



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

2025-2026
INTERN HANDBOOK

*An overview of training in school
psychology at Ottawa's largest school board*





OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Internship Program in School Psychology 2025-2026

Intern Brochure

**An overview of training in school psychology at
Ottawa's largest school board**

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Our Commitment to Social Justice

We acknowledge that the Ottawa Carleton District School Board Internship Program in School Psychology takes place on the traditional unceded, unsurrendered Algonquin Anishnaabeg Territory, and we thank the Algonquin Nation for hosting us on their land.

We recognize that there have been, and continue to be, significant wrongs committed towards Indigenous Peoples, Persons of Colour, individuals who identify as 2SLGBTQ+, and members of other marginalized communities. We are continuing the journey of understanding the ongoing effects of colonialization, systemic racism, and discrimination, as well as exploring opportunities to disrupt the systems of oppression.

In order to be a competent psychologist, you must be able to practice psychology with all persons. Within our internship training program, we also believe that a competent psychologist must be aware of their own identity, practice in an anti-oppressive and anti-racist manner, and be committed to taking real and meaningful action to fight for equality and social justice for all persons. We need to do better.

Overview of the Ottawa Carleton District School Board

The Ottawa Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) is the largest school board in Eastern Ontario serving more than 74,000 students within the City of Ottawa. The OCDSB is the seventh largest district by school population in the province of Ontario and currently has 143 in-person school sites:

- 116 elementary schools (for students in Year 1 kindergarten through grade 8)
 - 108 community-based elementary schools
 - 5 alternative elementary schools that allow for increased flexibility in instruction and learning
 - 2 special education sites
 - 1 virtual school
 - Schools vary in the grades offered, and may include:
 - Kindergarten - grade 5
 - Kindergarten - grade 6
 - Kindergarten - grade 8
 - Grade 6 - 8
 - Grade 7 - 8
- 31 secondary schools (for students in grades 9 through 12+)
 - 22 community-based secondary schools
 - 1 arts-specialization secondary school
 - 2 technical secondary schools with trade specialties
 - 5 alternate secondary schools that accommodate learners for whom traditional school environments have not been successful
 - 1 Virtual School
 - 1 adult high school for adult learners to earn credits towards obtaining their Ontario Secondary School Diploma

The OCDSB is committed to being a dynamic creative learning organization that fosters the achievement, well-being, and dignity of every student. There are many resources available to help support our learners throughout their school careers, such as those available through Learning Support Services (LSS). These services include Psychology, Social Work, Speech and Language, and Itinerant Teachers and Itinerant Educational Assistants to support exceptional students.

Psychology at OCDSB

The Department of Psychology exists as an interdependent department within Learning Support Services (LSS) at OCDSB. Psychology staff are mental health professionals (psychologists, psychological associates, and psychoeducational consultants). Currently, there are 40 psychology staff working at the OCDSB, including 19 autonomous doctoral level psychologists. These professionals have declarations of competence in school and/or clinical psychology, and some have additional competence in counselling psychology, neuropsychology, or forensic psychology. The specific psychologists who are available for supervision vary from year to year; as such, we cannot guarantee supervision with a psychologist who has a specific competence.

In addition to our permanent staff, the OCDSB also acts as a training centre for a variety of trainees in psychology at different levels. There are frequently a number of graduate-level psychology students completing practicum placements under supervision from psychology staff. This provides an opportunity for interns to obtain experience supervising practicum students while under supervision themselves. We also often have staff members completing their supervised practice year(s) or retraining plans. Four interns in psychology complete our psychology staff team.

Psychology staff provide direct psychological services to more than 3,000 students each year. They are each assigned to families of schools across the district, and provide services and support to those schools. Examples of such services include:

- Consultation with school staff about students or programming;
- Early screening of learning, social-emotional, and behavior problems;
- Individual assessment of learning, social-emotional, and behavior problems;
- Individual or group intervention;
- Capacity building of school staff and LSS staff; and,
- Collaboration with community partners.

Although each staff member provides services independently in their schools, the department of psychology operates as a team. Staff members are encouraged to consult with each other as needed throughout their days/weeks. There are formal staff meetings approximately once a month, with additional informal opportunities for peer support and consultation through supervision pods. All trainees, including interns, are provided with a primary supervisor; interns also have a secondary supervisor and are connected with mentors through their rotations and participation on committees. However, all psychology staff are available to our interns for support and consultation.

The Tiered Approach to Service Provision

Within the OCDSB, supports and accommodations are provided to students within a tiered model. This means that attempts are made to support students with the least intrusive strategies that are effective. To this end, a tiered approach to service provision was developed, as shown in Figure 1.

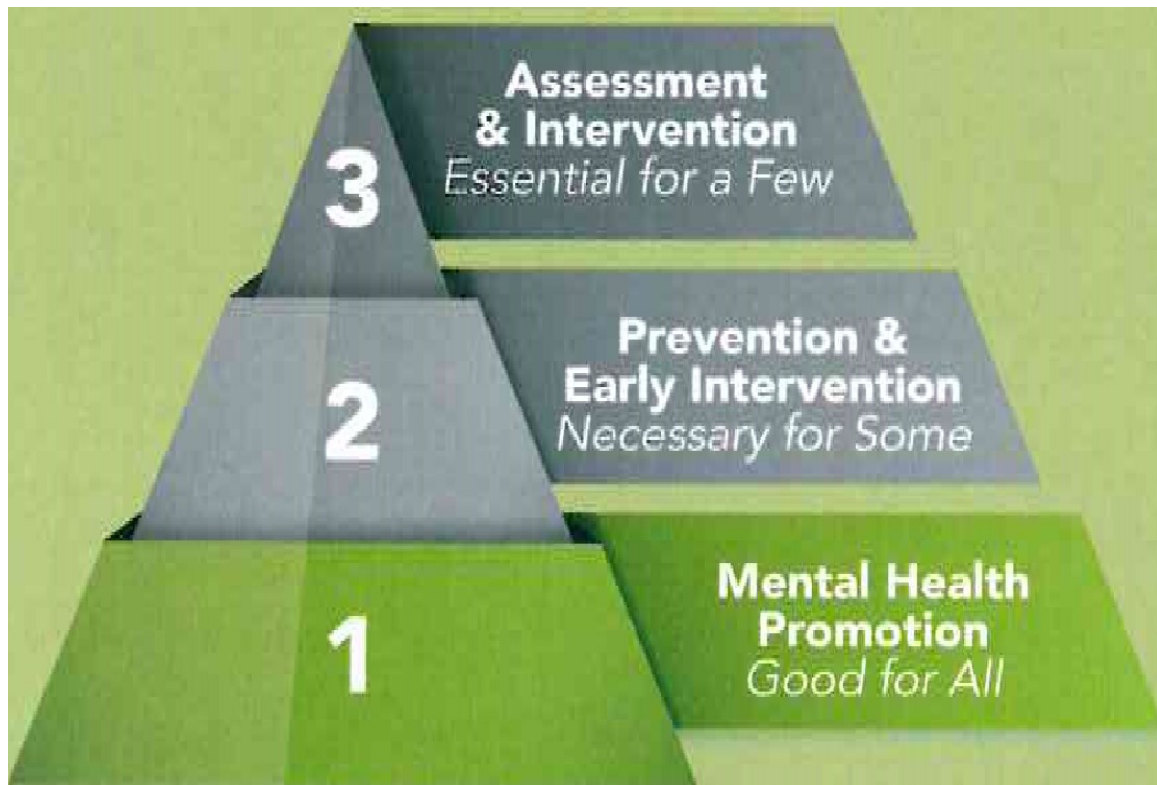


Figure 1. Tiered approach to service provision at the OCDSB

In practice, this tiered approach means that staff and interns will be expected to provide services to a wide variety of students at different levels of concern. Some examples include the following:

- Tier 1: Consultation with an educator about ADHD, observation of a student to provide recommendations to the educator about behaviour management or learning, building capacity by providing training to school staff
- Tier 2: Review of a psychological assessment to provide recommendations, discussing a student at a multi-disciplinary meeting, referring to in-school teams
- Tier 3: Conducting a psychological assessment, providing individual intervention, connecting with community agencies, referring to OCDSB teams

Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings

Each school has a multi-disciplinary team, consisting of school staff members (the learning support teacher, principal and/or vice-principal, and others depending on the school), a psychology staff member, a social worker, a speech and language pathologist, and a learning support consultant. Other staff are included in this team as relevant and required. This team meets to discuss the needs of students of concern within the school and to plan for their support within the tiered approach. Consent is required in order for the team to discuss students. Most schools hold at least three regular multi-disciplinary team meetings throughout the year, as well as additional case conferences as needed. As members of the psychology staff, interns form an integral part of the multi-disciplinary team and are expected to attend these meetings at their schools.

In addition to these in-school multi-disciplinary team meetings, interns will participate on a Specialized Class Placement (SPC) review committee. At the OCDSB, we offer specialized congregated programming to students with significant learning needs (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, learning disorders, behaviour, giftedness). Schools prepare applications for students to attend these programs, and a system-level multi-disciplinary team, consisting of representatives from psychology, social work, speech and language, and educators, reviews the applications and makes recommendations for placement. Interns will have the opportunity to participate on a review committee.

Finally, interns will also attend Learning Support Services staff meetings. These are also system-level multi-disciplinary meetings, including members of psychology, social work, speech and language, itinerant teachers, and itinerant educational assistants. The purpose of these meetings is to share information about the school system that is relevant to all disciplines.

The Internship Program in School Psychology

The OCDSB Internship Program in School Psychology has recently achieved accreditation with the Canadian Psychological Association, making it the first accredited school psychology internship program in Canada that is not part of a consortium. We are thrilled to provide quality training in school psychology within the Canadian context.

The mission of the OCDSB Internship Program in School Psychology is to prepare developing professionals with the body of knowledge, the set of skills, and the habit of thought necessary to work effectively as a school psychologist in an educational setting. By “habit of thought,” we are referring to the intangible practices beyond knowledge and skills, such as the attitudes, the interpersonal awareness and skills, and the interplay between learning, development, and mental health.

The philosophy of the internship mirrors that of the OCDSB, in that the learning and wellbeing of our students is central. An evidence-based/best practices approach is used and findings from clinical research are closely integrated with student learning and well-being. Student cognitive, psychosocial, and mental health needs and challenges are conceptualized within a developmental framework.

Our program recognizes and values the unique skill set that school psychologists develop, as well as the essential role they play in supporting all students in an equitable manner. Our program exists to provide quality training to aspiring school psychologists. We value the fact that we offer psychological services in an accessible manner, helping to provide services to traditionally underserved communities. Consistent with the OCDSB’s focus on equity and anti-racism, our program strives to work toward teaching anti-racist, anti-oppressive practice. As a training program for school psychologists, we understand the role of both mental health and learning in student well-being, as well as the inability to separate the two.

The Internship Program in School Psychology is intended for students completing doctoral studies in school or clinical psychology. This program is designed as a training experience for interns that helps them complete the requirements of their doctoral training and prepares them for a career in school psychology. While the program focuses on school psychology, the skills learned are readily transferable to a range of community settings.

Interns work in schools within the educational context with other members of the multidisciplinary team. Interns provide a variety of psychological services to students and schools including consultation, assessment, intervention, prevention, staff development, and collaboration with community partners. Tiered intervention is emphasized so that the intern works to support educators in working with students in their classrooms (Tier 1) and in small group settings within the school (Tier 2). The goal of these tiers is to support students in the least intrusive means possible and to attempt to prevent future difficulties in at risk students. If a more complete psychological assessment or intervention is required (Tier 3), the intern would provide these services within the scope of their skill set.

Interns will gain experience with children and youth who present with learning, self-regulation, behavioural, social-emotional, well-being, and mental health challenges. Interns are exposed to an array of students in a variety of educational settings. The emphasis is on early identification and early intervention, assessment, program development and intervention, and prevention. Building capacity for front line staff who work with students in the classroom is also a significant focus of the internship.

Through their internship experience, trainees develop an increased awareness of and acquire skills with respect to mental health prevention and promotion, assessment, diagnosis, consultation, program planning, intervention, and professional ethics. Weekly supervision sessions are held to assist the intern achieve these goals.

During the internship, interns are exposed to:

1. **The role of the school psychologist in an educational setting:** Ways in which the school psychologist can work effectively within the school culture are addressed. The importance of working with the student within one of their two natural habitats (home and school) is explored.
2. **Interactions with school staff, colleagues, students, and families:** Working collaboratively within the school setting, in conjunction with the school's multidisciplinary team, students, and families, requires an understanding of a variety of ways of interacting professionally and communicating information. Awareness of these interpersonal dynamics will be explored in supervision.
3. **Evidence-based intervention:** Effective and cost efficient problem solving, intervention, and programming, based on research and outcome studies, will be emphasized.
4. **Opportunities to work with educators and engage in capacity building:** Teachers, Early Childhood Educators, Educational Assistants, and other school-based staff are at the forefront in dealing with students' learning, well-being, and mental health. The intern will have the opportunity to engage in professional development intended to improve the knowledge and skills of school staff.
5. **Ethics, Jurisprudence and Professional issues:** The CPA Code of Ethics, The College of Psychology of Ontario Standards of Practice, and the legislative statutes and regulations that govern psychology, particularly school psychology, are explored on an ongoing basis. Included in ethical care is a move toward anti-racist, anti-oppressive practice, and integrating principles of social justice and equity into our practice.

Goals and Objectives of the Internship Program

Goal 1 – Develop competence in providing comprehensive assessments with children and adolescents with a variety of presenting concerns from a diversity of backgrounds

Objective 1 – Interns will demonstrate competence assessing children and adolescents presenting with learning, behavioural, emotional, and developmental concerns, using a range of assessment tools and techniques, recognizing the potential impact of cultural and linguistic diversity.

Goal 2 – Develop competence in providing consultation to families, educators, and community agencies.

Objective 2 – Interns will demonstrate competence in providing consultation to families, educators, and community agencies, around a variety of presenting concerns (e.g., learning, behaviour, mental health, development, risk, etc.), integrating an understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity into conceptualization and recommendation.

Goal 3 – Develop competence in providing a variety of types of interventions relevant to a diversity of presenting concerns and backgrounds.

Objective 3 – Interns will demonstrate competence in planning and delivering evidence-based interventions (e.g., Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Brief Intervention for School Psychologists (BRISC), Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS), Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), psychoeducation) in different modalities (e.g., individual, group, family, classroom-based, school-wide), using data-based treatment monitoring.

Goal 4 – Develop interpersonal skills required for professional and ethical practice.

Objective 4 – Interns will demonstrate competence in developing and adapting interpersonal relationships with a variety of people and settings, including clients, families, educators, and professionals, especially as required for working with clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Goal 5 – Develop the habit of thought required to integrate science into clinical practice, according to the scientist-practitioner model.

Objective 5 – Interns will demonstrate competence in integrating elements of program evaluation, research, and scientific exploration into their clinical practice, learning the importance of remaining grounded in the literature.

Goal 6 – Develop sensitivity to, and awareness of, individual and cultural differences.

Objective 6 – Interns will demonstrate awareness of their own backgrounds and biases, and reflect on the impact of these on clients, sensitivity to the individual and cultural diversity of clients, and the application of these skills in clinical practice.

Goal 7 – Develop the ethical and professional standards required for independent practice.

Objective 7 – Interns will demonstrate an awareness of the legal and ethical requirements for psychological practice and will apply these in their practice; interns will also demonstrate professionalism in their communication, practice, and interactions with others, as well as during supervision.

Goal 8 – Develop the self-care skills required for independent practice.

Objective 8 – Interns will learn the importance of, and demonstrate skills in, managing multiple priorities and the work-life balance, including taking time for self-care activities to prevent compassion fatigue and burnout.

Goal 9 – Develop the skills necessary to provide supervision to a junior colleague.

Objective 9 – Interns will develop the skills required to supervise a practicum student in a school setting, including providing developmentally sensitive guidance, evaluation skills, and providing feedback.

Program Structure

This program is designed to provide the opportunity to work as a school psychologist while allowing the intern additional research, didactic, and supervision opportunities. As such, interns will be assigned a reduced school load compared with that of a full-time psychology staff member, and will be allotted time to participate in other training activities. This design has the flexibility to provide both breadth and depth of training for interns, exposing them to the wide range of activities typically conducted by school psychologists. There are four major components to the training program: clinical training in schools, rotations, didactic experiences, and program development/evaluation and/or research.

The internship year is divided into two main periods: the school year, and the summer. The school year runs from September to June, while the summer spans July and August. Internship activities vary according to the period. During the school year, interns engage in clinical training in schools, rotations, and didactic training. During the summer months, interns have the opportunity to engage in program development, program evaluation, and/or research activities.

Clinical Training in Schools

This training component takes place during the school year (September to June). Under the supervision of two doctoral level psychologists who have declarations of competence as school and/or clinical psychologists working with children and/or adolescents, the intern will work as a member of the psychology team and will be assigned up to four schools. An example of a possible school assignment is:

- Two elementary schools (kindergarten-grade 5, kindergarten-grade 6, kindergarten-grade 8);
- One elementary school that includes intermediate grades (kindergarten-grade 8, grades 6-8, or grades 7-8); and,
- One high school (grades 9-12+).

Interns are members of the school's multidisciplinary team, and as such are expected to provide psychological support to children, families, and staff in their schools. Typically, interns would be exposed to a diverse group of school-aged students with a variety of developmental, learning, and mental health issues. Through their internship experience, interns develop an increased awareness of and acquire skills with respect to diagnosis, consultation, assessment, interpersonal relationships, intervention, and professional and ethical issues.

Examples of these duties include:

- **Capacity Building:**
The OCDSB is currently involved in a variety of capacity building activities that assist educational staff help their students to become more resilient, engaged, and self-regulated learners. Interns may engage in a variety of activities such as making formal presentations, facilitating working groups,

providing guidance on tools, or modelling strategies. Interns may also be involved in planning programs, either for individual support, classroom-based support, or school-wide support.

- Consultation:

In accordance with the tiered approach, the first line of involvement with a student is often consultation with educators. Interns are expected to become familiar with the consultation model, allowing them to obtain information and provide recommendations for tier 1 and tier 2 supports.

- Early Identification and Early Intervention:

Early intervention has been found to be an effective way of addressing student needs prior to them interfering significantly in learning, behaviour, and well-being. Interns could learn to use screeners to augment their knowledge of early development to assist in identifying students at risk for challenges in the future. This data can also be used to assist in early learning program planning.

- Assessment:

A key activity provided by psychology staff is assessment. Interns will have the opportunity to engage in various forms of psychological assessment, including observations, interviews, administration of standardized tools, report writing, and providing feedback. At the OCDSB, there are many types of assessments possible, and interns may be exposed to any of the following:

- Psychoeducational assessments,
- Psychodiagnostic assessments,
- Developmental assessments,
- Risk of harm assessments,
- Suicide assessments, and,
- Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA).

- Intervention:

Youth often present with mental illness or challenges coping with adversity. Although complex mental illness and trauma are beyond the scope of presenting issues that can be responsibly treated within a school setting, there are many opportunities for intervention, especially at the secondary level. Interns are expected to use evidence-based practice when providing counselling or therapy to students for such issues as anxiety, depression, self-regulation, self-esteem, or family-based conflict.

- Collaboration:

It is important to recognize that no child exists in isolation. Interns are expected to collaborate with educators, school staff, and parents in supporting students. Many students are also connected with professionals in the community; when possible, interns are encouraged to try to collaborate with these professionals in order to provide consistent support to students.

Rotations

This training component takes place during the school year, between September to June. Rotations are designed to provide interns with exposure to different systems within the OCDSB, offering depth and breadth of experience. Interns will have the opportunity to participate in either one year-long rotations (September – June), or two half-year rotations (September – January, February – June), depending on their interests and the availability of activities. Each rotation will be supported by a rotation mentor, and will be performed under the supervision of the primary or secondary supervisor.

There are several rotations available with different teams within the board. The following are examples of opportunities that may be available. This list is not exhaustive; it may be possible to arrange other opportunities, depending on interests and availability. **It is important to note that some of these rotations or activities may not be available in the 2025-2026 year, depending on the availability of mentors.**

- Early Learning Team – The Early Learning Team (ELT) is a system-level consultation team that supports kindergarten students across all schools in our board. Referrals to the ELT may be for individual students or entire classes, requesting support for behaviour, language development, social skills, or learning concerns. The ELT provides observations and recommendations for support, often consulting about a student over a short period of time to develop a plan for intervention. Additional consultation is available through Kinder Care meetings - an ELT member joins the school's multi-disciplinary team to consult about a specific child or class. Opportunities for intern involvement include:
 - Reviewing and discussing applications for support;
 - Observations of kindergarten students and classes;
 - Consultations with staff, parents, and school teams; and,
 - Provision of short-term interventions with our youngest learners.
 - There may also be opportunities to develop resources to support educator learning.

- Developmental Disabilities – The Developmental Disabilities (DD) team is a system-level consultation team that supports learners with DD; team members support all schools within our board. The OCDSB also has two congregated learning settings for students with DD, as well as numerous congregated classes that are integrated into community schools. These DD programs are designed for students who have been identified as having moderate to severe deficits in intellectual ability and adaptive functioning. The program emphasizes the development of functional academic skills, communication, and adaptive/life skills. The DD team provides support for all of our learners with DD in these congregated settings as well as those who are integrated into community classrooms. Requests for support are typically related to learning needs, behaviour or mental health concerns, social skills, and engagement. Opportunities for intern involvement include:
 - Observations;
 - Consultation in multi-disciplinary team meetings;
 - Assessment;
 - Support for families as they connect with community agencies; and,
 - Short-term, in-school interventions and advocacy.

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- There may also be opportunities to develop resources to support educator learning.
 - Gifted Committee – The Gifted Committee (GC) is a system-level committee that supports and advocates for gifted learners across all schools and grade levels at the OCDSB. The GC supports gifted students in both specialized classes and in community schools. The GC is also involved in advocacy and equity work, as they attempt to understand and address the over- and underrepresentation of various populations receiving gifted support. Requests for support are typically related to engaging or motivating gifted learners or understanding a perceived mismatch between their cognitive abilities and their academic output; requests for support with self-regulation and mental health requests are also frequently received.

Opportunities for intern involvement include:

- Observations in community and specialized settings;
 - Consultation with educators about how to best support gifted learners in community schools;
 - Interventions for executive functioning, social skills, or emotion regulation; and,
 - Delivering professional development to educators.
 - There may also be opportunities to develop additional resources to support educator or student learning.
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- Autism Spectrum Disorders Team – The Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Team is a system-level team that supports the learning, adaptive, and behavioural needs of students with a diagnosis of ASD. The ASD team offers intake assessments and observations to incoming students with ASD, as well as ongoing consultation regarding students with autism in all grades. Opportunities for intern involvement include:
 - Observations in community and specialized settings;
 - Observation and participation in the intake process;
 - Consultation with educators about how to support students with ASD in community schools;
 - Consultation with educators in specialized settings about supporting students with ASD;
 - Consultation with psychology staff.
 - There may also be opportunities to develop additional resources to support educator or student learning.

 - Behaviour Rotation – This rotation would involve working closely with our Safe Schools Team, a system-level team that supports students with externalizing behaviour across all schools. This team also consults with psychology and social work staff members as they support their own schools. Participation in the behaviour rotation may require flexibility in scheduling, as the incidents are less predictable. Opportunities for intern involvement include:
 - Observations in community and specialized settings;
 - Consultation with psychology or social work staff about behaviour needs;

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- Shadowing and participation in Violence Risk Threat Assessments;
 - Shadowing and participation in Risk assessments;
 - Participation in the Critical Incident Review Committee (CIRC), a system-level committee that reviews and provides recommendations for significant, high-impact incidents; and,
 - Group interventions for students with significant self-regulation or behaviour needs.
 - There may also be opportunities to develop additional resources to support educator or student learning.
- Program Evaluation – This rotation is overseen by the Learning Support Services Program Evaluator. Although it is best experienced as a full-year rotation, arrangements can be made to participate in a half-year if needed. Specific program evaluation projects differ by year and change according to the priorities of the OCDSB. Recent projects include Barriers and Facilitators to Mental Health Support for Indigenous and Black Students in the OCDSB, review of our Learning Disabilities Program, and evaluation of in-school supports for gifted learners. Opportunities for intern involvement include:
 - Literature reviews;
 - Survey creation;
 - Participation in focus groups;
 - Data analysis;
 - Writing reports and/or developing presentations; and,
 - Knowledge dissemination.
- Complex Clinical Presentation – We are excited to announce a new rotation that we piloted during the 2023-2024 training year. This rotation will address the needs of several students with complex medical, neurodevelopmental, psychological, or combined presentations that require specialized assessment and/or consultation. The intern will provide consultation to psychology staff and will have the opportunity to engage in complex assessment and differential diagnosis. Interns interested in this rotation should have extensive training (e.g., neuropsychological, health) in diagnosing complex and comorbid presentations, as well as experience with various testing and psychological batteries. This rotation will be supervised by one of our school psychologists with expertise in clinical neuropsychology. Opportunities for intern involvement could include:
 - Developing research literature skills to find relevant scientific information to guide consultations and assessments;
 - Conducting assessment;
 - Learning about different psychological tests and measures;
 - Consulting with multidisciplinary team members, including external health care practitioners involved in student care; and,
 - Presenting the assessment results to the school team to help them better understand the presentation of their student.

Specialized Class Placement Review Committee

At the OCDSB, there are congregated programs designed to support significant learning needs. Admission to these programs is through application, and multi-disciplinary teams review each application to try to ensure goodness of fit between student need and program focus. Interns will have the opportunity to participate on a specialized class placement (SPC) review committee. These typically take place across several days in April to review and make recommendations for placement. Their activities will be supported by the SPC mentor, under the supervision of the primary or secondary supervisor.

The following is a list of the SPC committees. Please note that not all committees may be available in any given year.

- Autism Spectrum Disorders Program (elementary and secondary) – for students with autism who present with significant cognitive, adaptive, social, and/or behavioural needs
- Autism Spectrum Disorders Secondary Credit Support Program (secondary) – for students with autism who are cognitively capable of achieving secondary credits but who require support to cope as a result of their symptoms of autism
- Developmental Disabilities (elementary and secondary) – for students with moderate, severe, or profound intellectual disabilities or autism
- Primary Special Needs Program (elementary) – for students in grades 1-3 who present with weak cognitive, adaptive, and academic skills
- General Learning Program (elementary and secondary) – for students in grades 4-12+ who present with weak cognitive, adaptive, and academic skills
- Language Learning Disability Program (elementary) – for students who present with significant delays in their language skills
- Learning Disability Specialized Intervention Program (elementary) – a one or two year program for students in grades 5-8 with significant learning disabilities
- Learning Disabilities Program (secondary) – for students in grades 9-12+ who present with significant learning disabilities and who require additional support to achieve secondary credits
- Behaviour intervention program (elementary and secondary) – for students whose externalizing behaviour is interfering with their academic and social success
- Dual Support Program (elementary and secondary) – for students who present with weak cognitive, adaptive, and academic skills, AND who are demonstrating significant externalizing behaviour
- Gifted Program (elementary and secondary) – for students who present with extremely strong cognitive abilities
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program (elementary and secondary) – for students with significant hearing impairments
- Blind/Low Vision (elementary and secondary) – for students with significant vision impairments
- Physical Support Program (elementary and secondary) – for students with significant physical needs

Didactic Opportunities

The internship year is a training year, and as such there is a significant emphasis on didactic activities. There are a wide variety of didactic activities available at the OCDSB, averaging 2 hours per week, although the hours may be distributed differently depending on the specific scheduled activities.

Interns participate in the seminar series at the OCDSB; these typically occur 2-3 times a month. This series includes journal clubs, guided discussions, and formal presentations. A significant focus of this internship program is on diversity: working towards developing a knowledge and understanding of anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and culturally relevant practice. Diversity-based sessions focus on building competence in practice with diverse populations. In addition, these discussions include the need for psychologists to understand historical and current harm and oppression towards Indigenous Peoples, Persons of Colour, individuals who identify as 2SLGBTQ+, and other marginalized communities, and work towards social justice for all. There are also content based seminars such as autism spectrum disorder or giftedness. Other psychology staff who are under supervision also participate in these trainings, helping to create a peer group for interns.

Staff meetings are held each month to discuss discipline-related issues and share information with the team. These meetings may include presentations from staff members or community organizations; interns may also have the opportunity to present at a staff meeting on topics of interest.

The OCDSB Internship Program in School Psychology participates in the City Wide Intern Training Seminar Series. This is a collaboration between all of the internship sites in Ottawa. These seminars are designed to create a social group of interns in Ottawa, as well as to standardize exposure to important training topics. Each month for half a day, OCDSB interns join interns from other training programs in the Ottawa area for a City Wide seminar. Topics such as Cultural and Individual Differences, Ontario Legislation, Supervision, Private Practice, Psychology of Indigenous Peoples, Psychopharmacology, and Mental Health in 2SLGBTQ+ are presented and discussed.

In addition, we are members of the Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs (CCPPP) and will be participating in the National Internship Seminars. This series of seminars provide shared content on social justice and ethics to interns from many training sites across Canada.

There are also a number of other training opportunities available to the interns throughout the year; these opportunities may vary from year to year. Examples of recent workshops and formal didactic activities include:

- ASIST training (a 2-day suicide intervention workshop)
- Collaborative Problem Solving training
- Violence/Threat Risk Assessment training
- Brief Intervention for School Clinicians (BRISC)
- Assessments with culturally and linguistically diverse students

Research

It is important for psychologists to remain connected to research once their graduate studies are complete so that their clinical practice remains evidence-based. Psychologists must also be able to establish the efficacy of assessment, consultation, and intervention activities, and base their psychological conclusions on empirically supported knowledge. During the summer months, interns have the opportunity to develop their integrated research skills by participating in program development, program evaluation, or other research activities.

Program development activities are expected to flow from rotations or other clinical experiences and provide useable content at the end of the summer. Examples could include developing training modules for kindergarten educators to learn about aggression and self-regulation in young learners, creating a protocol for group therapy for a target population, or developing guidelines for psychology staff for combating racism or oppression while conducting assessments. There is a great deal of flexibility in topics, although topics will need to be approved by the Supervisor of Psychological Services. These activities would be largely independent, but would be supervised throughout the summer by the summer supervisor.

Summer program evaluation activities would involve joining with the LSS Program Evaluator. Over the summer, the activities tend to be more focused on data analysis, report writing, and knowledge transfer, but may also involve some planning for the following year's projects. Topics and projects will be provided to interns by the Program Evaluator.

Other research activities may be possible; literature searches or other secondary research projects could be approved if the topic has impacts for the practice of psychology. Unfortunately, due to the time limited nature of the internship year, it is typically not possible for interns to conduct primary research projects involving data collection.

In addition, if an intern has a specific interest in program evaluation, they are able to participate in the Program Evaluation Rotation (as described above). If an intern is assigned to the program evaluation rotation, they will also be expected to participate in the summer research experience. The intern may choose to continue to engage in program evaluation work, either on the project(s) they were engaged in throughout the year or on a new project(s), or they may choose to engage in other program development or research activities, as described above.

In May or June, interns have the opportunity to present their dissertation research to their colleagues in psychology. In this way, they are able to engage in disseminating knowledge and discussing the implications and applications of their research.

Weekly Expectations for the School Year

During the school year, schedules are generated on a biweekly basis; Figure 2 provides an example of a two-week schedule. Interns are expected to spend 3.5 days each week in schools, typically 1 day a week in their high school and 1 day each week or every other week in each of their other three schools. Higher needs schools are assigned additional time

each week. An additional day every two weeks is available to meet urgent or pressing demands in any of their schools.

Half a day each week is dedicated to engaging in rotations. The fifth day of the week is reserved for supervision and other didactic opportunities. While supervision may occur at any time during the week, the equivalent of a half day is spent reviewing cases and reports, as well as discussing other professional issues.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	High School	Elementary School 1	Elementary School 2	AM: Rotation activities	AM: Supervision
				Additional half-day to address school needs	PM: Didactic activities
Week 2	High School	Intermediate School	Elementary School 2	AM: Rotation activities	AM: Supervision
				Additional half-day to address school needs	PM: Didactic activities

Figure 2. Sample two-week schedule for the school year

Weekly Expectations for the Summer Months

The schedule is very different over the summer. Figure 3 provides an example of weekly schedule for the months of July and August.

As described above, most of the time over the summer is dedicated to program development, program evaluation, or other research activities (approximately 3.5 days per week). This provides the intern with sufficient time to be immersed in a project of choice and to create a product at the end of the summer, while the time limits encourage the intern to choose a manageable project.

During the summer, interns are also invited to engage in Personal Growth Project. This is designed to arise out of self-reflection and to develop the habit of continuous education throughout the career of a psychologist. With the support of their supervisors, interns select one or more areas in which they would benefit from additional knowledge or development. Time is provided throughout the summer for interns to pursue this growth independently, and

to discuss their progress with a supervisor. Interns may use this time to continue to develop some areas of weaker skill or address knowledge gaps, to broaden their current knowledge or skills, or to look ahead to a future position and gain knowledge in areas that may be beneficial in the future. For example, an intern who had only limited experience leading groups may choose to learn more about group therapy; an intern who is just beginning their learning journey in anti-racism may choose to engage in personal readings to deepen their understanding of identity and oppression; or an intern who will be transitioning to a family mental health clinic may choose to participate in training activities related to understanding and supporting family systems.

Supervision continues throughout the summer, focusing on competency development, self-reflection and mentorship, professional growth, and the transition to autonomy. Supervisor will also supervise the program development activities

The summer months also provide interns with a time buffer to ensure completion of all record keeping activities.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	Program development activities	1 hour of individual supervision + Program development activities	Program development activities	Program development activities	Personal growth project
PM	Program development activities	Program development activities	Program development activities	1 hour of group supervision + Intern socialization time	2 hours of individual supervision

Figure 3. Sample weekly schedule for the summer months

Supervision

In accordance with CPA Accreditation Standards, interns will have a small team of supervisors led by the primary supervisor who, along with the intern, will coordinate supervision. Interns will be assigned a primary and secondary supervisor. Additional mentors may be involved at different times throughout the internship year to provide mentorship during rotations and specialized class placement review.

A supervision contract is developed at the beginning of the internship between the intern and the primary and secondary supervisors so that there is a clear and common understanding of respective responsibilities and expectations. Within the first few weeks of internship, an individual training plan will be developed to help guide training activities.

The general goals of the internship are met through weekly supervision, as well as through meetings with the director of clinical training and selected staff. Supervision is developmental in that it takes the intern from a point of origin and moves forward in a systematic and planned manner towards predetermined goals. Supervision is also collaborative so that the professional development of both intern and supervisor is enhanced.

The intern will receive a minimum of four hours of supervision each week, at least three of which will be individual. Supervision is intended to be face-to-face, but may be conducted virtually by phone or videoconferencing if required. Supervision will include case review, the setting and monitoring training goals, and professional development. The majority of this supervision will be conducted with the primary supervisor, although there will also be regular (weekly or biweekly) supervision with the secondary supervisor, and additional supervision with additional supervisors as required.

Supervision of Supervision

In addition, the intern is considered a member of the OCDSB psychology department's training program. Each year, students from local psychology graduate programs participate in practicum placements at the OCDSB. Whenever possible, intern are provided with the opportunity to provide supervision to more junior trainees as part of their own professional development. The process of supervision is supervised by the primary or secondary supervisor.

Evaluation

At the end of January, the supervisory team meets with the intern to complete the mid-term evaluation forms. At this time, the Individual Training Plan is also reviewed in order to determine if any changes are needed to the original goals. At the end of June, when the school year is ending, interns meet with their supervisory team to complete the second clinical evaluation forms. A final evaluation form is completed by the summer supervisor team in August, at the end of the internship; this final evaluation form focuses on research

and other professional skills. Each of these evaluation forms are reviewed by the supervisory team and the intern.

The intern is then asked to complete a series of forms evaluating their internship experience and providing feedback to help further develop the internship training program. These evaluations are only completed once evaluations of the intern have been finalized so as to remove any actual or perceived consequences for the intern, and to encourage honest feedback on the intern's experience.

Facilities

The skills psychologists learn are transferrable, allowing them to generalize skills gained in one placement across a wide variety of practice settings. School psychologists in particular need to be flexible in their approach to psychology. Interns will learn to adapt to conditions in their different schools, and may need to adjust their daily expectations in response to unexpected circumstances. In addition, interns are part of an itinerant group of psychologists, which means that they move between settings to practice, requiring organization, preparation, and flexibility. In order to facilitate their work, all psychology staff are provided with the necessary space and materials.

Interns will require access to a car for the duration of the internship.

Workspace

Each school is expected to provide suitable space where the professional can operate in a private, comfortable manner and can conduct their clinical work confidentially. Interns typically spend most of their time at their schools, although they may participate in supervision, rotations, and didactic activities in various locations across the city. It is also possible that some of these activities remain virtual.

Given the itinerant nature of the role of school psychologist, psychology staff are not assigned individual workstations outside of the schools. There are shared workspaces for psychology staff at the two main OCDSB sites: in the psychology department at the main OCDSB administrative building and in the Learning Support Services satellite office at Gloucester High School. Interns are welcome to use desks in either location if they are not at one of their assigned schools.

Workshops and seminars will be held at various locations throughout the city, although they may also continue to be virtual.

Test Materials and Assistive Technology

Interns have access to all of the assistive technology, test supplies, and scoring systems that are available to OCDSB Psychology staff.

- **Laptop:** Interns are provided an encrypted laptop computer which they can use for email, report writing, accessing certain scoring systems, and search engines.
- **Virtual Platform:** Many non-clinical materials are available through the secure OCDSB Google network. These include encrypted Gmail and Google Drive, as well as additional Google Suite features. The OCDSB uses their secure Google Meet for providing virtual services. Like all psychology staff, interns have access to all necessary electronic resources.

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- **Cell Phone:** As school psychologists, we frequently travel between schools. Cell phones are provided to all staff, including interns, so as to facilitate communication with assigned schools and supervisors. In the case that an urgent matter arises, interns can be readily contacted by the psychology department or their schools.
 - **Test Supplies:** Interns will be provided with the tests they would typically use in their daily work, and will also have access to all of the other tests shared by OCDSB psychology staff on an as needed basis. Arrangements for borrowing these tests are made through the psychology department's office administrator. All protocols and scoring materials are provided by the psychology department. Many of the tests are computer-scored, and there are two scoring computers available to staff: one in the psychology department at the main OCDSB administrative building and the other at the Learning Support Services satellite office at Gloucester High School.
 - **Tablets:** Two iPads are made available to each intern for use in certain test administration (e.g., WISC-V). Training is provided for the use of the iPads for administering tests.
 - **Laserfiche:** Psychology files are stored electronically in a system called Laserfiche. Training is provided on the effective use of Laserfiche, including storing and organizing the data.
 - **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Should any PPE be required, it will be provided to interns. Historically, this has included disposable surgical or KN95 masks and eye protection (e.g., a face shield and/or eye goggles). Each school is equipped with a plexiglass barrier for use during in-person testing, and each school is responsible for providing hand sanitizer and sanitizing cleansers for work spaces and material.

Internship Specifications

Each year, there are four full time internship positions available. The Internship runs for 12 months, running from August 25, 2025 to August 22, 2026. Please note that the start date may be slightly later (e.g., September 1, 2025) depending on the approved OCDSB calendar. The intern spends approximately 1800 hours in the internship.

Eligibility

The requirements for application to the Ottawa Carleton District School Board Internship Program in School Psychology include:

- Current enrollment in a doctoral program in School or Clinical Psychology;
- Completion of all compulsory doctoral coursework by the time internship begins;
- Completion of comprehensive exams by the time internship begins;
- Dissertation proposal approved by the time internships begins;
- Dissertation research well underway (the dissertation does NOT need to be complete) by the time internship begins;
- Training and experience in consultation, intervention, and assessment; and,
- An interest engaging in capacity building with school staff.

In accordance with the CPA Accreditation Standards and Procedures, all applicants must have a minimum of 600 hours of supervised practicum experience, including at least 300 hours of direct service and 150 hours of supervision. The direct service hours must include a balance of assessment and intervention experiences with children and/or adolescents. Please note that the quality of your practicum hours (e.g., breadth and depth) is more relevant than the total number of hours.

We recognize and value the importance of lived experience and experientially gained knowledge. Applicants from marginalized populations, applicants with disabilities, and/or applicants with experience working with diverse populations, especially Indigenous Peoples, Persons of Colour, recent arrivals to Canada, and 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, will be given special consideration. In accordance with Canadian employment regulations, applicants must either be Canadian citizens or hold a permit that allows them to be eligible for employment in Canada.

We do require a police background check for working with vulnerable sectors, but we recognize that some candidates may have come into contact with the justice system through bias or advocacy; we will still review applications from candidates who have had prior police contact.

Application

The OCDSB Internship Program in School Psychology uses the APPIC standard application available online at <http://www.appic.org/>. We participate in the matching process sponsored by APPIC. All applicants must register with the National Matching Services (www.natmatch.com/psychint) and/or APPIC (www.appic.org) to be considered. Applications are reviewed and interviews are granted according to the eligibility criteria listed above.

The follow documents are to be included in the application:

- Cover letter describing the intern's interests in psychology in general and interest in school psychology in particular;
- Graduate school transcript;
- Curriculum Vitae;
- APPIC Verification of Internship Eligibility and Readiness Form; and,
- Three letters of reference (at least two of which should be from supervisors familiar with the intern's professional skills particularly as they relate to school psychology).

The OCDSB Psychology Program Code Number is 187711

Deadline for Submission is November 1, 2024.

Selection

The intern selection process is managed by the Intern Selection Committee, which is comprised of the Supervisor of the Department of Psychology, the Director of Clinical Training, and at least two psychologists. This committee receives and reviews all applications, and establishes a shortlist of applicants who will be invited for an interview. We adhere to the Canadian interview notification date: applicants will be notified whether they are invited to an interview on December 6, 2024, and arrangements for the interview will be started on December 9, 2024. Interviews are planned between January 13 – 24, 2025.

To address potential inequity and financial hardship for candidates, all interviews will be conducted virtually.

The current interview process is designed to provide applicants and interviewers with the information we both need to make the best choice for the internship year. Applicants first meet with the Director of Training and the Supervisor of Psychological Services to learn more about the internship program and ask any questions they may have. Although this is not intended to be evaluative in nature, it is an opportunity for all parties to explore goodness of fit between the applicant's training goals and the internship program. Following this, applicants will be interviewed by two psychologists. This is the formal interview portion and is evaluative. Finally, applicants are provided with the opportunity to speak confidentially with at least one current or former intern. This is designed to allow applicants to obtain information about the "real-life" experiences of the program. No feedback will be solicited from the current or former intern about this meeting. Each of these three portions lasts approximately 1 hour.

Please note that as we adapt to the virtual format, we may be incorporating additional interview elements to provide applicants with a more fulsome understanding of our program.

Following the interview period, the Intern Selection Committee will create a ranked list of potential candidates. The OCDSB Internship Program in School Psychology adheres to the requirements and process stipulated by APPIC for the match of intern and training site through the National Matching Service. Specifically, this internship site agrees to abide by the APPIC policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept, or use any ranking-related information from any intern applicant.

Should there be positions remaining after Phase I of the match, we participate in Phase II of the match and the Post-Match Vacancy Service, according to the APPIC procedure.

Preparation

Interns are hired as a casual employee of OCDSB. They require a Criminal Record Check, including a vulnerable sector check, completed within 6 months of the internship start date. Also, interns complete a number of online webinars required by the Ontario Ministry of Labour prior to being the Internship. Specific communication regarding timelines for these requirements will be addressed by members of the psychology department and OCDSB human resources.

Stipend and benefits

A stipend of \$46,000 is provided to each intern, paid out in two-week pay periods throughout the internship year. Interns are provided with sick leave benefits as per the employment agreement. In addition, interns are able to claim mileage for their required daily travel, according to the OCDSB mileage policy.

The intern has the vacation benefit of two weeks of holiday over the winter/Christmas break, one week of holiday during March Break, and two weeks of holiday in the summer. Please note that these holiday times are not flexible. Interns are entitled to all standard statutory holidays. In addition, interns are provided with 3 paid days for the observance of recognized religious holy days.

Since interns are regarded as casual employees with the OCDSB, they are not awarded health or pension benefits; however, since interns continue to be graduate students affiliated with their host university, they are urged to maintain their university health care benefits.

Similarly, internship positions are deemed learning positions and as such, the Union representing psychology staff does not regard interns as members of the Collective Bargaining Unit. This means that interns will not be expected to pay union dues or participate in union activities. Rather than seeking support from the union, interns will be provided with support from the ombudsperson, their supervisors, and the Director of Clinical Training.

Orientation

The orientation period will take place in the first two weeks of the internship. During this orientation period, the psychology department will ensure that all prerequisite elements of the intern's program are in place such as Human Resources requirements, school assignments, and access to departmental information systems. The Director of Clinical Training will have the intern's orientation package and the City-wide Seminar schedule. Interns will be introduced to their supervisors. Supervision contracts, supervision logs, evaluation formats, and conflict resolution protocols will be reviewed. Arrangements will be made to introduce interns to their schools and to have them meet with psychology staff who served the schools in the past.

Meetings will be set up during the first weeks of school to orient the intern to their school, to the department's information collection systems, test scoring systems, and other procedures.

Psychology Department Contacts

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CPA Accreditation Office Contact Information

The OCDSB IPSP is accredited with the Canadian Psychological Association. We completed our site visit in May 2022, and received notification that we achieved accreditation in November 2022. Information regarding accreditation status can be obtained from the CPA Accreditation Office at:

141 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 702
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5J3
Tel: 613-237-2144
Fax: 613-237-1674
Toll Free: 1-888-472-0657
accreditationoffice@cpa.ca