunteers must comply with Policy and Procedure #280.0, Volunteers in Our Schools and:

- Complete the Volunteers in Our Schools Form, available through the school.
- Submit a Vulnerable Sector Screening completed within the last six months (requirement for new volunteers) OR sign the Annual Offence Declaration (returning volunteers).
- Sign a Confidentiality Agreement.
Student well-being is one of the key priorities of the Ministry of Education as outlined in Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario. Research shows that healthy children and youth are better learners. Therefore, it is important to create conditions that will lead to good health and overall well-being. This includes developing strong relationships and a positive sense of self, eating well, staying active, getting enough sleep and promoting positive mental health.

Healthy schools and workplaces are learning environments that support the cognitive, emotional, social and physical well-being of staff and students to provide the optimal conditions for learning and working. Everyone has a role to play in providing this support, including students, staff members, parents/guardians and community partners.

For more information and healthy resources, including tips on packing environmentally friendly and healthy lunches, visit the Board website. You can also view Board Policy and Procedure #218.0, Healthy Schools and Workplaces.

**ACCIDENT/ILLNESS**

*What happens if a student becomes ill or is hurt at school?*

If a student becomes ill or is injured at school, we will make the student as comfortable as possible and contact parents/guardians or emergency contacts to pick him or her up. A child will not be allowed to go home until a parent/guardian or designated emergency contact has been contacted.

If the injury is serious, the principal or a designate may call an ambulance. We will contact parents/guardians or the emergency contact provided as soon as possible. Please ensure contact information is accurate and up-to-date.

*Can a student stay inside at school if they are sick or hurt?*

Students who are ill should stay at home until they are well enough to participate in all school activities. This includes recess, physical education and outdoor activities. There is no supervision available for students to stay inside during recess because they are not feeling well.

**ALLERGIES**

We have a number of students and staff in our schools that have life-threatening allergies. If some of these people are exposed to an allergen, they may go into anaphylactic shock – a potentially life-threatening condition. Medication must be administered by injection within minutes to those individuals to keep them safe.
Please help us ensure the health and safety of all of our students:

• Let the school know immediately if your child has a life-threatening allergy or medical condition and complete the appropriate forms.
• Ensure your child carries their epinephrine auto-injector medication, if needed.
• Your child’s principal will inform the parent community if there is a particular life-threatening allergy (e.g. nuts, eggs, dairy) at the school. Please note that apart from nuts and nut products, we are not able to accommodate requests to eliminate certain food products from classrooms or schools.
• Practice measures to avoid allergens, such as:
  o Checking the ingredients label on any food students bring to school.
  o Avoiding sending nut products or peanut butter replacements.
  o Avoiding sending homemade food items for the entire class (e.g. birthday cake).
  o Encouraging your child to wash their hands thoroughly before arriving at school to ensure they are not bringing any trace amounts of allergens to school.
  o Encouraging handwashing with soap before and after eating.

For more information, see Board Policy and Procedure #661.0, Anaphylactic Reactions.

CONCUSSIONS

Recognizing the serious effects that concussions can have on student learning, achievement and well-being, the Board is committed to working with parents/guardians and community partners to provide appropriate support to prevent and minimize the risk of concussions. Parents/guardians:

• Should inform the school if their child has a concussion or is experiencing symptoms of a concussion.
• Will be contacted if a head injury is suspected by school staff.

For more information, see Board Policy and Procedure #627.0, Concussion Management.
HEAD LICE (PEDICULOSIS)

Head lice or pediculosis is common in school-aged children. It is not a communicable disease and does not cause illness. All families can help to decrease head lice in our school communities by performing regular head checks of their children and treating the head lice if found. Checking for lice takes patience, diligence and plenty of time.

It is recommended that you always be sensitive to a child’s feelings around this topic. Head lice can happen to anyone regardless of socioeconomic factors or level of personal cleanliness. When head lice are identified at school, parents/guardians are contacted so a recommended treatment can start right away.

Additional information about head lice is available through the Canadian Pediatric Society. If you have questions about head lice or any other public health-related topic, please contact York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-252-9933.
HEALTH CARD NUMBERS

In accordance with the Personal Health Information Protection Act, schools and school boards cannot collect and use health card numbers. Only those professions that are reimbursed through Medicare collect health card numbers. Parents/guardians are contacted in any instance where a health card number is required. Medical attention cannot be denied in the absence of a health card number.

HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES

We believe the ultimate goal of health support within the school setting is to have students be as independent as possible with their own care, recognizing that in some cases coordinated supports are required. Students who are independent can also develop self-advocacy skills and have a circle of support among people who understand their needs and can provide assistance as required.

We believe all school personnel and others entrusted with the supervision of students have a duty of care to assist students during medical emergencies, to the extent of their capacity within the means available to them, and what is reasonable for persons without medical training.
Immunization

Immunization is one of the most successful strategies to promote health and prevent illness related to a vaccine-preventable disease. All vaccines on the Ontario Routine Immunization Schedule are provided at no cost to the public. The Immunization of School Pupils Act requires all students attending school in Ontario to be up-to-date with diphtheria, tetanus, polio, mumps, measles, rubella, pertussis* (whooping cough) and meningococcal* disease immunization. Students born on or after January 1, 2010 also require varicella* (chickenpox) immunization. Students whose immunizations are not up-to-date may be suspended from school for up to 20 days.

Other vaccines, including human papillomavirus (HPV) and hepatitis B are also offered free of charge for certain age groups. Parents/guardians are responsible for maintaining a record of their child’s immunizations and informing York Region Public Health anytime an immunization is given. Some students may be exempt from immunization based on medical, religious or conscientious grounds.

*Effective as of July 1, 2014

For more information, please call York Region Community and Health Services, Immunization Services at 1-877-464-9675, ext. 73452 or visit york.ca/immunizations

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<tr>
<th>Vaccine</th>
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<th>Years (Age)</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Tetanus*</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pertussis (Whooping Cough)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polio*</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Human papillomavirus (HPV)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Publicly Funded Routine Immunization Schedule in Ontario

- Recommended time of immunization
- Mandatory per Immunization of School Pupils Act, as of July 1, 2014. Students are required to have these immunizations at a signed exemption to attend school in Ontario.

For more information call 1-877-464-9675, ext. 73452 or visit york.ca/immunizations

1-800-361-5653
TTY: 1-866-252-9933
Health support services are available for students who are unable to attend school without the support normally provided at home by a family member and that cannot be deferred until after school hours. This includes emergency services and essential routine health services such as:

- administration of medication
- catheterization
- suctioning
- seizure management
- diabetes management
- communication disorders management
- management of physical challenges

Parents/guardians whose children require health support services are responsible for:

- Informing the principal of the health/medical needs of their child.
- Understanding that the provision of health support services is their ongoing responsibility. By requesting the assistance of school personnel in providing these services, they are temporarily delegating limited authority to the personnel of the school for a particular purpose, rather than relinquishing any part of their parental responsibility.

Students with health support needs are responsible for independently carrying out their medical management plan to the extent they are capable and, where appropriate, carrying with them any necessary equipment which is part of their normal daily activity.

For more information about health support services for your child, please contact your child’s teacher or principal. You can also view the Board Policy #662.0, Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings and its related procedures.

**MEDICATION**

Parents/guardians, if your child has a life-threatening allergy or medical condition, it is important to let the school know immediately and complete the appropriate forms. It is your responsibility to administer medication. Treatment regimes should be adjusted to avoid administration of medication during school hours. When this is not possible, you may request the assistance of school personnel.

If your child needs medication during school hours, and it is a medication that we can administer, please leave it in the school office labeled with your child’s name and the correct dosage. You must inform the school if your child is bringing medication to school (e.g. asthma puffer, EpiPen®, Tylenol®, etc.).

Students can carry medication with them if required for a medical condition and if the office is made aware. Parents/guardians must ensure the safe transport and disposal of items requiring special precautions, such as sharps and medications, at all times. Students with epinephrine auto-injectors are responsible for carrying them...
with them at all times, where age and/or developmentally appropriate. Medication will be administered by school staff only after you complete the Request for Administration of Medication or Self-Administration of Medication Form that can be obtained through the school office.

SCENT SENSITIVITIES

Many people have allergic reactions or sensitivities to scented products like perfumes, deodorants and other fragrances. All staff, students, and visitors are asked to refrain from or minimize the use of scented products, as they can result in adverse effects on the health of others.

For more information, see Board Policy and Procedure #661.0, Anaphylactic Reactions.

SMOKING ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Smoking, holding lit tobacco products and consuming any other tobacco products are not permitted on school property at anytime by anyone (staff, students or visitors), including in any vehicle. The use of electronic products such as electronic cigarettes, cigars and pipes as well as cartridges of nicotine solutions and related products are also not permitted on school property.
This is in compliance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act which is enforced locally by York Region Community and Health Services and/or Board Policy and Procedure #461.0, Tobacco-Free Environment. The act also prohibits supplying and sharing tobacco to persons under 19 years of age and carries a fine for those who are not compliant. There is an exception for ceremonial use of tobacco by First Nation, Métis and Inuit students and staff.

A progressive form of discipline, involving suspension from school and fines, is in place for students who break the law. For more information, please contact York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-252-9933 or visit www.york.ca/tobacco.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Students should be dressed appropriately for weather conditions when they come to school.

During the cold winter months, students can stay warm by wearing layers of loose-fitting clothing, a hat, scarf, and mittens or gloves. If students walk to school, bright coloured and reflective pieces of clothing help make them visible to motorists and traffic. Students should also consider bringing extra pants and socks in case they get wet.

During the hot, sunny weather, students should protect themselves by:
- Seeking shade or creating their own.
- Wearing a hat and suitable clothing to cover their skin.
- Putting on sunglasses that provide UV protection to protect their eyes.
- Applying or reapplying sunscreen 20 minutes before exposure to the sun.
- Reducing outdoor physical activity in very hot weather.
- Drinking plenty of water.
- Wearing loose fitting, light-coloured clothing made from a breathable fabric.

York Region Community and Health Services recommends using a broad spectrum sunscreen with Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or higher to prevent sun-related illnesses.

Recess
The principal decides at the time of each recess whether students will remain inside, or go out for shortened or full period recess by keeping a close eye on weather conditions, including temperature, wind chill, sun/cloud conditions and wind velocity.

Send your child to school dressed and ready for outdoor play. Students will be supervised in their classroom during recess and lunch hour whenever an indoor recess is necessary.

More information is available on the Board website, including the Extreme Hot and Cold Weather and UV Protection Guideline.
ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Student accident insurance provides coverage for injuries due to accidents not covered by government or private health plans (e.g. the cost of expensive dental work as a result of an accident). It is strongly recommended that parents/guardians of students involved in athletics purchase this insurance.

Insurance covers a student in the event of an accident at school, or anywhere else as coverage applies, 365 days a year, even during non-school activities. Insurance applications are sent home in early September and are also available through the school office. All completed applications should be sent directly to the carrier.

CARING AND SAFE SCHOOLS

This policy outlines the Board’s commitment to creating caring and safe schools and the Board’s approach to student discipline. It explains the responsibilities of trustees, staff members, students, parents/guardians and community partners. Parents/guardians and students are required to sign the Policy Agreement Form showing they understand this policy. The form will be sent home at the start of each school year.

The full policy is available on the Board website.

Policy #668.0, Caring and Safe Schools

York Region District School Board is committed to creating and sustaining caring and safe schools which promote student learning, achievement and well-being. Each student has the right to learn in positive and respectful surroundings free from harassment and discrimination. Inclusive, accepting, respectful and healthy relationships allow individuals to reach their full potential. This is consistent with all Board priorities, policies and procedures, and the Ontario Human Rights Code. Norms, expectations and standards of behaviour reflect a responsible and civil society where inclusion, acceptance and safety build the foundation of a caring and safe school climate.

The Board values and respects diversity and inclusivity. To support all students in becoming healthy and contributing members of society, strengths, needs and barriers to learning are identified and responded to as part of a whole-school approach.

Building a caring and safe school climate is complex. It requires supportive leadership, effective teaching practices, healthy relationships, a systematic approach to addressing behaviour and the involvement of parents/guardians and the broader community.

Behaviour occurs in context, is learned, serves a function and can be changed over time. All students benefit from clear, consistent behavioural expectations with
positive modeling. To enhance caring and safe school climates, positive student behaviour supports are provided and inappropriate behaviour is addressed taking into account mitigating and other factors, using a progressive discipline approach. A clear focus on anti-bullying supports the development of healthy relationships, educates the school community and encourages timely reporting of bullying incidents so that immediate and appropriate action can be taken.

Parents/guardians play a critical role in the education of their children and in supporting their social, emotional and academic growth. Students, families and schools face complex and challenging issues that often require Board supports and collaboration with external agencies to access resources that contribute to positive outcomes for all students and families.

Definitions

Bullying (Definition from the Education Act)

Bullying means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where:

(a) the behaviour is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of:
   (i) causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual’s reputation or harm to the individual’s property, or
   (ii) creating a negative environment at a school for another individual

(b) the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education (“intimidation”)

Bullying may be physical, verbal, social and/or electronic.

Mitigating and Other Factors

Mitigating and other factors must be taken into account when addressing inappropriate student behaviour. Specific mitigating factors include:

• the student’s ability to control his/her behaviour
• the student’s ability to understand the consequences of his/her behavior
• whether the student’s continuing presence in a school creates an unacceptable risk of safety to others
• other factors, including:
  o the student’s history
  o whether a progressive discipline approach has been used with the student
whether the activity was related to any harassment of the student because of his or her race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation or to any other harassment
how a suspension or expulsion would affect the student’s ongoing education
the age of the student
in the case of a student for whom an individual education plan has been developed:
• whether the behaviour was a manifestation of a disability identified in the student’s individual education plan
• whether appropriate individualized accommodation has been provided, and
• whether the suspension or expulsion is likely to result in an aggravation or worsening of the student’s behaviour or conduct

Progressive Discipline
A progressive discipline approach promotes positive student behaviour, combining prevention and intervention strategies and discipline with opportunities for students to continue their education. Inappropriate student behaviour is addressed using a continuum of developmentally appropriate interventions, considering mitigating and other factors. There is a progressive application of consequences that may include, but is not limited to, a conversation with student and/or parent/guardian, office referral, community service, withdrawal of privileges, detention, peer mediation, restorative practices, counselling, suspension and expulsion.

Bias-Free Progressive Discipline
York Region District School Board is committed to implement progressive discipline that is bias free. Bias-free progressive discipline commits to identifying and addressing discriminatory bias and systemic barriers in relation to discipline. A bias-free approach is one that respects all people and groups and reflects human rights principles. As well, this approach looks to support student voice and to give them opportunities to help build schools that are socially inclusive where they can talk about bullying, racism, homophobia, diversity and inclusivity. Schools must also be academically inclusive where teachers understand individual student needs and learning styles.

An anti-bias approach to progressive discipline aligns and builds on the following Ministry of Education initiatives:
• Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy
• Safe Schools Strategy
• Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students with Special Education Needs Through Progressive Discipline Kindergarten to Grade 12
• English Language Learners: ESL and ELD Programs and Services, 2007
• Comprehensive Action Plan for Accepting Schools
• Ontario First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007
• Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario
Restorative Practice
Restorative practice responds to student behaviour by focusing on repairing harm experienced by others and rebuilding relationships. This practice is used as part of progressive discipline to build, strengthen and help restore healthy relationships (Adapted from Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students with Special Education Needs through Progressive Discipline, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2010).

Student Discipline Committee
The Student Discipline Committee is comprised of members of the Board of Trustees. It is authorized in accordance with the Education Act to exercise the powers and duties of the Board with regard to student suspension appeals and expulsion hearings.

Student and Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:
• contributing to a caring and safe school climate in accordance with all Board priorities, policies and procedures and the school code of conduct by:
  o supporting and maintaining a caring and safe school climate
  o acting with reasonable care towards themselves and others
  o developing healthy attitudes, behaviours and relationships consistent with Board priorities, policies, procedures and the school code of conduct
  o actively and positively participating in school and school-related activities, such as, but not limited to, anti-bullying, character development, and equity and inclusivity initiatives
• understanding that they are accountable for inappropriate behaviour that has a negative impact on the school climate, whether occurring on or off school property and/or during a school-related activity or event

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Community Partners are responsible for:
• supporting school staff and students in promoting a caring and safe school climate, in accordance with Board priorities, policies and procedures and the school code of conduct
• modeling and supporting the development of healthy attitudes, behaviours and relationships in support of positive behavioural expectations
• understanding that students are accountable for inappropriate student behaviour that has a negative impact on the school climate, whether occurring on or off school property and/or during a school-related activity or event
• working with Board and school staff to coordinate supports for students, where appropriate
Suspensions
From Board Procedure #668.1, Student Suspensions

This procedure outlines how student suspensions are administered.

A student who is suspended from a school is not permitted to be on Board property or participate in school-related activities or events including, but not limited to, all school buildings, grounds, transportation, field trips, except for the purposes of attending the Alternative Classroom and Counselling for Expelled and Suspended Students (ACCESS). A suspension shall be for no less than one school day and no more than 20 school days.

Where a student has committed one or more of the infractions outlined below where the infraction has a negative impact on the school climate, whether on or off school property, or during a school-related activity or event, the principal shall consider suspension as part of a progressive discipline approach.

These infractions, as outlined in the Education Act and Board procedure include:
1. uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person
2. possessing alcohol or illegal drugs
3. being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
4. swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority
5. committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school or Board property or to property located on school/Board premises
6. bullying or cyberbullying
7. habitual neglect of duty (with Superintendent of Schools approval only)
8. opposition to authority
9. any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the moral tone of the school
10. any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the physical or mental well-being of members of the school community, and/or
11. any act considered by the principal to be contrary to the Board or school code of conduct

Expulsions
From Board Procedure #668.2, Student Expulsions

This procedure outlines how student expulsions are administered in the Board.

A student who is expelled is removed from all schools in the Board and given the opportunity to continue their education through the Alternative Classroom and Counseling for Expelled and Suspended Students (ACCESS).

Where a student has committed one or more of the infractions outlined below where the infraction has a negative impact on the school climate, whether on or off school property, or during a school-related activity or event, the principal will suspend the student and shall consider expulsion.
These infractions, as outlined in the Education Act, include:

1. possessing a weapon or replica weapon, including possessing a firearm
2. using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person
3. committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner
4. committing sexual assault
5. trafficking in weapons or illegal drugs
6. committing robbery
7. giving alcohol to a minor
8. bullying or cyberbullying, if:
   (i) the pupil has previously been suspended for engaging in bullying and/or cyberbullying, and
   (ii) the pupil’s continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person
9. any infraction outlined in Board Procedure #668.1 Student Suspension that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor
10. the pupil’s pattern of behaviour is so refractory that the pupil’s presence is injurious to the effective learning and/or working environment of others, and/or
11. the pupil has demonstrated through a pattern of behaviour, such as, but not limited to neglect of duty, truancy or opposition to authority that he/she has not prospered by the instruction available to him/her and that he/she is persistently resistant to making the changes in behaviour which would enable him/her to prosper

CHILDREN’S AID SOCIETY (CAS)

All school board staff have a legal responsibility to notify the CAS if there are concerns for the well-being of students under the age of 16 years. Any suspicions of physical or sexual abuse, neglect or lack of care by a parent/guardian must be reported immediately to the CAS. Parents/guardians will not be consulted in these situations.

ELEMENTARY SAFE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROGRAM

The safety of our students is a priority. Our safe arrivals programs and safe departures protocols are in place so that we can account for the whereabouts of absent students.

Parents/guardians, inform your child’s school if your child is going to be absent or late to school or an after-school event that he or she has planned to attend. Where possible, notify the school in advance. Call the school and leave a message on the answering machine or with the office.
If you have not informed the school of your child’s absence in advance, the school will take the following steps, in this order, to ensure your child is safe:

1. We will call your home.
2. If we do not reach you at home, we will call your work and/or cell phone.
3. If we cannot reach you at work, we will call your emergency contact number.
4. If we cannot get information from your emergency contact about your child’s location, we will speak to a sibling if one is in the school.
5. If we are still unable to get information, we may check with a friend of your child.
6. If we are still unable to get information, we will consider your child missing and we will contact York Regional Police.

For more information, see Board Policy and Procedure #665.0, Safe Arrivals and Departures – Elementary Students.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency information is extremely important for your child’s safety. Let the office know as soon as possible if any of the following information changes:

- work or home numbers
- emergency contacts and telephone numbers
- changes in custody agreements
- medical alert or changes in health condition (e.g. allergies, medications)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Board has a number of policies and procedures in place to address emergency situations when normal school operations cannot continue or where student and staff member safety may be at risk. This could include a fire, flood or acts of violence. All schools have individual plans and conduct drills throughout the year.

There will be six fire, two lockdown and one hold and secure drill annually so students become familiar with emergency preparedness procedures. These drills are important so that in the case of an actual emergency, students and staff members know what to do to be safe.

In a hold and secure situation, York Regional Police will ask that outside doors of a school be locked. Normal school operations will continue inside the building, but no one may enter or leave the building until police indicate it is safe to do so. This will occur regardless of weather.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please be considerate and careful when using the school parking lot. Do not park in the fire zone or bus loops for any reason. Please work with us to keep our students safe.
Five Parenting and Family Literacy Centres offer families with children up to 6 years of age a place to sing, read and learn together. These drop-in programs are free of charge and require no registration. The Parenting and Family Literacy Centres operate four hours per day at the following York Region District School Board schools:

- Armadale P.S. 11 Coppard Ave., Markham (905) 472-4050 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- Jersey P.S. 176 Glenwoods Ave., Keswick (905) 476-7777 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- Markham Gateway P.S. 30 Fonda Rd., Markham (905) 472-3303 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- Walter Scott P.S. 500 Major Mackenzie Dr. E., Richmond Hill (905) 884-2693 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- Woodbridge P.S. 60 Burwick Ave., Woodbridge (905) 851-0102 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Come and see how household objects like sponges, shower curtain rings and cardboard boxes can help your child develop important literacy and numeracy skills.

Parenting and Family Literacy Centres are funded by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

For further information on the Parenting and Family Literacy Centres please visit our Board website www.yrdsb.ca

POLICE OFFICERS IN SCHOOLS

Schools have School Resource Officers assigned by York Regional Police. These officers frequently visit schools. They help administrators, staff members, students, parents/guardians and members of the community in matters relating to safety, security and well-being. Elementary schools partner with the York Regional Police to deliver a “VIP” program, in which police officers visit classrooms.

SEARCH OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

At the start of each school term or semester, school administrators will advise all members of the school community that:

- The school administrator has the right to search school property, such as lockers and desks, without notice to, or permission from, any person.
- Police may from time-to-time be invited onto school premises to conduct a search. These searches may be conducted without notice to, or permission from, any member of the school community other than the school principal.

SURVEILLANCE

Please be aware that many of our schools have surveillance cameras positioned in areas of the school to enhance security both inside and outside the building.
Know more. Do more.

Download the York Region District School Board App TODAY!

Visit the App Store/Google Play or scan the code to download the app for free!
INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees is the governing body of the York Region District School Board. The trustees are required to establish a Multi-Year Plan to guide system direction for a three-to four-year period. The Multi-Year plan is a reflection of priorities identified by our educational communities.

MULTI-YEAR PLAN GOALS

Student Achievement and Well-Being

Continuously increase student achievement and well-being through a culture of caring and learning, which emphasizes:

- Positive relationships among students, staff, parents/guardians, and community members.
- Inviting and innovative physical environments in schools and workplaces.
- Safe and supportive schools and workplaces.
- Engagement of students, staff, parents/guardians, and community members in public education.
- Student and staff mental and physical well-being.

Delivery of Effective and Sustainable Education Programs

Deliver effective, innovative and sustainable educational programs to each student by:

- Implementing modern learning approaches which engage students and prepare them to succeed in a globally connected world.
- Providing access to differentiated and relevant learning opportunities, resources and programs.
- Engaging students as partners in their learning.
- Embracing environmental awareness.

Stewardship of Board Resources

Align human and financial resources with Board priorities by:

- Demonstrating professionalism and accountability for high standards of practice in all Board operations.
- Enhancing confidence in public education.
- Ensuring new initiatives are focused and attainable.
- Modelling continuous environmental sustainability.
CONTACT INFORMATION

The Education Centre - Aurora
60 Wellington Street West, Aurora ON L4G 3H2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calling From</th>
<th>Switchboard</th>
<th>Automated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aurora &amp; King</td>
<td>905-727-3141</td>
<td>905-727-0022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newmarket &amp; East Gwillimbury</td>
<td>905-895-7216</td>
<td>905-895-7227</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgina</td>
<td>905-722-3201</td>
<td>905-722-6255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Whitchurch-Stouffville</td>
<td>416-969-8131</td>
<td>416-969-7170</td>
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<tr>
<th>Service Department Contacts</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board and Trustee Services</td>
<td>ext. 2327, 2262, 2049 or 2217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Use of Schools (Permits)</td>
<td>ext. 2150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Education Services</td>
<td>ext. 2307 or 905-884-3434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Communications</td>
<td>ext. 2203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director’s Services</td>
<td>ext. 2278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive School and Community Services</td>
<td>ext. 2409 or 905-884-3434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Access and Privacy</td>
<td>ext. 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services (Special Education)</td>
<td>ext. 3235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Transportation Services</td>
<td>905-713-2535 or ext. 4551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Education Centre – Central (Aurora, King, Richmond Hill)</td>
<td>905-884-4477 or 416-324-2902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Education Centre – East (Markham)</td>
<td>905-940-7800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Education Centre – North (East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Newmarket, Whitchurch-Stouffville)</td>
<td>905-895-5155</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Education Centre – West (Markham and Vaughan)</td>
<td>905-764-6830</td>
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