



Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

40 Matheson Boulevard West, Mississauga, Ontario L5R 1C5 • Tel: (905) 890-1221

September 21, 2010

TO: Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of Grade 7 – 10 Students

RE: THE HOMEWORK HELP PILOT PROJECT: INDEPENDENT LEARNING CENTRE'S (ILC) HOMEWORK SITE

The 2010-11 academic year represents Dufferin-Peel's second year of participating within the Homework Help pilot project. This project has now expanded to 32 English-Language Boards across the Province of Ontario, and the project's goal remains to provide students in grades 7 to 10 with an after-hours online support in math.

The ILC operates Homework Help – a website that provides students with access to a variety of math resources, and access to free online tutoring from Ontario Teachers, Sunday to Thursday evenings from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. To utilize this resource, students must register for the site (<http://homeworkhelp.ilc.org>) by completing the registration process. This requires:

1. Creation of an anonymous username
2. Creation of a unique password
3. Providing a valid email address
4. Selecting 'students' as user type
5. Entering student's date of birth
6. Entering student's Ontario Education Number (OEN)
7. Confirming agreement with the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy

Notice re the Use and Disclosure of the Ontario Education Number (OEN)

The collection, use, disclosure and retention of students' personal information is permissible as long as it complies with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)* and where parents are reasonably informed of the information sharing through a clear notice. The use and disclosure of personal information of students in grades 7 to 10 between the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and the Independent Learning Centre (ILC), who operates the Homework Help website on behalf of the Ministry of Education, is to facilitate the 2010-2011 registration process. The OEN will allow the Ministry of Education to track and assess student activity on the Homework Help site, and to determine the impact of the project on student success.

Therefore, notice is being given to notify students/parents/guardians of the use and disclosure of the following to the ILC: the OEN, the date of birth, the grade, and only for secondary students, the course name.

Online Tutors

On a nightly basis, there are a variety of tutor chat rooms available for each of the four grade levels represented in the project. The tutor chat rooms are an online chat environment within

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which students can dialogue with the online tutor on a one-to-one basis. The site does not permit student-to-student interaction. Inside the tutor chat rooms, students are able to pose questions associated with homework or math concepts which they require support with, and the tutor works with the individual students to assist them. The chat room environment provides both the tutor and the student with access to an interactive whiteboard that can be used to work through any mathematical problem (e.g. solving equations, graphing, volume and area). In addition, some of the nightly chat rooms that students have access to, provide an audio option where, in addition to texting with the tutor, the students have the ability to listen to the tutor orally explain the concepts, and provide help.

While logged into the site, student identity is protected. Only the unique usernames of the tutor and the student are visible. In addition, the tutors have the ability to remove students from the specific chat room, who are not using the site for its intended purpose. In more extreme cases of inappropriate use, the tutors have the ability to terminate a student's account and thereby deny them further access to the site.

Success in 2009 – 2010

The project proved quite successful in 2009-2010. Students from Dufferin-Peel took full advantage of the support provided by the site, representing the second highest number of student registrations and the highest number of repeat student use, in comparison to the other participating boards. This suggests, that after initially using the site, students recognized the value and the benefits of the website. Here are some comments from Dufferin-Peel students who utilized the service last year:

“My tutor was great she or he helped me so much that I understand something I had much difficulty with”.

“Homework Help is so helpful to me. These teachers really understand. HOMEWORK HELP IS AWESOME! (no joke!)”

“It was actually a really great website to get any type of math question understood and because of this website i got a good grade on my math test.”

“I am having a difficult time understanding this particular chapter of math we are learning in school. Math has never been my best subject, but I am very grateful for this free online help. Thank you. Using the site today helped me understand a portion of my math homework. Thanks so much!”

HOMework HELP launches for the 2010-2011 academic year on Sunday, September 26th.
Student registrations can begin as of Tuesday September 28th.

If you would like more information about the **HOMework HELP PILOT PROJECT**, please contact either the Superintendent of Program, (905) 890-1221 X 24261
or
the E-Learning Contact, (905) 890-1221 X 24484,
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