

SPEECH

**DAVE HANCOCK
MINISTER
ALBERTA EDUCATION**

**EDUCATION WEEK
CTS ANNOUNCEMENT**

TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 2008

9:15 A.M.

St. Joseph School

10830 - 109 Street

(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

Thank you Premier Stelmach for joining us here today during Education Week in Alberta, and thanks to the St. Joseph's school community for their gracious hospitality in hosting this event.

This CTS lab is one of many throughout the province where students are discovering their passions and getting a feel for possible career opportunities.

In fact, I know there are some students with us here today who have already mapped out their plans for post-secondary education based on what they've discovered in this classroom.

And that is the premise of career and technology studies – finding career pathways through discovery, opportunity and accessibility.

But for that to happen the equipment and technology must support the curriculum, and we are making sure that happens with funding support.

The government's \$79 million investment for CTS equipment upgrades, resources and innovative strategies is a benefit to communities and the province because we are empowering students to make informed career choices.

CTS exposes students to a world of choice.

Let's talk about choice. CTS funding will support not only upgrades to CTS labs throughout Alberta, it will also support an aggressive overhaul of the CTS curriculum. Students like these here at St. Joseph's will be exposed to a wider range of choices within strategically organized clusters like Health, Recreation and Human Services, or Media, Design and Communications Arts, which is happening behind me.

We are also looking at innovative strategies to include rural students and those outside the metros with access to the same choices. For example, the concept of Regional Skills Centres would be complementary learning centres within a region that would provide advanced technical and career focused programs.

These centres, rural and/or urban, would help students prepare for the workplace and related post-secondary programs.

Mobile labs and partnerships with post-secondary providers are being explored. In fact, the latter is already happening in this province. Currently, the Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Catholic and SAIT have partnered to pilot the delivery of a pharmaceutical technician credential program to students in high school.

Technology will also be an important component to the delivery of CTS with the online delivery and updated digital resources.

And, of course, we will support enhancements to the equipment students are using in existing CTS labs to support CTS training across the province.

Skills Canada Alberta, in partnership with the government, has already allocated more than \$14 million in government grant money to school boards and authorities across Alberta for equipment upgrades to over 100 CTS labs. In fact, that funding will support enhancements to this lab.

I look forward to the coming months when we can talk in more detail on Education's CTS initiative currently underway and our plan to support enhanced delivery models that will benefit those students that choose CTS as part of their high school education.

By growing CTS, we are also growing this province, and most importantly, for students, we are growing possibilities.