



Career Learning Practice Guide

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Introduction

Designed for all Rocky View School (RVS) staff, this Career Learning Practice Guide serves to build a shared understanding of RVS' multi-faceted approach to career learning.

As our students experience the collective impact of career learning beginning in elementary through high school, they develop a greater understanding of how their personal preferences and aptitudes align with various career pathways. By providing robust career planning and experiential learning, students will be empowered with the skills, experiences and knowledge they need to make informed school programming and career choices. Ultimately, ongoing and meaningful integration of career learning will foster student motivation and engagement, making school more relevant, purposeful and fulfilling.

In this practice guide, staff will learn about key approaches and implementation strategies that will bolster the profile and integration of career learning for students within all RVS schools. Ensuring every student engages in career learning and planning is the collective responsibility of all RVS educators.

This practice guide aims to align district and provincial goals and expectations regarding career learning ([Appendix A](#) and [B](#)).

RVS Career Learning Framework

The approaches embedded within this practice guide can be understood through an **EXPLORE**, **ENGAGE** and **EXPERIENCE** framework.

Staff will support students to **EXPLORE** a broad spectrum of careers. Students will be guided in recognizing their individual preferences and aptitudes, enabling them to make choices about potential career paths.

Staff will facilitate opportunities for students to **ENGAGE** with community partners who bring career expertise related to curricular content areas, allowing students to acquire knowledge, identify their preferences and develop skills related to career fields.

Staff will design and promote learning opportunities for students to **EXPERIENCE** authentic, hands-on career-integrated activities, fostering a deep understanding of various career fields.

This framework leads students to make informed decisions so they can **CHOOSE** their next steps, such as the workforce, skilled trades, post-secondary education, or community living (see [glossary](#)).



Section 1: Key Approaches to Career Learning

The implementation strategies that accompany each approach are intended as examples and may be adjusted, as appropriate, across all grade levels.

Staff are encouraged to design learning experiences that align with these key approaches.

Resources to support implementation of the following key approaches can be found on [myRVS](#).

1. Career Learning Opportunities in all Curricular Areas

Integrating career learning into curricular areas means taking the opportunity, where appropriate, to make explicit and intentional connections between what students are learning and possible careers.

As students progress through school, career integrated learning helps prepare them for the transition between divisional levels and from high school to the workforce, vocational training, post-secondary education or community living.

By embedding career learning into all curricular areas, students will be:

- exposed to a broad spectrum of career opportunities;
- able to explain how subjects such as science, math, social studies, English language arts and the arts can lead to meaningful career opportunities; and
- better equipped to make informed decisions about their future career options.

Implementation Strategy Examples

Elementary		
Explore	Engage	Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce students to careers related to curricular outcomes they are learning about in school. • Incorporate books that feature various careers and discuss the skills and knowledge these careers require. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite parents/guardians or community partners to visit the classroom to introduce students to career fields. • Prepare students to ask questions related to the careers of facilitators/presenters during presentations and field trips and provide opportunities to debrief these conversations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with parent or community partners to create an active learning activity for students in relation to a career. • Design active learning opportunities for students to engage in hands-on, career-related skill development and learning.

Middle

Explore	Engage	Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate opportunities for students to explore a range of careers related to middle school subjects. Connect career skills to Alberta student competencies. Provide feedback to students and facilitate reflective activities regarding students' skills, strengths and aptitudes related to aspects of middle school subjects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite community partners whose careers have a connection to course content. Prepare students to ask questions of presenters during presentations and field trips about their job and the training required. Debrief students afterward. Questions might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why and how did you become a ...? What were you like as a student? What do you like most about your work? What are some challenges in your work? What was the most difficult to learn? Who else do you work alongside? What do they do? What training did you take to get into your position? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design active learning opportunities for students to engage in hands-on, career-related skill development and learning connected to course content.

High School

Explore	Engage	Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate opportunities for students to explore a range of careers related to high school subjects. Provide feedback and facilitate reflective activities regarding students' skills, strengths and aptitudes related to aspects of high school subjects. Connect career skills to Alberta student competencies. Share information about careers that relate to course content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare students to ask questions of presenters during presentations and field trips about their job and the training required. Debrief and provide the opportunity for reflection afterward. (Questions like those asked at the middle school level may be used.) Invite community partners whose careers have a connection to course content. Utilize experts to solve industry related challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design active learning opportunities for students to engage in hands-on, career-related skill development and learning connected to course content.

2. Prominence of Career-Related Learning Outcomes in Delivery of Career-Related Courses

Making career-related learning outcomes prominent in career-related courses (such as *Career and Technology Studies (CTS)*, *Career and Life Management (CALM)*, *Career and Technology Foundations (CTF)*, *Knowledge and Employability Occupational Courses 8-12*, *Health and Life Skills 7-9*, and *Physical Education and Wellness 1-6*) means ensuring students engage in career-related learning activities in a meaningful and robust manner as intended in the curriculum.

As students progress, their learning will reflect a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of career-related knowledge, skills and decisions toward career planning.

Students will be able to:

- build self-awareness, explore careers and understand workplace roles;
- connect their learning to careers, develop employability skills and begin structured career planning; and
- progress to engage in advanced career planning and build toward the transition to employment, technical school, college, training program, university or community living.

Implementation Strategy Examples

Elementary		
<p>Educators can facilitate activities that allow students to discover “who I am” as a learner and a person along with “my likes and dislikes.” Students in upper elementary will reflect upon their strengths, talents and interests and learn about careers in society.</p>		
Explore	Engage	Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore various terms, such as work, occupation, job, roles, volunteer, contribute, strengths, talents and interests in relation to curricular content. • Have students reflect on their own likes, dislikes and strengths, recognizing how these personal traits may relate to different career fields. • Have students begin to articulate their preferences and how these might connect to future career possibilities. • Expose students to a variety of jobs through career-related games, storytelling and discussions. • Introduce students to different types of work in their community and how these roles contribute to society. • Investigate different jobs that require different Alberta student competencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite parents/guardians or community partners to the school to share information about their careers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find opportunities within a school setting to take on roles that mirror skills and characteristics of an “on the job” environment and make explicit connections from these experiences to jobs. • Participate in simple, hands-on activities that introduce the idea of working in teams and solving problems or other Alberta student competencies as they might encounter in a career.

Middle

Educators support students to explore specific careers, reflect on how their skills and interests align with future opportunities, and engage in practical activities that promote career readiness.

The Health and Life Skills 7-9 course asks students to “investigate, interpret and evaluate career information and opportunities” and to “begin to develop résumé writing and job search skills.”

A major focus of CTF curriculum is to explore “interests and passions while making personal connections to career possibilities.”

Explore	Engage	Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide students with up-to-date labour market information to expand their understanding of current career trends and demands. Engage in reflective conversations that emphasize abilities and qualities that may inspire students to investigate career areas in which they may find value and interest. Introduce students to career reflection and career exploration tools. Share career planning resources and tools with parents/guardians to help facilitate career planning conversations at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit a post-secondary institution to participate in a tour or workshop to learn skills and knowledge associated with a CTF course. Collaborate with a parent or community partner who works in a career field related to a CTF course. This may include inviting an expert to the classroom, collaborating to design a learning activity to develop a work-based skill or visiting a workplace. Find opportunities to practice employability skills through collaborative learning, hands-on experiences and class-based activities that mimic real-world career tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide CTF course offerings that appeal to the career interests of students.

High School

As students advance through high school, educators will support students to make informed decisions based on career learning experiences and to engage in career planning.

An outcome in every CTS module is for students to "create a connection between a personal inventory and occupational choices."

The CALM curriculum presents a clear avenue for staff to ensure that students will develop and apply processes for managing lifelong career development.

Explore	Engage	Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share up-to-date labour market information to broaden and modernize students’ understanding of the demand for various careers. Share career planning resources and tools with parents/guardians to help facilitate career planning conversations at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with a parent/guardian, community partner or returning alumnus who works in a career field related to the CTS course. This can involve inviting an expert to the classroom, collaborating to design a learning activity that will develop a work-based skill or visiting a workplace. Visit an off-campus location, such as a post-secondary institution or industry, to participate in a tour, attend a workshop or open house or learn skills or knowledge connected to what they are studying in school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage students to job shadow or volunteer to gain insight into their suitability for various careers.

3. Students' Preferences and Aptitudes

This approach helps students learn about themselves and possible careers that align with their preferences and aptitudes. By engaging students in structured reflection, hands-on learning and research activities, students will:

- develop self-awareness of personal preferences (likes/dislikes) and aptitudes (abilities) that inform career decision-making;
- find a sense of direction, connection and confidence in their future planning; and
- participate in experiential learning opportunities best suited for their preferences and aptitudes.

Implementation Strategy Examples

<p>Elementary</p> <p>Educators facilitate informal and playful activities that allow students to discover their preferences.</p>	
<p>Explore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate career learning using role play where students depict the perspective of someone who works in a career(s) that intrigues them, such as a career-related “dress up” day. • Play career-related games and participate in storytelling that exposes students to a variety of job roles. • Plan self-reflection activities where students reflect on what curricular subjects and activities they enjoy and are good at. • Let students know when you observe they are good at something and explain how that skill or ability can be applied in a career. 	<p>Engage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk with guest speakers or other facilitators to investigate how and why they chose their careers, and understand the day-to-day lived experience of their careers.
<p>Middle</p> <p>Career learning involves structured reflection on student preferences and aptitudes.</p>	
<p>Explore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use assessments and resources that connect student traits to potential careers (e.g., ALIS, myBlueprint). • Use career surveys and self-reflection journals to help students think critically about their strengths and weaknesses in alignment with career areas. • Incorporate opportunities to help students think critically about their strengths and weaknesses related to Alberta student competencies. 	<p>Engage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan career exploration days and debrief these experiences. • Role-play challenges where students take the perspective of someone who works in a career(s) that intrigues them. Debrief these experiences.

High School

Educators support students in refining their understanding of career preferences and how these can be applied to specific careers.

Explore

- Use career exploration tools (e.g., ALIS, myBlueprint, MyPass, career fairs or post-secondary open houses, career exploration days) to help students match their preferences to real-world opportunities.

Engage

- Facilitate a process for students to engage in high school course selection that is focused on career planning rather than credit attainment.
- Share opportunities that may pique student interest and prompt students to investigate experiences aligned with their interests – volunteering, The Educational Partnership Foundation (TEPF), work experience, internship, etc.
- Place displays prominently in schools and share career-related information with students and parents/guardians regarding scholarships and post-secondary education or training opportunities.

4. Career Conversations, Reflection, and Planning

Career conversations are meaningful discussions between students and trusted adults, such as teachers, which provide valuable insights, guidance and support related to careers. These conversations help students explore career options, gain new perspectives and refine or challenge their career ideas, which better prepares them for future decisions.

As students grow, learn and gain new experiences, reflection helps them continually assess their strengths and preferences, ensuring their career plans remain relevant.

In middle school, students begin to identify and research possible career directions they may be well-suited for. During high school, students begin to engage in more specific and detailed career planning. Regularly revisiting career planning ensures students' goals stay aligned with their personal growth and the changing demand for various careers, leading to more informed and fulfilling career decisions.

Students will be able to:

- articulate at least one area of career interest;
- engage in ongoing reflection and revision of career planning; and
- align career interests with course selection and pursue relevant experiences, such as job shadows, internships, post-secondary visits, etc.

Implementation Strategies Examples

Elementary	
Educators will introduce students to career conversations and reflections.	
Explore	Engage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use self-reflection activities (likes/dislikes) where students consider what they enjoy, what they are good at or what captures their attention. • Have reflective conversations that emphasize student abilities and qualities that may inspire students to investigate career areas they find value and interest in. • Plan activities where students can begin identifying careers they've learned about or are interested in, documenting these along with their favorite subjects and activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite outside speakers to share information about their careers as well as the careers of people they work with. • Facilitate post-conversation reflection.

Middle

Educators will support students to begin to develop a career direction.

Explore	Engage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an inventory of strengths, including Alberta student competencies and career interests. • Identify areas of career interest based on career-related experiences and research. • Have reflective conversations that emphasize student abilities and qualities that inspire students to investigate career areas of interest. • Investigate the work and demands of a selected career. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach guest speakers to prepare for conversations with classes about their careers. Conversation may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How they built their career. This may involve sharing how they connected with people in their career field, identified and overcame challenges, and sought to and capitalized on opportunities. • Discussing career decisions they made and how they made them. • Specific subject or occupational information for students who are particularly interested in pursuing a similar career. • Sharing information about the careers of people they work with and what they do. • Facilitate post-conversation reflection.

High School

Every high school student will engage in career planning.

Explore	Engage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in career planning activities in CALM. • Enrich the career learning outcomes in CALM by adding a one credit course during the delivery of CALM, CTR2310: Career Directions – Expansion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a process to ensure students’ career planning developed in CALM/CTR2310 is revisited with staff at important junctures, such as course selection. • Engage in career dialogue with students as a mechanism for securing new and useful information and as a prompt for challenging and confirming career thinking. • At their discretion, the principal may offer additional courses in subsequent years, such as CTR3310: Career Directions – Transitions. • Coach guest speakers to prepare for conversations with classes about their careers. Conversation may include questions similar to those asked at the middle school level (see above).

5. Collection of Students' Career Interests – Middle and High School

Students benefit from schools collecting information about individual career interests and preferences because staff can:

- design meaningfully engaging learning experiences;
- determine future career integrated learning opportunities;
- match presenters and community partnerships with student preferences; and
- make recommendations to connect students with unique learning opportunities, such as Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), Dual Credit or Work Experience opportunities.

Schools will collect key information, including:

- Student Preferences (See [Glossary](#))
- Student Career Interests

Schools, at their own discretion, may collect additional information regarding students related to career learning.

6. Annual Immersive Extended Learning Experience (IELE) – Middle School

Immersive Extended Learning Experience (IELE) is an educational opportunity for students that is intensive, interactive and often extended (minimum of three days). During an IELE, students deeply engage with a particular subject or field of interest. This type of experience may go beyond the traditional classroom setting, allowing students to immerse themselves fully in practical learning and develop a comprehensive understanding and insight into a specific topic or skill.

An IELE is a coordinated school endeavour aimed at providing a school-wide or grade-wide experience to students. It may culminate in a CTF credential and/or micro-credential. In many cases, students work under the guidance of mentors, experts or professionals in a career field facilitated by a teacher. The activities and tasks undertaken during the experience align with the skills and knowledge required within the specific industry or profession. This authentic learning experience supports students in developing workplace skills and assists them in making informed decisions on careers aligned with their preferences and aptitudes.

IELEs are of an extended duration (three to five full days) to allow students to focus their learning explicitly on developing career related skills or on completing a project.

Implementation Strategy Example

Experience

- An Experiential Learning Week (ELW) provides an opportunity for students to engage in high interest and immersive learning experiences over the course of a week. Students choose an ELW class aligned with their interest. Teachers, with the help of community partners and parents/guardians in specific occupational areas, facilitate learning experiences intended to allow students to gain practical knowledge, skills and/or credentials. ELWs can be designated as a stand-alone CTF course. An ELW prepares students for future learning and career interests in a hands-on learning environment. Accomplishing this may require the student's regular schedule be changed for the duration of the ELW.

7. School-Wide Initiatives – High School

Career-related school-wide and grade-wide events and activities offer students opportunities to explore a range of career fields by engaging with experts, professionals and community partners. These contributors share information and expertise about their careers and may engage students in active learning where they develop skills and gain a sense of what various careers encompass.

Implementation Strategy Examples

Explore	Engage	Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite community partners to share information about their careers through events such as lunch and learns. • Organize career fairs for students to learn about employment opportunities. • Invite post-secondary institutions to share information about their program offerings. • Profile an alumni on your school's website each month, describing the pathway they followed towards their career. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a career contact list – a list of parents/guardians and community partners who can offer expertise to curricular classes. • Collaborate with community partners to facilitate career dedicated days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote job shadowing, job investigation or research, workplace observation, work site investigation, a mentorship arrangement or a project. • Create a specialized program or pathway within a school, such as a school academy (see Glossary), that focuses on a particular career field or industry. • Facilitate an IELE (see key approach 6).

8. Off-Campus Education – High School

Off-campus education provides opportunities for some high school students to explore, engage and experience a variety of occupation based careers. Through these opportunities, schools and the community combine resources to further students' career development, employability skills and possibly earn credentials toward a career pathway. These experiences help students make informed decisions about education, training and employment when they complete high school. For more information, please refer to Alberta Education's [Off-campus Education Handbook](#).

Off-Campus Education in Alberta includes:

Experience

- **Work Experience 15/25/35** – The primary purpose of Work Experience is to provide opportunities for high school students to apply their knowledge, skills and attitudes in the workplace. These courses also provide opportunities for the school and community to combine resources to further students' career development and build their employability skills. The business or industry partner provides meaningful work or volunteer experience that contributes to the student's career development goals and aspirations. Work experience opportunities are directly connected to learning about a career or career pathway that will lead to a successful transition to post-high school life.
- **Career Internship 10** – Students discover career interests in meaningful work activities, situated in community-based work sites in either the trade, technology or service sectors.
- **Green Certificate Program** – Students develop the knowledge and skills to enter a variety of agriculture-related programs that may lead to further study in agribusiness.
- **Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)** – Students develop trade specific skills while earning high school credit and on-the-job training hours towards an apprenticeship.
- **Work Study (Grades 7 – 12)** – Students participate in off-campus experiential learning that may include job shadowing, job investigation or research, workplace observation, work site investigation, a mentorship arrangement or a project that is related to junior or senior high school curriculum. Work Study is under the cooperative supervision of a certificated teacher and the employer's onsite representative and is a short-term and/or part-time experience with no marks or credits.
- **Knowledge and Employability Occupational Courses** – These courses provide on and off-campus opportunities to develop employability skills to assist students in becoming active and responsible citizens, improving quality of life for themselves and their families and positively impacting their communities.
- **Dual credit** – Students in Grades 10 – 12 get opportunities to discover career passions and interests while earning high school and post-secondary credits at the same time. Credits can count towards a post-secondary diploma, degree or journeyperson certificate.

Off-campus Career Learning in RVS includes:

- **Building Futures** – Students will learn how to build a house from the ground up by working elbow-to-elbow with trades people while competing Grade 10.
- **Mechanics Training Centre** – Students interested in the trade of automotive mechanics will get real world, hands-on education.

Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities

Students will:

- participate in ongoing career reflection and planning and contribute to the direction of the programming that is offered throughout their school experience;
- participate fully in their exploration of career learning; and
- engage in ongoing reflection and revision of career planning that captures their personal preferences and aptitudes aligned to career areas with the support of school staff and parents.

Teachers will:

- implement the key approaches identified within this guide; and
- build curricular connections and facilitate learning experiences that will guide students toward making informed career decisions.

Administrators will:

- ensure the key approaches within this guide are implemented;
- build a school-wide culture that values career learning as an integral part of every student's educational journey; and
- ensure career learning is accessible to all students and fosters respect for diverse career paths, offering equitable opportunities for exploration and growth.

Parents/Guardians can:

- share their expertise (where possible) or provide networking opportunities for others to share knowledge and skills with students;
- contribute feedback and insights toward the development and implementation of student experiences and career pathway planning;
- participate in school events when invited that promote career learning;
- support their child in potential job shadows/internships; and
- engage in career conversations at home with their child.

Community Partners (volunteers, post-secondary schools, business, organizations) can:

- provide accurate, informative and robust tools, resources and expertise for students to engage in high interest, relevant and practical experiences.

Appendix

Appendix A: Rocky View Schools alignment with the RVS Career Learning Practice Guide

2022 – 2026 RVS Strategic Plan

- **Improving our Students' Learning**
 - Goal – Offer diverse learning opportunities for students
 - Outcomes:
 - Increased student engagement
 - Parents/Guardians feel students are learning the skills needed to be successful
- **Connecting with our Community**
 - Goal – Foster new partnerships and strengthen existing relationships that enhance learning
 - Outcomes:
 - Increased access to specialized expertise and skills
 - Enhanced learning opportunities
 - Greater allyship with stakeholders

RVS 2023 – 2027 Education Plan

Goal 2: Building Future Ready Students

- **Outcome: Students graduate high school prepared to be successful for any path they choose.**
 - Performance Measures:
 - (ABEd) High school completion rate of students within five years of entering Grade 10.
 - (ABEd) High school to post-secondary transition rate of students within six years of entering Grade 10.
 - (RVS) The percentage of students planning to finish high school and pursue a trade, apprenticeship, college or university program.
 - (RVS) The percentage of students who find classroom instruction relevant to their everyday lives.
- **Outcome: Bolstering abilities in essential skills such as critical thinking, communication, problem solving, collaboration, managing information, cultural and global citizenship, creativity and innovation, and personal growth and well-being.**
 - Performance Measure:
 - (ABEd) Overall teacher and parent/guardian agreement that students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school.

Appendix B: Provincial Recommendations and Alignment with RVS Career Learning Practice Guide

Career Education Task Force Final Report, March 2023

The Career Education Task Force Report desired outcomes include:

- Expose students to a greater breadth of possible careers
- Create opportunities for hands-on and experiential learning in a field of interest
- Increase access to career-related courses and subject matter experts in one's area(s) of career interest
- Increase access to effective and appropriate career planning support and advice
- Create connections between schools, students, post-secondary institutions and employers
- Build student readiness for careers
- Ensure equitable and sustainable funding for programming

The Career Education Task Force Final Report further articulates that career education can be delivered through courses dedicated to this purpose and embedded within courses in other subject areas. Opportunities can be on and off campus, providing access to all resources needed for students to develop knowledge and skills that further their career path.

In Grades 7 – 9 and earlier, the focus needs to be on career exploration. As students learn about careers that interest them, it becomes more important to develop general knowledge and skills, through hands-on experience related to a career(s) of interest. Experience becomes more of a focus for Grades 10 – 12. Students should be well prepared for the transition to post-secondary or the work force.

Skills for Jobs Task Force Final Report, September 2020

"The Task Force believes strongly in the importance and value of work-integrated learning – that is, that there is significant power in the learning through work." As articulated in their framework, the responsibility of educators K – 12 is to build strong curricular connections and bridging experiences that will guide students along an informed career pathway.

Essential (soft) Skills provide a foundation for learners to progress within their chosen career and to be lifelong learners prepared for our changing world, and empower individual and organizational success.

Mandate Letter from Premier to Minister of Education, July 2023

"Alberta's economy is creating tens of thousands of jobs in the modern economy, yet we are not doing enough to encourage Alberta students to pursue career paths with the most plentiful and lucrative employment opportunities."

"We must do a better job of equipping Alberta's youth with the skills and direction they need to find meaningful employment in the economy we are building."

Trades and Apprenticeship and Vocational Education (TAVE), 2023

The vision is, "Inspiring Alberta's youth to pursue skilled trades and technologies as a viable career pathway." As articulated in this framework, educators can build strong curricular connections and bridging experiences that will guide K–12 students along an informed career pathway.

- TAVE Outcomes:
 - **Explore** the scope, the demand and the value of skilled trades & technologies.
 - **Engage** in academic studies and skills training through inclusive, authentic, hands-on learning opportunities.
 - **Experience** diverse work-integrated learning opportunities with employers and partners.

Ministry Business Plan: Education (2023 – 2026)

"Developing and implementing innovative learning opportunities within the education system, such as career education programs, ensures a variety of pathways for students to enter post-secondary education or their chosen fields in the workforce."

One of the key objectives within the 2023 – 2026 Alberta Business Plan is to strengthen career education programming.

Calls to Action identified in the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) Needs Assessment – Supporting Student Choice: Successes and challenges in recruiting teachers to support student choice in pursuing a career in skilled trades and technologies, 2021

The calls to action identified within this report address the need to build teacher confidence in various career pathways, trade opportunities and labour market trends to strengthen students' career exploration and interests. In addition, clearly defined career curriculum connections with relevant age-appropriate resources would expand career exploration from K to 12.

Ministerial Order on Student Learning (#005/2024)

"Hands-on and experiential learning experiences will allow students to learn by doing. Opportunities for students to be active participants in learning will promote an understanding of the practical application of knowledge and enrich students' learning experiences. Students will be prepared for the real world as they strengthen critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills, and practice self-reflection for personal growth."

Appendix C: Glossary

Alignment with Career and Educational Goals: Immersive Extended Learning Experiences (IELE) are structured to support students in exploring potential career pathways or further educational pursuits by offering experiences that align with their preferences and future aspirations.

Application of Knowledge: Students have the chance to apply what they've learned in practical settings, which can include gaining hands-on skills, developing projects or even earning certifications or credentials related to their chosen area of study.

Aptitude: A student's natural ability or talent in a specific area, such as problem-solving, creativity, communication or technical skills. It reflects the student's potential to excel or learn quickly in particular subjects or activities. It often serves as an indicator of areas where the student may achieve success with further development and practice.

Authentic Learning: Learning opportunities and experiences that closely mirror real-world contexts, tasks and expectations. It involves aligning students in settings to provide them with a genuine glimpse into the challenges, skills and expectations they may face in their chosen fields.

Career: A lifestyle concept that involves the sequence of work, learning and leisure activities in which one engages throughout a lifetime. Careers are unique to each person and are dynamic, unfolding throughout life. Careers include how persons balance their paid and unpaid work and personal life roles.

Career Planning: A process through which a student can identify attributes, specific occupational fields of interest and personal priorities to guide their high school programming and transitioning from high school to post-secondary and/or the workplace.

Community Living: Refers to the process of transitioning students with exceptional learning needs into environments where they live, work and engage in everyday activities within the broader community. It emphasizes independence, social inclusion and participation in community-based settings, such as supported living arrangements, volunteer opportunities or employment programs. The goal is to help students develop life skills, foster relationships and access services to support their well-being and integration into society.

Extended Duration: IELEs typically span a significant period, such as three consecutive days or more, to allow for in-depth exploration and sustained engagement.

Focused Learning: These experiences are designed to align with students' interests and passions, enabling them to delve deeply into a subject, skill or career area.

Immersiveness: Students are actively involved in the learning process, often through practical activities, projects or experiences that require them to apply knowledge and skills in authentic contexts.

Preference: A student preference refers to a student's expressed interests, likes and dislikes related to learning, activities or career fields. It reflects individual inclinations and tendencies that can guide personalized educational experiences and help identify potential career paths aligned with a student's strengths and abilities.

Real-World Connections: IELEs often involve partnerships with experts in specific fields or industries, as well as community resources, to provide students with real-world exposure and learning opportunities.

School Academy: A school academy, in relation to career learning, is a specialized program or pathway within a school focused on a particular career field or industry. These academies are designed to provide students with in-depth knowledge, hands-on experience and skills relevant to specific professions, such as technology, skilled trades, health sciences, business or the arts. Through partnerships with industry professionals, internships and tailored coursework, school academies help students explore and prepare for potential career paths while still completing their general education requirements.