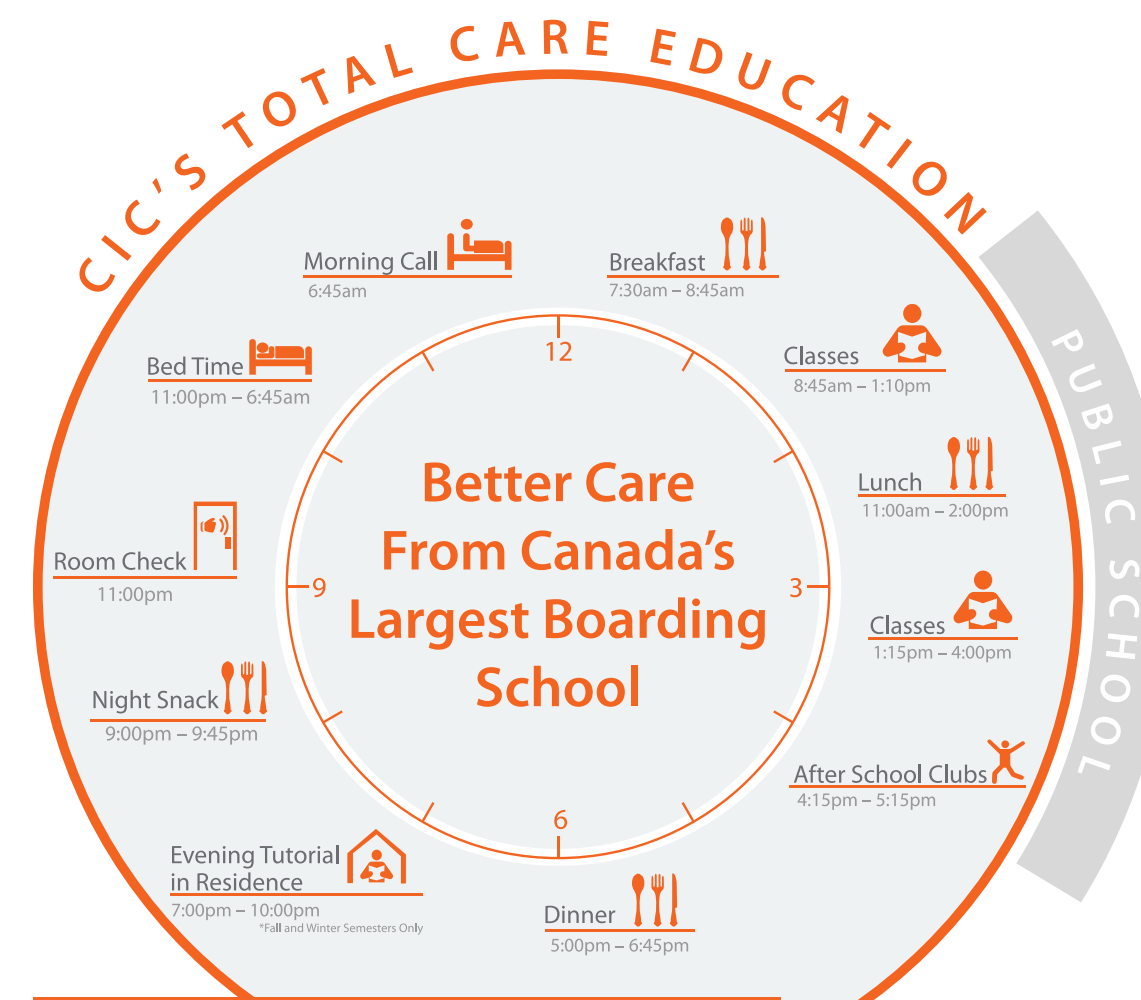




Private vs. Public School Education

A comparative guide for parents





What parents should know before sending their child abroad to study

Private vs. Public School Education

Choosing the right school for your child requires careful consideration and examination. When you consider Canada as the destination for your child to study abroad, you have two general choices: attending a public school or a private school.

To help you make this choice, the following is a comparison between Columbia International College, Canada's largest private boarding school, and public schools in Canada.

Columbia International College

- Designed for international students
- Has catered to the needs of international students for 35 years
- Provides priority attention to nurture young students as their parents would

Public Schools

- Designed for local students living in communities that are a short distance away from the school premises
- Students live at home with their parents
- Students walk to school or have their parents drop them off and pick them up

The listed features are based on the concerns parents feel are most important in their decision-making.

Safety and Health

Safety and Health*

*Noted as parents greatest concern

Concerns	Columbia International College	Public School
Safety	<p>Safety and security are top priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic buildings and all five residences are monitored 24/7 by members of Campus Safety and staff members. All buildings are equipped with close-circuit TV (CCTV) and residences feature access controlled door systems. Door-to-door school service is provided to take students to and from residence and academic buildings, in the morning, after-school, and after extracurricular activities in the evening. Daily residence room checks are conducted at 11 p.m. Students in residence must sign-in and sign-out on weekends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public schools do not provide residence. International students have to live in local homes where available. The safety of homestay neighbourhoods depends on location and some of these homes could be far from the school and would require public transportation. School buses are available to pick-up and drop-off students during regular school hours only. Students involved in extracurricular or after-school activities must find their own transportation when going home. Some public schools have CCTV for academic buildings.
Health Care	<p>Private medical clinic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-campus nurses are available in school every day to treat ill students. Nurses visit residences everyday except Sunday to attend to injured and ill students. Being an international school, our nurses are experienced in communicating with ill students to understand their ailments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents usually look after the health issues of students. Nurses visit school every few months. Students are responsible for seeking medical care outside of school if they are hurt or ill.

Residence and Food Services

Residence and Food Services

Concerns	Columbia International College	Public School
Residence Program	<p>Residences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All residences are owned and operated by Columbia. We take responsibility to ensure student safety. Separate residences for boys and girls. Residences are equipped with recreational facilities, cafeterias, wellness stations and tutoring centres. Residence life allows students to make friends from around the world, participate in residence programming and discover landmark attractions. Students mature faster and learn independence by being on their own. Parents are given residence schedules and are informed of their child's whereabouts. Residences are open 24/7; students do not have to move out during holidays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most public schools offer homestay options or apartment rentals for international students. Homestay options or apartment rentals are unsupervised by schools. Students rent rooms in apartments or family houses. Homestays isolate students from their peers and make social interaction outside of school difficult for international students. Students may or may not be given the opportunity to discover landmark attractions. Homestay options are not owned by individual schools but contracted out to a third party. Students are placed with pre-selected homestay parents. There is no assurance that these homestay parents, who come from a wide variety of backgrounds, are all strong role models of character for students.
Food Services	<p>Delicious, nutritious and convenient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open all-year-round and serve up to four meals a day, allowing students to stay relaxed and focused on their studies. Executive Chef designs daily menus that meet students' needs. Cultural foods from various regions are served daily at school and in residence. Students with dietary/religious needs are served special meals. Nutrition, quality, and food safety are high priorities at Columbia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cafeterias are only available at school. Cafeterias are closed during public holidays and on weekends. Students may need to spend time preparing meals if staying at rental apartments. The selection and variety of food may be limited. Some schools may not cater to special dietary/religious needs. Cafeterias may or may not accommodate special diets, forcing students with dietary restrictions to prepare their own meals.



"Columbia International College has 35 years of experience in teaching English to international students."

Learning English

Learning the English language and developing comprehensive language skills requires skill in many areas. Immersing ESL students in schools with native English speakers does not guaranteed their success.

Without a high level of proficiency in a language or good knowledge of local culture, it is difficult for non-native speakers to interact with native speakers in meaningful discussions. For example, international students who study English abroad and who do not have a strong knowledge of the English language may feel shy or embarrassed to contribute to classroom discussions due to their fear of being misunderstood. Moreover, without a good knowledge of local culture, conversing with native English speakers is more difficult for international students.

According to the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, learning a new language requires skills these five areas:

1. Listening
2. Speaking
3. Reading
4. Writing
5. Grammar

Learning English at Columbia

Columbia International College has 35 years of experience in teaching English to international students. We understand the special learning needs of international students and cater our English program to ensure students develop proficient English language skills in ALL five areas -listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar. Our diverse teaching methods and our unique learning environment provides the following:

ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT

Students should be assessed on their initial level of English proficiency and placed into classes of the appropriate level. In doing so, they gain skills in all five areas that are required to progress from a beginner level to an advanced level.

Classroom learning teaches academic English while extracurricular activities teach students social language.

WELL DESIGNED PROGRAMS

A well-established and well-taught ESL program is the key to successfully learning proper English. Columbia's ESL program is specifically designed for ESL students and caters to their unique leaning needs.

Columbia is committed to nurturing the whole student and follows fundamental academic frameworks, such as BICS* (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) and CALP** (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency), to ensure each student develops formal English communication and academic skills.

In addition, our Academic Support Program ensures that our students excel in all areas of English. We commit essential resources such as tutors and seminars, which are typically not utilized by native English speakers.

* BICS framework develops students' oral communication in their second language and enhances their social conversational fluency.
**CALP develops students' formal academic capability and higher order thinking skills needed for classroom learning.

TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR

Unlike native English speakers, ESL students need greater support in understanding the rules applied to the English language. ESL students are provided with academic tutors who are trained to foster the development of international students.

TOEFL/IELTS TEACHING EXPERTS

ESL students in Ontario are required to pass the English proficiency test as a precondition to university acceptance. Columbia dedicates its resources to ensure that ESL students pass this vital test. TOEFL and IELTS courses, provided by Columbia and taught by qualified teachers, are available at convenient times such as on weekends and during semester breaks. In addition, Columbia is capable of organizing waived or reduced TOEFL/IELTS scores for international students seeking admissions to some of Canadian's top university.

RECOGNITION FROM TOP UNIVERSITIES

Columbia's ESL and English courses are recognized by top universities. All Columbia students successfully complete a Grade 12 pre-university English course (ENG4U) which is required in order to be accepted to universities across Canada and the United States.

Quality of Education

Quality of Education

Concerns	Columbia International College	Public School
Academics	<p>Quality teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low student-teacher ratio keeps class sizes small (15-20 students). • Highly qualified and specialized teachers for each subject; 40% hold a PhD or Master's Degree. • Academic curriculum focuses on educating the whole child and caters to individual student needs. <p>Flexibility in study plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic courses are offered throughout three semesters of the school year that translates to greater flexibility in course selection for students. • Students can choose to study as many or as few courses, depending on their personalized assessment. <p>Efficient use of time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three semesters per year provide more efficient use of time and allow students to complete more credits in a year. • Combined studies of ESL and academic courses allow for a more efficient use of time. <p>Unique courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses in leadership, social justice, character education, arts, science and technology are offered to students beginning in Grade 7. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger class sizes on average (30-35 students) make it more difficult to cater to individual student needs. • Teachers may or may not have received specialized training in the subject area they teach. • Students usually begin their studies in September or January. It is difficult for students to catch up on missed work if they begin mid-semester. • Tuition fees may or may not be allocated to the ESL program and can be shared amongst schools in the public system.
Character Building	<p>Committed to character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character Building is implemented across the school curriculum using monthly themes. • Commitment to effectively implement Character Building for students led to our ownership of Bark Lake - a 700 acre Outdoor Education Centre. • Character Building is taught in school, at residence and at Bark Lake. • Students develop character skills through leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most schools do not have character education programs. • Character focused programs may or may not be integrated into the school curriculum.

Support for Student Success

Support for Student Success

Concerns	Columbia International College	Public School
Online Student Tracker	<p>Large support staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon arrival, students are assessed for their Academic, Social, Emotional and Physical needs and are given an individualized learning plan. • Teachers, Guidance Counsellors, Residence Staff, Liaison Staff, Student Development Staff, Medical Staff all monitor and track this plan throughout the semester. • Full-time Guidance Counsellors and Liaison Officers are widely available to assist all students (Grades 7-12). <p>Communication with parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress, mid-term and final reports are handed out online each semester to parents. • Student conduct and incidents are reported; parents are informed on a timely basis. • Multilingual liaison staff form close connections with students and assist in translating correspondence for students and parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress and mid-term reports are handed out each semester to students only. • Guidance Counsellors are only available at the senior level (Grades 9-12). • Being a public institution, public schools are required to follow Ontario's Privacy Act and cannot disclose information to parents. • May or may not have multilingual staff members who can communicate with international students or their parents in their native language. • Parents may not receive any information on their child's performance.
Academic Support Program	<p>Learning support for success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Success is our central academic focus. • Academic tutors, peer tutors and teachers provide tutoring at school and in residence free of charge. • Academic Support program monitors student progress and ensures they are excelling academically and socially. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers may recommend tutors to parents but at an extra cost. • Tutors outside of school hours may be available at an additional cost. • Students must make arrangement to meet their tutors at a public location or at their parent's residence.
Athletics & Extracurricular Activities	<p>Learning outside the classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 70 clubs and groups to choose from in athletics, arts, community service, leadership and more. • Athletics and extracurricular activities occur on weekdays and weekends. • Students are given the opportunity to attend sporting events, theatrical performances, local area and landmark attractions on weekends and throughout the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports and clubs are offered after school. The diversity of clubs depends on school size and resources. • School related activities occur only on weekdays. • Depending on the school, students may or may not attend class trips (usually once a year in June).

University Placement and Admissions Enrollment

University Placement and Admissions

Concerns	Columbia International College	Public School
Post-Secondary Admission	<p>University Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships with top ranked universities give students exclusive benefits and admission privileges. Extensive scholarship opportunities are available to Columbia graduates. University representatives personally meet with students and offer individualized post-secondary counselling. Columbia graduates have a reputation for academic excellence and are often given early acceptance. 100% admission rate for Columbia's graduates since 1994. More than 50% of Columbia graduates are accepted by the number one university in Canada - the University of Toronto. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University partnerships are not found in the public system. Students compete with thousands of graduates for a limited number of scholarships. Students meet university representatives at university fairs outside of school. Individualized meetings at the school are difficult to arrange. Students must be at the top of their class to receive early acceptance. The best public schools in Hamilton have university admission rates of about 60%.

Enrollment

Concerns	Columbia International College	Public School
Student Population	<p>Diverse and welcoming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcomes students from over 73 countries. Students are nurtured as they are without the comfort and security of their parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Canada, public schools are designed for local students living in communities that are a short distance away from the school premises.
Admission	<p>Academics and Character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students must apply and pass an interview process. Students are selected based on academics, community involvement and good character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By law, all students must be granted admission to a nearby school, regardless of academic standing or character.
Recruiting International Students	<p>System of Total Care®</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specializes in fostering the development of international students. Education system that caters to unique needs of international students. Makes recruitment of international students its top priority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International students are recruited to fill school voids with low enrollment. Recruitment of international students is an afterthought.



“Columbia students are the most fantastic students inside the classroom and outside. They actively participate in campus life at University of Waterloo.”

Ian Goulden, Ph.D.
Dean of Mathematics
University of Waterloo



“Columbia graduates thrive here. They do well here. They are leaders here and we want more of them.”

Diane Crocker
Office of the Registrar
University of Toronto,
Mississauga

TOTAL CARE®

Total Care Education System® is the best education system for students studying abroad. Columbia's Total Care Education System® is modeled to provide the kind of care and balanced education parents want their children to have when studying abroad.

It provides a nurturing educational environment that provides peace of mind to both parents and students, delivered through 4 distinct yet inter-related components.

TOTAL LEARNING®

- Prepares students to succeed in the North American education system
- Customized education plan to meet these needs of each student

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT®

- Ensures each student receives a well-balanced education by providing opportunities outside the classroom for students to explore their strengths and build strong character.

TOTAL LIVING®

- Offers our students a home away from home by providing age-appropriate guidance.
- Students stay in a safe and comfortable environment where they learn to adapt to North American customs and lifestyle.

TOTAL COMMUNICATION®

- Bridges the vast communicative distance between students and their parents.
- Minimizes this distance by providing modern communication systems that help parents and students stay connected.

Delivering Success

At Columbia, we urge students and parents to learn all the facts of both public and private education systems in order to make an informed decision.

Columbia's success in providing exemplary care through our Total Care Education System® allowed us to become the largest private boarding school in Canada. With millions of dollars in scholarships and close to 50 percent of the graduating class admitted to Canada's top university, University of Toronto, Columbia's graduates' record of achievement clearly reflects the success of the Total Care Education System®.

Invest in your child's future

Choose a school that is designed specifically for English as a Second Language students with effective teaching and learning strategies..

Choose the Total Care Education System that caters to the needs of International students and that gives your child the best care away from home.

Choose Columbia International College

COLUMBIA
INTERNATIONAL
COLLEGE
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada



Total Care Education System®
For You, Success.

1003 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8S 4P3
Tel: +1 905 572 7883 Fax: +1 905 572 9332
E-mail: columbia@cic-TotalCare.com
www.cic-TotalCare.com