Delta School District
Inspired Learning

2026/2027
LANGUAGE CHALLENGE

INFORMATION
FOR SCHOOL COUNSELLORS

Please Note: Payment using cheques is still available. A credit card payment option can be found on our webpage (a small credit card surcharge will be added)

Also refer to:
- Student Application Package

COAST-METRO CHALLENGE CONSORTIUM

- ABBOTSFORD - BURNABY - COQUITLAM - DELTA - HOWE SOUND - LANGLEY - NEW WESTMINSTER - NORTH VANCOUVER - RICHMOND - SURREY - VANCOUVER - WEST VANCOUVER

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

It is highly recommended that all counsellors read the Ministry of Education policy regarding the Language Challenge process in detail on the Ministry website (link below):

1. All public school students (and Adults who are registered in the Adult Graduation Program) are entitled to a free challenge process for any course taught by their school district
2. Students may challenge courses not taught by their own school district through another school district
3. The Ministry will fund every successfully completed course Challenge at the same rate as a 1-credit course – approximately $285
4. Counsellors must do a pre-Challenge Equivalency review before recommending students for a Challenge. "Schools must document the Challenge assessment delivered to each student, including a pre-Challenge Equivalency review, and the documentation must be made available to Ministry auditors if requested (MoE Challenge Policy Document)." (link below).

Public school students and **Adults who are registered in the Adult Graduation Program** will not be charged any fees for the Language Challenge Exams; instead they pay a $50 refundable deposit, to be refunded on exam day (deposit will be forfeited if they do not show for the exam). We will bill the school districts directly for students who apply for Language Challenge Exams at a rate of $220 per exam (note: the districts will be reimbursed at approximately $285 per successful student).

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS, INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND ADULTS (not registered in Adult Grad Program):

The cost for Language Challenge exams for students from Independent Schools, Adult Students (not registered in the Adult Grad Program) or International Students is $220 per exam. The cheque for $220 should be attached to the application when it is submitted (payable to Delta School District). Independent Schools can be refunded for each successful Challenge according to the percentage of the funding you receive from the Ministry.

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/earning-credit-through-equivalency-challenge-external-credentials-post-secondary-credit-and-independent-directed-studies

STEPS FOR COUNSELLORS HELPING WITH LANGUAGE CHALLENGE APPLICATIONS:

1. Familiarize yourself with this Information Booklet and the Student Application Package – **please note that students are required to type highlighted areas on page 9 of the application form online (PDF) before they print the application**.

2. Communicate the availability of Language Challenge to Students and Staff (bulletins, TV monitors, website, etc.)

3. Instruct students to go to our webpage so they can complete the application before they print it and submit it to you. They can google "Language Challenge Exams" or some variation to find it: https://www.deltasd.bc.ca/schools/secondary/challenge-exams

4. Provide course IRPs or ensure students know where to get this information (ministry website, Challenge web page)

5. Determine that the student is not better suited to receive credit through Equivalency. Review completed applications with students to make sure they provide sufficient evidence regarding their ability to challenge the course. Please check details on page 9 of application (a common mistake is student number instead of PEN).

6. If the student meets with your (counsellor's) approval, place the completed "Personal Background" in their file.

7. Ensure that there is a current "passport-type" photo (endorsed with your signature directly on the photo) and a cheque for $50.00, made to the Delta School District, attached. All applications must be submitted to the Delta School District by November 20th, 2026.

8. Note: if paying by credit card, the credit card receipt must be attached to the back of the application

Independent and Non-Consortium Schools:

Please Note: Independent Schools and Schools that are not a part of the Coast-Metro Challenge Consortium can send their application forms directly to the Delta School District by November 20th, 2026.

Attn: Phil Manuel
Delta Continuing Education
4750 – 57th Street
Delta, BC V4K 3C9

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COAST-METRO CHALLENGE CONSORTIUM

- ABBOTSFORD - BURNABY - COQUITLAM - DELTA - HOWE SOUND - LANGLEY - NEW WESTMINSTER -
- NORTH VANCOUVER - RICHMOND - SURREY - VANCOUVER - WEST VANCOUVER -

CHALLENGE INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF CHALLENGE

The purpose of Challenge is to permit students to obtain credit for a Grade 11 or 12 course who have already acquired the appropriate learning elsewhere. All students are entitled to request an opportunity to challenge courses for credit. Students who request the opportunity to challenge a course must be able to give strong and compelling evidence that they will succeed in the challenge and that it is in their best interests.

Challenge provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate that they have satisfied the learning outcomes of a course in the graduation program and to enable them to earn credits without taking the course. It is anticipated that Challenge will be necessary and appropriate only in exceptional circumstances.

The process of Challenge is meant to be rigorous, maintaining the integrity of the curriculum and the standards of a quality education. It is intended for students of exceptional ability or for those who have had exceptional opportunities for learning through some special circumstance.

Challenge is not a way for students to improve their course marks, nor a replacement for the valuable experience of learning in a classroom setting.

COURSES AVAILABLE FOR CHALLENGE

For 2026/2027, course challenges will be available in the following subject areas:

Language Challenge Exams:
Administered by the Delta School District

- ASL 11 (American Sign Language)
- Farsi 11&12
- French 11&12
- Japanese 11&12
- Korean 11&12
- Mandarin 11&12 (traditional & simplified characters)
- Punjabi 11&12
- Spanish 11&12

Course Challenge 2026 – 2027 Timeline

September 2026	Course challenge applications, guidelines and specifications updated on the webpage.
November 6, 2026	Completed student applications for the challenge process due at the school level.
November 20, 2026	All applications for challenge are delivered to the Delta School District (Delta Continuing Education)
December 11, 2026	Last day for cancellation, withdrawal or changes. Requests must be made in writing.
December 2026	Confirmation letters (email) sent to students, reports sent to schools.
January 30th & 31st, 2027	Language Challenge examination dates (see Exam Schedule below).
March 2027	Results mailed to students and to schools

Dates of Language Challenge Examinations

The Language Challenge Examination will be held on **January 30th & 31st 2027**. **Students must be available from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on their exam day (see exam schedule below)**. Students cannot choose or change their assigned exam date. Refunds, withdrawals, and changes cannot be granted after December 11th 2026 to students who are unable to write the exam due to scheduling conflicts.

January 30, 2027	**January 31, 2027**
• Farsi 11 • French 11 • Japanese 11 • Korean 11 • Mandarin 11 (simplified) • Mandarin 11 (traditional) • Punjabi 11 • Spanish 11	• Farsi 12 • French 12 • Japanese 12 • Korean 12 • Mandarin 12 (traditional) • Mandarin 12 (simplified) • Punjabi 12 • Spanish 12

Note: ASL 11 – exam dates will be arranged with each student

CHALLENGE LIMITATIONS

For the 2026/2027 school year, the Coast-Metro Challenge Consortium is providing Language Challenge exam opportunities for courses listed on page one.

Any Grade 11 or Grade 12 course that is currently offered in the school district may be challenged for credit. To be eligible to participate in the challenge process, a student should be enrolled in the school district, registered for home schooling, or enrolled in the distance education school where the challenge is requested.

The Counsellor will conduct a pre-Challenge Equivalency review (please see Challenge website) to ensure that the student is not better suited to proceed with Equivalency instead of Challenge.

A student may challenge a course only once. Students who have successfully completed a course may not write a challenge exam in the same subject at a later date for the purpose of improving their mark. Students who have previously failed a course may write the challenge exam at a later date provided they show evidence that the learning outcomes have since been met.

Students who would like to improve their mark in the course that they challenged are still eligible to take the course in a classroom setting later. Students are allowed to Challenge more than one exam in the same year – if there are scheduling conflicts we will try and arrange a special sitting to finish the other exam.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following information is intended to assist counsellors and school administrators with challenge procedures.

1. **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "PLACEMENT", "EQUIVALENCY" AND "CHALLENGE"?** (See Appendix C for more information)

> ***"Placement"*** refers to the internal process of assessing students for the purpose of placing them at a higher level. It does not give credit for the lower level. Students could be placed into grade 12 without challenging grade 11, if schools wish. But in this instance, the students cannot receive credit for the grade 11 level on their transcript.

> ***"Equivalency"*** is used when students have earned credentials from outside the BC school system and these are deemed by the Ministry (or the District) to be the equivalent of course credentials offered through the school.

> ***"Challenge"*** refers to the process of participating in a formal evaluation of grade 11 and 12 courses in order to receive credit with a percentage mark on the transcript.
>
> Language courses do not have provincial exams.

2. IS THIS PARTICULAR CHALLENGE PROCESS MANDATORY?

For students who do not have proper documentation allowing them to receive credit through Equivalency, Challenge is an approved way to receive credit with a percentage mark for grade 11 and 12 Language courses. The other option is for the student to take the course.

3. CAN STUDENTS BE COUNSELLED TO NOT ATTEMPT THE CHALLENGE?

Students need the opportunity to discuss the merits, the process of challenge and its place in the student's academic goals, with counsellors and other appropriate staff. Where a counsellor and/or teacher believe a student has insufficient background to successfully challenge a course, the student should be counselled to *not* proceed. However, students should not be denied their choice to undertake a course challenge. Furthermore, students need to know that the course challenge is rigorous, and processing the student's application to participate in the challenge process does not guarantee high or even passing results.

4. CAN STUDENTS CHALLENGE AGAIN IF THEY ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE MARK?

Students are not allowed to take a challenge a second time to improve a mark.

They are eligible to take the course later in the classroom if they want to get a better mark.

If a student is found to have submitted a duplicate application to write a challenge examination, a $25.00 administrative processing fee will apply and the student's application will be returned to their home school.

5. CAN STUDENTS CHALLENGE A COURSE THEY HAVE PREVIOUSLY FAILED?

Students who have previously failed a course may write the challenge exam at a later date, provided they show solid evidence that they have worked on that course in the interim and that the learning outcomes have since been met.

6. CAN STUDENTS CHALLENGE A COURSE IN WHICH THEY ARE REGISTERED?

No. Students can either register in a course **or** challenge the course – they cannot do both.

7. CAN A STUDENT WRITE A CHALLENGE FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF A COURSE IF THEY HAVE ALREADY PASSED THE COURSE?

Students may not challenge a course once they have already completed that course.

8. WHAT SUPPORT OTHER THAN INFORMING STUDENTS ABOUT THE CHALLENGE PROCESS AND ITS REQUIREMENTS CAN STUDENTS EXPECT FROM THEIR SCHOOL IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR THE CHALLENGE PROCESS?

Students are required to review the IRP (Learning Outcomes) and the Challenge Exam Specifications in order to apply for the course challenge. Students may request IRPs and textbooks for the course or be referred to the BC government website for the IRP (*https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum*). The language challenge exam specifications can be found at https://www.deltasd.bc.ca/schools/secondary/challenge-exams/. Schools are not expected to "coach" or "instruct" students in any other way. The idea is that students are already very familiar with the subject matter for that level.

9. AT WHAT GRADE LEVEL SHOULD A STUDENT CHALLENGE A GRADE 11 OR 12 COURSE?

It is a strong recommendation, given the mature level of understanding required in the challenge activities, that students challenge the grade 11 course while they are in grade 10 and not before. Grade 8 or 9 students will probably fare better if they wait until grade 10 if they are concerned about marks. Another reason for recommending grade 10 is to leave open the option of taking the course in grade 11 if the challenge is not successful. Students would ordinarily be in grade 11 before they apply to challenge a grade 12 course.

10. DO THE UNIVERSITIES REQUIRE A SECOND LANGUAGE AS AN ENTRANCE REQUIREMENT?

Universities in BC no longer require a second language as an entrance requirement. It is highly recommended that students look through the requirements for their intended degree/program to decide if a language credit is needed.

11. Is there provision for students with special needs?

Students requiring special adjudication procedures must attach appropriate documentation to the application form and request this provision as per the *Provincial Examination Guidelines for Students with Special Needs*.

12. Does the student still have to take a Provincial Exam for a Language Challenge course?

No, there are no provincial exams for language courses.

13. Who qualifies for a "Free" challenge exam?

For students in the public school system the Language Challenge Exam fee is paid by their school districts (who are then reimbursed by the Ministry of Education). **Adults registered in the Adult Graduation program** are also paid for by their school district. These two groups pay a $50 refundable fee which is returned to them if they show-up for the exams.

Independent School students, International students and Adults not registered in the Adult Graduation program pay the fee for the exams ($220 per challenge exam). This fee is non-refundable unless the student cancels before the Dec 11th 2026 deadline (a $25 administration fee is deducted). All cheques are payable to the Delta School District (please check our webpage for credit card payment options – credit card surcharge will be added).

SECTION 1: SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 Identify one person who will take responsibility for Challenge Procedures in the school.

1.2 Decide upon a method to communicate Challenge Procedures with staff, students, and parents. For example:

Teachers: Staff bulletins, staff meetings and Department meetings

Students: Course selection booklets, Grade assemblies
Challenge Awareness/Information Evenings
TV monitors, website, notice boards and library displays

Parents: Newsletters for home
PAC/Challenge Awareness Evenings
Meet the teacher nights
Link on school website

1.3 Provide students with appropriate IRPs, Challenge Exam Specifications, information pamphlets – explain that students have to complete the application form online before printing it for submission to their school.

1.4 Determine that the student is not eligible for Equivalency before approving for Challenge. Review applications for challenge.

1.5 Ensure cheque is attached -- $50.00 (per course) Refundable Exam Deposit. (Please note: students who choose not to show up for the exam forfeit the deposit). ***Independent School, International and Adults students (not registered in the Adult Grad Program) attach $220 cheque. Make all cheques payable to the Delta School District. (Check our webpage for credit card payment options – a small credit card surcharge will be added).***

1.6 Endorse the student's recent photo. Someone who knows the student at the school should do this. Please ensure that the picture is a recent, clear, "passport-like" photograph.

1.7 Forward all completed applications to the Delta School District by November 20, 2026. (Retain photocopies of all documents for school records).

***Please note**:*
The procedures at the school are a school-based issue. Usually, the Counselling Department would promote Challenge information, collect applications, verify photo ID and sign off the Personal Qualifications and Application Forms. Counsellors might refer students to subject Department Heads and other classroom teachers at their discretion.

SECTION 2: STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Student completes **Student Application Package online (page 9) at our website before printing it for submission to their school** (discuss with parents) – student deadline November 6, 2026 (school deadline to get application to us: Nov 20th 2026) **https://www.deltasd.bc.ca/schools/secondary/challenge-exams**

2.2 Student discusses "Challenge" suitability with Counsellor and a relevant Subject Teacher, and reviews Challenge Exam Specifications for the specific subject(s).

2.3 Student, in consultation with parents, checks to ensure that the course challenge meets their academic goals. The student refers to the exam specifications, learning outcomes (IRP) and notes any requirements.

2.4 Student completes the Challenge Application Form on website and prints (includes supporting documentation) and returns this form to the Counsellor who reviews the student's readiness to challenge the course with the student.

2.5 After review by the Counsellor, the student must submit for attachment to the Challenge Application Form:

- $50.00 cheque. *(Cheque must have student's name and school clearly marked on the back – this cheque is returned on exam day – if student is unable to attend the exam they will forfeit this money)*. All Independent, International and Adult Students (not registered in the Adult Grad Program) attach $220 cheque. Make all cheques payable to Delta School District.
- A fairly current photograph that is a good likeness of the student, and has been endorsed by a school official (signed on the actual photograph so we know the photo has not been substituted by the student).
- If using the credit card option, student must print and attach the credit card receipt to the back of the application.

2.6 Check the Language Challenge Web page for additional information: https://www.deltasd.bc.ca/schools/secondary/challenge-exams.

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- French 11 & 12
- Japanese 11 & 12
- Korean 11 & 12
- Mandarin 11 & 12
- Punjabi 11 & 12
- Spanish 11 & 12

Non-Language Challenge Exams:

Please contact your school district for information regarding non-language challenge exams.

Please Register At Your School

REGISTRATION DEADLINE for Students to Submit Applications to School:
November 6, 2026

Deadline for Submission of Applications by Schools/Districts to Delta

November 20th, 2026

CHALLENGE EXAM DATES
January 30th and 31st, 2027
(please see exam schedule on p. 2)

Mail Applications to:
Attn: Phil Manuel
Delta Continuing Education
4750-57th St
Delta, BC V4K 3C9

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APPENDIX A

EXTERNAL LEARNING

EQUIVALENCY	CHALLENGE
• Recognizes documented learning from outside the BC school system which the Ministry and local school districts deem equivalent to the learning outcomes of a Ministry-Authorized or Locally Developed grade 11 and 12 course. • Where the Ministry has not assessed equivalency credentials from other institutions school boards have the authority to determine equivalency. e.g., Credit granted for a local Dance Studio program that is an 80% or better match of learning outcomes for Dance 11 Performance.	• Allows students to receive credit and a percentage mark for a provincially developed grade 11 or 12 course, offered within a district, through a process of assessing the relevant knowledge and skills they have gained elsewhere. • Courses will be normally available for Challenge one year after full implementation of their Integrated Resource Packages (IRP). e.g., Credit granted through a Spanish 12 challenge process would provide a mark and percentage grade for the course.

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Some Helpful Steps

EQUIVALENCY	CHALLENGE
1. Direct students to gather relevant certificates and documentation for an equivalency review. 2. Compare learning outcomes from Appendix A of the IRPs for equivalencies. A high degree of overlap or 80% match to learning outcomes is required. 3. Develop your own district's equivalency list for local frequently requested reviews.	1. The challenge process is required if there is no documentation for equivalency review. 2. Ministry-Authorized grade 11 or 12 courses taught within a district are available for challenge. 3. This process provides credit with a percentage mark.

CASE STUDY #1

Shi Wei has recently come from Taiwan and is enrolled in grade 11. She studied English as a foreign language in her high school in Taipei, but the language of instruction for the rest of her schooling was Mandarin Chinese. Shi Wei and her parents want to ensure that she has the necessary language prerequisites to enter post-secondary institutions. In the pre-Challenge Equivalency review the counsellor discovers that they have the documentation that would allow her to receive a letter grade in Mandarin 12. The counsellor recommends that Equivalency is better suited for this student and does not approve the application for Challenge.

CASE STUDY #2

Harjot is a student who emigrated from India before he completed elementary school. He has been attending a Heritage Language school on the weekends to maintain his Punjabi skills. The counsellor determines that Harjot does not have the prior education to receive Equivalency credit for Punjabi 12. However, after receiving recommendations from his Heritage school and his parents, the counsellor is confident that the student has sufficient skills to do a successful Challenge of Punjabi 12.