

Proposal for the expansion of the existing HCLC Hospitality and
Tourism Program at the Highlands Community Learning Centre

Prepared for

The ad hoc community nutrition committee

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Proposal for the expansion of the existing HCLC Hospitality and Tourism Program at the Highlands Learning Centre

Introduction

The success of the Hospitality and Tourism course at the Highlands Community Learning Centre (HCLC) is attributed to the design and content of the course as well as the innovative approach to service excellence within the community. The students of the HCLC have invited several community groups, school board officials and trustees to luncheons that they have planned, prepared and served as part of the requirements of the Hospitality and Tourism course. Positive encouragement from the health unit, the community and school officials has prompted the course to expand to provide “meals of the week” or “meal deals” for sale to the public, as well as bake sales and a soup kitchen.

Recognizing the success of the current Hospitality and Tourism course, the HCLC staff and health unit believe that there is an opportunity to engage the community in the development of an integrated education project that will expand current community-based learning/training and employment opportunities for Haliburton youth. This project would:

- expand the Hospitality and Tourism course presently taught by Highlands Learning Centre teachers supported by Health for Life/HKPRD and the services of a volunteer, from the current six week single credit program to a multi-credit integrated package,
- engage the practical support of additional community partners in the training and employment of Haliburton youth.

- provide an opportunity for the school board to meet the new requirements to maintain secondary students in school to the age of 18 as well as expand the variety of learning choices for students who are not successful in traditional classrooms
- advance existing healthy living programs involving food access and nutrition education

Description of the Project, Vision and Scope

The Grade 11 Hospitality and Tourism (Workplace Preparation) course currently taught at the Highlands Learning Centre focuses on food preparation and management, hospitality and tourism activities, equipment, and facilities. Students learn how to prepare, present, and serve food; plan, manage and promote activities; and use necessary equipment. Throughout the course students also learn the fundamentals of providing high-quality service to produce customer satisfaction (*Ontario Curriculum Grades 11 and 12: Technological Education*, p. 93). While the grade 11 course has no pre-requisites, it provides the necessary background permitting students to advance to the Grade 12 Hospitality and Tourism course.

In addition to the essentials of food preparation, management and service that are presently at the core of this course, our students learn the principles of healthy eating and strategies for judicious selection in the food they purchase. As well they are exposed to models of healthy nutrition, and increase their access to nutritious food through the services of the Health Unit and Health for Life.

Building on our current experience, using both grade 11 and grade 12 Hospitality and Tourism courses as our basis, and the additional flexibility of the Ontario Youth

Apprenticeship Program, we propose expanding our Hospitality and Tourism course beyond its current time frame of six weeks in a multi-stage process. We want to develop a program that would:

- permit students to complete their OSSD,
- allow them to gain practical experience in a work environment (a community kitchen),
- develop entrepreneurial skills,
- earn apprenticeship papers as an assistant cook and/or a cook,
- provide an avenue for students to contribute to their community by contributing to it in a positive way
- provide various community agencies with additional options for furthering their own mandates
- advance existing healthy living programs involving food access and
- further nutrition education

Stage One

We would begin by enhancing current course offerings to provide our students with the necessary pre-requisites for admission to an assistant cook apprenticeship (completion of grade 10). Students would take additional credits in an integrated package that would include Mathematics, Science, English, Hospitality and Tourism, Entrepreneurship, Marketing. A related cooperative education placement or participation in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program would be mandatory.

We would expand current facilities to establish a community kitchen as a mutually beneficial cooperative venture thereby making additional entrepreneurial

opportunities available to our students while they provide service to various community groups. The kitchen would offer a real work environment whereby students can gain social and employment skills. They would

- Work under the direction and supervision of a professional cook,
- Develop and practice their entrepreneurial skills (marketing, menu planning, customer relations, accounting),
- Earn additional professional certificates (Super Host, WHMIS, CPR, First Aid),
- Prepare, serve and deliver meals to various community groups or clients such as Meals to Go, or the hot lunch programs at county schools,
- Supply an expanded resource for community programs that already provide food within their programs such as the 'Food for Thought' employment workshops sponsored by HRSDC and the Moms and Tots program at SIRCH.

Stage Two

With community partners such as OYAP, Sir Sandford Fleming College, the Haliburton Development Corporation, we would plan, design and deliver an assistant cook apprenticeship (1 year program) at this site. Students could continue to earn credits towards their OSSD while completing the training required for this professional certification.

We will continue to develop the community kitchen so that students participate in some of the management decisions for this facility and more experienced students assist in the mentoring of younger ones. Fees charged and collected for the community kitchen service should begin to offset some of the original development costs for this project.

We will establish an advisory board that includes representatives from the administrative partners as well as community representatives to provide support and suggestions for the project's ongoing development and implementation.

Stage Three

In the final stage we would continue to provide the necessary academic courses for the completion of the OSSD while continuing to provide upgrading courses for older students. We would cooperatively plan, design and deliver a cook apprenticeship (3 year program) in partnership with Sir Sandford Fleming College. The Community Kitchen would be well established enough to expand co-operative education opportunities for beginning secondary students. The initial project could now initiate/deliver programs like The Junior Chef to familiarize senior elementary students with career opportunities in the food industry by providing Job Shadowing experiences as well as practical experience with food preparation and modelling healthy eating habits.

Background

There are several indications that the development of this initiative is an opportunity whose time has come. These include

- The successful community partnership supporting the design and delivery of the present Hospitality and Tourism course at the Highlands Learning Centre,
- Current healthy nutrition programs offered to students and community groups by the Health Unit and Health for Life,
- The August 2004 approval of a Board Policy on Nutrition in TLDSB Schools,
- Recent developments in Ontario secondary education that increased resources to support at-risk students (Student Success), the increased flexibility included in the Ontario Young Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), the requirement that secondary students remain in school until the age of 18 and current initiatives undertaken by the Board to offset projected reductions in student enrolment.
- The distribution of Program guidelines for the Student Nourishment Program issued by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services in December 2004
- The published results of a community consultation conducted by the Workforce Development Board in the cities of Kawartha Lakes and Peterborough and the counties of Northumberland and Haliburton, that supports the rationale for this project.

Our current experience with the community partnership that has evolved through then the Hospitality and Tourism course is the first and most important of these and the driving force behind this proposal.

The Hospitality and Tourism Course

Teachers at the Highland Community Learning Centre have, for the past three years, taught a food preparation program as part of the grade 11 Hospitality and Tourism course. The course runs for four hours per day over a six-week period. Usually it is offered in the latter part of the school year (after March Break) using the renovated kitchen in the basement of the Centre as a classroom. A volunteer who supervises and directs the students in the kitchen supports the HLC teaching staff. The program presently permits successful students to obtain one of the following two credits:

- A Hospitality and Tourism, grade 11 Workplace Preparation or
- A Hospitality and Tourism, grade 12, Workplace Preparation

And the following three certificates

- Smart Serve
- National Sanitation Training Program (NSTP)
- Service Excellence

These certificates are included in a list of over two dozen certificates identified by recent Board research as being recognized by employers and, in some cases, as being mandatory for the workplace. In addition, the program provides students with

- Practical experience in nutrition and food preparation,
- Opportunities to prepare and serve food to pre-selected community groups with the supervision, direction and assistance of a community volunteer.

Interested students can also move to a co-op placement with a willing employer and earn an additional co-operative education credit. This program also introduces

students to the basics of WHMIS a workplace health and safety certification that is completed in a working environment.

The Grade 11 Hospitality and Tourism (Workplace Preparation) course focuses on food preparation and management, hospitality and tourism activities, equipment, and facilities. Students learn how to prepare, present, and serve food; plan, manage and promote relevant activities; and use necessary equipment. Throughout the course students also learn the fundamentals of providing high-quality service to produce customer satisfaction (*Ontario Curriculum Grades 11 and 12: Technological Education*, p. 93). While the grade 11 course itself has no pre-requisites, it provides the necessary background permitting students to advance to the Grade 12 Hospitality and Tourism course.

We propose to offer students both these credits as part of an integrated package that will include English, Mathematics, Entrepreneurship and co-operative education credits. Integrating course material will create a learning environment that is both innovative and flexible. Our students will have opportunities to consolidate their learning by developing strong relationships with their teachers and making connections to their community. These are among optimal learning conditions for at risk students as supported by the research (*Think, Literacy, Success 2003*).

Current Nutrition Programs

The principles underlying student nourishment programs endorsed by provincial government initiatives as well as the healthy nutrition programs offered to students and community groups as cooperative initiatives by the Health Unit, and the School Board have produced several successful cooperative ventures. Government guidelines

encourage the engagement of community groups and local stakeholders in the design and implementation of student nourishment programs. (*Student Nourishment Program, 2004*)

In August 2004, the Board approved a nutrition policy and procedure to ‘ensure that students have equitable access to healthy food choices and that through curriculum activities. . . [students will] develop an appreciation for the value of proper nutrition.’ Among the objectives of this policy is the development of school-based nourishment programs in all TLDSB schools and the encouragement of partnerships between schools and community partners to accomplish this. The Health Unit is a major partner in this initiative.

Additional cooperative, nutrition-related projects are

- initiatives to establish a Food Distribution Center in Haliburton County,
- the application for a Job Creation grant to hire a coordinator for the centre in partnership with Fleming’s Job Connect
- the composition and work of the Community FooD Action Committee that already involves representatives of social action groups and community members.

Our proposal can take advantage of the working partnerships that have already developed through these community nutrition initiatives.

Educational Initiatives

Recent developments in Ontario secondary education have spurred the growth of alternative educational programs to provide secondary students with a variety of non-traditional ways to complete their high school diploma. Government grants support the development of programs for at-risk students through the Student Success initiative. The

Ontario Young Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) is characterised by increased flexibility to encourage high school students to actively consider technical training and begin that training while still in school. The recent government mandate that will require secondary students remain in school until the age of 18 is currently challenging school boards to develop programs to fill an immediate need.

Our timely proposal will permit us to take advantage of these developments by accessing current the resources, and applying for further financial assistance through government grants.

What the Research Says

The published results of a community consultation conducted by the Workforce Development Board in the cities of Kawartha Lakes and Peterborough and the counties of Northumberland and Haliburton support the economic rationale for this project.

The *Trends, Opportunities Priorities Report 2004* produced and delivered by the Workforce Development Board in the fall of 2004 identified training in literacy, language and soft skills as the number one teaching priority in Haliburton County. These skills are valued locally since jobs in the service sector particularly in tourism and hospitality are the second largest source of employment here. The 2001 census reveals that the primary occupations for women in Haliburton County include a participation rate of 56.1% in accommodation and food services. Similarly the primary occupations for men indicated that their participation rate in accommodation and food services was 44.6%.

The number of jobs in this sector continues to expand and the proportion of Ontario workers employed in this sector alone has increased “from more than half to

nearly three-quarters“ in the past thirty years.

<http://119.71.28.92//eng/training/apprenticeship/Skills/service.html>).

Among the six significant common themes identified in this report, there are three in particular which support the rationale for this proposal. They are:

- lack of employer priority placed on training
- a scarcity of training opportunities in rural areas
- outward migration of youth (*Top Report, 2004 p. 4*)

As well, the Haliburton County focus group identified these top two priorities:

Language, literacy, and soft skills training and

The outward migration of youth

Among the suggested next steps to address Haliburton priorities was a stronger correlation between academics and practice to increase student exposure to real life situations. The anticipated outcome would be the creation of well-rounded youth better able to deliver high levels of performance sooner for potential employers. The focus group also advocated the teaching of soft skills as part of the school curriculum. In order to address the problem of outward migration of our youth, the focus group supported the promotion/creation of co-op and entrepreneurship opportunities for students to provide them with life experiences and increased value for future employment opportunities (*TOP Report, 2004*). We believe this proposal begins to directly and effectively address these needs.

Indicators of Success

The annual review and assessment process should include the following indicators.

- # of registered students
- # credits granted
- # of graduates
- # of days/years in operation
- Satisfaction of participants

- Budgets met
- Quality of Program achieved
- Success of its graduates (obtaining employment, beginning entrepreneurial ventures)
- Community Support
- Imitation

Examples of Comparable Programs Elsewhere

Our planning processes are reinforced by descriptions of similar programs that have been successfully offered elsewhere in Ontario, in Ottawa and Toronto. These programs engage youth in the creation and management of community kitchens, provide non-traditional learning opportunities and give back the community by donating its financial proceeds. Here follow summary descriptions of these two programs obtained from their websites.

Roasted Cherry Coffee House

The *Roasted Cherry Coffee House* is a youth entrepreneurial program of New Beginnings for Youth, a local Ottawa charity that serves the needs of youth and has supported learning outside of traditional classrooms since 1986.

The *Roasted Cherry* is a coffee house with a difference. It is a space where youth can transfer learned knowledge into real world settings, learn and accept responsibility, accountability and develop a sense of working as a team. It is run and managed by youth.

It provides a training ground for youth to develop and enhance their entrepreneurial skills. The team is made up of university, post graduate, high school co-op, college and alternative education students.

All proceeds generated through sales, catering and tips are returned to the community in support of youth leadership, development and the advancement of education.

The Coffee House also provides a wide range of co-op opportunities including:

- Computer graphics
- Website design and maintenance
- Finance
- Customer relations
- Catering
- Food preparation and menu planning
- Marketing

The River Restaurant

The *River Restaurant* is a friendly fine dining restaurant in Toronto's west-end operated by All.A.Board Youth ventures, a private, non-profit charitable organization. It offers year-long programs to at-risk youth who learn valuable food preparation and service skills that enable them to secure long-term employment. In addition to the restaurant, this organization also operates a program called *The Woodshop* which manufactures furniture and multi-unit wood products. In the fall of 2003 this organization also supported the establishment of a new company called *The Frozen Pantry*. It prepares and delivers convenient everyday meals freezer sealed and frozen in individual single portions.

These facilities offer solid employment training to their clients (approximately 40 youth annually) and a commitment to community involvement. The training program

does not include academic credits. As well, All-A-Board rejected the ‘unnecessary constraints of government support requiring training programs to help youth in three month cycles’ They determined that this time frame was far too short to realistically accomplish their goals and planned their programs to operate year round.

Resources: Current and Estimated

We estimate that the program will require access to current resources and the acquisition of others to address needs generated by this proposal. The following resources are divided into two lists. The first describes those resources that are indispensable (must haves) to the initial development and implementation of the program. The second list (would likes) includes resources that would enhance the initial establishment.

Must Haves:

- A facility which meets the requirements of health code to accommodate commercial cooking and food preparation instruction,
- A restaurant facility that provides students with realistic food service training and accommodates clients
- A professional cook and assistants both contracted and volunteer with appropriate experience with food preparation and student management to assist with student supervision, training and support,
- The services of a full-time secretary with responsibilities for communications, marketing, and bookkeeping tasks; appropriate office equipment to facilitate the above work,

- A technical assistant familiar with grant proposal writing to apply for all appropriate grants quickly and efficiently,
- Extended student transportation to the primary learning site at HLC and additional related sites as needed so that all students have equitable access to this program year round, and the necessary support to complete their mandated co-operative education learning requirements,
- Transportation resources to meet the contractual obligations of the community kitchen with respect to food delivery for specific clients,
- Program flexibility in delivery, and design (pre-requisites and course requirements) must be assured for the success of this alternative program.
Regional seasonality of employment opportunities which is a fact of life here also necessitates this,
- Contractual agreements with technical advisors for start-up tasks (e.g. a professional cook)

Would likes

- Stipend for our students

Recommendations (prioritized)

- That this committee accept the rationale underlying this proposal and champion the process whereby it can quickly obtain the necessary board approval and resources both human and financial
- That a steering committee be struck to engage the necessary community partners to commit to the program, obtain indispensable resources fiscal and human and oversee the establishment of the Community Kitchen.
- That plans be developed to renovate the current HCLC facilities to include a Community Kitchen or another site be selected and adapted.
- That the Board approve expanded timelines for the delivery and acquisition of credits. Currently there are no official educational resources for students in Haliburton to complete courses beyond daily high school hours either at night school or during the summer without a commitment to extended travel. The seasonal nature of local employment opportunities necessitates a year long framework.
- That the Board extend student transportation arrangements to permit equitable access to this program
- That a short term contractual agreement be approved to hire a professional chef to assist with technical designs for the Community Kitchen

References

Apprenticeship in the Service Sector; Apprenticeship Training – Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities website

<http://119.71.28.92//eng/training/apprenticeship/Skills/service.html>).

Ontario Curriculum Grades 11 and 12: Technological Education

Roasted Cherry Coffee House

<http://www.roastedcherry.com/studentcoop.htm>

Student Nourishment Program: Program Guidelines for Communities, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, December 2004

The River Restaurant and the Woodshop

<http://www.torontothebetter.net/2river.htm>

Think, Literacy Success: The Report of the Expert Panel on Students at Risk in Ontario, October 2003.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>

TLDSB Policy ES 50-50 : Nutrition in TLDSB Schools

TOP Report: Trends, Opportunities Priorities, 2004, Community Action Plan.
Workforce Development Board

www.wdb.ca