

Ontario Secondary School Programs for Low German Mennonite Students

Program & District	Contact Person(s)	Structure
<p>ACCESS Program</p> <p>(Tilbury District High School)</p> <p>Lambton Kent DSB</p>	<p>Helen Fast, LGM Engagement Worker</p> <p>helen.fast@lkdsb.net</p> <p>Todd Grainger Student Success</p> <p>todd.grainger@lkdsb.net</p>	<p>ACCESS Program</p> <p>At Tilbury District High School we are proud of our rural background and culture. ACCESS is a program that respects the Mennonite faith and way of life while providing a solid education.</p> <p>Highlights of the program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leads to an Ontario Secondary School Diploma with an opportunity to meet all students in different pathways. ● Operates out of Tilbury District High School ● Credits are earned through teacher-supported study. ● Course are provided through the elearning platform asynchronously ● Co-operative Education credits are earned through the workplace ● Teacher Accessibility is extended through personal conversation and interaction ● One-on-one teacher instruction is provided from 8:00 to 2:15pm daily at the school ● Evening hours are scheduled every Tuesday from 6:00-8:00pm ● New ACCESS students have an hour long google meet Thursday morning to answer questions and help with courses. ● The goal is to have students earn 16 credits by the end of grade 10. In grade 11 they earn 3 more academic credits while completing their diploma through coop at the workplace.

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<p>ASPIRE Program</p> <p>(East Elgin Secondary School)</p> <p>Thames Valley DSB</p>	<p>Catarina Vindasius Department Head 226.268.8059 c.vindasius@tvdsb.ca</p>	<p>ASPIRE Program is a culturally responsive and relevant program that honors Mennonite faith, values, culture and language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This flexible and innovative grade 9-12 program is designed for all student pathways using individualized programming that incorporates lived experiences and interests to create hands-on projects connected to curriculum expectations.• Operates out of East Elgin Secondary School in Aylmer• ASPIRE 9/10 - Schedule: Mondays students are off site (home or at work) support from teachers is synchronous or asynchronous. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday students attend class. Tuesday evening in class support available for students working through the day. Friday's students are off site (home or at work) support from teachers is asynchronous.• Students earn 8 credits/year - Team teaching project-based approach Semester1 (science, math tech1,tech2), Semester2 (english, physed,• ASPIRE 11/12 - Schedule: Mondays students are off site (home or at work) support from teachers is synchronous or asynchronous. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday students can attend class. Tuesday evening in class support available for students working through the day. Friday's students are off site (home or at work) support from teachers is asynchronous.• Students earn 6 credits/year - Team teaching project-based approach focus is on humanities, coop, a missing compulsories• Community outreach events are held to promote and support learning for the Low German speaking Mennonite community• Strong working relationship and connection with the elementary Bridges program offered at Summers Corners and Straffordville
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<p>CASE and Riverside (Listowel District SS)</p> <p>Avon Maitland DSB</p>	<p>CASE teachers: Teresa Renecker 519-274-4279 teresa.renecker@ed.amdsb.ca</p> <p>Fred Valdez 519-531-0380 fred.valdez@ed.amdsb.ca</p> <p>Riverside Teachers: Andrea Gerber 226-261-0811 andrea.gerber@ed.amdsb.ca</p> <p>Michelle Kuepfer 226-261-0810 michelle.kuepfer@ed.amdsb.ca</p>	<p>CASE (Community-based Alternative Secondary Education)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· semestered grades 9-12 courses at Listowel District Secondary School that are separate from the mainstream programming;· in-class for two days per week to learn from qualified secondary teachers in a traditional classroom setting with blended learning and inquiry-based learning; including shop classes delivered by certified tech teachers <p>Students are expected to connect with their teachers for clarifications, support, and 1 to 1 tutoring. Teachers accommodate this in addition to the Cooperative Education component of the program. This occurs online, via text and chat, or face to face throughout the week as students continue to work on their academic assignments and projects in addition to their cooperative education programming. Students are offered a variety of field trip opportunities to extend and relate their in-class learning to real-world contexts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Students combine curricular studies with three days per week of cooperative education placements in the community;· Optional: Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program within the CASE program specializing in Agriculture, Business, Construction, Health and Wellness, and Manufacturing. Students are able to access free certifications that include first aid, working at heights, chainsaw safety, and food safety, among others.
		<p>Riverside Rural Learning (Ages 14-21)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Riverside strives to provide flexible academic programming to students and families from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, including but not limited to Low German speaking families, students from local private Christian schools, and students who were previously homeschooled. Program staff support students and families in working towards individualized goals through a blended learning <p>Students work independently on e-learning courses and meet with Riverside teachers once a week in a variety of locations including various high schools, and a local elementary school, Mornington Central; one session is scheduled in the evening each week to accommodate students who are working</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> students may opt to participate in co-op but it is not a required component, students can also access the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program at LDSS specializing in Agriculture, Business, Construction, Health and Wellness, and Manufacturing. Students are able to access free certifications that include first aid, working at heights, chainsaw safety, and food safety, among others.
<p>ELAWS (Elmira District Secondary School) Waterloo Region DSB</p>	<p>Jeff Martin, jeff_martin@wrdsb.on.ca Elmira District Secondary School 4 University Ave Elmira, ON N3B 1K2 519.669.5414 x5210</p>	<p>ELAWS (Elmira Life and Work Skills), Waterloo Region District School Board)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blends classroom instruction with valuable work experience Aims to develop skills that enable youth to enter the workforce (emphasis on math/technical skills/writing), strong interest in apprenticeship Teachers are sensitive to values of students and their families Classes are held at the main campus but separate from the mainstream high school population Students attend classes on Tuesday and Wednesday(remainder of week is spent at co-op placements and completing homework) Certification programs available: Safety, CPR, First Aid, Food handling, etc. Visit website for more details
<p>PARTNERS Program (Norwell District Secondary School) Upper Grand DSB</p>	<p>Kiran Sandhar, Math and Science Teacher Kiran.Sandhar@ugdsb.on.ca Christine Kay, Centre Peel Principal 519.638.2881 Francis Noventa, Norwell High School Principal 519.343.3107 ext. 305</p>	<p>PARTNERS Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 9-10 courses are taught at Norwell District Secondary School All compulsory core courses offered as well as Learning Strategies; Visual Arts; Food and Nutrition; Individual, Family, and Social Living; Exploring Technology, Transportation, and Manufacturing Program runs two days per week with a third day available for tutoring

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<p>ROUTES Program (Crossroads Public School)</p> <p>District School Board of Niagara</p>	<p>Gerda Klassen, 905.468.7793 GerdaKlassen@dsbn.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lesen, Schreiben, Rechnen for students between the ages of 4 and 14 to work towards their Grade 8 Graduation Diploma using a flexible program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focused on math, reading and writing with their peers in small group settings ○ Programming developed with community input and respectful of religious and cultural beliefs ○ Extra activities available (e.g. guitar club) ● Arbeit Schule for students aged 14 and up, to work towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students may work full-time (co-op credits) ○ Flexible hours ○ Monday class at Crossroads Public School, 1350 Niagara Stone Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake ○ Students work at their own pace and courses meet individual needs
<p>Tu Puente Ministry of Education</p>	<p>Abe Wall, Principal "a.wall@tvdsb.on.ca"</p>	<p>Tu Puente (Your Bridge in Spanish) supports students K-12 that leave Ontario for Mexico throughout the school year.</p> <p>Students from LKDSB, TVDSB, GEDSB, UGDSB, AMDSB, and DSBN are six districts that have partnered with the Ministry of Education and the Mennonite Central Committee to support elementary students in Literacy and Numeracy, and secondary students in credit achievement while in Mexico.</p> <p>The goals are academic skill development, credit accumulation, increased graduation rates and increased engagement.</p> <p>In Mexico, Tu Puente has a facility in Nuevo Ideal, Durango. It is staffed by our MCC partners. Students can come and connect with their Ontario learning and workers can also support the learning off site and virtually.</p>

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<p>TURNING POINT (Valley Heights Secondary School) Grand Erie DSB</p>	<p>Andrea Breedyk, Department Head 519-429-1356 Andrea.Breedyk@granderie.ca</p> <p>Emily Sharpe, Assistant Department Head Emily.Sharpe@granderie.ca</p>	<p>Turning Point 9/10: Students can earn 8 credits in four terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Term 1 (Sept-mid Nov): Work or attend classes at Valley Heights to earn elective credits (art, physical education, business)• Terms 2 and 3 (mid Nov-mid April): Focus on compulsory credits in face to face classes at Valley Heights (English, math, history, geography)• Term 4 (mid April-June): Earn cooperative education credits through work or volunteer placements <p>Turning Point 11/12: Students earn credits in several ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Face to face classes at Valley Heights and/or Houghton Public School Portables• eLearning classes with Teacher support in Room 123 at Valley Heights, Houghton Portables or Aylmer EMMC Church• Evening Homework Help at Houghton on Tuesday and Thursday from 6pm-9pm• Cooperative education credits• English Literacy Development Classes: Building English reading and writing skills <p>Mature Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (MPLAR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MPLAR candidates are assigned to our Homework Help section• Students can be over 21 and still enroll at Valley, instead of having to go to Grand Erie Learning Alternatives (GELA) <p>Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For senior TP students to get into apprenticeships and help pay for courses or materials that they'll need on the jobsite. <p>OFA (for those in the agricultural areas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding was provided through OYAP for most students, and we subbed the material out for a GLS course credit.• Agricultural SHSM planned Sept 2024 start date. <p>Dual Credit Night School Credits in Technology (manufacturing and woodworking)</p>
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<p>ULearn (Linwood Public School)</p> <p>Waterloo Region DSB</p>	<p>Shane Martin 519-998-9535 shane_martin@wrdsb.ca</p> <p>Kristine Clemmer kristine_clemmer@wrdb.ca</p> <p>Linwood Public School 50 Pine Street Linwood 519.698.2680</p>	<p>ULearn ULearn allows students to progress towards a high school diploma while continuing to work and earn money for their families. We welcome students of any skill level in an environment that respects the values of the communities that ULearn serves. Students generally attend classes 1-2 days a week and co-op credits are earned while at work on the remaining days of the week.</p> <p>Monday Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formal classes held at Linwood Public School ● Students complete compulsory workplace level courses (students who wish to complete college level courses attend the ELAWS program) <p>Thursday “Hands-On” Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students complete sewing, cooking, electrical, woodworking and basic computer programming projects to earn fashion, technology and food and nutrition credits ● Several field trips are planned per year that allow students to earn new skills, complete community service hours or engage in career exploration ● Popular with junior students who tend to be employed fewer days per week than senior students <p>Friday Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Friday offers drop-in support to all students until 4:30PM ● Popular with senior students who work at metal and wood shops, which tend to end shifts early on Fridays <p>Co-op:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students earn 10-12 credits by completing co-op courses ● Workplace Safety: students receive training related to WHMIS, Worker Health and Safety Awareness, Working at Heights, Forklift Safety and First Aid/CPR ● Career Exploration: teachers attempt to assist students to explore, prepare for and pursue jobs that better match their interests and future career goals
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<p>WELL Program (Leamington District Secondary School) Greater Essex County DSB</p>	<p>Greater Essex County District School Board 451 Park Street West P.O. Box 210 Windsor ON N9A 6K1 GECDSB_LDSS@publicboard.ca Phone: 519-255-3200 Toll Free: 1-888-779-7735</p>	<p>WELL Program</p>
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Key Reasons Why Conservative Mennonite Groups Do Not Support Secondary Schooling *(taken from a presentation given at an EDSS staff meeting)*

Historically, a number of conservative Mennonite communities, including the Low German (LG) communities, have not participated in high school education in large part due to fears that their teenage children will learn values and practices that are contrary to their belief systems, which may cause their children to leave their faith communities. Generally speaking, these groups also all value labor (especially working with their hands) during their teenage years as part of learning how to be a responsible adult within their communities. Up until the mid 2000s only a very small percentage of conservative Mennonite youth were participating in secondary education at any level.

A combination of unique factors prevent LG students from fitting into the timelines and structures common within most high school programs. A few of the leading factors are listed below.

Frequent Migration

Many LG students leave school for Mexico for extended periods of time. Frequent migration is especially difficult to accommodate in a regular high school because these programs are based on completing courses within specified timelines. Unlike elementary school where students move onto the next grade no matter how much or little they attended school, high school students who migrate often are simply unable to complete their credits. Migrant behavior also tends to lead to major gaps in a student's education and consequently, they struggle to succeed academically.

Working is Essential Part of the Family Income for Many Students

- *LG culture values the importance of working to contribute to the family unit.*
- *Many families rely on income from their teenagers to survive, because the family needs the income from a full time wage.*
- *At any point during a semester students may be laid off, find themselves between jobs or suddenly have the support of their parents to do more education. Conversely, students who were engaging at a high level may suddenly be required to work full time.*

Ambivalence about the Value of Education

- *Students and parents often feel uncertainty about the value of education especially if the family is unsure if they will eventually return to Mexico where most feel a high school education is unnecessary. Faith and family are generally more highly valued than establishing and advancing one's career.*
- *This means a student's level of engagement will often ebb and flow based on their current shifting attitudes towards education. Examples: One young woman performed very well during grade 9 but then started working full time and felt very stressed balancing work and school so suddenly school seemed to have little value so she informed us that she was quitting. But more than a year later she started to re-engage. Others boys in the program worked on their basic Math and English skills for a while at the evening program but then decided to quit; then more than a year later returned as they then realized the value in working towards a high school diploma at the ages of 17 and 18.*

Some of the programs listed in the table are designed with

- *Flexible start and end dates for course completion.*
- *ELL (English Language Learner) level courses and one-on-one support to meet the needs of students who need to fill in gaps within their elementary level education before moving on to the types of topics and skills required within most academic and applied level courses*
- *Emphasis on Cooperative Education credits so students can work.*