



Ontario Education Levels and Immigration Status Enrolment Eligibility

Presented by:

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This presentation is
possible thanks to
the support of:



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The land we are standing on today is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Huron-Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

OVERVIEW

- Land Acknowledgement
- FCJ Refugee Centre
- Precarious Status & Implications with Education
- Education System in Canada – Ontario Education Act
- Ministry of Education – Memorandum SB16
- Secondary/Tertiary 18+ Education Access

Who We Are

- We are a non-profit organization which serves refugees and others at risk due to their immigration status
- We welcome anyone asking for information, counsel and support regarding these issues.
- We address systemic issues that newly arrived refugee claimants and persons with precarious immigrations status face in Canada including lack of resources, marginalization, and discrimination.
- FCJ Refugee Centre is unique in its capacity to serve anyone who needs assistance. We have a particular penchant for serving populations who we term as “precarious migrants”.

**FCJ
REFUGEE
CENTRE**



**WALKING
WITH
UPROOTED
PEOPLE**



Service and Resources



**SETTLEMENT &
INTEGRATION**

- Shelter for women & children
- Refugee Housing Hub
- Women's services
- Food distribution
- English Classes
- Clinic
- Youth
- Access to Education

**IMMIGRATION
SUPPORT**

- Refugee process
- Immigration orientation
- PRRA (risk assessment)
- Refugee appeal
- H&C (Humanitarian & Compassionate App.)
- Sponsorship
- Work permit
- Etc.

**ANTI-HUMAN
TRAFFICKING**

- Migrants Workers Mobile Clinic
- Direct services to trafficked persons
- Migrant Women's Counter Trafficking Alliance
- Youth Alliance Against HT

**PUBLIC
EDUCATION &
NETWORKING**

- Webinars & training sessions
- Borderless Voices podcast
- YouTube channel
- Resources
- Country research
- Newsletter & annual reports

**FCJ
REFUGEE
CENTRE**

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WWW.FCJREFUGEECENTRE.ORG

What is regularized status vs precarious status?

REGULARIZED VS. PRECARIOUS STATUS

What are examples of 'regularized' status?

- Canadian Citizen
- Permanent Resident
- Convention Refugee
- Protected person
- International student*
- Visitor*

What are examples of 'precarious' status?

- Refugee Claimants
- Refused Refugee Claimants
- International student*
- Visitor*
- Those caught in limbo due to immigration policy changes
- Victims & Survivors of Human Trafficking
- Those involved in sponsorship breakdown
- Anyone without official immigration status living in Canada

Education System FAQs

EDUCATION SYSTEM IN CANADA

- Education in Canada is Provincially Administered
- Levels of Education in Ontario can be divided by - Preschool Daycare, Elementary, Secondary, and Post-Secondary
- The Ministry of Education is the ministry of the Government of Ontario responsible for government policy, funding, curriculum planning and direction in all levels of public education, including elementary and secondary schools
- Paul Calandra is the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario
- The Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security is the ministry of the Government of Ontario responsible for administration of laws relating to post-secondary education.
- Nolan Quinn is the Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security for the Province of Ontario

Education System

Elementary & Secondary Level (under 18)

PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM IN ONTARIO

Ontario operates four publicly funded school systems:

- An English-language public school system
- A French-language public school system
- An English-language separate school system
- A French-language separate school system

PUBLIC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS IN THE GTA

Toronto

- TDSB (Toronto District School Board)
- TCDSB (Toronto Catholic District School Board)

York

- YRDSB (York Region District School Board)
- YCDSB (York Catholic District School Board)

Halton

- HDSB (Halton District School Board)
- HCDSB (Halton Catholic District School Board)

Peel

- PDSB (Peel District School Board)
- DPCDSB (Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board)

Durham

- DDSB (Durham District School Board)
- DCDSB (Durham Catholic District School Board)

INTERNATIONAL OR DOMESTIC STUDENT?

- Who qualifies as a domestic student in Ontario?
- What does it mean to be an international student? Requirements?

*There are other types of statuses that fall under either category outside of the newcomer population

FEES: DOMESTIC OR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT?

What are examples of 'domestic' status?

- Canadian Citizen
- Permanent Resident
- Convention Refugee/Protected person
- Refugee Claimant*
- Rejected Refugee Claimant*
- Non-status*
- Minor Child of International Student*
- Minor Child of Work Permit Holder*
- Temporary Resident Permit*
- Awaiting decision on PR*

What are examples of 'international' status?

- Visitor/Tourist (less than 6 months in Canada)
- Foreign National outside Canada

ACCESS TO ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

- School aged children who have arrived in Canada as visitors must wait 6 months before entering school
- School aged children who have made a port-of-entry refugee claim can enter right away as they will have the Letter of Acknowledgement of Claim
- School aged children who have made an inland refugee claim need to wait for their refugee documents to enter school
- School aged children with parents who hold a valid Study or Work Permit before the child is enrolled in school have the same fee exemption as domestic students

WHAT DOCUMENTS ARE NEEDED?

- Passport (parents + child(ren))
- Birth Certificate (child(ren)) [and Baptismal Certificate if Catholic Elementary School]
- 2 different Proof of address (this can be rental agreement, utility bill, internet, landline phone, taxes, any letter from a government agency etc.)
- Refugee status documents if you are a refugee (parents + child(ren)); or
- Entry stamps/plane tickets/boarding passes from the day you entered Canada if you are non-status (parents + child(ren)); or
- Immigration documents if you are a Study/Work permit holder (parents + child(ren))

Ministry of Education

SB16

Ministry of Education

Education Labour and Finance
Division

315 Front Street West
12th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 0B8

Ministère de l'Éducation

Division des relations de travail et du
financement en matière d'éducation

315, rue Front Ouest
12^e étage
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 0B8



2024: SB16

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Superintendents of Business

FROM: Romina Di Pasquale
Director
Enrolment, Funding & Labour Policy

DATE: August 28, 2024

SUBJECT: **Updated Guidance on Policies and Supporting
Documentation related to Pupil Residency and Eligibility
Status for Tuition Exemption**

The purpose of this memorandum (Memo) is to provide updated guidance on policies and supporting documentation related to confirming pupil residency and eligibility status for tuition exemption under the *Education Act*. The ministry's last guidance was issued through memorandum 2018 SB08 "Clarification of Policies and Supporting Documentation to Confirm Pupil Residency and Eligibility Status", which consolidated previous memoranda on this matter. This 2024: SB16 memorandum supersedes that memorandum, effective the start of the 2024-25 school year.

Updates in this Memo are intended to provide clarity and guidance so that all school boards enroll students in Ontario's publicly funded schools consistently across the province and in compliance with the *Education Act*. For ease of identifying what is new, updates are noted **in bold** (in addition to section headings), including the introduction of best practices for school boards.

General

All school boards are required to review documentation to determine a student's eligibility to attend a publicly funded school in Ontario either with the payment of a fee or

EDUCATION ACT - “DON’T ASK, DON’T TELL”

Section 49.1

Section 49.1 was added to the *Education Act* in 1993 to ensure that minor children are not denied an education because of their immigration status or that of their parents. The section reads as follows:

“
A person who is otherwise entitled to be admitted to a school and who is less than eighteen years of age shall not be refused admission because the person or the person's parent or guardian is unlawfully in Canada.

QUESTIONS?

Education System

Secondary Level (over 18)

SECONDARY SCHOOL AGE 18+ AT THE TDSB

EdVance Program

18 - 20

Adult School

21+

NOTE: A VALID IMMIGRATION STATUS IS NEEDED TO ENROLL; AGE NOT COVERED UNDER THE EDUCATION ACT

LIST OF TDSB ADULT SCHOOLS

School	Address	Postal Code
Burnhamthorpe Adult Learning Centre	500 the East Mall, Etobicoke, ON	M9B 2C4
City Adult Learning Centre	1 Danforth Ave, Toronto, ON	M4K 1M8
Emery Adult Learning Centre	3395 Weston Rd, North York, ON	M9M 2V9
Scarborough Centre for Alt Studies Adult	720 Midland Ave, Scarborough, ON	M1K 4C9
Yorkdale Adult Learning Centre	38 Orfus Rd, North York, ON	M6A 1L6

LIST OF 2025-26 QUADS

2025-2026 Program Dates

Term	EdVance	Adult
1	September 2 - November 10	September 4 – November 10
2	November 11 – January 28	November 12 – January 28
3	January 30 - April 17	February 3 - April 17
4	April 20 - June 24	April 22 - June 24

Secondary School Age 18+ Summary

- If you have valid immigration status and are above 18 years of age, you can go to Adult School to secure an OSSD (Ontario Secondary School Diploma)
- No particular English Level needed (at most schools)
- Benefit of the Continuing Education program is earning an OSSD while improving English - both increasing access to post-secondary education and employability
- Registrations for Quad 2 is almost full for November 11 start; Quad 3 registrations and assessment test booking for English & Math open in January 2026

Getting Your OSSD (Ontario Secondary School Diploma)

What you need to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma depends on the year you started Grade 9.

If you started Grade 9 in 2023 or in prior years, you must earn:

- 18 [compulsory credits](#); 12 [optional credits](#); the [literacy requirement](#); at least 2 [online learning credits](#)

If you started Grade 9 in 2024 or in later years you must earn:

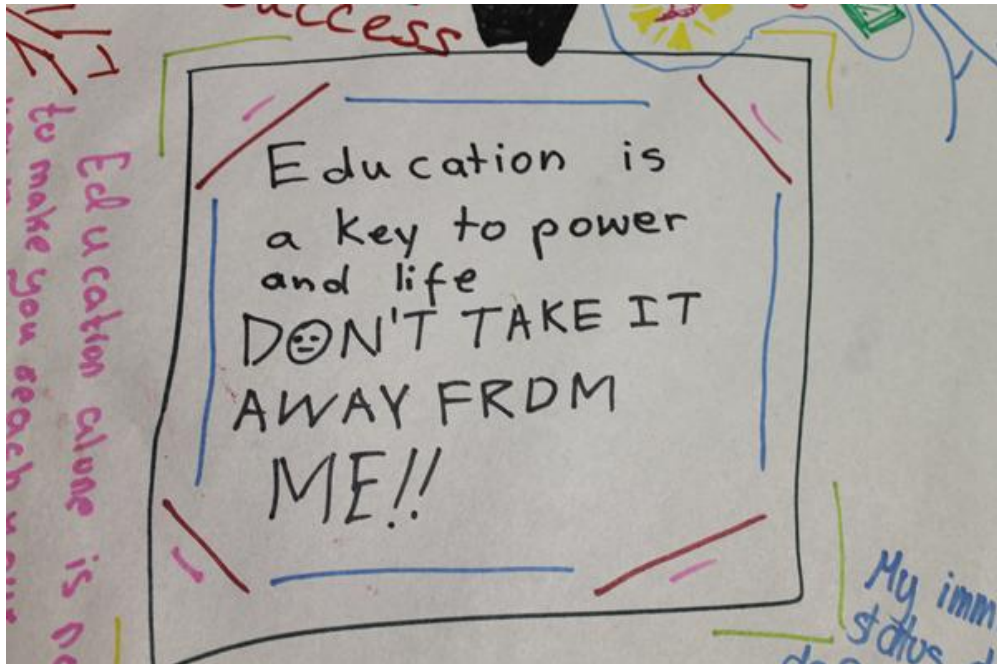
- 17 [compulsory credits](#); 13 [optional credits](#); the [literacy requirement](#); at least 2 [online learning credits](#)

Everyone needs 40 hours of [community involvement activities](#) (volunteering) to get their high school diploma.

QUESTIONS?

Post-Secondary & Beyond

THE FCJ/YORK PROGRAM



- After the Pan Am Games in Toronto in 2015, the City of Toronto welcomed proposals to the Community Legacy Initiative Fund for projects which would increase capacity and address systemic barriers experienced by the city's Latin American, South American and Caribbean communities.
- The project, Access to Education, was submitted and approved - for providing two options for accessing post secondary education at York University.
- The project offers two pathways for entry into University - a bridging course program, and a direct entry program.

DEVELOPMENT OF BRIDGING COURSE

- The bridging program was designed to support students who had been out of formal education for some time. The course provides a re-introduction to formal education structure, and introduces the students to the support services available within the university.
- There have been several rounds of delivery of the Bridging Course – from Winter 2017, until now.
- The bridging course itself, ‘Critical Approaches to Migration and Uprootedness’ is delivered from within the department of Sociology, with the course contents focusing on migration theory.
- The course has been a collaborative effort, with staff from the writing centre, legal services and York Campus Security participating.

DIRECT ENTRY

- The Direct Entry program was created to support students at the point of graduation who meet or exceed the standard for qualification to university admission.
- This program required several coordination and implementation processes from the Admissions and Registrars offices, in order to create student profiles online, which recognized them as domestic students.
- All of the students who have been admitted to the degree programs have shown incredible gratitude and excitement at the opportunity to study at university – an opportunity that for many would otherwise not have been an option in the near, or distant future.
- The program has been no less than life changing for it's participants.

Sanctuary Scholars Applications & Other Ventures

[York University](#)

What else do I need to know?

This program isn't open to students who are currently in Canada with international student immigration status or students who are hoping to come to Canada as international students. We have also worked hard to make other modifications across the University to ensure student safety, accessibility and a welcoming environment for Sanctuary Scholars.

To apply

Students must contact the program coordinator during their application process to ensure they are eligible for the Sanctuary Scholars program. For more information on the Sanctuary Scholars program, please contact a program coordinator: spisinfo@yorku.ca.

[Toronto Metropolitan University](#)

About This Program

The Sanctuary Scholars program offered at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) via the Office of Social Innovation (OSI), provides an access pathway specifically for students who hold precarious immigration status.

While students with precarious immigration status, who we have termed Sanctuary Scholars, can enroll in school at the elementary and secondary levels in Ontario, accessing the post-secondary level is often very difficult or even impossible. Sanctuary Scholars may have completed all of their education in Ontario, or may be coming to Canada with high school or even university-level education, but they cannot join their friends and peers in pursuing post-secondary education. This is why at Toronto Metropolitan University we have worked hard to develop a new access pathway specifically for Sanctuary Scholars.

In keeping with our commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and access as outlined in the 2020-2025 [Academic Plan](#), TMU has taken an important step by creating the Sanctuary Scholars program. We have furthered our commitment to welcome all people to an environment of belonging, based on the university's values of inclusivity, innovation and excellence. We work continuously to establish a safe and welcoming place for Sanctuary Scholars. We take the confidentiality and the unique needs of this group very seriously.

Contact

sanctuaryscholars@torontomu.ca

What is Precarious Immigration Status?

Within the Sanctuary Scholars program at TMU, the term 'precarious status' is used to include people who have made immigration applications, including: refugee claims, refused refugee claims, humanitarian and compassionate ground (H&C)* applications, pre-removal risk assessment (PRRA)* applications, people on temporary resident permits (TRPs)*, as well as those who have no immigration status.

*See the Terminology list

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ACCESS PROGRAMS

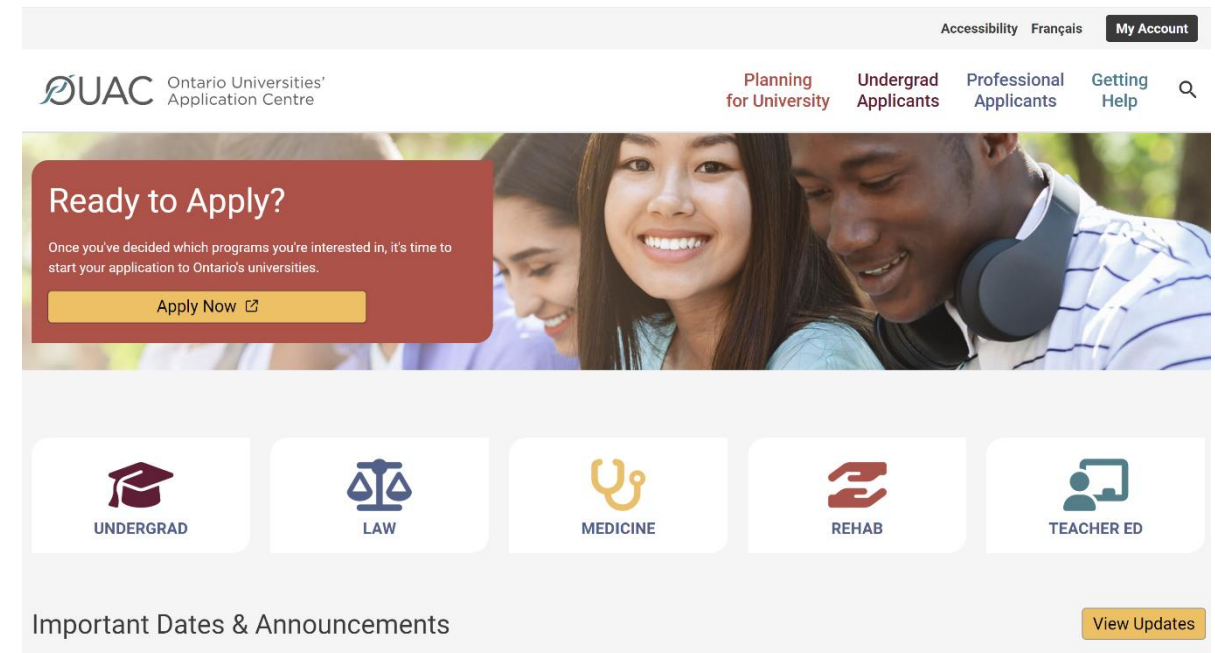
- York University
- Toronto Metropolitan University
- Queen's University
- Wilfred Laurier University
- University Of Toronto
- No colleges so far

College & University Applications

Ontario College Application Service



Ontario Universities' Application Centre



OSAP (Ontario Student Assistance Program)

The [Ontario Student Assistance Program \(OSAP\)](#) is a financial aid program that can help you pay for college or university.

OSAP offers funding through:

- **grants:** money you don't have to pay back
- **a student loan:** money you need to repay once you're done school

When you apply for OSAP, you are automatically considered for both grants and a loan. If you don't want to take a loan, and you're a full-time or part-time student, you can decline it after your application is approved.


OSAP can help you pay for: tuition, books and equipment, fees charged by your school, living expenses (full-time students only), child care (for full-time and part-time students with children)

Current Advocacy Efforts

ONTARIO EDUCATION REPORT CARD PROJECT

- The Uprooted Education 2016 Ontario Report was the result of a project undertaken by members of the FCJ Youth Network to explore how the unique trajectories and social locations of migrant youth with precarious immigration status intersect with Access T.O.; particularly its involvement in, Ontario High Schools.
- The 2024-2025 reports do a follow-up on the 2016 edition detailing the current experiences through the same five salient themes (Getting In, Equitable Participation, Anti-discrimination, Support, Moving On), and offers insight into promising practices and possibilities to ignite change.


REPORT CARDS AND FOCUS GROUPS



Walking with Uprooted People


A ROCKY PATH

Understanding Access to Education Challenges for Newcomer Children & Youth

Ontario Education Report Card
Phase 1: June 2024

Prepared by:  FCJ YOUTH Network


Funded by:  Maytree
Poverty • Rights • Change



Walking with Uprooted People

BUILDING PATHWAYS

Enhancing Access To Education Systems for Newcomer Children & Youth

Ontario Education Report Card
Phase 2: February 2025

Prepared by:  FCJ YOUTH Network

Funded by:  Maytree
Poverty • Rights • Change

**SEPTEMBER 25
9:30AM TO
12:00PM**

ROUNDTABLE ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN ONTARIO

 FCJ YOUTH Network

 FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE

 Maytree
Poverty • Rights • Change

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Thank you

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