

Life Skills Program

What is the Life Skills Program?

The Life Skills Program is designed to provide alternative curriculum for students who have an intellectual/developmental disability and/or a significant physical disability.

The focus of the Life Skills Program is on the development of basic literacy, numeracy, life skills, social skills and vocational skills.

The goal of the program is to allow the student to become as independent and self-sufficient as possible upon graduation from secondary school.

Who is it for?

- The Life Skills Program is for students who may have been previously ISA funded with an intellectual/developmental disability and/or a significant physical disability.
- Students who have a formal Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Students should be identified through the IPRC process.
- Students whose literacy/numeracy skills are at a primary level or below.
- Students who have had alternate curriculum presented to them in the elementary school in conjunction with the Learning Enrichment Teacher.
- Students who are exempted from taking French.
- Students who will not be successful at passing the Ontario Secondary School Grade 10 Literacy Test.
- Students who will attain a Certificate of Accomplishment
- Students who may attain an Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC)

What courses do students in the Life Skills Program take?

Students in the Life Skills Program mostly take “K” coded courses. All “K” coded courses are non-credit courses that offer alternate curriculum based on the students level of functioning and ability. Students may be integrated into regular courses to promote inclusion or they may be taught in segregated Life Skills courses in order to focus on specific skills. If a student has the ability to attain regularly coded credits in any subject, they will be given that opportunity. The credits earned will be put towards the attainment of the Certificate of Accomplishment or OSSC.

What are the suggested courses for a Grade 9 student?

Students in the Life Skills Program could take courses in any of the following:

- Literacy: KEN ANA /B
- Numeracy: KMM ANA /B
- Culinary/Cooking: KHI ANA /B
- Physical Education: KPF ANA /B
- Art, Dance, Drama or Music: KAL ANA /B
- Any Technology: KCW ANA /B
- In-school Work Experience: KGW ANA /B
- Religion: KHD ANA /B

All “K” coded courses can be combined with regular classes or may be offered in a segregated setting.

Educational Assistants are available to provide support in all “K” coded courses.

How do I fill out the Grade 9 Option Sheet?

To fill out your son/daughter’s option sheet, please schedule an appointment with either the Department of Special Education or the Life Skills Teacher.

What happens to the students after Grade 9?

Students in the Life Skills Program have the opportunity to stay in secondary school until the age 21. The focus continues on the development of basic literacy, numeracy, life skills, social skills and vocational skills with the goal of the student being as independent and self-sufficient as possible upon graduation.

Vocational skills continue to be one of the main focusses of the Life Skills Program. These skills are introduced in either Grade 9 or 10 (depending on the students ability) by participating in the In-school Work Experience course. Students will perform tasks in 3 areas:

- Office: shredding paper, photocopying, collecting attendance etc.
- Building/Maintenance: dusting, sweeping halls, washing windows, vacuuming, recycling etc.
- Cafeteria: stocking shelves, making sandwiches, baking, other food prep as assigned, wiping trays etc.

Upon completion of these experiences, and if the student is deemed ready by the Life Skills Teacher, the student will then participate in the Community-based component of the Work Experience course beginning in Grade 11 and continuing until graduation from secondary school.

Educational Assistants assist in providing on-the-job support and training as necessary. If the students are independently successful then they will continue with minimal support. All students are encouraged to try a variety of jobs in order to gain a portfolio of skills to enable them to be employable after secondary school.

What happens to the students after completion of secondary school?

- Students can enter into support programs through the Association of Community Living, ODSP etc.
- Students can enter the workforce on a part-time or full-time basis, with or without support depending on level of independence.
- Students can enter the Work Matters program offered by the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board.

Goal and Transition planning is usually discussed at the IPRC Review meetings every April. Assistance with this is available upon request of the parent/guardian.

Additional Information Regarding the Life Skills Program:

The Life Skills room is fully equipped with:

- 2 wheelchair accessible washrooms that each contains an electric ceiling mounted lift, electric adjustable change table and storage for personal hygiene items for students requiring it.
- 1 physiotherapy bed with an electric ceiling mounted lift
- a fully equipped kitchen area with all appliances
- a fully equipped laundry area
- Life Skills Classroom that contains various academic materials including computers with various software including: Kurzweil, Clicker 4, Writing with Symbols etc.

Educational Assistants greet the students in the Life Skills Program at their buses in the morning and assist them in boarding the buses at the end of the day (if required). Lockers are located in the hallway directly outside the Life Skills room so that the students are adequately supervised. If students cannot use a combination lock, use of keyed locks are permissible and can be purchased by the parents. An extra key will be kept in the students file in case of loss or misplacement.

Villanova is equipped with an elevator to the second floor and keys will be made available to the student by the school.

Students in the Life Skills Program eat lunch in the school cafeteria or in the Life Skills room, depending on the student's individual needs. Educational Assistants are on hand to provide support as needed. Food can be heated in the Life Skills room prior to lunch or purchased in the school cafeteria.

*****Please note: Most Life Skills students do not attend school during exams as per Board Policy. Parents will need to find alternate arrangements for their son/daughter during that time. See School Calendar for exam dates.**