

NEWS RELEASE FROM THE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

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Subject: The Ultimate Skill Challenge
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The Ultimate Skill Challenge

Kemptville, ON – Five years ago, a new initiative consisting of a skills competition for grade 7 and 8 students was created with plans of expansion throughout the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario. The first competition featured six teams representing six Cornwall and area schools. On May 30, 2007 the North Grenville Municipal Centre in Kemptville will be home to the Fifth Annual Ultimate Skill Challenge which will feature 54 teams from 23 elementary schools, including one team from the Upper Canada District School Board. The event will begin at 9:30 a.m. and will conclude at approximately 1:30 p.m.

The enthusiastic participation of schools from every region in the Board has attributed to the record number of teams, surpassing last year's total of 48 teams. Dan Lortie, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator for the CDSBEO and event organizer is pleased with the level of involvement. "We have teams from every region of our board, and we are thrilled that the event has become so popular among our students."

CDSBEO Schools participating in the event include: St. Mary CHS (Brockville), St. Mary-St. Cecilia (Morrisburg), St. Andrew's (St. Andrews West), St. George (Long Sault), St. Anne (Cornwall), Bishop Macdonell (Cornwall), Sacred Heart (Cornwall), St. Jude (Vankleek Hill), St. Thomas Aquinas CHS (Russell), St. Francis Xavier (Hammond), Holy Name of Mary (Almonte), Holy Trinity CSS (Cornwall), St. Michael CHS (Kemptville), St. Edward (Westport), St. Francis de Sales (Smiths Falls), St. Luke CHS (Smiths Falls), St. James the Greater (Smiths Falls), Sacred Heart (Lanark), St. John Elementary (Perth), and Notre Dame CHS (Carleton Place).

The event, which consists of a timed design and building competition, is intended to promote occupations in the skilled trades, as well as the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program. "For many students, this is one of their first opportunities to experience hands on learning, which is what trades are all about," said Denis Thibault from the Eastern Ontario Training Board.

Sharon Scattolon, Pathways Consultant with the CDSBEO Student Success Initiative added, "It is hoped that after an event like this, students will be more inclined to register for technology in grade 9 and eventually explore skilled trades in cooperative education in grade 11."

An event of this scale would not be possible without the help and assistance of several community minded organizations that support the Ultimate Skill Challenge through sponsorship. Along with the *Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program*, the event is sponsored by *Bell*, the *Eastern Ontario Training Board*, *Passport to Prosperity* and the *1000 Island Workplace Development Board*.

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario operates 40 elementary and 10 secondary schools across 8 counties. The CDSBEO offers excellence in Catholic education through provincial-leading programs to approximately 15,000 students.