

TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023 - 2024

For more information, contact us:

Email: studytoronto@tdsb.on.ca

Phone: 416-395-8120

Mail:

International Students and Admissions Office
Toronto District School Board
5050 Yonge Street, 1st floor
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M2N 5N8



Introduction to Toronto

Toronto, the capital of the Province of Ontario and the largest city in Canada, is not only a vibrant, diverse and exciting place to live and learn, but also Canada's leading centre for education, high technologies, life and medical sciences, finance and entertainment. As the home to the country's top universities and colleges, Toronto is attracting students from across Canada and around the world.

- Friendly and diverse communities
- One of the most liveable cities in the world
- Great opportunities to attend Canada's best universities, and colleges
- Canada's leading centre for the arts and museums
- Canada's financial centre
- Convenient public transit system

Welcome Video from the International Students Office website: <https://youtu.be/PtLUiLfvJZo>

About the Toronto District School Board

As the largest and most diverse public school district in Canada, the TDSB prides itself on being a leader of public education in the Province of Ontario and across Canada. Our students are among the highest performing in the world.

- 110 secondary schools
- 473 elementary schools
- 39,000 teaching and support staff
- 245,000 students
- 160,000 students in continuing education programs
- 2000+ international students from all over the world

Important Dates (September 2023 - June 2024)

July 24-28, 2023: New Secondary Students Reporting

July 31 - August 25, 2023: Orientation and Summer School Program (Secondary)

August 21-25, 2023: Elementary Students Reporting

August 28, 2023: Online Orientation (Secondary)

August 29, 2023: Online Orientation (Elementary)

September 5, 2023: First Day of School

September 22, 2023: Latest date to Report for New Secondary Students

October 9, 2023: Thanksgiving Day, no school

October 31, 2023: Deadline to Renew for February Semester

December 25, 2023 to January 5, 2024: Winter Break, no school

February 2, 2024: First Day of Semester 2

February 19, 2024: Family Day, no school

March 11 to 15, 2024: March Break, no school

March 29, 2024: Good Friday, no school

April 1, 2024: Easter Monday, no school

May 20, 2024: Victoria Day, no school

June 26, 2024: Last Day of School

Travel and Holidays

While students are encouraged to explore and experience Canadian culture through travel during their stay in Toronto, it is expected that travel will not interfere with your academic studies and should be limited to designated school holidays.

International Office Contact Information

Staff				
	Name	Phone	Mobile	Email
Office Contact Information (5050 Yonge)		416-395-8120		StudyToronto@tdsb.on.ca
Interim Senior Manager	Fred Liu	416 395-8108		Fred.Liu@tdsb.on.ca
Administrative Assistant	Brian Chan	416-395-8119		Brian.Chan@tdsb.on.ca
Admissions Assistant	Kate MacKenzie	416-395-8118		Kate.MacKenzie@tdsb.on.ca
Admissions Assistant	Aatika Okadia	416-395-9656		Aatika.Okadia@tdsb.on.ca
Admissions Assistant	Philip Qian	416-395-8104		Philip.Qian@tdsb.on.ca
Guidance Counsellor for International Students	May Chang		416-802-8947	May.Chang@tdsb.on.ca
Guidance Counsellor for International Students	Janice Field		437-655-4061	Janice.Field@tdsb.on.ca
Guidance Counsellor for International Students	Christine Gillespie		416-805-2257	Christine.Gillespie@tdsb.on.ca
Guidance Counsellor for International Students	Karen Pak		416-802-9365	Karen.Pak@tdsb.on.ca
Guidance Counsellor for International Students	Rory Stretch		416-805-1158	Rory.Stretch@tdsb.on.ca

List of Schools that Accept Secondary Fee-Paying International Students

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/International-Programs/International-Students/School-Placements>

Find your Secondary Guidance Counsellor for International Students

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/International-Programs/International-Students/Contact-Us>

Your guidance counsellor will support, listen, advise and help with problem solving and planning for course selection and post-secondary applications.

Find Your Elementary School

Placements at TDSB Elementary schools are based on the address of the custodian/parents. To locate your local area school(s), please refer to the TDSB website: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Find-Your/School> for school information.

International Students Office Reporting Process

For the 2023-24 school year, all students will be learning in-person. The option for virtual learning from home country will NOT be available for new incoming students.

ALL new students MUST complete reporting with the TDSB International Students' Office before registration at school. Incomplete reporting may delay registration at school and impact a student's course selection process.

Please review details on our website here: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/International-Programs/International-Students/Arrival-Reporting>

School Registration Process

After Reporting is completed with the International Students Office, the legal custodian or parent(s) of the student should email or call their [assigned school](#) and make arrangements for registration and course selection.

The follow documents are required to register at your designated school:

- Your valid study permit
- Your valid passport
- Your most recent school documents (transcripts) from your home country
- Immunization record
- Newcomer Profile
- Proof of address (2 or 3 pieces, such as hydro bill or bank statement, lease agreement etc.) for **elementary students only**
- Legal Custodian documents (both pages)
- Phone #s and e-mail of your custodian and homestay parents
- Math and English Assessment Results for **secondary students only**

Studying in Canada

You will likely find some differences between the educational/value system in your own country and that in Canada. It is essential for you to understand the appropriate and accepted roles for students in the Canadian educational system.

In Canada:

- Students are encouraged to ask questions for clarification, to challenge information, or to extend thinking. The philosophy of education in Canada includes the idea that students should be involved in an interactive learning process; that is, they should not sit passively and accept or memorize what the teacher says.
- Teacher-student relationships tend to be relatively informal compared to those in many Asian countries. For example, teachers may begin the class with a joke or with friendly conversation.
- Group work is an important part of school learning; it stresses cooperation, tolerance, and compromise. It is also evaluated as part of your mark.
- Discussion is often used as a means of teaching. Students are expected to be able to discuss in order to develop their ideas and opinions and to present them in class.
- Students learn not just information, but how to arrive at conclusions, to solve problems, and to analyze. As part of this process, students are often asked how they got an answer, rather than just what the answer is.
- Plagiarism (submitting the work of another person as your own, or copying the work or words of another person and presenting it as your own) is a serious offence. A student can receive a “0” or fail a course or assignment for plagiarising someone else’s work.

Tips for Studying in Canada

- **Don’t be afraid to ask questions** if you don’t understand. Teachers expect to be questioned. Make sure you understand what the teacher wants you to do in an assignment. If you are quiet, the teacher will think that you understand. Teachers are usually available before or after school for questions and extra help.
- **Be on time for class.** If you are late you will be marked as late on the attendance sheet. If you cannot attend a class or be on time, notify the school in advance and explain the reason. If you miss a class, see the teacher the next day to find out what you missed.
- You will probably find the classes less structured in Canada. You will also have to **organize your own time** after school for study. Plan your time carefully, balancing school work, English practice, and relaxation.
- **Hand in all assignments on the day they are due.** If you are not able to finish your assignment on time, talk to your teacher before it is due. If you miss any assignment/quiz/test/exam, see the teacher and ask if there is any way to make it up.
- **Almost everything you do that is assigned by the teacher counts in your final mark.** That means that class tests, presentations, discussion assignments, working in groups are worth certain marks. Overall, class work is worth about 70% of your final mark while the formal examination itself is worth between 20% and 30%. A student who works hard all semester will likely pass the course, but a student who doesn’t work hard and misses many classes will likely fail.

Staff in TDSB Schools

All TDSB school staff are eager to help international students adjust to the new learning environment. These staff include:

Principal: The principal is in charge of programs at the school and works closely with staff, students and parents.

Vice-Principal: The Vice-Principal assists the principal in running the school and looks after discipline.

Teachers: Students have different teachers for different subjects. You can call the teacher Mr. Ms. or Mrs. as appropriate and the person's surname (e.g. Mr. Smith), rather than "teacher".

ESL Teachers: They help students learn English and strategies for success in their other classes.

There may be school specialists who work with teachers and help students learn. These people include:

- **Librarians:** help students access resources on the Internet and learn about books, magazines, etc.
- **Guidance Counsellors:** assist in planning students' timetables and applying to university. They can tell you about other programs in the schools and in the community. In some of our schools, there are guidance counsellors designated for international students and they will be the key contact sf at your school.
- **Office Staff:** assist in registering students, do the school's office work and answer phone calls.
- **Teaching Assistants:** help teachers in the classroom.
- **Resource Teachers:** help students who require additional assistance.
- **Caretakers:** keep schools clean and make sure the building is operating safely and properly.

Attendance Expectations

Your first obligation in Canada is to attend school every day and go to all your classes. You can have fun, too, but your main job is to do well in your studies.

If you are absent, your custodian should call the school to let them know why (illness, appointment, etc).

If you are absent without authorization or a meaningful explanation, there can be serious consequences (failing courses, later graduation, removed from your school, etc).

Daily Schedule for 2023-2024

For the 2023-24 school year, we will be continuing the semester model in secondary schools where four classes are taught daily, with a one hour lunch period. Please note that some TDSB secondary schools are usually non-semestered but will follow our board's directive to use a semester model.

	Day 1 (assigned to odd calendar days) e.g. September 7	Day 2 (assigned to even calendar days) e.g. September 8
9:00 - 10:20 a.m.	Class A*	Class A*
10:25 - 11:40 a.m.	Class B	Class B
11:40 - 12:40 p.m.	LUNCH	LUNCH
12:40 - 1:55 p.m.	Class C	Class D
2:00 - 3:15 p.m.	Class D	Class C

** includes opening exercises*

SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM - Attendance

- 24 hour voicemail available at all schools
- Elementary: verify with a phone call on the morning of, or with a note prior to the absence.
- Secondary Absences: verify with a note or phone call prior to absence and upon the student's return.
- Absence = Phone Call Home
- 15 consecutive absences = possible demission from school
- Planned absence = Note to school and teacher ahead of time
- Students leaving school during the day MUST sign out in the main office.
- Visitors must go to school main office to "Sign in" or "Sign out".

Severe Weather (School Bus or School Cancellation)

Please visit: www.tdsb.on.ca for announcements made usually by 6am in the morning.

Student Expectations & Responsibilities

Student expectations and responsibilities are clearly indicated in the TDSB Code of Conduct which applies to all students. The document is also available at www.tdsb.on.ca.

It is expected that students will:

- Be at school and be on time
- Be prepared to learn
- Complete class work, homework, and assignments in a timely fashion
- Follow all school rules
- Take responsibilities for their actions
- Ask questions

Roles and Responsibilities of Custodians

A responsible and reliable custodian is very important for international students, who are **under the age of 18** and not accompanied by their parent, to have a safe and successful learning experience while they are studying at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB).

If the international student applicant will be in the care of a custodian, the student's parent should read the following roles and responsibilities of a custodian carefully in order to arrange for the best care for their child.

The custodian, on behalf of the parents, is responsible for making the necessary arrangements for the care and support for the student while s/he is studying in Canada. The custodian shall:

- Be the official contact for the Toronto International Student Programs (TISP) and the TDSB school with regards to all matters involving the international student;
- Maintain up-to-date custodian contact information with the school and the International Students and Admissions Office;
- Make sure that the student renews with the International Students and Admissions Office and makes the tuition fee payment on time;
- Bring the student to school with required documentation for school registration and to complete /sign all appropriate school documents;
- Assist the student with settlement needs such as opening a bank account, buying a cell phone, how to use public transit and other similar supports;
- Provide consent as needed by the school for academic programs and activities after communicating with parents and receiving their consent;
- Attend parent-teacher interviews and communicate with parents afterward;
- Inform the school and the International Students and Admissions Office immediately if any change is made to the student's homestay or custodianship arrangement;
- If temporarily away from the City of Toronto, for example travelling, arrange for an emergency contact person and provide the emergency contact information to the school and the International Education Office;
- Monitor the student's attendance record, report student absences to the school following school procedures, and communicate student's absences to parents in a timely manner;
- Send student's mid-term and final reports to parents and communicate among the school, the International Students and Admissions Office and parents/students regarding any related concerns and/or follow-up;
- Assist the student with solving any behavioral, social, emotional and medical concerns and communicate with the school, student, parents and the International Students and Admissions Office;
- Assist the student with solving homestay issues and communicate with parents, schools and the International Education Office; and
- Respond in a timely fashion to requests/phone calls from the school and the Admissions Office in order to best ensure the student's safety.

Living Expectations

All students are expected to live with a family or with their custodians, preferably with an English-speaking family who can help you with your English.

It should be noted that the majority of Canadian high school students live with their families until they have completed high school and university. Living with a family provides students with the necessary support and stability they will need to succeed in school and a foreign environment.

If you change families and your address, you must inform our office and your school-based guidance counsellor right away.

Homestay Organisations

Homestay options are also available. Families need to contact the homestay organisation directly. More information can be found at: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/International-Programs/International-Students/Homestay>.

Graduation Requirements for Secondary Students

In order to obtain the **Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)**, students must fulfill the requirements from the Ministry of Education: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/high-school-graduation-requirements>

Prior Learning Equivalents

Students who have successfully completed one or more years of high school in their home countries may be granted equivalency credits. The amount of credits granted is on a case-by-case basis. Consideration will be given to the students' academic performance with the TDSB and high school credits earned outside of Ontario.

Academic Expectations

When you decide to come to Toronto to Study, you and your parents must sign an Agreement (as it was stated in the application form) in which you agree to obey certain school rules. Please make sure you read and understand the provisions in that agreement.

These are the rules that you are expected to follow:

- You must start the semester with four courses or a full timetable. **Please note:** a minimum of 3 courses per semester is required to maintain full-time status at the school. If you are having a lot of difficulty, please contact your guidance counsellor at school to discuss (e.g. drop one course). Timetable change requests are reviewed and subject to approval by your guidance counsellor and/or custodian/parent. You cannot drop a course on your own.
- You must be working hard to maintain a good average.
- You may change a course with the approval of your guidance counsellor.
- You must take the proper sequence of courses (pre-requisites) like other Canadian students

English Language Learners

An important goal of International students is to improve their English while attending school in Canada. All TDSB schools designated for international students offer ESL courses and special second language support classes for different levels of learners. These courses help students become proficient in English.

When students first arrive in Toronto, they are assessed for their language abilities and are placed in certain English language classes based on the results of the assessment. Students with very strong foundations in English may be placed in regular English classes. Students who need to develop one or more of the skills of reading, writing, speaking or listening are placed in the most suitable level of English as a Second Language (ESL) class. Here is a list of our ESL levels in ASCENDING order. These courses form a progression from the beginning level to regular English:

ESLB: High Beginner (many international students who have studied some English in their home country are placed in this level when they first come to Toronto)

ESLC: Low Intermediate

ESLD: High Intermediate

ESLE: Advanced

English Grade 10 or 11: After ESL courses are completed

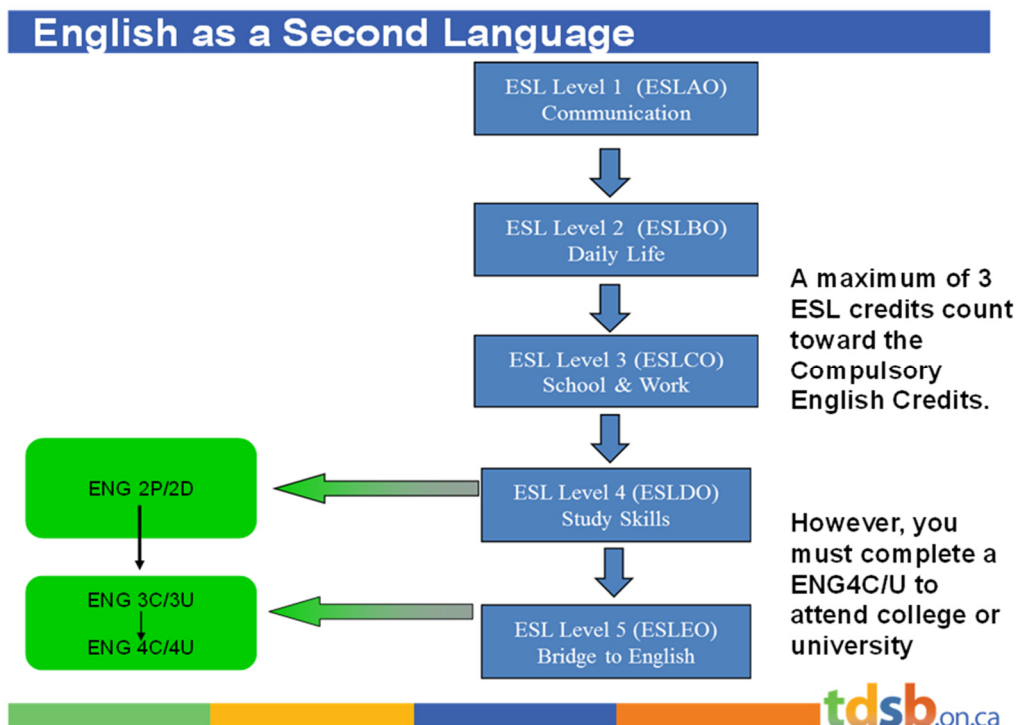
Please note:

- ESLDO is considered a crucial course in students' language development and must be taken. It cannot be skipped.
- Each ESL course is worth one credit and is included in a student's overall average.
- ESL courses are not connected to grade level. Students progress through the levels at different rates depending on their motivation, work ethic and effort.

To graduate from high school in Ontario, a student must pass a Grade 12 compulsory English course.

Students who study in Canada for less than 4 years and want to attend university here must take an English proficiency test in addition to passing Grade 12 English. Such English language tests include TOEFL, CAEL, IELTS, Duolingo and CanTest.

For more general information about English Language Proficiency Tests, please refer to: [English Language Proficiency Tests](#) within this document.



International students have found these useful ways to meet English speaking people and practice their English:

- Practice English as part of the normal routine
 - Talk with your homestay family during dinner and relaxation time
 - Join family events and outings
 - Play with children
 - Watching English TV or video programs
 - Reading English newspaper or websites
 - Listening to English Radio programs
- Join school clubs (e.g. choir, drama, band) and/or sports teams
- Go on school trips
- Get involved in community activities outside school at local community centres, churches or summer camps
- Consider getting involved in activities in a variety of ways
 - act as a volunteer
 - take part in sports
 - take courses in art, crafts, music, etc.

Instructions on Accessing TDSB Student Email

1. Visit <http://aw.tdsb.on.ca>.
2. You will be prompted to enter your student number and password. This is your TDSB student number and password.

My TDSB Number: _____

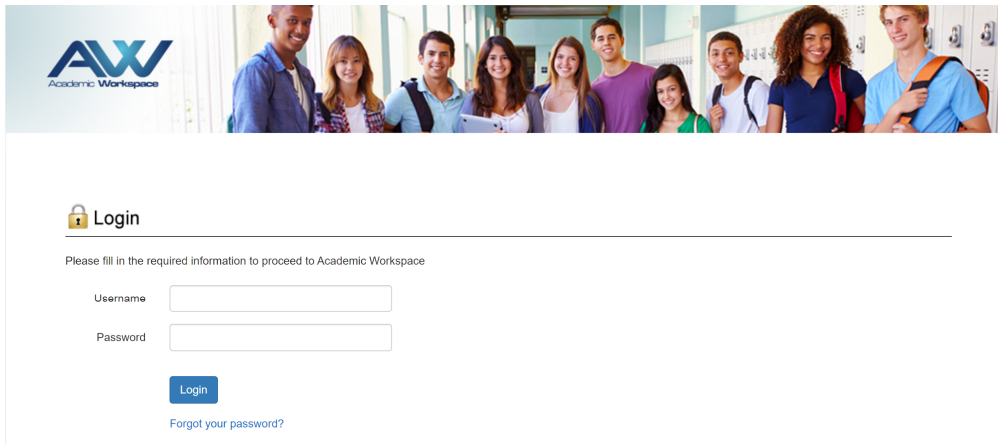
My TDSB network Password: _____

3. When you log on for the first time you should use your shared secret password. Your shared secret password is the last 4 digits of your student number, the day you were born (ie. 06 for June), the month you were born (ie. 07 - for July) followed immediately by the ending @Tdsb (the “T” is a capital letter)

Format: ####DDMM@Tdsb


For example: Student Number is 333 550 **100** Birthday is March 17, 2002. Shared secret password is: 01001703@Tdsb

4. If you do not remember your password, please use the ‘Forgot your password?’ link below the Login button.



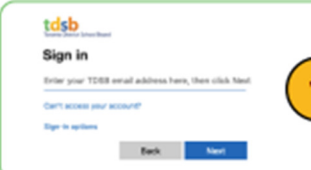





1. You can also use Password Manager to reset a password - first step - register:

2. Second step - now you can reset a password:



Self Service Password Reset

Resetting your password


	<div style="background-color: #ccc; border-radius: 10px; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;">1</div> <p>Enter email address and click Next.</p>
	<div style="background-color: #ccc; border-radius: 10px; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;">2</div> <p>Click Forgot my password.</p>
	<div style="background-color: #ccc; border-radius: 10px; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;">3</div> <p>Enter the characters in the picture and click Next.</p>
	<div style="background-color: #ccc; border-radius: 10px; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;">4</div> <p>Answer the security questions and click Next.</p>
	<div style="background-color: #ccc; border-radius: 10px; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;">5</div> <p>Enter a new password and Finish.</p>
	<div style="background-color: #ccc; border-radius: 10px; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;">6</div> <p>Select Click Here.</p>

You have successfully reset your password.

Do you need to update your security questions or add an additional method?
 Visit <https://aka.ms/setupsecurityinfo>

IT Services

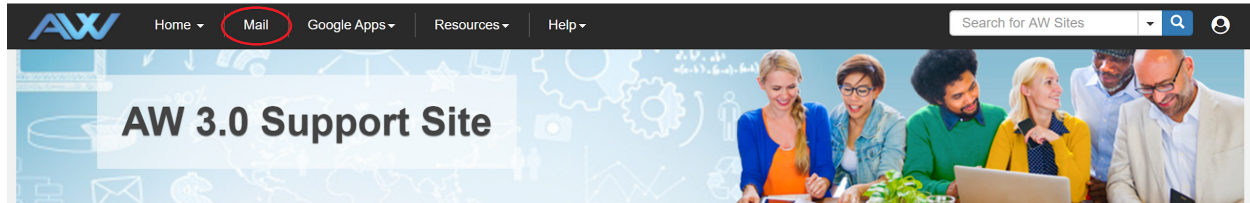
Connect • Discover • Learn • Create



Contact Us

416-396-9100 • tdsb.on.ca • Student Virtual Learning IT Support

3. Once you have logged in, click on the **'Mail'** link at the top of the page to access your student email. You will be taken to the Gmail interface (TDSB Email Accounts are Gmail accounts).



4. If this is the first time you are logging in to your student email, you will be prompted to confirm your email address. Please make a note of this email as this is your student email address as long as you are a TDSB student.

Report Cards

High school students will receive two reports each semester:

- a mid-term report card approximately half way through the semester
- a final report card at the end of the semester

Consequences of Absences, Failures and Inappropriate Behaviour

Students will be given a warning for inappropriate behaviour, frequent absences from school, or for failing a course. Guidance counsellors, vice-principals and principals will also be involved with notifying your parents/custodians.

You may be asked to leave the program if you do not show signs of improvement. No refunds will be made for students removed from the program.

Course Selection and Planning Guide

For more detailed information, please refer to the TDSB Choices webpage for our [Course Selection and Planning Guide](#).

For how to read course codes, see [here](#). As a sample, consider the following course code MPM2D1:

- The first 3 letters represent the subject area and course name.
- The next digit represents the grade (1 is grade 9, 2 is grade 10, 3 is grade 11, 4 is grade 12)
- The next letter represents the level (D or W means academic, P means applied, U means university level, C means college level, M means mixed university/college level).
- MPM2D means mathematics, grade 10, academic level.

Information about Courses at Night School and Summer School:

<https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/conedsecondarycreditprogram/>

Note: The fee for night school and summer school courses is \$1500 per credit, if you have already paid for and enrolled in 8 courses during the school year. The majority of night school and summer school credits are for students in grades 11 or 12. There are a few courses available for students in grade 9 or 10.

Information about International Language Courses:

- High School: <https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/conedsecondarycreditprogram/Saturday-International-Languages>
- Elementary School: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/Beyond-the-Classroom/International-Languages-Elementary-and-African-Heritage>

Graduation Requirements for Ontario High Schools:

- Visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/high-school-graduation-requirements>
- TDSB information on graduation requirements: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/High-School/GradesExamsDiplomas/Getting-your-Diploma>

Admission Requirements for Universities in Ontario:

Universities require 6 grade 12 courses, one of which must be ENG4U (grade 12 English). If you have studied in an English language school for less than 4 years, then you will need to successfully complete an English Proficiency test.

Visit <https://www.ouac.on.ca/> and <https://www.ontariouniversitiesinfo.ca/> for admission requirements for different programs at universities.

Admission Requirements for Colleges in Ontario:

Visit <https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en> for details.

English Language Proficiency Tests

Different tests are available. Check the college/university websites for the minimum scores required for admission.

- CAEL: <https://www.cael.ca/>
- Cambridge: <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/>
- Duolingo: <https://www.duolingo.com/>
- IELTS: <https://www.ieltscanada.ca/>
- TOEFL: <https://www.ets.org/toefl/>

Toronto District School Board School Transfer Requests

In order to learn at an optimal level, students are encouraged to remain at the same school within the TDSB under normal circumstances. Please review the [School Transfer Policy](#) posted on the International Students and Admissions Office (ISAO) website.

On exceptional occasions and approved by the ISAO, students can request to transfer to a different school at the end of the school year or at time of renewal.

Students must email or call their Guidance Counsellor for International Students (GCIS) at their current school and provide valid reasons for the request.

The GCIS will review the request, inform the International Office and contact the guidance department of the requested school for availability for spaces and course offerings. If there is space, and a valid reason for the transfer, the student and custodian will be notified, and the transfer will proceed.

Medical Insurance

- General Information: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/International-Programs/International-Students/Medical-Insurance>
- Medical Assistance Phone number: **1-866-883-9787**
- Insurance company website: <https://www.studyinsured.com/tdsb>
- Find a doctor near you: <https://www.studyinsured.com/tdsb/en/health-services>

Renewal Forms and Tuition Payment

Visit the website below for deadlines to renew, and instructions on payment of tuition:
<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/International-Programs/International-Students/Renewal>

Elementary Renewal Form and Secondary Renewal Form are available online in our Forms and Resources webpage: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/International-Programs/International-Students/Forms-and-Resources>

How to Extend Your Study Permit

Visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/extend-study-permit.html>.

Other Contacts and Resources

Emergency Services: Ambulance, Fire, Police	911
Toronto Public Library	www.TorontoPublicLibrary.ca or (416) 393-7131
Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)	www.TTC.ca or (416) 393-3030
Toronto Public Health	www.Toronto.ca/Health or 416-338-7600
Children's Aid Society of Toronto	www.TorontoCAS.ca or 416-924-4646
Toronto Youth Services	https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/children-parenting/youth/find-youth-services/
Kids Help Phone	www.KidsHelpPhone.ca or 1-800-668-6868
Ontario Legal Aid	http://www.legalaid.on.ca/ or 1-800-668-8258
Volunteer Opportunities	https://www.volunteertoronto.ca/ or 416-961-6888