

Trades and Technologies Summit 2025: Forging the Future Career Pathways that Inspire Student Success Highlights Summary

On May 27 and 28, 2025, the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) and the TAVE Committee hosted the second Trades and Technologies Summit at the Olds College of Agriculture & Technology campus. Guided by the TAVE Strategic Framework, the event championed shared responsibility and accountability, gathering a diverse group of 176 participants from 41 School Authorities from across Alberta, government, post-secondary institutions, and partner organizations.

Representatives included:

Government Organizations

1. Department of Education
2. Department of Advanced Education

Colleges and Polytechnics

1. Olds College of Agriculture & Technology
2. Lethbridge Polytechnic
3. Northwestern Polytechnic
4. Red Deer Polytechnic
5. NAIT (Northern Alberta Institute of Technology)
6. SAIT (Southern Alberta Institute of Technology)
7. Lakeland College
8. Medicine Hat College
9. Northern Lakes College
10. Rundle College

Educational Associations and Other Stakeholder Organizations

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| 1. AISCA (Association of Independent Schools and Colleges of Alberta) | 10. Conseil scolaire FrancoSud |
| 2. Almadina School Society | 11. KTC - Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council |
| 3. Fusion Education Association | 12. Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) Secretariat/Learner Pathways |
| 4. University of Calgary | 13. Alberta Professional Learning Consortium (APLC) |
| 5. Skills Canada Alberta | 14. The Educational Partnership Foundation |
| 6. ASET (Association of Science and Engineering Technology Professionals of Alberta) | 15. College of Alberta School Superintendents |
| 7. Holden Rural Academy | 16. Build Alberta Apprenticeships Foundation |
| 8. Calgary Construction Association | |
| 9. County of Paintearth | |

Program Design and Delivery

Summit 2025 provided a comprehensive program offering attendees the opportunity to explore, engage, and experience six Trades and Technologies themes related to shaping the future, including:

1. Alberta Stories of Practice
2. Building Awareness: Explore, Engage, Experience
3. Building Futures
4. CTF/CTS Programming
5. Groundwork: Understanding Foundations
6. Power of Partnership

The program showcased:

A Teacher Panel: Explore, Engage, Experience: Building Trades and Tech Pathways from the Classroom Out



A Student Panel: My Learning, My Future: Student Voices



Forging Career Pathways: A Collaborative Approach to Student Success Forum

A forum of educational leaders, including:

1. **Dr. Carla Johnson**
Assistant Deputy Minister, Curriculum and Career
2. **Dr. Ryan Sawula**
New Superintendent of Schools
(June 2025), Chinook's Edge School Division
3. **Stefan Rutkowski**
CEO and President, CAREERS
4. **Paula Anderson**
Training & Safety Support Work Leader, Fortis Alberta
5. **Host: Stacey Rishaug**
Director Communications and Marketing, CAREERS



Action Tank: Business Council of Alberta

This *action tank* session invited participants into an energizing conversation at the intersection of policy, practice, and possibility. Led by the Business Council of Alberta's Director of Policy & Economics, Alicia Planincic, and Senior Policy Analyst, Dylan Kelso, this session explored *how policy becomes action*—and how Alberta can build a future-ready, inclusive, and competitive workforce.



Breakout Sessions Summary: Building Career Pathways for Student Success

The *Trades and Technologies Summit* featured **39 breakout sessions and over 75 speakers**, showcasing a wide range of innovative practices that are transforming career education across Alberta. System leaders, educators, post-secondary partners, and industry experts shared scalable strategies for dual credit programming, collegiate models, rural access, and work-integrated learning. From early exploration in elementary school to apprenticeship readiness and post-secondary transitions, the sessions emphasized collaboration, equity, and hands-on experiences. Together, they offered a comprehensive vision for building future-ready pathways that meet the diverse needs of students and communities across the province.

Feedback regarding the structure of this learning opportunity was overwhelmingly positive. Some comments are captured below:

- Participants expressed gratitude for the valuable experience and commended the organizing committee for their efforts in orchestrating a successful event.
- Attendees praised the organization, smooth session transitions, informative communication, and excellent food provided.
- The location at Olds College was appreciated, as well as the tour opportunities offered.

The following two survey comments depict the high level of satisfaction and appreciation expressed by participants:

- Thank you to the organizing committee for such fine work. The effort to amplify this work across the province is greatly appreciated. The higher profile guests and speakers can be attributed to the value of TAVE and the work of the leadership in this group.
- Big fan of the structure - schedule was perfection, transition between sessions was smooth, presentation rooms were close, all communication on the event was extremely organized and informative, tech support staff was wonderful, food was dynamite, multiple seating areas provided great opportunities for meaningful conversation moving between sessions. A lot of consideration went into creating an impactful experience and I can't say enough positive things about the summit.

Some attendees suggested incorporating more networking opportunities around partner booths and recommended broader educator attendance to increase collaboration across school divisions.

Recommendations also included hearing from dual credit program instructors and exploring different locations for future summits.

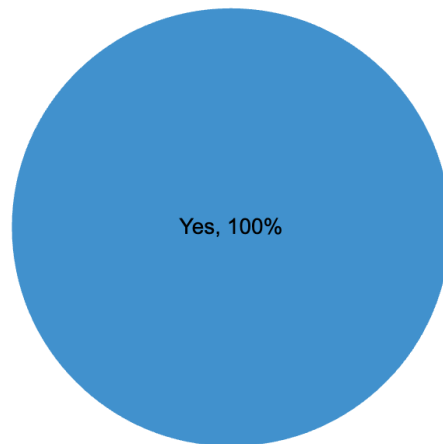
Attendees highlighted the importance of amplifying this work across the province and emphasized the need for ongoing, consistent events to support Alberta students' career pathway advancement and success.

2024 Trades and Technologies Summit: Shaping Futures Survey Results

Participant Feedback

100% of the participants that completed the survey reported that the TAVE Trades and Technologies Summit assisted in exploring, engaging with, and gaining experience in the work being done with Alberta students in the skilled trades and technologies areas.	100% of the participants that completed the survey reported that they plan to apply learning from the TAVE Trades and Technologies Summit in their organizations. This result demonstrates that Summit 2025 effectively provided valuable and actionable insights.
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The summit helped me make connections that can support future collaborative work in trades and technology education.



Attendees reported several key aspects that made the learning opportunity meaningful for them:

1. Practical Application and Program Insights

- Sessions provided immediately usable ideas for schools and student programming.
- Attendees appreciated detailed examples from other divisions, including dual credit, trades, and career transitions.

2. Networking and Collaboration

- Meaningful connections were made with professionals across jurisdictions, roles, and industries.
- Attendees valued informal conversations, shared challenges, and collaborative planning.

3. Student Voice and Real-World Relevance

- The student panel was consistently praised as a powerful, grounding element.
- Participants highlighted the importance of student-centered programming and authentic career exploration experiences.

4. Sharing of Practices and Resources

1. Divisions openly shared innovative practices, implementation strategies, and tangible resources.
2. Attendees found inspiration in stories of success and lessons learned.

5. Variety and Quality of Sessions

- The range of session topics and high-caliber presenters contributed to a well-rounded learning experience.
- Small group formats allowed for rich discussion and deeper engagement.

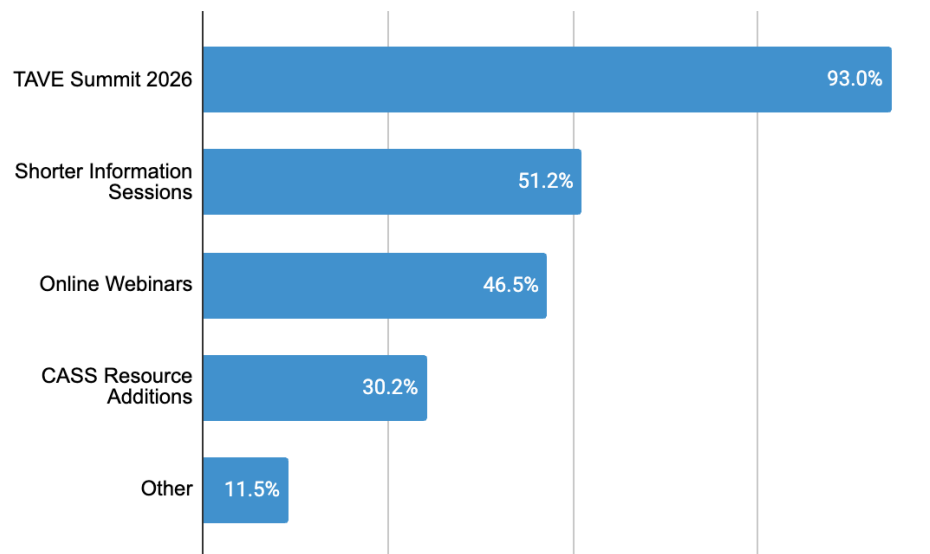
6. Inspiration and Mindset Shifts

- Exposure to different models helped shift thinking, particularly around trades and apprenticeship as first-choice pathways.
- Participants left energized, with renewed commitment to student futures and system innovation.

7. Venue and Atmosphere

- The setting at Olds College was noted as ideal, supporting hands-on learning and showcasing post-secondary opportunities.

Participants were asked to identify additional support that would advance efforts to inspire students to pursue career pathways in trades and technologies. Responses emphasized the important importance of offering a Summit 2026, followed by information sessions, online webinars, noting that this opportunity was unique in Alberta.



Summary

CASS and the TAVE Committee acknowledge the leadership and support of Alberta Education in advancing Trades and Technologies education across the province. Their contributions have been instrumental in facilitating this important provincial gathering, which offered a comprehensive view of emerging practices and priorities.

The event reinforced the importance of shared responsibility among school authorities, government, post-secondary institutions, and industry partners. Together, these stakeholders are shaping a future-focused education system that reflects Alberta's evolving economic and workforce landscape.

Attendees emphasized the importance of practical implementation strategies, student voice, and the exchange of effective practices. These insights underscore the value of continuing to EXPLORE diverse ideas, ENGAGE in collaborative learning, and provide meaningful EXPERIENCES for students across all contexts.

By aligning educational initiatives with labour market demands, we are preparing students with the skills, competencies, and adaptability required to succeed. This alignment supports not only individual readiness but also contributes to Alberta's broader economic development.

Through continued collaboration, innovation, and purposeful planning, Alberta's education partners are bridging the gap between school and career—empowering the next generation to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Photo Gallery



Trades and Technologies Summit: Shaping Futures
Highlights Summary