Your teen must decide on her unique plan to achieve her personal career/life goals, including the selection of the types of high school courses that are best suited to her. Peel District School Board offers different types of courses to enable high school students to design their own path, with help from you, guidance counsellors and teachers.

**Grades 9 and 10**

In grades 9 and 10, four types of courses are offered - academic, applied, locally developed compulsory and open courses. These courses set high expectations for all students and differ in the balance between essential concepts and additional material, and in the balance between theory and application.

**Academic courses** develop students’ knowledge and skills through the study of theory and abstract problems. These courses focus on the essential concepts of a subject and explore related concepts as well.

**Applied courses** focus on the essential concepts of a subject, and develop students’ knowledge and skills through practical applications and concrete examples. Familiar situations are used to illustrate ideas, and students are given more opportunities to experience hands-on applications of the concepts and theories they study.

**Locally developed compulsory credit courses** focus on essential skills, use relevant and practical activities that provide opportunities for students to develop their literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, decision-making and communication skills and prepare students for future studies in grade 11 and 12 workplace preparation courses.

**Open courses** are the only type of course offered in most subjects. They are designed to prepare students for further study in a subject, and to enrich their education generally. Open courses comprise a set of expectations that are appropriate for all students.

Students must select either academic, applied or locally developed compulsory courses in each of the core subjects. All types of courses set high expectations for students while preparing them for studies in the senior grades. Students in Grades 9 and 10 will choose the type of course primarily on the basis of their strengths, interests, and needs.

Students who are successful in a course in Grade 9 will be able to proceed to the same type of course
in the same subject in Grade 10. When a student wishes to switch from one course type in Grade 9 to another in Grade 10, he and his parents should consult with a guidance counsellor.

**Grades 11 and 12**

In grades 11 and 12, students choose from courses designed to prepare them for post-secondary destinations.

*University preparation courses* equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to meet entrance requirements for university programs. They emphasize theoretical aspects of the course content but also include concrete applications.

*University/college preparation courses* include content that is relevant for both university and college programs. They equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to meet the entrance requirements for specific university and college programs and emphasize both theoretical aspects and related concrete applications of the course content.

*College preparation courses* equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to meet entrance requirements to most college programs or for admission to apprenticeship or other training programs. They emphasize concrete applications of the theoretical material covered in the course and also emphasize the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

*Workplace preparation courses* are developed in close collaboration with representatives from a variety of workplaces. These courses are designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for direct entry into the workplace or for admission to apprenticeship programs and other training programs offered in the community. They prepare students for a variety of jobs, training programs and occupations.

*Open courses in grades 11 and 12* are appropriate for all students, regardless of their post-secondary destination. These courses are designed to broaden students’ knowledge and skills, reflect their interests and prepare them for active and rewarding participation in society. They are not designed with the specific requirements of universities, colleges or the workplace in mind.

For additional information about selecting courses refer to another article in this series entitled “Help your teen choose high school courses by building on success.”