



Board of Education

Media Information

April 29, 2008

3,000 Students Expected to Attend the Stepping Up Trades Fair

Kelowna, BC: On April 30, District students in grades 6, 8 and 10 will have an opportunity to learn about careers in the trades from people working in the industry. Approximately 50 local tradespeople from carpenters to welders will conduct hands-on demonstrations and be available to answer student questions about training, apprenticeship, wages and more. The event at the Kelowna Curling Club from 9am to 2pm is organized by School District No. 23's Career/Life Programs department.

“This energetic, exciting event will feature demonstrations and activities at exhibitor booths,” says Stacey Smith, Coordinator, Secondary School Apprenticeship Dual-Credit Programs at School District No. 23. “Students will have the opportunity to explore a wide variety of rewarding trades career choices with salaries comparable to careers requiring university degrees.”

Currently, British Columbia is experiencing a shortage of skilled tradespeople. This shortage is particularly acute in the construction industry where projects have stalled for lack of skilled workers. However, almost every trade is experiencing shortages as a result of the large number of Baby Boomers reaching retirement age. This trend is expected to worsen over the next 15 years. The Stepping Up Trades Fair is an opportunity for students to learn about viable and rewarding alternatives to general studies, a university degree, or college diploma.

This is the second year of the Stepping Up Trades Fair. Last year, organizers heard from students that they loved the hands-on activities and learning about the different trades.

“We want to make sure that our students are on a career path that is suitable to them and will offer them a good quality of life,” says Smith.

“A career in trades is a perfect fit for many students and it's one with many job opportunities. School District No. 23, with a mandate from the Ministry of Education, has developed numerous dual-credit career training programs such as the Residential Construction program offered at Rutland Senior Secondary. Through this program, students earn their Grade 12 diploma along with earning post-secondary accreditation.” Currently School District No. 23 offers 25 career training programs.

For comments, please contact:

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