Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Expansion in 2007-08

School Board Application Process and Package for Requesting Ministry of Education Approval to Pilot an SHSM(s) in 2007-08

District school boards, in collaboration with their business and postsecondary education and training partners, are invited to apply to offer a SHSM(s) in 2007-08. The SHSM is an important component of the government’s Student Success initiative.

Boards have the opportunity to submit proposals to ramp up existing pathway programs:
• for approval as SHSM pilots in five (5) established sectors: arts and culture, construction, manufacturing, hospitality and tourism, and primary industries: agriculture, forestry, landscaping and mining; and/or
• for approval as new SHSMs to be launched in 2007-08 in the new sectors of: business, health and wellness, transportation, environment, and energy.

By the end of the two-year pilot period, approved SHSMs must have the following required components:
1. a package of 9–11 required credits identified in the SHSM’s sector specific guide, with pathways to the four destinations of apprenticeship training, college, university and the workplace;
2. compulsory certifications which are identified in each SHSM framework;
3. experiential learning through job shadowing, work experience, and a minimum of 2 credits earned through cooperative education;
4. use of the Ontario Skills Passport (OSP) to document demonstration of essential skills and work habits;
5. ‘reach ahead’ opportunities where students have an experiential opportunity in their postsecondary destination, whether apprenticeship training, college, university and the workplace.

In addition, approved SHSM pilots must be offered in partnership with:
• local business and industry,
• public postsecondary education and training partners.

In all cases, the Ministry of Education’s approval is required to offer an OSSD with a SHSM designation.

Application Details

• Boards only submit one application. This application can address several SHSM sectors. This year’s 27 launch boards are required to include their current 2006-07 SHSM pilot in the board’s 2007-08 application;
• Further instructions are on page 1 of the application (Excel file);
- 2 -

• Submit the board’s application to Angela Hurlock, Angela.Hurlock@ontario.ca no later than May 2, 2007 and copy the Education Officer with the lead for SHSMs at your ministry Regional Office;
• Deliverables will include three (3) reports consisting of an action plan, data collection, budget/expenditure details, plus development of contextualized learning activities.

Key dates in the application process:

• April 5 - memo with SHSM application sent to boards
• April 17, 18, 19 - video/teleconferences on SHSMs for interested boards (see enclosure 2 for schedule and registration form)
• May 2 - applications due (ONLY electronically) to the ministry
• Week of May 22 - boards confirm SHSMs to be offered in 07-08 - transfer agreements confirmed and signed by boards
• May 30 and 31 - orientation sessions for boards with approved Majors
• Weeks of July 9 & 16 - writing teams to develop sector-specific guides for the new Majors, editing sector-specific guides for existing Majors

Funding available to support the pilots will be based on the number of boards that apply and the number of successful pathways programs that meet the SHSM criteria. Boards will be informed of the results of their application, the board’s funding allocation, and then asked to confirm the SHSM(s) they commit to pilot in 2007-08. Boards will be expected to support SHSMs from existing board resources after a two-year pilot with ministry funding.

Boards applying to the Ministry of Education for approval to offer an SHSM may wish to consider submitting a dual credit pilot project proposal to the School College Work Initiative (SCWI) for the SHSM’s college and/or apprenticeship pathway component. The ministry, in consultation with the SCWI co-management team, will mesh the approved pilots relevant to both initiatives and determine an appropriate allocation recognizing that a dual credit program is one or two of the four required pathways in a SHSM.

The Ministry of Education will host orientation sessions in Toronto for boards with approved SHSMs for 2007-08:

• May 30, 2007: all boards with approved Majors in arts and culture, construction, manufacturing, hospitality and tourism, and primary industries: agriculture, forestry, landscaping and mining;
• May 31, 2007: all boards with approved Majors in business, energy, environment, health and wellness, transportation.

If you have any questions, please contact Aldo Cianfrini at (416) 325-2669, aldo.cianfrini@edu.gov.on.ca or Audrey Cartile at (416) 326-0552, audrey.cartile@edu.gov.on.ca.
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