

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

June 10, 2003

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Career-Focused Education – Update

ORIGINATOR: B. Holt, Executive Director, Instructional and Curricular Support Services

RESOURCE

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INFORMATION

Background: In November 2002, a recommendation to develop a comprehensive strategy for school to work transition referred to as **Career Focused Education**, was approved by Board.

Career Focused Education (Appendix I) is a framework for learning that allows students to pursue interests in a cluster of careers, as they complete their high school program, allowing access to a wide range of educational and employment opportunities. It is a model which embraces the need for the educational process to provide every student with a wide range of experience. Even while they take some courses in a career cluster area, other courses ensure that they will fulfill the broader expectations of the Edmonton Public Schools' **Graduate Profile** (Appendix II). Each learning route in a career cluster (Professional, Technical or Direct Entry) will have a graduate profile. Work on the graduate profile is progressing and a set of profiles will be presented to the board in the fall update, subsequent to consultations with the Career Focused Education Advisory Board and stakeholders groups.

Consultations: Consultations on the Career Focused Education model have been held with a large number of people representing parents, business leaders, post-secondary representatives, industry and Alberta Learning (both Basic and Advanced Education), as well as with the educational society Phi Delta Kappa and the Careers the Next Generation Advisory Board.

Responses have been overwhelmingly positive. Initially, a few concerns were expressed about the potential for streaming students into trades training, however, after full explanation of the model these concerns diminished.

Results Achieved: Nearly all targets identified for completion by April 2003, in the project plan and timeline (Appendix III) have been achieved. The only targets that have been delayed relate to the integration of the pilot of the **Test of Workplace Essential Skills** (TOWES) and the establishment of the Career Focused Education Advisory Body.

The TOWES pilot has been delayed due to negotiations on cost and the consideration of another instrument. Meetings held on May 22 have helped to resolve outstanding concerns and the essential skills pilot will take place in the fall. The establishment of the general advisory body was delayed until after the presentation with CNG which was originally scheduled for early April but was rescheduled by CNG.

Prior to general implementation of Career Focused Education on a broad scale, and prior to promoting large increases in Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) and Career Internship (CI) placements, much work needed to be done to ensure district regulations and practices were in order to accommodate new Occupational Health and Safety requirements, thus ensuring the safety of our students and maximizing educational value of learning opportunities.

Alberta Learning requires workplace inspections and other legislation requires high standards of safety. Coordinators and administrators at the school level are concerned about liability, thus thoroughly addressing the safety issue is central to the growth of RAP and other off-campus programs. The following steps have been taken:

- in November 2002 the report on Career Focused Education was shared with off-campus coordinators at CNG
- based on results of the November meeting with CNG, meetings were held with work experience coordinators on March 1 and RAP coordinators on April 15 to finalize and prepare implementation of the Worksite Safety Inspection Checklist (Appendix IV)
- meetings were held with Lisa Johnston, EPS Occupational Health and Safety consultant to make final revisions
- the revised checklist will be posted on the curriculum website [curriculum.epsb.net]
- teachers will begin to register work stations with curriculum and all employers will be registered in a central database, accessible to schools, starting September 2003
- plans are in place for a September meeting of high school and junior high off-campus coordinators, to review workplace safety. Lisa Johnston will review Occupational Health and Safety legislation and district tools that help ensure compliance
- the **Take Our Kids to Work** program has been suspended. Work has begun to standardize EPS policies and procedures for authorized Alberta Learning programs such as RAP, CI and Work Experience, before consideration is given to unfunded programs

Collaborative Arrangements: A number of collaborative arrangements have been undertaken which will serve to grow opportunities for students wishing to enter RAP or Career Internships.

- The Edmonton Motor Dealer Association, in partnership with CNG: Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Catholic Schools have made available 125 RAP positions in trades related to their industry.
- On May 20, 2003 Edmonton Public Schools, along with representatives from N.A.I.T. and Grant MacEwan College, met with the Software Human Resource Sector Council, an Ottawa based group, to develop Career Internship possibilities in the Information Technology sector.

- On May 22, 2003 staff from curriculum met with Dr. Donna Palmer, the leading Canadian consultant in the area of Workplace Essential Skills, to help advise on the pilot of essential skills testing, to be conducted at Jasper Place School.
- On May 22, 2003 curriculum staff met with Edmonton Public School maintenance and union staff to begin work at identifying internship positions with EPS maintenance for some prospective RAP students.

Ongoing Work: A large amount of work will be conducted between now and the fall.

- General Advisory Body for Career Focused Education will hold its initial meeting on June 20th. The purpose of this meeting will be to update leaders in business, industry and post-secondary, as well as other stakeholders and to receive advice on next steps and implementation.
- Full implementation of RAP Standards and Off-Campus Safety requirements will occur in September.
- Graduate Profile will be created for learning routes for each of the career clusters.
- Career Clusters and Learning routes will be developed in the **Fine and Performing Arts**, as well as **Science and Technology** and **Health and Community Service** for pilot at Victoria, M.E. LaZerte and J. Percy Page schools respectively (Appendix V).
- Edmonton Public Schools will host the Alberta Tech-Prep Seminar in September, which will bring educators and industry together to enhance collaboration (Appendix VI).
- Edmonton Public Schools, in partnership with other districts in the capital region and with CNG, will develop a public awareness campaign to ensure students, teachers and parents are aware of the range of career opportunities available, along with the requirements for entry and the importance of each occupation, trade or profession.

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Appendix I:	Career Focused Education
Appendix II:	Graduate Profile for all Edmonton Public Schools Students – Global Expectation
Appendix III:	Project Plan and Timeline
Appendix IV:	Off-Campus Education Work Station/Work Site Inspection Checklist
Appendix V:	Career Focused Education for all Edmonton Public Schools Students
Appendix VI:	Alberta Tech Prep Seminar, Edmonton 2003