












# EMPOWERING

# POTENTIAL

## THE AWARD CANADA WAY

### What is the Award?

We are a youth achievement program that has supported student success in Canada for more than 60 years by embedding experiential learning within a co-curricular framework. Each year, over one million young people in more than 130 countries take part. The Award empowers youth ages 14 to 24 to build the knowledge, skills, and capabilities needed for life and work through a co-curricular approach that connects formal classroom learning with hands-on, real-world experiences—fostering whole-student development. With an emphasis on literacy and reflection, youth are empowered with this non-competitive framework to see themselves within the curriculum.

Award sections: Young people build a portfolio as they set and achieve smart goals to personalize their educational journey			Curricular Connections: Complementing curricular goals and learning outcomes they experience in the classroom.
<p><b>Skill Development:</b></p> <p>Participants develop their talents, broadening their abilities, increasing their self confidence and improving their employability.</p>		 <p>Progressing weekly toward their goals for <b>13 weeks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooperative Education (Co-op)</li> <li>Environmental Studies</li> <li>Social Studies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical Recreation:</b></p> <p>Young people improve their fitness and performance, and build a healthy lifestyle which encourages good mental health and physical well-being.</p>		 <p>Progressing weekly toward their goals for <b>26 weeks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>French &amp; Indigenous Language Programs</li> <li>Science, Technology, Engineering, &amp; Math (STEAM)</li> <li>Social &amp; Well-being</li> </ul>
<p><b>Voluntary Service:</b></p> <p>Participants volunteer in their communities, making a positive contribution to society and demonstrating social responsibility.</p>		 <p>Progressing weekly toward their goals for <b>52 weeks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical &amp; Health Education</li> <li>Business &amp; Entrepreneurship</li> <li>Technology</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adventurous Journey:</b></p> <p>Young people discover a spirit of collaboration, planning, and adventure as they step outside their comfort zones and take part in an overnight learning experience with their peers.</p>		 <p>Progressing weekly toward their goals for <b>52 weeks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Science</li> <li>Geography, World Issues, &amp; Indigenous Studies</li> <li>Micro Credentials (SHSM, Project Management, Coding)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gold Project:</b></p> <p>Participants broaden their experience by staying in an unfamiliar environment with other young people, taking part in a purposeful project and building new relationships.</p>		 <p>Progressing weekly toward their goals for <b>52 weeks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English Language Arts</li> <li>Outdoor Leadership &amp; Camping</li> <li>Careers Studies</li> <li>Leadership &amp; Peer Mentorship</li> <li>Financial Literacy &amp; Economics</li> <li>Civics</li> </ul>

## The missing piece: our co-curricular approach

Award Canada's co-curricular approach is a strategic response to a growing national recognition that preparing young people for success means nurturing not only academic achievement, but also character, citizenship, and real-world skills. It is a deliberate shift to educator alignment on classroom and experiential learning but also recognizing the declining levels of attainment and drive to improve literacy, numeracy, holistic skills and mental-health. The co-curricular approach reframes the Award not as something "extra," but as something complementary aligned with the values, goals, and outcomes already embedded in public education.

By delivering the Award as a co-curricular experience, education partners can offer students meaningful learning opportunities that sit alongside the formal curriculum and contribute to broader student development goals.

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Imagine earning a globally recognized accreditation while participating in activities you love. This framework allows students to set personal goals, gain additional SHSM certifications, and align their learning with real-world experiences. Supporting the GECDsB's commitment to building confident learners, this initiative will have a lasting impact on students' careers and lives.



Vicki Houston, Director of Education  
of Greater Essex County  
District School Board

