

OUT-OF-TOWN STUDENT PROGRAM [OSP] FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS [FAQ]

If YGW is a community school, why is it admitting students from out-of-town?

YGW was founded as a community school focused on the local student and maintains this as its primary target population. Over the years YGW's unique approach to *limudei kodesh* and general studies has attracted inquiries, and subsequently attendance, from young men and women outside our community. The Board and administration have recognized that good students from out-of-town can have a positive impact on the social, academic, and spiritual dimensions of our school as well as its financial viability. In spite of these positive additions to our school, when concerns about the impact of out-of-town students reached a critical point, the Board placed a moratorium on the program and stated that it would not consider a new program until it was felt that it could be implemented correctly.

At the same time, YGW has identified its minimum enrollment at 120 students per Middle School/High School Division to achieve financial stability. To provide the full range of services YGW would like to offer our students the ideal enrollment is 150 students.

The Board of Directors and staff leadership have determined that our natural constituency in the local market will not be adequate to fully provide the optimal numbers of students for the foreseeable future. Therefore, in order to provide the best educational opportunities for all our students, the Board voted to institute the two-year pilot OSP with new standards, policies and procedures that resolve structural issues from the previous program. While the Board of Directors has capped OSP participation at 25% of the High School student population, we do not anticipate reaching this maximum target during the pilot program.

As a community school YGW cannot emphasize more strongly that we will not compromise the quality of our school or the standards as set forth in the new policies for the sake of meeting these enrollment and financial goals.

What does 150 students per Middle School/High School Division allow YGW to achieve?

Beyond financial stability, the additional student enrollment will allow for more flexibility and increased investment in our educational program. This will enable YGW to significantly increase our investment in staff development and technology, improve our staff retention programs, add diversity to our course offerings, and expand our Educational Support Services program, to name a few.

How is the new OSP different from the previous boarder program?

The Board of Directors and staff leadership, in consultation with community members, former boarder hosts and program participants, took the last two years to identify the core issues that contributed to programming deficiencies and designed a new program which is structurally and procedurally sound.

What were the key issues identified from the previous boarder program?

There were three key issues identified:

1. The selection criteria for students in the program;
2. Selection and monitoring of housing accommodations;
3. Monitoring students in the program.

How will the new OSP address the weaknesses of the previous boarder program?

The OSP is focused on attracting students from out-of-town who will contribute positively to the religious, academic, and social atmosphere of YGW. To that end the former Vaad HaChinuch, now integrated into the Rabbinic Governance Board, established seven core criteria for the student and their family to be considered for the program. Full admissions criteria are detailed in the OSP Admissions Policy. This Admissions Policy is a component of the new policies, procedures, and the various agreements to be adhered to by the student and their family for acceptance and continued participation in the OSP. All of these materials are accessible on the OSP webpage.

The Host Family Program was also revamped to identify local families who are equipped to provide the participating students with stability, guidance and social support in a Torah-observant household in addition to appropriate housing and meal accommodations. YGW will maintain an active partnership with the host families including training, site visits and on-going communication. Full host family policies can be viewed on the OSP website.

Finally, YGW will have a multi-layered approach to monitoring the students in the program. In addition to our teachers who interact with the students every school day, and the host families, each division will have an OSP Manager and madrichim or madrichos whose tasks will be to interact with the students on a regular basis, identify potential problems, and support the students when they're not in class. Full job descriptions can be viewed on the OSP website.

Why is the OSP considered a pilot program?

The OSP is considered a pilot program because of two specific stipulations placed on it by the Board of Directors:

1. The program has been approved for two years only and will be discontinued unless the Board actively votes to continue the program after conducting a full review.

2. Additional oversight has been mandated for the implementation and two year pilot period.

What “Additional Oversight” has been put in place?

1. The establishment of an “Enrollment Review Committee”. This committee, composed of three members or designates of the Rabbinic Governance Board (RGB) who receive no financial benefits from the school, will review that the process has been followed for each Menahel-recommended admission to the program.
2. The establishment of an “OSP Committee” of the Board of Directors that will oversee the program and meet regularly with the staff-leadership of the school.
3. The RGB will monitor all incident reports in order to be aware of egregious or persistent issues, with the full authority to intervene at any time.

Are there scholarships available for the OSP?

YGW has very limited funds for scholarships for out-of-town students. On average, YGW cannot extend scholarships beyond 25% of Tuition. There is no scholarship for housing, fees, or travel expenses.