ecampus Ontario

Ontario Open:
Sharing Resources to Enhance Equity and Access

The Virtual Learning Strategy (VLS) is investing in developing collaborative, learner-driven, high-quality, digital-by-design materials for all Ontario learners and educators, now and into the future.

The Virtual Learning Strategy is built on three key pillars:

Being the future

Being a lifelong learner

Being a global leader

100% of VLS-funded materials

✓ will be available for use and reuse across Ontario public postsecondary sector,

✓ for up to and beyond 50 years,*

✓ through the eCampusOntario Open Library.

"Open access is a powerful driver for [...] creating systemic change and allowing for a rigorous analysis of the lifecycle of materials and knowledge."

— VLS project team

Through the VLS, Ontario Indigenous Institutes, colleges, and universities are working together to create digital-by-design learning materials that build on the sector's collaborative efforts to advance knowledge, teaching practices, equity, and access.

*per the Copyright Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. C-42

Ontario Commons License (OCL 1.0)

VLS-developed materials include digital content and resources designed to build and enhance digital capacity and fluency. All VLS-developed materials will be made available to the Ontario public postsecondary sector through the Ontario Commons License. Please note the Ontario Commons License – No Derivatives (OCL-ND 1.0) license can be applied to work where adaptation is not appropriate (e.g. Traditional Knowledges, sensitive content).

Q: Can VLS materials developers select other licensing options?

A: The Ontario Commons License is non-exclusive (i.e., VLS resource developers can enter into other licensing agreements, such as Creative Commons licenses).

Q: How long will VLS materials be available?

A: Ontario Commons Licenses last the duration of the copyright term, and cannot be revoked.

Q: How can VLS materials be used by eligible educators and learners (i.e., educators and learners from Ontario public postsecondary educational institutions)?

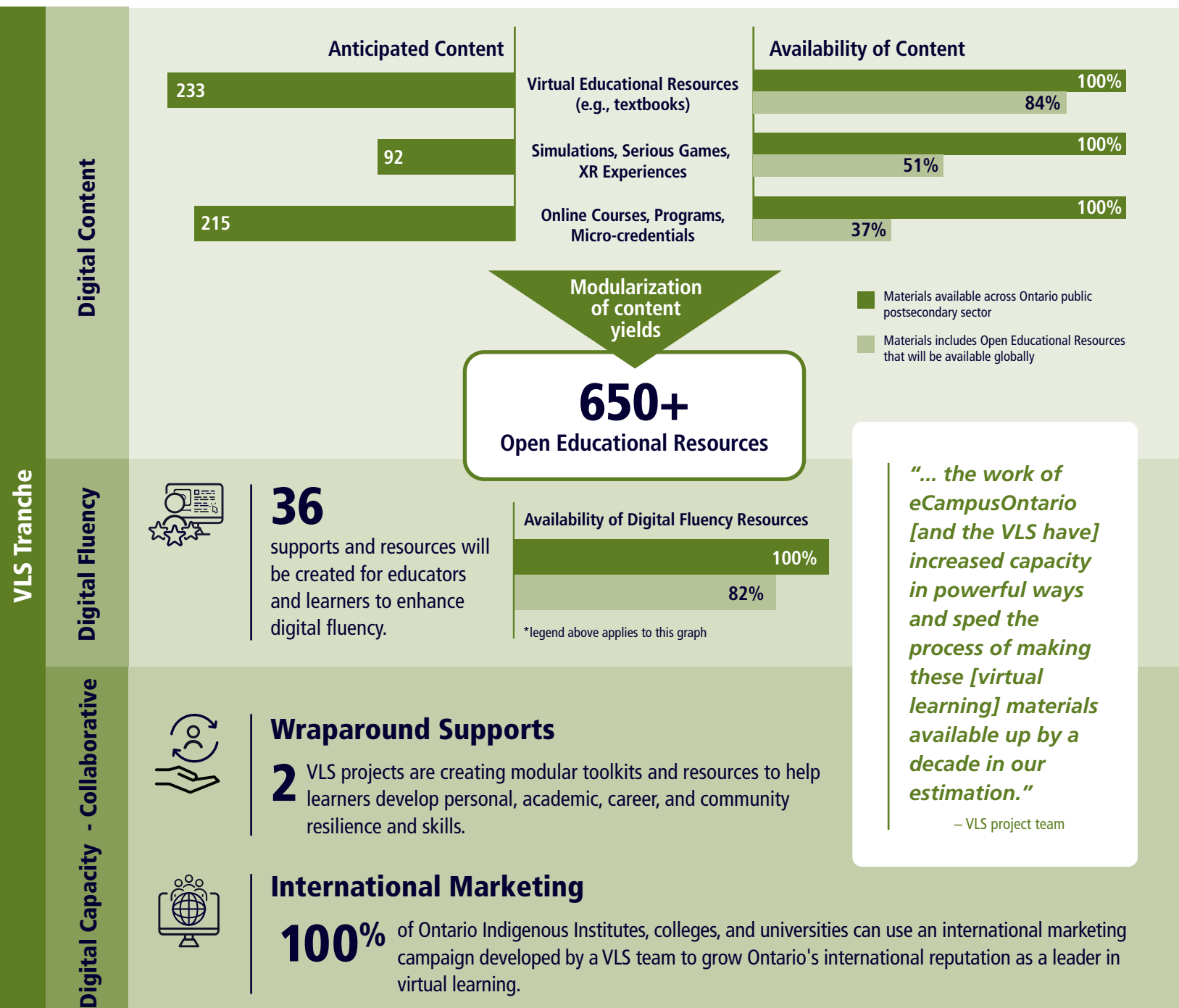| A: Conditions for use and reuse	Ontario Commons License (OCL 1.0)	Ontario Commons License - No Derivatives (OCL-ND 1.0)
Must be used only as part of a publicly offered credit/non-credit course/program	✔	✔
Must give credit or attribution to the original author(s)	✔	✔
Can copy the work	✔	✔
Can modify or adapt the work	✔	✘

Sharing Digital-by-Design Materials

In this section we explore the infusion of materials into the Ontario postsecondary sector made possible through the VLS.

The VLS is investing in:

1. Developing digital content including courses, programs, resources, and micro-credentials
2. Enhancing digital fluency by creating supports & resources for educators and learners
3. Building digital capacity through wraparound services and marketing
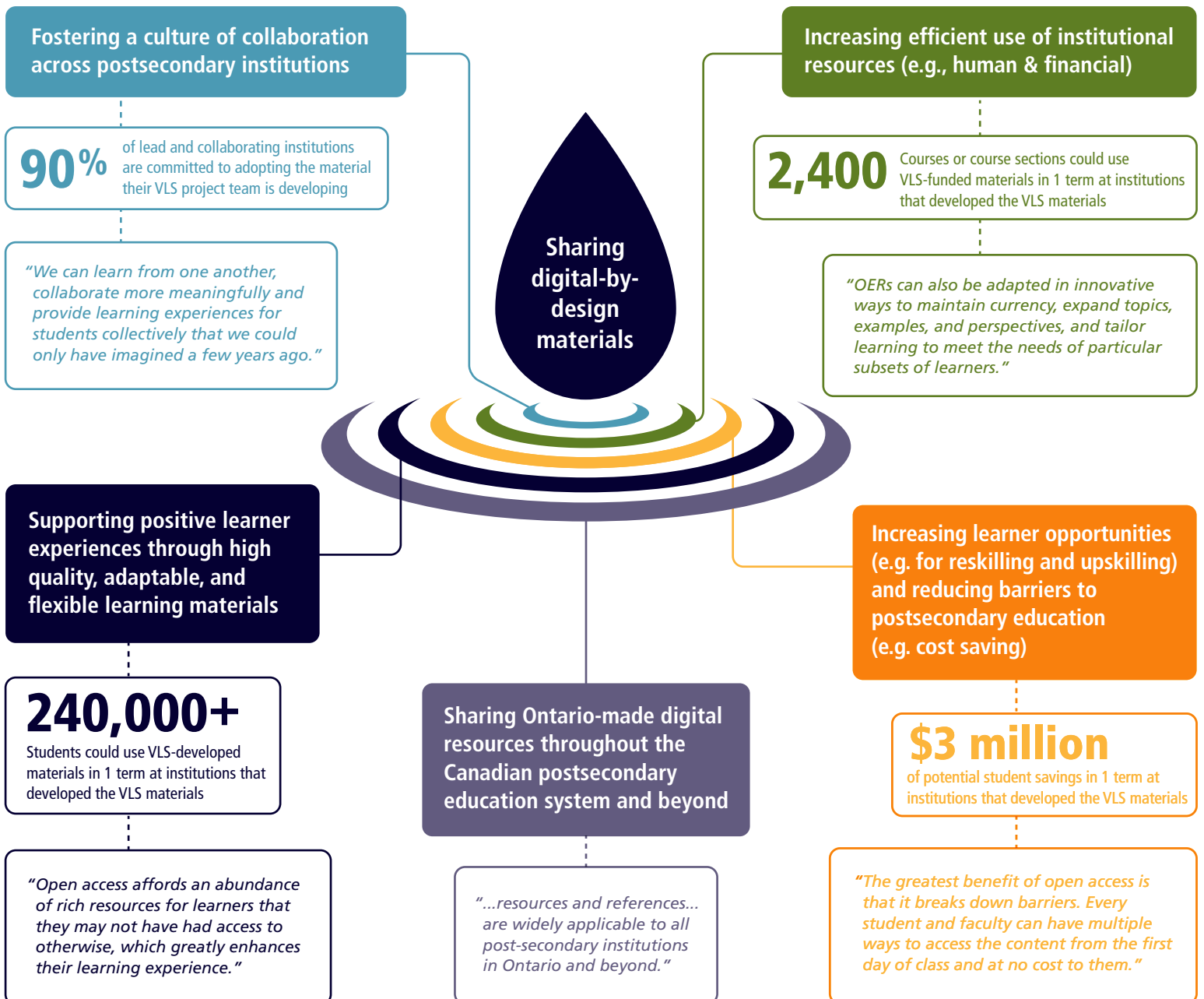
VLS materials are categorized by project type (e.g., Virtual Educational Resources). VLS materials can be modularized, and some components may be converted into distinct, globally available Open Educational Resources (OER). For example, a course could include ancillary resources such as a test bank, a syllabus, slide decks, assignments, and/or videos. VLS project teams may apply a Global Open License to these ancillary resources thus making them OER.

VLS Tranche

Digital Content

Anticipated Content

- 233 — Virtual Educational Resources (e.g., textbooks)
- 92 — Simulations, Serious Games, XR Experiences
- 215 — Online Courses, Programs, Micro-credentials

Availability of Content

- Virtual Educational Resources (e.g., textbooks): 100% / 84%
- Simulations, Serious Games, XR Experiences: 100% / 51%
- Online Courses, Programs, Micro-credentials: 100% / 37%

Modularization of content yields

650+
Open Educational Resources

Legend:
- ■ Materials available across Ontario public postsecondary sector
- ■ Materials includes Open Educational Resources that will be available globally

Digital Fluency

36 supports and resources will be created for educators and learners to enhance digital fluency.

Availability of Digital Fluency Resources
- 100%
- 82%

*legend above applies to this graph

Digital Capacity - Collaborative

Wraparound Supports

2 VLS projects are creating modular toolkits and resources to help learners develop personal, academic, career, and community resilience and skills.

International Marketing

100% of Ontario Indigenous Institutes, colleges, and universities can use an international marketing campaign developed by a VLS team to grow Ontario's international reputation as a leader in virtual learning.

"... the work of eCampusOntario [and the VLS have] increased capacity in powerful ways and sped the process of making these [virtual learning] materials available up by a decade in our estimation."

— VLS project team

Impacts of Sharing Digital-by-Design Materials

The findings presented in this report were collected from VLS project teams via the 2nd quarterly report (Q2). VLS project teams were asked to respond to a series of quantitative and qualitative (open-ended) questions related to licensing and sharing resources. Open-ended responses were analyzed using an inductive thematic analysis and the major themes are synthesized and presented in this report. Major themes and aggregate quantitative findings were triangulated and are presented together to share an evidence-informed narrative about how the VLS principles and pillars are being realized through collaboration and sharing of VLS-created materials across Ontario, and beyond. In this section we explore perceived and anticipated impacts of sharing VLS-created digital-by-design materials. The impacts are visualized as ripples below.

Fostering a culture of collaboration across postsecondary institutions

90% of lead and collaborating institutions are committed to adopting the material their VLS project team is developing

"We can learn from one another, collaborate more meaningfully and provide learning experiences for students collectively that we could only have imagined a few years ago."

Increasing efficient use of institutional resources (e.g., human & financial)

2,400 Courses or course sections could use VLS-funded materials in 1 term at institutions that developed the VLS materials

"OERs can also be adapted in innovative ways to maintain currency, expand topics, examples, and perspectives, and tailor learning to meet the needs of particular subsets of learners."

Sharing digital-by-design materials

Supporting positive learner experiences through high quality, adaptable, and flexible learning materials

240,000+ Students could use VLS-developed materials in 1 term at institutions that developed the VLS materials

"Open access affords an abundance of rich resources for learners that they may not have had access to otherwise, which greatly enhances their learning experience."

Sharing Ontario-made digital resources throughout the Canadian postsecondary education system and beyond

"...resources and references... are widely applicable to all post-secondary institutions in Ontario and beyond."

Increasing learner opportunities (e.g. for reskilling and upskilling) and reducing barriers to postsecondary education (e.g. cost saving)

$3 million of potential student savings in 1 term at institutions that developed the VLS materials

"The greatest benefit of open access is that it breaks down barriers. Every student and faculty can have multiple ways to access the content from the first day of class and at no cost to them."

All quotes are from VLS project teams.

Priorities to Sustain Impacts of Sharing Digital-by-Design Materials

The open learning cycle is an iterative process where shared content is created, used, reused, remixed, repurposed, and continuously updated to meet the needs of educators and learners. In this section, we explore priorities identified by VLS project teams to ensure the impact of sharing digital-by-design materials is sustained over time. These priorities apply to most, if not all, moments in the open learning cycle.

Continuing to build a supportive culture of collaboration that values openness

Embedding principles of equity, diversity, decolonization, and inclusion (EDDI)

Co-creating, refining, and aligning frameworks, policies and procedures

Maintaining and enhancing existing tools and digital infrastructure for open access

Example areas of focus

Continuing to build a supportive culture of collaboration that values openness

- Diverse and inclusive inter-institutional partnerships and collaborations
- Equitable valuation for contributions and efforts
- Capacity building, communities of practice, and support networks for educators and learners
- Evolving teaching practices and roles
- Active learner participation and engagement

Embedding principles of equity, diversity, decolonization, and inclusion (EDDI)

- Access to affordable and reliable hardware, software, and a high speed internet connection
- Diverse representation in developers and users
- Accessibility and universal design for learning
- Indigenization and decolonization of resources and systems
- Diversification of content (e.g. translation)

Co-creating, refining, and aligning frameworks, policies and procedures

- Quality assurance and peer review
- Intellectual property, copyright, licensing, and attribution
- Ensuring content of resources is up-to-date and reflective of current understandings

Maintaining and enhancing existing tools and digital infrastructure for open access

- Search and discoverability
- Curation and adaptation of resources
- Digital infrastructure for diverse resource types
- Privacy and security measures
- Longevity of digital infrastructure

Quotes from VLS project teams

"As our resource is used and adapted, we hope that others can learn from us, and in turn, we can learn from them... the open access approach helps to support a collaborative approach to problem-solving through knowledge sharing."

"Ensuring that contributions from marginalized voices are centralized in OER creation and that it is funded."

Learn more here about building inclusive hybrid futures for all learners

"It is critical that open access resources (e.g., courses, including all materials) be used, reviewed, critiqued, and improved by users to ensure that the information is of the highest quality."

"[Consider] ... the maintenance of online or digital resources as digital platforms advance and change: many of these resources might become outdated as technology and educational best practices advance."

eCampusOntario Open Library

The eCampusOntario Open Library currently provides educators and learners with access to open educational materials, tools, and practices that can be used, shared, and adapted in the digital environment. The eCampusOntario Open Library is the largest OER repository in Canada. The eCampusOntario Open Library will be home to VLS-created educational materials in 2022 (e.g., programs, courses, modules, resources, XR/VR)

"To further education, you have to be open to collaboration. The only way we can advance anything is by being open in a way that empowers and enables creators to create, define, identify, and share their work in a way that resonates with them."

Rama Kaba-Demanin
Program Lead
eCampusOntario Open Library

eCampusOntario Community Supports

- Ontario Open Library Network (OOLN)
- Instructional support materials
- Advocacy support
- OER cataloguing standards
- Print on demand services

Practices

eCampusOntario OPEN LIBRARY

Educational materials (including OER)

Open publishing tools

Types of educational materials housed in eCampusOntario's Open Library

Simulations, Serious Games, XR Experiences, Others
92

Online Courses, Programs, Micro-credentials
61   215

Virtual Educational Resources
(e.g., textbooks, images, audio files)
563   233

- **Currently in Open Library**
- Anticipated VLS additions in 2022

Only values greater than 5 have been labelled above.

Online publishing tools available through eCampusOntario Open Library

PB PRESSBOOKS

- Create or adapt interactive OER that can be easily shared
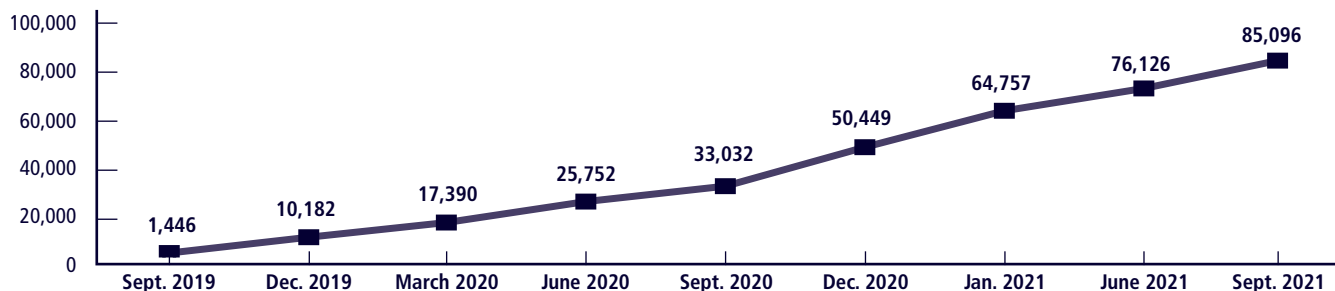 - Multiple export formats support and H5P, hypothes.is, and MathJax integrations

2,600+ Pressbook Users **(as of Aug 2021)**

eCampusOntario H5P Studio

- One stop shop to create, share, and discover interactive learning objects
- 40+ content types and a user dashboard with access to created content, favourite content, and more

4,200+ H5P Studio Users (as of Aug 2021)

Total Open Library downloads of educational materials and open publishing tools (i.e., Pressbooks)

Date	Downloads
Sept. 2019	1,446
Dec. 2019	10,182
March 2020	17,390
June 2020	25,752
Sept. 2020	33,032
Dec. 2020	50,449
Jan. 2021	64,757
June 2021	76,126
Sept. 2021	85,096

Some of the data presented in this infographic has been rounded and represent approximations. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact vls@ecampusontario.ca.

This report is the third in a series of five Virtual Learning Strategy (VLS) Focus Reports that tell data-driven stories about the VLS investment. VLS Focus Reports are accompanied by a series of five Foresight Reports. The Foresight Reports expand on the VLS pillar of Being the Future by exploring maturing trends in the Ontario postsecondary sector and situating the VLS in the futures of virtual learning.

2021-22 VLS Reports Outline

● Focus Report   ● Foresight Report

| Launching the VLS | Connecting to Create | Hybrid Futures | Tomorrow's Learners | Ontario Open | ... |