

**Date:** December 18, 2024 **Agenda Item:** 8.5

**To:** Board of Trustees

**From:** Shawna Warren, Superintendent

**Originator(s):** Jonathan Konrad, Deputy Superintendent, Education Services

**Subject:** **Building Futures**

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**Background:**

The Government of Alberta has emphasized the importance of enhancing career education opportunities to prepare students for success in Alberta’s growing economy. With significant investments, including \$21.5 million to support the start-up and expansion of career-focused programs, the province is enabling school divisions to align educational initiatives with workforce needs in industries such as skilled trades, aviation, technology and engineering. Minister of Education Demetrios Nicolaides highlighted this priority, stating, *“The demand students have for hands-on, experiential career education programming is growing. Our commitment to expand collegiate programming across the province will connect more students to rewarding career pathways while giving them the skills and abilities they need to be successful after graduation.”*

In response to these provincial priorities, Sturgeon Public Schools is proud to introduce the Building Futures Program in the Fall of 2025. This initiative represents a strategic enhancement of educational offerings, aligning closely with the Division’s mission, vision, values and the goals outlined in our Education Plan.

**Program Overview**

The Building Futures Program is an innovative educational model that combines academic instruction with experiential learning. Through active participation in the construction of a residential home, students will acquire both practical skills and academic credits necessary for high school graduation. The program is designed to foster critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving, offering students real-world applications of their learning within a supportive and structured environment.

**Highlights from Similar Programs**

Research into comparable programs has demonstrated their effectiveness in engaging students and inspiring career exploration. Notable benefits include:

- A unique opportunity for students to work alongside professional tradespeople, developing practical skills that are transferable to both personal and professional contexts.

- Increased interest in trades-related careers, with a significant proportion of participants pursuing further education or apprenticeships in the construction industry.
- The ability to earn up to 75 credits in a single academic year, providing students with enhanced flexibility in their Grade 11 and 12 schedules.
- A sense of pride and accomplishment among students, as they contribute to the tangible outcome of constructing a home.

### **Alignment with Provincial and Division Priorities**

The Building Futures Program is well-aligned with the Division’s mission to create collaborative and engaging learning environments and its vision of motivating students to pursue their unique paths to success. Additionally, it complements Alberta Education’s career education priorities, such as providing experiential learning opportunities and addressing workforce shortages in skilled trades. By integrating academic instruction with practical experiences, this initiative supports student transitions to post-secondary education and workforce entry, thereby contributing to Alberta’s economic development.

### **Implementation Plan**

Preparations for the program’s launch are underway. Key steps include:

- Recruitment of Grade 9 students and their families, commencing in early 2025, through targeted presentations and communications.
- Establishing partnerships with San Rufo Homes and other industry stakeholders to ensure access to quality learning environments.
- Finalizing logistics such as transportation arrangements and site management to support seamless program delivery.

The introduction of the Building Futures Program is anticipated to provide significant benefits to students and the broader community, enhancing educational outcomes while addressing workforce needs in the trades sector. This initiative underscores our commitment to delivering innovative and impactful educational experiences while aligning with both provincial priorities and divisional goals. Further updates will be provided as implementation progresses.

### **Status & Relationship to Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS):**

This report aligns with the [SLOS](#) in the following way:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>COMPETENCY:</b> | (1) Building Effective Relationships  |
| <b>INDICATORS:</b> | a. collaborating with community and provincial agencies to address the needs of students and their families; and<br>f. facilitating the meaningful participation of members |

of the school community and local community in decision-making.

**COMPETENCY:** (3) Visionary Leadership  
**INDICATORS:** a. ensuring that the vision is informed by research on effective learning, teaching and leadership; and  
c. promoting in the school community a common understanding of and support for the school authority's goals, priorities and strategic initiatives.

**COMPETENCY:** (4) Leading Learning  
**INDICATORS:** c. ensuring that all instruction in the school authority addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of study; and  
e. ensuring that staff have access to resources, programs and expertise to support them in meeting their professional responsibilities and in addressing the learning needs of all students.

**COMPETENCY:** (6) School Authority Operations and Resources  
**INDICATORS:** a. providing direction on fiscal and resource management in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and school authority requirements; and  
e. establishing data-informed strategic planning and decision-making processes that are responsive to changing contexts.

**Governance Implications:**

[Education Act](#)

Preamble

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta recognizes the need to smooth the transition for students between secondary education and post-secondary education or entry into the workforce.

Off-campus education programs

22(1) A board may provide off-campus education programs for its students.

(2) A board may enter into an agreement with a person to provide a workplace for students who are participating in an off-campus education program.

[Policy 105: Vision, Mission and Values](#)

VALUES

Learning choices. One size does not fit all. We recognize that to prepare students for their futures, we must meet their diverse needs along the way.

[Policy 225: Role of the Board](#)

Education Planning and Programming

The Board shall deliver appropriate education programming to meet the needs of all students enrolled in a school operated by the Board and to enable their success [Education Act s. 33(1)(a)].

[Administrative Procedure 215: Community Partnerships](#)

Strong community partnerships are integral to building strong schools and strong communities.

[Administrative Procedure 845: Off-Campus Education](#)

Sturgeon Public Schools supports and promotes off-campus education programs and believes that school/community partnerships provide opportunities for students to gain practical workplace experiences that enable successful transition from school to careers.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the December 18, 2024, Public Board meeting.

**Attachment(s):**

1. [Charting Career Pathways for Students \(September 3, 2024\)](#)
2. [Career Education Empowers Students' Futures \(November 20, 2024\)](#)