

NEWS RELEASE FROM THE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

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Subject: High Skills Major in Construction
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High Skills Major in Construction Pilot Program Officially Underway

Carleton Place, ON – The next phase in the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario’s Construction Technology Program is now officially underway. A pilot for the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) in Construction program is being offered at Notre Dame Catholic High School in Carleton Place. The pilot advances the current BUILD program at the school which is a specialized construction technology program lead by teacher Bill Howe launched by the Student Success initiative.

Students enrolled in the BUILD program have built a 30 foot by 30 foot storage garage at the school and two small cottages. “Our students do all the work so they gain real on-the-job experience. This is an authentic, functioning job site. That means our students have to assume all the responsibilities of an actual construction job. It truly is unique for a high school setting,” said Mr. Howe.

The course offers students the opportunity to gain valuable on-the-job training in several construction related trades, such as: framing, plumbing, electrical, insulating, roofing, plastering, painting, and siding installation. Students will also receive training and certification in the following sector-specific requirements: Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), Standard First Aid, Fall Arrest, CSAO Health & Safety-Basic, Traffic Control, Electrical Safety, Confined Space Awareness, and Hoisting & Rigging.

Notre Dame CHS graduate, Sean Bimm said he is living proof that Mr. Howe’s program works. “It was the experience of a lifetime. It was amazing to be part of a real team. I could see the results of my learning and I landed a great job once my employer saw my portfolio, especially with my experience and the six certifications I have earned.”

Sean’s employer Kenny Tuff, Health and Safety Coordinator for the Fuller Group of Companies, said the school should be commended for its efforts. “With a safety culture that is growing stronger and more demanding, it is refreshing to have young workers enter the work force with pre-established qualifications and a higher level of awareness for health and safety. The program offered at Notre Dame is a strong step in the right direction for both young workers and the health and safety culture as a whole.”

The pilot project is a natural progression for the current program. SHSM is a community-partnered construction initiative supported by the local business sector, Algonquin College Perth Campus, and the Parks of the St. Lawrence Commission. The class is currently building a camper cabin for the Commission.

Upon completion, the cabin will be transported to the Ivy Lee Campground near Gananoque. The Parks of the St. Lawrence Commission is optimistic about the continued partnership with the CDSBEO and hopes to add at least six cabins to each of the five parks it operates along the St. Lawrence Seaway between the Quebec/Ontario border and Kingston. The Camper Cabin Cooperative began in the spring of 2006, with the development of architectural plans for camper cabins to be built at various parks along the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Board Chair Ronald Eamer said the project is about giving students the opportunity to succeed. "Mr. Howe's commitment to student success is inspirational and we are so fortunate to have him leading this effort. All of our students deserve a chance to prepare themselves for the next phase of their lives, whether that is entering the workforce or post-secondary education. This program is giving them that chance."

Director of Education Bill Gartland agreed. "There is nothing more important to our Board than to see our students be successful. The opportunities offered through the High Skills Major Program are helping students make positive decisions that affect the rest of their lives. I am pleased with the wonderful work being done in this program, and by all who are involved."

For more information, please contact CDSBEO Communications Officer Bob Perreault at 613-258-7757 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.

Attached Photos:

Kevin Courtland Bill Gartland.jpg – Technology Construction Student Kevin Courtland shows some of the class' equipment to CDSBEO Director of Education Bill Gartland

Mr. Howe's Construction Technology Class.jpg - Mr. Howe's Construction Technology class stands in front of the camper cabin they are currently constructing for the Parks of the St. Lawrence Commission.

Howe Gartland Eamer Kirby O'Brien Hughes – Partners in the SHSM project: Notre Dame CHS Teacher Bill Howe, CDSBEO Director of Education Bill Gartland, CDSBEO Board Chair Ronald Eamer, Lanark County Trustee and Vice-Chair Nancy Kirby, Ministry of Education Officer Philip O'Brien and Parks of the St. Lawrence Manager of Parks and Recreation Barry Hughes.



