



Welcome to our sixth edition of Bringing School Home ! The Simcoe County District School Board produces this regular e-bulletin to help parents support children on their journey of lifelong learning.

We know positive connections between home and school support student achievement. In each Bringing School Home e-bulletin you'll find practical tips and strategies to help your child achieve success in those important years of learning from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Bringing School Home is available through the Simcoe County District School Board website (www.scdsb.on.ca). As well, parents, guardians and other interested members of our school communities may subscribe through our website and have the bulletin e-mailed directly to their email accounts. (Readers may also unsubscribe at any time.) Please send your comments and feedback to: webadmin@scdsb.on.ca.

Questions of the month: **What do educators mean when they talk about “pathways”?**

“Pathways” refer to the various educational and career options available to students after they have completed high school. Educators generally talk about four post-secondary pathways: the workplace, apprenticeship training, college, and university. Regardless of which pathway your child chooses to pursue, each will require a specific combination of education, training, and skills. Pathways programs at SCDSB secondary schools provide students with an opportunity to explore potential future pathways while completing their Ontario Secondary School Diplomas (OSSDs).

Focusing on a pathway during high school is beneficial for several reasons:

- it gives students an opportunity to “test drive” a career or post-secondary educational option they are considering;
- it makes schoolwork feel more relevant by helping students make the connection between their current learning and their future plans; and
- it helps students develop the skills that will be the most meaningful to them in the future, should they decide to pursue their chosen path.

What pathway programs are available?

Now, more than ever, secondary schools are able to provide a variety of supports to help students get the credits they need

while they explore their options. While learning opportunities were once fairly prescriptive, it is now possible for students to customize their school experience based on their interests, goals, strengths, and needs. The SCDSB works closely with the Ministry of Education to provide a variety of programs and supports designed to give each student the opportunity to achieve success.

The following pathway programs are among the options and supports available to students in SCDSB secondary schools:

Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM)

Students enrolled in an SHSM program “major” in courses related to a particular sector while working towards their OSSD. Each major consists of eight to ten classroom courses, as well as workplace experiences and sector certifications in their selected field. The SHSM program is suitable for students pursuing any of the four post-secondary pathways (the workplace, apprenticeship training, college or university), and students who complete the program receive a special designation on their OSSD. The SCDSB currently offers these programs in Arts and Culture, Construction, and Transportation.

Dual Credit Programs

In a Dual Credit Program, students earn credits by participating in apprenticeship training and postsecondary courses. Credits earned may count towards both their high school diploma and their postsecondary diploma, degree, or apprenticeship certification. Students who are heading for college, an apprenticeship or the workplace may be eligible – check with your home school's guidance department for more information and availability.

Expanded Cooperative Education (“Co-op”)

Expanded co-op offers students valuable, hands-on work experience in addition to high school credits. Students gain confidence as they explore one or more potential career options in a workplace setting, and they can apply two co-op credits towards the 18 compulsory credits they need to graduate. Credits earned in co-op can also be used to meet optional diploma requirements.

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

Students with an interest in the skilled trades can benefit from participating in OYAP, a provincial program which allows them to start training in a trade while completing their high school credits. Starting in Grade 11 or 12, students have an opportunity to become registered apprentices and work towards becoming certified journeypersons in a skilled trade while completing their secondary school diplomas. Details are available on the OYAP website at www.oyap.com.

For more information about these and other SCDSB pathway programs and student supports, contact your school's guidance department or visit the Ministry of Education's web site at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/morestudentsuccess/>

This month's featured web pages

We invite you to visit www.scdsb.on.ca often for news, facts, school information, Board highlights and hundreds of other pages about Simcoe County's public education system. This month we are featuring our "Student Success" web pages:
http://www.scdsb.on.ca/students/student_success.cfm

Our Internet surfing this month leads to information about graduation requirements on the Ministry of Education's website:
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/graduate.html>

Next Issue

The next issue of *Bringing School Home* will feature 'Getting ready for Kindergarten.'

Quote of the month

On graduation: "There is a good reason they call these ceremonies 'commencement exercises.' Graduation is not the end; it's the beginning." ~ Orrin Hatch, U.S. Senator

The Simcoe County District School Board is deeply committed to ensuring all learners have the opportunity to realize their dreams within a vibrant and successful public education system. We are very proud of our 57,000 students who are learning and achieving in our 108 schools and six adult learning centres throughout our urban and rural communities. Working with school communities, our dedicated and skilled staff members provide quality programs to help students develop lifelong learning skills in safe, caring environments. Our schools are located in the Huronia and Georgian Bay regions of south-central Ontario.

For more information visit our web site at www.scdsb.on.ca



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