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# Dynamic new pathways

## *Programs in manufacturing, technology, and arts to launch at Assumption*

(Windsor, Ontario, Feb. 27, 2016) – New programs that better prepare students for university, and better equip them for careers in manufacturing industries and high-tech sectors, will soon be launched at Assumption College Catholic High School, the WECDSB announced today.

Beginning in the second semester of the 2016-17 school year, Assumption will offer:

- Expanded programming in the area of advanced manufacturing, especially in such high-tech areas as robotics and aerospace;
- New computer coding/programming and app development curriculum that will be integrated into computer science programs;
- Enhanced arts programming associated with the International Baccalaureate program;
- The Board will also begin the application process to create a middle years International Baccalaureate program.

“We have a duty to provide our students with the skills they’ll need to find meaningful careers in the occupations of the future,” said Director of Education Paul Picard. “We’ve heard loud and clear from industries that their growth is being limited because they don’t have the skilled workforce they need to expand. We have a role to play in addressing the higher-than-average unemployment rates that have plagued this area for so long by encouraging our students to consider manufacturing as a career option, but also by providing them with the foundation they need to be employable in that sector.”

One of the Board’s first priorities will be to establish a task force to work with potential industry partners and other key stakeholders who may want to provide advice and expertise in developing specific curriculum, or providing resources that will help in the development of programming and facilities at Assumption.

“It will be very important for us to listen to our industry partners as this expanded programming evolves,” said Board Chair Barbara Holland. “Manufacturing is a sector with some of the highest projections for occupational growth, but local employers are having difficulty in attracting youth to positions that are available. The

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evolution of technology has become vital to the sector, and the use of robotics, machines, and software has created a dramatic shift in the skill sets that employers are looking for. So we'll be relying heavily on our friends in industry to help us better understand what their needs are so that we can build our facilities and programs around those needs."

With existing programs in robotics and aerospace at Assumption, it makes perfect sense to expand manufacturing programs, but also to introduce more modern computer and information technology programming, Picard said. Robotics students are equipped with iPads and are accessing course materials through iTunes University, so they're comfortable and familiar with how our curriculum has become digitized.

"Expanding coding and app development will add another element for those students so they'll be able to see the big picture of how leading-edge technology is driving the manufacturing industry, but also just how many high-tech employment opportunities exist in the sector that they might not have considered," added Holland.

Expanding arts programming related to the IB program is in keeping with the way arts are generally being incorporated in to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) subjects, said Picard.

"Visual and performing arts are an essential part of IB middle years curriculum," he said. "By immersing IB students in arts and culture programming at an earlier age, we believe they'll stay interested in those disciplines as they advance into upper years, which will help us grow programs in drama, dance, media and music for IB and non-IB students alike at Assumption."

"Immersing students in the arts is a critical part of fostering the kind of creative thinking students need to survive in sectors that have traditionally been based more on STEM subjects," added Holland. "So offering expanded arts programming is a key piece of the environment we are trying to create at Assumption."

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