BUILDING A PLAN FOR BEST PRACTICES IN APPRENTICESHIP SUPPORT

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Agenda

• Origins of the SAWD fund
• Current use of SAWD funding at Algonquin College
• Outreach within the College
• Working with MTCU
• Essential skills
• Canadian Apprenticeship Forum
• The recent introduction of mindfulness into the trades classes
• Group discussion about how to move forward
A BRIEF HISTORY OF SAWD
A Brief History of SAWD Funding

• Supports for Apprentices With Disabilities
• Addressing: the creation, implementation and future of SAWD at Algonquin College.
• This refers to a paper that I wrote in December 2012, that looked at the 3 topics in the second point.
A Brief History of SAWD Funding

- SAWD has been in place as an annually renewed funding since 1998.
- For two years prior to this the College Community for Disability Issues (CCDI) expressed concern to the MTCU about the rising client base arising as apprenticeship enrolment increased.
Rationale for the fund

• A public Ontario Government report shows that about 120,000 apprentices are learning a trade today — nearly 60,000 more than in 2002–03.

• Annual apprenticeship registrations have grown from 17,100 in 2002–03 to more than 29,000 in 2010–11
Rational for the fund

- With this rise in the number of apprentices came a corresponding rise in the number of apprentices requiring supports from the Ontario College’s Centers for Students with Disabilities (CSD), support centers.
The implementation of SAWD at Algonquin College

• In 2008, after Algonquin College received the first of the SAWD funding, the manager for the CSD advertised for a person with a trade’s background to work part time for the CSD
Gordon McGregor
Apprentice Support

• Gordon started at 12 hours per week
• The initial role was to provide awareness of the services that the CSD could provide to apprentices at the College
CURRENT USE OF SAWD AT ALGONQUIN COLLEGE
Roles: Currently There are 2 people

• For the last 4 years there have been 2 people working to support apprentices
• Counsellor/ Learning Strategist
• The original Outreach Administrator and advisory/ support person. This role has expanded.
Current use of SAWD

- Supporting apprentices has expanded to including not only supporting apprentices, but to include supporting trades professors.
- A key goal is to bring universal awareness about alternative and individual learning styles.
Current use of SAWD

• The outreach role also includes helping the professors create more accessible material
• This includes helping to understand Universal Instructional Design
• SAWD funds are used to purchase technology that is made available for trades professors to use.
SAWD funding at AC this past year

• Formation of SAWD working group
  • Online meeting of many colleges
  • Intro to research initiatives
• Visit from Fanshawe and sharing of resources
• Mobile learning & UDL initiatives ongoing
• CCDI one year ago-important next steps:
  • Initiate a formal study of how funds are being used, as well as gaps in service
WORKING WITH MTCU
Working With the Ministry

• Algonquin College Apprentice Support works very closely with the local branch of TCU.

• Repeat exam failure apprentices are referred to use for assistance. The apprentice has to have been an Algonquin College student at some point.
Addressing low first time exam writing pass rates

- First time certification exam pass rates can be as low as 33%
- An average can be described as about 50%
Essential Employability Skills

http://esot.essentialskillsgroup.com/
Events Affecting Current Apprentices

- Essential Skills Development
- Intensive nature of Training
- No formal Transition or connection between work and college.
- Ontario College of Trades Regulations
- Mental Health Disabilities
- Disabilities and Stigmas
CAF

- Supported by institutional and employer groups
- A source for research papers on apprenticeship in Canada
- Holds annual conferences that address topics such as attracting people to the trades as well as keeping them in their apprenticeships
Research shows that about 50% of apprentices in Ontario drop out before attending their first level of schooling.
CAF Western Forum

• Held this past winter at SAIT in Calgary
• Apprentices attend 4 levels of in school training
• Ministry exams are written at the end of each level
• 50% of apprentices fail the first level
MINDFULNESS IN APPRENTICESHIP
MINDFULNESS

• As part of week 9, exam preparation, strategies are presented that cover how to prepare for writing a multiple choice exam, being aware of health and wellness and “seeing yourself” passing the exam the first time

• Mindfulness has recently been introduced into the exam preparation week
Mindfulness

• The mindfulness training has been a better than expected success
• Apprentice provide feedback through a survey at the end of the training
• A lot of feedback suggests that the mindfulness training be introduced earlier in the apprenticeship process
Marc Sabouran

• Video
GROUP DISCUSSION
Group Discussion & Activity

• What ideas can help colleges use SAWD effectively?
• Is there interest in a formal working group?
• Is it possible to have long term dedicated people working in apprenticeship
Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence