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The provision of electronic learning opportunities supports the goals and purposes of education as defined by the Ministry of Education and the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) and in accordance with Ministry of Education policy.

DEFINITIONS

Electronic learning includes:

eLearning - is a system through which curriculum is delivered over a wide area network. Students can work on course material at any time and from anywhere, provided they have a computer and Internet access.

vLearning - involves the use of video conferencing equipment to connect a teacher with students at other schools in real-time; synchronously. Students can receive immediate feedback as required.

bLearning - is a blend of classroom instruction supported by the use of eLearning materials. It can also include video conferencing opportunities when available.

The DSBN believes in the appropriate use of technology to facilitate student learning and will endeavour to provide appropriate opportunities for its use through strategies that include eLearning, vLearning and bLearning by students and staff in order to:
- Augment face-to-face classroom delivery
- Offer designated credit courses
- Provide professional development opportunities for staff who are developing and teaching courses
- Provide opportunities for staff development

All content for electronic learning opportunities developed under the auspices of the DSBN is the property of the DSBN who has sole copyright to the material.

The development and provision of eLearning opportunities for students will be offered within the framework of the following guiding principles:
- Electronic learning may be offered to DSBN students who might otherwise not have access to a particular course or who might like to experience an alternate format for learning or by the recommendation of the Administrator because of special circumstances
- DSBN on-line credit courses will be available to students from Boards who are members of the Ontario eLearning Consortium according to the guidelines for access as established by the Consortium
- DSBN on-line credit courses may be offered (fees may apply) to students outside the DSBN who cannot otherwise receive the same credit from the Board with whom they are registered and have a letter of support from their Administrator
- Within each course, there will be ongoing and timely interaction among students, between teachers and students, and with facilitators or site mentors in order to enhance student learning and social interaction
- Where possible, efforts will be made to meet the needs of Identified and/or "at risk" students who have been offered the opportunity for on-line learning
- Students will be offered access during the school day to in-school technological resources necessary for them to take an electronic learning course
- Only qualified teachers will be selected to deliver electronic learning credit courses
- Teachers who design, implement or facilitate electronic learning must have completed the electronic learning professional development training as designated by the DSBN
- Program will be reviewed on an on-going basis using criteria that include:
  - student academic achievement
  - alignment of course content with Ministry guidelines and expectations
  - course completion rates
  - participant feedback

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- Development of new electronic learning programs will be based on student needs guided by input from staff and approved prior to implementation by the Superintendent responsible for electronic learning

All electronic learning courses will be managed and delivered using provincially developed electronic learning credit courses through the provincial Virtual Learning Environment (vLE). All other forms of electronic learning will be completed through a platform (vLE, email provider or other) agreed upon by the ITS team and the Superintendent responsible for electronic learning.

This ensures that:
- Security of copyright on DSBN electronic learning documents is maintained
- Electronic communication between students, and between students and teachers is logged
- A secure, standardized, full featured environment for electronic learning is provided by the DSBN

References

Policy E-05: Digital Technology Use by Staff
Policy D-01: Digital Technology Use by Students