

Frequently Asked Questions

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMME

What kind of student is a good candidate for the IB Diploma Programme?

According to the [International Baccalaureate \(IBO\)](#), the Diploma Programme is a rigorous and challenging course of study. Success throughout the programme depends on motivated students. **In addition to academic success**, the IBO suggests that a student's

- dedication to do their best
- active study
- willingness to be organised in order and to complete work while leading a full, balanced life
- and having a strong commitment to learning in and beyond the classroom

serves as an indicator of the ability to earn the Diploma.

What is the difference between IB and AP?

In York Region, both the Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Programs are considered enrichment opportunities for students. Both programs potentially offer successful candidates advanced standing at university. The programs are equally considered at the postsecondary level.

AP offers students the chance to take exams in course(s) of interest or aptitude, while the IB Programme is a comprehensive program that includes the IB Core (Creativity/Activity/Service, Extended Essay, and Theory of Knowledge).

Can the full IB Diploma be studied online?

No. It is not possible to complete the IB Diploma Programme online.

How do colleges and universities view the IB Diploma?

For information on university admission, please see [information on the International Baccalaureate website](#).

Will the IB Programme help my child get into university?

The answer is dependent on several factors, including the student, the university and the programs that the student would like to enter.

Does being an IB student give my child an advantage when applying to university?

Students in the IB Programme earn two Diplomas, an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and an IB Diploma. Both the OSSD and IB Diplomas are well respected. Ontario universities and colleges

first consider the OSSD results when making admissions decisions. IB results may be considered after admission to award advance credits, or placement at the university.

Other universities and colleges in Canada, as well as internationally consider OSSD and IB Diplomas in various ways. Students are encouraged to speak with the schools and programs to which they are applying closer to the time of application to learn about their processes.

Do IB students get lower marks than students in OSSD classes because the Programme is rigorous?

IB assessment criteria and mark bands take into consideration the rigour of the Diploma Programme and student scores are not impacted negatively by participation in the Programme.

IB IN THE YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Which schools in the York Region District School Board offer the IB Programme?

Alexander Mackenzie High School, Bayview Secondary School, Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School, Maple High School and Milliken Mills High School are authorised IB World Schools.

Who can apply to the IB Programme in York Region?

Grade 8 students who currently live in York Region are eligible to apply.

Regrettably, visa students (i.e. international fee-paying students) are not eligible for the IB Programme in York Region.

Children of parents who hold a work permit/visa are eligible to apply.

Does my child need to have French to be eligible to apply to the IB Programme?

We recommend that students are working at grade level in French at time of application.

How many spots do you offer?

YRDSB anticipates that we will be able to offer placements to over 500 students at the five sites. We will offer 116 spots at each site.

Is busing available?

Transportation is **not** provided for regional programs such as IB. Our schools are located on local transit lines.

Can I apply from Grade 9 or 10?

Students who are in grade 9 or 10 should contact the IB Coordinator at the school that serves their home address to learn about eligibility and available space.

Would you consider offering Higher Level IB maths?

Although we revisit our course offering regularly, we do not anticipate that we will be offering HL maths in future. There are very few post-secondary programs that request HL maths, and our students are still eligible to apply because they earn both the IB and OSS Diplomas.

Can my child also take non-IB courses while completing the IB Diploma Programme?

In grade 11 and 12 IB students have a full course load. There is no room in the student schedule to take extra, or non-IB courses. Some students elect to take non-IB courses during the summer.

What percentage of students attend international postsecondary schools?

A small percentage of our graduates do attend international postsecondary institutions. We do not release the names of schools to which students apply, or select to attend. We have a 100% graduation rate and all of our IB students have accepted or deferred offers of admission to postsecondary learning.

If we decided to participate in the IB Programme in Grade 9, are we *required* to finish the programme? Can my child change their mind?

We work very hard to support students so that they thrive while participating in YRDSB's preIB and IB Programmes and we hope that they will work through and complete their IB course of study but students are not obliged to stay in a programme that is not the right fit for them. Be advised students may be required to return to their home school if they do not stay in the programme.

YRDSB IB BOUNDARIES

To which school can I apply?

You are assigned to a school based on your home address. To determine which school serves your home address, please visit the [YRDSB School Locator](#). We strongly encourage you to do this before completing the online application.

We have purchased a home in York Region or in a specific IB school's boundaries. Can my child apply for the YRDSB Program, or that school's IB Programme?

This is a question that needs to be considered on an individual basis as there are several variables taken into consideration (for example, your closing date). Prior to completing an application, you will need to make an appointment to speak with an administrator from your IB area school who will assess your situation.

My IB Area school is not conveniently located; a different school is a better or more convenient option for our family. Can we apply here?

No. Application eligibility is based on home address and, regrettably, we are not able to make exceptions.

I own property in a school's catchment area but do not live there; can we apply with that address?

No. Application eligibility is based on the student's current home address and, regrettably, we are not able to make exceptions.

We plan to buy/rent a property in a school's catchment area in the future. Can we apply to that school?

No. Application eligibility is based on **current** home address, and regrettably, we cannot make exceptions.

I want to know that my child is accepted into the IB Programme before I purchase a new home. Can I apply to a specific site with the future intention to purchase a home?

No. Application eligibility is based on home address at time of registration and, regrettably, we are not able to make exceptions.

Can I apply to the YRDSB IB Programme and to other IB Programmes?

You may apply to Programmes offered by other Boards or private schools; however, when applying to the YRDSB Program, you are only able to apply to your area IB School.

Are transfers between YRDSB sites available?

If you move into a new IB catchment area, transfers can only be considered if there is available space.

2025 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

What are the application requirements?

- Live in York Region **at time of application**
- Be a student currently in Grade 8
- Complete the online registration process through EDSBY
 - The Application Window will be open: **Friday, October 17, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. - Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.**
 - During the online registration, students will select a day to write an in-person Assessment Task
 - Thursday, November 20, 2025 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
 - OR
 - Saturday, November 22, 2025 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
- Write the in-person assessment task
 - Students respond to a prompt provided by a teacher
- Complete the Personal Portfolio
 - Details about submitting the Portfolio will be shared with the applicant's email address after the registration window closes

- The Personal Portfolio is due by: **9:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 19, 2025.**

Where is the link to complete the EDSBY application?

The **IB registration link** to complete the EDSBY application can be found on the Application and Admissions page of Dr. G.W. Williams' website.

How can we create an EDSBY account if our child is not currently attending a YRDSB school?

These are the [Instructions for YRDSB IB Programme Registration - Parent Reference Guide](#) and these are the [Instructions on how to login / create an Edsby parent account - Parent Reference Guide](#).

PERSONAL PORTFOLIO

What is the Personal Portfolio?

The Personal Portfolio is an opportunity for students to tell us about themselves.

Students are asked to think about the life experiences that they have had and to choose three (3) artefacts that represent how these life experiences have shaped them as individuals.

For each of the artefacts students should: **(a) explain what they have learned about themselves from the experience and (b) explain how they can apply this learning in the future.** Students have a maximum of 75 words to answer these questions for each artefact.

For the purpose of this task, an artefact is a visual or graphic representation of an experience. Experiences may include a life event, a trip you have taken, a community event, a personal accomplishment, your participation in an activity, your involvement in the creation of something, or a tradition.

Students will submit this portfolio via a Google slide deck. They will receive a direct email with details about how to format and submit the portfolio after the application window closes.

Where will applicants receive information about submitting the Portfolio?

Information about submitting the Portfolio will be sent to the student's email address after the application window closes.

For YRDSB students this address will be their YRDSB gapps account. For students who are not currently in the YRDSB system, the email will be sent to the student email address entered on the EDSBY application form.

In what format are students expected to complete the Portfolio?

Students are asked to create three (3) slides, one for each artefact. Students should answer the task prompts in the "speaker notes" section of the slide presentation. A template will be provided to

support students with this task. To answer these questions for each artefact, students have a maximum of 75 words.

Students may answer the questions in point form.

Must students complete the Portfolio in one sitting, or can they save the work and work over time?

Students are able to work on the portfolio slides over time. They must submit their work no later than **9:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 19, 2025.**

Can students edit the portfolio after they submit it?

No. Students will have up to one week to work on the portfolio before submitting it. Once submitted, the portfolio cannot be edited and resubmitted.

Can students submit the Portfolio late?

No. Late submissions will not be considered. The completed portfolio must be submitted before **9:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 19, 2025.**

Can anyone (ex: parents or a sibling) help me to complete the portfolio?

No. This is an independent task. Questions should be directed to the IB Coordinator.

IN-PERSON ASSESSMENT TASK

When do I complete my in-person assessment task?

You will complete your in-person assessment task on the day you selected when you registered for the IB Programme Application Process through the EDSBY platform.

- Thursday, November 20, 2025 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- OR
- Saturday, November 22, 2025 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Where will the assessment task take place?

The assessment task will take place at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School at the time you select during the EDSBY registration process..

What is the assessment task?

Students will be asked to respond in writing to a prompt.

What do you want to see in my answer?

We will be reading your answer both for the ideas that you share, and for the clear communication of those ideas.

Can I prepare for this assessment?

It is not necessary to study or prepare for this assessment task. We do not encourage or endorse any tutors or tutoring companies.

Is there a time limit for students to complete the assessment task?

Students will have 40 minutes to plan and write their response to the prompt.

In what format should I write my response?

Answers should be full sentences written in paragraph form.

Is there a recommended word count?

This is a timed writing, so there is no word count target or limit. We encourage students to make use of a full writing process: planning, writing and editing. We are looking for quality not quantity in student responses.

What tools should I bring to the assessment?

Students may complete the written task using a pencil or pen.

MISCELLANEOUS APPLICATION QUESTIONS**Is there a multiple choice subject assessment or test for the Dr. G.W. Williams SS application this year?**

No. There is no subject-based assessment or test this year.

Are applicants required to submit a report card as part of the application this year?

No. Report Cards are not an application requirement for this year.

Is it necessary to submit a reference letter as part of the application this year?

No. We neither require nor will we consider reference letters this year.

Can I submit additional materials to support my application?

No. Please do not submit additional materials in an effort to support your application.

Can I find out the results of my IB Program application?

Individual results and/or standings will not be released. Submitting the application indicates that you understand and will adhere to this policy by not requesting the results.

If I am not accepted, is there a waiting list?

When application decisions are released, we will advise parents and students whether they are on a waiting list. We will draw students from this waiting list until seats have been filled – up until September of Grade 9. Students on the waiting list will only be contacted IF a space becomes available for them.

If a student is offered a place in the IB Programme, are they required to accept the offer?

No. Students are offered a placement and will be given a date by which to advise the school if they will be accepting or declining the offer.

Do we pay a fee when we are accepted to the Programme?

Yes. Payment of the Grade 9 fee is made when accepting an offer of admission. The fee is \$258.00. Details regarding payment will be shared with offers of admission.

SCHOOL LIFE AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**Do the YRDSB's PreIB and IB students only take classes with other IB students?**

In Grade 9 and 10 students have the opportunity to take elective courses, meet and work with students from many of the programs offered in our schools. In Grade 11 and 12, students are usually in IB courses only.

Do IB students have time to participate in extracurricular activities?

The IB Diploma Programme encourages and requires students to strive for balance in the different aspects of their lives - intellectual, physical and emotional. Extracurricular activities are an essential component of achieving this balance and required to meet the Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) requirements of the IB core.

My child is a high performance athlete, can the IB Programme accommodate their training schedules?

YRDSB's PreIB and IB students have a full school timetable every year. While in the past, high performance athletes may have participated in YRDSB's IB Programmes, they were able to arrange training schedules to accommodate their school schedules. Regrettably, the school timetable cannot be changed for IB students to participate in athletic competition or training.

Still have a question?

After reading this document, if you still have questions, you are welcome to reach out to your IB Coordinator by email.