

1.0 PURPOSE:

To provide guidelines for the implementation for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition in Catholic Secondary Schools in the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 **PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION PROCESS (PLAR):** the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby students eligible for PLAR, excluding mature students, may obtain credits for prior learning. Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary schools. Students may have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the expectations outlined in provincial curriculum policy documents in order to earn credits towards the secondary school diploma.

2.2 **Challenge:** The process whereby students' prior learning is assessed for the purpose of granting credit for a Grade 10, 11, or 12 course developed from a provincial curriculum policy document published in 1999 or later.

2.3 **Credits:** Challenge for credit for courses based on provincial curriculum policy documents will be available to students only in courses that are actually taught in schools operated by the board. All credits granted through the PLAR process that is, through either the challenge process or the equivalency process – must represent the same standards of achievement as credits granted to students who have taken the courses.

2.4 **Reasonable Evidence:** Documentation that the curriculum expectations of the course have already been achieved as well as related Catholic Graduate Expectations and that the student would likely be successful in the challenge process.

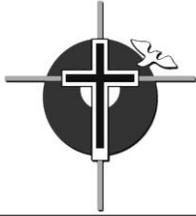
2.5 **Discipline:** The term discipline refers to the subject area covered by any one curriculum policy document. All courses in that document are considered to belong to that discipline.

3.0 PROCEDURES

3.1 Board Responsibilities:

3.1.1 Prepare and distribute to the schools the information Brochure.

3.1.2 Prepare and distribute to the Principal the Administrative Procedures.



- 3.2 Ministry Policy Governing the Challenge Process
- 3.2.1 Each secondary school course calendar shall contain information regarding challenges for credit and opportunities for challenge. Schools/Board may not charge students any fee for undergoing the challenge process.
- 3.2.2 Students may earn no more than four credits through the challenge process, with no more than two in one discipline.
- 3.2.3 Students may use certificates or other records of accomplishment earned outside Ontario classrooms as reasonable evidence of eligibility to challenge for credit for a related course within the Ontario curriculum, if they wish to earn credit for the course without taking the course. Students with music certificates that are accepted for credits in OSS 6.8.6, *appendix 4: Music Certificates Accepted for Credits*, however, are not required to challenge for credit for the appropriate music course, but are granted credits in accordance with OSS Program and Diploma requirements, Appendix 4.
- 3.2.4 A record of all completed challenges for credit – that is, all challenges for which students earned a final percentage grade, whether a passing or a failing grade shall be included in the board’s September Report to the Ministry. For semestered schools, this information shall also be submitted in the school March reports.
- 3.2.5 The responsibility for PLAR shall be carried out under the direction of the school principal who grants credits in the school in which the student is registered.
- 3.2.6 Arrangements may be made with other boards to provide opportunities for eligible students to challenge for credit for courses that are not offered by the Board.
- 3.2.7 In cases where a student who is an adult or the parent of a student who is not an adult disagrees with the decision of the principal about whether or not the student should challenge for credit, the parent or adult student may ask the appropriate Supervisory Officer to review the matter.
- 3.2.8 The challenge process is an evaluation process and shall not be used as a way for students to improve their mark in a course for which they have already earned a credit, nor as a way to obtain a credit for a course they have previously failed.



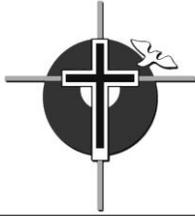
3.2.9 Students cannot be granted credits through the challenge process for any of the following courses:

- a course in any subject if a credit has already been granted for a course in that subject in a later grade either as a single credit or as part of a block equivalency
- a course for which credit has already been granted or for which there is significant overlap with a course for which credit has been granted (e.g., a student cannot challenge for credit for an academic course if he or she has already earned a credit for the applied course at the same grade level, and vice versa)
- a transfer course
- a locally developed course
- a cooperative education course
- a course in English as a second language (ESL), English literacy development (ELD), or Anglais pour débutants (APD), if the student has one or more credits in English from the curriculum policy documents for English for Grades 9 to 12 under OSS (i.e., the documents for English-language schools or the documents for French-language schools) or from the curriculum guidelines for English or Anglais/English for Grades 9 to 12/OACs under OSIS
- a course in French as a second language (FSL), Actualisation linguistique en français (ALF), or Perfectionnement du français (PDF), if the student has one or more credits in Français from the curriculum policy documents for Français for Grades 9 to 12 under OSS or the curriculum guideline for Français for Grades 9 to 12/OACs under OSIS

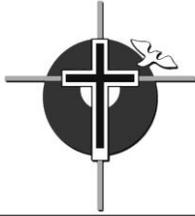
3.2.10 Students may challenge for credit for a course only if they can provide reasonable evidence to their principal (or designate) they would likely be successful in the challenge process. The responsibilities of the student include:

- a) initiating the PLAR challenge by approaching the school Principal (or designate) for information regarding the process.
- b) completing the application process by gathering “reasonable evidence” to support the application by the due date.
- c) completing the formal tests and other assessments by the due date(s) as determined by the Supervisory Officer responsible.

3.3 **Principal Responsibilities:**



- 3.3.1 Ensure that students are informed that they are responsible for initiating the challenge process and for satisfying all of the requirements, and ensure that students who are not adults (i.e., students who are under the age of eighteen) are informed that they need parental approval before applying to challenge for credit for a course.
- 3.3.2 Ensure that every prospective applicant and his or her parents, if he or she is not an adult, are informed about policies and procedures related to challenging for credit, including policies on and procedures for recording results in the Ontario Student Record (OSR) and on the Ontario Student Transcript (OST).
- 3.3.3 Ensure that every prospective applicant is provided with an application package as well as materials that indicate what is expected in the course (i.e., the curriculum expectations) for which the student wishes to challenge for credit. (See Attachment #1)
- 3.3.4 Evaluate each application in consultation with the student's parents (or with the student if the student is an adult) and appropriate school staff (i.e., guidance counselor, teacher-adviser, and subject teacher) to determine whether reasonable evidence for success exists and whether the challenge should occur. A student must challenge for credit for an entire course, whether it is a full-credit or a partial-credit course. Credit will be granted only for the specific course for which the student has successfully challenged for credit.
- 3.3.5 Ensure that the successful applications are forwarded to the Board level.
- 3.3.6 Ensure that no more than four credits may be earned by one student in the PLAR challenge process with no more than 2 credits granted in any one discipline.
- 3.3.7 Ensure that students who do not have suitable documentation, owing to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., students who are refugees), will receive counselling concerning the gathering of evidence.
- 3.3.8 Inform the students of the date of the assessment and the requirements of the challenge.



3.4 Record Keeping:

- 3.4.1 The Principal will ensure that a “PLAR Challenge for Credit: Cumulative Tracking Record” form (See Attachment #3) is maintained and included in the student’s OSR. This form is intended to track the number of credits earned and the disciplines in which credits have been earned through the challenge process, as well as failures and withdrawals. This form should be consulted as part of the student’s application to challenge.
- 3.4.2 A “PLAR Challenge for Credit: Interim Tracking Record” form (See Attachment #4) will be maintained for credits earned through the challenge process in a school outside the student’s regular school (the regular school is the school that maintains the student’s OSR).
- 3.4.3 The principal of the school outside the student’s regular school will use the “Interim Tracking Record” form to communicate the results of the student’s challenges for credit to the school that maintains the OSR.
- 3.4.4 The following entries must be made on the student’s Cumulative Tracking Record” form and the “Interim Tracking Record” form, as applicable:
- a) For challenges for credit for Grade 10, 11, or 12 courses: the student’s passing percentage grade, failing percentage grade, or withdrawal from the challenge process must be entered on the appropriate tracking record form(s).
 - b) The following entries must be made on the student’s OST:

For challenges for credit for Grade 10 courses, only passing percentage grades will be entered on the OST. If the student subsequently takes the Grade 10 course, only the higher percentage grade will be recorded on the OST. No notation will be entered on the student’s OST if the student withdraws from or receives a failing grade in the challenge process.

For challenges for credit for Grade 11 and 12 courses: Passing and failing percentage grades will be entered on the student’s OST. No notation will be entered on the OST if the student withdraws from the challenge process.

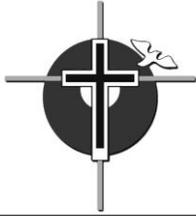
Student must provide notification to the school principal of withdrawal from the challenge assessment 48 hours prior to the date of assessment.



- 3.4.5 Board must ensure that only teachers certified by the Ontario College of Teachers conduct the PLAR challenge process. Teachers with expertise in the subject area will develop, administer, evaluate, and report PLAR challenge tasks for credit.

3.5 Student Responsibilities

- 3.5.1 Students are responsible for:
- a) gathering all information about the PLAR process from their secondary school
 - b) assembling the appropriate evidence to support their application
 - c) participating in the assessments required for the challenge
- 3.5.2 Students must apply for a PLAR at the school which they are registered. PLAR applications and challenges will be restricted to certain scheduled periods during the school academic year.
- 3.5.3 Students cannot be granted credits through the challenge process for any of the following courses:
- a) a course in any subject if a credit has already been granted for a course in that subject in a later grade either as a single credit or as part of a block equivalency.
 - b) a course for which credit has already been granted or for which there is significant overlap with a course for which credit has been granted (e.g. a student cannot challenge for credit for an academic course if he or she has already earned a credit for the applied course at the same grade level, and vice versa)
 - c) a transfer course
 - d) a locally developed course
 - e) a cooperative education course
 - f) a course in English as a second language (ESL), English literacy development (ELD), or Anglais pour (APD), if the student has one or more credits in English from the curriculum policy documents for English-language or the documents for French-language schools or from the curriculum guidelines for English or Anglais/English for Grade 9 to 12/OACs under OSIS.



- g) course in French as a second language (FSL), Actualisation linguistique en français (ALF), or Perfectionnement du français (PDF), if the student has one or more credits in Français from the curriculum policy documents for Français for Grades 9 to 12/OACs under OSIS

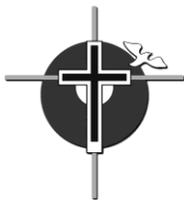
- 3.5.4 Students are permitted to challenge the same course a second time after a certain length of time provided that they can provide additional reasonable evidence.
- 3.5.5 Students must provide notification to the school principal of withdrawal from a challenge assessment 48 hours prior to the date of assessment.
- 3.5.6 Students must adhere to the deadlines set forth by the Board for all steps in the Challenge process, i.e. application date, assessment date(s).

4.0 APPENDICES

- Attachment 1. Application Package to Challenge for Credit for a Course
Attachment 2. Record of Assessment of Challenge for Credit for a Course
Attachment 3. PLAR Challenge for Credit: Cumulative Tracking Record
Attachment 4. PLAR Challenge for Credit: Interim Tracking Record
Attachment 5. PLAR Process Flow Chart

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Ontario Secondary School OSS Grade 9-12 Program and Diploma Requirements 1999
Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum No. 129 PLAR: Implementation in Secondary Schools



**CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
OF EASTERN ONTARIO**

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION APPLICATION FORM
APPLICATION TO CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT FOR A COURSE**

Please complete this application form and submit it to your school principal. More information about PLAR is available on the Ministry website: www.edu.gov.on.ca.

Surname: _____

Given names: _____

MIN/OEN: _____ Grade: _____

Gender: ___male___female Date of birth: ___year___month___day

Name of parent/guardian: _____

School: _____

I wish to challenge for credit for the following course:

Course Title	Course Type	Course Grade/Level	Course Code

I am aware that a passing or failing mark resulting from a challenge for credit for a Grade 11 or 12 course will be entered on my Ontario Student Transcript and that a passing or failing mark or a withdrawal resulting from a challenge for credit for any Grade 10, 11, or 12 course will be entered on my PLAR tracking record and maintained in my Ontario Student Record.

I am aware that the PLAR challenge process will include formal tests (balanced between written work and demonstration, as appropriate for the subject) worth 70 per cent of the final mark, and other types of assessment worth 30 per cent of the final mark. I am aware that my skills and knowledge will be evaluated against the expectations outlined in the appropriate provincial curriculum policy document. I am aware that a maximum of four credits may be granted through the challenge process for courses in Grades 10 to 12, with no more than two in any one discipline.

I am submitting the following as evidence that I am qualified to challenge for credit for this course:

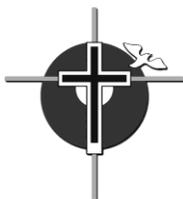
- _____ letter(s) of recommendation from teacher(s) familiar with the course expectations and CGEs
- _____ letter(s) of recommendation from member(s) of the community
- _____ a portfolio of relevant work
- _____ proof of successful relevant experience in a supervised setting
- _____ proof of independent learning in a relevant area
- _____ a videotape, audiotape, or CD-ROM with samples of relevant work
- _____ proof of relevant prior learning from another educational jurisdiction
- _____ proof of successful completion of courses identified as prerequisites for this course

Attachment 1

Student Paragraph

Write a paragraph of **100–200 words** stating why you want to challenge for credit for this course. Be sure to include the following:

- ways in which the course credit will help you to fulfil your educational goals
- your special interests and skills related to this course



I have reviewed the curriculum expectations and the descriptions of the levels of achievement for this course with a designated subject teacher.

I understand that a board/school committee will review my application.

Signature of student: _____ Date: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of teacher-adviser/
guidance counsellor: _____ Date: _____

PLAR Application Checklist:

Please ensure that you have included the following pieces with your application:

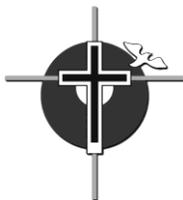
- Registration form**
- Knowledge & Skills Profiles**
- Reference Forms**

Registration forms are due to the school principal no later than _____.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date application received: _____

Date challenge process completed: _____



REFERENCE FORM 1

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Include up to 2 letters of reference from a teacher/instructor based on previous learning in an area related to the challenge.

NAME OF CANDIDATE _____

COURSE CHALLENGED _____

NAME OF REFERENCE _____

Reference Contact Information

Position/Title _____

Address _____
(Street) (City) (Postal code)

Phone _____ Email address _____

How long and in what capacity have you known the candidate.

Length of Time: _____

Capacity: Teacher Instructor Personal Reference Other

Has the candidate explained to you the nature of the PLAR challenge?

Yes No

Has the candidate reviewed with you the expectations of the Ministry course they intend to challenge?

Yes No

Do you feel you have a reasonable understanding of the knowledge and skills the candidate should possess in order to make a successful PLAR challenge?

Yes No

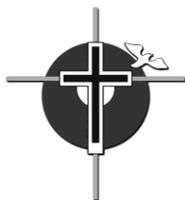
From your perspective, please rank the candidate in terms of the appropriateness of their prior learning (i.e., skills and knowledge) that would suggest they have a reasonable chance of success with their PLAR challenge?

Low Medium High

Please comment on the appropriateness and likelihood of success regarding the PLAR challenge by the candidate.

Reference Signature

Date



Knowledge and Skills Profile – EVIDENCE OF RELEVANT LEARNING

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Please identify programs, courses or experiences that provide evidence of successful learning that support your application for a PLAR challenge.

NAME OF CANDIDATE _____

COURSE CHALLENGED _____

1. Title: _____ **Date(s):** _____
(Course/Program/Experience)

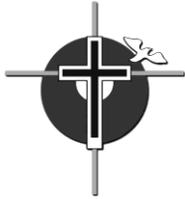
Contact Person _____
(i.e., instructor, leader, reference)

Briefly describe the knowledge and skills you learned that support your application for a PLAR challenge.

2. Title _____ **Date(s)** _____
(Course/Program/Experience)

Contact Person _____
(i.e., instructor, leader, reference)

Briefly describe the knowledge and skills you learned that support your application for a PLAR challenge.



Knowledge and Skills Profile – Samples of Work Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

NAME OF CANDIDATE _____

COURSE CHALLENGED _____

Please provide one or two samples of original work that provides evidence of successful learning that will support your application for a PLAR Challenge. Explain briefly how this work supports your challenge for this credit.

Sample 1: (Please attach to this form)

Title _____

Rationale

Briefly describe the knowledge or skills highlighted by this sample of work AND briefly explain how this supports your application for a PLAR challenge.

Sample 2: (Please attach to this form)

Title _____

Rationale

Briefly describe the knowledge or skills highlighted by this sample of work AND briefly explain how this supports your application for a PLAR challenge.

Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition (PLAR) Student Application Checklist

- Completed Student Information (page 1)
- Completed Student Paragraph stating why you want to challenge for credit for this course (page 2)
- Signatures of Student, Parent/Guardian, Guidance Counsellor, and School Principal completed (page 3)
- Relevant stages “checked off” on PLAR Process Flow Chart (pages 4 & 5)
- Up to two (2) completed letters of reference from a teacher/instructor, familiar with the course expectations and CGEs, based on previous learning in an area related to the challenge (pages 6 & 7)
- Completed Knowledge and Skills Profile providing evidence of relevant learning (page 8)
- Samples of Original Work included with descriptions that provide evidence of successful learning (page 9)
- I am submitting the following as evidence that I am qualified to challenge for credit for this course:
 - _____ letter(s) of recommendation from member(s) of the community
 - _____ a portfolio of relevant work
 - _____ proof of successful relevant experience in a supervised setting
 - _____ proof of independent learning in a relevant area
 - _____ a videotape, audiotape, or CD-ROM with samples of relevant work
 - _____ proof of relevant prior learning from another educational jurisdiction
 - _____ proof of successful completion of courses identified as prerequisites for this course
- Completed Student Application Checklist (this page)

RECORD OF ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT FOR A COURSE

Student's surname: _____

Given names: _____

MIN/OEN: _____

Gender: ___male___female

Date of birth: ___year___month___day

Name of parent/guardian: _____

Course title: _____ Course type: _____

Course grade/level: _____ Course code: _____

Teacher: _____

School: _____

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION: CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT
Cumulative Tracking Record

Surname Given Names MIN/OEN Student Number Gender Date of Birth

School Board/School Authority/Inspected Private School¹ Number Name of School Date of Entry

Date (Year/ Month)	School Board/Inspected Private School ²	Course Grade/ Level	Course Title	Course Code	Discipline	Percentage Grade	Credit	Compulsory	Withdrawal	Authorization ³

¹ Name of school board/school authority/inspected private school that maintains the student's OSR

² Name of school board or inspected private school through which the student earned the credit(s)

³ Signature of person authorized to maintain the student's OSR

Note: For policy on the use of this form, see Policy/Program Memorandum No. 129, "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): Implementation in Ontario Secondary Schools".

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION: CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT
Interim Tracking Record

Surname	Given Names	MIN/OEN	Student Number	Gender	Date of Birth
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School Board/School Authority/Inspected Private School¹	Number	Name of School	Date of Entry
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Date (Year/ Month)	School Board/ Inspected Private School ²	Course Grade/ Level	Course Title	Course Code	Discipline	Percentage Grade	Credit	Compulsory	Withdrawal	Authorization ³

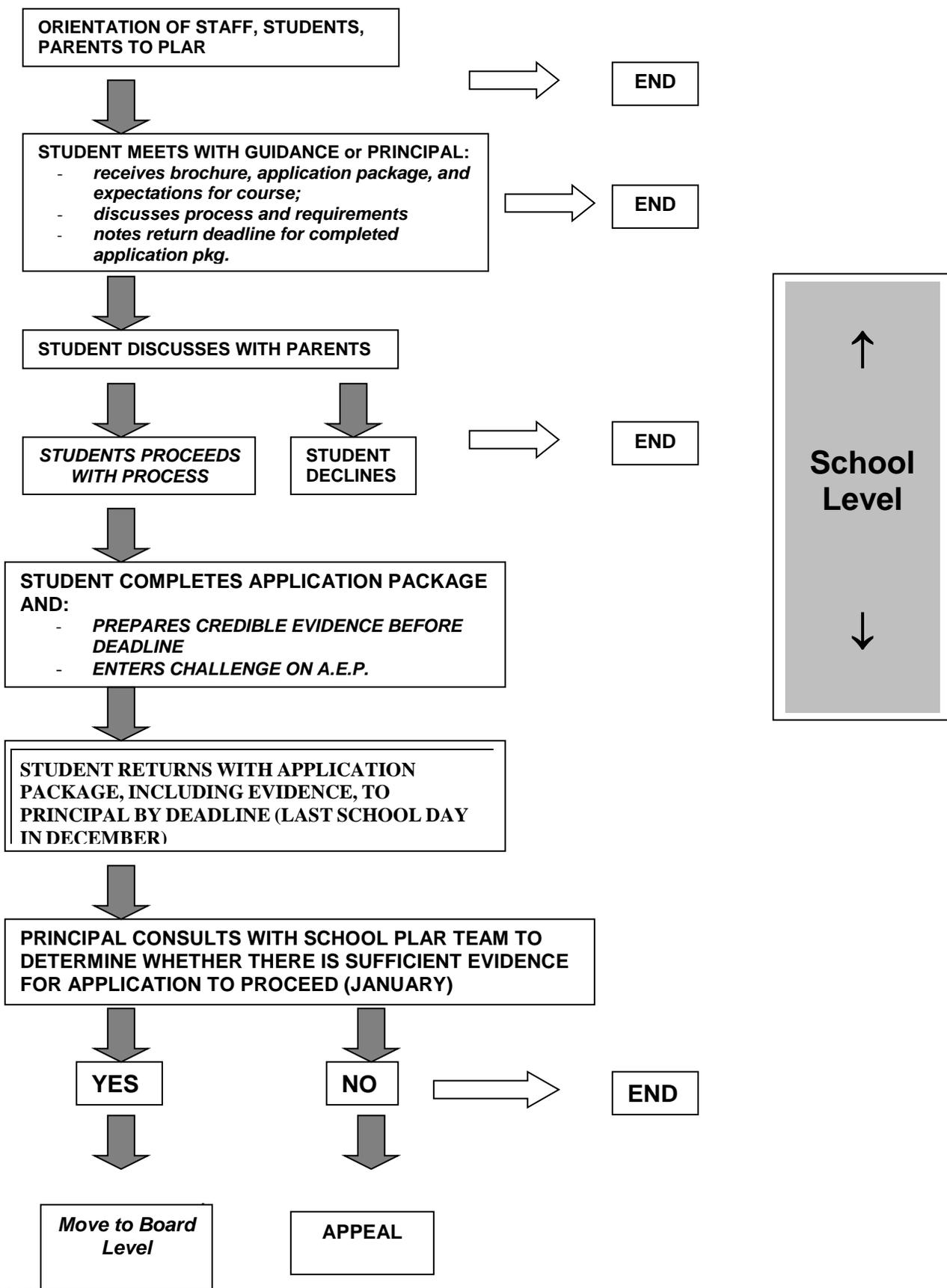
¹ Name of school board/school authority/inspected private school that maintains the student's OSR

² Name of school board or inspected private school through which the student earned the credit(s)

³ Signature of principal who granted the credit(s)

Note: For policy on the use of this form, see Policy/Program Memorandum No. 129, "Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): Implementation in Ontario Secondary Schools".

PLAR PROCESS FLOW CHART



PRINCIPAL:

- FORWARDS APPROVED APPLICATION PACKAGE(S) TO BOARD TEAM FOR REVIEW BY DESIGNATED DEADLINE (END OF FIRST SEMESTER)
- ARRANGES FOR QUALIFIED TEACHER WHO WILL CONDUCT ASSESSMENT
- MAKES STUDENT AWARE OF DATE OF ASSESSMENT (EARLY TO MID-APRIL)

PRINCIPAL RECORDS ON INTERIM TRACKING SHEET AS APPLICABLE

STUDENT PREPARES FOR ASSESSMENT INDEPENDENTLY

STUDENT ATTENDS ASSESSMENT DAY(S) AND COMPLETES TASKS

QUALIFIED TEACHER EVALUATES ASSESSMENT TASK(S)

QUALIFIED TEACHER REPORTS TO SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

PRINCIPAL: - ISSUES CREDIT AND REPORTING FORM
- RECORDS ON CUMULATIVE TRACKING FORM

CREDIT GRANTED

CREDIT DENIED

APPEAL

GUIDANCE INSERT REPORTING FORM AND TRACKING FORM(S) IN OSR

Board Level