PROVINCIAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS
In Ontario

Provincial Schools and Demonstration Schools are part of the Provincial Schools Authority (PSA), which was established under the Provincial School Negotiation Act.

These schools are operated by the Ministry of Education and provide education for elementary and secondary school students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, who are blind or have low vision, who are deafblind, and/or who have severe learning disabilities. The schools also provide outreach services and opportunities for professional development for staff working for school boards.

PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS:

- are operated by the Ministry of Education;
- provide education for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, who are blind or have low vision, who are deafblind, or who have severe learning disabilities;
- provide an alternative education option;
- serve as regional resource centres for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, who are blind or have low vision, who are deafblind, or who have severe learning disabilities;
- provide outreach and home-visiting services to parents of preschool children who are Deaf or hard of hearing, are blind or have low vision, or are deafblind;
- develop and provide learning materials and media for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, are blind or have low vision, or are deafblind;
- provide school board teachers with resource services;
- provide professional development for teachers.

Admittance to a Provincial School is determined by the Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296, "Ontario Schools for the Blind and the Deaf ". Application for admission to a Demonstration School is made on behalf of students by the school board, with parental consent. The Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities (PCLD) determines whether a student is eligible for admission.

The following four Provincial Schools in Ontario provide education for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, are Blind or have low vision, or are deafblind:

- W. Ross Macdonald School, Brantford
- Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf, Milton
- Robarts School for the Deaf, London
- Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf, Belleville

The language of instruction at the three schools for the Deaf is American Sign Language (ASL). The language of instruction at the W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind and Deafblind is English.

The Centre Jules-Léger, which functions as both a Provincial School and a Demonstration School, provides instruction for the Deaf in Langue des Signes Québécois (LSQ). All other instruction is in French.

The following three Demonstration Schools provide education for students who have severe learning disabilities. Instruction at these schools is in English:

- Amethyst School, London
- Sagonaska School, Belleville
- Trillium School, Milton

Transportation for students enrolled in Provincial Schools is arranged by school boards or Provincial Schools. Transportation for students enrolled in Demonstration Schools is arranged by Provincial Schools.

Below are brief descriptions of the various types of schools. Contact information for all Provincial and Demonstration Schools in Ontario can be found at the end of this document. More information on these schools is also available on the Provincial Schools Branch page of the ministry website.

PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE BLIND OR HAVE LOW VISION OR ARE DEAFBLIND

The W. Ross Macdonald School in Brantford and the Centre Jules-Léger in Ottawa provide education for students who are blind or have low vision or are deafblind. The language of instruction at the W. Ross Macdonald School is English; at the Centre Jules-Léger, instruction is in French.

The schools, which are also provincial resource centres for visually impaired and deafblind children and youth, provide:

- support to local school boards through consultation and the provision of special learning materials, such as Braille materials, audiotapes, and large-print textbooks;
- professional services and guidance to ministries of education on an interprovincial, cooperative basis.

Programs at these schools:

- are tailored to the needs of the individual student and are designed to help these students learn to live independently in a non-sheltered environment;
- are delivered by specially trained teachers;
- follow the Ontario curriculum developed for all students in the province;
- offer a full range of courses at the secondary level;
- offer courses in broad-based technology and mobility training;
- are individualized to offer a comprehensive "life skills" program;
- provide home visiting for parents and families of preschool deafblind children to assist in preparing these children for their future education.

PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

The following Provincial Schools offer services for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing:

- Centre Jules-Léger, Ottawa
- Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf, Milton
- Robarts School for the Deaf, London
- Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf, Belleville

The Centre Jules-Léger serves francophone students and families throughout Ontario.

These schools provide elementary and secondary school programs for students from Kindergarten to the end of high school. The programs follow the Ontario curriculum and parallel courses and programs provided in school boards. Each student's special education needs are met as set out in his or her IEP. Provincial Schools for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing:

- provide rich and supportive educational environments that facilitate student's language acquisition, learning, and social development through American Sign Language (ASL) and English, or through Langue des Signes Québécois (LSQ) and French;
- operate day and residential programs;
- provide residential facilities five days per week for those students who do not live within reasonable commuting distance from the school.

Each Provincial School has a resource services department that provides:

- consultation and educational advice to parents of children who are Deaf or hard of hearing and to school board personnel;
- information brochures;
- a wide variety of workshops for parents, school boards, and other agencies;
- an extensive home-visiting program delivered to parents of preschool children who are Deaf or hard of hearing by teachers trained in preschool and Deaf education

Additional information can be obtained from the resource services departments of the Provincial Schools.

DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE SEVERE LEARNING DISABILITIES

Although the primary responsibility to provide appropriate educational programs for students with learning disabilities remains with school boards, the ministry recognizes that some students require a residential school setting for a period of time. The Demonstration Schools were established to:

- provide special residential education programs for students between Grades 4 and 11;
- enhance the development of each student's academic and social skills;
- develop the abilities of the students enrolled to a level that will enable them to transition back to their local school within the same school year.

The Ministry of Education provides services for children with severe learning disabilities at four Demonstration Schools:

- Amethyst School, London
- Centre Jules-Léger, Ottawa
- Sagonaska School, Belleville
- Trillium School, Milton

Each Demonstration School has an enrolment of not more than forty students. The language of instruction at the Amethyst, Sagonaska, and Trillium Schools is English; at the Centre Jules-Léger, instruction is in French.

Admission Procedures:

In order to be eligible for admission to a demonstration school, a candidate must satisfy the following criteria:

- the applicant must qualify as a resident student of the school board (as in Section 32 of the Education Act);
- because of the nature of the learning disability and /or other factors, the applicant must be in need of a residential education program;
- the applicant must have a severe learning disability, according to the Ministry definition;
- a psychologist or other mental health professional must have determined recently that the applicant is not in need of treatment for emotional or behavioural disorders;
- an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) must have recommended to the school board that the applicant be placed in a demonstration school;
- the applicant must have been assessed by a resource services consultant from a demonstration school.
- IPRC review needed to admit students.

Referrals:

Special Services staff supporting programs for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing oversee the referral process to demonstration schools. School boards may make referral to the demonstration schools, upon the recommendation of an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). Such referrals shall be directed to the appropriate regional office of the Ministry of Education. The Special Services staff member who oversees the TCDSB programs for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing should ensure that the following are submitted to the regional office:

- assessment information;
- school history;
- personal and family data;
- a list of alternative placements in order of priority by the IPRC.

Revised application requirements have been provided by the Ministry of Education for use beginning in September 2003.

The Provincial Committee On Learning Disabilities:

Decisions regarding admission to demonstration schools will be made by the Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities, which consists of:

- an official from the Special Education and Provincial Schools Branch, who will call and chair meetings;
- the demonstration school program directors;
- one representative of the Children's Division of the Ministry of Community and Social Services;
- a registered psychologist;
- one or more additional representatives.

The Provincial Committee request additional information from the regional offices in order to determine the priority of candidates for the available places in the Demonstration Schools. In addition, the Committee will interview the applicants, the parent(s) / guardian(s), and the school board representatives. Meetings will take place in the appropriate regional office of the Ministry of Education and Training. The Committee will communicate its decisions and recommendations to the school board; copies will be sent to the parent(s) / guardian(s) and the student's home school.

Residential Schools for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing:

The Ministry of Education provides the services of two Provincial Schools for the Deaf.

E.C. Drury School in Milton is the residential school for the Deaf for students in the Toronto area.

The program objectives of the Schools for the Deaf are as follows:

- to provide residential education programs for students who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- to assist enrolled students to develop personal life and learning strategies;
- to provide in-service teacher and related support staff education;
- to provide resource services to school boards which have established alternative; educational programs for the deaf under Ministry policy / program Memoranda 76C.

Admission Procedures:

In order to be eligible for admission to a school for the Deaf, a candidate must satisfy the following criteria:

- the applicant must qualify as a resident student of the school board (as in Section 32 of the Education Act);
- the applicant must be five years of age on or before the 31st of December of the year of admission;
- the applicant or parents must submit evidence satisfactory to the Provincial Superintendent (Schools for the Deaf) that, because of a severe or profound hearing loss, the applicant is in need of a Special Education Program;
- an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) must have recommended to the school board that the applicant be placed in the School the Blind or Deaf (a letter supporting the application must be submitted).

Referrals:

The Special Services staff for the TCDSB Programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing oversees the referrals to the residential school. Boards may make referrals to Provincial Schools for the Deaf upon the recommendation of an Identification, Placement and Review Committee. Such referrals are made directly to the Superintendent, Provincial Schools for the Deaf.

The school board should ensure that the following are submitted to the Superintendent:

- assessment information (including recent audiological, psychological and speech-language pathology reports);
- school history;
- personal and family data;

The Provincial Admission Committee for Schools for the Deaf

Decisions regarding admission to Schools for the Deaf will be made by a Provincial Admissions Committee. The Admissions Committee consists of:

- an official from the Special Education and Provincial Schools Branch who will call and chair meetings;
- school principal and vice-principal;
- Resource Services, Program Director;
- a registered psychologist;
- a social worker;
- a residence representative.

The committee will meet with the student (where appropriate), his/her parent(s) or guardian(s), and appropriate board personnel. The Admissions Committee will consider any additional factors such as emotional, behavioural, social, or physical problems which may affect the applicant's admissibility to the school. Meetings will take place at the appropriate Provincial School. The Admissions Committee will report its decision to the parents and school board; copies will be sent to the parents/guardians and the home school.

Residential Schools for Students Who Are Blind or DeafBlind

The Ministry of Education provides the services of one Provincial Schools for the Blind and DeafBlind at W. Ross Macdonald School in Brantford.

The program objectives of the School for the Blind and DeafBlind are as follows:

- To provide residential education programs for students who are blind or deafblind;
- To assist enrolled students to develop personal life and learning strategies;
- To provide in-service teacher and related support staff education;
- To provide resource services to school boards which have established alternative educational programs for the blind and deafblind under Ministry policy/program Memorandum 76C.

Criteria for Admission

In order to be eligible for admission to a school for the blind and deafblind, a candidate must satisfy the following criteria:

- The applicant must qualify as a resident student of the school board (as in Section 32 of the Education Act);
- Be educationally blind or deafblind, i.e. unable to use his/her sense of vision or vision/hearing to benefit from a program for blind or deafblind students;
- The school board and parents shall submit evidence satisfactory to the Provincial School that the applicant is in need of a Provincial School Program;
- An Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) must have recommended to the school board that the applicant be placed in the School for the Blind or DeafBlind;
    - The applicant shall have been assessed by a resource services consultant from the W. Ross Macdonald School.

Referrals:

Referrals to W. Ross Macdonald School are processed by the Special Education staff. School boards may make referrals to W. Ross Macdonald School upon the recommendation of an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). Such referrals shall be submitted directly to the W. Ross Macdonald School.

The School Board must ensure that the following are submitted to the W. Ross Macdonald School:

- assessment information (including recent audiological, psychological, and speech language pathology reports);
- school history;
- personal and family data.

The Provincial Admission Committee for Schools for the Blind and Deaf

Decisions regarding admission to the demonstration schools will be made by the Provincial Admissions Committee for blind and deaf-blind students. This committee consists of:

- a chairperson, who will be the Superintendent or designate;
- the vice- principal of the Blind and/or DeafBlind program;
- Resource Services Consultant;
- a residence representative;
- an advocate representative of the Ministry of Education or the Children's Services Division of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (invite to attend);
- other appropriate school staff (such as a psychologist or social worker).

The committee will meet with the student (where appropriate), the parent(s), and appropriate board personnel. The Provincial Committee may request additional information from the school board in order to determine the admissibility of the candidate. In addition, the Committee will interview the applicants, the parent(s) / guardian(s), and the school board representatives. Meetings will take place at W. Ross Macdonald School.

The committee will communicate its decisions and recommendations to the school board; copies will be sent to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) and the home school.

TRANSPORTATION:

Students who attend are provided transportation. Ministry does refund boards for 100% of the costs of transportation to the Demonstration Schools. There are currently 15 TCDSB students attending Provincial Schools at this time.

In TCDSB, decisions regarding how children will be transported to the provincially run schools is made on an individual basis. Children who require additional attendants (health-care professionals, for instance) have that care provided on the mode of transportation as well.

For children who attend day schools they are transported by wheelchair mini-bus, van, or taxi, depending on their needs from their home to the school.

Students who attend Residential Schools are provided transportation facilitated by the TCDSB. The Provincial Schools and the agencies involved with the children determine the programming needs for the children and the type of transportation required.

ENROLMENT AS OF JUNE 30, 2026 IN PROVICINAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS BY EXCEPTIONALITY:

Blind/Low Vision	Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Learning Disabilities	DeafBlind
2	13	0	0

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS

Provincial Schools

Centre Jules-Léger
281, rue Lanark, Ottawa, ON K1Z 6R8 Tel: 613-761-9300 TTY: 613-761-9302
https://ccjl.ca/

Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf
255 Ontario Street South, Milton, ON L9T 2M5 Tel: 905-878-2851 TTY: 905-878-7195
https://ecd.pdsbnet.ca/

Robarts School for the Deaf
1515 Cheapside Street, London, ON N5V 3N9 Tel: 519-453-4400 TTY: 519-453-4400
https://rob.pdsbnet.ca/

Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf
350 Dundas Street West, Belleville, ON K8P 1B2 Tel: 613-967-2823 TTY: 613-967-2823
https://sjw.pdsbnet.ca/

W. Ross Macdonald School
350 Brant Avenue, Brantford, ON N3T 3J9 Tel: 519-759-0730
https://wrms.pdsbnet.ca/contact_us

Demonstration Schools

Amethyst School
1515 Cheapside Street, London, ON N5V 3N9 Tel: 519-453-4400
https://ame.pdsbnet.ca/

Centre Jules-Léger, see Provincial Schools above

Sagonaska School
350 Dundas Street West, Belleville, ON K8P 1B2 Tel: 613-967-2830
https://sag.pdsbnet.ca/

Trillium School
347 Ontario Street South, Milton, ON L9T 3X9 Tel: 905-878-2851
https://tri.pdsbnet.ca/

Reference Document

Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Resource Guide, 2017