



"Together We Learn"
School District No. 23
(Central Okanagan)

BOARD OF EDUCATION

News Release

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Employers Help Put Students on the Fast Track to Trades Success

Kelowna, BC – Employers and students participating in the Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA) Program shared their success stories at a dinner in their honour last night at Okanagan College. Mitchell Campbell has always loved to build things and through this program, he has the opportunity to get on-the-job training with RICON and start earning money in the construction industry. Natallie Gorges, who started cooking in Grade 11, is well on her way to becoming a chef as she gains experience in the kitchen of the Kelowna Golf & Country Club. Employer Blair Husak of Blair Mechanical Services Ltd. calls his apprentices “fantastic” and notes that “within two or three years, we have a great employee”. Holly Sauve, whose son Jarred is training as a chef at Ricardo’s Mediterranean Kitchen, is thrilled that she gets to sample his delicious experiments.

Kelly McRae, the Career/Life Programs Consultant and Secondary School Apprenticeship Program coordinators Stacey Smith and Doug Gunn thanked one of the essential partner groups. “The enthusiast participation of employers in particular makes this program a success,” noted McRae. This team and others within School District No. 23 are currently working to develop new career and apprenticeship courses to provide students with even greater choice and career opportunities.

Smith encourages students to take advantage of the scholarships and incentives available. A \$1,000 SSA Scholarship from the Ministry Education is available to students who achieve a minimum C+ average and stay in their trade for at least 5 months (or 1100 work hours) after graduation. There are also Provincial tax incentives and tool allowances.

“This is one of many incredible programs in this District,” said Chairperson Moyra Baxter. “Superintendent Mike Roberts and Assistant Superintendent Hugh Gloster are champions of programs that really connect with students. Thank you to the employers who have made this apprenticeship program possible.”

“It takes a village to raise a child,” said Gloster “and there is no better example than this program. Last night the Education Committee considered some innovative new programs to bring forward to the Board. School District No. 23 has 4% of provincial secondary students but 14-15% of secondary school apprentices—that is quite an accomplishment.”

Twenty-two students, their parents and employers were invited to attend the SSA Program Recognition Dinner.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT:

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