

DATE: June 9, 2015
TO: Board of Trustees
FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT: Career Pathways Model Update (Response to Request for Information #088)
ORIGINATOR: Kathy Muhlethaler, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
RESOURCE STAFF: Jennifer Allen, Chelsea Erdmann, Bill Howe
REFERENCE: March 3, 2015 Board Meeting (Trustee Gibson)

ISSUE

The following information was requested: Provide information regarding the status and next steps with respect to Career Pathways.

BACKGROUND

A Career Pathways concept model was presented to trustees in September 2014 and to district leaders in early October 2014. A Career Pathways Symposium was held on October 30, 2014, where more than 300 members of the community (parents, external stakeholders, students, and staff) participated in the full day event and provided feedback on the concept model and proposed implementation plan.

The revised Career Pathways Model and stakeholder feedback from the Symposium are attached for information (Attachments I and II). The feedback was analyzed and a summary report provided to symposium participants. The summary report (Attachment II) included an outline and timeline of next steps.

CURRENT SITUATION

Career Pathways Work to Date

The Administration has initiated the following actions since the Symposium in October 2014.

Revisions to the Career Pathways Model

The Career Pathways Model (Attachment I) was revised based on feedback received from participants (Attachment II), e.g., the term “commitment” was changed to “readiness,” and the final section of the model, covering Grades 10 - 12, was adjusted to point slightly upward. Networking was added as an essential element for success, post high school. The model remains a living document and may undergo further revisions based on discussions and input from stakeholders.

Presentations and Further Discussions on the Career Pathways Model

Mini-symposiums on the Career Pathways Model were held to solicit additional feedback from the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education community as well as the community in support of students requiring specialized supports. Seventeen people attended a mini-symposium with the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Advisory Committee on January 22, and 15 people

attended a mini-symposium with the Inclusive Education Parent and Community Advisory Committee on April 28.

Presentations of the Career Pathways Model were made at district professional learning sessions in February and March, as well as to system and school administrators from across Alberta at the ULead Conference in Banff in March.

Sharing and Building Resources

A Career Pathways section has been created on *Staff Room*, the internal district intranet. The section, available to all district staff, includes:

- electronic versions of the Career Pathways Model;
- tips for successful school roll-out of Career Pathways;
- sample PowerPoint presentations and activities for discussion at the school level;
- an extensive listing of Career Pathways related programs already in place in schools, e.g., Junior Achievement, Dual Credit, RAP, Work Experience, Junior ATB, and Welcome to Kindergarten.

A database of stakeholders was created and continues to be expanded upon as potential partners are identified. The database includes all participants from the October 30 Symposium who indicated that they would like to be involved.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education has created a database of community people who are willing to share stories of their educational journeys including their successes and challenges. These mentors volunteer their time to give back to their communities and, upon request, are available to speak at schools in the District.

Meetings with additional scholars and experts such as those listed below have been ongoing:

- Stephen Murgatroyd, currently CEO of Collaborative Media Group (CMG) and Chief Scout of the Innovation Expedition Inc. Stephen is author of over 40 books on innovation policy and practice.
- Staff and students of High Tech High in San Diego. High Tech High has received international recognition for its success in project based learning and for successful preparation of students for postsecondary studies.
- Ken Bautista of Start-up Edmonton, a creativity lab that provides a place for entrepreneurs, companies, creators, designers and developers to make, build and get feedback on ideas as they take shape.
- Simon Breakspear, founder of LearnLabs, a learning research and design agency based in Sydney, Australia. Simon is recognized internationally as a leading thinker on educational reform and learning innovation.
- Numerous academic staff from the University of Alberta, MacEwan University and NAIT.
- Gil Silberstein, President of “myBlueprint”, an electronic portfolio and career planning model which is currently being used in 12 district schools.

Representation and input was provided to the design of this year’s District Survey, ensuring that questions were included to provide much needed information and data for future initiatives and for measuring progress.

Career Pathways Steering Committee, Advisory Council and Sub-Committees

A Career Pathways Steering Committee, with representation from schools and key central departments, was established to lead further development and implementation of each aspect of the Career Pathways Model. Professional learning for the District Steering Committee was provided to support leading the work of sub-councils and working groups.

Each member of the Steering Committee will lead a sub-council or working group (Attachment III). External membership for each sub-council and working group as well as membership in the Career Pathways Advisory Council will be finalized by September 30, 2015.

Kindergarten to Grade 4 Programming

The Welcome to Kindergarten Program is currently in place in 46 elementary schools across the district. The Welcome to Kindergarten Program is sponsored by The Learning Partnership and helps prepare pre-kindergarten children for a positive start to school. Parents and guardians attend orientation sessions with their children in the spring prior to beginning kindergarten. They receive early learning and literacy resources, and learn how to use these resources at home to help create a foundation for positive relationships between parents teachers and community agencies while setting the stage for a smooth transition to school and future success.

The Entrepreneurial Adventure Program was piloted in twelve district schools this year. Each Grade three or four classroom was paired with a business mentor through the Bank of Montreal (BMO) and is receiving support from The Learning Partnership. Students in each class chose a charity that they wished to support and then developed and carried out a business venture to raise money for their charity. Throughout the process, teachers have made connections to curriculum and students have had opportunities to develop competencies that align with the Ministerial Order for Student Learning. An Entrepreneurial Adventure Showcase was held at City Hall on May 22. One Grade 4 class was presented with a national award, sponsored by The Learning Partnership, for teamwork based on their venture in raising funds for the Zebra Child Protection Centre.

A set of classroom materials designed to introduce Career Pathways to students in Kindergarten through Grade 4 have been developed with feedback from a focus group of teachers. These materials will be piloted in 2015 - 2016.

Junior High Programing

Alberta Education has mandated that all Career and Technology Studies (CTS) course options in Grades 7 – 9 be transitioned to Career Technology Foundations (CTF) as of September 2015. CTF is a new curriculum that supports flexible, interdisciplinary learning where students explore interests and passions while making connections to career possibilities and technologies associated with CTS occupational areas such as business, communication, human services, resources, and technology while working through engaging challenges. All junior high principals attended a half day professional learning session on January 12, 2015 regarding the implementation and implications of the provincially mandated CTF program. All current junior high CTF teachers have had the opportunity to attend one of two full day workshops regarding the transition to CTF. Teachers were also given the opportunity to attend a full day session on CTF and assessment.

High School Programming

On January 13, 2015, and at a follow-up meeting in February, all high school principals received an overview of the Career Pathways Model specifically for students in Grades 10 – 12 and beyond. Professional learning sessions were presented by Career Centre representatives of three post-secondary institutions regarding preparation for transitions from high school. These sessions led to the organization of a Career Pathways professional learning day held on March 20, 2015. Over 850 high school staff attended keynote addresses by Simon Breakspear and Blessie Mathew, as well as thirty-two breakout sessions led primarily by school-based staff. There was also a display showcase with over 30 post-secondary, community and business organizations in support of Career Pathways.

At one high school in 2015 – 2016 the Career and Life Management (CALM) course for Grade 11 students is being combined with Career and Technology (CTS) courses which include digital citizenship and mental health outcomes for students. Traditionally CALM has been offered as stand-alone three credit course. The intent of this more robust offering is to include a deeper level of content and experience to better prepare students in planning for their next steps as they transition from high school.

A Career Pathways Practitioner course was developed in conjunction with the University of Alberta and was offered to high school counselors in May. In this course, participants explored and engaged with curriculum and teaching of career-related education. They also investigated a variety of ways and resources to help students think about strategic career planning, and occupational and educational opportunities. Eighteen staff from across the district have successfully completed this university credit course.

A Transition to University Boot Camp will be offered to Grade 10 - 12 students this summer. The course will help students explore options in transitioning to university. Work has also begun on co-developing a course, Transition to Careers, which will assist university students' transition to the world of work through focusing on topics such as well-being and work-life balance, career management, career resiliency, dealing with uncertainty and conflict, oral communication, and cross cultural communication.

In partnership with Rupertsland Institute, Métis high school students have been invited to attend a summer session to earn high school credits while also preparing to tackle post-secondary life. Students will spend five days on MacEwan University's Campus and four nights in student residence learning about leadership, career options, scholarships, money management and MacEwan University's programs.

A program with NorQuest College has been designed for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to allow them to earn three credits towards their high school diploma over two weeks in August. The program focus is on developing community leaders by bridging high school learners to their community and post-secondary options.

School Initiated Programs Related to Career Pathways

Many schools have built on and initiated new work related to Career Pathways this year. The following are a just of few examples of many initiatives from across the district.

High Schools

This spring, one of our high schools was selected to receive a grant from Merit Contractors which will allow students to explore the trades by participating in “Trades Boot Camps”. Several cohorts of students will visit a variety of work sites and receive preparatory training for careers in the Construction Industry. Students successfully completing the program will receive scholarships and assistance in finding job placements. Other “boot camp” possibilities are currently being developed with NAIT.

A number of high schools have established and are exploring new dual credit opportunities for students with post-secondary institutions. These partnerships will allow students to gain advanced standing in programs related to areas such as becoming an educational assistant or pursuing training in business.

Connections with the Alberta College of Art and Design (ACAD) along with the support of the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) are building a variety of opportunities for artist in residence and community programs in a district high school.

Staff and students from several schools are working with the “Centre for Global Education” which provides on-line facilitated learning opportunities designed to engage and empower students to be active global citizens and agents of change. This innovative learning environment engages students from across the district and beyond in achieving curricular outcomes while preparing them for the world they will inherit.

Through high school redesign, schools continue to build and expand on alternative learning days on which they provide a variety of authentic and experiential opportunities for students that are linked to Career Pathways. On these days, students are able to choose from a variety of activities allowing them to: try something new and different, work on a subject they need help with, attend a big event or guest speaker, or learn more about a subject that they love.

Many elementary and junior high schools have also initiated, planned and held their own Career Pathways events. For example, several schools have held Career Pathways events including presentations by a variety of speakers; four schools participated in the I³ (Investigate, Invent, and Innovate) program; and many other schools have engaged in a variety of cross curricular project based learning activities. The Junior ATB Program which focuses on Financial Literacy is currently being offered in six elementary schools.

CONSIDERATION AND ANALYSIS

Since the October 30th Symposium, the remainder of the 2014 - 2015 school year has focused on building awareness, understanding and readiness for District staff across the District regarding the Career Pathways Model. This focus has included targeted professional development for junior high staff in the area of CTF and high school staff on enhanced programming to support Career Pathways. Additional feedback and research has been gathered in order to strengthen the foundation for future work. Some key pilots, e.g., Entrepreneurial Adventure Program, were also introduced.

Resources from the 2013-2014 accumulated surpluses from operations (ASO) supported release time for school and central staff to work on various aspects of the Model. The development of a three to five year comprehensive project plan in 2015-2016 will include key performance

indicators, an evaluation framework, a comprehensive communications plan and identification of ongoing resources needed to carry out the plan.

NEXT STEPS

With resources to support Career Pathways work in 2015 – 2016, a comprehensive project and communications plan will be developed which will include the following next steps:

- formalizing the Career Pathways Advisory Council and terms of reference;
- selecting external members for sub-councils and working groups;
- creating plans and logic models for each working group (and sub-council)
- expanding the Entrepreneurial Adventure program;
- enhancing Welcome to Kindergarten and early years experiences;
- expanding the I³ (Investigate! Invent! Innovate!) program for junior high schools;
- continuing with support for CTF implementation in junior high schools;
- exploring myBlueprint, e-portfolios and other potential career planning programs to support Career Pathways;
- continuing to support high schools in enhancing programs for high school students related to Career Pathways;
- developing a centralized process to support business partnerships at the school level.

ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES


ATTACHMENT I	Career Pathways Model
ATTACHMENT II	Feedback from October 30, 2014 Career Pathways Symposium
ATTACHMENT III	Career Pathways Leadership Framework

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Career Pathways Model

The Career Pathways Model fosters growth and success for every student by supporting their journey from early learning through high school completion and beyond, and enhances public education through communication, engagement and partnerships.

The Career Pathways Model is about building awareness, understanding and readiness for a pathway that helps students find dignity and fulfillment in life.



Student/Parent/Teacher Meeting on Career Pathways
Note: more frequent meetings may occur if required



ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR THE WORKPLACE

(Employment and Social Development Canada)

- Reading
- Writing
- Document Use
- Numeracy
- Computer Use
- Thinking
- Oral Communication
- Working With Others
- Continuous Learning

THE VISION OF AN EDUCATED ALBERTAN (Alberta Education)

An Engaged Thinker and Ethical Citizen with an Entrepreneurial Spirit

- Critical thinker
- Life long learner
- Creative
- Adaptable
- Technology literate
- Collaborative
- Empathetic
- Respectful
- Communicator and team builder
- Local contributor
- Environmental steward
- Values diversity
- Takes personal responsibility
- Competitive
- Financially literate
- Confident
- Self-reliant
- Resourceful
- Resilient
- Risk taker

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAREER PATHWAYS

- Business and Information Technology
- Construction, Manufacturing and Transportation
- Health, Education and Human Services
- Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences
- Arts, Design and Communication



Highlights of
**CAREER PATHWAYS
STAKEHOLDER
FEEDBACK**

Revised December 10, 2014

Highlights of Career Pathways Stakeholder Feedback

Background

This report provides a summary of highlights from Edmonton Public Schools' Career Pathways Symposium, held in Edmonton on October 30, 2014. More than 300 members of the community (parents, external stakeholders, students, and staff) participated in the full day event. At the Symposium, Edmonton Public Schools staff presented the conceptual model for Career Pathways to participants, who were then invited to provide their thoughts and feedback on aspects of the model. This report also reflects feedback from the October 1, 2014 Edmonton Public Schools District Leadership Meeting (DLM), where almost 300 school principals and Central Services leaders discussed the model.

It was important for Edmonton Public Schools to solicit feedback from the various stakeholders because implementation of the model will need to be a collaborative endeavor to ensure mutually beneficial outcomes. Two overarching outcomes of the Career Pathways model are:

- building structures, direction, supports and opportunities for students, enabling them to complete high school with clear plans and possibilities for their futures, whether that be post-secondary studies, apprenticeship training, community living, or the world of work and,
- ensuring all students have the ability to implement, revise and adapt their plans throughout their lives in response to a rapidly changing world.

Symposium feedback was overwhelmingly positive with a few areas needing further clarification or constructive direction for the work ahead. We gathered approximately, 1,500 pages of feedback. Analysis of feedback resulted in the identification of a number of themes, which are summarized in this report according to stakeholder groups, key topics and ideas.

Participation

Attendees expressed a genuine enthusiasm for Edmonton Public Schools' willingness to present such an innovative model and excitement for the benefits they believed would result for students. The Symposium also resulted in the District having a long list of stakeholders wishing to become more involved, including those interested in further dialogue and consultation. There was a general consensus that the voices of students in the room were very appreciated and that we should continue to include them as the model rolls out.

The Conceptual Model

There was widespread support for the model representing all students from kindergarten through to high school completion. Financial literacy, the social entrepreneurial emphasis, and opportunities for mentorship were highly supported aspects of the model. It was important for participants that the model be flexible enough to include all students and provide multiple opportunities and pathways for students to explore. Some felt the linear nature of the model didn't provide sufficiently for the variety of pathways available to students or for the flexibility students need in a rapidly changing world. As development of initiatives within the Career Pathways model progress, it is our intention to include

enhanced experiential opportunities for students, allowing them increased flexibility to develop their competencies. Overall, there was widespread support for having educators, students, parents, and external stakeholders working together and engaging in ongoing collaborative efforts in the best interests of students.

The biggest concern about the model was with the word “commitment” in representing the final stage of the model. Participants felt that it was too ‘scary,’ too ‘controlled’ or too ‘linear’ and that it did not speak to the reality of possible pathways. Many felt “readiness” would better reflect this aspect of the model as it would speak to being ready for the next steps that students may take as they transition from high school.

There were several requests to reconsider the title of the project, feeling ‘Career’ Pathways is perhaps too narrow or limiting. Through initiatives Edmonton Public Schools will undertake, we will ensure our definition and approach to careers is inclusive and reflects a broad perspective, providing students, regardless of their abilities and challenges, with flexibility for an uncertain future.

Equity

Participants in the Symposium stressed the importance of developing equity of access and involvement for students regardless of demographics, socioeconomic status, ability level and aptitude, cultural background, existing school resources, and level of parental involvement.

Outcomes, Indicators and Measurements

There was a general consensus that it would be important for us to know how we will measure and demonstrate success of implementing the model, and for us to ensure a broad definition of success for students. Participants identified numerous other ‘attributes’ of the successful post-high school student. Many suggestions revolved around notions related to competencies such as resilience including the ability to take risks, be adaptable and learn from failure, the ability to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity, the qualities of compassion and empathy, physical - mental - emotional - spiritual wellness, social awareness, persistence or grit, curiosity, and work ethic.

Educators

Educators expressed great excitement about the possibilities the model provides. However, it is important to educators that the model be implemented slowly with sufficient support to ensure its success. They also felt they would need support in terms of identified staff positions to coordinate partnerships with business. Educators recommended we complete an inventory of initiatives already present in schools that are aligned with the model, making it easier to learn from one another and collaborate on initiatives. Educators also stressed it would be important to connect and embed Career Pathways initiatives with the existing curricular outcomes and competencies as outlined in the *Ministerial Order on Student Learning*.

Parents

Parents felt the implementation of the Career Pathways model would give kids hope, keep doors open, and decrease anxiety about the future. They reported excitement in what their children would learn and

in “being able to see (their) child in the model.” They believed teachers would be able to integrate career discussions into class activities in ways they may not have considered in the past. It was important to parents that they be involved and stay informed so they can continue to track their child(ren)’s progress and be better able to support them on their journey(s).

External Stakeholders

External stakeholders were highly supportive of the model and were eager to see it move forward. They want to be involved and said they’re ready to help out in a variety of ways. They praised the District for having the courage to begin such a forward thinking model for change and for inviting so many stakeholders into the conversation.

There was strong support for schools reaching out to industry and for industry reaching out to schools in order to collectively support our youth. Strong communication was stressed as essential for partnerships to work well. Development of a database of potential partnerships and supports for building partnerships coordinated through Central Services was viewed as a necessity, as was support and training for partners who are not used to working with children in a classroom setting. Careful development of partnerships to ensure alignment with the District’s Cornerstone Values will be essential in creating mutually beneficial relationships.

Students

Students said how much they valued having mentors in their lives as well as equity of access and resources for all students. They also noted that increased flexibility of opportunity for them to make choices throughout school and for their futures was important to them. Students were very happy to be involved in the Symposium so their voices could be heard. They valued opportunities to give back to the local and global community while building fundamental skills, such as leadership, teamwork, and the ability to take risks and learn from mistakes. Some students said their parents would benefit from education alongside them and that teachers could serve as advocates if students felt their parents pushed them toward careers they didn’t feel fit them.

One area of our current school model students believed needed to change and improve to align with Career Pathways is the Career and Life Management (CALM) curriculum.

Feedback Related to Curricula and Programming

In addition to educators, many other stakeholders noted the importance of identifying and sharing the initiatives going on in schools that already align with the Career Pathways model. Not seeing the initiative as an add-on for teachers, but rather integrating and embedding it into existing curriculum would enhance implementation of the model and relieve potential stress for teachers. Many ideas for exposing students to career pathways possibilities and developing skills and competencies were shared throughout the day. Career crawls, mini internships, volunteer experiences, career camps, shadow opportunities, supervised student clubs, lunch time talks, field trip experiences, genius hours, and alternate learning days were just some of the suggestions we heard.

Communication and Collaboration

Communication and collaboration between all stakeholders will be essential for maximum success of this initiative. Opportunities to involve all stakeholders in ongoing conversation and to build strong relationships with one another was seen as desirable by the vast majority of participants. A need for a district communications team or committee was expressed in order to develop a strong communication plan to share information regarding progress, further development of the model, and opportunities for involvement. The importance of celebrating along the way, by sharing successes and learning from failures, was strongly communicated.

Developing a common understanding of terminology of the model will be important for a shared understanding of the work. Terms like career, entrepreneurship, success, resiliency, and financial literacy, as well as the competencies of an educated Albertan, will need to be clearly defined.

Communicating student growth and development of student portfolios, including provisions for goal setting, reflection, shifts/changes in focus will be important in order to demonstrate success of individual students as well as the model in general.

Actions Arising from the Symposium

Within 45 days (by December 15, 2014):

1. All feedback from the Symposium (1,500 pages) analyzed, with themes and recommendations identified.
2. The visual representation of the model revised to reflect feedback from participants, e.g., the term “commitment” changed to “readiness,” and the final section of the model, covering Grades 10 - 12, adjusted to point slightly upward. Networking was also added as an essential element for success, post high school.
3. The District has allocated human and financial resources to support the development and implementation of the Career Pathways Model, including support for release time of school and central staff to work on various components of the Model. Kathy Muhlethaler, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, has been assigned to lead this work. A communications team has been created and will begin to develop a communications plan to keep all stakeholders apprised of developments related to Career Pathways.
4. The District has held preliminary discussions with The Learning Partnership and BMO about a pilot of the *Entrepreneurial Adventure Program*. Communication has gone out to elementary schools to allow them to express interest in piloting the program at the Grade 3 or 4 level beginning in January 2015. Thirteen classrooms will pilot this program between January and June.
5. School principals have received a survey about programs and initiatives in their schools now that relate to Career Pathways.
6. A database of Symposium participants created to involve all stakeholder groups in ongoing work. This database will be expanded upon as additional stakeholders have been identified.
7. All Symposium participants have received an email update about the Career Pathways Model, including a revised visual representation of the Model.

Within 90 days (by January 31, 2015):

8. Information sessions scheduled for principals and teachers in January about implementation of the Career Technology Foundations (CTF) curriculum, for Grades 5 to 9, in September 2015. A small committee of principals, teachers and a representative from Alberta Education created to plan and organize these sessions.
9. A high school committee established and a high school principal meeting held to discuss future direction for high school programming and implementation including dual credit strategies, RAP, CALM curriculum, work experience etc. Future meetings will involve collaboration with stakeholders.
10. Meetings with additional scholars and experts from Advanced Education and post-secondary institutions will continue.

Within 150 days (by March 31, 2015):

11. Mini-symposiums scheduled to share the Career Pathways Model with stakeholder groups who will be instrumental in providing specialized supports for First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) students, English Language Learners (ELL) and students with diverse and exceptional needs.
12. The overarching Career Pathways Advisory Council and Career Pathways District Steering Committee established. The Council will include members representing all stakeholder groups, including the Board of Trustees while the Steering Committee will include members from schools and central departments. The Council membership and terms of reference will be shared with Symposium participants.
13. Committees created to focus on different aspects of the model and provide recommendations and leadership for moving forward with implementation.
14. A comprehensive project plan (3 - 5 years) developed to implement the various components of the Career Pathways Model. The project plan will include key performance indicators, an evaluation framework, and identification of ongoing resources needed to carry out the plan. The request for ongoing resources will be considered by Trustees during the spring planning/budget process for the 2015-2016 school year.
15. Following the development of the project plan, a comprehensive communications plan for Career Pathways developed, which will include preliminary resources for further sharing and developing the model with all stakeholders and in all schools.

Career Pathways – Leadership Framework

