



# TDSB SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS FAMILY GUIDE

## CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR BLACK STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

### Introduction

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) offers a range of **Specialized Programs** for students entering school in **September 2026**.

The **online application** will be open from: **Monday, November 24, 2025 → Friday, December 12, 2025 at 12:00 p.m. (noon)**.

These programs give students opportunities to develop their interests and strengths in areas such as **the Arts, Leadership, Math, Science, Technology, and International Baccalaureate Diploma** opportunities. (Please note: French is not a Specialized Program).

Families often consider these programs to:

- Support a child's unique learning interests
- Build confidence and belonging
- Expand future academic and career pathways

More information can be found on the TDSB website:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/cpao/Central-Program-Admissions-Office/Specialized-Programs>

This guide is designed to help families understand:

- What each program is about
- How to decide if a program is a good fit
- The steps to apply
- What happens after applying

### Step-by-Step Application Process

1. **Learn about programs** by reviewing school websites, attending Open Houses and through the linked videos below:

[Video 1: Overview of TDSB Specialized Programs](#)

[Video 2: Applying to TDSB Specialized Programs](#)

2. **Check eligibility.** For many secondary programs, students are expected to meet a report card baseline at or above **70%**. This is Step 1. The Central Programs Admissions Office states, *of the following marks, no more than 2 can be below the Provincial standard (70%): Language, Math, Science & Technology, Geography, History, French (average of the 4 strands), Health and Physical Education (average of the 2 strands) and the Arts (average of the 4 strands). Report 2 marks will be used. When not available, the Report 1 mark will be considered.* Students considering applying should use the [Benchmark Calculator website](#) to confirm their eligibility. Once your child's eligibility is confirmed, please move to the following



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sections (Step 2 of the process).

3. **Prepare any required demonstrations**, such as portfolios, auditions and reflections if applying to an Arts program.
4. **Complete the online application**, by selecting a program type (e.g. Arts, Leadership) as the primary program choice and one optional alternate program of the same program type.  
Example: (Primary) Birchmount Park CI: Athletic Leadership and (Alternate) R.H. King Academy: Leadership
5. **Attend and participate in the in-person demonstration of knowledge and skills if applying to a Math, Science and Technology, Leadership or International Baccalaureate program.** Applicants will attend the in-person session at their primary choice program location. Your child will receive reminder emails through PowerSchool about the in-person session including details about what to bring.
6. **Wait to receive** either an offer, waitlist placement, or non-placement notice on February 11, 2026.
7. **Accept the offer by the deadline**, if your child receives one.

## Resources for Families and Students

[Application Requirements Website](#)

[Additional Resources Website](#) which includes several videos reviewing the program options and application requirements.

### Application Support Webinars

The TDSB will be hosting three program specific information webinars to help students prepare for the application and demonstration of knowledge and skills.

- *Arts* - Wednesday, November 19, 2025 (7:00 - 8:30 p.m.)
- *Leadership* - Thursday, November 20, 2025 (5:00 - 6:30 p.m.)
- *Math, Science and Technology and International Baccalaureate* - Thursday, November 20, 2025 (7:00 - 8:30 p.m.)

## Program Areas and Family Steps

### 1. Arts Programs

Arts programs support students who are passionate about Dance, Drama, Film, Music, Musical Theatre, Media Arts, and Visual Arts. [Students will be asked to submit either a portfolio or prepare an audition.](#) For more details about the Arts programs, please visit this link:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/cpao/Central-Program-Admissions-Office/Specialized-Programs/Arts>



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### *What Families and Students Need to Do*

- Look at the list of schools that offer arts programs.
- Talk with your child about which art practice they enjoy or want to grow in.
- Review portfolio or audition requirements on the program website.
- Begin **collecting or creating** artwork, recordings, or performance videos.
- Attend school Open Houses or virtual info sessions.
- When applying, upload all required materials.
- Practice for an audition or creative task, if required.

## 2. International Baccalaureate (IB)

IB programs offer academically challenging coursework that encourages critical thinking, global understanding, and university preparation. For more details about the IB program, please visit this link:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/cpao/Central-Program-Admissions-Office/Specialized-Programs/International-Baccalaureate>

### *What Families and Students Need to Do*

- Look at the list of schools that offer the program.
- Explore IB school websites to understand expectations and the unique course offerings at each site.
- Check report card marks to ensure eligibility using the [Benchmark Calculator](#).
- Attend the school's Open House to ask questions about support and workload.
- Attend the in-person demonstration of knowledge and skills on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. at your primary choice IB program site. Support your child with readiness preparation activities.

## 3. Leadership Programs

Leadership programs focus on collaboration, advocacy, public speaking, and supporting student voices in school and community spaces. For more details about the Leadership programs, please visit this link:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/cpao/Central-Program-Admissions-Office/Specialized-Programs/Leadership>



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### *What Families and Students Need to Do*

- Talk about how your child shows leadership at home, school, community, cultural spaces, or faith spaces.
- Help your child reflect on and share leadership examples (big or small).
- Look at the list of schools that offer the program, and consider the unique program focus of each school.
- Attend the school Open House.
- Attend the in-person demonstration of knowledge and skills on Monday, December 15, 2025 from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. at your primary choice Leadership program site.
- Encourage your child to express their values, voice, and sense of community responsibility.

### **4. Math, Science & Technology (MST)**

MST programs emphasize inquiry-based learning, experimentation, coding, robotics, and hands-on problem solving. For more details about the MST programs, please visit this link: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/cpao/Central-Program-Admissions-Office/Specialized-Programs/Math-Science-and-Technology>

### *What Families and Students Need to Do*

- **Review the list of MST schools** to see which location and program focus aligns with your child's interests.
- Attend the MST school's **Open House** to learn more about expectations, program culture, and in-person demonstration of knowledge and skills.
- Explore MST program overviews, school videos, STEM clubs, robotics teams, and science activities.
- Encourage your child to try simple problem-solving tasks or science investigations at home (ex: building, tinkering, exploring, experimenting).
- Prepare for possible **problem-solving or design challenges** during the multiple choice demonstration of knowledge and skills.
- Attend the in-person demonstration of knowledge and skills on Monday, December 15, 2025 from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. at your primary choice Math, Science and Technology program site.

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### How the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement Will Support Families

The Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement will be hosting **two** in-person information and preparation sessions to support Black students and their families with Step 2 of the Specialized Programs (CSIP) application process.

These sessions are community-rooted spaces designed to provide clarity, encouragement, and guidance, so that Black students and their families do not navigate this process alone.

#### East Session

- **Date:** Wednesday, November 19, 2025
- **Time:** 5:30PM - 7:00PM
- **Location: Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement**  
Winston Churchill Collegiate Institute  
2239 Lawrence Ave E., Scarborough, ON M1P 2P7

#### West Session

- **Date:** Thursday, November 20, 2025
- **Time:** 5:30PM - 7:00PM
- **Location: Amesbury Middle School**  
201 Gracefield Ave, North York, ON M6L 1L7



Please register at your preferred location using this [form](https://bit.ly/CSIP-CoE) (<https://bit.ly/CSIP-CoE>) or scan the QR code.

#### What Families Can Expect:

- Clear explanation of **what Step 2 involves** - after successful completion of report card benchmark eligibility
- Guidance on **Demonstrations of Knowledge and Skills**
- Support preparing **Arts portfolios and auditions**
- Support preparing for **IB, Leadership, and MST readiness tasks**
- Opportunities to ask questions and receive guidance from caring adults who want your child(ren) to succeed



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### *Breakout Room Support*

During the session, students and families will have the opportunity to join **small group breakout rooms**, supported by TDSB staff and community partners. Breakout sessions will offer families:

- Mentorship and guidance
- Discussion of rubrics and expectations
- Support with preparation and practice
- Space for questions

Families have the opportunity to select from the following breakout sessions:

- Math, Science and Technology (MST)
- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- The Arts

We know that navigating school systems can sometimes feel overwhelming. Please know that **you and your child do not have to go through this alone**. We are here to walk beside you, answer questions, and support your child's growth and confidence.

We look forward to being in community with you on either November 19th (East) or November 20th, 2025 (West). Your child's brilliance and possibilities matter — and we are here to honour that, together.

### **Ongoing Engagement with the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement**

The Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement is dedicated to improving the experiences and outcomes for Black students. We strive to be responsive to the voices of Black communities who continue to advocate for systemic change within educational institutions and for dismantling anti-Black racism at the TDSB.

To receive regular updates from the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement, please join our [mailing list \(https://bit.ly/47PuhJX\)](https://bit.ly/47PuhJX) and follow us on [Instagram \(@tdsb\\_cebsa\)](#) and [X \(@tdsb\\_cebsa\)](#).