



June 26, 2019

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
Mowat Block
22nd Floor
900 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Lecce,

Congratulations on your recent appointment to Minister of Education.

The Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON) represents over 200 residential builders of high, mid, and low-rise buildings in the province, with a focus on the GTA. Our members build Ontario's communities, homes, and future. We are committed to providing leadership and fostering innovation in the industry through the following six core focuses: Training and Apprenticeship; Government Relations; Labour Relations; Health and Safety; Building Science and Innovation; and Building Code Reform and Technical Standards.

RESCON looks forward to working with you to provide pathways for youth into the skilled trades, which was a key focus of our two recent reports that provide a road map to improve recruitment and retention in the skilled trades:

The first report on recruitment, [*A Behavioural Economics Approach to Recruitment in Skilled Construction Trades*](#), applied behavioral economics to recruitment in the skilled trades and found that behavioural causes are a major contributor to the gap between the demand for skilled construction labour and its supply.

There are clear opportunities to enhance the outreach to young people during and after elementary and secondary school. The report recommends that:

- Young people need earlier and more sustained exposure to skilled construction work as a viable and equal option with college and university.
- There is a fundamental need to improve all elements of career guidance frameworks and career options models in high school.

The second report on retention, [*Retaining Employees in the Skilled Trades*](#) summarizes findings from a comprehensive survey of construction workers in the residential and residential-related skilled trades across the GTA. The report found that these construction workers are amongst the highest satisfied compared to workers from other sectors.

The report included the following key findings and recommendations:

- Increase the number of shop classes within secondary schools.
- Promote construction jobs to all students, whether they are book-smart, hands-on, tech-savvy, or entrepreneurial.
- Only 8% of workers surveyed were positively influenced by a guidance counsellor.

- 96% of workers surveyed attribute shortages of workers to stigma and negative parental influence.

These reports are bolstered by a video series launched by Job Talks and RESCON, profiling careers in the construction skilled trades. Please see the following [link](#) for an example video. We recommend these videos be shared with every school board and guidance department across Ontario.

RESCON appreciates and supports the reforms your government has already made to Ontario's training and apprenticeship system, including commitment to increase student and parent exposure to skilled trades, as outlined in the *Education that Works for You* plan. We also appreciate the government's support regarding our reports' work, which was reflected by having Cabinet representatives at our reports' launch event in March.

RESCON would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our recent initiatives including our push to provide all school boards and high school guidance offices with information on the skilled trades and the careers the construction industry can offer young people in Ontario.

Please contact Amina Dibe to set up a time that is convenient for a meeting. She can be reached via email at dibe@rescon.com or by phone at 905-760-7777.

Thank you,

Andrew Pariser



Vice-President
RESCON

Copy to:

Trisha Rinneard, Director of Stakeholder Relations