

This semester OCENET and OCDSB schools are hosting international students from 48 countries around the world...with international students in 23 high schools and 36 elementary schools throughout the OCDSB

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International Certificate Program continues its success story



Following a special ceremony in June, many of the 2018 recipients of the OCDSB International Certificate pose in front of the architecturally stunning Aga Khan Foundation Canada's Delegation of the Ismaili Imam at building on Sussex Avenue. These International Certificate Program (ICP) students demonstrated a special commitment to global citizenship and intercultural awareness. Almost 500 OCDSB high school students are currently enrolled in the ICP.

FEATURE: A conversation with Director of Education, Dr. Jennifer Adams, about international education in the OCDSB

Director of Education Jennifer Adams will soon be retiring from the OCDSB; she leaves a legacy of being a strong advocate for international education. During her 8 years as Director, Dr. Adams has overseen many significant changes in international education at the OCDSB including an increase in the enrollment of international students in schools, more student and teacher exchange programs, the creation of the International Certificate Program, new MOU agreements with educational jurisdictions overseas, intercultural competency training, among many other initiatives. OCENET has had an important role in all of these developments.

The following are excerpts of answers by Jennifer Adams to several key questions about international education at the OCDSB:

#1: Being "Globally Aware" is one of the intended Exit Outcomes for every OCDSB student. Why is this exit outcome important for today's graduating students?

JA: "The idea of being globally aware is related to an understanding that students are heading into a world of great interconnectivity, both socially and economically. Global awareness includes the idea of a sustainable world, and a world concerned with issues associated with social justice and diversity. Research has shown that these skills are developmental and will continue to evolve long after graduation."

#2: How do international education initiatives have a positive and reciprocal impact for both for international students and educators as well as for OCDSB students and staff?

JA: "I'm thrilled with the work that the OCDSB and OCENET have done together. When we look back, OCENET was primarily a student recruitment agency. OCENET and the OCDSB realized that so much more could be done...the partnership between these two organizations has

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A Conversation with Jennifer Adams (continued from page 1)



In December 2017 Director of Education Dr. Jennifer Adams was invited as guest presenter at the Jeju International Symposium on Education where she delivered a presentation on the topic of “Continuous Assessment in the Learning Process: Transforming Assessment Practices in the OCDSB”

“These international partnerships give kids opportunities they would never have had before, and it is highly motivating for our staff...the interaction, and the learning, and the excitement and motivation—that’s what education should be!”

- Dr. Jennifer Adams,
OCDSB Director of Education

led to initiatives such as the International Certificate which is an example of how a wide cross-section of students can have internationally-focused academic courses and their unique interests and experiences formally recognized. The International Certificate Program is a concrete example that has fundamentally changed and improved the way in which programs are offered in our schools....I’m also really pleased with the way we have fostered partnerships with educational jurisdictions in Sweden, Spain, Aix-Marseille, Nice, in France, Chengdu in China, and Jeju Island in South Korea, among others. These partnerships provide opportunities for ongoing professional learning for our educators, our administrators, and really interesting opportunities for students.”



OCENET Executive Director Geoff Best, Amancio Ortega, OCDSB Director of Education Dr. Jennifer Adams, and OCENET Program Director Constantine Ioannou (l-r) at the signing of the teacher training program partnership agreement between Fundación Amancio Ortega Gaona (Spain), the OCDSB, and OCENET.

#3: In what ways has OCENET contributed to the OCDSB being recognized as an innovative leader in international education in Canada and abroad?

JA: “I think the liaison with the OCDSB and OCENET has evolved to the point where we have reciprocal benefits between the visiting international students and educators and the students and staff in our schools. OCDSB students and staff are now connected through established ongoing relationships to learning in other places....Public education in Canada is very highly regarded around the world, in part because of PISA and other learning assessments....many countries are dealing with the effects of globalization and

changing student demographics, and they are trying to figure out how to provide education to a much more diverse population. The OCDSB is eager to share our experiences with other educational jurisdictions. In Ontario, 95% of parents choose publicly funded education—this is most unusual in most parts of the world. I think OCENET has been able to help the OCDSB share that vision and share that model. We often get requests from educational jurisdictions around the world that want to come and see what teaching and learning looks like here.”

#4: What are some of the challenges that have come with the expansion of international education in the OCDSB and how has the school board addressed these challenges?

JA: “We have greater numbers of international students and educators coming to the OCDSB. We need to think about the resources in place to support the international students. Also, when we have visiting international educators come to learn about our schools, there is the question of our capacity to offer a meaningful learning experience for the visitors, as well as opportunities for our staff to learn from them....The OCDSB has addressed these challenges by focussing on a few significant partners. We see the mutual benefits of these long term relationships....Obviously one of our primary concerns is safety and security, and it is comforting to know that when we are sending students and teachers overseas to participate in outbound exchanges or on study tours, we know the people who are there at the other end....We ask for feedback from teachers and principals to get a sense of how this is all working—”Are they seeing the benefits of the international relationships?” and “What are the challenges?”— we share this information with OCENET and seek solutions.

Another aspect of international education involves the issue of equity. We try to make sure that there are equitable opportunities for students to participate in international education initiatives. For example, one of our concerns during the development of the International Certificate Program (ICP) was the experiential education component and knowing that not every ICP student would be able to travel outside of Canada. We designed the

A Conversation with Jennifer Adams (continued from page 2)

program to ensure students could successfully complete the ICP through volunteering with a consulate office or international NGO situated in Ottawa. Secondly, the availability of study abroad bursaries for students and staff of up to \$1,000 to pursue an international learning experience helps address equity. Any of our 10,000 employees can apply for a bursary; it is not exclusively limited to teaching staff...The third piece around equity is friendship schools. Over time, the learning and sharing is happening for all of the students because it is occurring during class time; they're connecting to other countries through technology. In this way, every stu-

dent has the opportunity to be involved. There are now many more different types of internationally related experiences for students and staff."

#5. During your years as Director of Education, can you recall an event or encounter which encapsulates the importance of international education for you?

JA: "It's difficult to pinpoint because in my role as Director I have been very privileged to have many experiences involving international education....perhaps my role as Chair of the OECD Study of Social Emotional Skills, which involves 10 countries, including Ottawa, Canada....Through OCENET and the OECD I have been able to observe several different educational systems around the world, and in spite of differing contexts and educational systems, there is a common understanding of the skills that are critical for students to be successful in the future."

"As a final comment, I would note that I am so proud of the work we have done in international education over the past decade. OCENET Executive Director Geoff Best and the OCENET team are to be commended for their leadership and for sharing their expertise with other school districts across Canada. OCENET has shown what international education in Canada can look like."

"I think that the scope we have been able to achieve over the past five years or so has had a significant and positive impact on the whole question of equity with international education."



OCENET (Ottawa-Carleton Education Network) and the OCDSB donate \$100,000 to the Education Foundation of Ottawa (EFO) to provide bursaries for students wanting to participate in international field studies abroad. Picture: Chris McGarvey (left), former Executive Director of the EFO; Jennifer Adams, OCDSB Director of Education; and Geoff Best (right), OCENET Executive Director



Pictured is the Director of Education in South Korea (1) at a MOU signing ceremony, (2) dressed in traditional attire (with OCENET Executive Director Geoff Best), and (3) meeting with Korean educators

International study abroad bursary program enables students to think big



Mirana explores the campus of Yale University while attending the Yale Young Global Scholars program last summer

Currently a Grade 12 student at Canterbury HS, Mirana dreamed of attending a unique program at Yale University. Last summer Mirana participated in the Yale Young Global Scholars (YYGS) program along with approximately 200 students from almost 60 countries. Mirana found the focus on bio-medical sciences at the university level to be fascinating, but the best part of the experience for her was making new friends from many parts of the world, including Egypt, Bosnia, India, and Israel. Mirana is in the Vocal Music Program at Canterbury HS and has been enrolled in the International Certificate Program (ICP) since Grade 10. She learned about the possibility of obtaining an OCDSB/OCENET International Study Abroad Bursary from the ICP website and says the bursary played a huge role in enabling her to attend the Yale program. Of her international experience she believes: "It has really helped me shape the kind of person I want to be and have a global perspective." Her advice to other students: "Don't be afraid to have ambitions."

STUDENTS: OCDSB/OCENET International Study Abroad Bursaries
Application Forms, FAQ's, Application Deadlines, Contact Information, etc.
 Information is available at: www.educationfoundationottawa.ca/helping-students-2/bursary/ocdsbocenet-international-study-abroad-bursary



Teacher Christy Armstrong in front of the North American tectonic plate

“As a Geography teacher you use resources such as a textbook or Google Earth, but to actually stand there and see the size and scope, and imagine the raw power that must have been needed to create such a unique landscape, that was an “Aha!” moment for me.”

- Christy Armstrong,
Teacher and Department Head,
Social Sciences & International Languages
Sir Robert Borden HS

Board-wide study tour to Iceland offers a new approach

Most often one school or several schools may collaborate to organize an international study tour. These trips are usually restricted to only students attending those particular schools.

In late June, a subject focussed study tour travelled to Iceland and what was unique about this trip was that students from any OCDSB secondary school in any grade were eligible to participate on the 6 day trip.

A primary motivation for organizing the trip to Iceland came from a concern by some Geography teachers that few schools offer the Grade 11 Physical Geography course, Forces of Nature: Physical Process and Disasters. Teachers Bob Barter and then Vice-Principal Steve Jackson from A.Y. Jackson SS, Christy Armstrong from Sir Robert Borden

HS. and Joanna Hughes from Longfields-Davidson Heights SS recognized that a study tour to Iceland was a perfect fit with the Geography curriculum. The teachers also saw the trip as a great PD experience.

Along with their four teacher chaperones, 36 students from 10 OCDSB high schools witnessed geological wonders first hand. They hiked on a glacier covered in volcanic ash in Thorsmork Glacier Valley, explored the Raufarhólshellir Lava Tunnels, visited the Blue Lagoon hot springs, saw spectacular waterfalls, walked black sand beaches and stood at the meeting of two tectonic plates at Thingvellir National Park. And while eating at a restaurant, the Canadians got an interesting lesson on human geography too as the group witnessed a sign on a wall

move from 350,798 to 350,799 to indicate a new Icelander had been born. All the Icelanders in the restaurant applauded and cheered!

The study tour was a great success and a similar type of Geography focussed trip is being considered for the future. Also, in part because of this study tour, there are now 6 OCDSB high schools offering the Grade 11 Physical Geography course.



Rainy weather did not dampen the excitement of the students as they hiked a glacier covered in volcanic ash at Iceland's Thorsmork Glacier

YPLS activities enhance ESL experience by Dahlia Liwsze



YPLS student Zichen encounters a tarantula at the Ottawa Insectarium

“We provide activity opportunities for our students not just as a fun add-on, but rather as a core component of our program.”

- Greg Duggan,
Director of Studies,
YPLS

What do insectariums, archery, tag ball, and soccer tournaments have in common? They are some of the activities that the Young People's Language School (YPLS) offers to help its students enjoy their ESL studies.

To help ease the winter blues in February, YPLS students were delighted (mostly the boys!) by the creepy crawly creatures at the Ottawa Insectarium on Sparks Street. From beetles and fuzzy tarantulas to stick insects and a mellow gecko, there was something for everyone. It was science class outside of the classroom.

In May, YPLS students went to Tag Zone in Vanier to burn off some energy and battle it out during a tag ball game. Unlike paint ball, tag ball involves reusable foam ammunition and is less painful (and messy!) than having paint hit you.

YPLS activity leader Chelsea Chapman said that she particularly enjoyed the Archery Games activity in August. “None of the students knew what to do. They'd never done it before; I'd never done it either. We all did it together, which was really nice.”

However, Chapman's favourite activity is playing sports with the kids. “Soccer is the most international sport; I don't even need to explain anything. They already know how to play. It's funny to hear them ask: ‘Miss, you play?’” “Yes” is the answer as Chapman has played competitive soccer for 14 years, including time on her high school team.

YPLS's after-school activity program gives its diverse student body extra opportunities to use English in a variety of situations. “It's a really good way for them to prac-

tice their English because they're all from different countries,” Chapman said.

Chapman has been the YPLS activity leader since July 2017 and loves “getting to know the students and seeing their English improve (while) connecting with them through activities... and seeing them ‘come out of their shells’ during activities.”

YPLS Director of Studies Greg Duggan also enjoys playing sports and frequently joins the students on field trips. “We provide activity opportunities for our students not just as a fun add-on, but rather as a core component of our programming,” said Duggan. “Experiential learning is a proven way to increase student engagement, use English in authentic situations, and promote a sense of community for both students and staff. Its importance can't be overstated.”

Life as an international student in Ottawa

by Dahlia Liwsze

This issue of Global Connections highlights the experiences of four students who attended OCENET's Young Peoples Language School (YPLS). Their stories are told and the accompanying photos taken by OCENET staffer Dahlia Liwsze.

Amirreza



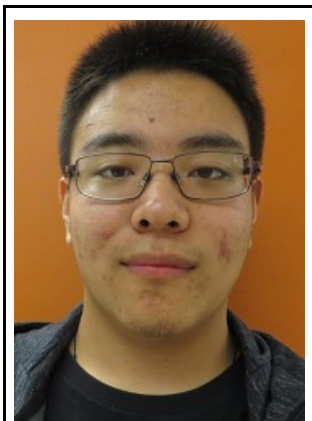
Amirreza is an Iranian student and sporty fellow from Tehran. Both of his parents speak English, and his mother in particular wanted him to study the English language in Canada. He lives with his maternal aunt and is enjoying his studies at YPLS, saying that Canada is "good." Amir does two hours of homework after school, a habit he intends to keep in high school. On the weekends, he likes to visit his family as he has many cousins in Ottawa. He loves sports such as soccer (his favourite), volleyball, and ping pong. What he likes best about Canada is the "kind people."

Tran



Tran is a long way from her home in Hue City, Vietnam. She decided to study English in Canada because it is the "best," and she has extended family in Ottawa. She says another reason for coming to Ottawa is that it is a city that feels "peaceful and safe." Tran is enjoying her YPLS studies in Ottawa and devotes several hours per day to homework. She loves to go shopping on the weekend and enjoys playing badminton. She plans to pursue university studies and become a family doctor.

Kai



Kai goes by the English name "Mark." The Tianjin native arrived in September to get a jump start on honing his English language skills at YPLS. Mark likes his English-speaking host family and is happy to improve his English outside of the classroom. He helps the family to cook and clean the table and says that after dinner, they "talk a long time." He also likes to hang out with friends on the weekend and go shopping. He finds Canada "different" in its traditions of eating food with a knife and fork instead of using chopsticks but says he "likes" Canadian food. He also appreciates how "in Canada, you can drink any water" directly from the tap. Mark's post-secondary educational pathway is not entirely certain, but might include science or math.

Nam Anh



Nam Anh is from the city of Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam and is known to his friends by his nickname "Bin." He is "happy" to be in Canada and has been at YPLS since August 2018. He decided to continue on at YPLS in the fall in order to improve his English before beginning in an OCDSB high school in February 2019. He says that both he and his parents did online research and chose the Canadian school system because it is so highly regarded. Since the summer, he says his English has become "better" and that he "sometimes" speaks English at home with his aunt, uncle, and cousin. Some of his hobbies include soccer (he plays with his cousin's friends), basketball, and international video games. Although he still doesn't know what he will take in university, he says that he is interested in history and IT.

Meet OCENET: Insook Bowman



Insook Bowman,
Program Administrator
Short Term/Group Programs

Each issue of Global Connections includes a feature interview with one of the OCENET team

1. What are some of your main roles at OCENET?

I am in charge of the registration of short term individual students and small groups of students. I also deal with various projects as a member of the exchange and project team at OCENET, which includes teacher delegations from overseas. I work closely with the OCENET staff, school staff, the admissions team, Ottawa Public Health, agencies, students' families and their host families.

2. What aspects of your job do you enjoy most?

My job enables me to meet people from all over the world and get to know their cultures and languages. It requires me to handle a variety of unexpected tasks and activities that have enhanced the scope of my main job responsibilities. For instance, I have to be an orientation presenter, a tour guide, an interpreter or a

counselor. Sometimes, I feel quite challenged but at the same time extremely joyful when each project is successfully completed.

3. What have been some of your accomplishments at OCENET that you are most proud of?

I have taken part in events I cannot forget. One memorable event was when I had an opportunity to teach Korean language and pop culture to students who participated in the International Education Fair hosted by OCENET last year. It was a great chance to utilize my teaching experience. I was delighted at how appreciated Korean pop culture has become among young people all over the world and that I was able to share my culture and mother tongue with them.

4. What new projects are you working on at OCENET?

I am currently working on a new project, which will be the second year of hosting

principals and delegates from Jeju, Korea. Last year, we had thirteen principals and delegates from Korea. During their visit, I had to act as an interpreter for their workshops and school visits, which gave me an opportunity to deepen my knowledge of Ontario's educational system and to admire how much effort school principals, teachers and staff in the OCDSB make for students' success. Once again, I feel very lucky to be a part of our educational system and the opportunity to share it with our visitors.

5. What are some of your interests outside of work?

I am a yoga addict and a certified yoga instructor. I practice yoga as much as I can and cannot think of my life without it. I am also a trained musician and enjoy playing piano, flute, cello and violin whenever I have a chance. I love to travel and have been to parts of Europe, Asia, and North and Central America. I hope to travel to Oceania, South America, and Africa in the future. My greatest joy of all, however, is every precious moment I spend with my two wonderful boys and supportive husband.

Swedish delegation shares a passion for education and hockey by Dahlia Liwsze



OCENET staff members
Dahlia Liwsze(l) and Kari
Hanes(r) got into the Movember spirit at the hockey game

Swedish delegations of teachers, principals, and directors have been coming to Ottawa for many years now thanks to a partnership with the OCDSB and OCENET.

This fall, nine principals from the Trollhättan/Vänersborg Principals' Study Tour and six directors from the SKOLchefer Directors of Education group arrived in Ottawa on Saturday, October 27th.

During their study tour, they met with OCDSB Director of Education Jennifer Adams and

visited eleven OCDSB schools, which included Glashan Public School, Sir Robert Borden High School, and Adult High School, among others, where they discussed a variety of pedagogical strategies, such as integrating immigrant students into schools. The Swedish delegation also met with instructional coaches to learn about their key role in assisting teachers with best practices and delivering professional development to classrooms. These meetings provided opportunities for a

reciprocal exchange of ideas and educational philosophies.

But the Canadians and Swedes shared more than a keen dedication to education; they both love hockey. On Thursday, November 1st, three OCENET staff members and the 15 Swedes went to the Canadian Tire Centre to see the Ottawa Senators defeat the Buffalo Sabres 4-2. The group sat up in "The Ledge" where they had a rink-wide view of the game. Visiting educators Tony Mufic and Yvonne Asberg correctly predicted the score of the game and won Senators scarves.

OCENET Tip Sheet #12:

Understanding Stages of Culture Shock



Culture Shock is a very real phenomenon that affects most people when they experience a culture that is different from their own or from what they are used to when they visit or live in another country for an extended period. Culture shock is a “normal” reaction, and every person experiences culture shock to a different degree. Understanding culture shock is not only important for students on an educational exchange or study tour, but also can help Canadian educators and students understand the culture shock challenges that international students may be coping with while studying in Canada; empathy is a key to helping students deal successfully with culture shock. Read more at: www.participate.com/mktg/the-4-stages-of-culture-shock

Stages of Culture Shock:

1. **Honeymoon** (up to 2 months) — everything in the new country seems fresh, positive and exciting.
2. **Culture Shock** (from 3-8 months) — this is the “difficult” phase, and often involves a sense of frustration, mood swings, irritability, negativity, homesickness, anger, and sometimes regret for leaving home.
3. **Adjustment** (from 8-12 months) — this is a time when things improve and a person starts to “negotiate” a better understanding of the new culture and how to adapt.
4. **Acceptance** (12+ months) — this phase involves the person being comfortable within the new culture,

For some, an additional phase may involve what is known as Reverse Culture Shock. Upon returning home following a lengthy stay abroad, individuals may repeat the whole culture shock cycle upon “re-entry” and have difficulty readjusting to living back in their home culture.

Experiencing life abroad as an international student is not always easy, but the vast majority find studying overseas to be a rewarding learning experience that makes one a more independent person with a better awareness of one’s own culture and of other cultures.

Culture Shock on You Tube

◆ Studying Abroad: Culture Shock

Five students from five continents speak about the challenges they faced and how they gradually overcame culture shock.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5EEz_R_RiE

◆ Culture Shock

Interview with a large number of Canadian university students who participated in international exchange programs around the world discuss the challenges they faced and offer practical solutions to overcoming culture shock.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=RU4eZsKcbX4

◆ We Survived Culture Shock; Here’s how you can too

Several international exchange students explain the stages of culture shock and provide ways of adapting to find a “new normal.”
www.youtube.com/watch?v=TB5P3J3rtuE

◆ Dealing with Culture Shock

A one-on-one discussion with a Canadian student who studied in India and focuses on “reverse” culture shock.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgwGAoSQ43k

◆ Why We Need to Embrace Culture Shock

A TEDx talk that discusses culture shock from a fairly academic point of view.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGSD6jduFJg



440 Albert Street
Room C315
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1R 5B5

Phone: 613-239-0277
Fax: 613-239-0608
email: ocenet@ocdsb.ca

OCENET Bulletin Board

Lynch-Getty Awards

Each year four *Lynch-Getty Global Student Awards* are presented to OCDSB students, two awards to Canadian students and two awards to international students. Each recipient receives \$1,000 for furthering their education. Find information on the award criteria and the application process at: www.ocenet.ca/en/page/show/lynch-getty



Najla Mohamed received the Lynch-Getty Global Student Award from OCDSB Superintendent of Instruction Shawn Lehman at the Ridgemont HS Graduation Ceremony in June 2018



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If you have an international education story that should be included in *Global Connections*, let us know.

Please direct any comments, questions, or suggestions to: ross.laing@ocdsb.ca