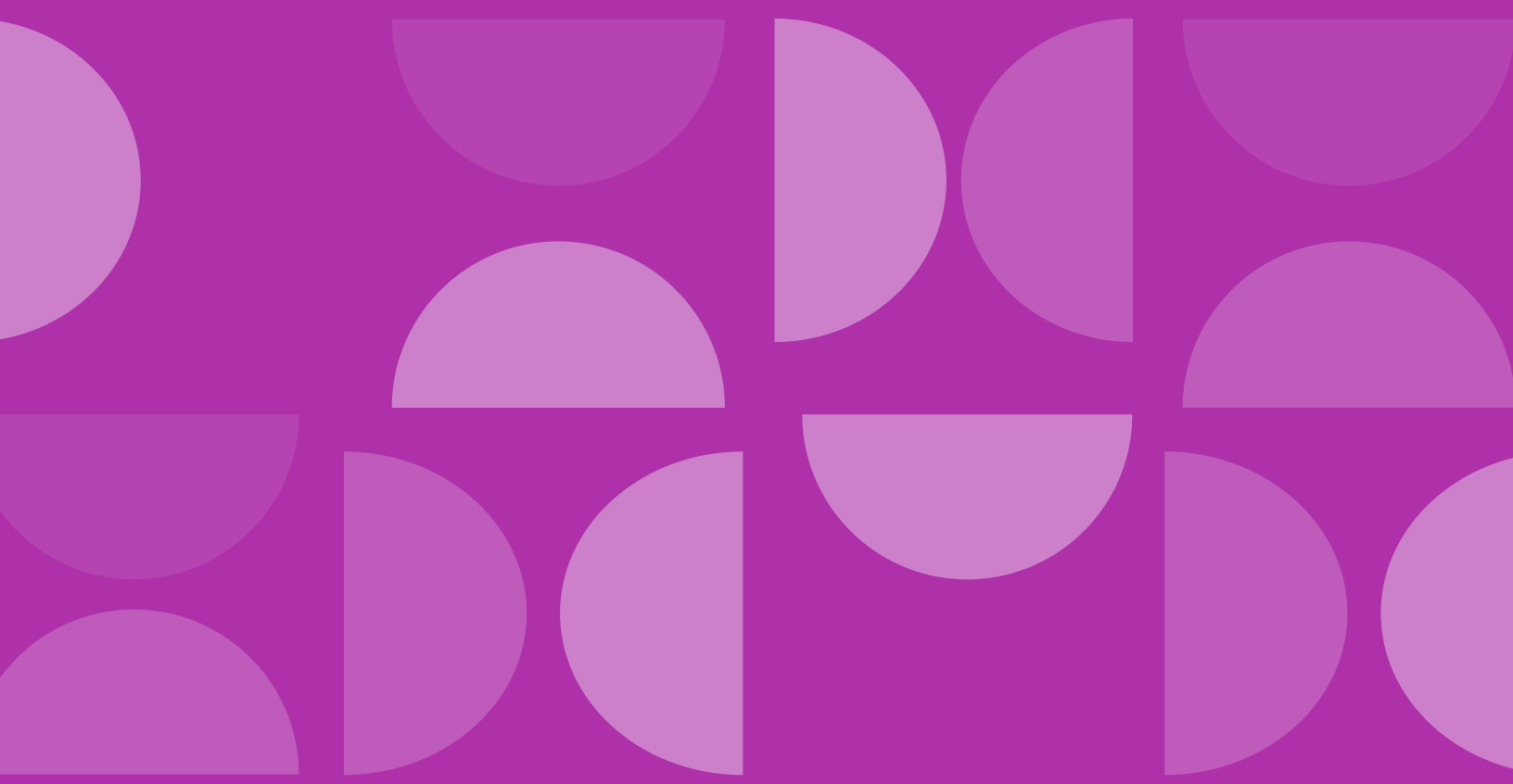


The unanswered questions in Ontario's proposed apprenticeship plan





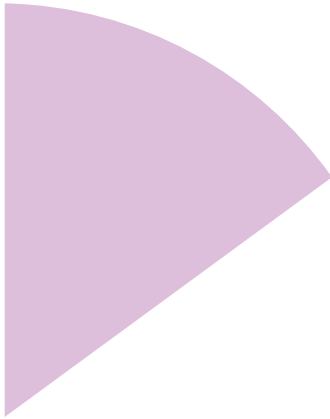
In March 2023, the Ontario government announced a proposal to allow grade 11 students to apply for an apprenticeship, killed the application process.¹ Upon receiving the Certificate of Apprenticeship, students could then apply for their high school diploma. However, Ontario also established a proposal for a new program, the [Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program \(OYAP\)](#), the [Specialized High Skill Major \(SHSM\)](#) program, [cooperative education](#), and a new model of [dual-credit opportunity](#).²

So, how can we make this proposal from the Ontario government different?

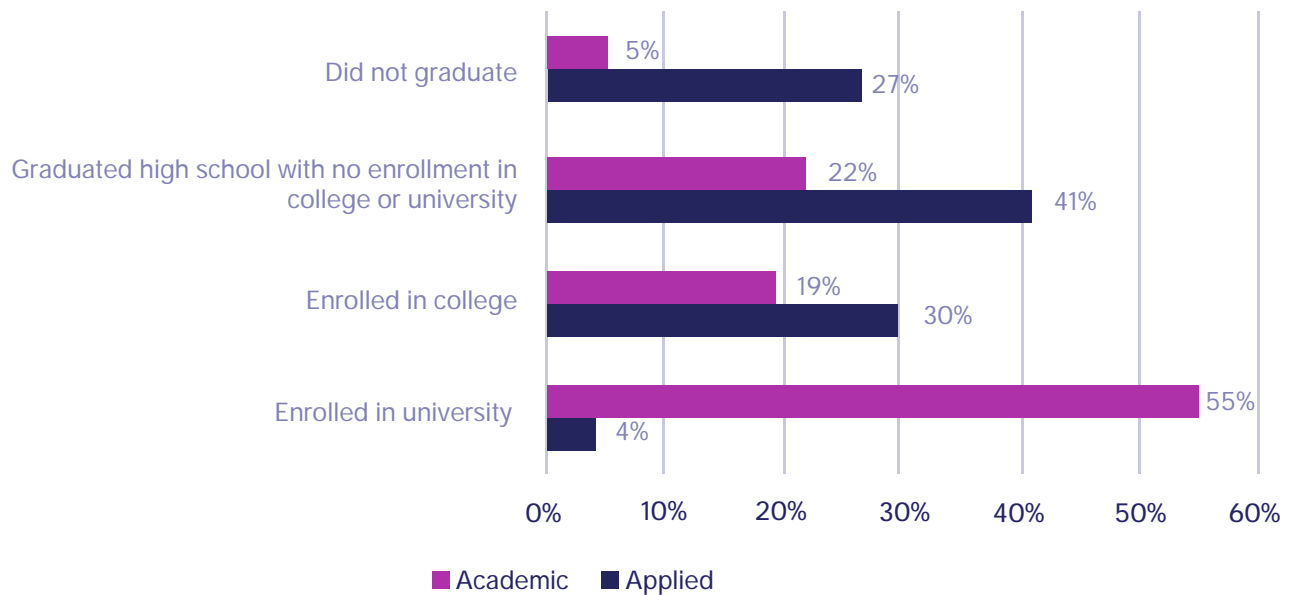
According to [Ontario's Education Act](#), a student in school is compulsory from the age of 6 to 18.³ However, Ontario's new proposal for an accelerated pathway for students who are killed by a school bus accident from school is a legal age 16. The plan also allows students to have completed grade 10 or the equivalent apprenticeship program appear in a new labor market age in the home of the long-term benefit of educational attainment. The key difference between the existing apprenticeship pathway and the new proposal is that the new policy would allow students to complete their high school diploma in favor of an earlier entrance to the labor force at the equivalent level. In contrast, existing programs for pathways to the labor force (e.g., OYAP, SHSM, co-op, etc.) allow young people to be enrolled in secondary school and still continuing to complete their high school diploma.

Providing students with the option to leave high school after grade 10 provides an option for the student and a lot of K-12 education in preparing all students to be active, engaged, and contributing citizens of our society. Students will miss out on the knowledge, skills, and competencies gained in their grade 11 and 12 compulsory course, as well as the [age of kill](#) for education boards learning opportunity and engagement in the school community. People for Education's effective combination of kill is the [New Basic](#).⁴

In addition to the potential loss of skills, a [high school diploma is a prerequisite](#) for the majority of well-paying jobs and post-secondary educational pathways.⁵ According to data from Statistics Canada, there is a clear link between [higher educational attainment](#) and higher levels of earnings and employment.⁶ Allowing students to leave high school in grade 10 provides an apprenticeship market that increases the likelihood of obtaining their high school diploma, which narrows their long-term opportunity for both work and school.



Post-secondary pathways for Ontario students in grade 9 academic and applied English and Math



Source: Ontario School Information System for grade 9 students in 2010-11; graduation determined at five years as of 2014-15; direct post-secondary enrolment as of 2015-16 as reported by Ontario College Application Service and Ontario University Application Centre

According to data from Statistics Canada, [completion rate](#) of apprenticeship programs is typically low in Canada, with only 36% of apprentices obtaining their certificate after making it a long and expensive program, a barrier to completion.¹¹ Research highlights several [reasons for non-completion](#), such as mismatch in expectations between employer and apprentice, personal and family reasons, and a lack of access, accommodation, support, and guidance on navigating the system.¹² Employment income also plays an important role in whether each apprentice in [low-income families](#) is likely to complete their [program](#) due to financial burden.¹³

With regard to education, both employer and apprentice note a [gap in knowledge and essential skills](#) gained through the school curriculum, including missing key mathematical concepts, a barrier to completing apprenticeship.¹⁴ Instead of leaving school early to enter the skilled trade, more consideration needs to be given to how education and apprenticeship can be better integrated together as opposed to having one or the other.

Source: Educational and Labour Market Longitudinal Platform, 2008 to 2016, taken from 'Factors associated with the

Source: Center on International Education Benchmarking, March 2015

1 Provide ample opportunities and resources for parents, students, teachers – especially guidance and career counsellors – to learn about the trades as early as in grades 7 and 8.

2 Address the existing challenges faced during apprenticeships and school programming related to the skilled trades (i.e., OYAP, SHSM program, etc.).

3 Support the ongoing implementation of de-streaming by providing the necessary resources to schools (e.g., professional development, consultations regarding implementation, clear communication about curriculum changes, funding for lower class sizes and guidance counsellors).

4 Plan for the de-streaming of grades 10, 11, and 12 in consultation with students, families, and educators.

5 Publicly collect and report identity-based data on student pathways and outcomes to monitor how policies and programs are impacting different groups.

6 Convene an Education Task Force to provide advice on this and other interrelated education issues, with representation from directors of education, teachers' federations, principals' councils, unions representing support staff, trustee associations, student organizations, representatives from the skilled trades, apprenticeship program delivery experts, deans of education, and Indigenous education associations.

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