

CAREER AND OFF CAMPUS **PROGRAM REVIEW**



Prepared For:

Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools

April 2024

Prepared By:

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The scope of this Program Review was to conduct an in-depth analysis encompassing Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools' initiatives in post-secondary pathways, career counseling and off-campus opportunities (work experience, green certification, RAP, dual credit) and related elements. This review also incorporated an examination of school based practices and processes, as well as insights into the experiences of students and families. The analysis will spotlight an overview of Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools' successes and provide recommendations for ongoing improvement.

PROCESS

**NOVEMBER/
DECEMBER
2023**

- Consulted with Senior Leadership team to develop work plan and process.
- Reviewed division and school documents including policies, procedures, websites, and strategic plans.
- Designed interview and survey questions.

**JANUARY/
FEBRUARY
2024**

- Attended January 18 professional learning day for Career Counselors and Off-Campus Coordinators.
 - Presented an overview of the project and facilitated a placemat activity.
- Interviewed division personnel: Jacqueline Yu, Karen Fox, Cheryl Kuemper.

**MARCH
2024**

- Conducted school visits at all high schools. These visits included interviews with administrators and lead teachers (1 hour) as well as student focus group sessions (1 hour).
- Student and Parent Surveys were sent out by school administrators following each school visit.

**APRIL
2024**

- Student and Parent Surveys closed April 12.
- Data from interviews, focus groups, document review, and surveys collated using a qualitative data analysis process.
- Final report completed.

PROVINCIAL CONTEXT



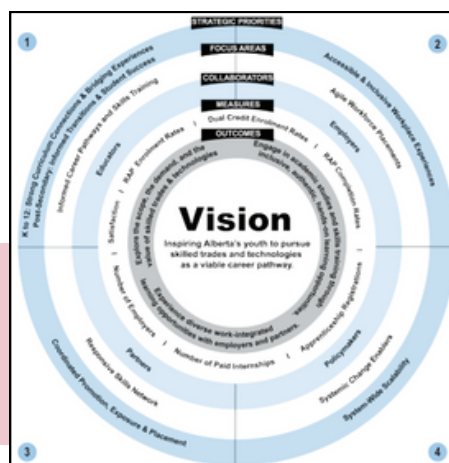
Alberta Education

The [Premier's mandate letter to the Minister of Education](#) emphasizes that this government has prioritized career planning and workplace experiences for Alberta's youth. The mandate letter specifically mentions increasing off-campus and internship opportunities for students in partnership with CAREERS, enhancing dual credit opportunities, organizing career fairs, promoting online resources for career counseling, and promoting high demand careers.

The [Guide to Education](#) outlines that schools and school authorities should engage students in career planning and provide students with opportunities such as dual credit and off-campus education programming.

Career Education Task Force

The [Career Education Task Force](#) was launched in July 2022 with a mandate to review career education throughout Alberta with a particular focus on grades 7-12. The final report was provided to government in April 2023 and contained many recommendations, several of which the government has since implemented. The report includes a framework (pictured here) which highlights 7 desired outcomes for career education programming in Alberta.

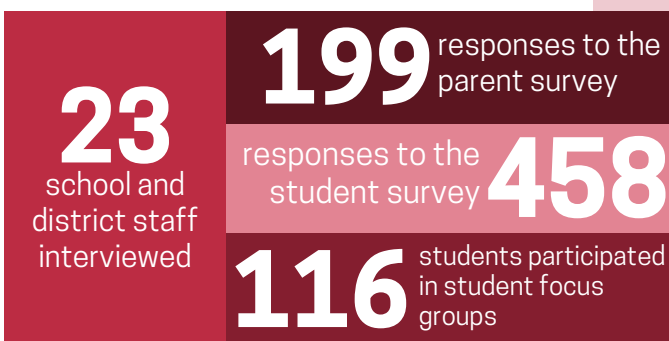


CASS TAVE Committee

Through a grant from Alberta Education, the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) established the Trades, Apprenticeship, & Vocational Education (TAVE) Committee to design a [framework](#) for building student engagement in the trades. This framework outlines the vision for trades and technologies education and experiences in Alberta's schools as well as outlining responsibilities for educators, employers, partners, and policymakers.

DATA ANALYSIS

Participation Rates



School Visits

School	Date of Visit	Administrator & Lead Teachers Interviews		Student Focus Groups	
		Participants	In Person or Virtual	Participants	In Person or Virtual
The Centre for Learning @ Home	February 27, 2024	3	In Person	11	Virtual
Holy Trinity Academy	March 6, 2024	3	In Person	21	In Person
Holy Cross Collegiate	March 12, 2024	2	In Person	9	In Person
Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy	March 14, 2024	2	In Person	15	In Person
Notre Dame Collegiate	March 19, 2024	3	In Person	20	In Person
St. Anthony's School	March 25, 2024	2	In Person	20	In Person
St. Joseph's Collegiate	March 26, 2024	3	In Person	8	In Person
St. Luke's Outreach Centre	March 28, 2024	2	Virtual	12	Virtual

DATA ANALYSIS

23

school and
district staff
interviewed

Staff Interview Themes - STRENGTHS

Division and school staff identified numerous areas of strength when it comes to career and post-secondary counseling and off-campus programming throughout Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools. The data outlined in Table 1 shows the top themes that emerged as strengths including the frequency that each theme was mentioned.

Divisional Supports (34)

- School staff expressed great appreciation for the divisional roles that exist to support his work and indicated that the support they receive from both of these people is invaluable.
- Staff expressed appreciation for the more formal relationship with CAREERS this year and the jointly funded divisional position which has provided them with support and more opportunities for student work placements.
- The opportunity to come together as a team of Career Counselors and Off-Campus Coordinators in person was highlighted by all staff as such a valuable learning opportunity for them. The chance to benefit from the expertise of those around the division doing this work and the sharing of ideas and resources is clearly valued.
- The fact that this work is a Board priority was recognized and appreciated by school and division staff.

Staff in the Counselor/Off-Campus Roles (29)

- Staff feel fortunate to have dedicated and passionate people in their schools and at the division level to do this important work. They value these roles and see the impact of the work on their students' success.
- The staff in these roles offer a variety of services to students including credit checks, academic advising, scholarship advice and information, setting up accounts and accessing resources, facilitating presentations and events, communicating information and opportunities, support with applications for post-secondary, scholarships, and employment, etc.
- Most importantly, the people in these roles help students explore their options beyond high school, see and imagine the possibilities, understand their strengths and gifts, and have a growth mindset.

Relationships with Students (27)

- Staff across all schools emphasized the value of having relationships with students as a strength within this work. Staff often get to know students over numerous years, allowing them to have a more in-depth understanding of each students' strengths and goals.
- Structures within schools such as advisory time, homeroom classes, and 1:1 meetings help to facilitate these relationships.
- When staff truly know their students they are able to offer personalized invitations for events and opportunities as well as personalized advice.

STRENGTHS	
Divisional Supports	34
Staff in the Counselor/Off-Campus Roles	29
Relationships with Students	27
Events & Experiences	27
Working with Parents	21
Off-Campus Programming	20
Team Approach	14
Time and Flexibility	12
Community Connections	10
Academic Advising	7
Resources	5

Table 1

Staff Interview Themes - STRENGTHS

Events & Experiences (27)

- Staff have developed strong relationships with post-secondary institutions allowing them to offer a variety of presentations, information sessions, advice and guidance for students interested in post-secondary. A variety of engaging events and opportunities are being offered to students throughout the division including career and post-secondary fairs, guest speakers and presentations, Discovery Days, virtual and in-person open houses and tours, on-site recruiter interviews, etc.

Working with Parents (21)

- Involving parents in conversations about their children's future was identified as important and staff indicated this was an area of strength due to their relationships with parents and families.
- Parents are often invited into conversations and meetings, can attend presentations and events, and are included in electronic communications to receive information and updates.
- Staff in these roles spend time showing parents the different pathways and opportunities that are available for their children, answering questions, and making sure that parents understand expectations and requirements for various opportunities.

Off-Campus Programming (20)

- The new divisional role in partnership with CAREERS this year was highlighted as a strength in supporting more off-campus programming and opportunities throughout the division.
- Most school staff talked about the increasing numbers of students involved in off-campus opportunities and that this was a focus for their school.
- The Foothills Emergency Services Program and the Exploring the Pipe Trades programs were both highlighted as innovative and valuable opportunities for students.

Team Approach (14)

- Schools value the staff in the Career Counselor and Off-Campus Coordinator roles but also highlighted that they had a team approach to this work. Often administrators and other teachers and staff members work together to support student success beyond high school.

Time and Flexibility (12)

- In the majority of schools there are staff with dedicated time to devote to their role of career counselor or off-campus coordinator. This time is valuable, appreciated and necessary to do justice to the role.
- Many staff in these roles have flexibility within their schedules to fit this work in as needed which allows them to be responsive to student requests for meeting times and to attend virtual meetings and events to gather information and updates.

Community Connections (10)

- Schools have good connections with their communities and they can leverage these connections to find work placements for students and build partnerships. In many communities several local scholarships have been created that students can apply for.

Academic Advising (7)

- The time devoted to academic advising by Career Counselors and Administrators has resulted in increased graduation rates across schools. Individualized credit checks and course selection advising ensures that students are on the right track while also allowing for responsiveness as students' goals shift and change.

Resources (5)

- Financial resources devoted to this work including allocations to schools and the division's support of the two divisional lead positions is recognized and appreciated at the school level.
- Shared resources among the counselors and off-campus coordinators were highlighted as a valuable.

DATA ANALYSIS

Staff Interview Themes - STRETCHES

Division and school staff identified numerous stretch areas (areas for growth) when it comes to career and post-secondary counseling and off-campus programming throughout Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools. The data outlined in Table 2 shows the top themes that emerged as stretches including the frequency that each theme was mentioned.

Time/FTE for Counseling/Off-Campus Roles (24)

- While the time currently allocated to the people in these roles is greatly appreciated, all schools indicated a desire to have more time devoted to this work. Many staff in these roles have multiple roles and responsibilities which can make it difficult to prioritize this work.
- Many schools have goals to increase student involvement in off-campus programming and offer more career and post-secondary events and opportunities to students. These goals take time to plan and implement.

PD/Training (20)

- Counselors and Off-Campus Coordinators value the professional development and training offered by the division and crave more of this. The staff in these roles have varied backgrounds and experience so this centralized training is critical.
- Topics of interest for further learning include conducting site inspections, employment resources for teens, navigating post-secondary websites, workplace injury and incident reporting, athletics in post-secondary, off-campus requirements, how to do a gap year, etc.

Divisional Resources and Consistency (16)

- There is a strong desire to have consistent documentation and resources across the division. This includes:
 - Handbooks for RAP, Work Experience, and Green Certificate
 - Checklist/procedure for site inspections
 - Checklist/procedure for workplace incident and injury reporting
 - Process for work placements including RAP and Internships
- There is a desire to continue to build the bank of centralized shared resources including centralized contact lists for companies and organizations that offer work placements, internships and volunteer opportunities, resources to support planning for a gap year, etc.
- Staff emphasized that the processes and resources that have already been created by division leads should be leveraged and built upon.

Meeting Varied Student Needs (15)

- Garnering genuine student interest in the opportunities that are offered can sometimes be a challenge.
- Ensuring that Work Experience placements, programs, and assessments are meaningful and connected to student career interests is something that school staff are continuing to work on.
- Competing with students' academic priorities can pose a challenge to participation. Students don't want to miss classes to attend presentations, meetings, etc.

STRETCHES	
Time/FTE for Counseling/Off-Campus Roles	24
PD/Training	20
Divisional Resources and Consistency	16
Meeting Varied Student Needs	15
Community Context	13
Ability to Offer it All	12
Community Connections	11
Parent Involvement	9
Equitable and Transparent Resourcing	9
Staff in the Counselor/Off-Campus Roles	8
Timetabling	7
Events and Experiences	4

Table 2

Staff Interview Themes - STRETCHES

Community Context (13)

- Socio-economic and demographic factors in some communities can present challenges to students' ability/willingness to engage. For example, high EAL populations, family finances, parents' education level and expectations can all create complexities and challenges for involvement with these opportunities.
- Location of rural communities creates challenges for in-person events and presentations.
- In some communities, the culture is such that students are overscheduled and overwhelmed with their activities including athletics, family commitments, requirement to work to support their family, etc. Students simply don't have the time to get involved.

Ability to Offer It All (12)

- Any given school cannot offer everything that students want or need due to staffing, resource, and infrastructure limitations.
- Transportation can pose a barrier to accessing off-campus opportunities and schools do not necessarily have the ability to address this barrier.

Community Connections (11)

- Building and nurturing community connections takes time and staff in these roles don't always have the time to devote to this work.
- Finding work and RAP placements for students that match their interests and career aspirations can be challenging in communities where there are limited opportunities.

Parent Involvement (9)

- It can be challenging to draw parents into these conversations and opportunities. Staff often find themselves shifting parental perspectives so that parents truly understand the wide range of opportunities that exist for their child beyond some of the more 'traditional' career and post-secondary pathways.

Equitable and Transparent Resourcing (9)

- School teams had varied levels of understanding of how funding for Career Counselor and Off-Campus Coordinator positions flows into their school budgets. There is a desire for more clarity around this as well as a desire for some guidelines for allocating time and resources to this work at the school level.
- Each school context is unique and has its own challenges and the more the resourcing can acknowledge these contexts, the better.

Staff in the Counselor/Off-Campus Roles (8)

- Staff in these roles have varied experience levels and backgrounds which can make it challenging to build consistency in expectations and program delivery across the division.
- Staff can often change from year to year which poses challenges for building capacity and consistency across the division.
- Some staff wondered about the separation of the roles between Career Counselor and Off-Campus Coordinator, understanding that both roles are working with students' career aspirations and goals beyond high school. Collaboration between the roles is important.

Timetabling (7)

- In smaller schools, it can be difficult to build timetables that allow students to have chunks of time within a day or week to attend off-campus placements such as RAP or Work Experience.

Events & Experiences (4)

- It can be challenging to find time to offer sessions and presentations so that students are willing and able to participate.
- In-person opportunities are certainly preferred but in some cases virtual opportunities are the only option due to logistical constraints.

DATA ANALYSIS

School Based Strategies and Opportunities

Evaluating Success

Strategies currently being used to evaluate the success of career and post-secondary counseling and off-campus programming in schools include:

- Credit counts
- Number of students participating in programming and events
- AERR data including graduation rates and post-secondary transition rates
- Scholarship recipient counts
- Survey data
- Education plan review conversations with Senior Administration
- Student excitement and engagement
- Employer feedback
- Family loyalty to the school
- Engagement with My Blueprint

Tracking Strategies

A wide range of strategies are being used throughout the division for Counselors, Off-Campus Coordinators and Administrators to track students' career interests, course selections, off-campus activities, etc. There is currently limited consistency in tracking between schools.

Strategies currently being used for tracking include:

- Google forms or documents
- Notes in PowerSchool
- Paper tracking (notebooks, files, class lists, etc)
- Enrolment in off-campus program numbers
- My Blueprint
- Academic tracking using PowerSchool, My Pass, etc.

Opportunities

When asked what opportunities or possibilities exist in the work of career and post-secondary counseling and off-campus programming, staff identified the following:

- Create an Administrative Procedure for Career and Post-Secondary Counseling to ensure a consistent approach throughout the division.
- More opportunities for students such as:
 - Career exploratory program
 - Career theme weeks
 - In-person trips to post-secondary institutions
 - Divisional traveling trades kits
 - Off-campus opportunities for students with diverse learning needs
 - Dual credit opportunities
 - Summer programming opportunities
- More time and FTE dedicated to this work including school-based staff and divisional lead positions. Some staff mentioned the possibility of having a centralized position to complete site inspections.

DATA ANALYSIS

116 students participated
in student focus
groups

Student Focus Group Themes - STRENGTHS

Students in the Focus Group sessions were open and honest and shared a great deal of feedback. They identified numerous areas of strength when it comes to career and post-secondary counseling and off-campus programming throughout Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools. The data outlined in Table 3 shows the top themes that emerged as strengths including the frequency that each theme was mentioned.

Staff in the Counselor/Off-Campus Roles (51)

- Students emphasized the importance of the personal connection and relationship with the staff in these roles. They appreciate that the staff are easy to talk to, make students feel comfortable, and are flexible and available to all students.
- Students appreciate the expertise of the staff in these roles and the fact that they help expand students' perspective about the opportunities after high school.

Supportive Staff (46)

- Beyond the staff in the role of Career Counselor or Off-Campus Coordinator, students recognized and emphasized that all their school staff were helpful and supportive of student success in high school and beyond.
- Students appreciate that teachers track their progress, check in with them, and are able to offer advice about life during and after high school.

Events & Experiences (35)

- Students appreciate the many events and experiences that are provided to them where they can engage with post-secondary institutions, explore careers and interests, and have questions answered. They particularly appreciate any hands-on opportunities they are given such as going to post-secondary institutions in person, medical and STEM experience days, and in-person presentations and fairs where materials are shared and questions can be answered.

Communication (18)

- Students feel that information is readily accessible to them through Google classrooms, social media, bulletin boards, announcements, websites, etc. They feel well-informed.

Classes (14)

- Students recognize the benefit of classes such as CALM and Learning Strategies to help them explore their strengths and career interests.
- They appreciate when option classes are designed and offered based on student interest and input.

Off-Campus Opportunities (14)

- Students who have taken advantage of RAP, Work Experience, Green Certificate and Internship opportunities spoke very positively about these experiences and were appreciative of their school for supporting them in finding these placements.

STRENGTHS	
Staff in the Counselor/ Off-Campus Roles	51
Supportive Staff	46
Events & Experiences	35
Communication	18
Classes	14
Off-campus Opportunities	14

Table 3

DATA ANALYSIS

Student Focus Group Themes - STRETCHES

Students in the Focus Group sessions identified numerous areas for growth (stretch areas) when it comes to career and post-secondary counseling and off-campus programming throughout Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools. The data outlined in Table 4 shows the top themes that emerged as stretches including the frequency that each theme was mentioned.

Staff in the Counselor/Off-Campus Roles (35)

- Students see the value in these roles and crave more time and opportunities to engage with these staff members. They want more 1:1 meetings and more time for in-depth conversations and guidance. They specifically mentioned a desire to have more help with applications for post-secondary and scholarship opportunities.

Broaden Career Advice (23)

- Students are seeking advice and guidance for a broader range of post-secondary opportunities such as humanities, political science, history, arts, creative writing, music, athletics, etc.
- Students also mentioned an interest in exploring a variety of careers that may not involve a post-secondary pathway such as entrepreneurship, cosmetology, art, etc.

Events & Experiences (21)

- Students see the value in these events and experiences and would like to see more of them in their schools. They would like to explore post-secondary opportunities beyond universities such as SAIT, NAIT, and other colleges and institutions.
- Students would like more information and advice about attending post-secondary institutions outside of the province of Alberta.

Classes (19)

- Students want more meaningful and hands-on option classes and learning experiences that are connected to their career interests and pathways.

Communication (16)

- Students expressed that they sometimes feel overwhelmed by the sheer amount of information available to them and find it difficult to process it all. They would appreciate strategies to navigate the information on their own so that they can explore when they have the time in their schedules.

Off-Campus Opportunities (11)

- Students appreciate and value these opportunities. Some mentioned they wished they had known about these opportunities earlier in their high school career so they could have planned their schedules accordingly to take advantage of them.
- They crave meaningful work experience placements and volunteering opportunities.

Gap Year Information (3)

- At a few schools, students mentioned that they were considering a gap year and wanted information and guidance about how to do a gap year so that it is purposeful and meaningful.

STRETCHES	
Staff in the Counselor/ Off-Campus Roles	35
Broaden Career Advice	23
Events & Experiences	21
Classes	19
Communication	16
Off-campus Opportunities	11
Gap Year Information	3

Table 4

DATA ANALYSIS

Student Focus Groups - Opportunities and Barriers

Opportunities

When asked what opportunities or possibilities exist in the work of career and post-secondary counseling and off-campus programming, students identified the following:

- Students recognize the value of expanding their experience and want as many opportunities as possible to have classes offered in their schools that connect to a variety of careers and interests such as carpentry, construction, contracting, languages, sewing and fashion, cosmetology, trades, entrepreneurship, music, art, legal studies, taxes and finances, psychology, first responder, sports leadership, agriculture, pottery, mechanics, welding, outdoor education, culinary arts, protective services, etc.
- Students expressed repeatedly the value and importance of staff in the counseling/coordinator roles and want as much time and access as possible.
- They would like to hear from community members, parents, and alumni about the realities of their jobs and suggested virtual or in-person sessions offered for interested students. They would also like opportunities to shadow people in various jobs and do volunteer work.
- Students have particularly appreciated hands-on and in-person events and experiences where they could explore career and post-secondary options and would like more of these.
- Students would like more opportunities for summer internship and offsite Work Experience and RAP placements.

Barriers

When asked about the barriers that prevent students from taking advantage of the services and opportunities provided to them as part of career and post-secondary counseling and off-campus programming, students identified the following:

- Students suggested that career and post-secondary conversations should start in earlier grades so that they are not overwhelmed with information in grade 11 and 12.
- They emphasized the importance of readily available information and timely responses to questions.
- Many students expressed that they simply do not have the time to get involved in these opportunities or access the supports available to them. They are over-scheduled and don't want to miss core classes.
- Some students simply do not know what they want to do after high school and therefore are not getting involved with career counseling or off-campus opportunities.
- Many off-campus opportunities require that students have a driver's license and/or a vehicle to transport themselves to their worksite. This is a barrier for some students.
- Students who depend on the bus to get to and from school cannot readily participate in after school events or activities.
- The cost associated with participating in some of these events and opportunities is a barrier for some students and families.
- School timetables may not allow for students to access RAP or work experience placements.
- Smaller communities may have fewer opportunities so there may not be placements available for students to access.
- Sometimes students' friend groups discourage participation or attendance at events or opportunities.

DATA ANALYSIS

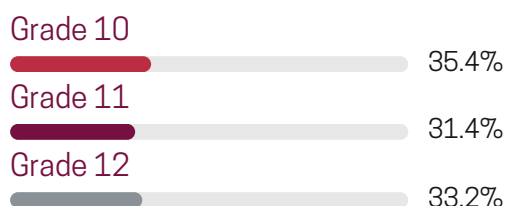
responses to the
student survey **458**

Student Survey Data

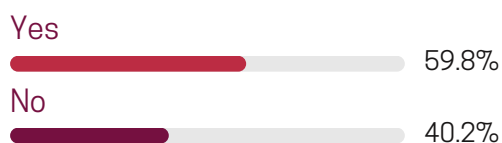
1. What school do you currently attend?

- Holy Trinity Academy (193)
- St. Joseph's Collegiate (97)
- Notre Dame Collegiate (70)
- The Centre for Learning @ Home (45)
- St. Luke's Outreach (22)
- St. Anthony's School (20)
- Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy (6)
- Holy Cross Collegiate (5)

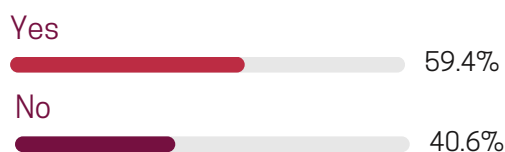
2. What grade are you currently in?



3. Have you accessed the supports and services at your school provided by a teacher who works in career counseling or a Career Counselor?



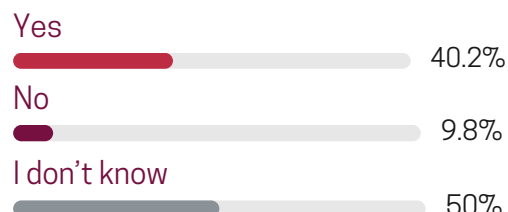
4. Have you participated in any post-secondary or career exploration activities organized by your school? (e.g., career fairs, post-secondary information sessions, guest speakers, workshops)



5. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the post-secondary and career counseling programming provided by your school?

- 58.1% were Very Satisfied or Satisfied

6. Do you feel that your school's career counseling services align well with your career aspirations and goals?



7. Are there specific areas or industries you think your school could focus on to better align with your career interests?

- Trades (22)
 - Medical Field (22)
 - Technology and Computer Programming (10)
 - Arts (10)
 - Sports Careers (8)
 - Science (7)
 - Entrepreneurship (6)
 - First Responders (5)
 - Humanities (5)
 - Cosmetology (4)
 - Engineering and Architecture (4)
- Students also mentioned wanting more supports and services at their schools in the following areas:
- Career Counselor (18) - more time, guidance and advice
 - Events & Experiences (13) - job shadowing opportunities, presentations, tours, Q&A sessions
 - Option Classes (9) - interactive and hands-on learning experiences tied to student career interests
 - Scholarship Information (6) - including out-of-province opportunities and student loan information
 - Financial Literacy (6) - building student capacity in life skills related to managing personal finances

DATA ANALYSIS

Student Survey Data

8. In your opinion, what improvements or changes could be made to enhance the effectiveness of post-secondary and career counseling programming at your school?

Staff in the Counselor/Off-Campus Roles (55)

- More time and access to these people
- More support with applications and course selections
- Easy and flexible access to these people
- Should be mandatory for students to meet with the Career Counselor

Communication and Advertising (26)

- More communication of information and opportunities
- Inform parents as well
- Easy access to resources and information

Events & Experiences (24)

- More of these - students value these opportunities
- Hearing from people in jobs and careers

More Option Classes (15)

- Tied to careers such as trades, medical field, computer programming, etc.

Broaden career/post-secondary advice beyond Alberta (15)

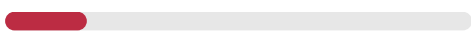
- Students indicated an interest in international work and educational opportunities

Scholarship Information (12)

- More information about scholarships and other financing opportunities for post-secondary

9. Have you ever been or are you currently enrolled in any off-campus programs offered by your school? (e.g., Work Experience, Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), Green Certificate, Career Internships)

Yes

 17.5%

No

 82.5%

10. If you have been involved in off-campus programming, how important have these off-campus experiences been in your overall high school experience?

- 36.8% indicated that these experiences were Very Important or Important

11. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the off-campus programming provided by your school?

- 38.9% were Very Satisfied or Satisfied

12. How well-informed do you feel about the post-secondary, career counseling and off-campus programming resources and opportunities available at your school?

- 47.1% felt Very Informed or Informed

13. How satisfied are you with the support you receive from your school in making decisions about your future beyond high school?

- 55.9% were Very Satisfied or Satisfied

14. Is there anything specific you would like more support or information on regarding your career exploration?

- Staff in Counselor/Off-Campus Roles (21)
 - More time to meet with them
 - Easy access to them
 - More in-depth and specific support
 - More support with figuring out what I'd like to do
- Broader Career Advice (20)
 - Expand career advice to careers such as sports, entertainment, policing, military, law, sports medicine, sciences, engineering, medical fields, etc.
- Support with Post-Secondary Application Process (13)
 - Admission and early admission requirements
 - Course and program selection
- Information about Scholarships and Financial Supports for Post-Secondary (12)
- More Option Classes (8)
- Off-Campus Opportunities (7)
- Communication (5)

DATA ANALYSIS

Student Survey Data

15. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with your school's post-secondary and career counseling or off-campus programming?

- Great Supports from the School (27)
 - Easy and welcoming
 - Very helpful
 - Amazing
- Off-Campus Programming (6)
 - Time built into schedule to honour the work required for Green Certificate
 - Programs like FESP are great
- Staff in Counselor/Off-Campus Roles (5)
 - Build their capacity and expertise
 - Start conversations with students earlier

I have been very fortunate to get lots of help and advice regarding post-secondary and career counseling in order to better prepare me for life after high school. I have been very lucky to have support from teachers and administrators alike and have felt safe and supported when asking questions.



With a small school, the support the staff and faculty have provided is very valuable and allowed for a foundation to be built. Overall, my school allowed for me to view my options clearly and discussed what I needed to achieve these options.



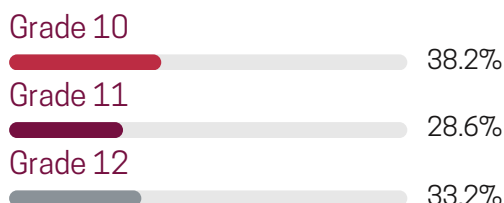
I greatly appreciate the fact that those who are involved in career counseling at my school genuinely care about students' futures. I have been personally and positively impacted by those involved and I cannot thank them enough.

DATA ANALYSIS

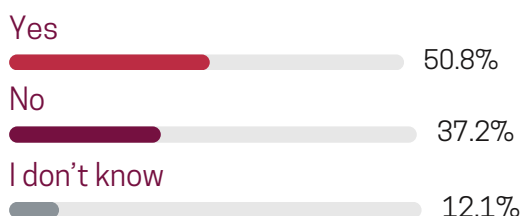
199 responses to the parent survey

Parent Survey Data

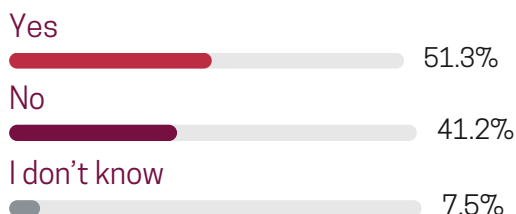
1. What grade is your child currently in?



2. Has your child accessed the supports and services at your school provided by a teacher who works in career counseling or a Career Counselor?



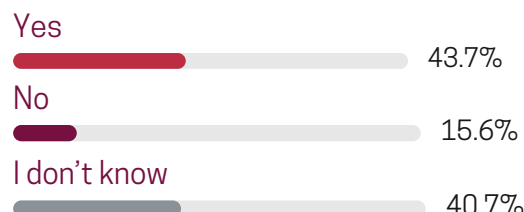
3. Has your child participated in any post-secondary or career exploration activities organized by your school? (e.g., career fairs, post-secondary information sessions, guest speakers, workshops)



4. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the post-secondary and career counseling programming provided by your school?

- 53.2% were Very Satisfied or Satisfied

5. Do you feel that the school's career counseling services align well with your child's career aspirations and goals?



6. Are there specific areas or industries you think your child's school could focus on to better align with the career interests of students?

- Trades (26)
- No, I'm satisfied (14)
- I don't know (7)
- Technology (6)
- Financial Services (4)
- Arts (4)
- Animal Sciences (3)

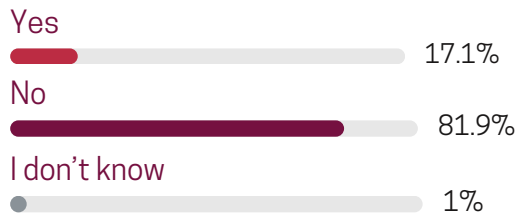
7. In your opinion, what improvements or changes could be made to enhance the effectiveness of post-secondary and career counseling programming at your child's school?

- None, I'm very satisfied (19)
- Staff in Counselor/Off-Campus Roles (15)
 - More FTE and time
 - More frequent meetings and check-ins
 - Strengths assessments
 - Should be mandatory
- I don't know (11)
- Events & Experiences (8)
 - More presentations and school tours
- Broaden Career Advice (13)
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Start earlier with students
 - Non-university pathways
- More Parental Involvement (13)
- Broaden Post-Secondary Advice (8)
 - Schools outside of the province and country
 - Technical schools
- Communication (7)
 - Parent guides
 - Regular information in newsletters and on social media
- More Focus on Trades (7)

DATA ANALYSIS

Parent Survey Data

8. Has your child ever been or is your child currently enrolled in any off-campus programs offered by your school? (e.g., Work Experience, Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), Green Certificate, Career Internships)



9. If your child has been involved in off-campus programming, how important have these off-campus experiences been in your child's overall educational experience?

- 56.4% indicated that these experiences were Very Important or Important

10. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the off-campus programming provided by the school?

- 37.7% were Very Satisfied or Satisfied

11. How well-informed do you feel about the post-secondary, career counseling and off-campus programming resources and opportunities available at your child's high school?

- 35.2% felt Very Informed or Informed

12. To what extent do you feel involved in your child's post-secondary and career exploration process?

- 66.8% felt Very Involved or Involved

13. Are there specific ways in which you would like to be more actively involved or informed?

- Email (15)
- More information and communication (7)
- Parent sessions (5)
- Doing a great job of this! (4)
- Meetings (3)
- Newsletter (3)

14. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with the school's post-secondary and career counseling or off-campus programming?

- Very satisfied and students are well-supported (13)
- I don't know what the school is doing in this area (9)
- More off-campus opportunities (8)
- This area needs improvement (6)
- Broaden career advice (5)
- More communication (3)
- More events and experiences (3)

I feel like the students are very well supported and that they are given a lot of opportunities to explore that will help them with their future careers/education choices.

This school has great programming in all these areas. Thank you for the effort!

I am extremely satisfied with the way my children were supported in the transition to post-secondary.



COMMENDATIONS

It is clear that there are many great things going on throughout Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools when it comes to career and post-secondary counseling and off-campus programming. The strengths identified throughout this report from staff, students, and parents should be celebrated and highlighted.

Overarching commendations include:

- There are committed and passionate people doing this work throughout the division who are going above and beyond the scope of their roles to set students up for success beyond high school.
- The positive student-teacher relationships throughout your high schools was obvious and is such an important strength when engaging in this work.
- Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools supports this work including allocating resources for school-based and divisional positions. This should be celebrated as not every school authority prioritizes having dedicated career counseling and off-campus staff in their schools.
- Staff in the Counselor/Off-Campus Coordinator roles are committed to increasing the numbers of students participating in Off-Campus learning opportunities. The new division role in partnership with CAREERS will help to support this goal.
- Schools across the district offer a wide variety of hands-on and engaging experiences to support students with career and post-secondary exploration. Students recognize and appreciate the value and impact of these experiences.
- School staff work hard to develop positive and trusting relationships with parents and parents feel involved in their child's journey through high school and beyond.
- Students and parents are generally satisfied with the career counseling and off-campus programming at their schools. They recognize and appreciate the value of the staff members in the Career Counselor/Off-Campus Coordinator roles.
- Staff in the Counselor/Off-Campus Coordinator roles are committed to their own ongoing learning and professional growth in these areas. They value the opportunities provided to them to come together as a learning community and build their expertise.
- The Board of Trustees and Senior Leadership team should be commended for undertaking this review process which demonstrates their commitment to reflective practice and continuous improvement

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered for your consideration in the spirit of continuous improvement:

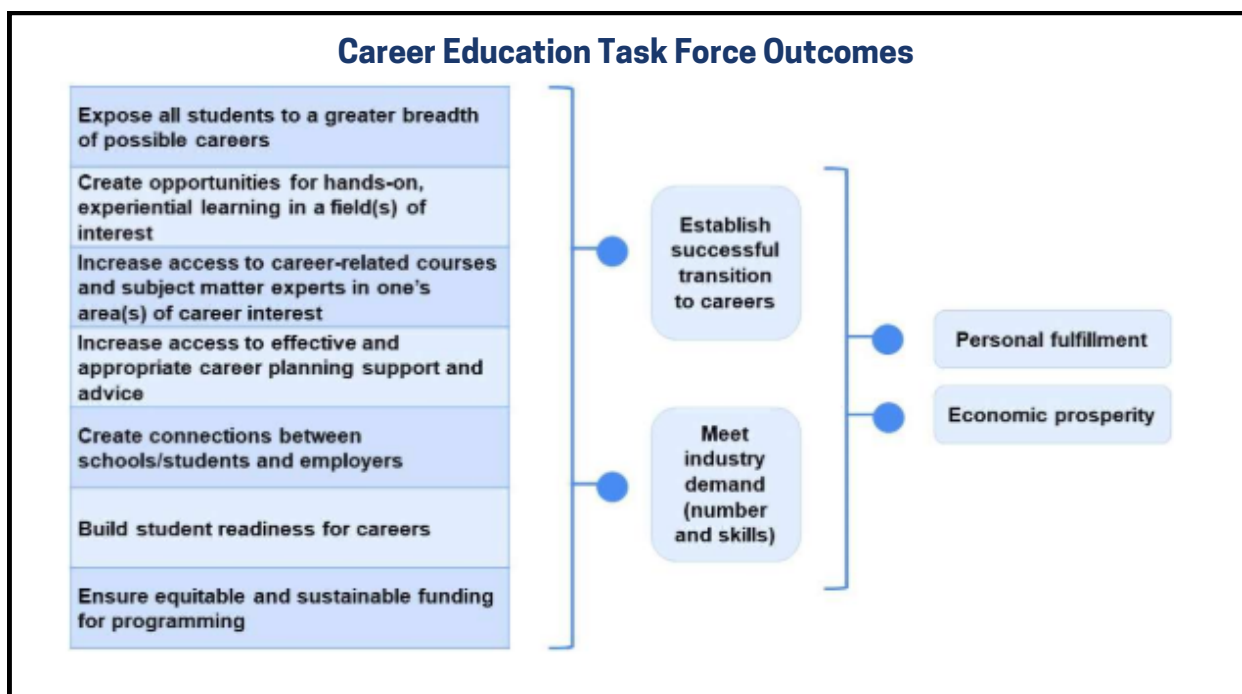
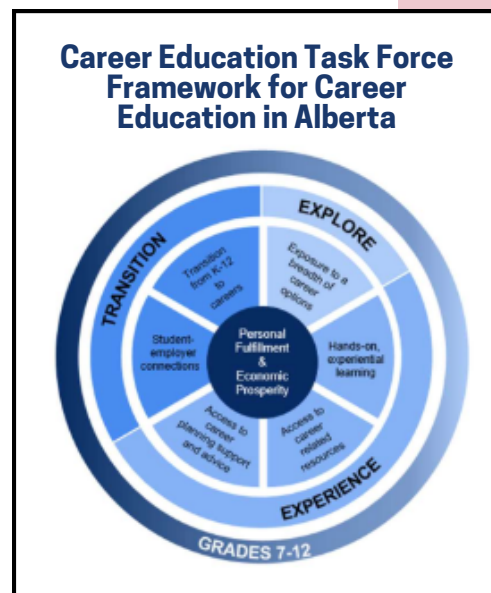
Consistent Divisional Approach

- Develop consistent tools, resources and processes to be used throughout the division including off-campus processes, handbooks, checklists and forms.
- Develop an Administrative Procedure for Career Counseling and consider a Board Policy as well. There is already a robust Administrative Procedure for Off-Campus Education in place as well as a Board Policy. Ensure that these match the most up-to-date requirements from Alberta Education. As new divisional processes and resources are developed, ensure that policies and procedures match.
- Consider implementing a consistent divisional tracking tools to track student career and post-secondary interests. This would allow for data to be gathered, utilized and compared within and between schools throughout the division. At the school level, such tool would allow for decisions to be made about course offerings based on students' career interests. My Blueprint would have some capability to provide this level of tracking and reporting, but is currently being used sporadically throughout the division. Another suggestion is to connect with Kylie Kissel, Director of Education Technologies at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools (kylie.kissel@rdcrs.ca) who has developed and implemented an easy and functional tracking tool that includes collated data sets.
- Engage Career Counselors, Career Practitioners, Off-Campus Coordinators and Administrators in conversations to ensure that students in every school have equitable opportunities to access career counseling and off-campus programming. These conversations could include:
 - Timetabling strategies in smaller schools to allow students to have the flexibility to participate in offsite Work Experience and/or RAP programs
 - Allocating FTE and scheduling time for staff in these roles
 - Strategies for setting up option courses based on student career interests
 - Assessment strategies for Work Experience placements that are authentic and meaningful
 - Opportunities to collaborate on post-secondary and career events and experiences
 - Considerations for school contexts (e.g. urban vs rural, etc)
 - Strategies for partnering with community members to support student work placements
 - Strategies for engaging parents in student futures conversations

RECOMMENDATIONS

Framework for Student Futures

- Consider developing and implementing a **Christ the Redeemer Framework for Student Futures**. Such a framework already exists as part of the [Career Education Task Force Final Report](#) and includes language and outcomes that could be leveraged as a starting point for the CTR framework. For example, the concepts of *Exploring*, *Experiencing*, and *Transitioning* could easily create a structure for a framework that spans from grade 7-12.
- The outcome statements in the Task Force's Framework could also be leveraged as they mirror many of the strength and stretch areas identified by stakeholders through this program review process.
- Creating a customized version of this framework for your school authority would allow you to take into consideration your local school contexts as well as embed Catholic education components throughout.
- This framework could map out expectations for programming and/or activities from grade 6 to graduation and could integrate career and life-skills planning. The goal would be to help students find their vocation through a variety of courses, reflective activities and experiences. By grade 11 or 12, students would then have already spent a lot of time discerning what gifts they have been given and what kind of life they hope to lead. They would then be well-poised to think about what steps they need to take to move toward the life they desire.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Centralized Professional Learning and Training

- Continue to prioritize building the capacity of the Career Counselor and Off-Campus Coordinator team through in-person professional learning days.
- Consider offering further professional learning/training to this team about topics such as:
 - Adopting a coaching approach when working with students on career and post-secondary planning
 - Site inspections, workplace injury/incident reporting, and off-campus requirements
 - Specific topics such as effectively doing a gap year, athletics in post-secondary, and navigating post-secondary websites and application portals

Funding for Counseling/Off-Campus Roles

- Continue to fund these roles at the current level and consider increasing the funding when able to do so particularly in settings where the staff in these roles have limited time assigned to the work.
- Continue to fund the Divisional Career Practitioner role in partnership with CAREERS.
- Ensure that schools are clear on how the funding for these roles flows into their school budgets.
- Consider some consistent expectations or guidelines throughout the division for use of funds including recommended FTE allocation, etc.

Communication

- Ensure easy access to information by students and parents throughout the division. All schools already have a Student Futures section on their websites but students indicated a preference for social media communication and parents indicated that email is one of their preferred methods to receive information.
- Ensure that celebrations and strengths are being regularly communicated to stakeholders so they are aware of the great work being done in your schools.

WITH GRATITUDE

I am so thankful to have had the opportunity to work with Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools to conduct this program review. It has been a pleasure to visit your schools and engage with staff and students across the division. A true commitment to the success of all students is evident throughout your division.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people who have supported this program review process with their actions, their open and honest input and feedback, and their sincere engagement:

- Dr. Andrea Holowka, Chief Superintendent
- Vincent Behm, Chief Deputy Superintendent
- Pat MacDonald, Associate Superintendent
- Cheryl Kuemper, Director of Learning
- Jaqueline Yu, Divisional Team Leader
- Karen Fox, Divisional Career Practitioner
- All of the school staff who facilitated my school visits and participated in interviews
- All of the students who participated in student focus group sessions
- All of the parents and students who took the time to complete the surveys

Sincerely,



Danica Martin

Danica Designs Coaching and Consulting



APPENDIX A

Administrator and Lead Teacher Interview Questions

Program Objectives

- What are the overall strengths of post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus programming within your school and the school division?
- What are the overall stretches of post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus programming within your school and the school division?

Program Structures and Processes

- Please provide an overview of the structure of the post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus programming in your school, including any specific courses, workshops, or activities offered.
- How do you monitor the progress of students in their career development and off-campus experiences?
- How are you ensuring compliance with relevant policies and procedures related to post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus programming?

Roles and Responsibilities

- Please outline your specific roles and responsibilities in supporting post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus programming within the school.
- How do administrators collaborate with career counselors to ensure the effective implementation of career programs?

Resource Allocation

- How are resources allocated to support post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus programming initiatives within the school division? Within your school?
- How are teachers and staff trained to support and contribute to post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus initiatives?

Student Participation

- What percentage of students actively participate in career and post-secondary counseling services? What percentage of students actively participate in off-campus opportunities?
- Can you share examples of successful strategies you've employed to capture students' interest in post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus opportunities?
- How diverse are the career and off-campus programs offered, taking into account different career paths and industries?

Parental Participation

- How are parents informed and involved in the career and off-campus planning process for their children?

Community Partnerships (if applicable)

- How does your school collaborate with local businesses, organizations, or professionals to enhance post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus opportunities for students?

Program Evaluation

- How do you evaluate the success and impact of post-secondary pathways, career and off-campus programs? Are there specific metrics or key performance indicators used to assess the effectiveness of these programs?

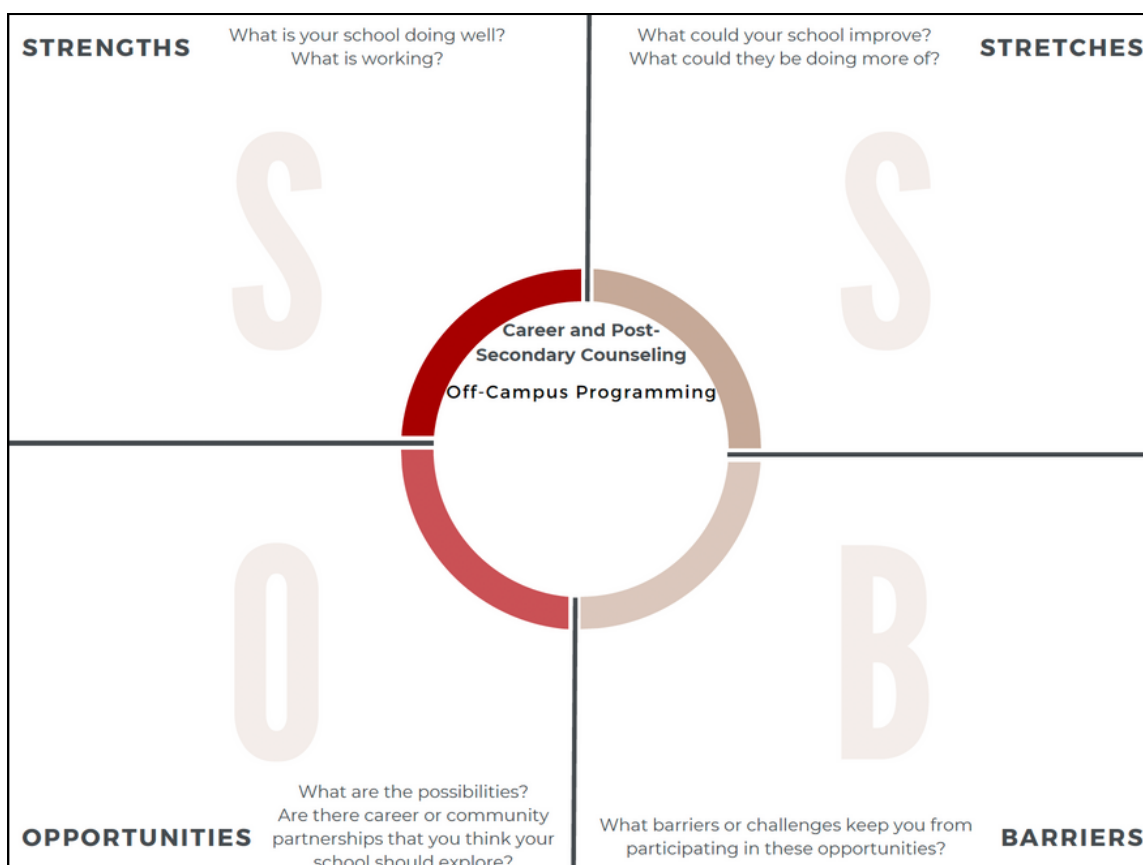
APPENDIX B

Student Focus Group Process

Introductory activity:

- Set the stage by sharing a broad overview of the review process.
- Discuss all of the ways their school currently supports career, post-secondary and off-campus programming

Placemat Activity (facilitated process):



Closing activity - Exit slip

- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with your school's post-secondary, career counseling or off-campus programming?

RESOURCES

- Alberta Education - [Guide to Education](#)
- Alberta Education - [Minister's Mandate Letter](#)
- Alberta Education - [Off-Campus Education](#)
- Alberta Education - [Off-Campus Education Handbook](#)
- Alberta Government - [Career Education Task Force](#)
- Alberta Government - [Career Education Task Force Final Report](#)
- CASS Trades, Apprenticeship, and Vocational Education (TAVE) Committee - [Strategic Framework](#)