

# Joint Press Release

November 30, 2015

## Supporting Student Learning at New Levels

**For Immediate Release** - Grande Yellowhead Public School Division (GYPSD) is proud to be a learning partner with Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) in offering a wide range of dual credit courses for our high school students for both academic and Career and Technology Studies (CTS) which provides students with a head-start on post-secondary education prior to finishing high school. Beginning in January of 2015, students in the communities of Hinton and Edson, registered in university level psychology and medical terminology dual credit sessions offered through online and onsite at GPRC satellite campuses. Building on the success of the pilot program, additional dual credit sessions are continuously being added based on student and community demand and interest.

“We are very excited to partner with GPRC in assisting our students on getting a head start on their chosen career path,” noted Sandy Axmann, Supervisor of Learning Services at Grande Yellowhead. “As this is a new program, we want to ensure that our students know about these exciting alternate learning options for them. With our new courses starting this January, we have been talking with a number of interested students and encouraging them to talk to their counselors to determine if these courses can fit within their timetable and meet their future career goals.”

“All dual credit courses offered by GYPSD and GPRC lead directly to programs offered by GPRC in Hinton and Edson or at GPRC’s campuses in Grande Prairie and Fairview. GPRC offers more than 80 credit courses by videoconferencing in Hinton, Edson, Jasper and Grande Cache which allows students to start or complete their certificate, diploma and event up to two years of university in their home community,” says Marcia Aldred, GPRC Dual Credit Coordinator.

Business and Office Administration courses as well as credit towards an Early Learning and Child Care Certificate and/or an Educational Assistant Certificate were recently added to GYPSD’s Dual Credit Program. GYPSD and GPRC are excited to be moving forward with courses on Veterinary Terminology which is transferable towards an Animal Health Certificate and Introduction to Native Studies which will be available January 2016. Coming in September of 2016 will be Introduction to the Cree Language I, followed in January of 2017 with Cree Language II. These courses count towards a GPRC Business Diploma specializing in Aboriginal Administration, all GPRC degree programs and all university programs in Alberta. In addition, GPRC has a new Trades program for high school students. Students are able to earn up to two tickets towards apprenticeship credits for certification as a Parts and Material Technician.

“The Dual Credit program is one of the many ways GPRC meets the needs of students in our region,” said GPRC Vice President Academic Susan Bangrove. “Our Dual Credit program connects high school students to post-secondary education and makes that transition easier. GPRC’s goal is to see students in our region move seamlessly into our programs and achieve their education goals. GPRC is grateful for the partnerships with the region’s high schools and very proud of the success of our students.”

*Grande Yellowhead stretches from Jasper National Park, east to Evansburg, and north to the Town of Grande Cache. The jurisdiction includes eighteen schools, five Learning Connection Centres, approximately 5,000 students, and 600 staff members.*



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Many GPRC Dual-Credit courses credits are transferable to post-secondary institutions across Alberta so students can take those credits wherever their education path takes them.

“One of our most popular sessions is the Medical Terminology course,” continued Axmann. “Students need to complete it before receiving approved entry into NAIT/SAIT for programs including medical radiology technician or combined lab and X-ray technician. By taking the Medical Terminology course during their Grade 12 year, a student is ahead of the game: having completed this pre-requisite instead of delaying their post-secondary entrance by having to take it during the summer after high school graduation or in the Fall semester.”

To get started in earning high school and post-secondary credits as early as January 2016, students are invited to make an appointment with their high school counsellor as soon as possible.

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### Backgrounder – Dual Credit Program

**So how does the Dual Credit Program work?** Students enroll in the college course and receive instruction by the college instructor. They are considered a college student while enrolled in high school. “Dual Credit” means Grade 11 and 12 students have the opportunity to earn Career and Technology Studies (CTS) credits towards their high school graduation as well as earning post-secondary credits. Upon successful completion of the course, students will earn five high school CTS credits and three college level credits per course. Students receive a transcript from each institution upon the completion of the course or term and the majority of the courses are transferable to all post-secondary institutions in Alberta within applicable programs. All dual credit courses are acknowledged on the high school transcript.

**When can I get started?** To take full advantage of the Dual Credit Program, planning should start as early as Grade 10 but students in Grades 11 and 12 can still participate if it works within their timetable. Representatives from GYPSD and GPRC have recently hosted information sessions on the program at high schools across the division to talk to students in all three grades

**What about costs?** There is a one-time, non-refundable application fee of \$70 payable directly to GPRC (which covers future application fees if a student continues their post-secondary career at the college after high school graduation). Each Dual Credit course requires a \$400 Refundable Tuition fee, (paid to the high school), by the parent. This fee will be fully refunded back to the parent upon successful completion of the course by the student. The tuition costs are then paid to GPRC by Grande Yellowhead Public School Division. Additional expenses such as textbooks and supplies are the responsibility of the student. If available, GPRC offers used textbooks at a reduced cost if the student requests it.