

# **NEWS RELEASE FROM THE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO**

**Date: November 20, 2007**  
**Subject: Specialist High Skills Major Pilot Project**  
**From: Bob Perreault, Communications Officer**  
[bob.perreault@cdsbeo.on.ca](mailto:bob.perreault@cdsbeo.on.ca)



Box 2222, 2755 Highway 43, Kemptville, ON K0G 1J0  
613-258-7757 or 1-800-443-4562 ext. 206

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## **CDSBEO to Launch Specialist High Skills Major Pilot Project: Transportation Technology Program**

**Kemptville, ON** – The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario is inviting the St. Francis Xavier Catholic High School community and media to attend the official launch of the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM).

**When: Tuesday, November 27 at 11 a.m.**

**Where: St. Francis Xavier Catholic High School, 1235 Russell Rd, Hammond**

The Transportation Program is a specialized technology program lead by St. Francis Xavier CHS teacher Tom Dregely, in association with local employers and partners offering experiential learning, cooperative education, and apprenticeship opportunities.

The SHSM is an exciting new learning opportunity for secondary students. The specialized program is a community-partnered transportation initiative supported by the local business sector, St. Lawrence College (Cornwall Campus), Algonquin College, and the University of Guelph (Kemptville Campus). The transportation sector program is based on industry-identified preparatory knowledge, skills, certifications, “reach-ahead”, and “on the job” learning opportunities focused within the automotive service industry. Participating students will develop their Ontario Skills Passport, and have opportunities to explore the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) and various School-College-Work Initiatives.

Students will also receive training and certifications in several sector-specific requirements, including: Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), Standard First Aid and CPR, Fall Arrest, Vehicle Lift Safety Training, Drive Clean and Customer Service Training.

Program partner Art Soper with the Ottawa Truck Center says the program responds to an identified community and sector need. “We need to work very hard to attract young men and women to the skilled trades in order to ensure the survival of our industry. We look forward to a long partnership with St. Francis Xavier Catholic High School and the students from their Specialist High Skills Major program.”

The program also meets the specific learning needs and interests of students, while preparing them for the world of work. It also gets them excited about their future prospects. Grade 11 student Jessica Wodarka said, "I've always enjoyed working with my hands and taking stuff apart. I took Mr. Dregely's Transportation Technology class in grade 10 and really enjoyed it. I look forward to being part of the Specialist High Skills Major, participating in co-op, starting an apprenticeship and becoming an Automotive Service Technician in the future."

Many community partners and employers have pledged their support of the SHSM at St. Francis Xavier Catholic High School. The program launch will be attended by CDSBEO officials and representatives from: the Eastern Ontario Training Board, the Benson Group of Automotive Companies, Ottawa Truck Centre, Embrun Dodge Jeep Chrysler, Johnson Equipment and Embrun Ford. Participants will be available for interviews.

A light lunch will be served.

For more information, please contact CDSBEO Communications Officer Bob Perreault at 613-258-7757 or 1-800-443-4562 ext. 206 or 613-859-0678 (mobile).

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.