

## **Orchard Park Secondary School**

### **Information for Parents and Students**

**Our Co-operative Education Program at Orchard Park provides experiences for our students that work to support them in earning credits to support their Ontario Secondary School Diploma. We wanted to share with you key information about our program. We have provided you with various links within this document that will allow you to explore the facets our program within this document.**

#### **What Parents/Students should know about Co-operative Education at Orchard Park?**

Co-operative Education is an experiential learning program that offers a deeper, hands-on, 'real world' educational experience outside the classroom. Students earn credits towards their diploma, gain valuable work experience, and make meaningful connections to career sectors.

#### **Why Take Co-op?**

Taking Co-op allows a student to talk to people in the industry, investigate a career path, and 'try out' a career they may be interested in while earning credits. This work experience can lead to a part-time job, an apprenticeship, and future contacts for a job reference or post-secondary program. Students will be able to add more work experience and skills to their resume.

#### **Co-op and other Experiential Learning Opportunities**

Co-op students at Orchard Park have had work placements in the community from many different areas of the workplace including the skilled trades, elementary schools, day care facilities, nursing homes, retail business, vet clinics, x-ray labs, computer repair shops, law firms, and medical clinics. Students have also completed online placements with marketing and coding businesses. Our students have been accepted at [Central Placements](#) . These workplaces offer competitive Co-op placements such as the SPCA, Hospitals, Cable 14, the Art Gallery of Hamilton, City of Hamilton and Hamilton Police Services. Orchard Park students have participated in [Specialized Learning Programs](#) held outside of Orchard Park - Building Careers Construction program, the Art Smart Theatre program, Militia Co-op, and the Healthcare Support Program. Students who are not able to fit a Co-op course in their timetable can take [Summer Co-op](#).

Students can earn one, 2 (half-day) or four (all day) credits towards their OSSD. Co-op teachers work collaboratively with each student and if needed with their parent to find a suitable Co-op placement that meets their needs, interests and preferences.

#### **OYAP (Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program)**

A Co-op student is an OYAP student if they work in an apprenticeable area. These students can begin [apprenticeship training](#) at their Co-op placement. This semester alone, Orchard Park has 40 OYAP students working in the skilled trades including six who have already started their apprenticeship training. OYAP students at Orchard Park have worked in many trades such as Welders, Millwrights, Electricians, Plumbers, Steamfitters, with Technicians in Automotive Service, Truck and Coach, and HVAC, Construction, Bakers, Cooks, Hairstylists, Child & Youth Workers and Educational Assistants. OP students are fortunate to have a large industrial area that is walking distance from the school.

### **Dual Credits**

HWDSB has partnered with Mohawk College to offer [Dual Credit Programs](#) (students earn both high school and college credits). Students can apply to the [OYAP Accelerated Program](#) allowing them to earn their Level 1 college training in their apprenticeship field while still in high school. These students take Co-op all day and spend 8-weeks in class with a college professor.

### **SHSM (Specialist High Skills Major)**

Many students begin to focus their academics in a specific career sector in grade 11. These students may choose to join one of six [SHSM](#) programs at OP – Arts & Culture, Business, Energy, Health & Wellness, Hospitality & Tourism, and Transportation. A minimum of two Co-op credits working in the career sector is a program requirement.

Taking Co-op allows students to be more informed and better prepared for future career planning decisions.

If you have any questions, we will be happy to answer them.

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Orchard Park SS Co-op Teachers