



GECD SB INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS PROGRAM

AGENT & FAMILY MANUAL 2026-27



WELCOME TO THE GECD SB!

WELCOME to the Greater Essex County District School Board!

Dear agents and families,

Thank you for your interest in the GECDSB International Students Program! The Greater Essex County District School Board invites students from around the world to experience life and learning in vibrant Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

Located on the Canada-US border at the most southern tip of Canada in the heart of the Great Lakes region, the GECDSB is the largest K-12 public school district in the region. International Students from over 20 countries study at our elementary and secondary schools in 9 municipalities including the City of Windsor, suburbs and surrounding small towns.

Students are welcome to study in our short-term and long-term programs, ranging from 4 weeks to a multi-year pathway leading to the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. We accommodate students at all levels of English language proficiency and place English language learners in four English as a Second Language programs in small classes featuring intensive English language instruction and support. We offer many academic options including a dedicated Centre for Creative Arts, and many technical programs that complement the local engineering, automotive, tool & die, manufacturing, construction and hospitality sectors.

Windsor is a medium-sized Canadian city with all the amenities of a large urban centre. The region of Essex County includes numerous large suburban neighbourhoods, thriving small towns and is home to some of the safest communities in Canada. Windsor boasts a mild climate, having among the fewest days of cold weather in Canada and among the sunniest days where the sun shines 2,261 hours each year!

Windsor-Essex is a beautiful, diverse and friendly region with a long history of welcoming newcomers from around the world. We look forward to welcoming your students in Windsor-Essex!



Michelle Marcuz
International Students Program Lead

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International Students Program
451 Park St. W. Windsor, ON N9A 6K1

Office: 519-255-3200 x10371

email: international@publicboard.ca

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Important Contact Information

Greater Essex County District School Board

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MLI Homestay

415 Yonge St., Suite 1202
Toronto, ON M5B 2E7 Canada
Main telephone: 1-855-946-4701

24 Hour Emergency Line
within North America 1-866-388-6543

24 Hour Emergency Line
outside North America 1-416-623-6215

Agents, parents and students: fill in the blanks below and retain for your records.

- Student name _____
- Phone number: _____ Email: _____
- Parent name _____
- Phone number: _____ Email: _____
- MLI Homestay Coordinator name _____
- Phone number: _____ Email: _____
- Custodian name _____
- Phone number: _____ Email: _____
- Agent name _____
- Phone number: _____ Email: _____

StudyInsured Medical Insurance 24 Hour Emergency Medical Assistance 1-866-883-9787
Multilingual guidance for any injury or illness, toll-free. **Students must call when accessing any medical service.** For a copy of the StudyInsured e-card, contact international@publicboard.ca

**IMPORTANT: FOR MAJOR ILLNESSES OR INJURIES, STUDENTS MUST CALL STUDYINSURED
WITHIN 48 HOURS**

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How to Use This Document

The GECD SB provides this document to international education agencies and parents to introduce our school district and outline the GECD SB's processes, expectations and requirements of the International Students Program.

Please review this document fully and become familiar with it before application, and continue to refer to it throughout the application and enrollment process. It is crucial that applicants understand our program and its requirements and expectations.

Please refer to the web links provided throughout this document. They contain valuable supplemental information that will enrich your understanding of our international education program.

Communication and Relationship Building

The GECD SB encourages regular communication from agents and parents with the GECD SB International Students Program staff and MLI Homestay staff. We are here to answer all your questions about international education at the GECD SB. Please reach out to our staff at any step along the process.

An Introduction to the Greater Essex County District School Board

The Greater Essex County District School Board was formed on January 1, 1998, with the amalgamation of the Windsor Board of Education and Essex County Board of Education.

The GECD SB operates 68 schools – 53 elementary and 15 secondary including the Adult, Alternative and Continuing Education program and the Trillium Learning Centre. We have approximately 36,000 students; 24,000 elementary and 12,000 secondary. We are served by approximately 3,700 employees. The Board's 2025-26 Operating Budget was \$545.8 million.

The GECD SB serves an area of 150 square kilometres in nine municipalities: Windsor, LaSalle, Amherstburg, Tecumseh, Lakeshore, Essex, Kingsville, Leamington and Pelee Island.

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International Students Program at a Glance

Highlights

- The GECDSB is the largest K-12 public school district in the region
- Programs are available for students ages 4 to 18 years old
- Semester system with intake in September and February
- Short-term and long-term programs available
- Groups and customized summer camps upon request
- ESL programming provided at no additional cost
- Convenient secondary student ESL assessments and helpful Pre-Arrival Learning orientation modules via Vital English
- Homestay accommodations provided by [MLI Homestay](#)
- Medical insurance provided by [StudyInsured](#) includes the [Stay Healthy at School](#) program
- Easy-to-use, secure, online agent & parent application portal via [TrueNorth](#)

Membership

The GECDSB is a proud member of:



Canadian Association of
Public Schools - International
Association canadienne des
écoles publiques - International



OASDI
AOCSI

Ontario Association of
School Districts International
Association Ontarienne des
Conseils Scolaires - International

A world of possibilities
Un monde de possibilités
EduCanada

Top 10 Reasons to Study at the GECDSB

1. Over thirty unique [technological education](#) courses available
2. Impressive array of in-school technological facilities complements the local economy
3. Thirteen secondary schools in 9 urban, suburban and rural communities
4. Four ESL programs support English language learners at all levels of proficiency
5. One dedicated [Centre for the Creative Arts](#)

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6. Outstanding varsity athletics, co-curricular activities, and extra-curricular clubs
7. Friendly Youth Ambassadors welcome and support International Students
8. Supportive International Students Clubs welcome and integrate students into school life
9. Diverse mix of international students from 20+ countries
10. Dedicated, helpful and knowledgeable International Students Program staff

Top 10 Reasons to Live and Learn in Windsor-Essex

1. [Windsor](#) is a medium-sized Canadian city very well suited for young students living away from home for the first time.
2. Home to all the amenities of a large city (transportation, entertainment, culture, academic opportunities)
3. Relatively low cost of living compared to the rest of Canada
4. Windsor-Essex is home to many of the safest communities in Canada
5. A border city with easy access to the USA and additional transportation, recreation, entertainment, economic and academic opportunities
6. [Diverse](#) and welcoming; 27% of Windsorites are newcomers and we are among the most diverse communities in Canada.
7. Mild climate with 4 seasons. Windsor lies in the same latitude as Northern California, Madrid, and Rome. Here in Canada's southernmost city, the sun shines 2,261 hours each year.
8. Local post-secondary academic opportunities at the [University of Windsor](#), [St. Clair College](#), Wayne State University and University of Detroit within easy commuting distance
9. Windsor is the [Automotive Capital of Canada](#) and the intellectual hub of the Canadian automotive industry
10. Growth and Development. Construction has begun on: Canada's first electric vehicle [battery plant](#) worth \$5 billion; [a new regional hospital](#); and a new [international border crossing](#) creating many economic benefits and opportunities.

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Where is Windsor-Essex?



Location map courtesy of Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island.

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Location

Windsor-Essex is the most southern community in Canada. It is located on the shores of Lake Erie Lake St. Clair and the Detroit River, directly across from Detroit, Michigan. Essex County's landscape is rich in agricultural land dominated by farmers' fields, vineyards, orchards, pastures and greenhouses. Windsor is located 370 km southwest of Toronto, the provincial capital. Windsor-Essex is in the Eastern Time Zone.

GECDSB International Students are discouraged from visiting the USA. [As per the Government of Canada](#), every country or territory decides who can enter or exit through its borders and the Government of Canada cannot intervene on your behalf if you do not meet entry or exit requirements for the United States. **If you are denied entry to the USA, you could be detained while awaiting deportation.**

Weather

Windsor enjoys 4 seasons with a relatively [temperate climate](#). Summers can be hot and humid with little rain. Fall is generally beautiful, with summer temperatures lingering and turning gradually cooler into November with some rain. Winters are mild compared to the rest of Canada, but students need to be prepared for cold temperatures and snowy days. Spring can be rainy with temperatures ranging widely before remaining consistently warm.

Windsor-Essex Average Temperatures

High °F	Low °F	Month	High °C	Low °C
32	20	January	0	-7
35	22	February	2	-6
46	29	March	8	-1
58	39	April	15	4
72	52	May	22	11
81	62	June	27	16
85	66	July	30	19
83	65	August	28	18
76	58	September	24	15
63	47	October	17	8
48	35	November	9	1
39	28	December	4	-2
60	44	Annual Average	16	6

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Days of Hot Weather in Windsor

The hottest days in Windsor have temperatures peaking in the 30s Celsius. The area averages one day a summer when the thermometer climbs above 35 °C (95 °F). The 30 °C weather can show up here anytime from April to October.

Days of Frosty Weather

Windsor typically has 116 days a year when the minimum temperature is at 0 °C or below. The average date for the last frost in spring is April 17. Frost normally returns here on October 30. The frost-free period extends for 195 days on average between the final spring frost and the first fall frost.

Days of Cold Weather

Windsor's coldest winter nights have lows in the minus-twenties °C (below -3 °F). But the city averages only one night a year, usually in January, when the thermometer drops that low. Temperatures below -30 °C (-22 °F) are not normal here. From November to April, Windsor can remain below freezing all day long. The city typically has 44 days a year when the temperature never rises above 0 °C.

Important Dates

Application Deadlines

- June 1 for September intake
- November 15 for February intake
- December 1 of the previous school year for most specialty programs
- 10 weeks prior to the start of any short-term program

First day of school

- 1st Tuesday after Labour Day in September (Labour Day is the first Monday in September in Canada).

School Transfer Deadlines

- May 1 for September semester
- November 15 for February semester

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Conventional Academic Program Delivery

Please note that the conventional program delivery may be modified due to public health directives. The GECD SB takes its direction on public health matters from local and provincial government health authorities. The GECD SB reserves the right to change the academic program delivery model based on directives from government health authorities. International Students will be placed in the prevailing educational delivery model.

Secondary School System

Secondary school classes follow a semestered schedule.

- Students take 4 courses per semester; 8 courses per academic year
- Semester 1: September-January
- Semester 2: February-June

Secondary School Intake Periods

- September
- February

Sample Secondary School Schedule

Period 1	8:30 AM - 9:45 AM
Period 2	9:50 AM - 11:05 AM
LUNCH	11:05 AM - 11:40 AM
Period 3	11:45 AM - 1:00 PM
Period 4	1:05 PM - 2:20 PM
Extracurricular activities	2:30 PM

Note: Some secondary schools with larger populations may schedule two lunch periods, typically divided between Senior Lunch and Junior Lunch periods. You will be advised of your school's particular schedule upon registration at school.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities such as athletics and clubs may be scheduled during lunch break or after school.

Ontario Secondary School Class Size

Publicly funded schools in Ontario are operated by the Ontario Ministry of Education. All Ontario public school boards must follow Ministry guidelines for class sizes.

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According to the Ontario Education Act, "... the average size in a given school year of a board's secondary school classes shall not exceed 23." O. Reg 484/20, s. 3.

Elementary School System

Elementary school classes follow a linear schedule. Students take the same classes throughout the school year.

Balanced Day

Elementary schools follow a Balanced Day schedule, featuring three 100-minute teaching blocks, separated by two 40-minute nutrition breaks. During nutrition breaks, students eat and get outdoor recess time.

Sample Balanced Day Schedule

Block A	
Period 1	8:30 AM
Period 2	9:20 AM
1 st Nutrition Break	10:10 AM
Block B	
Period 3	11:00 AM
Period 4	11:50 AM
2 nd Nutrition Break	12:40 PM
Block C	
Period 5	1:20 PM
Period 6	2:10 PM
Dismissal	3:00 PM

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities such as athletics and clubs may be scheduled during a nutrition break or after school.

Ontario Elementary School Class Size

Publicly funded schools in Ontario are operated by the Ontario Ministry of Education. All Ontario public school boards must follow Ministry guidelines for class sizes.

According to the Ontario Education Act, "The average size in each school year of the classes of a board ... shall not exceed 26." O. Reg 245/17, s. 1.

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Application Process

The GECSB International Students Program welcomes applications from non-resident students between the ages of 4 and 18 years old. Applications for students who are 19 years old or older will not be accepted.

A Note for Agents

The GECSB welcomes the expertise of reputable, high quality education agents with a proven track record who wish to work as a representative of the GECSB's International Students Program.

If you are interested in applying to be an education agent of the GECSB, please contact international@publicboard.ca

When an agency agreement has been completed, agents will receive access to the Agent Portal for access to our secure, online student application and management system TrueNorth.

A Note for Parents

The GECSB is happy to work with parents who wish to apply directly for their child. It is not necessary to use the services of an Education Agent to facilitate an application to the GECSB International Students Program.

An easy-to-use Parent Portal gives families access to our secure, online student application and management system TrueNorth. The International Students Program staff will work directly with you in all matters involving your child.

TrueNorth

The GECSB accepts student applications via [TrueNorth](#), a secure, multi-user, web-based system to manage the information tracking, reporting and collaborative needs of our International Education program. There are two distinct portals for parents and Education Agents.



Secure Portal - Greater Essex County District



[Agents Start Here](#)

For active agents. Create and submit online student applications.



[Parents Start Here](#)

For parent contacts of enrolled students or parents who are not working with an agency and wish to create and submit online student applications.

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Ontario's Immunization Schedule

Immunization protects children from many serious diseases that are easily spread in schools. Under the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*, all children attending school in Ontario need to have proof of immunization against the following infectious diseases:

School Immunization Checklist

- Meningococcal disease
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Varicella (for children born in 2010 or later)
- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Polio
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella

Children who are not fully immunized may not be allowed to attend school. For other recommended vaccines, visit [Ontario's Immunization Schedule](#).

Required Documents

Please collect all documents prior to applying. Each document must be scanned individually as a PDF less than 5 MB each. Online applications must be completed and submitted within 30 days.

1. A copy of the passport with photo and identifying information. The passport MUST be valid for a minimum of 6 months upon arrival to Canada.
2. Transcripts or report cards for the last 2 years translated into English;
3. Immunization records translated into English;
4. GECDSB Mandatory Student Participation Agreement;
5. GECDSB Student Information Form; and
6. Parent Accommodations Contract (required for elementary school students only).

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Application Procedures

The application deadline for September is June 1. The application deadline for February is November 15.

1. Submit the online [application](#) form in full. Incomplete applications may be delayed or returned to the applicant.
2. Pay the application fee. Applications received without payment will be returned to the applicant for payment.
3. Upon acceptance to the GECD SB International Students Program, a Letter of Acceptance and a Letter of Accommodation will be uploaded to the TrueNorth portal (you will receive an email notification). These documents are required to make an application for a Study Permit, obtained from [Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada](#).
4. Pay tuition and medical insurance fees. The invoice and payment instructions will be uploaded to the TrueNorth portal. Payment is due 30 days prior to the start of the program. For payments from outside of Canada, applicants can pay via [Convera](#) (formerly Western Union). For payments from within Canada, applicants can pay by certified cheque, bank draft or wire transfer.
5. Apply for a [Study Permit](#). It is your responsibility to ensure that you have a valid Study Permit. In most cases, applicants are required to provide fingerprints and a digital photo ([biometrics](#)). Upon approval by IRCC, the Student Visa will be issued by mail or email. You must provide this documentation to a Canada Border Services Agent upon arrival in Canada.
6. Complete the online Vital English and Vital Math Assessments and the Pre-Arrival Learning modules. Within two weeks of acceptance to the GECD SB International Students Program, a link will be emailed to the student email address provided on the TrueNorth application form. The assessment must be completed in a timely manner in order to determine school placement and homestay location.
7. Secure local accommodations. Secondary School students (Grades 9-12) may apply to [MLI Homestay](#). **Elementary school students (Grades K-8) MUST reside with their parent/s for their entire duration of their elementary school studies.** Parents of elementary students must submit the Parent Accommodations Contract (located in the TrueNorth portal) at the time of application. Elementary students are NOT permitted in the MLI Homestay program. There are NO exceptions.

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8. Unaccompanied minor students travelling without their parent must submit a fully executed [Custodianship Declaration Form IMM 5646](#). This is a Government of Canada form in two pages. It must be completed, signed and notarized by a parent and the custodian. It must be submitted to the International Students Program Office prior to arrival and provided to the Canada Border Services Agent upon arrival in Canada.

School Registration Procedures

1. After arrival in Windsor-Essex, students/agents/parents are NOT to proceed to the school without an appointment. Students must register at their school via Connect, the GECDSEB's online registration portal at: <https://register.publicboard.ca>

Note: Students residing outside of the designated school district must advise the International Students Program administrator. Please note that some schools are closed to out of district students and all students are required to provide two proofs of residency upon registration.

2. After submitting the online registration, the student must call the school to make an appointment to complete the registration process. Secondary students will select their courses at this time if they have not already. Students must be accompanied by an adult who is listed as one of the student's contacts - a parent, host parent or custodian- and bring the following documentation:

- Passport;
- Study Permit (or other travel authorization for short-term students)
- GECDSEB Letter of Acceptance and Letter of Accommodation;
- Custodianship Declaration;
- Two proofs of residency* (see below);
- StudyInsured wallet card or other proof of medical insurance;
- Academic covalidation requirements, if applicable.

***Acceptable proof of residency documents**

Please provide at least two (2) of the following:

- Most recent property tax bill
- Most recent income tax assessment
- Most recent utility bill (includes hydro, water, gas or public utilities)
- Mortgage, rental or lease agreement for the permanent residence (must be accompanied by official receipt of payment. Handwritten receipt by landlord is NOT acceptable)
- Most recent home insurance policy
- Most recent cable, internet or landline telephone bill (not a mobile telephone bill)

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- Most recent bank statement
- Valid Ontario drivers' license (not temporary)

Study Permit Conditions

As a study permit holder, there are a number of [conditions](#) mandated by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) that students need to meet. If students do not meet these conditions, IRCC may revoke the student visa and study permit and order them to leave Canada. It is the agent /parents' responsibility to be aware of and adhere to any such conditions. **Students may be dismissed from the GECDSB International Students Program for failure to submit a valid study permit to the program administrator.**

As a study permit holder, these conditions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Students must be enrolled full time at their designated learning institution. Part time studies are not permitted;
- Students are required to maintain a valid study permit. Each study permit has an expiry date. If a study permit will expire prior to the completion of the student's studies, the parent/agent is responsible for applying to IRCC to extend the study permit in a timely manner to ensure students have a valid study permit throughout the duration of their studies.

If a student chooses to not complete their studies, does not have a valid study permit, or if they are dismissed from the GECDSB International Students Program, they are no longer authorized to reside in Canada, and they must return to their home country immediately. The GECDSB will report such instances to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. IRCC is authorized to investigate students who violate any of the conditions of their study permit and students risk being deported and may be inadmissible to return to Canada in the future.

School Residential Boundaries

Elementary International Students MUST attend the elementary school within the residential boundary in which they reside.

Secondary International Students are strongly encouraged to attend the secondary school within the residential boundary in which they reside. Secondary International Students that choose to reside outside of their designated school district are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from school. Students residing and attending secondary school in different municipalities must be aware that there is no public transportation available between municipalities.

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Please note that Vincent Massey Secondary School is closed to students who reside outside its residential boundary.

Transportation

School Bus Transportation

School bus transportation for the GECDSD is provided by the Windsor-Essex Student Transportation Services (WESTS) consortium. School provided transportation is a privilege, not a right. School secretaries will assist with arranging busing for eligible International Students.

Please note that it takes 3-5 days to process school bus transportation requests. Requests for transportation are initiated when the student attends their school to complete registration.

School bus transportation is provided only for the following eligible students:

- Elementary students residing in Windsor and Essex County
- Secondary students residing outside of the City of Windsor

Eligibility

Students may access transportation services if they are attending an in-boundary Board-designated school and their primary address is at a distance of more than:

- 1 km, for junior and senior kindergarten;
- 1.6 km, for Grade 1 to Grade 8 inclusively;
- 3.2 km, for Grade 9 to Grade 12 inclusively

BusKids

Parents and agents can determine if a student is eligible for school bus transportation online through [BusKids](#), a public, online query program. Enter the student's intended address, city/town, Grade and select Greater Essex County District School Board to determine eligibility.

Service de transport des élèves
Windsor – Essex
Student Transportation Services

No Alerts

Home School Information Which School do I Attend? Can I Ride a Bus? Log In

Online Forms and Requests

Can I Ride a Bus?

Street Number

Street Name

Municipality

Board

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Bus Stop Locations

Under normal circumstances, students may be required to access their school bus transportation up to the following distances from their residences:

- 1 km for elementary students
- 2 km for secondary students
- Rural students will be picked up at a WESTS designated stop as close to their residence as possible.
- Urban students will be picked up at a WESTS designated community stop that is accessible to a number of students.

Secondary School Students in ESL and Specialty Programs

Secondary students attending the designated ESL school in their residential boundary may access WESTS transportation services if their primary address is at a distance of more than 3.2 km, for Grade 9 to Grade 12 inclusively.

Secondary students attending a specialty program and who reside outside the school district may be eligible for WESTS transportation services. School secretaries can confirm student eligibility.

Transit Windsor Bus Service

Secondary students residing in the City of Windsor are not provided with transportation. [Transit Windsor](#) provides public transportation to secondary schools within the City of Windsor for a fee. Students who will use Transit Windsor daily for school are encouraged to purchase a Transit Windsor Smart Pass. The [youth rate](#) at the time of this writing (Spring 2026) is \$81 for 30 days.

Accommodations Options

Elementary School Students (K-8)

International Students who are in elementary school (Grades K-8) MUST reside with a parent for the entire duration of their elementary school studies. Elementary school students are NOT permitted to reside in an MLI Homestay and they may NOT live unaccompanied by their parent for any length of time. The **GECDSB Parent Accommodations Contract K-8** located in the online TrueNorth application portal outlines parental responsibilities and must be submitted at the time of application.

Secondary School Students (Gr. 9-12)

International Students who are in secondary school may apply to the MLI Homestay program, or reside with a parent, or reside with relatives as arranged by a parent. The **GECDSB Parent-Host Accommodations Contract Gr. 9-12** located in the online TrueNorth application portal

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outlines parental and host responsibilities. It must be submitted at the time of application if the student is not intending to reside with the MLI Homestay program.

Under no circumstances shall a student live alone or without direct live-in adult supervision. Students found to be in violation shall be dismissed from the program and sent home at their parents' expense.

MLI Homestay

Muskoka Language International Homestay ([MLI Homestay](#)) is the official accommodations provider for International Students studying at the GECD SB. MLI Homestay is available for secondary school students only.

MLI Homestay services include:

- Legal custodianship service
- Homestay placement
- Local support and activities
- Settlement and progress reports
- 24-hour emergency support



Agents who have not previously registered with MLI Homestay must complete the “New Agent Profile”. Contact MLI Homestay or the International Students Program Lead for information.

Parent Accommodations

Parents must commit to reside with their child for the entire duration of the study period. They may not leave their child unaccompanied for any length of time. There are no exceptions.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their chosen accommodations are appropriate. Parents are responsible for supporting the family with essential needs throughout the entire duration of the study period. Parents must take caution to ensure they are residing in the appropriate residential boundary for their child’s intended school. Parents are strongly advised to confirm the residential boundary of their intended residence **before** they sign a lease agreement or purchase a residence. Consult [BusKids](#) or contact the International Students Program office.

Custodianship

Unaccompanied minor students travelling without their parent must submit a fully executed Government of [Canada Custodianship Declaration Form IMM 5645](#) prior to arrival.

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The [custodian](#) is appointed by the parents and must be a responsible adult 25 years of age or older who is a Canadian citizen or a Permanent Resident. The custodian must make the necessary arrangements for the care and support of the student in place of the parents as appropriate. The custodian must reside within Essex County and within a reasonable distance of the student's residence and school and must be able to fulfill the obligations as a custodian in the event of an emergency.

An MLI Homestay staff person will be appointed as custodian for students in its homestay program.

Students may be dismissed from the GECD SB International Students Program for failure to submit a valid and completed Custodianship Declaration to the program administrator.

Exemption

International Students living with a parent(s) or legal guardian for the duration of their studies are exempt from submitting a Custodianship Declaration.

Travelling to Windsor



Windsor International Airport (YQG)

Windsor International Airport (YQG) is conveniently located within the City of Windsor.

When booking travel, select [Windsor International Airport \(YQG\)](#) as the final destination.

Windsor International Airport offers frequent service to and from the major Canadian airports via Air Canada or Porter Airlines.

Please note that Toronto Pearson International Airport is 350 km north-east of Windsor, approximately a 4-5 hour drive. **The GECD SB and MLI Homestay DO NOT offer airport pick up or drop off service at Toronto Pearson International Airport.**

Students are responsible for communicating their flight itinerary to their MLI Homestay coordinator and host family. Students must ensure they have their host family's contact information saved in their mobile phone prior to arrival to Canada. Students are responsible for confirming their airport pick up details with their MLI coordinator and host family prior to departure from their home country.

When Should I Arrive?

Parents and agents are encouraged to work with MLI Homestay to ensure the appropriate arrival and departure dates.

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Students are expected to familiarize themselves with their new surroundings before they begin school. Students are encouraged to:

- explore their neighbourhood with their host family;
- understand the walking route get to and from school;
- understand the Transit Windsor bus system and purchase a Transit Windsor bus pass if necessary;
- purchase any school supplies or other necessities;
- locate the closest pharmacy and urgent care medical clinic and add them to the contacts in their mobile phone.

Program Offerings

The GECDSB is proud to offer International Students the opportunity to study at the elementary school level (Grades K-8) and the secondary school level (Grades 9-12).

Elementary School Program

International Students are welcome to join our elementary schools (K-8) throughout the academic year. The GECDSB will place elementary students in the age-appropriate grade as per the Ontario Ministry of Education. Parents may NOT choose the grade in which they wish to have their child enrolled.

Secondary School Program

Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)

The Ontario Secondary School Diploma is Ontario's secondary school pathway program to earn a graduation diploma for students in Grades 9-12. The GECDSB will place secondary International Students in the appropriate grade level depending on their academic ability, academic goals, post-secondary pathway and length of stay in the program.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate with an [Ontario Secondary Student Diploma](#), students must successfully complete:

- 30 credits (17 compulsory, 13 optional)
- 40 hours of community involvement activities
- Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)
- At least two online learning credits

The Ontario secondary school [curriculum](#) offers students many choices and academic streams. Students intending to earn an OSSD are encouraged to regularly consult with their guidance counsellor to ensure they are taking the appropriate courses for their post-secondary pathway and to take advantage of the many options available to students.

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Equivalency Credits

Students enrolled in the GECDSD who have earned secondary school credits in their home country will have their official transcripts assessed for credit equivalency. School staff will make the determination to apply previously earned credits to the OSSD.

Covalidation

Covalidation is the process of validating the courses a student takes in Ontario in order to receive credit for them in their home country. Students from certain countries including Brazil, Italy, Mexico and Spain, who intend to return to their home country to complete their high school program may require covalidation of their Ontario secondary school courses. Before students apply to the GECDSD's International Students Program, students must check with their home high school to determine if they must covalidate their Ontario courses.

It is the students' responsibility to familiarize themselves with the covalidation process including:

- whether or not the covalidation process is required;
- the course, grade level, stream and the number of credits required;
- the timelines within which the covalidation process must be completed;
- any academic requirements specific to the student's home school or country.

It is the student's responsibility to advise their guidance counsellor that they need to covalidate their credits at the time of course selection. Students must present their guidance counsellor with an official document listing the specific courses they require.

It is the student's responsibility to advise the GECDSD International Students Program Lead in writing (email is acceptable) with sufficient advance notice to request covalidation of documents. There is a fee to have the transcript notarized and authenticated by the International Students Program.

Short-Term Program

Many International Students join the GECDSD for a short-term program. We are happy to accommodate this cultural and linguistic experience for elementary and secondary school students. Elementary students must be accompanied by a parent, unless they are part of a GECDSD-approved short-term group program.

A short-term program is a period of study that is less than one semester in length. The following conditions apply to the GECDSD's Short-term Program:

- it is not available during the months of January and June;
- it is a minimum of 4 weeks in length;

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- Short-term programs are offered at select schools only. Please consult with the International Students Program staff for schools offering the short-term program.

Group Program

The GECD SB will consider applications from groups of students, for a long-term or short-term program, working through agency. Agents should contact GECD SB International Students Program staff for details. Applications are due a minimum of 10 weeks prior to the start of any group program.

Summer Camp

The GECD SB will customize a summer camp program for your group. A minimum of 15 students is required to create a customized summer camp package. Summer camp is a non-credit program, focusing on cultural experience and language acquisition, in addition to customizable options such as STEM programming, robotics, creative arts, athletics or general recreation. Agents should contact GECD SB International Students Program for options and availability.

Summer Learning Programs and Night School

[Summer learning programs](#) are offered to currently enrolled students who have studied with the GECD SB for at least one semester. All International Students are subject to applicable tuition fees. Enrolment in summer learning programs and night school is facilitated through the Guidance Department at the student's secondary school. Summer learning program applications open in the spring; the application deadline is mid-June.

Secondary School ESL Program

The GECD SB is proud to have four secondary school English as a Second Language programs to support students in their English language development. Students at all levels of English language proficiency are welcome to study at the GECD SB because English language learners are supported at every level of their English language proficiency. The GECD SB has the right to place students at the appropriate secondary school based on their English language proficiency. Proficiency may be determined through the Vital English assessment and/or by the Ontario ESL STEP assessment.

The minimum English language proficiency requirement for the mainstream secondary school program is level ESL DO. Students who do not achieve the minimum requirement will be directed to attend the ESL program at the secondary school within their residential boundary.

The Ontario English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum is based on the belief that broad proficiency in English is essential to students' success in both their social and academic lives, and to their ability to take their place in society as responsible and productive citizens. The ESL curriculum expectations are designed to help English language learners develop the skills they need to develop proficiency in everyday English and, most especially, the proficiency

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in academic English that will allow them to integrate successfully into the mainstream school program.

The aim of the ESL curriculum is to help students become successful English language learners who can:

- use English to communicate effectively in a variety of social settings;
- use English to achieve academically in all subject areas;
- take charge of their own learning, independently and in groups;
- select and use effective learning strategies;
- integrate confidently into mainstream courses;
- use English effectively to advocate for themselves in all areas of their lives;
- make a successful transition to their chosen postsecondary destination (work, apprenticeship, college, university);
- function effectively in a society increasingly committed to the use of information technology;
- use critical-literacy and critical-thinking skills to interpret the world around them;
- participate fully in the social, economic, political, and cultural life of their communities and of Canada.

Taken from *“The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12: English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development”*. The Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007, pages 3-4.

What ESL level am I at?

The GECDSD uses Vital English, a secure, online English language proficiency assessment tool, to determine students’ ESL level within the Ontario curriculum. This assessment is done online by International Students in Grades 9-12 who are new to the GECDSD International Students Program and whose first language is not English. Following completion of the assessment, the GECDSD receives the student’s assessment score which corresponds to an Ontario ESL curriculum level, from beginner level ESL A to level ESL E (advanced).



Elementary students in Grades K-7 are **not** assessed via the Vital English assessment tool. Grade 8 students intending to return to the GECDSD for Grade 9 will be assessed in the fall of their Grade 8 year.

What school can I go to?

The GECDSD is proud to have four secondary school English as a Second Language programs to support International Students in their English language learning:

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Secondary School	ESL Program	Minimum ESL Entrance Criteria
Belle River District High School	NO	ESL DO
Essex District High School	NO	ESL DO
Hon. W.C. Kennedy Collegiate Institute	YES	ESL AO
Kingsville District High School	NO	ESL DO
Leamington District Secondary School	YES	ESL AO
North Star High School	NO	ESL DO
Riverside Secondary School	NO	ESL DO
Sandwich Secondary School	NO	ESL DO
Tecumseh Vista Academy	NO	ESL DO
Vincent Massey Secondary School	NO	ESL DO
Walkerville Collegiate Institute	NO	ESL DO
Westview Freedom Academy	YES	ESL AO
W.F. Herman Secondary Academy	YES	ESL AO

Summary of the Ontario ESL Curriculum Levels

ESL AO

- Answer simple questions about personal information
- Read, speak and write using simple sentences (subject-verb-object) using present and past tenses
- Understand simple directions, instructions and presentations
- Write short compositions by following a structured model
- Identify and understand descriptive adjectives in a short reading

ESL BO

- Participate in conversations and class discussions

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- Read, speak and write using simple and compound sentences
- Write a paragraph using an organizer or outline
- Ask for clarification using previously taught phrases
- Describe the character and setting in a short story

ESL CO

- Make a short classroom oral presentation
- Read, write and speak using simple, compound and complex sentences
- Write a three-paragraph essay using linking words and phrases
- Explain the character development and plot in a short story or novel
- Take notes from an oral presentation using an organizer

ESL DO

- Identify main ideas and supporting details in an oral presentation using an outline or organizer
- Actively participate in classroom discussions in all subject areas.
- write a three- to five-paragraph persuasive literary essay
- Analyze character traits, plot, foreshadowing, similes and metaphors in readings.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion in articles

ESL EO

- Orally explain and support your point of view on a current issue
- Summarize a news report
- Write persuasive literary and comparative essays
- Identify literary elements in various texts (allusions, settings, subplot, imagery, conflict, and metaphors)

Transferring Out of an ESL Program

International secondary school students who are in an ESL program may not transfer to a school without an ESL program until they have completed ESL DO. The request to transfer out of the ESL program must be made in writing to international@publicboard.ca and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If approved, transfers will occur at the start of a semester only. **Students wishing to transfer for September must make the request by May 1. Students wishing to transfer for February must make the request by December 1.** Requests received after these dates will not be accommodated.

Elementary ESL Program

Elementary school International Students whose first language is not English are welcome to study at our elementary schools. There is no minimum English language requirement for

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International Students in elementary school (K-8). Elementary International Students are supported in their English language development by their classroom teacher and an ESL Coach.

Grade 8 to Grade 9 Transition

International Students in Grade 8 whose first language is not English and who wish to continue on to Grade 9 with the GECDsB will be assessed for English language proficiency. The school team will use assessment and evaluation data to help determine school placement for the student's Grade 9 year.

While each elementary school is a feeder school for a designated secondary school, not all secondary schools can support English language learners who need specialized, intensive English language support. Students who will continue to benefit from ESL support will be directed to attend their designated secondary school with an ESL program. International Students entering Grade 9 whose first language is not English are not guaranteed acceptance to their home secondary school. The student must demonstrate sufficient English language proficiency to be accepted into their home secondary school. **The GECDsB has the right to place International Students at the appropriate school and program based on their English language proficiency.**

Experiential and Enhanced Learning Programs

Co-Operative Education

Students in [Co-op](#) gain experience in the workplace and explore career interests in any industry, business or community setting while earning credits. Because Co-op is an unpaid placement, International Students are eligible to participate. It is typically a two-credit course students take in Gr. 11, Gr. 12 or in the Summer Learning Program. There are a wide variety of placements to choose from.

Co-op application details

- Co-op Education is available to students in Gr. 11 and 12
- International Students must be assessed at ESL DO or higher to be eligible to apply.
- Application is through the school's Guidance Department.

Specialist High Skills Major

The [SHSM](#) program provides focused learning in a particular economic sector. In addition to a taking a specific bundle of Gr. 11 and 12 courses including Co-Operative Education, students participate in specialized training, experiential learning field trips and work to solve real-world problems. It is a two-year program beginning in Gr. 11. International Students must be assessed at ESL DO or higher to be eligible to apply. There are a wide variety of sectors to choose from. Application is through the school's Guidance Department.

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SHSM application details

- The SHSM program is available to students in Gr. 11 and 12
- International Students must be assessed at ESL DO or higher to be eligible to apply.
- Application is through the school's Guidance Department.

Dual Credit

In the [Dual Credit](#) program, students earn a secondary school elective credit and college credit by taking a course at [St. Clair College](#). The primary focus is on students who face significant challenges in completing the requirement for graduation but have the potential to succeed. It is specifically for students who intend to transition to college after graduation. Credits are offered in a variety of programs.

Dual Credit application details

- The Dual Credit program is available to students in Gr. 12
- International Students must be assessed at ESL DO or higher to be eligible to apply
- Application is through the school's Guidance Department

Enriched and Advanced Placement Courses

Enriched courses are offered at Vincent Massey Secondary School at the Grade 9 and 10 level. These enriched courses are compulsory for the AP courses in Grades 11 and 12. The Grade 12 AP courses offer students the option to write the Advanced Placement exam which may be accepted as a university credit at some universities. Students are advised to confirm with their intended university whether or not an Advanced Placement course will be accepted.

Enriched /AP courses are offered in four streams: English, French, Math and Science. Students must begin the program in Grade 9.

Enriched Application Details:

- Enriched and Advanced Placement courses are offered at **Vincent Massey Secondary School**
- Enriched courses in Grades 9 and 10 offered at **Riverside Secondary School**
- International Students must be assessed at ESL DO or higher to be eligible to apply for the enriched program
- Acceptance to the program is through application process. The deadline for application is the Fall of the students' Grade 8 year.
- Students are responsible for the Advanced Placement exam fee. The fee for writing an Advanced Placement exam at the time of this writing is \$135 CDN and is subject to change without prior notification.

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E-STEAM Program

Entrepreneurship in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics

The E-STEAM program is a unique and specialized program designed to develop global competencies through enhanced interdisciplinary methodology focusing on the STEAM disciplines. Experiential learning opportunities will emphasize innovation, collaboration and social entrepreneurship.



E-STEAM students will pursue their learning in an area of concentration, completing enhanced-level and fast-tracked courses, with an emphasis on career-focused exploration.

Area of concentration include:

- Computer Science and Engineering
- Medical Sciences

E-STEAM Application Details:

- E-STEAM is offered at **Tecumseh Vista Academy** Secondary School for students in Grades 9-12. Students must begin the program in Grade 9.
- International Students must be assessed at ESL DO or higher to be considered for the program.
- Acceptance to the program is through application process. The deadline for application is the Fall of the students' Grade 8 year.

French Immersion

French Immersion is designed for students whose first language is not French. As students move through the program, they will learn in both French and English. The objective is full mastery of the English language, functional fluency in French, as well as an understanding and appreciation of French culture.

Elementary School Application Details:

- French Immersion Program is offered at select elementary schools
- **Students may enter the French Immersion program in Kindergarten and up to October 1st of Grade 1 year.** Students may enter the program beyond October of Grade 1 with a demonstrated proficiency in French language skills appropriate to their level. This includes listening, speaking, reading and writing in French to ensure success in the program. (As per Board policy [Admission to Immersion French Programs](#), P-AD-03)

Secondary School Application Details:

- French Immersion is offered at the following secondary schools: Belle River District High School, Erie Migration District School, W.F. Herman Academy, Sandwich Secondary School and Tecumseh Vista Academy.

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The secondary French Immersion program is available for:

- Students whose first language is French
- Students who studied at a French language school for a minimum of 3,800 hours by the end of their Grade 8 year where French was the language of instruction a minimum of 50% of the total instructional time.

mySTEM Program

[mySTEM](#) is a personalized, integrated program that prepares students for post-secondary pathways in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Students in the program will choose to specialize in one of three areas:

- Medical Science and Natural Science
- Engineering, Robotics, Computer Science, and Mathematics
- Digital Arts & Design Technology

Students registered in the mySTEM program will complete twelve (12) required courses throughout their years in secondary school. Each year, students will also participate in at least three (3) STEM activities outside of the classroom each year to enhance their learning.

mySTEM Application Details:

- The mySTEM program is offered at **Belle River District High School** for students in Grades 9-12. **Students must begin the program in Gr. 9.**
- International Students must be assessed at ESL DO or higher to be considered for the program.
- Acceptance to the program is through application process. The deadline for application is the Fall of the students' Grade 8 year.

Walkerville Centre for the Creative Arts

WCCA is a regional, pre-professional arts training center that offers secondary students intensive instruction in 10 distinct art disciplines:

- Visual Arts (Painting, Drawing, Printmaking, Sculpture)
- Media Arts
- Dance (Ballet, Jazz, Modern)
- Drama
- Vocal (Folk, Music Theatre, Jazz, Classical)
- Music Theatre
- Piano
- Band
- Strings
- Guitar

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[WCCA](#) is the secondary school enriched arts program for the most passionate, dedicated and promising student artists. Students immerse themselves in the art forms of their choosing alongside other motivated, skilled and passionate students and are supported by expert staff, tutors and guest artists.

WCCA Application Details:

- The WCCA program is offered at **Walkerville Collegiate Institute** for students in Grades 9-12.
- International Students must be assessed at ESL DO or higher to be considered for the program.
- Acceptance to the program is through application and audition. The deadline is in the early Fall of the year prior to the students' intended enrollment. Auditions take place in mid-December and can be facilitated online for International Students who are overseas and applying for acceptance for the upcoming school year.

Extra-Curricular Activities

At the GECD SB, our schools offer something for everyone. From varsity sports and house league teams, academic clubs and general interest groups to social justice causes, our schools have such a wide variety of teams, clubs and activities that it is impossible to list them all. We are confident that every student will find an extra-curricular activity that appeals to them. Some clubs or activities occur at certain points in the year while others run year-round.

International Students Clubs

International Students are strongly encouraged to engage with their International Students Club. The goals of the Club are to:

- immediately connect International students with each other and domestic student mentors in the school;
- welcome and integrate International Students into the school community; and
- support the academic, social and emotional needs of International Students.

International Students are also encouraged to get involved in an additional activity. Examples of typical sports, clubs and activities are listed below, and there may be more or fewer clubs offered at schools than are included here. **Please note not all these extra-curricular options are available at all schools and are subject to change.**

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Varsity Athletics

Varsity sports are governed by the Windsor Essex County Secondary School Athletic Association ([WECSSAA](#)). School sports run at specific times of year, and student participation may be subject to tryouts:

Badminton (spring)
Baseball (spring)
Basketball (girls-fall/boys-winter)
Cross Country (fall)
Curling (winter)
American Football (fall)
Golf (spring)
Ice Hockey (winter)

Slo-Pitch (spring)
Soccer (spring)
Swimming (winter)
Tennis (fall and spring)
Track & Field (spring)
Volleyball (boys-fall/girls-winter)
Wrestling (winter)

Clubs and Committees

Animation Club
Announcements Crew
Art Club
Assemblies Committee
Best Buddies
Chess Club
Choir
Cross-Fit Club
Dance Team
Debate Team
DECA Business Club
Drama Club
EcoSchools Team
Feminist Club
Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)
Guitar Club

International Students Club
Knitting Club
Mental Wellness Team
Peer Mentors
Peer Tutors
Photography Club
School Plays and Musicals
Prom Committee
Radio Club
Robotics Club
School Newspaper
Semi-Formal Committee
Social Justice Club
Student Council
Ukulele Club
Yearbook Committee

Activities and Events

Coffee House
Fashion Show
Food Drive
Grade 8 Day
Grade 9 Orientation Day
House League Sports
Job Fair

Leadership Camp
Math Contests
MindForce
Multicultural Night
Photography Contest
School Dance
School Plays and Musicals

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School Spirit Days
Science Fair
Science Olympiad
Sears Drama Festival

Special Olympics
Talent Show
Terry Fox Run
The Pluralist Magazine

StudyInsured Medical Insurance



It is mandatory for International Students to purchase medical insurance for the duration of their studies at the GECDsb. [StudyInsured](#) is the GECDsb's exclusive medical insurance provider. International Students program staff will facilitate the purchase of insurance for students. The fee will be included as a separate line item in the student's invoice. The medical insurance will be effective prior to the student's arrival to ensure students are covered immediately upon their arrival in Canada. Our office will include the student's insurance e-card, insurance policy, and a claim form with their GECDsb welcome email.

[StudyInsured](#) hosts a co-branded website with the GECDsb where students can register to see their insurance details their e-card, Summary of Benefits, Policy Wording and Claim Form. Students can register on the [StudyInsured Student Portal](#) to submit and manage claims, review claim history, access virtual care, schedule in-person doctor visits, find nearby medical providers and more.

Included in the insurance is the [Stay Healthy at School](#) mental health and wellness support program which provides free, 24-7 access to multi-lingual professional counselling available in person, by video chat and via telephone. It is a confidential and secure service available from anywhere in the world in over 100 languages. It can be accessed by telephone, internet or mobile app.

Parents have the option of purchasing additional private insurance for their child. Parents are responsible for assessing the adequacy of all health, medical, travel and other insurance which might be prudent to obtain while their child is studying in Canada.

Technology for Learning and Connecting

Recommended Requirements

1. Smart Phone

All secondary school International Students should have a smart phone with a Canadian phone plan with data and Canadian phone number BEFORE they arrive in Canada. Students are strongly encouraged to use the services of a company such as [PhoneBox](#) that provides students with a Canadian SIM card.

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2. Laptop Computer or Tablet

All Secondary School International Students should have a reliable computer or tablet to access the GECDSB's many online learning platforms.

Online Learning Platforms:

All GECDSB [online learning platforms](#) can be accessed with the student's Microsoft Work/School account.



Microsoft Office Suite and Office 365

GECDSB students are issued a free Microsoft Office Suite software package including OneDrive, Teams, Canva and a free Office 365 student email account.



Edsby

[Edsby](#) is the GECDSB's online communication platform for students, teachers and parents. School news and announcements, assignments, marks and attendance can be viewed. Students and parents can communicate with teachers, school administration and guidance counsellors. Parents are able to monitor student progress and attendance, enter planned absences for appointments or illnesses ahead of time.



To register, parents must contact the school and provide an email address so they can be sent an invitation email with instructions and a link to activate their parent account.

myBlueprint

[myBlueprint](#) is a comprehensive software program for education and career/life planning with the tools students need to make the most informed decisions about their future.



The secondary school course planner allows students to plan for their Ontario Secondary School Graduation Diploma requirements while discovering their eligibility for post-secondary pathways in Canada.

The software includes post-secondary and career databases that allow students to search, filter, and compare local, province-specific information on apprenticeships, programs, and occupations to ensure students make better decisions and are more prepared for the future. Parents can access their child's account via email link and share in tracking their child's credit accumulation and post-secondary research.

GECDSB Virtual Library

Access our [Virtual Library](#) to find content for both elementary and secondary schools that features accessible e-Books, online databases, newspapers, encyclopedias, videos and more to support students' learning.



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Use Destiny Library Catalogue to find out what resources are available at your school library.

Elementary Virtual Library Commons provides links to reliable resources that enrich students' projects from their early and intermediate stages of research.

Secondary Virtual Library Commons provides links to reliable resources that will support secondary students in their more advanced research and projects.

Brightspace by D2L

Brightspace by D2L is a Learning Management System and platform where teachers can post materials, manage assignments, and communicate with students, and students can access course content, participate in discussions, and submit work.



Tuition, Fees and Refund Policy

Fee Schedule

International Student [tuition and fees](#) appear on the GECDSD International Students Program website. They are also set out in Schedule A of the Agency Agreement.

Tuition and fees are due in full 30 days prior to the start of classes. It should be noted that for many countries, a receipt for full tuition payment is required for the Study Permit application.

Fee Payment

International Students will receive an invoice upon acceptance to the International Students Program with full payment instructions. We are proud to offer students easy and convenient payment through Convera (formerly known as Western Union).

Payment Options from Outside Canada

- [Convera](#)

Payment Options from Within Canada

- Bank draft
- Wire transfer
- e-transfer

Please note that payments from within Canada cannot be made through Convera at this time.

MLI Homestay Fees

All homestay fees will be paid directly to MLI Homestay. Any applicable homestay refunds will be managed by MLI Homestay.

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StudyInsured Medical Insurance

GECD SB International Students program staff will facilitate the purchase of insurance for students. The fee is included as a separate line item in the student's invoice.

GECD SB Refund Policy

The [refund policy](#) is widely available via the following:

- GECD SB International Students Program webpage;
- Mandatory Student Participation Agreement;
- Agency Agreement;
- Student tuition invoice; and
- Upon request from the GECD SB International Students program staff.

Miscellaneous Fees

International Students are subject to any additional fees that may be charged for:

- class field trips or excursions;
- any school activities with an admission fee, such as football game or school dance;
- athletics fee for school sports
- any out-of-town / overnight expenses for activities with clubs, teams, extracurricular activities, etc.

Behavioural and Academic Expectations

GECD SB Code of Conduct

The GECD SB [Code of Conduct R-AD-28](#), sets clear standards of behaviour that apply to students, parents/guardians, volunteers, teachers and staff whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school-related events or activities, or in other circumstances that impact the school climate.

All students are expected to abide by the GECD SB Code of Conduct. Students who breach the Code of Conduct may be dismissed from the GECD SB International Students Program and sent home at their parent's expense.

Student Handbook

Each secondary school has its own student handbook that set out the school rules governing code of conduct, school attendance procedures, textbook policy, dress code, extracurricular activities, assessment and evaluation, use of personal communication devices and translation devices and much more. International Students and parents are expected to familiarize themselves with their child's Student Handbook. It should be issued to the student upon registration at the school. Students who breach the expectations in the Student Handbook may

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be dismissed from the GECD SB International Students Program and sent home at their parent's expense.

Mandatory Student Participation Agreement

All International Students are subject to the academic, behavioural and program expectations outlined in the Mandatory Student Participation Agreement. All incoming International Students and their parent(s) must read, sign and submit with their application the GECD SB's mandatory Student Participation Agreement. Students who breach the expectations outlined in the MSPA may be dismissed from the GECD SB International Students Program and sent home at their parent's expense.

Responsibilities

The GECD SB, parents, students and education agents all have a role to play in supporting the International Student experience. Specific responsibilities of the GECD SB, MLI Homestay, parents, international student and education agents include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Greater Essex County District School Board

The GECD SB is responsible for:

- The delivery of the education program;
- Supervision of students during regular school hours, while on school board property or during field trips;
- Placement of students within a school operated by the GECD SB;
- Assisting MLI staff with student support as needed;
- Providing current information, promotional materials, fee schedules, application forms at no cost to the contractor / parents;
- Notifying the contractor and parents of any changes to the application process, policies, fee schedules or educational services; and
- Ensuring all International Students are treated on the same basis as all other students.

2. MLI Homestay Inc.

MLI Homestay is responsible for, but not limited to:

- Providing homestay services, monitoring and guardianship of students for full time study;
- Placing and monitoring students in homestay families;
- Making arrangements for transportation to/from airport;
- Providing support to host families and students via Emergency Telephone Line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;

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- Providing the support of a Local Homestay Coordinator;
- Providing mediation for host family and student issues; and
- Providing host family and student support in emergency situations.

MLI Host Families are responsible for, but not limited to:

- A warm, caring environment;
- An English only or French only environment, depending on the student's language of study;
- A comfortable, private bedroom;
- 3 nutritious meals a day and healthy snacks;
- Providing general support and guidance to the student;
- Access to a washroom and laundry facilities; and
- An invitation to join in family life and daily activities.

3. Education Agents and Agencies

An agent or agency is a contractor of the GECD SB who may reside in Canada or overseas and who is appointed by the GECD SB as a marketing and recruitment representative for the GECD SB, subject to the terms of the Agreement. The contractor's appointment is non-exclusive.

Agents and Agencies are responsible for, but not limited to:

- Providing assistance, information, guidance and support to students to facilitate application for the Student Visa/Study Permit, Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) or other applicable travel documents;
- Promoting, advertising and marketing the GECD SB as offering quality institution of learning;
- Making every reasonable effort to recruit qualified International Students;
- Providing accurate information regarding the program, tuition and accommodations;
- Completing all necessary application forms for prospective students;
- Supplying the Mandatory Student Participation Agreement and any other documentation deemed necessary by the GECD SB, and to translate those documents as required;
- Explaining the GECD SB's payment procedures and refund policy;
- The delivery of each student to the GECD SB;
- Maintaining regular communication with the GECD SB during the term of the Agreement;

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- Using reasonable efforts to assist students and facilitate parental involvement as necessary;
- Informing the student of the ramifications of any breach of rules, regulation, conditions and expectations, and shall obtain written confirmation from each student that the student understand such;
- Informing all students as to immunization requirement for all persons entering an Ontario public school; and
- Ensuring a student shall contract with MLI Homestay Inc. to reside with a local Host Family (if in secondary school), or that a student will reside with their parent(s) / legal guardian for the duration of their studies with the GECD SB.

4. International Students and Parents

The student and the parents are responsible for, but not limited to:

- Reading, understanding, agreeing and complying with the terms and conditions of the Mandatory Student Participation Agreement;
- Following all rules and expectations as set out in the GECD SB Code of Conduct, GECD SB Mandatory Student Participation Agreement, Student Handbook, and MLI Student Agreement, as applicable;
- Assessing the adequacy of all health, medical, travel and other insurance which might be prudent to obtain while in Canada; and
- Assessing and satisfying the acceptability of all arrangements for the student's participation in the program, including the appropriateness and adequacy of all living accommodations, all travel arrangements and any type of insurance for the student.

When International Students are not using the services of an education agency, International Students and parents are additionally responsible for:

- Obtaining assistance, information, guidance and support as needed to facilitate application for Canadian Student Authorization and or/ Visa or applicable travel documents;
- Obtaining accurate information regarding the program, tuition, fees, and accommodations;
- Understanding the application process and completing all necessary application forms;
- Understanding the GECD SB's payment procedures and refund policy;
- The delivery of the student to the GECD SB;
- Maintaining regular communication with the GECD SB during the student's course of study;
- Understanding of the ramification of any breach of rules, regulation, conditions and expectations;

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- Understanding the immunization requirements for all persons under the age of 18 years entering an Ontario public school; and
- Making arrangements for the student's accommodations with MLI Homestay, or; enduring the appropriateness and adequacy of their family's living accommodations if the student will reside with their parent(s).

We Look Forward to Meeting You!

The GECD SB encourages regular communication from agents and parents with our staff and MLI Homestay staff. We believe that communication is one of the most important factors in building positive, supportive relationships. We strongly encourage regular communication to help facilitate a smooth transition to life and learning in Canada. We are here to answer all your questions about international education at the GECD SB. If you have any questions about anything, please reach out to us. We look forward to welcoming your student to the GECD SB!

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