

Explore, Engage, Experience: Finding a Future in Trades and Technologies

Session 1: EXPLORE

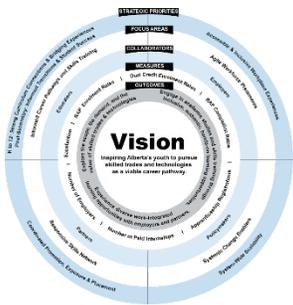
Parkland School Division, Skills Canada Alberta, High Prairie School Division No 48 and Prairie Rose Public Schools

The intent of a CASS Learning Guide is to apply research, deepen understanding and enhance professional practice within the Alberta context. With a focus on optimum learning for all students, a Learning Guide provides an opportunity to grow system leader knowledge, resulting in quality school leadership and quality teaching throughout Alberta.

Summary

Through a grant provided by Alberta Education, the College of Alberta School Superintendents established the Trades, Apprenticeship and Vocational Education Committee (TAVE) made up of representatives from Alberta school authorities, post-secondary institutions, skilled trades partner organizations, and employers.

TAVE designed a [strategic framework](#) that illustrates how stakeholder groups could come together to close the employment gap while maximizing efficiencies and building synergies among partnering organizations. TAVE framed the vision and outcomes statements from a student perspective enabling all the stakeholders to work toward optimizing conditions to increase participation in skilled trades and technologies. These foundational and compelling stakeholder statements are:



Vision
Inspiring Alberta's youth to pursue skilled trades and technologies as a career pathway.

Outcomes
Through shared responsibility and accountability, Alberta's government, school authorities, post-secondary

institutions, partner organizations, and industry enable K-12 students to:

- **Explore** the scope, the demand, and the value of skilled trades and 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.

In 2023, TAVE is proud to be featuring Alberta Stories of Trades and Technologies' practices and possibilities for supporting students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in today's rapidly changing world.



PARKLAND SCHOOL DIVISION

Story of Practice #1: Building Futures (Recording 14:47 – 38:27)

Deputy Superintendent Mark Francis shared how Parkland School Division reorganized alternative programs into a single site called Connections for Learning. The district focused on strategic direction and resource mobilization, which resulted in an improvement in the quality of programs offered. The Building Futures program provides students with a hands-on opportunity to build a house alongside skilled tradespeople and contractors to learn the principles of construction, and finance, as well as hone their interpersonal skills. Students first build the garage which quickly becomes their Grade 10 classroom for all subjects. Every aspect of the building process, from design to selling the finished home involves students!

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Story of Practice #2: Skills Canada Alberta Trade-A-Trade® (Recording 44:05 – 1:01:36)

Alycia Pawluk, the Manager of Programming & Education at Skills Canada Alberta, which is part of the National Association with Skills Canada strives to create programs that showcase trades and technology for youth in Alberta. Skills Canada Alberta identified an opportunity in the market for hands-on learning environments in junior high and created the Try-A-Trade® program.

Acknowledgements

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Try-A-Trade® aims to provide students with opportunities to explore trades and technologies while developing practical skills in an engaging and accessible way. Two delivery models are available, one where students attend the Provincial Skills Canada competition in Edmonton and try their hands at various skill activities, and another where interactive classroom kits are shipped directly to the classroom. The program has opened doors to exciting and rewarding career paths for more than 11,000 secondary students across 163 schools in Alberta. The government has provided funding to significantly grow the program over the next three years. Sign-up in the fall of 2023 to participate. www.skillsalberta.com

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Story of Practice #3: Power Engineering – Perspectives and Possibilities
(Recording 1:01:54 – 1:22:46)

High Prairie School Division is a small, rural school authority located in north-central Alberta with forestry and oil & gas industries. The Division has been offering a dual credit program in partnership with Northern Lakes College for over a decade, giving secondary students the chance to explore a career as a 4th Class Power Engineer. Monica Edwards, the Career Coach Lead, highlights how the two-year asynchronous program provides coordinated support and prepares high school students to write the Alberta Boiler Safety Association (ABSA) Power Engineer’s Certification examination.

The program has been so successful that students have gone on to pursue higher levels of power engineering, enroll in a university or other post-secondary programs or walk straight into meaningful employment as 4th class power engineers. Other students in the program have been provided the opportunity to explore, engage, and experience an occupation at a young age, giving them a head start on their career journey. With this program, High Prairie School Division has demonstrated how local partnerships can provide students in small, rural areas high-quality career opportunities.

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Additional Supports for System Leadership Capacity

- [Watch the full recording here](#)
- [Presentation Slides](#)
- [TAVE Strategic Framework](#)
- [2021 Supporting Student Choice Successes and Challenges in Recruiting Teachers to Support Student Choice 2022 Alberta School Authority Skilled Trades and Technologies Survey Report](#)



Story of Practice #4: Prairie Rose Public Schools are Forging Futures
(Recording 1:23:42 – 1:48:25)

Prairie Rose Public Schools is transforming the education system in southeastern Alberta with their initiative called Prairie Possibilities. This program provides students with unique and personalized learning experiences that connect the Alberta curriculum with local businesses, non-profit organizations, and post-secondary institutions. With the support of the governance system and funding from trustees, Prairie Rose has implemented 18 projects that have been hugely successful.

The Prairie Rose Possibilities offers an extensive range of programs to students, including the Dave Rozdeba Flight Academy where high school students can experience flying at 5000 feet to obtain their pilot’s license. For students interested in the arts, the Seven Persons Fine Arts Academy teaches skills in music, drama, and art for grades 4-6. Other academies teach the skills required to become elite baseball, hockey, and rodeo athletes, while agriculture-related programming has students running an actual farm, researching sustainable agriculture practices, and gaining experience in beekeeping and gardening. The program also includes Badlands Cre8tions, a student-run online store that focuses on developing entrepreneurial skills and providing hands-on learning opportunities in a real business. Prairie Rose Public Schools has prioritized igniting minds, kindling hearts, and forging futures to continue the tradition of academic excellence, recognize their rural roots, and provide future prospects for their students. This initiative provides an array of unique experiences to students and ideas for other rural communities to broaden their programming.

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Research to Practice

Questions for reflection and dialogue within your context.

1. How is your organization inspiring students to pursue a career in skilled trades & technologies?
2. Which learning activities allow students to explore the scope, demand, and value of skilled trades and technologies?
3. What leadership actions will you explore to enhance the future of trades and technologies in your context?

