



WINDSOR-ESSEX CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Skilled Trades Centre

WECDSB opens new training facility in Tecumseh

(Tecumseh, Ontario, Wednesday, October 11, 2023) – Students interested in exciting careers in the trades will gain the valuable experience they need to get a great head start at the [St. Anne Catholic Skilled Trades Academy and Learning Centre](#), which was officially opened at a ceremony this morning.

Located at 12050 Arbour Street in Tecumseh, the centre is the new home for Grade 10-12 students working towards their apprenticeships in carpentry, masonry, plumbing, and welding. There are currently about 80 students utilizing the facility, which includes four traditional classrooms, as well as shops for carpentry, masonry, and plumbing. Welding booths are currently being installed and will be ready for the next school year. The facility – home to a CAD lab, as well as a simulation lab where students can experience other non-traditional trades – has the capacity to expand by another 50 students if necessary.

The opening of the centre – former home to St. Anne Catholic High School before it relocated to its present location in Belle River in 2007 – is the next logical step for a school board which has led the way in skilled trades programming, according to Director of Education Emelda Byrne.

“Back in 2015, along with our partners at the Ontario Masonry Training Centre, we launched our masonry program at F.J. Brennan Catholic High School,” Byrne said. “It was a program that took off quickly and would eventually become the model for our extremely successful [Construction Academies](#). Since then we have launched academy programs in electrical, plumbing, and carpentry & construction at three different high schools, and hundreds of students have started down the pathway towards exciting careers in the trades, earning many of their apprenticeship hours in our schools and in co-op placements at worksites throughout Windsor-Essex.”

Board Chair Fulvio Valentinis said the school board has heard “loud and clear” from its industry partners about the need for qualified, job-ready graduates who can fill the skills gaps so that our local economy can continue to succeed.

“With the provincial government’s expectations for new housing starts, a new hospital on the horizon, the arrival of the new battery plant, and all of the other spin-off manufacturing associated with those projects, there are going to be innumerable opportunities for the

“Building communities of faith, hope and service”

students who graduate from our new skilled trades center,” Valentinis said. “As a community partner, our school board has a responsibility to provide the opportunity and the training for those students to gain the skills they need to occupy these very lucrative jobs, so that they can stay right here in Windsor-Essex to work and raise their families.”

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