

Frequently asked questions about Explore High Skills

What is the Explore High Skills program?

Explore High Skills is a Peel District School Board pathway program that allows secondary schools with Specialist High Skills Major programs to offer a unique specialized program choice for grade 9 and 10 students. These sector-related programs are available to students in all skill levels and in all pathways.

Who can apply to the Explore High Skills program?

All students who are currently in grade 8 can apply to the Explore High Skills program. Peel District School Board students **must** apply online at www.peelschools.org/ExploreHighSkills. Non-Peel District School Board students must download the application and submit to the school which they would like to attend.

What are the application deadlines and key dates for the Explore High Skills program?

Application opens: Nov. 9, 2016

Application closes: Nov. 25, 2016 at 4 p.m.

Out of board application opens: Nov. 22, 2016

Out of board applications close: Dec. 16, 2016 at 4 p.m.

Explore High Skills Offers sent out: Feb. 15, 2017

Explore High Skills Offers close: Feb. 17, 2017 at 4 p.m.

Out of boundary offers will be sent to Peel District School Board students on Feb. 21

Out of board offers will be sent to non-Peel District School Board students on Feb. 21

All offers must be accepted by Feb 22 at 4 p.m.

When can I apply for the Explore High Skills program?

Peel District School Board students/families in grade 8 can apply online or get additional information at www.peelschools.org/ExploreHighSkills. The application is open from Nov. 9 to Nov. 25, 2016

Non-Peel District School Board students can apply from Nov. 22 to Dec. 16 by downloading the application, located at www.peelschools.org/ExploreHighSkills, and submitting to the school which hosts the Explore High Skills program of their choice(s).

What fees are associated with Explore High Skills?

There are no program fees and no application fees associated with Explore High Skills programs.

Can I apply to multiple Explore High Skills programs?

Yes. Peel District School Board students/families in grade 8 can submit applications for up to three Explore High Skills programs, including those offered at locations other than their neighbourhood school.

How does the Explore High Skills program differ from the regular grade 9 program?

There are several resources to help students and parent(s)/guardian(s) learn about the specialized features of the Explore High Skills program. Visit www.peelschools.org/ExploreHighSkills for a listing of schools and programs, and links to more information. Additionally, view the video, review the flyer for program components on our website. You can also contact the school for program details.

When choosing courses for grade 9, will students interested in Explore High Skills need to choose different courses?

Depending on the school and sector, upon acceptance to the program, students may be asked to select a course connected with the Explore High Skills sector.

What if a student chooses not to (or is unable to) complete all components of the Explore High Skills program?

If a student chooses not to complete a component of the program (e.g. a certification) they will not receive the Explore High Skills certificate at the end of grade 10. There will be no impact to a student's final grade.

What are the benefits to my neighbourhood school offering a whole-school Explore High Skills program for *all* grade 9 students?

The Explore High Skills program is designed to provide skill-building activities relevant to a variety of career plans in *all* pathways. Grade 9 students can make connections to their personal interests, aspirations and career goals by participating in Explore High Skills activities. For example, students can earn career-related and industry-recognized certifications that are relevant to any work/life environment. Students will develop learning skills that are applicable to any subject area. Focused learning activities allow all students to make connections between classroom learning and their interests to support their Individual Pathway Plan (IPP).

Castlebrooke, Cawthra Park and Harold M. Brathwaite Secondary Schools are offering whole-school Explore High Skills programs to their neighbourhood grade 9 students.

Will the whole-school Explore High Skills program impact my course selection?

Students will follow the usual process in selecting courses for grade 9 according to their pathway plans. Explore High Skills programs will not impact grades or create extra work. Students involved in whole-school Explore High Skills programs will choose to participate in some or all of the Explore High Skills

activities based on their interests and pathway plans. Grade 8 students whose neighbourhood secondary school is Castlebrooke or Harold M. Brathwaite Secondary School will indicate their Explore High Skills program choice, since both of those schools offer Explore High Skills in two different sectors.

Is there specific criteria to apply to the Explore High Skills program?

All Peel District School Board students currently in grade 8, entering grade 9 as of September 2017, are eligible to apply for the Explore High Skills program.

Current grade 9 students, enrolled in the Explore High Skills program, will transition into the EHS program for grade 10.

Where is the Explore High Skills program offered and which sectors for 2017-18 school year?

School	2017-18 Program(s)
Castlebrooke Secondary School	Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Sports
Cawthra Park Secondary School	Arts and Culture
Harold M. Brathwaite Secondary School	Justice, Community Safety and Emergency Services Business
Heart Lake Secondary School	Arts and Culture Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
Meadowvale Secondary School	Business (not offered in grade 9 in 2017-18) Construction and Engineering
Mississauga Secondary School	Health and Wellness
North Park Secondary School	Business
Rick Hansen Secondary School	Hospitality and Tourism Manufacturing
TL Kennedy Secondary School	Business

	Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
Turner Fenton Secondary School	Hospitality and Tourism

What are the boundaries for Explore High Skills sectors?

For information on program boundaries, visit [Find Your School](#). To find the Explore High Skills program in your boundary, enter your home address to display program boundaries.

Will busing be provide to students who attend a program outside of their boundary?

No. Busing will not be provided to students in the Explore High Skills program. However, students attending their neighbourhood school may be eligible based on the board's [transportation policy](#). See [STOPR](#) for details.

Can I apply to an Explore High Skills program in a school that is not my neighbourhood school?

Yes. There are a maximum of 10 spots available at each school for students who live outside of their neighbourhood school boundary. Students who live and apply within their neighbourhood school boundary will be offered spots first.

If there's a program that is offered at your neighbourhood school and out-of-boundary school, students will be accepted to their neighbourhood school first. If there is a spot available at the out-of-boundary school after the first and second round of offers have been made, an offer will be made. Busing will not be provided.

When will offers be made to out-of-boundary and non-Peel board students?

On Feb. 20, the school will offer remaining spots to Peel District School Board students who live outside of the neighbourhood boundary and non-Peel District School Board students. These spots will be limited to 10.

Can a student accept more than one Explore High Skills offer?

A student can only accept one offer. All offers made by other schools will automatically be declined once one is accepted. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will need to reply to the acceptance email to confirm the offer. **Once the offer is accepted, this is irreversible by the parent.**

Can I apply to both the Explore High Skills program and Regional Learning Choices Program?

Yes. Grade 8 students can submit applications for both the Explore High Skills program and Regional Learning Choices Program. However, a student can only accept one offer, with the exception of Harold M. Brathwaite and Cawtha Park secondary schools, in which all grade 9 students, including Regional Learning Choices Program will have the opportunity to participate in all components of the Explore High Skills program. All other applications/offers will automatically be unavailable once one offer has been accepted. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will need to reply to the acceptance email to confirm the offer. Once the offer is accepted, this is irreversible by the parent.

If I attend the Explore High Skills program outside of my boundary, do I lose a year of ROPSSAA eligibility?

No, students in the Explore High Skills program will be able to participate in ROPSSAA. The Explore High Skills program falls under the Peel board's Regional Learning Choices Program—[Policy 64](#), which exempts students from losing a year of eligibility when transferring to another school.

I'm having trouble submitting my application online. Why?

Please ensure all information has been entered and choices have been confirmed. Students must have the support of their parent(s)/guardian(s) before submitting their applications.

How do I know that my application went through okay?

After submitting the application, applicants will see a response appear on the screen that reads "Thank you for submitting an application. You can now close this window." This indicates that applications have been submitted successfully.

What happens if there are more applicants than available spaces in the program?

If there are more applicants than spaces in the program, a lottery system/random selection process is used to select the students.

Am I eligible to participate in Specialist High Skills Major program in grade 11 if I do not participate in the Explore High Skills program?

Yes. The Explore High Skills program is not a prerequisite for the Specialist High Skills Major program.

After completing the Explore High Skills program, do I have to reapply for the Specialist High Skills Major program?

Yes. The Specialist High Skills Major program is a separate opportunity for grade 11 and 12 students only.

What do students receive upon successful completion of the Explore High Skills program?

Students who successfully complete the six required components of the Explore High Skills program by the end of grade 10 will receive the Explore High Skills certificate. Students will also receive a record card documenting completion of each of the required components.

What if I do not want to continue in the Explore High Skills program?

If a student is at their neighbourhood school, they can remain at the school in the regular program. If a student was enrolled in an Explore High Skills program outside of their neighbourhood school boundary, they would transfer back to their neighbourhood school.

More information?

For more information regarding the Explore High Skills program, visit www.peelschools.org/ExploreHighSkills. If you have questions about a specific school and/or program, they should be directed to the school. For general questions, email us at communications@peelsb.com and a Peel board staff member will respond.