

**A Review of Exemplary Career Development Programs
In British Columbia**

By:

Don Hutchinson
Brian Leonard
Calvin Ravening
Mark Semple

A GRADUATING PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTERS OF EDUCATION

In the

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
(EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP)

We accept this paper as conforming to the required standard

The University of British Columbia

June, 2005

Don Hutchinson, 2005
Brian Leonard, 2005
Calvin Ravening, 2005
Mark Semple, 2005

ABSTRACT

The British Columbia Ministry of Education declared in January 2004 that career development would be one of its top three goals for public education in British Columbia. This study looked at three districts in the province widely recognized as leaders in the field of career development. The purpose of the study was to identify specific successful practices and programs used by those three districts that could serve as a model for other districts throughout the province that are in the process of developing, expanding, and implementing career development programs.

Recent literature focusing on career development has raised a historical debate about whether career education should respond directly to a specific labour market or strive to create a more globally educated student. Other literature traces the history of vocational programs throughout western democracies as well as the benefits of such programs, including improved socialization and future career successes. The researchers used primarily qualitative research in the form of interviews with district and school coordinators and program teachers. This approach allowed the researchers to probe deeply into values, beliefs, and experiences of the educators interviewed.

The researchers came to the following major conclusions: districts with successful career programs value and make them a priority; partnerships with business and labour are essential; communication between school and district personal is needed; funding cutbacks need not be the end of programs; and that these programs have an enormous positive impact on the lives of students. From the conclusions, the researchers made the following major recommendations: districts should identify career education as a district priority and include it as part of the District Accountability Contract; districts must develop and foster positive working relationships with business, labour, and post-secondary institutions; in order to sustain program viability, districts need to actively market their programs through a variety of methods; finally, districts need to have a senior-level district co-coordinator with support staff.