



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Learn at Home Phase 2 *Parent Guide*



OCDSB LEARN AT HOME

PARENT GUIDE

On April 6th, we begin Phase 2 of OCDSB Learn at Home. We are taking a phased approach to OCDSB Learn At Home and will focus on teaching and learning in two week blocks. This will give us an opportunity to hear how it is working for our families and students and make any necessary adjustments. We don't expect parents to be teachers and are not trying to recreate the school day at home. We are here to support parents and students in their learning.

What Does Learn At Home Mean?

Learn At Home is new for everyone. We know that parents and teachers are trying to support learning at the same time that they are working from home and caring for others. These are challenging circumstances.

OCDSB Learn At Home will allow learning to continue with a focus on key concepts so that students can finish their academic year and advance to the next year or graduate. Some things parents should know about the OCDSB Learn At Home strategy are:

- **Age and Grade Appropriate** — Everything is based on the age and grade of the student, including hours of work, focus areas, use of technology and communication;
- **Hours of Work** — The number of hours of learning per week is reduced and includes the total amount of time for instruction and student work;
- **Focused** — Not every subject will be taught in elementary; in secondary and elementary teachers will focus on key concepts;
- **Instruction** — Instruction is teacher-led with resources to support learning, and tasks/assignments for students;
- **Technology** — Instruction will happen electronically and could include Google classroom, Google Meets/Hangouts, Google Sites, our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), teacher websites and email or phone calls as appropriate;
- **Supported** — Resources and supports are available for families including access to technology, online learning resources, special education resources and professional services. Speak with your teacher and principal for support.
- **Culturally Relevant and Responsive** — Students have access to learning resources where they see themselves and their families represented and reflected.
- **Assessment** — All students, Kindergarten to Grade 12, will receive final report cards at the end of the school year. Students graduating from grade 12 this year will receive mid-year marks for semester 2. .
- **Parental Support** — Parent resources and supports have been created to help support student learning and well-being.



We are all in transition, which is why we are taking a measured approach. In Phase 1 educators and principals were checking-in with families with a focus on well-being. This will continue in Phase 2, with the addition of focused teacher-led instruction to support student learning. There are resources and tips available to assist parents. If you have questions or need additional support, please speak with your child’s teacher or principal.

Hours of Instruction

The Ministry of Education has provided direction by grade on the number of hours of learning per week, and the areas of curricular focus for students. The number of hours per week/course varies by age and grade.

Grades	Total Hours per week (Teaching and Learning)	Areas of Focus
K-3	5 hours	Literacy and Math
4-6	5 hours	Literacy, Math, Science and Social Studies
7-8	10 hours	Literacy, Math, Science and Social Studies
9-12	3 hours per course (semestered schools) 1.5 hours per course (non-semestered schools)	Course content

The number of hours **is the total amount of time** students will be engaged with their learning in a given week. This would **include any teaching time led by teachers, as well as the time for students to be working on the learning tasks assigned by teachers.** We recognize the need for flexibility for our families in these unusual circumstances. We have created the attached the [OCDSB Learn at Home Plan — Phase 2](#) for easy reference.

Focus on Key Areas of the Curriculum

The Ministry of Education has limited the scope of instruction. Teachers are reviewing their long range plans and curriculum requirements to determine which “big ideas” and “core skills” have not yet been taught, practiced and assessed. Teachers will modify and simplify their long range plans. Not all specific curriculum expectations will be addressed. The focus is on core skills and big ideas that are essential to the grade or course.

Even though every subject will not be taught, educators are working to deliver an integrated curriculum to the extent possible. We also know that many students are learning in other ways while at home and this can support critical thinking, inquiry, innovation and creativity. This is a good opportunity to encourage your child’s learning through other activities such as reading, card games, science experiments, independent study, art, music, or personal fitness.



Educator Collaboration to Support All Students and Families

We have asked our educators to collaborate; together they will create safe and supportive learning communities to ensure that students and families feel supported, rather than overwhelmed, by learning opportunities. This includes thinking about:

- The number of contacts that are reasonable for a family/ student to negotiate at this time;
- How to intentionally build in opportunities to understand the current needs (emotional, learning, physical) of students/ families?
- How to work together to differentiate instruction and support for learners/ families?

Technology at Home and Support for Families

Technology is an important part of the OCDSB Learn At Home strategy, but this does not mean that students are in a virtual classroom all day. Teachers will use technology to reach out to all students and provide meaningful learning. This will be through a combination of teacher-led instruction, resources to support learning, and tasks/ assignments. This will look different by age and grade, and could include using Google classroom, Google Meets/Hangouts, Google Sites, and our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Teachers who have established teacher websites and/or other tools may continue to use those. In addition, email or phone calls will be used as appropriate.

We have been working to **support with families who require wifi access and/or devices** in order to support your child's learning at home. Schools will be in touch with families in the next week. If you require assistance with access to technology, please speak with the principal of your child's school.

Online Learning Resources

OCDSB Learn At Home includes [additional online learning resources](#) compiled to support learning. These cover a range of grades and subjects and include:

- Mathematics
- Language (English, French as a Second Language)
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies/History/Geography
- Physical Education
- Arts



Special Education Supports and Resources

An important part of our plan is ensuring support for students with special education needs. We know that these supports look different for learning at home and have created this list of [Special Education Resources and Supports for OCDSB Learn At Home](#) to assist families. The document includes information for different age groups about resources to support in the following areas:

- Reading and Writing
- Mathematics
- Gross and Fine Motor Skills and Sensory Skills
- Life and Personal Care Skills
- Social Skills
- Communication Skills
- Self-Regulation
- Blind and Low Vision Resources
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Resources
- Assistive Technology

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Teachers will be reviewing IEPs for students in their class to ensure any accommodations, modifications, or alternative curriculum expectations are taken into consideration when planning for learning at home. Parents of students with IEPs may want to consider collaborating with their child's teacher to reinforce accommodations and/or IEP goals in the home learning environment. We know this may not always be possible, but a discussion with your child's teacher may help to identify solutions.

Accessing learning supports and professional services staff

Given the current exceptional circumstances, we are not able to provide direct support to students at home. Educational Assistants are helping teachers to support student learning needs. Professional staff, including Psychologists, Social Workers, Speech Language Pathologists, and Board Certified Behaviour Analysts have been reaching out to the students with whom they work. We are exploring new options to provide professional services support using a secure virtual platform that ensures privacy and confidentiality.

If you require services or supports, please speak with your child's teacher/principal.

English Language Learners

Teachers are planning for the needs of English language learners (ELL). Teachers use the STEP continuum to address the language learning goals and content/curriculum goals of students. Parents of ELL students should encourage their children/youth to access TVO resources and other age appropriate television and radio where they can be hearing the English language, to practice speaking in English, and know that reading and writing in their own language(s) also helps to build literacy skills. There are resources to support English Language Learners in our [Additional Online Resources](#).



Culturally Relevant and Responsive

In this unprecedented time, we continue our commitment to equity, inclusion and supporting the dignity of every person. We have been working to provide learning resources that are culturally relevant and responsive along with thoughtfully designed learning opportunities to ensure that all of our students feel supported, seen, and connected.

Secondary eLearning Courses

All eLearning courses will resume on Monday, April 6th. This includes both OCDSB courses, and all of the courses offered through the OELC (Ontario eLearning Consortium). eLearning students, and parents will receive a direct email to share further details. The student learning requirement will be 3 hours per week.

Assessment and Evaluation

The Ministry has provided direction about assessment, evaluation and reporting. For elementary students, teachers will use formative assessment to gather evidence and provide feedback on student progress in learning. Secondary students will be assigned learning tasks, projects and culminating activities that will be marked by their teachers for purposes of formative and summative assessments. Teachers will communicate results of these marked assignments to students. Results will be used by teachers to inform students' final course marks. We are also expecting additional information from the Ministry.

Report Cards and Graduation

All students, Kindergarten to Grade 12, will receive final report cards at the end of the school year. Students graduating from grade 12 this year will receive mid-year marks for semester 2. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that all students finish their academic year and advance to the next year or earn the credits they need to graduate.

*These are unprecedented times as
we work together to reduce the
transmission of COVID-19.*

*We want to thank you for your
continued support, caring and
commitment to students and families.*





OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



April 2020