More ways to succeed in high school:

a booklet for parents and students

What's inside?
• Introduction for parents
• New programs that help students earn credits
• New ways for students to learn outside the regular classroom
• Stories of students who have used these programs to succeed
The agriculture course opened a lot of doors for my future.

- Adrien, expanding his horizons

Students can build their strengths and develop their interests.

Adrien always wanted to go into agriculture. Having grown up on the family farm, he thought he knew a lot about it too. He was about to discover that there was more to farming than he had ever imagined.

He learned this first-hand when he took the Specialist High Skills Major in agriculture at his high school.

“I’m gaining experience while studying,” Adrien explains, “and I’m making lots of contacts that will help with a job search.”

Adrien worked half days on the job with local companies. He experienced a variety of farming practices and got to meet successful employers in the community. The rest of his day was spent in school. He also worked on a new product to sell. Adrien researched it thoroughly, and then made a presentation to sell the product to area farmers.

The Specialist High Skills Major is opening Adrien’s eyes to the broader world of agriculture and is preparing him for success in a field he loves.

“It’s a real experience, in the real world.”

- Vincent, artist in training

Specialist High Skills Majors shine the spotlight on a future career.

Vincent loves the arts. He acts, sings and dreams of being a TV entertainer. So his teachers encouraged him to sign up for a Specialist High Skills Major in the arts.

Now Vincent gets face-to-face with people who live his dreams. He meets guest speakers and learns first-hand from people working in the community. He takes field trips to visit local theaters and production facilities. Even his research projects demand that he approach working artists.

“We put on a play that we wrote ourselves and that we invented – so it really came from us.”

The program has opened his eyes to new career possibilities. “I found out that I was able to create something, to write, to create scenery, to put together a project,” Vincent explains. “Now I know that I am more than just a good actor.”
EXPANDED CO-OP

What is it?
High school students can apply two co-op credits towards their compulsory graduation requirements. This program gives students the chance to:
• Experience hands-on learning
• “Test-drive” career options
• See the relevance of their classroom learning
• Develop the essential skills and work habits required in the workplace
• Gain valuable work experience to help build a résumé for postsecondary programs and future employment.

Who is it for?
All students who are heading for university, college, apprenticeship or the workplace.

Co-op helps employers discover and train future employees.

When Mike Holmes, the well-known contractor and star of Holmes on Homes, was approached to take on a co-op student, he knew he was interested right away.

“I’m high on the skilled trades industry,” he explains, “and the idea of tempting the kids in school into the skilled trades... it was just fabulous.”

Students who choose co-op are looking for alternatives or enhancements to learning in a regular classroom. Sometimes they know exactly what they want to do. Sometimes they don’t. Mike understands this and the important role employers play.

“I want students to get the experience of real work, not just the thought of working. Giving them the chance to say, ‘Hey, you know what? I like this.’”

Matt was this student, and once he graduates Mike has invited him to work on his crew full time. So what would Mike say to other employers about taking a co-op student?

“It was easy and it doesn’t cost any money, so let’s be serious, it’s a very smart move.”

And for Matt, his expanded co-op program ended up giving him much more than simply four credits in one semester. As Matt puts it, “I had the time of my life.”

Calling all employers!
If you are interested in taking on a co-op student, please contact the principal at your local high school. You can find the phone number at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/sbinfo or call 1-800-387-5514.

“In the hospital everything goes on really fast – and I think I can handle it!”
- Mbalia, aspiring medical student

Expanded Co-op gives students both work experience and credits.

Growing up in Gambia, Mbalia always knew she wanted to be a doctor. When this “A” student heard about Expanded Co-op, she decided to take part to get real work experience.

Mbalia spoke to her co-op teacher who arranged a co-op placement in the Endoscopy Clinic at Toronto General Hospital.

“I got a first-hand look at a doctor giving a patient a gastroscopy – it was pretty fascinating.”

She also gets to work with nurses, talk to medical students and reassure nervous patients. “That’s the best part of my day – when the patients come in,” Mbalia says.

Mbalia has applied to several universities and still plans to go to medical school. “Talk to your guidance counsellor,” she advises other students. “Think about where you want to work and what you would like to do. Then go for it.”

“This placement has allowed me to use my talents.”
- Kevin, pursuing his goals

Expanded Co-op gives students needing workplace accommodations practical opportunities to succeed.

Kevin was looking for a way to pursue his goal of becoming a machinist. He found that opportunity in a co-op placement through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program. Kevin is Defr. As an apprentice machinist, he quickly discovered he had the right mix of skills and attitudes to be successful, and his employer saw him as a valuable part of the team.

“I really enjoy lathe work and milling. The work has to be exactly right.”

Real-life, hands-on experiences gained through co-op can help all students explore future employment and career options.
“I need this credit to graduate this year. It’s... the credit that I need for university.”
- Genevieve, aspiring English teacher

Online and other new courses give students more choice.

Genevieve wants to be an English teacher. But when she moved to a new school for Grade 12, she couldn’t find the course she needed. Fortunately, her guidance counsellor understood. “We’ve tried to open things up, so kids can take something that interests them,” says Cairin Nelson.

So Genevieve enrolled in a Writer’s Craft course online. “I usually do it at home; it’s easier, it’s calmer, and quiet,” she says. She writes the assignments on her computer and emails them to the teacher. She also gets to work at her own pace.

“It’s a more flexible schedule... because I don’t have certain dates to get stuff in,” explains Genevieve. “So if something comes up, it’s not a big deal.”

What else does she like about the course? “I like doing it by myself because you’re not comparing marks to your peers and you’re not comparing assignments.”

And Genevieve is doing well. Taking an online course in a subject that interests her helps keep her marks high – which will help her get into university.

NEW COURSES

What are they?
Schools offer new technological education courses and have added new modules to existing technical education courses. Students can also take advantage of over 50 online courses.

How do they help?
These courses give students more opportunities to take subjects they find interesting and accumulate credits they need to graduate.

Who are they for?
All students.

To find out more about online education opportunities for your child, visit www.elearningontario.ca or contact your school.

EXPANDED CO-OP

“When the classroom wasn’t the best place for me to learn,”
- Parminder, finding his vocation

A chance to learn in new ways, and build confidence.

Parminder couldn’t speak a word of English when he came to Canada. Steve, his co-op supervisor, recognized his interest in cars. He used that interest to get Parminder talking.

“My English improved in co-op... I learned about engines and all those parts.”

Parminder excelled in his co-op placement at Oakland Ford. He got more than just two credits – he succeeded at school. His teachers immediately noticed a new self-confidence in him.

“I want to be a car mechanic for my future... everyone loves cars.”

The hours he’s spent in co-op have counted towards the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program. This will make it easier for him to become a mechanic in an environment where he learns best.

What are they?
Innovative local programs that help students who need extra support and attention to stay in school. These projects help students accumulate credits, take programs linked to colleges, and encourage youth who have left school to return.

Who are they for?
Students who are struggling in a regular classroom setting or who want to return to high school.

To find out more visit www.Ontario.ca/MoreStudentSuccess and click on Expanded Co-op.

LIGHTHOUSE PROJECTS

“It changed my thinking. I work harder now, and I am passing everything.”
- Meaghan, learning in her own way

Lighthouse Projects are flexible. Schools can create programs that meet students’ needs.

Meaghan was struggling in school. She was falling behind and was having a lot of trouble with math.

Her teachers and principal recognized that the regular classroom didn’t interest Meaghan. But they thought a Lighthouse Project that included judo classes might engage her. They convinced her to join this new program where she could get more personal attention, recover lost credits – and take judo. Almost immediately, her performance in school improved.

“It was a lot better than regular classes 'cause I got to talk to people... I could either do work, or I could help other people do their work.”

Meaghan’s teachers tied math to her passion for hands-on learning. Now Meaghan’s taking a trades-focused math program where she learns math by taking measurements.

Meaghan gained lost credits and is now planning an apprenticeship in carpentry.

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“I’m going to college and finishing high school at the same time.”
- Chris, on the path to success

Dual Credits let students “try on” college courses while still in high school.

Chris never liked high school. “I was a bit of a slacker,” he admits. “I didn’t hand in assignments and didn’t bother writing tests.”

That was before he found out about a special program that let him earn high school credits while studying at a local college. Chris began taking construction manufacturing in the morning with a college instructor. Then in the afternoon, he took an English and sociology credit with a high school teacher.

The courses were Dual Credits – they counted as high school credits and as college prep courses. The prep courses would give him an advantage when applying to college.

His parents are proud of the change they’ve witnessed in their son. As Chris explains, “They were really excited about it when I could tell them, ‘Hey, I’m going to college and I’m going to finish high school’... it’s really exciting for them.” The fact that his marks are a lot higher also makes his parents happy.

College also felt different from high school. “There’s a lot of respect and freedom,” Chris says. “I felt like it was just holding my future in front of me. It made me reach out and grab it. It was really motivating that way.”

Chris’ plan: graduate from high school and return to college to get an apprenticeship in the skilled trades.

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“Student Success Culture”

What is it?
Training for principals and teachers is being rolled out across the province. This includes new ideas and innovative approaches to helping kids graduate from high school. It builds upon a culture of high expectations and individualized attention and caring.

How does it help students?
When teachers learn about new opportunities they are better able to give students choices and match students with an appropriate alternative to regular classroom learning.

Who is it for?
Students, teachers, principals, guidance counsellors and parents.

To find out more, visit www.Ontario.ca/MoreStudentSuccess and click on Student Success Teams.

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“Dual Credit Program”

What is it?
Students can earn a number of credits by participating in apprenticeship training and postsecondary courses. Courses count towards both their high school diploma and their postsecondary diploma, degree, or apprenticeship certification.

Who is it for?
All students who are heading for university, college, apprenticeship or the workplace.

To find out more about Dual Credits and how they can help your child, visit www.Ontario.ca/MoreStudentSuccess and click on Dual Credit Program or talk to your school’s Student Success Team.
“Sometimes high school is too much to handle on your own.”
- Ashley, getting the support she needs

Student Success Teams focus on the individual.

In Grade 10, Ashley moved away for a year. Her new school tracked credits differently, and when she returned, Ashley discovered she was almost a year behind.

Ashley attends a small school, and she was determined to graduate with her friends. "That’s the only reason I came back,” she says. So her school’s Student Success Team set to work to make it possible.

“They rearranged everything to help me get my credits.”

Her teachers knew they had to help Ashley create a timetable that kept her motivated, so she could catch up. So they focused on her interests and included a co-op course in auto mechanics. She loves the program, and it gives her two compulsory credits.

As Ashley’s teacher puts it, “When you know someone is going to fight the odds, you’ve got to do what you can to help them.”

Ashley is well on her way to earning all her high school credits. With more hard work and the help of her teachers, principal and guidance counselor, she will graduate with her friends.

What is it?
This is a group of programs that help students as they move from elementary school to secondary school with increased individual attention and programming tailored to fit their situation.

Who is it for?
Students adjusting to high school.

To find out more, visit www.Ontario.ca/MoreStudentSuccess and click on Student Success Teams.

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Student Success is Graduation and More

You can see for yourself how students are meeting with personal success as they move toward high school graduation and beyond.

They’re getting there with the help of flexible programs and the support of caring teachers and adults.

They’re building self-esteem, developing new skills, finding new interests and facing the future with confidence.

They’re finding optimism and options in high school.

... call your Student Success Team at your school.
Parents

For more information about what is happening in Ontario's high schools, visit www.Ontario.ca/MoreStudentSuccess.

Students

Get real-time help with your homework online! Discover more course options and get tools for planning your education, training and career at www.ltc.org.

Train as a registered apprentice while finishing high school. Find out more at www.oyap.com. Get clear descriptions of the "Essential Skills and Work Habits" that employers are seeking and land your placement! Visit skills.edu.gov.on.ca.

Teachers

Find the latest e-learning course information at www.elearningontario.ca. For strategies, tools, resources and professional development opportunities visit www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess.

Want to teach or set up a co-op program at your school? Check out www.ocea.on.ca for information, tools and resources.

Employers

Give students more work experiences and build your talent pool. Make the connection and get involved. Visit www.edu.gov.on.ca/passport.

For more information about programs in your community, call the Ontario Business Education Partnership at 1-888-672-7996.

Get help hiring, evaluating and tracking student workplace performance at skills.edu.gov.on.ca.

Are you a parent looking for information and programs to help your child? Are you a student looking for financial help with your apprenticeship? Are you an employer who wants help with your apprenticeship training costs? You can find all this and more at www.ontario.ca/employmenteontario or by calling 1-800-387-5656.

Contact your school principal or a member of your school's Student Success Team.