



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Family Reception Centre Parent Guide

Public Education: *Doing it W.E.L.L.*



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Note: For the purpose of this guide, the term “parent” refers to the parent and/or guardian; the person who has lawful custody of the child.



Welcome!

Welcome to the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB). Our mission is “Educating for Success – Inspiring Learning and Building Citizenship”. We are the largest public school board in Eastern Ontario. Our schools are staffed by caring administrators, teachers and support staff who work diligently to ensure your children meet their full potential.

The OCDSB offers programming in English, including Core French, Early French Immersion (EFI), and Middle French Immersion (MFI). English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Literacy Development (ELD) programs are also available.

This guide provides information to newcomer and returning families about programs and services available to students in our schools. A good understanding of what the OCDSB can offer your child, who may also be learning English, will make the transition to school as smooth as possible.

This guide is a resource for your use. It will direct you to other agencies who will also help you get settled in your new community. There is information regarding programs offered by the OCDSB, settlement, school supports and secondary school requirements. At the end of the booklet, you will also find a glossary of terms.



The Family Reception Centre (FRC)

The Family Reception Centre (FRC) welcomes families new to Canada or to the OCDSB, and families returning to the District. The FRC will help you find your way through the school system.

The FRC can assist in:

- helping you become familiar with Ottawa area agencies that will help make your move easier;
- evaluating new students for placement within our school system;
- evaluating returning students for placement within our school system; and,
- providing ongoing support to ensure student success.

The FRC's services may be accessed by:

- new students from junior kindergarten to grade 12 whose first or primary language is not English;
- new students who have not previously attended school in English;
- junior and senior kindergarten students who have been in Canada less than one year (other junior and senior kindergarten students register directly at school);

- some international students; and,
- some Canadian citizens or permanent residents who have been studying abroad for more than one year.

How to make an appointment with the FRC:

Once students have arrived in Canada, their parent(s) should call as soon as possible to book an appointment for an assessment at 613-239-2416. At least one parent must be present with the student(s) at the time of the appointment.

The following documents are required for the assessment appointment:

- immigration documents;
- immunization records;
- school records; and,
- proof of address in Ottawa.

All students will be accessed in the following areas:

- listening and speaking;
- reading;
- writing; and,
- math.

The assessments take up to two hours for elementary students and from three to five hours for secondary students.

During the assessment, the assessor will interview the parents and the student to gather information about the student's:

- academic strengths and needs;
- educational history;
- exceptionalities — for example, does the child have a learning disability;
- interests and goals;
- issues that could affect schooling; and,
- level of English language proficiency.

A multicultural liaison officer (MLO) will meet with the family to provide community information and answer questions. The MLO will make follow-up contact with the family at the student's school. The MLO will assist you and your family while you settle into your new community. To learn more about MLOs turn to page 27.

At the assessment appointment, parents will complete the school registration form (elementary students) and the immunization assessment form.

After the assessment, the assessor will complete a written report containing programming recommendations for your child.

For elementary students, parents will either:

- take the report to the school directly to finalize registration; or,
- have the assessor mail the report to the school to finalize registration.

For secondary students:

- the report is sent directly to the secondary school; and,
- the school will call parent(s) to arrange a registration appointment.



Understanding English Language Learners

Who are English language learners?

English language learners (ELLs) are students in provincially funded English language schools whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English that is significantly different from the variety used for instruction in Ontario's schools. They may require focused educational supports to assist them in attaining proficiency in English.

What support programs are available for ELLs?

For their first few years, many ELLs take one of two distinct language-support programs:

- English as a Second Language (ESL) programs: for students whose first language is other than English or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools. Students in these programs have had educational opportunities to develop age-appropriate first-language literacy skills.
- English Literacy Development (ELD) programs: for students whose first language is other than English or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools. Students in these programs are most often from countries in which their access to education has been limited, and they have had limited opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in any

language. Schooling in their countries of origin has been inconsistent, disrupted, or even completely unavailable through the years that these children would otherwise have been in school. As a result, they arrive in Ontario schools with significant gaps in their education.

How long does it take ELLs to learn English?

Most ELLs begin to understand day-to-day language skills within a year or two. For example, they can follow classroom directions and maintain simple conversations about familiar topics and routines. However, it takes much longer — from five to seven years — for most ELLs to become equal with their English-speaking classmates in academic English or using English as a language for learning.

Why does it take so long for ELLs to catch up to their peers in academic language?

Academic language is usually used in an educational setting. Conversational language is used in everyday settings. It's the difference between talking face-to-face with a friend about what you're eating for lunch and studying Canada's Food Guide in class. Conversational words are short and simple (for example, old, food, cars, trucks). Academic words are longer and more complicated (for example, ancient, nutrition, fatigued, vehicles).

What can newcomers expect during the adjustment period?

Most newcomers of all ages pass through four stages of adjustment after arriving in a new country:

- *Arrival and first impressions* - newcomers are excited to be in a new environment and optimistic about new opportunities;
- *Culture shock* - newcomers may find it difficult to make friends and the challenge of learning in English may seem overwhelming;
- *Recovery and optimism* - students, who are well supported at school, begin to feel more confident about learning English and about fitting in without having to abandon their cultural identity; and,
- *Adapting* - after a few years most newcomers become comfortable with a new identity that balances their original culture with elements of the new culture.



Kindergarten Programs

The OCDSB offers two levels of kindergarten:

- Junior kindergarten (JK) is for children who are four years old by December 31.
- Senior kindergarten (SK) is for children who are five years old by December 31.

The Full Day Kindergarten Program for 4 and 5 year olds is currently offered in close to half of the OCDSB's schools and should be fully phased into all schools by 2015–2016.

The Kindergarten Program may be supported by an Extended Day Program. For more information and a list of the schools currently offering the program, please go to www.ocdsb.ca.

Half-day kindergarten programs are from Monday to Friday at all other schools.

What is the Kindergarten Program?

Our kindergarten programs support early learning, the development of social and behavioural skills, logical thinking, creativity, language and communication skills, as well as fine and gross motor skills through play-based learning in the classroom.

How do I register my child for kindergarten?

Kindergarten registration is ongoing throughout the year. Generally, neighbourhood schools will hold registration and information sessions in January, February and/or May but you can register at any time.

Call or visit your school for more information.

The following documents are required to register your child for kindergarten:

- proof of the child's age — any one of the following: a birth certificate, baptismal certificate, registration of birth card, passport, permit to attend school from OCDSB, or confirmation of Permanent Residence or Permanent Resident card; and,
- record of immunization & Ontario health card or proof of compliance with the exemption of immunization of school pupils act, R.S.O. 1990, c.11.

Does my child need proof of immunization to attend school?

Yes, your child's complete immunization record must be provided to the school at kindergarten registration. The school will not keep this record but will send it to the Ottawa Public Health Immunization Program. Please notify the Ottawa Public Health Immunization Program every time your child receives a vaccination.

If your child has lived or travelled outside Canada or in a First Nations/Inuit community in Canada for three months or longer during the past five years, complete a Certificate of Immunization and Tuberculosis Assessment for School Entry. For more information, please contact the Immunization Program at 613-580-6744, extension 24108, or by email: immunization@ottawa.ca.



The Elementary School Program (Grades 1 to 8)

How are newcomers placed in elementary school?

Newcomers whose first language is not English are assessed in language and mathematics at the FRC before being placed in school. ELLs are placed in regular classes with children their same age at their neighbourhood school.

What documents are required to enroll in elementary school?

Students new to Canada must provide the school with:

- immigration documents;
- certificate of Immunization and Tuberculosis Assessment for School Entry from Ottawa Public Health;
- language and mathematics assessment report from the FRC; and,
- school records, if available.

What kind of help do ELLs receive in elementary school?

All ELLs are integrated into the regular classroom for most of the day depending on their language proficiency. ESL teachers are assigned to classrooms to work with regular

classroom teachers to support ELLs with English. The ESL teacher may work with individual students or with small or larger groups to adapt the regular curriculum for these learners.

What about students who have gaps in their education?

ELLs requiring ELD programming are placed in either congregated classes for ELD or regular classes with other children their own age in schools with an ESL teacher on staff. Additional small and large group support will be provided by the ESL teacher. The ESL teacher will also work with the regular classroom teacher to modify the curriculum expectations for their academic and language needs.

What is the Education Quality and Assessment Office (EQAO)?

The EQAO is an agency funded by the Ontario Government. All students in grades 3 and 6 are tested in reading, writing, and mathematics to see if they are meeting *The Ontario Curriculum* expectations.

When is the EQAO test given?

The EQAO test takes approximately three to five days and is usually given at the end of May or beginning of June over a one-week period. You will receive a note from the school indicating when the test is being held.

What if my child doesn't know English well enough to take the EQAO test?

If your child is a beginner in English, he or she may be exempted from the EQAO test. When your child has acquired the level of proficiency in English required to be successful, your child should participate in the grade 3 and grade 6 provincial assessments. Exemptions and accommodations are provided based on the student's language needs at the time of the assessment. For more information about EQAO, please visit their website at www.eqao.com.



The Secondary School Program (Grades 9 to 12)

How are newcomers placed in secondary school?

Newcomers whose first language is not English are assessed in English and Mathematics at the FRC before being placed in school. Their placement in a grade or in specific subjects depends on their prior education, background in specific subject areas, and career goals. Equivalent credits for previous education may be awarded.

What are equivalency credits?

Students may be granted equivalent credits for secondary grades completed prior to arriving in Canada. For example, a student who had successfully completed the equivalent of grade 10 in his or her home country may be granted 16 equivalent credits, but may not have the English language skills to successfully take grade 11 courses only.

What is Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)?

The PLAR process is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process by which students may obtain credits for prior learning. Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school. All credits granted through the PLAR process must represent the same standards of achievement as credits granted to students who have taken the course. For more information about PLAR, please contact Student Services or the Guidance Department at your school.

What if the newcomer doesn't speak English?

Five levels of English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are available at eight OCDSB secondary schools: ESLAO, ESLBO, ESLCO, ESLDO, and ESLEO. Students may count up to three of these courses towards the four English credits required to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). The fourth compulsory English credit must be taken at the grade 12 level.

The eight secondary schools that offer ESL courses are:

- Adult High School
- Bell High School
- Brookfield High School
- Glebe Collegiate Institute
- Gloucester High School
- Rideau High School
- Ridgemont High School
- Woodroffe High School

What help is available for ELLs in academic subjects?

Credit and non-credit sheltered courses are offered at eight of our secondary schools in subjects such as History, Geography, Science, and Mathematics. Students learn the basic concepts of the subject material. These subjects will vary from school to school and from semester to semester.

What about students who have gaps in their education?

Newcomers whose first language is not English and who have significant gaps in their education can enrol in five levels of English Literacy Development (ELD). Courses are available to these students in three OCDSB secondary schools — Rideau High School, Ridgemont High School, and Woodroffe High School.

What is the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)?

The OSSLT is a province-wide reading and writing skills test that relates to all subject areas studied up to the end of grade 9. The OSSLT is a 2.5 hour test written by grade 10 students in the spring. Students enrolled in ESL or ELD programs may be offered accommodations or they may defer writing the test to a later date.

What is the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC)?

Students who have written the OSSLT and failed may take this course. Successful completion of the course meets the literacy requirements for graduation.

What is Community Involvement?

Students must complete at least 40 hours of community service in order to graduate. The aim of the community involvement requirement is to encourage students to make a positive contribution to their community. For more information, please consult the publication *OCDSB Guidelines for Community Involvement*, available at www.ocdsb.ca.

What is required to graduate from secondary school?

Ontario Secondary School Diploma students must successfully complete:

- 30 credits, including 18 compulsory credits and 12 optional credits;
- 40 hours of community involvement; and,
- the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC).

Detailed information regarding course requirements is available in all high school guidance offices and on the OCDSB website at www.ocdsb.ca.

Students can learn more about programs, scholarships, community involvement and much more by visiting the Students' Corner on the OCDSB website at www.ocdsb.ca - then click on "Students".



The Central Orientation Class (C.O.C.)

What is the C.O.C.?

The C.O.C. is a special class designed for newcomers, ages 18 to 21, whose first language is not English and who have significant gaps in their education. C.O.C. students generally come from countries where their access to education has been limited.

Where is the C.O.C. located?

This class is located at Adult High School, 300 Rochester Street.

How do you enrol in the C.O.C.?

Students are placed in the C.O.C. after an initial assessment at either the FRC or Adult High School.

What do C.O.C. students study?

Students develop English-language and literacy skills through content-based courses with an emphasis on Canadian content. Mathematics, Learning Skills, and Computer programs are also taught. Basic orientation and life skills are emphasized to support living and learning in Ottawa.

Can C.O.C. students earn secondary school credits?

Yes. Students can earn secondary school credits each semester in ELD. Students receive a credit in either ELDAO or ELDBO depending on which course best fits their capabilities at the end of the semester. These credits count towards the four English credits required to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

How long do students stay in the C.O.C.?

Students usually spend two semesters in the C.O.C. but the length of stay may vary from one to four semesters.

Where do students go after completing studies in the C.O.C.?

The C.O.C. teacher works with each student to create an education plan. The teacher consults with staff from the Family Reception Centre, Adult High School, and other OCDSB programs to provide students with the best opportunity for success.

Want to learn more about Continuing Education? Check out the OCDSB's website for information about General Interest, International Languages and Adult Education programs. Visit www.ocdsb.ca and click on "Programs", then "Continuing Education".



French as a Second Language Programs (FSL)

What FSL programs are offered at the elementary level?

Three types of FSL programs are offered:

- Core French: junior kindergarten to grade 8, as part of the English program;
- Early French Immersion (EFI): senior kindergarten to grade 8; and,
- Middle French Immersion (MFI): grades 4 to 8.

What is Core French?

Core French aims to develop basic communication skills in French and give students an appreciation of French culture. Core French is an important part of the English Program. French is taught for 100 minutes per week in junior and senior kindergarten and 200 minutes per week in grades 1 to 8.

What is EFI?

EFI is an optional program that begins in senior kindergarten. It is intended for students whose first language is not French and allows them to become functionally bilingual through maximum exposure to French studies. Students are taught in French 100 per cent of the time in senior kindergarten and grade 1. With the introduction of English in grade 2, the French

component drops to 80 per cent and gradually lessens to about 50 per cent in grades 6 to 8. EFI students study the same course content as students in the English Program.

What is MFI?

The optional program is intended for those who have completed the grade 3 English/Core French Program and wish to transfer to an Immersion Program. All subjects except English Language Arts are taught in French in grades 4, 5, and 6. In grades 7 and 8, French, Language Arts, Mathematics, History, Geography, Health and Physical Education are taught in French. French makes up about 66 per cent of the program in grades 4 to 6 and up to 50 per cent in grades 7 and 8.

Do all elementary students have to take French?

Yes, elementary students take Core French or one of the optional French Immersion programs. A student may be exempt from taking Core French for a limited period of time.

What French programs are offered at the secondary level?

At the secondary school level, the OCDSB offers three types of FSL programs:

- Core French;
- Extended French; and,
- French Immersion.

What is Core French?

Core French provides students with fundamental communication skills in French and an understanding of the nature of the language and its culture. Core French is a single credit course (110 hours) and is offered at all levels from grades 9 to 12. Core French is offered at both the academic and applied levels.

Do all secondary school students have to take French?

One credit in FSL is required to obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Newcomer students who lack a background in French can be exempt from taking French at the secondary level. Instead, another compulsory credit course is substituted for French.

What is Extended French?

Extended French is a four-year certificate program. A student must successfully complete four courses in Extended French and at least three courses in other subjects taught in

French. By the end of the program, students will be able to talk freely on familiar topics, read books, magazines, and newspapers in French, and function in a French-speaking community.

What is French Immersion at the secondary school level?

French Immersion is a four-year certificate program. Students must successfully complete four courses in French Immersion and at least six courses in other subjects taught in French. By the end of the program, students will participate easily in conversation and discussions, will be able to take courses at the college or university level taught in French, and will be able to accept employment in which French is the working language.

Want to learn more about programs offered in the OCDSB? Visit the OCDSB's website at www.ocdsb.ca then click on programs. From French Immersion to Specialist High Skill Majors (SHSM), we have the programs you want!



Learning Support Services

What are learning support services?

Formerly known as special education, learning support services include a wide range of supports and programs for students with special needs. Special needs can refer to academic needs or may be related to other areas where the child requires more intensive support to be successful (e.g. behaviour, social-emotional needs, communication, physical and/or intellectual, etc.). This support may be provided in the regular classroom or, in more extreme cases, in a specialized program.

Do newcomers who don't speak English need learning support services?

Not all non English newcomers require learning support services. Learning support services provided by OCDSB staff are required only if your child has been identified as needing special assistance. How the student performs in school in their first language is a good indicator of their overall academic abilities. Newcomers with little English may be tested in their first language in mathematics and writing by the Family Reception Centre, who will then share the results with the school. Once they are placed in school, teachers will monitor the students' learning progress. It usually takes one to two years to develop social language skills and five to seven years for academic language. Teachers compare each student's rate of progress to these normal patterns of second language learning. Teachers can also use the initial FRC assessment as a baseline for measuring individual progress.

What if a newcomer student is not learning at an accepted rate?

A small percentage of ELLs have special education needs. It is important to identify these students as early as possible so appropriate support can be arranged. Students do not need learning support services just because they have not yet had the chance to acquire the knowledge and skills on assessment tests. Students are monitored to ensure and encourage academic success.

How does a student begin to receive special education support from their school?

The OCDSB follows a research-based, multi-disciplinary intervention model called the Tiered Approach to provide support for at-risk learners. This approach, described in the table on the next page, is based on ongoing assessment and progress monitoring. Students who do not adequately progress in one tier are then provided with the next tier of support.

Tiered Approach

Tier	Who	What	Where	How
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Teacher • Learning Support/ Resource Teacher • Parent consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom based • Consists of sound instruction based on successful practice for all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor progress of class • Flag at-risk learners • Provide differentiated instruction
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teacher • Learning Resource / Support Teacher • May include consultation with school multi-disciplinary team* • Parent consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to students who have not progressed satisfactorily with Tier 1 instruction and interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More intensive intervention • An IEP may be developed and implemented in Tier 2
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teacher • Learning Resource / Support Teacher • May include working with school multi-disciplinary team* • Parent consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For students who do not respond to instructional efforts at Tier 1 and 2 levels • Students may need to be referred for more extensive assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular classroom assessment locations within the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A) Assessment • B) Classroom observation by appropriate member(s) of multi-disciplinary team* • Information from A and B (above) and teacher's assessment of student's previous response to interventions guide more specialized instruction

* School multi-disciplinary team consists of: Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Social Worker, Psychologist, and Learning Support Consultant (LSC)

What is a special education assessment?

A special education assessment is an evaluation of a student by a specialist to determine if the student has special needs and to clarify what those needs are. The OCDSB has specialists on staff that will assess students at no cost to parents, but there may be a waiting list. Specialists may be staff within the school (e.g. the learning support teacher), they may be members of the multi-disciplinary team, or they may be other board staff who are specially trained to conduct specific types of assessments (e.g. Itinerant Teachers of Blind/Low Vision or Deaf/Hard of Hearing).

Assessment may include the following:

- the process of systematically gathering information about student learning and/or cognition from a variety of techniques and tools;
- gathering relevant information about the student from the parent/guardian/student and school personnel;
- talking to the student about school, interests, and educational or vocational goals;
- gathering information from community professionals (e.g. doctor, public health nurse, or social agencies, where appropriate) with written permission from the parent/guardian/student;
- observing the student in the school or classroom setting;
- examining samples of the student's school work; and,
- conducting formal standardized tests and/or informal tests.

What is an Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

An IEP is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs (i.e. the strengths and needs that affect the student's ability to learn and to demonstrate learning).

An IEP:

- is a record of the particular accommodation(s) needed to help the student achieve his/her learning expectations, given the student's identified learning strengths and needs.

- is a working document that identifies learning expectations that are modified from the expectations for the age-appropriate grade level in a particular subject or course, as outlined in the Ministry of Education’s curriculum policy documents
- identifies alternative expectations, if required, in program areas not represented in the Ontario curriculum.
- is a record of the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purpose of reporting student achievement of modified and/or alternative expectations.

Not all children whose second language is English require an IEP. An IEP is required when the school principal determines that a student’s achievement will be assessed on the basis of modified expectations AND/OR the student regularly requires accommodations for instructional or assessment purposes.

When an IEP is developed, it describes what the school will do to help your child. It should include:

- an outline of the special education program and services that will be provided;
- specific educational expectations;
- teaching strategies and assessment methods specific to the student;
- for students 14 years and older (except those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness), a plan for transition to appropriate post-secondary school activities such as work, further education, and community living will be developed; and,
- for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, a plan for all transitions where the student requires support (e.g. transitions between activities and/or settings).

An IEP must be completed within 30 school days after your child begins school or has been placed in a special program. The principal must ensure that you receive a copy.

What is an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)?

An IPRC is a meeting to officially identify a student’s needs. The IPRC may be requested by the parents or the school. Once parents have made a request in writing an IPRC must be held within 10 days. The school must inform parents about an IPRC and it is very important that parents attend.

The main purpose of the committee is:

- to determine whether the student is exceptional;
- to identify strengths and needs;
- to identify areas of exceptionality, according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education;
- to recommend placement for a student deemed as exceptional along the continuum from regular program within the community school to more specialized placements; and,
- to review the identification and placement of the student at least once in each school year.

What happens at an IPRC and do parents have a role?

The IPRC consists of at least three people, one of whom must be a school principal or a supervisory officer employed by the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB).

Others who can attend the meeting include:

- the parent/guardian;
- the principal of the child's school;
- staff such as the child's teacher, learning support services personnel, or other qualified professionals who may provide further information or clarification;
- a parent's representative (a person who speaks on behalf of the parent or child);
- an interpreter, if one is required (a request should be made to the principal of the child's school); and,
- the child (if appropriate or if 16 years of age or over).

Note: Not all individuals listed above will be in attendance at all IPRC meetings.

The IPRC will review all available information about the child. Those present will discuss programs and services being considered and will make recommendations regarding exceptionality, special education programs, placement, and services for the student. Committee members will discuss any such proposal at the parent's request (or at the

request of a student who is 16 years of age or older).

If the Committee recommends that the child be placed in a specialized program, the reasons shall be recorded as a written statement on the Determination Record. This record will state whether the IPRC has identified the child as exceptional, it will describe of the child's strengths and needs, will make recommendations regarding a special education placement and program, and will provide the reason(s) for the decision to place the child in a special education class.

If, at the meeting, the Committee determines that the child be identified with an exceptionality, parents will be asked to sign a document (i.e. the Determination Record) agreeing to the Committee's recommendations. Parents may take the document home and think it over before deciding whether to sign it. Following this, an IEP will be developed that reflects the decisions made in the IPRC meeting.

Some tips for your IPRC:

- You may bring a family member or friend who knows the child to the meeting.
- Bring any doctor's notes or assessments about the student's medical condition or learning skills.
- If you disagree with the IPRC decision, you may appeal it but there is a time limit for the appeal.
- The IPRC process may seem very formal but it means that you and your child will have a right to request ongoing support.

What if a newcomer has already been identified with an exceptionality?

ELLs with identified learning exceptionalities are eligible to receive special education or support services and ESL or ELD services simultaneously. The development of an IEP for ELLs needs to take into account both language learning needs and the student's exceptionality. When a student with an exceptionality arrives at the FRC, a learning support consultant will be contacted to assist with the intake interview. It is important to bring any relevant documentation about your child's exceptionality to the meeting.

Are students requiring learning support services placed in a separate class?

Most students requiring learning support services are placed in the regular classroom for all or part of the day with support from a classroom teacher, a learning support teacher, or support person, depending on their needs.

How are students requiring learning support service helped in schools?

Sometimes learning support involves a different way of teaching. Program delivery may vary from school to school but generally learning support teachers, classroom teachers, and educational assistants work together as a team to adapt the regular course work for exceptional students. At the elementary level, learning support teachers are available to classroom teachers to help students with special needs. At the secondary school level, students may receive additional classes with their schedule to receive help from a learning support teacher or they may be supported within their regular classes.

Will my child's support change over time?

Your child's program and placement will be reviewed at least once every school year. You may ask for changes or for more information at this time.

Where can parents get more information?

- Speak to your teacher, principal, learning support teacher, or guidance counsellor.
- Ask your school's MLO to help explain the learning support process.
- Talk to other parents at your school about how learning support services work.
- Visit the Ministry of Education's website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/speced.html> for a variety of special education resources.
- Attend a meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). Contact the Committee Coordinator in Board Services at 613-596-8255 for more information.



The Multicultural Liaison Officer Program (MLO)

What is the MLO Program?

The MLO Program is a school-based outreach program intended to serve the needs of immigrant and refugee children and their families to make them feel more at home in their new country. MLOs from various cultural and language groups work with students, parents, teachers, and administrators in the schools to address the educational concerns of newcomer families. MLOs also work with newly arrived families at the Family Reception Centre.

What do MLOs do at the Family Reception Centre?

MLOs at the FRC are available to meet with parents while their children are being assessed. They provide essential information for newcomers to Ottawa. They answer parents' questions about education in Ontario, provide information about programs in the OCDSB and inform parents about community support such as daycare, homework clubs, library programs, and family literacy centres. If needed, they also provide referrals to community organizations that help students and their families settle in Canada. As well, they connect parents with the MLO in their children's school who will provide ongoing support.

What do MLOs do in the schools?

MLOs in the schools work on three levels with students and parents, with teachers and

school staff, and within the community. They:

- work directly with parents and students to inform them about the education system and their roles and responsibilities;
- contact parents to let them know about the educational and social development of their children, to tell them about events at the school, and to encourage them to get involved;
- advocate for students and parents with school staff;
- provide language and cultural understanding at meetings involving staff members, parents, and students;
- help bridge cultural differences, mediate conflicts, and facilitate resolution;
- offer workshops for staff and students to increase cross-cultural awareness and understanding; and,
- provide liaison between the school and the community about changes in the community's demographic profile, partnership possibilities, and issues of concern.

What other settlement services are available?

As well as the MLO Program, Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO) offers help with getting settled, finding work, housing issues, legal aid, learning English, counselling, and women's mentoring. An English conversation and social group and a summer camp for immigrant youth are also available.

For more information about these programs or to obtain OCISO's Handbook for Newcomers, visit the OCISO website at www.ociso.org or call 613-725-5671.

Settlement concerns throughout Ontario can be addressed at the Settlement Workers in Schools website at www.settlement.org.



Helping Your Child at School

How can I help my child to be successful at school?

You can help your child reach his or her full potential by being actively involved in your child's learning — at home, in the school, and in the community. You are an important partner in your child's education. By being involved, you encourage good learning habits and support your child in making positive choices about their future.

What can I do at home?

- Enrol your child in the International Languages Program to help them maintain their first language. Call the Continuing Education office at 613-239-2703 or visit www.ocdsb.ca (check under Programs, Continuing Education).
- Read to your child or get them to read to you. Reading, in any language and at any age, is one of the best ways to ensure student success.
- Limit television and computer time and make sure you know what your child is watching.
- Teach your child how to use the Internet safely.
- Create homework routines.
- Make sure your child has regular homework time on week nights.

- Make learning fun — play board games.
- Go to the public library, visit a museum, or attend a special event.
- Read your school, school council, and classroom newsletters.

How can I get involved at school?

- Attend your school's Meet-the-Teacher night held early in the year.
- Get to know other parents at school.
- Attend parent–teacher interviews.
- Offer to volunteer in the school.
- Attend school council meetings (usually one evening a month).
- Offer to translate at the meetings to encourage other parents in your cultural group to participate.

How can I get involved in the community?

- Attend a meeting of the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC), the umbrella organization representing OCDSB school councils — www.ocasc.ca.
- Attend a meeting of the Community Council for Ethnocultural Equity (CCEE), the OCDSB's advisory committee on equity and diversity. Call Inclusive, Safe and Caring Programs at 613-721-1820 for information.
- Attend a free activity at the Main Branch of the Ottawa Public Library, 120 Metcalfe Street. The library offers ESL books and social groups, homework clubs, children's story time, and a networking group for immigrant parents, in collaboration with OCISO. Free day care and bus tickets are available by calling a library settlement worker at 613-818-7082.

Where can I get more information?

- Visit the OCDSB website at www.ocdsb.ca or call 613-721-1820.
- Visit the Ontario Ministry of Education website — www.edu.gov.on.ca.
- Visit TV Ontario's Independent Learning Centre (ILC) — www.ilc.org for homework help for high school students.



Talking to Your Child in Your First Language

What is a parent's first language?

A parent's first language is the language parents are most familiar with and speak most confidently.

What is a child's first language?

A child's first language is any language learned before the age of three. A language learned after age three is considered to be a second language.

Why is it important for children to learn their first language well?

Learning one language well helps children develop basic language concepts. Children who learn their first language well at home develop strong language skills in their first language. This solid language base will help them to learn a second language easily and will develop good reading and writing skills.

Why is it important for parents to talk to their children in their first language?

Parents are their children's first language teachers. Children learn language best from people who are confident in that language and speak the language well.

Does talking to your child in your first language help when learning English?

The language concepts children learn through their first language will transfer easily to another language. That is why learning the first language well at home actually helps children learn a second language better at school.

What is the First Words Preschool Speech and Language Program?

For pre-school and kindergarten-aged children, this program focuses on the prevention, early identification, and treatment of speech and language problems in young children (from birth until they become eligible for senior kindergarten). First Words promotes first language development at home and offers information about learning two languages at the same time.

What is the Primary Language Literacy Project (PLL)?

The PLLP is a program to support Ottawa families in using their first language when speaking with their young children at home. The aim is to help children develop strong first language skills in order to help them learn a second language well. For more information, please contact your child's kindergarten teacher, visit www.firstwords.ca or e-mail firstwords@pqchc.com.

What is the International Languages (IL) Program?

The OCDSB's Continuing Education Department offers free Saturday morning classes in many international languages (not English or French). These classes are available to all school-aged children from kindergarten to grade 12. At the elementary level, classes are taught in many elementary schools. Registration is ongoing. Secondary courses are offered at Nepean High School, Glebe Collegiate Institute and the Adult High School (evenings only). High school students may earn credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. For more information about the International Languages Program, please call 613-239-2703, or visit the Continuing Education page on the OCDSB website at www.ocdsb.ca.

Community and School Resources

Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Publications

- Family Reception Centre brochures available in French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic, and Farsi — www.ocdsb.ca/med/pub
- *Help your Child Succeed* — www.ocdsb.ca/par/hucs
- *Your Child's Education — Be a Part of It!* — www.ocdsb.ca/par/pi

Ministry of Education Publications

- Tip sheets for parents — www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/tips/
- Bullying — www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/bullying.html
- Communicate with the teacher — www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/tips/talk.html
- Helpful links — www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/links/
- Parent Guide to Special Education — www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/special.html

Homework Help

Online homework help for high school students. Ask a Teacher — www.ilc.org

Language Services

- International Languages Program — www.ocdsb.ca/programs/continweb/ILP
Tel. 613-239-2703
- Primary Learning Language Project (First Words) — www.firstwords.ca

Settlement Services

- OCISO's Handbook for Newcomers — www.ociso.org
Tel. 613-725-0202
- Settlement Workers in School — www.settlement.org

Services to Ottawa Residents

City of Ottawa — www.ottawa.ca

Tel: 311

Community Council for Ethnocultural Equity (CCEE)

OCDSB Advisory Committee — call Inclusive, Safe and Caring Programs at 613-721-1820 for information.

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Glossary of Terms

C.O.C.:	Central Orientation Class
EFI:	Early French Immersion
ELD:	English Literacy Development Program
ELL:	English Language Learner
ELP:	Early Literacy Program
EQAQO:	The Education Quality and Assessment Office
ESL:	English as a Second Language
FSL:	French as a Second Language
IEP:	Individual Education Plan
IL:	International Languages
IPRC:	Identification, Placement and Review Committee
JK:	Junior Kindergarten
MFI:	Middle French Immersion
MLO:	Multicultural Liaison Officer
OCASC:	Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils
OCDSB:	Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
OCISO:	Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization
OSR:	Ontario Student Record
OSSD:	Ontario Secondary School Diploma
OSSLC:	Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course
OSSLT:	Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test
PLAR:	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
PLLP:	Primary Language Literacy Program

How to Contact Us

Family Reception Centre

202-300 Rochester Street, Ottawa, ON K1R 7N4

Tel: 613-239-2416 Fax: 613-239-5990

www.ocdsb.ca/par/nci

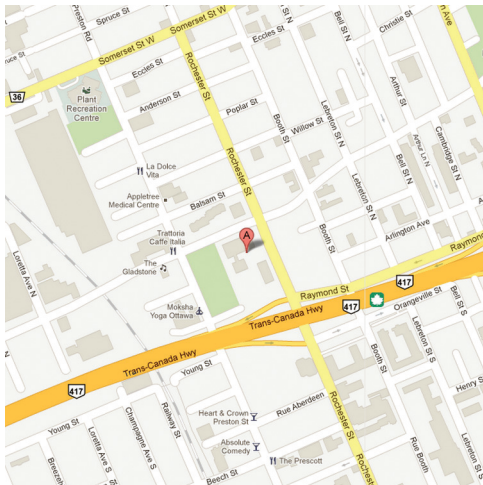
Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Summer Hours: 8:30 am to 3:30 pm

Bus Routes: #14, 85, 101

Family Reception Centre Contact List:

- Robyne Warren, FRC Coordinator, Kindergarten to Grade 12
- Mariana Hammoud, Office Assistant
- Samira Elmasri, Assessor
- Mohamed Suleiman, Assessor
- Anna Tang, Assessor



Remember, we are here to help!



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Family Reception Centre **Parent Guide**

Public Education: *Doing it W.E.L.L.*

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