

A Guide for **Career Educators** About

Career Education in B.C.



Helping you to
guide, coach and
inspire students



StrongerBC
for everyone

**career
education
society of BC**

Acknowledgement

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SECTION 1:

Your role in Career Education

Welcome to Career Education. Whether you're new to this subject matter or are a seasoned educator, this resource is designed to help you. Through tips, key information and an overview of essential resources, it will orient you to British Columbia's Career Education curriculum, inspire you in your role, advance your practice and set you up to succeed as a career educator.

Career Development is an essential part of B.C.'s education system. In fact, along with Intellectual Development and Human and Social Development, it forms the three pillars of the Educated Citizen. B.C.'s curriculum enables students to graduate as Educated Citizens of the 21st century, with the necessary qualities to seize a wide array of global opportunities.

This situates the importance of the work you do, but it's also a starting point for something much bigger. No matter what grade level you teach, your role as a career educator is to give your students a solid understanding of themselves, their career aspirations, and a sense of excitement about exploring opportunities that captivate their interests. You have a unique and vital role to play in helping students navigate the world around them and continually strive towards a meaningful, positive future.

Understanding Career Education in B.C. and where YOU fit in

A career is so much more than a job. It's an individual's unique journey through life. It impacts not only how they work and earn an income, but also how they bring their skills and interests to life day-to-day, who they interact with and the opportunities they pursue in an ever-changing world.

Successful Career Education involves people like

YOU



K-GR 3

- Goal-setting
- Self-exploration
- Roles and responsibilities
- Exposure to jobs in the community
- Exploration of skills and interests
- Importance of learning
- Teamwork and work habits



Parents and Caregivers

The most important career influencers for kids in K-12.

- Genuine conversations about interests and passions
- Encouragement to explore and try new things
- Participation in school and community programs and events
- Post-secondary planning and support

GR 4-5

- Personal and public identities
- Respect for differences
- Innovative and entrepreneurial thinking
- Leadership and project management
- Safe behaviours
- Role of technology
- Volunteering



Educators

Interpret the curriculum, bring it to life and offer guidance.

- Exploration and awareness of career options
- Skill building and personal development
- Individual career pathway planning
- Activities, events and connections within the community

GR 6-7

- Preferences and abilities
- Community contributions
- Respect and inclusivity
- Attitudes and influences
- Value of new experiences
- Short and long-term goals



Employers

Community partners providing real-world exposure to industries and workplaces.

- Guest speaking in schools
- Work experience placements
- Youth mentorship
- Career fair participation

GR 8-9

- Self-assessment
- Purpose and passions
- Learning goals
- Curriculum choices
- Networks and mentors
- Career research
- Family expectations
- Community responsibility
- Workplace safety
- Decision-making

GR 10-12

- Research, challenges, opportunities and risks
- School/work/life balance
- Career-life journey mapping
- Mentorship
- Networking
- Work experience and experiential learning

DID YOU KNOW?

Career Development is one of the three aspects of the *Educated Citizen* mandate for B.C.'s education system.

- ✓ Intellectual Development
- ✓ Human and Social Development
- ✓ Career Development



Much like people, careers are constantly changing. That's why our approach to Career Education in B.C. is not a one-size-fits-all model. It's customized to match each student's and every community's unique needs.

K-12 Career Education goals

In B.C., Career Education is integrated at every level of elementary and secondary education. This is important because career and life skills will guide students for their entire working lives.¹



Build adaptability, resilience and flexibility



Understand the importance of ongoing career-life development



Learn and grow skills and competencies



Develop self-knowledge to inform career-life choices



Explore and interact with a variety of people and perspectives



Investigate a range of roles and opportunities

[SOURCE: [B.C. CURRICULUM](#)]



76%

In the next 10 years, 76% of job openings will require some form of post-secondary education or training.²



1.1 million

In the next decade, B.C. will have over 1.1 million new job openings in health care, technology, education, social services and skilled trades.³

¹ BC Curriculum

² WorkBC British Columbia Labour Market Outlook

³ WorkBC British Columbia Labour Market Outlook



StrongerBC

“You don’t need to teach Career Education alone and in a vacuum. The best Career Education programs have the support of administrators, colleagues, families, local educational organizations and employers in the community.”

Bonnie Alexander, School District 61
District Career Coordinator, Pathways &
Partnerships (Greater Victoria)

Exploring and learning together

Due to globalization and evolution in technology, the world of work has changed significantly in the last 30 years. Your career and work experiences are likely very different from what your students are experiencing today as part of their career-life development process. But that doesn’t mean you aren’t ready to teach Career Education. In fact, your personal journey, along with your curiosity and enthusiasm in exploring this topic, are key to your students’ success.

Developing self-awareness and learning to ask questions are key components of Career Education. By working alongside your students and coaching them as they develop their interests and career pathways, you can prepare them for a lifetime of learning and adapting to new and emerging opportunities.

A valuable approach you can take to this curriculum is to cultivate an open mind and a genuine sense of curiosity. Share your enthusiasm for helping students explore the intersection between their interests, strengths and career possibilities.

Some of the most important questions you’ll want to explore with students, regardless of the grade you teach, should include:

- ✓ What are the ways people can contribute productively to society?
- ✓ How do you envision yourself sharing your skills and talents in the workforce?
- ✓ What kinds of roles match your values, interests and aspirations?
- ✓ What emerging roles might be in demand when you enter the workforce?
- ✓ How do you envision yourself learning about, responding to and adapting to careers and career pathways in elementary school, secondary school or following secondary school?
- ✓ What problem would you like to solve in the world, and who’s trying to solve that problem today?
- ✓ What job sectors are growing in B.C., across Canada and around the world?

The best ways to help your students prepare for an ever-changing career path are asking and answering questions such as the ones above, having open discussions and creating opportunities to explore the broad range of options in their future. It’s truly all about getting them excited for their futures, and assuring them that adventure awaits, no matter their career path.

While this resource provides some of the information you’ll need to be successful in your role as a career educator in B.C., it’s also designed to provide some starter ideas that inspire creativity in your approach to delivering the curriculum.

Whether you’re teaching in elementary or secondary school, the Career Education curriculum contains invaluable concepts for your students. By helping them discover their interests and connecting those

interests to the broader world around them, you can lead students toward valuable opportunities such as work experience, dual credit courses and a plan for continued learning after graduation.

It takes time and patience to be successful in this role. You'll need to stay up to date on continual changes in the world of work, discover new resources and keep abreast of the evolving labour market. Take comfort in knowing that, just as Career Education is a lifelong journey, so too is fine-tuning your craft as a skilled career educator.

Framing the conversation about career-life planning

From a young age, children are often asked, "what do you want to be when you grow up?" As common as this question is, for many reasons it's not the best way to start a conversation about career possibilities because it suggests that the job someone does *is* who they are. It assumes they'll have a single path and that their interests will stay the same throughout their lives.

In contrast, today's approach to Career Education shifts the focus of this question to long-term problem solving and how to make positive contributions to society. Rather than asking students what they want to be, career educators and career counsellors now encourage students to imagine what gifts they see themselves sharing with the world, and what community or global problems they'd like to solve. This can also be framed as who they'd like to become, and how they'd like to participate.

"The most important thing you can do to be successful in this role is to come at Career Education from the lens of curiosity and flexibility. Don't get caught up in what you don't know, but seek to always be looking for answers."

Heather Elliott, Acting Vice Principal of Career Education, School District No. 33 (Chilliwack)

In addition to asking your students how they'd like to contribute to the world around them, here are a few more key messages you can share with them about career-life planning:

- **Throughout your career journey, you'll likely have many jobs** and you may change occupations several times throughout your life. This is completely normal.
- **Choosing a career path isn't just about how much money you'll potentially earn.** While money is important, it isn't the only consideration for selecting a career. You also want to think of what kind of life you want to lead, who you'll spend time with and the values that motivate you.
- **We spend two-thirds of our lives working** (on average, 80,000 hours). It's important to choose an occupation that helps us feel fulfilled and happy, and that makes a positive contribution to society.
- **It's always a good idea to have a backup plan**, whether it's for a chosen program, school or career path.

- **Remember, you're not deciding your entire future right now.** You're simply choosing a path to explore. You can always change course if you want to explore new career options.
- **There are many paths you can choose** to create the kind of life and future you're envisioning for yourself.
- **There are many learning options after secondary school** for all kinds of learners and interests. All post-secondary learning is helpful.

About Career Education

Here are some concepts to keep in mind that apply to both Career Education as an integrated component of elementary school subject matter, as well as the Career-Life Education (CLE) and Career-Life Connections (CLC) courses in secondary school:

- **There's no manual for these courses.** At every level, the B.C. Career Education curriculum offers room for educators to be flexible and creative.
- **There's a lot of information.** Educators aren't always career experts. There's no specific training for this role, and there's a lot to learn!
- **The world continues to change.** Career opportunities, industries and labour markets have transformed significantly in recent decades.
- **Stereotypes abound.** There are many stereotypes about careers and the world of work that are irrelevant and inappropriate. It's our responsibility to combat these stereotypes and reveal the opportunities available to students.
- **Career Education is not universal.** People's diverse backgrounds and experience, including immigrants, newcomers and those who were educated outside of B.C., remind us that Career Education is not universal. What you experienced in school may be different from what's offered here today.

- **Education and training options have expanded.** There are many options for post-secondary education and training of which new educators may not be aware.

Access your allies: the Career Education community

The Career Education community in B.C. extends well beyond your classroom and curriculum. You'll find there are many resources and supports available to educators, and many people working in this field who will be able to help you access the knowledge, resources and tools you'll need to build out your course materials and overall approach, including:

- ✓ Career Education Society of BC (CES)
- ✓ District career coordinators
- ✓ School-based career educators and advisors
- ✓ Government of B.C. organizations and agencies such as WorkBC and SkilledTradesBC

Set up a network of people you can compare notes with:

- **If you have access to your predecessor in your role,** that's a great place to start to learn what's been done in your Career Education course and school.
- **Talk to other career educators in your school** and plan a scope and sequence to avoid covering the same topics.
- **Connect with colleagues and your district career coordinator.** Don't hesitate to lean on them as you get yourself established.
- **Connect with other schools and school districts** to find out how they're approaching the curriculum.



Defining jobs, occupations and careers

Career Development is the lifelong process of learning, work and job transitions. It encompasses “jobs,” “occupations” and a “career,” all of which refer to different components in the journey. Let’s take a closer look:

- ✓ A job is a specific position you hold within an organization or as someone self-employed.
- ✓ An occupation is a type of work that includes tasks, education and training, typical wages, work settings and other factors. It often comes with opportunities for additional training, progress, advancement or promotion.
- ✓ A career encompasses a lifelong journey that includes a job (or several) and an occupation (or several).

SECTION 2:

B.C.'s Career Education curriculum

B.C.'s K–12 Career Education curriculum prepares students for a lifetime of career exploration and meaningful contribution to society.

It supports their path to becoming educated citizens and provides them with the skills they need to make informed choices about their careers and lives.

The Career Education curriculum is also a foundation for lifelong learning that supports students' transition to post-secondary education, training and employment. Today's students face the reality that nearly 76 per cent of job openings in B.C. between now and 2034 will require at least some post-secondary education or training. Therefore, what students learn through Career Education in their K–12 years will support their future success.

Expanding students' horizons with purposeful Career Education and shaping their futures, in the labour market and more broadly as productive citizens, begins in their first year in B.C.'s education system. At the elementary level, students explore their surroundings and are exposed to many new ideas and opportunities about careers and career pathways. At the same time, they confront stereotypes about work and life that can take hold. As young as age 7, students begin to make assumptions about the occupations to which they're suited, and these assumptions may not reflect the broad range of opportunities actually available to them.

As students reach secondary school, their understanding of careers and the world of work grows and is often shaped by who and what are a part of their lives. Family members, friends, teachers and employers play important roles here. Educators are crucial guides as students work to understand themselves and the possibilities available to them. You can help students learn how their interests can become a part of their career-life journeys.

A brief look at B.C.'s K–12 Career Education curriculum

The Career Education curriculum is organized into three areas of focus:

1. Personal development
2. Community connections
3. Life and career planning

It's structured to integrate holistically into multiple areas of learning, and educators are invited to customize it to their students' distinct needs and interests.



DID YOU KNOW?

More than 1.1 million job openings are expected in B.C. between 2024 and 2034. Visit the [B.C. Labour Market Outlook 2024 Edition](#) to learn about the skills and occupations that will be in demand.

K-12 Career Education goals

Students are expected to:

- ✓ Recognize the need to be adaptable, resilient and flexible in order to meet the opportunities and challenges of today's world.
- ✓ Understand how ongoing purposeful career-life development contributes to the success and well-being of individuals, communities and society.
- ✓ Build personal career-life development capacity to effectively learn and grow new interests, knowledge, skills and competencies throughout their lives.
- ✓ Develop awareness of their personal strengths, competencies, values and passions, and use this self-knowledge to inform career-life choices.
- ✓ Communicate and interact collaboratively with others, valuing diversity of people, perspectives, worldviews, ideas and opportunities.
- ✓ Explore a range of experiences, roles and opportunities in personal, educational and workplace contexts to advance their personal career-life journeys.



DID YOU KNOW?

The majority of the more than 1.1 million job openings B.C. needs to fill by 2034 will require people who have post-secondary education and skills training.

"A lot of people come out of secondary school, go to university, and then become a teacher. That's their path. But to be a Career Education teacher, you need to be well versed in what's happening in the world. You need a holistic picture of what's going on in the world around you."

Lisa Chapieski, District Coordinator,
Student Options & Opportunities, School
District No. 37 (Delta)



GROWING INTO YOUR CAREER EDUCATOR ROLE

While Career Education is a required component of the curriculum in B.C., many schools have distinct approaches to career-focused programs and opportunities for students.

Connecting with career educators in other schools is a great way to build your knowledge and develop ideas that bring your course material to life.

Check with your school's Career Education team for details about work experience opportunities, programs, events and activities at local post-secondary institutions and approved training providers.

Career Education in Kindergarten to Grade 7 (K-7)

Students in K-7 progress through the foundations of Career Education, self-awareness and connection to the community.

- **K-3 student development** is characterized by a use of play, imagination and fantasy to understand the world of work, and starts with self-awareness and connecting to community.
- **Grades 4-5 student development** is characterized by learning about why and how others choose their occupations. Students become familiar with the role of interests, strengths, values and needs in career decision-making, and build upon self-awareness, emerging leadership skills, influences on personal choices and deepening connections to community.
- **Grades 6-7 student development** deepens students' understanding of how interests, strengths, values and needs impact career decision-making. Students begin to develop perspectives on the steps needed to achieve multiple potential career pathways. They also continue to recognize how self-awareness and connections to community can help them to explore possible future careers.



DID YOU KNOW?

Career Education builds upon foundational skills in literacy and numeracy, and focuses on developing skills for further success, such as problem-solving, empathy, communication, critical thinking, adaptability and accountability. [Learn more about these and other core competencies.](#)

Career Education in Grades 8-12

As students continue to explore diverse perspectives and opportunities through career clusters and career path exploration, Career Education in Grades 8-9 increases their understanding of how interests, strengths, values and needs impact career decision-making. Students start to make decisions and consider the possibilities regarding next steps in their education when entering the graduation program in Grades 10-12.

In Grades 10-12, students further refine their personal career-life development goals through experiential learning. They cultivate community connections, gather authentic evidence of learning and reflect on competency development. Students explore post-graduation possibilities in diverse educational, work and personal-life contexts, and build the career-life management skills to effectively pursue who they are and how they want to be in the world. Career Life Education (CLE) and Career Life Connections (CLC) courses taken in Grades 10-12 are required for graduation. The CLC course includes a career-life exploration component and a capstone project.



What is the “Educated Citizen”?

Career Development is one of the three aspects of the Educated Citizen mandate for B.C.’s education system. The other two are Intellectual Development, and Human and Social Development.

The Educated Citizen is:

- ✓ Thoughtful, able to learn and think critically and can communicate information from a broad knowledge base
- ✓ Creative, flexible, self-motivated and has a positive self-image
- ✓ Capable of making independent decisions
- ✓ Skilled, and can contribute to society generally, including via the world of work
- ✓ Productive, gains satisfaction through achievement and strives for physical well-being
- ✓ Cooperative, principled and respectful of others regardless of differences
- ✓ Aware of their rights and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, the community, Canada and the world

Additional curriculum opportunities for student career exploration

In addition to the required Career Education courses, such as CLC and CLE, many schools and school districts across the province offer a wide variety of elective courses and initiatives to help students explore and prepare for specific careers or more immediate work opportunities. While some schools' approaches are often distinct, many offer some or all of the following courses that support in-depth career exploration and career engagement:

- Work Experience 12A and 12B
- Youth Work in Trades (YWIT) 11A, 11B, 12A and 12B
- Youth Explore the Trades
- Dual credit courses (which offer both secondary and post-secondary credit) such as Youth Train in Trades
- Workforce Training Certificates 12



DID YOU KNOW?

The Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC) has continuous view diagrams for K-9 with the Big Ideas, Curricular Competencies and Content that will help educators understand the growth of Career Education at various ages. A Career Education 10-12 Guide with an overview, delivery examples, capstone sample and career-life exploration component guidelines is also available to help educators implement the career-focused curriculum, and to help students make future plans.



CURRICULUM FACTS

B.C.'s Career Education curriculum *is* designed to:

- ✓ Value a breadth of careers and interests
- ✓ Empower students to understand themselves, their communities and their roles as productive citizens
- ✓ Help students plan toward their preferred futures

B.C.'s Career Education curriculum *is not* meant to be:

- ✗ A one-size-fits-all model
- ✗ About pursuing a particular career or professional path
- ✗ An easy or unimportant course credit

SECTION 3:

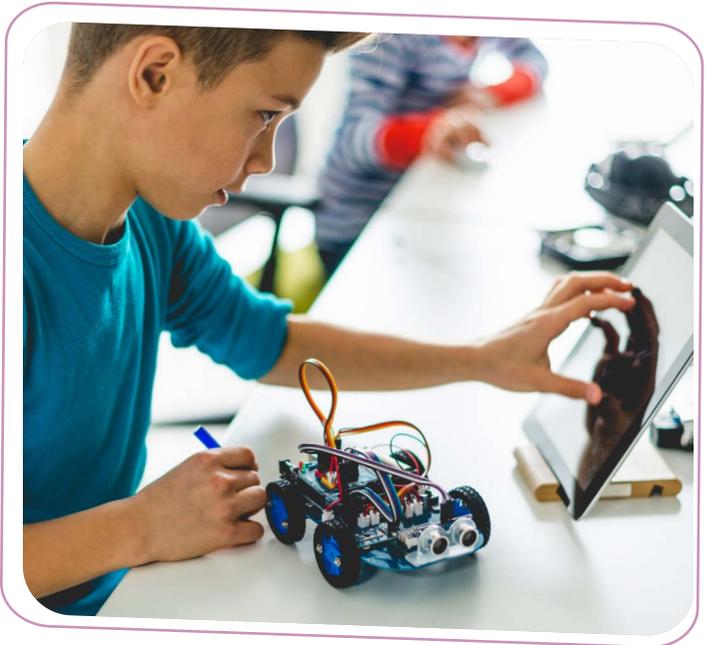
Helping B.C. students prepare for a bright future

Technology and other factors are changing the workforce and reshaping careers as we have known them in B.C. and around the world. When today's students enter the world of work, they'll be faced with new and emerging needs and demands.

New tools, changing demographics and an evolving labour market mean this generation will require a career plan and approach that's flexible and meets today's needs.

More than ever, today's students need opportunities to explore emerging career paths and develop the skills required to adapt and succeed in a rapidly changing world. To address this, the Government of B.C. has launched the K-12 Career Connections initiative as part of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan to increase supports for foundational skill development, career exploration, career sampler programs and work experience placements.

Launched in 2023, the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan is based on labour market data that identifies high priority industries and in-demand occupations where meaningful careers will exist well into the future, such as:



- Digital marketing
- Engineering
- Health care and social assistance
- Skilled trades
- Professional, scientific, and technical services (including B.C.'s tech sector)
- Education (including Early Childhood Education and the K-12 workforce)

By enhancing Career Education activities in B.C. schools, the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan is able to focus and support current Career Education efforts. Its goals are to enable young people to explore potential occupations, develop the skills needed to match high-opportunity occupations in growing sectors and enhance opportunities for students, including those living in rural/remote areas.



The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan works with B.C.'s Career Education curriculum

The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan has been designed to enhance B.C.'s existing Career Education curriculum and programming. This means that some current programs will offer new resources and additional opportunities. It will also create entirely new programs and resources to provide more students with the chance to build critical skills.

The K–12 Career Connections initiative will increase support for career exploration and foundational skill development for students in Grades K–8. For students in Grades 9–12, it will also expand:

- Career sampler programs
- Work experience placements
- Access to micro-credentials

A new program for parents and caregivers is being developed to provide more information about how they can take an active role as their child's career coach.

These are just a few of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan initiatives. This initiative is evolving, so please check [the website](#) for the latest details.

All together, these initiatives will help more students graduate from secondary school ready to transition to post-secondary study and training, and develop the skills they'll need to work in in-demand sectors.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Government of B.C. has invested \$480 million over three years to support the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, so more young people can get the training needed for in-demand careers.

The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan also supports people facing barriers

K–12 initiatives within the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan have been designed to prioritize supports for students who may face barriers to accessing career and skill development opportunities, including Indigenous students, students with disabilities or diverse abilities, children and youth in care and students living in rural or remote areas of the province.

Finding opportunities that fit your students' needs

All of the resources and programming opportunities created under the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan will provide various entry points for your students to explore and pursue their interests and potential career goals. Educators are encouraged to explore how to make the most of these opportunities.

To learn about the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan programming available in your area, connect with your school or school district and Career Education colleagues.

You can also access the complete [StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan](#).

SECTION 4:

How to develop a successful Career Education practice

Whether you're a new Career Education teacher or a seasoned professional, helping students prepare for life after secondary school is a big responsibility. Career Education is not only about getting students to complete their course credits, it's also about ensuring they're equipped to make a smooth transition from secondary school to further education, training or employment.

It's important to recognize that Career Education courses are unlike those in many other subject areas. The Career Education curriculum works best when it's tailored to each student in each class, and you'll be asked to guide students in diverse ways.

"My goal has always been to connect students with their passions and goals, and ensure they are accessing the right supports/ programs that are best suited to them at the time."

Heather Elliott, Acting Vice Principal,
Career Education, SD33 (Chilliwack)

These courses will require you to:

- ✓ Facilitate a lifelong journey of self-discovery while breaking down misconceptions about what this journey looks like.
- ✓ Curate opportunities for students to discover themselves and their place in the world.
- ✓ Support students as they explore potential career paths, meet professionals in a wide range of occupations and challenge stereotypes about certain occupations and who can do them.
- ✓ Encourage students to take advantage of the many ways to follow their career path and explore their preferred future, such as career sampler programs, work experience placements, post-secondary school tours, and career and job fairs.

Keep in mind that you don't have to define students' futures for them. Your objective is to deliver the curriculum in an engaging and meaningful way so students have the tools to explore what their future could look like.



DID YOU KNOW?

The National Occupations Classification (NOC) lists more than 500 occupations. You can explore them at [WorkBC](#) to find occupational profiles and information related to jobs in B.C.

“To be successful, Career Education teachers need to find out where each student is at and what they want to learn, and then figure out how to build that into the curriculum. Plus make learning fun and engaging.”

Allisson Badger, District Career Education Coordinator, School District 73 (Kamloops/Thompson)

- Create a “Human Library,” an event where you bring a group of people from various employment sectors to the library. Students can visit each person to ask questions and learn more about their job.
- Encourage students to talk to their parents and caregivers about their career journeys. You can even send them home with interview questions.
- Let data and research guide your way. There are many purposeful resources and activities that reflect best practices in career-life education. You can learn more about some of them at the end of this resource.
- Focus on career categories such as builders, creators, problem-solvers, persuaders, helpers or organizers, instead of job titles. This opens up a broader range of possibilities for students to consider.

Strategies for delivering Career Education at every level



IN GRADES K-7

- Find out what your students are interested in and then discuss those interests.
- Expose students to new experiences and people in different occupations, including people who challenge stereotypes.
- Find ways to weave career-related conversations and activities into parts of your curriculum.
- Build awareness about a broad range of careers. Try to avoid defaulting to familiar careers such as doctors, lawyers and teachers.
- Discuss the relationship between students’ extracurricular interests and potential careers.
- Share your personal career story with students.
- Invite guest speakers into the classroom to showcase the variety of occupations, and the winding and often unexpected nature of career journeys.



IN GRADES 8-9

- Encourage students to explore different career options and ideas.
- Organize career-related field trips and career exploration activities that expose your students to options and ideas for their future.
- Encourage students to read biographies to learn about different career journeys and life paths.
- Find relevant career- and work-related online content, aligned with your school’s or school district’s social media policies, that may open up genuine conversation. [WorkBC’s Career Trek](#) videos, for example, feature all kinds of careers that you can explore by salary, industry or education.
- Explore how school activities can become conduits to career-related discovery.

- Discuss career-related activities (such as jobs and volunteer work) that students are already engaged with in their community. Find further opportunities for them to get involved in Career Education outside the classroom.
- Share your personal career story, and bring in guest speakers to talk about a variety of occupations.
- Encourage students to talk to their parents and caregivers about their career-life journeys. You can even send them home with interview questions.
- Help students develop job skills that include building a strong work ethic and practicing self-promotional skills that will eventually lead to better resume writing, interviewing, communicating and collaboration strategies.
- Use resources such as [WorkBC](#) and [EducationPlannerBC](#) to explore labour market trends and labour gaps, and the post-secondary programs that match students' interests.
- Make them aware of scholarships, community grants and [StudentAidBC](#).
- Explore [apprenticeship programs](#) and work experience opportunities, and how they can ladder into post-secondary education and training.
- Research dual credit opportunities in your school or school district. Visit a dual credit course or program to get a better understanding of these opportunities.
- Develop life skills related to money management, interpersonal relationships and work-life balance.
- Set up workstations with resources that are helpful at various stages of the world of work learning journey.
- Create a post-secondary transition plan that's realistic, attainable and aligned with students' aspirations.



IN GRADES 10–12

- Explore a diverse range of career programs and resources, even if students think they know their path! After all, having multiple potential pathways is often desirable.
- Create a [vision board](#) to map students' interests and goals. Students can do this by cutting and pasting together images that represent their vision for the future.
- Research post-secondary credential programs and their prerequisite courses, entry requirements and tuition costs. Consider different pathways to accessing these programs, such as dual credit courses, transfer programs, and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition.
- Share information about career-related events and info sessions, and encourage students to attend. Follow up with them to get their feedback and reflections.



DID YOU KNOW?

Students in many schools across B.C. can take post-secondary courses while still in secondary school, often for free. These are called dual credit courses. Planning for these courses typically starts in Grade 10, and in addition to providing post-secondary credits, these courses usually count as elective credits at the Grade 12 level.



DID YOU KNOW?

The average person will change jobs or occupations numerous times throughout their lifetime as they build on their skills, competencies and experience.

Helpful information about careers

As you get settled in your role, you'll start accumulating key information about careers, occupations and the world of work to use in your teaching. In the elementary school years, use this information to build activities in other subject areas. For example, in math class, you can include discussions about real-life applications and occupations where math is used regularly. Career exploration in elementary school is about building awareness, trying new things, asking good questions and getting exposed to a wide variety of career areas.

Once students reach Grade 10, the curriculum includes active discovery of labour market and occupational information. Consider looking up information online with your students or taking students to the library to fill in any details you don't have yourself. The Resources section of this guide offers some excellent starting points.

Considering employability skills

Another important aspect of Career Education is the development and practice of core employability skills that will help students enter into and advance through the workforce. Not only will these kinds of skills help students gain awareness about themselves, their habits and their ability to succeed in the world of work, but they'll also become essential for students involved in work experience programs, looking for part-time work and participating in extracurricular activities.

Some of the skills you might consider integrating into your coursework include:

- ✓ Active listening
- ✓ Work ethic and enthusiasm
- ✓ Time management and organizational skills
- ✓ Exercising good judgment
- ✓ Communicating respectfully

Your students will likely be at different stages in their development of these skills and attributes, and part of your role will involve identifying how you can best support their learning.

You may also want to introduce fun ways to practice specific job readiness skills, such as mock interviews, in which they learn how to interact with an interviewer and present the best version of themselves to others.

Connecting with your students

There are few other areas in B.C.'s curriculum where you can truly get to know each and every student. Building relationships with your students is part of the foundation you'll need to guide them effectively in planning for their future. Your ability to connect with students and share your enthusiasm and experience can help them realize their potential, and also address fears or apprehensions they may feel about their future. You can encourage them to be optimistic in their choices, whether they already know what program of study they want to pursue, or they're still learning about the world of work and the many opportunities they could explore.

One thing to note is that some students grow up with a strong sense of their interests and aspirations from a young age, and nothing along the way will deter them. In secondary school, this group is often referred to as the "running start" group, as they may already be well

on their way toward their chosen path. Others spend years searching for a career path that fulfills them. These students need exposure to a wide variety of career experiences to find out what they enjoy. They're often referred to as "exploratory wayfinders". You'll likely have both types of students in your class.

As your Career Education course begins, try to get a sense of where your students' interests lie. If common themes arise (e.g., sports, animals, arts), you can tailor the course activities toward these themes. Just know that as they learn and grow, even within the course of a year, their interests and passions could change and evolve too.

Connecting with parents and caregivers

Sharing the progress you're making in the classroom with your students' families can help to ensure Career Education best practices and key messages are reinforced at home and aligned with school-based learnings. After all, a student's parents and caregivers are typically the most influential people in their career journey. It's a good idea to engage and involve them in opportunities and events as much as possible.

A few ways you can engage with parents and caregivers:

- ✓ Send a newsletter
- ✓ Email them directly with updates, opportunities and program information
- ✓ Host career information events
- ✓ Share information about post-secondary info sessions
- ✓ Invite them to meet at parent-teacher nights
- ✓ Invite family members to join the class and discuss their careers
- ✓ Use the school's social media channels

"Your career journey is part of your life journey. Draw upon your experiences. These can enrich your ability to teach this course."

Trevor Knowlton, Retired, Former Vice Principal,
Careers Programs, School District No. 67
(Okanagan Skaha)



DID YOU KNOW?

Parents' and caregivers' engagement in students' school life often drops off significantly in secondary school. As students become more independent, many parents and caregivers assume that their children are effectively self-managing the process of planning for their future.

You can go beyond the required course reporting by helping parents and caregivers understand the "why" behind the career and personal development work you're doing. This may ease the anxiety that so many of them may be facing about their child's future, and help to ensure they're supporting their child in navigating the decisions they'll need to make.

Fostering community connections

Your local community will prove invaluable in helping you to develop a broad perspective on local labour market trends, needs and opportunities, along with potential work experience employers, mentors and guest speakers.

At some point, you'll want to make connections with:

- **Local employers who can potentially host work experience students**, come speak in your classroom and share details about opportunities, skills gaps and the future outlook for their industry.
- **Local organizations and business associations** like the Chamber of Commerce and other groups that can help bridge career explorations with the world of work.
- **Local city employees**, the local health authority and large employers.
- **Local post-secondary schools**, including universities, colleges and skilled trades training providers.
- **Local non-profit organizations** with a mandate to help youth succeed in the workforce.

Building these kinds of connections will reveal opportunities for you and your students, and provide a more holistic perspective on careers and the world of work.

Connecting with employers

Local employers are an essential part of your Career Education community. They can be key partners in providing unique insights into careers for elementary students and work experience opportunities for secondary school students, and are an important source of “on-the-ground” information about the latest industry needs and trends.

Employers can also serve as mentors for your students, guest speakers in your classroom, and may be willing to open their workplace to tours and field trips.

Understanding employers' immediate needs and exposing students to professional work environments can also help you to assess which of your students' employability skills need to be strengthened. Use the [A Guide for Employers About Career Education in B.C.](#) as a resource to start conversations with employers.

A few tips for engaging with employers:

- **Know their capacity and respect their limits.** Some employers will have 15 minutes to offer you, others may only have a few minutes.
- **Reflect the mutual benefits of working with students.** While students are looking for opportunities to build skills and experiences, employers also get the benefit of training their potential future workforce.
- **Have students greet and thank employers.** Whether they're visiting the school or hosting them on a career field trip, ensure students thank employers for their generosity and time.
- **Feature employers in school media channels.** Showcasing your partnerships and ensuring employers get credit and kudos not only helps employers gain positive exposure in their community, it creates a community culture where career programming is celebrated.
- **Stay in touch regularly.** Aim to build genuine relationships and keep in regular contact with employers by reaching out periodically and sending them your newsletter. If you're on their radar, they may be more inclined to say yes to your requests when they have capacity to engage with you.



Connecting with post-secondary institutions and approved training providers

Forging connections with post-secondary institutions and approved training providers in your community will help you learn about what programs and fields of study are available, and ensure you're in the loop on key information around admissions processes and requirements, upcoming information sessions, tours and support services, and dual credit opportunities. Many post-secondary institutions have recruiters who will come to schools and help students prepare their applications.

Connecting students of all ages to local post-secondary institutions and approved training providers will help to bridge the gap between school and the broader community. Students should visit post-secondary campuses long before they're in Grade 12. You can actively seek out post-secondary events such as open houses, skills competitions and science fairs.

Be sure to include local colleges, trade schools and training opportunities in your outreach, as not all students will necessarily attend university after graduation.

When considering training providers for skilled trades exploration, ensure they are affiliated with the Youth Work in Trades Award and SkilledTradesBC, and approved to deliver training.

Supporting students to be successful

There are many career and community supports in place for students to develop their skills and interests.

A few things to keep in mind:

- ✓ Consider what may be needed to create a positive experience for participating students (e.g., cultural safety supports, resources and accommodations as outlined in a student's Individual Education Plan) and plan accordingly.
- ✓ Research accessibility and other requirements when exploring post-secondary opportunities for your students. Many post-secondary institutions have made accessibility a priority, and have accessibility centres that students can connect with before they start classes. Take time to explore post-secondary institutions so you can support students with the most current information.

Some of the most important conversations you'll have with students will be about further education or training beyond secondary school. These conversations can take place any at point in a student's K-12 journey, but will typically occur more often when students are in Grades 10-12. When that time comes, educators are encouraged to help students explore the full range of options available

for post-secondary learning, including those that best align with each student's goals, passions and strengths.

After they complete secondary school, some students may wish to pursue on-the-job skilled trades training; some will want to take a year off to travel and explore; and others may wish to transition to post-secondary study at a university or college. All of these learning opportunities can become valuable parts of an individual's career-life journey. Students will be best supported when you take the time to listen to their dreams and aspirations, provide them with information about different options for post-secondary learning and help them navigate the path they choose to pursue.

Planning out your year

Whether you're just starting out in Career Education or have been teaching it for some time, you'll eventually be able to plan out your year in advance based on themes and learnings that relate to the curriculum.

In the beginning though, you may find yourself going from week to week as you establish your course priorities and materials. Building lessons as you go is an effective way to get started, and eventually you'll have a sense of the rhythm that works for you and your students.

If you need help creating a scope and sequence for your year, reach out to your colleagues or to the [Career Education Society of BC \(CES\)](#). Here's an example you can look to for inspiration from [School District 73](#).

Use the resources at the end of this guide to deepen your learning about careers and discover the many tools available to help you plan out your course activities.

"Career educators need to arm themselves with the research and the 'why' behind our work. It is what speaks to school boards, district leaders, administrators and most importantly, teachers. Once they know that this work is impactful, the more they will weave Career Education into their everyday practice."

Bonnie Alexander, School District 61
District Career Coordinator, Pathways & Partnerships (Greater Victoria)



DID YOU KNOW?

Not all students will respond to parents' and caregivers' efforts to get involved in their career planning process. Sometimes encouraging a career mentor from outside the family can be a good way to help your students get the support that works best for them.

SECTION 5:

Resources and next steps

There's a wealth of Career Education and labour market resources available to career educators in B.C.

This section equips you with the information, guidance and support you need to work your way through the B.C. Career Education curriculum and delve into the finer details of career-life planning, labour market information and opportunities for post-secondary education and training.

You'll notice that some of these resources have been created or updated as recently as 2024, while others are a little older. As programs, resources and curricula evolve, it's a good idea to review the resources and websites directly for updates.

Labour market resources

▶ [British Columbia Labour Market Outlook 2024-2034](#)

This rolling 10-year forecast provides a current, in-depth look at 64 traditional industries and 2 emerging industries: the clean economy and the care economy. It projects needs for education and training relating to in-demand industries and occupations. Be sure to review the data for your region.

▶ [National Occupational Classification](#)

Canada's national system for occupations helps you to learn about an occupation's main duties, educational requirements and other useful details.

Career planning and education resources

▶ [BC Career Education Curriculum](#)

This website offers a deeper philosophical understanding of B.C.'s curriculum from K-12. Here, you can review the big ideas, curricular and core competencies, and content learning standards for each grade level.

▶ [B.C. Dual Credit Guide](#)

Developed by B.C.'s ECC, this guide will help you understand B.C.'s dual credit system so you can advise your students on how to include dual credit programs as part of their post-secondary learning plan.

▶ [B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care Courses](#)

As you expose your students to a wide array of opportunities for career exploration and engagement, become familiar with the ECC's numerous career-related courses, including:

> [Work Experience \(WEX\) 12A and 12B](#)

This pair of 4-credit elective courses provides students with guidance and support as they participate in paid or unpaid, in-person or remote work experience placements.

> [Workforce Training Certificates 12 \(WTC\)](#)

This elective course provides students with the opportunity to participate in workforce training opportunities while in secondary school, and bundle them together to receive up to 4 credits toward graduation.

> [Youth Train in Trades \(TRN\)](#)

In partnership with [SkilledTradesBC](#), this dual credit program offers funding for students to complete their technical training while still in secondary school.

➤ [Career Education Guide K-7](#)

This guidebook, available through [School District 73](#) (Kamloops-Thompson), shares Career Education strategies and vetted resources that support the K-7 Career Education curriculum. It includes both direct and integrated learning approaches that inspire students to expand their horizons and explore their career options.

➤ [Career Education K-9 Content](#)

This continuous view diagram illustrates Career Education topics spanning personal development, connections to community and life and career planning.

➤ [Career Education Society of BC \(CES\)](#)

The Career Education Society of BC represents all regions of British Columbia, influencing the direction of career education and development through national and provincial representation on boards and advisory committees. CES works together with leaders in education, business, industry and government to champion career education as an essential life skill.

➤ [Career Exploration Resources for K-8 Teachers](#)

This handbook, developed by [Education and Employers](#) for B.C.'s Ministry of Education and Child Care, features a variety of guides, activities and lesson plans to help K-8 educators plan career exploration activities.

➤ [EducationPlannerBC](#)

This site offers tools to help you and your students research programs offered by B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions, including program entrance requirements. Be sure to use the [Find Your Path](#) tool which allows students to explore career categories and occupational paths.

➤ [Guiding Principles of Career Development](#)

Created by the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC) and backed by abundant research, this graphic overview provides foundational principles to consult often, as your students progress through K-12 and beyond in their career journeys.

➤ [SkilledTradesBC](#)

As the crown agency that advances B.C.'s skilled trades training system, SkilledTradesBC promotes equitable access to skilled trades, and upholds standards for apprenticeship training, certification and program funding. You can share its skilled trades quiz with your students to help them identify skilled trades that match their interests.

➤ [StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan](#)

In spring 2023, the Government of B.C. released this plan to address shifting labour market trends and create new supports for British Columbians, including students who have yet to enter the workforce. It provides information about new initiatives such as increased student financial aid, expanded programs and other training resources for your students as they consider their post-secondary journey.

➤ [WorkBC Career Discovery Quizzes](#)

Students can take career and personality quizzes to discover how their abilities, work preferences and interests can help them explore careers that best suit them.

➤ [WorkBC Teachers and Career Counsellors Section](#)

This collection of materials is broken down into sections for Grades 5–9 and Grades 10–12 CLE and CLC, and provides accessible and interactive lesson plans, learning activities, tools and resources to support your lesson planning or program building.

You'll want to explore the [Find Your Fit Tour](#), geared toward students in Grades 5–10, and consider signing up to have the tour visit your school. You can also reference [WorkBC's Career Trek](#), an online exploration tool featuring all kinds of careers across B.C. that you can search by salary, industry or education.

➤ [WorkSafeBC](#)

The Student WorkSafe 10–12 resource package includes [Resources for Teachers](#) and numerous guides for students learning independently. You'll also find a [Workplace Safety Knowledge Test](#) and [Workplace Safety Certificate](#) to assess student learning.

Resources to share with your students and their parents and caregivers

➤ [A Guide for Parents and Caregivers About Career Education in B.C.](#)

A guide to Career Education in B.C. for parents and caregivers, developed by B.C.'s Ministry of Education and Child Care. A companion resource to this educator guide, the parents and caregivers guide helps parents and caregivers support their children through the K–12 Career Education curriculum.

➤ [The Early Years: Career Development for Young Children. A Guide for Parents/Guardians](#)

Researched and created by CERIC, this guide focuses on children aged 3 to 8. It illustrates the many ways that Career Development begins early in a child's life, so you can reflect upon the ways they're already exploring pathways and revealing their interests and passions.

➤ [WorkBC Parents' Section](#)

A resource to help start conversations between parents and caregivers and their children, this step-by-step guide provides the opportunity to move through topics one by one, or to choose the most relevant topic. Don't miss introducing parents and caregivers to the interactive [career discovery quizzes](#) and the [career exploration videos](#). There's also a wealth of [resources for Indigenous Peoples](#).



StrongerBC
for everyone

**career
education
society of BC**