

WHAT IS THE CAREERS TECHNICAL CENTER?

The Careers Technical Center offers and manages all of the Dual Credit Programming in Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools. This includes: Nineteen Train In Trades options, Dual Credit Enrichment - Academic Stream, as well as 5 full-time Certificate Programs. In addition to Dual Credit Programs, we offer and manage Work In Trades Apprenticeships, organize and run the Central Island Skills Canada Competition, support District and School Career Programs, and offer events like Heavy Metal Rocks, RCMP Camp, Career Certification Camps, Jr, Welding (Canadian Welding Association) and others.

While students can start a formal program with us as early as grade ten, most of our students are in grade twelve where they either take a program in lieu of their grade twelve school year or add additional courses as electives while studying at their home school.

For those students that are not sure what they want but have a career cluster in mind, we offer everything from a class and/or job shadow, to an extensive three to five-month post-secondary trades sampler program where they can hone in on their passion.

Our mandate also includes exposing Elementary students to trades and skills through hands-on project-based learning workshops. These have included students at every grade level but primarily focus on Grades 6-7.

WHAT ARE THE UNIQUE, POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL?

Our School is unique as it is the only school that supports students at literally every level. We work with students from elementary to post-graduation. Our goal is to support students that are looking to enhance their school experience with opportunities that lead to enrichment offerings that can support them in both finding a passion and getting a head start in University, Trade, or Certificate programs at a Post Secondary Level that leads to a Specific Career Goal. We support our students with both social-emotional and academic support. Often, we support students that have disengaged from their formal education which has threatened their graduation status. By offering career-centered educational opportunities we have been able to recapture these students and put them back on the graduation pathway.

WHAT ARE OUR ASSETS - WHAT DO WE CELEBRATE?

We start working with students as early as grade five to identify career paths they are passionate about. Our team works diligently to support them in finding their fit by highlighting their abilities and matching them with programs in the high school years that they will be successful in while meeting their educational goals. On average our completion/graduation rate is consistently between ninety and ninety-five percent.

WHO ARE THE STUDENTS THAT TAKE DUAL CREDIT?

Some of our students don't know what they want to do and are looking for options not offered in their current educational experience. Some of our students that take our programs know what they want to do and are looking for a headstart in a program like Carpentry or Dental Assistant. Many have expressed to us that they are looking for a different delivery model that leads them to a specific outcome.

Students that take our Work In Trades option are working in their field of choice and are looking for support in moving forward in an apprenticeship or formal training leading to graduation.

The students that chose one of our pathways learn better by doing, with a hands-on approach.

Many of our students are able to scaffold their success by taking more than one program with us leading to their high school graduation as well as industry certification. Many have shared with us that while successfully focusing on their passion, they feel that they are "fitting in" for the first time.

WHICH LEARNERS AND WHICH AREAS WILL WE BE FOCUSING ON?

Our first focus area will be to increase the number of students in our Work In Trades and Dual Credit Enrichment Programs. Part of this increase will come from connecting with students that would not have been our typical student. This would include new Canadians, Aboriginal students, and students with special abilities. Our other programs are healthy but have a limited number of opportunities based on seat allocation from our Post Secondary Partners. While increasing the student opportunities we are also revisiting our delivery model to ensure we are using "best practice". This would include expanding opportunities for underrepresented groups like new Canadians, aboriginal, and female students. We have always and continue to offer support to our students to succeed with specific support by working closely with VIU's Student Support Services.

Our second focus area will be to expand aboriginal content in all our programs over the next three years starting with our Elementary Trades Program. This year we will do this by using a variety of building techniques used by aboriginal and non-aboriginal tradespeople and artisans. The goal is to showcase the beauty and diversity that exists in both cultures culminating in a natural harmonious project.

WHERE ARE WE CONNECTED?

Our two focus areas support all four NLPS Goals as well as two of the four goals from the ITA.

Our team is reviewing the course material we use to support these programs; focusing on confirming content will enhance the student experience, knowledge, and skills.

We are increasing the number of students that can access Work In Trades and Dual Credit Enrichment by connecting with the NLPS staff that work directly with our diverse learners to ensure they understand the opportunities that are available to them. Our goal is to meet the needs of students who are seeking knowledge and experience that are not available to them at their home school.

We are building specific programs to attract aboriginal and female students to a career in trades that will lead to an increase in those students in our Work In Trades population.

Through our partnership and support of Skills Canada, we have added project challenges like Wind turbines for example, that support environmental leadership. We are also modifying existing challenges like the gravity car challenge to take the opportunity to talk to students about the shift from fossil fuels to electric cars.

Finally, we are supporting Truth and Reconciliation by focusing on putting into practice Syeyutsus (Walking Together) by integrating knowledge from various cultures which will culminate in a project that works to better respect our diverse heritage. We are also cultivating a relationship with the Navigators at the VIU Friendship Center and connecting them with our students on Campus.

OVERALL STRENGTHS AS WELL AS THE NEEDS OF THE LEARNERS.

Our students excel at doing. They usually have a passion they are focusing on and want to increase their ability to be part of that world.

Some of our learner's struggle with the academic portion of a program but could rebuild an engine blindfolded. They need ongoing support and encouragement that they can do both but often are missing pieces that have prevented them from being successful. Sometimes just the motivation of being in a program is enough for them to overcome their perception of not being "book smart", other times they need support with techniques to fill in gaps in their learning.

Others are very focused on their academics and want to challenge themselves by taking on university courses while still in high school.

Both groups require support in the culture shock of moving to a less supportive education delivery model designed for adult learners that requires a higher level of commitment and responsibility. We work on supporting them with this transition.

WHAT IS GOING ON FOR THEM?

Whether a student is in an Enrichment, Trade, Certificate, or Apprenticeship program the workload and expectations increase to that of the regular world where being late or putting in a minimal effort is not tolerated. Although we do our best to prepare them for this eventuality, many students are not prepared and go through a culture shock for the first part of a program. It is a big step up.

We also have students that are the first in their family to go onto any post-secondary experience. This puts a lot of pressure on them to succeed and make their families proud of them.

Our challenge, as we are not with our students in their day-to-day learning is that we are not able to observe changes in personality that would signal the need for support. With this in mind, we have created a culture of communication between VIU instructors, department chairs, and ourselves to identify struggling students and quickly determine the level of support required for the student. We then build a support plan for both academic or social-emotional needs.

WHAT ARE THE ACTIONS THAT WE PROPOSE TO TAKE RELATED TO OUR INQUIRY? WHAT WILL WE DO MORE OF, LESS OF, DIFFERENTLY TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR OUR STUDENTS?

Build capacity by working closely with our champions in the counseling, coordinating, ELL, AbEd, and other staff in NLPS schools to ensure they understand the opportunities they can offer to the students in their care.

Increase the CTC staff's collective knowledge on how to support our aboriginal learners by working with our partners on strategies to increase our content and the presence of aboriginal culture. With the Elementary Trades as described above, this will include project selection and delivery methods. For our students at VIU, this will include connecting our VIU students to the Navigators from the Friendship Center.

For our new Canadians, we have reached out to the VIU Refugee Program and the International Education Faculty to connect our students with supports already in place for students of similar backgrounds.

3 YEAR PLAN:

Year 1: We will continue to concentrate on building our relationships with our educational, cultural, and employer partners to create a welcoming and safe educational platform for our students to grow their skills and knowledge. This year we will look at ways to expand the tool cart program as we move to a supportive role from a delivery role by changing the role from our previous delivery model. By adjusting the role of the Elementary trades program, we can free up time for our teacher to increase our Work In Trades program. This will allow us to double the opportunities for our apprentices and increase capacity in our elementary ADST at the same time. By shifting the Work In Trades responsibilities this frees up myself to concentrate on increasing Dual Credit Enrichment offerings.

As COVID has changes how we connect with students we are implementing an advertising campaign to increase awareness of the CTC to students, parents, and employers.

Year 2: Post COVID (we hope) we will increase opportunities for our underserved population by creating specific opportunities for our new Canadians, aboriginal, and female learners. We have already started on this goal by connecting with the right people but due to COVID, new program development is on hold.

On the Elementary front, we would like to expand out to supporting not only trades but careers education in general through the support of provincial organizations like CES to local initiatives. By supporting tools already in place, like My Blueprint, we can support our elementary careers curriculum by creating connections to our teachers to share ideas and resources.

Year 3: In year three we would like to introduce career cluster pathways to our NLSP Schools. By working closely with VIU we want to design pathways for grade ten students that are ready to start selecting

courses with a specific career path in mind. We will also continue to expand our elementary tool cart program and introduce further supports for the elementary careers curriculum.

SUMMARIZE WHAT THE NEW AREAS OF LEARNING WILL BE AND HOW WE WILL SUPPORT THAT NEW LEARNING IN ORDER TO BENEFIT THE STUDENTS

We would seek district support in principle to expand the Tool Cart Project. Finance for the project has already been raised and will be supported by future ITA grants.

We would also like approval in principle to work with district coordinators to build supports for elementary teachers to support best practices in careers education.

As dual credit grows there could be staffing implications to maintain the integrity of our programs. This could be increased teaching FTE, support staff, or a mix.

Ongoing financial support to run Skills Canada. We do receive some money from Skills Canada BC but it is shared with VIU and two other school districts. It is used to cover material costs. The support would go to providing TTOC release for the teachers in NLPS that volunteer to be contest chairs or to run an event. This has included up to seven teachers from NLPS on average for the last five years.

HOW WILL WE KNOW THAT WHAT WE ARE DOING IS WORKING AND IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR OUR LEARNERS?

We will continue to monitor our success rates and strive to keep them in the ninety percent range.

We will track the students we work with to see what programs they have taken with us.

We are going to survey our students, parents, and employers to gather feedback about our programs and look for ways to improve them.

WHAT WILL WE BE USING AS BASELINE DATA? HOW WILL WE CHART GROWTH?

We will compare the number of students in our programs to the numbers we have over the last four years.

HOW WILL WE RESPOND IF WE SEE NO CHANGES?

As a team, we will review our results and make any changes necessary to improve them.

HOW WILL WE MAKE PARENTS, STUDENTS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AWARE AND INVOLVED?

We are working on a poster campaign to circulate to the high schools. These will feature past students specific to that school that have completed programs with us. It will include a "where are they now " component to help students visualize themselves in that same future.

Post COVID we will be hosting a parent careers night hosted by Simon Fraser University to give parents strategies to support their child's career goals.

In partnership with the ITA, VIU, The Chamber of commerce, and the Nanaimo Builders Association we will host an employer forum on employee succession planning along with a panel discussion. We want to introduce them to the faces of the people there to support them and their business and at the same time create opportunities for our students.

We are inviting aboriginal artisans to work with our staff to help plan our future projects in a culturally respectful and enriching way.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR ABORIGINAL LEARNERS IN THE CTC?

We have a record number of twenty aboriginal students taking programs with us this year. 11 in Trades, 1 in a Certificate Programs, 7 in Dual Credit Enrichment, and in finishing graduation requirements. All are at the Grade 12 level.

We have offered a connection with the VIU Gathering Place and made them aware of the opportunities open to them in addition to the regular VIU programs and activities.

EXAMPLES OF PRO-D, SPECIAL EVENTS, SPEAKERS, CURRICULAR INTEGRATION, ROUTINES AND CUSTOMS, ETC.

Through our partnerships with outside organizations, we offer a variety of short-term career shadows to help students get a taste of the career that excites them. This includes:

- Heavy Metal Rocks, this is three days of students getting to run heavy equipment like bulldozers, graders, dump trucks, and more. They also get to learn safety skills and meet with industry leaders to learn about the Heavy Equipment Operator field.
- RCMP Summer camp. This is a week-long intensive look into the works of emergency services. While living on-campus students get to try out policing from making arrests, working a CSI case, or tactical response on the paintball course.
- Summer Certification. We have and plan of offering again a summer certification program that was broken down into, construction, service, and healthcare industries. This week-long certification camp ended in a WEX or WRK opportunity with very high success rates on getting students summer employment in their field of interest.
- Maker Day Teacher Pro D. We ran a teacher Maker Day to help build the capacity of "Makers" in the district. 22 educators joined 4 facilitators for an excellent day of learning.
- Quadrant Marine Level One Marine Service Technician. In partnership with Quadrant Marine, we ran a level one pilot Marine Service Technician program to meet the requests of both students and employers. This is a high need area for skilled workers. 12 students completed the 6-week program, and most were offered employment immediately following.
- ITA. We have the Apprenticeship Coordinator for the ITA as a guest speaker with the ITA to support the transition for life after CTC.
- WITT. We have representatives with Women IN Trades Training to put on workshops that we invite all students to attend.
- Career Fairs. The CTC takes part in career fairs meeting students and going over program options. We joined Wellington Secondary for "Tech Week" and brought in different VIU programs to meet with students and talk Careers!
- Living Libraries. We took part in the Living Libraries session to again meet students to answer questions about opportunities the CTC offers.
- Mind over Metal. This is a Jr. Welding camp hosted by VIU for students aged 12-15. It is a week-long program where students get to cut and weld to build a project they choose.

CONTINUING AND NEW INITIATIVES

We are building connections with the VIU Friendship Center and plan to have Navigators meet with our students to make connections and create an opportunity to feel connected to their culture while training for their passion.

We have reached out to the VIU Refugee Center to learn what activities and services are available to our new Canadians.

We would like to run another Summer Certification camp. At this point, it depends on where we are with COVID.

We are working one on one with teachers interested in the Trades Cart Project to teach them new skills and get them to a place where they are comfortable to run ADST projects with our support.

All of this gives us the opportunity to work with students and introduce them to our Programs.

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE ARE BEING SUCCESSFUL?

We are creating surveys to give to future, present, and past students to learn what work(s) for them and how we are doing.

We are also going to start this year in collecting data on what students we work with starting in the Elementary Trades Program to see if that program was an influencer in their decision to take an ADST school elective in grades 9 - 12 and follow a trades path.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT, STAFF AND PARENT VOICE

We are part of a Trades Industry Advisory committee that works with some employers. We need to do more by including students and parents in the discussion. We have tried a PAC but there is not enough interest so we will try running events we can get parents out to and connect with them there. All post COVID of course.