



APPLYING TO COLLEGE

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS & GUARDIANS

The Guidance Department is here to support students as they prepare to transition from O'Neill to their postsecondary destination. It is important that they make informed decisions that will lead them to a rewarding and fulfilling career pathway. Your role as a parent/guardian is so important in this process and we hope to provide you with the tools and information that you need to best support your child. Please feel free to contact us with questions at (905)728-7531.

RESEARCHING YOUR OPTIONS

i) My Blueprint is an excellent resource for researching careers and programs available at colleges and universities across Canada; it is also the computer program that we are using to store each student's Individual Pathway Plan. The I.P.P. is an online portfolio that stores the student's goals, plans and reflections about their potential career and educational pathways. Each student will work on it a minimum of twice per year and it can be accessed by parents by linking your child's account to your parent account.

If you wish to view your child's I.P.P.:

1. Have your child log into My Blueprint by visiting www.myblueprint.ca/ddsb. They can log in using the same credentials that they use to access their school accounts.
2. Click on their name in the top corner. Select 'My Links'.
3. Click on the button marked +Add Link. This will trigger an email invitation to be sent to you.

ii) Visit <http://www.ontariocolleges.ca> or download the mobile app to learn about college information. This is the same website that you will use to apply to college.

- To learn what programs are available click on "Programs." If you know the general name of a program you may search for it in the "Program Search".
- It is also possible to look for programs by "Program Category". You can further streamline this search by clicking "Selecting A College". This will allow you to view all the programs offered at a specific institution.
- Once you have selected the above, a list of programs will appear. Beside each program title there is an arrow to expand the selection. If you click on this icon

you will be shown a synopsis of the program. Take note of whether the program is highly competitive. If a student is interested in applying to a highly competitive program, they must apply by the Equal Consideration Date of **February 1st**.

- Once you have selected the above, a list of programs will appear. To look at the details of a particular program, click on “Website”. This will take you to the college website and that specific program. Here you will learn about admission requirements for the program, courses to be taken, tuition, degree completion options and careers that might arise from this program.
- There are several types of accreditation available at college. The types include Apprenticeship, Bachelor’s Degree, Certificate, Diploma, Graduate Certificate and Collaborative. You can find out more by looking at the individual programs offered.

iii) Compare statistics on Ontario’s colleges: [Key Performance Indicators](#). You will find statistics on graduation rates, employment rates and student satisfaction.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- Students apply for college online through the Ontario Colleges Application Service (OCAS). The application period opens in **October**.
- Students can apply any time after the application period opens by visiting www.ontariocolleges.ca. The only requirement is the OEN number, which can be found on report cards and timetables. If you don’t have the OEN number, students can ask for it at the Guidance Office.
- The cost to apply is \$150. This fee is paid online by credit card, online banking, certified cheque or money order. This fee allows you to make 5 college/program choices. Students cannot select more than three programs at the same college.
- Grades will be sent to OCAS automatically by the school board at scheduled intervals throughout the year. Current secondary school students are not required to send transcripts themselves to the Ontario college.
- Additional requirements, such as supplementary application forms, portfolios, auditions or interviews, are the responsibility of each student. They will be contacted by email by the college once they have submitted their application.
- Program choices may be changed in the application at any time at no cost, providing that the total number of choices has not changed. Changes that are made after the application deadline will still be processed, but admission decisions may be affected by late applications depending upon the competitiveness of the program.

- Admissions averages for highly competitive programs will typically be calculated using the marks from the highest four grade 11 or 12 college/university/mixed courses. This calculation will also typically include the prerequisite courses.
- Students applying to a college outside of Ontario, will be applying directly through the college's website. Transcripts can be requested from the Guidance office as needed.
- You can log in to your account at any time and view your offers. When you are ready to accept an offer, you will also do that in your Ontario Colleges account.

TIMELINES

Date	Detail
September	O'Neill College application assembly
Early October	College Fair held at O'Neill
Late October	Scholarship/bursary/OSAP presentation at lunch
February 1	The Equal Consideration Date. Students applying to highly competitive programs must apply before this date.
Spring	An OSAP assembly will be held at the school
May 1	The deadline to accept offers of admission. Colleges may extend the deadline which will be communicated with the offer.
June	Most colleges will require the tuition deposit to be made.

FINANCES

Planning ahead to finance your child's post-secondary education is very important for most families. There are many options available to ensure that money is not a barrier to your child attending the college that offers the best program possible for them.

- Scholarships** are awarded based on academics and/or extracurricular involvement. They may be awarded automatically with admission or require a supplementary application. In addition to those available by the institution, there are countless scholarships provided by employers, community organizations, and others. These are best researched by visiting:
 - www.yconic.com (Create a profile to be matched with eligible scholarships)

- www.scholarshipscanada.com (Create a profile to be matched with eligible scholarships)
 - <https://seekingscholarships.com/the-scholarship-report-2/> (DDSB password is **scholar58**)
 - www.scholartree.ca
 - www.ontariocolleges.ca. Click “Paying for College” from the “Colleges” menu for resources on scholarships, bursaries and financial planning.
 - Visit the Student Awards/Financial Aid website for each of the colleges. You will find a listing of available scholarships and bursaries, including criteria and application information. Many of these are awarded automatically based on grades and supplementary applications, but others require additional forms.
- ii) **Bursaries** are awarded based on financial need. The best way for the institution to assess financial need is to apply for OSAP after they have accepted an offer to college. Your child should contact the Financial Aid office to find out more about specific bursaries that are available. Many institutions have a separate form that must be completed for consideration for bursaries. Students might also consider work-study programs in which students are hired for part-time jobs based on their financial need.
- iii) **OSAP** is the Ontario Student Assistance Program that provides a mix of grants and loans for students with financial need. Visit <https://osap.gov.on.ca> for information and to apply online. Applications for 2025/26 will open in April/May.
- iv) Tips for managing a student budget:
<https://www.csnpe-nslsc.canada.ca/en/managing-your-money/budgeting-for-student-life>