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Executive Summary

The world is changing and so are the skills needed by British Columbia’s students. Rapid developments in technology, the need to address climate change, the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation and the evolution of the gig economy are all significant influences on future labour market projections and needs. More jobs than ever before will require some kind of post-secondary education.

While local and regional economies can experience major economic shifts rapidly, it takes time for people to obtain a credential, up-skill or re-skill themselves. It will be important for governments, post-secondary institutions, Indigenous communities and stakeholders to work collaboratively and implement long-term planning to ensure the skills needed in the future are being provided today. One of the most significant determinants for obtaining a post-secondary education is proximity to a university, college or training institute. Having a local training option is an important support not only for students, but also for sustainable community growth.

In March 2018, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training provided Royal Roads University (RRU) with funding to “support planning for a new West Shore campus in consultation with the Ministry.” RRU subsequently invited representatives from the University of Victoria, Camosun College, School District #62 (SD 62), the Sc’ianew Nation and local governments to participate in the development of this report.

The Terms of Reference provided by the BC government to the Steering Committee and Working Committee members provided further clarification. Additional objectives for the project include: articulating the current unmet need for post-secondary education in the West Shore, identifying local post-secondary accessibility issues, reflecting changing student expectations and proposing a range of potential options to address these issues. Government also requested that any recommended solution be a “cost-effective pilot solution that could be deployed to other communities.”

The West Shore is a region on southern Vancouver Island with a population of 77,460 consisting of municipalities, First Nations communities and electoral districts west of Victoria to Port Renfrew. According to Statistics Canada, the West Shore is one of the fastest growing regions in Canada, having experienced a population increase of 49% between 2001 and 2016, and projected growth of 27% over the next decade. This rapid growth is also disproportionately skewed towards a younger demographic; the region has a larger share of persons under the age of 15 (17.1%) compared to the provincial average (14.9%). The need for post-secondary education services in the region will continue to increase over time.

Current student data, projections by SD 62 and modelling completed to inform this report further demonstrate the growing need for an additional post-secondary option in the West Shore to support the community and foster a strong, sustainable regional economy. Six-year high school completion rates are currently at a 20-year high in SD 62 (76.3% in 2016-17) and have generally trended upward since 1999-20 (63.1%), but sit below the province-wide average of 84%. Similarly, direct transition rates of high school graduates to all types of post-secondary institutions in SD 62 lag behind the provincial average. The five-year (2011-12 to 2015-16) historic average is 43.2% compared to 52.5% in all of BC.
Additionally, West Shore high school graduates are transitioning to university at much lower rates than their counterparts in other parts of BC. Just 17.2% of graduates are attending university, almost half the provincial average of 34.1%.

Currently there are limited local options for SD 62 graduates looking to continue their education locally. Royal Roads University does not offer a Year 1-2 program for domestic undergraduate students. The University of Victoria and Camosun College (Interurban Campus and Lansdowne Campus) currently receive the majority of SD 62 graduates, but neither are geographically situated to ideally serve students who wish to stay in their home West Shore communities. Research has shown that post-secondary participation rates are higher when there is a local option available.

While the cost of post-secondary education is a key barrier facing all students, West Shore learners face additional challenges that increase cost pressures. Access to affordable housing near UVic and Camosun campuses is extremely difficult to find and often unavailable, although the implementation of various actions to address the housing crisis by the government and construction of additional student housing may increase rental stock which will help alleviate the issue over time.

If affordable housing close to campus cannot be obtained, West Shore students often choose to continue to live at home to manage costs. First-year post-secondary students rarely have their own personal vehicle and typically need to rely on public transportation. Depending on where in the West Shore a student resides, daily commute times to campuses vary between just over an hour to nearly four hours. Not only are long commute times a significant deterrent to enter post-secondary education, but they also make it very challenging for students to find employment to support the cost of their education.

The BC Labour Market Outlook (2017) estimates that more than 900,000 job openings will be created over the next decade, with more than 78% requiring some form of post-secondary education or training. There is also a growing gap between the skills the workforce has and the skills that will be needed to fill job openings. Action is needed to encourage West Shore learners (both school-leavers and adults) to participate in post-secondary education to avoid a future skills shortage.

There is an opportunity for the BC government to address the challenges of accessing post-secondary education in the West Shore with an innovative, transformative education model that could serve as a model for the province.

The South Island post-secondary institutions and SD 62 are exploring new approaches to undergraduate education that emphasize systems thinking, as well as interdisciplinary, experiential and problem and project-based learning. This would include a significant focus on field study and workplace experience to better develop learning and career pathways, and build students’ capacity to become changemakers in their workplaces and communities.

This report concludes that West Shore learners (SD 62 graduates and adults pursuing advanced education) would benefit from a new local post-secondary education option. Based on key factors including current high school graduation transition rates and the proximity of other options, a new undergraduate post-secondary campus with an innovative delivery model would best meet local need. A new West Shore campus would also provide a new, viable option for students from the rest of the South Island and Capital Regional District.
While there are arguably significant benefits in expanding post-secondary access on the West Shore, there are a number of challenges which need to be acknowledged.

First, there is a need to better understand how the various barriers such as distance, transportation/commute times and housing (cost and scarcity) interact and how current actions to address these issues might affect interest in new post-secondary options. Second, the assumptions underlying population growth forecasts, graduation and transition rates, and enrolment projections will require further examination to ensure that the anticipated demand is realistic.

And finally, given anticipated demand, a detailed analysis of the operational viability of the initiative will be critical to ensure that there is capacity to offer high-quality programming (and the necessary ancillary services) with the breadth and depth that students and adult learners will expect and need.

If the provincial government wishes to proceed with an expansion of post-secondary education on the West Shore, the appropriate next step is to provide funding for a comprehensive business case. The business case would include a comprehensive academic curriculum designed in collaboration with SD 62 and the South Island post-secondary institutions, an identification of infrastructure needs, site selection and design, and financial analysis and timelines.
Royal Roads University, (RRU) was asked by the BC provincial government to conduct an analysis of post-secondary education in the West Shore region. To support this report, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (MAEST) provided a one-time grant of $250,000 to RRU in March 2018 to “support planning for a new West Shore campus.”

Labour market forecasts project a growing gap between the skills needed for future job openings and the skills currently possessed by workers. Locally, there has been growing interest in seeing the establishment of a new post-secondary institution in the West Shore. There are currently limited options for West Shore high school graduates to take first or second year courses, a gap residents, elected officials, Indigenous communities and stakeholder groups believe needs to be addressed as the region’s population continues to increase.

RRU invited representatives from the University of Victoria, Camosun College, School District #62 (SD 62), the Sc’ianew (Cheanuh) First Nation and local governments to participate in the development of this report to ensure that a broad range of voices and perspectives were included.

MAEST’s stated objectives (Appendix A.i – Steering Committee Terms of Reference) for this report are:

- **Identify post-secondary accessibility issues experienced by learners and potential learners in the West Shore**
- **Conduct a needs assessment to determine the scale and scope of any issues identified**
- **Propose a range of possible interventions (initiatives) that could address these issues.**

A Steering Committee (Appendix A.i) was formed to support the development of this report, comprised of:

**Philip Steenkamp** – President and Vice- Chancellor, Royal Roads University – Chair

**Allan Cahoon** – President and Vice-Chancellor, Royal Roads University – Past Chair

**Mayor Stew Young**, City of Langford

**Ravi Parmar** - Chair, Sooke School District #62 (or designate)

**Scott Stinson** – Superintendent and CEO, Sooke School District #62

**Shannon Baskerville** – Deputy Minister, Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (or designate)

**Jamie Cassels** – President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Victoria

**Sherri Bell** – President, Camosun College

**Russ Chipps** – Chief, Sc’ianew (Cheanuh) First Nation - Beecher Bay

**Mitzi Dean (Observer)** – MLA Esquimalt-Metchosin
MAEST supplied additional guidance that any proposal to the provincial government for funding must address the following:

- **Clearly articulate the unmet need**
- **Provide innovative options and solutions to meeting the need**
- **Reflect changing student expectations for post-secondary education**
- **Be adaptive to the changing nature of work and society**
- **Be a cost-effective pilot solution that could be deployed to other communities**
- **A strong enough case for government to consider providing funding**

Additionally, a Working Committee (Appendix A.ii – Working Committee Terms of Reference) was established primarily to develop a needs assessment for post-secondary in the West Shore and to develop options for collaborative approaches to address the needs. The committee subsequently oversaw three workshops and the development of research reports that have helped to inform the findings of this report, (Appendix B – Workshop and Research Reports), including:

I. **School District 62 Stakeholder Survey Report**

II. **Workshop 1 – Needs Assessment Research**

III. **Workshop 2 – Academic Visioning**

IV. **Workshop 3 – Partnership Planning**

V. **Background Research Report**

VI. **Stakeholder Interviews Report**

VII. **Enrolment Projections Report**

In addition to the primary and desktop research, meetings were held with West Shore mayors including Maja Tait (Sooke), Rob Martin (Colwood), John Ranns (Metchosin), Ken Williams (Highlands), and Mike Hicks (Director, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area). Mike Reilly, the president of the West Shore Chamber of Commerce, and Kevin Albers, CEO of M’akola Housing, were also consulted for their perspectives.

This report summarizes high-school graduation levels, transition rates to post-secondary education, and population and demographic projections. It also analyzes the future demand for workers, and the skills they will need to fill newly created jobs and openings created by retirements. Additionally, consultation with students, parents and local educators was conducted to provide the perspectives of people currently living, learning and working in the West Shore.

The educational partners in this project also participated in an academic visioning exercise to develop a new, collaborative model to best position West Shore students transitioning from high school to post-secondary for long-term success by giving them the attributes, skills, experience and knowledge needed to pursue their chosen career. The resulting interdisciplinary, problem-based and career-focused model proposed could be implemented on the West Shore and deployed to other BC communities in the future.

This report clearly identifies the need to expand post-secondary access on the West Shore and proposes an innovative delivery model that will equip students and those already in the workforce with the skills they will need to thrive in the emerging economy.
The West Shore refers to a geographic area located west of Victoria on the southern tip of Vancouver Island. It consists of the cities of Colwood, Langford and View Royal; the districts of Highlands, Metchosin and Sooke and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area. The area also includes the ancestral lands of several Indigenous Nations including T’Souke (Sooke), Pacheedaht (Jordan River), Sc’ianew (Beecher Bay), Xwsepsum (Esquimalt), and Lkwungen (Songhees).

SD 62 serves West Shore municipalities and includes the ancestral lands of several Indigenous Nations including T’Souke (Sooke), Pacheedaht (Jordan River), Sc’ianew (Beecher Bay), Xwsepsum (Esquimalt), and Lkwungen (Songhees).

SD 62 provides K-12 education in the West Shore communities. As a result of sustained growth in the community, new and expanded secondary school spaces are planned throughout the area.
According to Statistics Canada, the West Shore is one of the fastest growing regions in Canada, having experienced a population increase of 49% between 2001 and 2016 (Appendix B.v “Post-Secondary Education in the West Shore: Background Research Report”). Additional growth of 27% over the next decade is projected (“Long Range Facilities Plan 2018 Update, Sooke School District,” Matrix Planning Associates, 2018).

As the West Shore community has grown, its demographics have begun to skew younger. The region has a larger share of persons under the age of 15 (17.1%) compared to the provincial average (14.9%) (Appendix B.v). Additionally, the community’s population of people aged over 70 is much lower, at 8.2%, than that of both BC’s 11.1% and Canada’s 10.4%. This stands in stark contrast to Victoria, where 24% of the population is over the age of 65 (Statistics Canada, 2016 Census profile).

Between 2011 and 2016, the 0-to-14 age group grew by 11%, indicating the need for post-secondary education services in the region is likely to increase (Appendix B.v).

The total population of the West Shore is projected to grow from 52,000 in 2001 to 111,000 in 2031 (Matrix 2018).

The West Shore includes the five fastest growing communities in the Capital Regional District. The fastest include the City of Langford, which had a population increase of 20.9% from 2011 to 2016, and the District of Sooke which experienced population growth of 13.7% in that same time period. This growth will be propelled primarily by a combination of the expanding economic and employment base of Victoria, the preference of future residents to seek more affordable suburban locations for housing (Appendix B.v), and continued development in West Shore communities.
As the West Shore community grows, the number of students and high school graduates will also increase. The five-year average number of graduates between 2012/13 and 2016/17 in SD 62 was 792 students (BC Ministry of Education, 2017). In 2022/23, the projected number of graduates is expected to be 910 students annually, and by 2027/28 the school district expects to be graduating 1,108 students each year, an increase of 29% (SD 62, 2018).

In 2016/17, 106 graduates identified as Indigenous Canadians. This is projected to increase to 166 Indigenous student graduates by 2028 (Appendix B.v).

Overall, the West Shore population aged 20-64 is less likely to have completed any form of post-secondary diploma, certificate or degree (60.7%) than the BC (63.9%) or Canada-wide (64.8%) average. (Appendix B.v). This West Shore demographic slightly outperforms the provincial and national averages when it comes to apprenticeship and trades certificates or diplomas, but has significantly fewer diplomas, certificates or degrees from a university compared to the rest of BC and Canada.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>West Shore</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No certificate, diploma or degree</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Highest level of education achieved by residents aged 20-64 (as a percentage). West Shore residents have a lower rate of post-secondary certificates, diplomas or degrees than the BC or Canadian average. Among residents with a post-secondary credential, the West Shore has a higher share of apprenticeship/trades certificate or diploma (11.4%) compared to the BC average (9.1%), and a lower proportion of bachelor level or above university credentials (20.5% compared to 29.9% BC average).

Nine percent of West Shore residents and 14% of the region’s Indigenous population do not have a high school diploma (or equivalent).
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND PROJECTIONS

During the span of 2016 to 2041 there will be a number of factors that affect the job market, including population growth, the number of retirees and the strength of the economy. As the suburban population of West Shore grows, the necessary services that support the surrounding area will also increase. From 2016 to 2041, the population is projected to grow by 59,000, with the labour force growing by 32,000. With an influx of potential workers, many industries will also expand, with jobs in public administration, health care and social assistance, retail trade, and scientific and technical services projected to make the largest gains in employment (Appendix B.v).

While the labour market is currently strong in the West Shore area, the changing economy will require higher levels of education. As higher skilled jobs increase, the West Shore will need post-secondary education opportunities not just for high school graduates, but also for adults who will need additional education as their jobs are eliminated.

The West Shore is one of the fastest growing regions in Canada and is anticipated to maintain growth for at least the next decade. The data projections indicate there is a growing need for post-secondary education services in the community.

**West Shore Labour Market Activity 2001-2041**

(Statistics Canada and MetroEconomics).
SD 62 serves approximately 10,600 students in the communities of Sooke, Port Renfrew, Metchosin, Highlands, Langford and Colwood. SD 62 has projected increasing secondary school attendance and thereby graduates, in alignment with projected population growth.

The projected increase in high school students in the table above was provided by SD 62 based on actual enrolments as of September 2018. The increase over baseline was calculated using the baseline of 3,079 students. Total potential graduates represents a projection of total in-year graduates using the five-year average of 20% of total high-school enrolment.

**SD 62 GRADUATION RATES**

SD 62’s 2016-17 graduation rate of 76.3% was well below the BC average (84%) and the 86.8% graduation rate of neighbouring SD 61 (Government of B.C., March 2017).

Historically, SD 62 has underperformed for six-year high school completion rates when compared against SD 61 and B.C. averages. However, SD 62’s graduation rates have generally improved since 2000 and currently sit at a 20-year high. SD 62 also has established a goal to improve completion rates to 82% by 2020-21.
In the West Shore, transition rates from high school to post-secondary education are lower than the rest of BC. In 2016/2017 SD 62 had 17.2% of graduates immediately attend university, compared to 34.1% province-wide (Information provided by the Ministry of Education from the Student Transitions Project). As shown in the table, the immediate transition rate to any type of BC public post-secondary institution for SD 62 in 2015/16 was 47%, compared to 52.3% province-wide. An immediate entry is defined as directly entering a post-secondary institution upon graduation from a secondary school, without taking time off to pursue personal or vocational activities.

**POST-SECONDARY TRANSITION RATES**

SD 62’s high school graduation rates are below the provincial average. However, Indigenous students have consistently graduated above the BC average for Indigenous students.
GRADE 12 GRADUATE LEARNER PROFILE
In the West Shore community, the traditional-aged Post-Secondary Education Learner Group (15 – 24 years of age) consists of roughly the same number of males and females, with a historically lower direct transition rate to post-secondary (even lower among Indigenous population) compared to the BC average. This demographic in the West Shore is also more likely to have a job (compared to BC or Canadian averages), and their parents are less likely to have post-secondary education.

Graduating students in the West Shore are also concerned about the cost of living away from home to attend a post-secondary institution. They identify their main motivation to attend post-secondary as career-based, but find it difficult to connect post-secondary programs and achievement to a potential career and feel pressure about making the “right” choices about education. For some students in the region (Indigenous communities and the District of Sooke), the closest commutable post-secondary options are hours away and require a vehicle/transportation for access. Students also have concerns about lack of support at post-secondary institutions related to mental health, family and financial.

EMPLOYED LEARNER PROFILE
The Employed Learner Group in the West Shore also consists of roughly the same number of males and females, are employed at a slightly higher rate than in the rest of BC or Canada, and may have children in SD 62. They are likely to be employed in a job sector that is predicted to shrink and almost half of this group do not have any post-secondary education versus BC and Canadian averages.

This group is part of an economic boom in the region, which along with lower cost of living may have attracted them to the area. They are almost as likely to have to work outside the region as within the West Shore.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 12 Graduation Year</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>Victoria (SD 61)</th>
<th>SD 62</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>52.3%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SD 62’s post-secondary transition rate is improving, but trails the performance of SD 61 (Victoria) and the BC average.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR A LOCAL POST-SECONDARY OPTION

With more young families living in the West Shore community, more residents are starting to consider post-secondary education. A recent survey of both students and parents conducted to evaluate community interest and perceived need for post-secondary education in the West Shore area, demonstrated that most parents and their children are planning for post-secondary education. With 78% of students and 93% of parent respondents expecting that the student will attend post-secondary education after secondary school, it is clear that education is top of mind in the West Shore community (Appendix B.1). As more families start to research post-secondary options, the top three considerations for both students and parents in choosing a post-secondary institution are:

- Affordable Tuition Fees
- Offering a Program of Interest
- Remaining in the Local Community

There has been ongoing community support to bring a new post-secondary option to the West Shore region. The sustained and projected growth of the area further emphasizes the changing needs of the community.

“We’ve been looking at ways to advance the delivery of post-secondary education and training to programs in the West Shore for a number of years. It makes a lot of sense to give students pursuing a post-secondary education the opportunity to do that in the community they live in.”

- Stew Young, Mayor of Langford, (CHEK News, April 17, 2018)
CURRENT OPTIONS SERVICING THE WEST SHORE

Current post-secondary options accessible from the West Shore include the University of Victoria, Camosun College and Royal Roads University. These institutions offer a wide variety of programs, including certificates; diplomas, bachelor, masters and doctoral degrees, and continuing education programs. However, apart from Royal Roads University which does not offer first and second year undergraduate education, the campuses are not easily accessible for students in the West Shore. Recently retired Sooke School District Superintendent Jim Cambridge confirms there is a long commute to Camosun College or University of Victoria: “It’s typically an hour to an hour-and-a-half transit ride each way and, to lots of students that’s a significant barrier.” (Chek News)

Historically, the vast majority of students from SD 62 have attended Camosun College, with 73% of Grade 12 graduates in 2010/2011 attending Camosun, and 14% attending University of Victoria. Other institutions attended by SD 62 graduates include Vancouver Island University (2.5%), Thompson Rivers University (3.1%) and Kwantlen Polytechnic University (0.9%).

POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF EXPANDED POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE WEST SHORE

As the West Shore community grows, its education needs at all levels are growing with it. SD 62 has seen an increase in graduates in recent years, but is not experiencing a proportional improvement in graduates transitioning to post-secondary. While there are post-secondary options in the Greater Victoria area, they are not easily accessible to students in the West Shore. Students and parents in the West Shore area indicate the impact of a local campus will be very positive for the community overall, and would allow students to stay closer to home to obtain a post-secondary education.

Modelling was completed for this report to project the uptake and impact of a potential new post-secondary campus in the West Shore. Within the first few years, it is anticipated hundreds of students would be taking undergraduate courses in the West Shore, with the total number of students at the campus reaching more than 1,000 after seven years of operations. This increase in capacity to locally educate the workforce will be of significant benefit to the region.
## Projected enrolment at a new West Shore post-secondary campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Y2 Adm</th>
<th>Y3 Adm</th>
<th>Part Time</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>158</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022-2023</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>319</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2023-2024</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>486</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2024-2025</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2025-2026</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2026-2027</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>846</td>
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<tr>
<td>2027-2028</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>915</td>
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<td>2028-2029</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Projected enrolment at a new West Shore post-secondary campus.
The model assumes an 80% retention between Y1-Y2, 70% from Y2-Y3 and 95% between Y3-Y4.

**NOTES:**
- Y2 Adm: Admission with credit into year 2
- Y3 Adm: Admission with credit into year 3
- Y2 Adm are direct admits to Year 2 (and included in the Year 2 column)
- Y3 Adm are direct admits to Year 3 (and included in the Year 3 column)
- Part-time: employed learners registered full-time, expressed as full-time count
- Assumptions: 20% International; 20% repatriation from other post-secondary institutions due to increased convenience; 10% out of district
West Shore high school graduates (43.2%) are transitioning directly to post-secondary education (PSE) at a lower rate than the provincial average (52.5%). The gap is much more pronounced for university transition, with just 17.2% of West Shore graduates attending university compared to the province-wide average of 34.1%.

To identify the specific barriers facing West Shore students, Academica conducted online stakeholder surveys and in-person workshops (Appendix B.i and Appendix B.ii) with students, parents, educators and community members.

A total of 795 valid surveys were completed by students from Belmont Secondary School, Royal Bay Secondary School, West Shore Learning Centre and Edward Milne Community School. More than half of the respondents (59%) were from Royal Bay Secondary, and 65% were students in Grades 9 or 10, potential entrants to post-secondary education in 2021/22. Twelve percent identified as Indigenous (Appendix B.i).

Five hundred and fifty parents of students from SD 62’s four secondary schools also responded to the survey. The participating parents were mostly women (76%) between the ages of 40-49 (55%) with the largest percentage living in Langford (40%). Additionally, 73% identified as having completed post-secondary education (Appendix B.i). This is higher than the general average of 60.7% of West Shore residents between the ages of 20-64 with a post-secondary certificate, degree or diploma (Appendix B.v).

Despite the lower PSE participation rates in the West Shore, the survey results found strong interest in post-secondary education amongst the community’s students and parents. Seventy-eight percent of the student group said that they planned to attend PSE at some point. It is notable that just 4% of students definitively said that they did not plan on pursuing post-secondary education; the remaining 18% said they “didn’t know” (Appendix B.i). Among the 131 total Grade 12 students who participated in the study, 55% planned to attend PSE in the upcoming fall, 34% said “yes, but not right away” and only 2% said “no”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSE Plans – by Grade</th>
<th>Plans to Pursue PSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 11</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YES, THIS FALL</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YES, BUT NOT RIGHT AWAY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NO</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DON’T KNOW</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of the student survey are incongruent with historic data. The five-year (2011-12 to 2015-16) historic average for SD 62 graduates transitioning directly from high school to PSE is 43.2%. Unsurprisingly, parents were more optimistic about their children attending post-secondary. The overwhelming majority of parents (93%) expect their child to pursue PSE, with less than 1% saying they didn’t anticipate their child pursuing PSE.

The research results provide a snapshot of the strong interest and value the West Shore community has in post-secondary education. The responses also identified the factors that are preventing actual PSE participation rates from SD 62 from matching the expectations of local students and parents.

While there is a broad range of factors and personal situations that influence individual decisions, three related issues emerged as the most significant barriers: tuition fees, housing costs and distance.

### AFFORDABILITY

#### TUITION FEES

The high cost of post-secondary education was the most widely cited barrier, with 39% of students saying that finances were the obstacle most likely to prevent them from attending post-secondary. Twenty percent of SD 62 students who self-identified as not planning to pursue PSE said it is too expensive. Similarly, 47% of students planning to attend PSE said that affordable tuition fees was a deciding factor in which institution they would attend.
BC has taken steps over time to try to mitigate direct and indirect costs of post-secondary education. Since 2005, tuition increases have been capped at 2% per year. The provincial government announced in February 2019 that it was eliminating interest on BC student loans moving forward.

During in-person workshops, students also expressed anecdotal concerns related to the cost of PSE, including:

- **Too much debt after completing PSE**
- **The cost of education added increased pressure to make the ‘right’ choices**
- **Might end up with a degree or qualification that they wouldn’t use**
- **Do not want to end up doing a job they don’t like after spending so much money on post-secondary education**

**DISTANCE AND COMMUTE TIMES**

One of the most important decisions a student can make to reduce the overall costs associated with pursuing a post-secondary education is to continue to live at home. However, aside from the first and second year university transfer courses offered by Camosun College at Belmont Secondary School, there are currently no post-secondary institutions locally offering classes for first and second year university students. SD 62 high school graduates, or adults seeking to continue their education, must commute to one of three existing post-secondary campuses in the Capital Regional District (CRD):

- **University of Victoria**
- **Camosun College (Interurban Campus)**
- **Camosun College (Lansdowne Campus)**

Research shows that distance to a physical campus is a barrier to education (Frenette, 2002). A study conducted by the Government of Canada regarding what influences young Canadians to pursue post-secondary studies, found that “students who lived too far from the closest university to make the trip every day were distinctly less likely to go to university than students who lived close to a university” (Dubois, 2002).

Students in locations without university campuses were 21% less likely to enrol in universities, and fixed costs of university studies were higher for rural students when compared to students in urban areas (Dubois, 2002). Additionally, students living beyond a manageable commuting distance are far less likely to attend university than students living within commuting distance (Frenette, 2002).

The Association of University and Colleges of Canada found that Indigenous youth are disproportionally affected by distance to post-secondary institutions due to the high rates of Indigenous youth who live in rural areas. This same report noted that Indigenous Canadians with university degrees have higher employment rates and earn higher wages (AUCC, 2011).

The distance challenge for West Shore residents is exacerbated by the lengthy commute times to the existing PSE options. The rapid population growth experienced in West Shore communities has created a significant congestion problem on the section of Highway 1 that connects the region to the rest of the CRD. The delayed and often unpredictable, commute times between the West Shore and the existing UVic and Camosun campuses are a natural deterrent.

Most first and second year students do not own, or have reliable access to, a vehicle, forcing them to depend primarily on public transit to get to and from school. A student travelling from the West Shore with a class starting at 9 am and ending at 4 pm can expect unreasonably long commute times. According to BC Transit Planner (2018), lengthy return travel times can be expected from Langford, Sooke and Metchosin to the three post-secondary campuses in the CRD. The following figure summarizes the total travel time from the West Shore to the existing campuses in the CRD using the BC Transit bus system.
Estimated round-trip commute times for students travelling from the West Shore to existing post-secondary institutions in the CRD (BC Transit Corporation (2018)).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>University of Victoria Campus</th>
<th>Camosun College (Interurban Campus)</th>
<th>Camosun College (Lansdowne Campus)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Langford</td>
<td>2:27</td>
<td>1:09</td>
<td>2:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sooke</td>
<td>3:50</td>
<td>2:42</td>
<td>3:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metchosin</td>
<td>3:29</td>
<td>3:29</td>
<td>3:50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Long commute times can be frustrating and indirectly affect the affordability of post-secondary education. Students who are spending multiple hours per day travelling to and from class are required to commit additional hours beyond the classroom to support their education. They are limited in their ability to participate in work-integrated learning opportunities or to defray costs of attending post-secondary institutions through part-time employment. The Academica research (Appendix B.v) revealed that almost 60% of student respondents plan to work while attending a post-secondary institution.

With the population in the West Shore projected to continue to increase, it is likely that travel times between the region and existing post-secondary campuses will only increase over the next decade, further discouraging students.

**HOUSING COSTS**

West Shore learners for whom a long commute time is unmanageable must seek housing closer to their desired post-secondary institution. For the majority of SD 62 graduates transitioning directly to PSE, that has typically been either UVic or Camosun. There are currently several major barriers to accessing affordable student housing in Victoria area. In their report titled “Victoria’s Student Housing Crisis” (Lotay & McGovern, 2017), the Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group (VIPIRG) concluded that “finding housing in Victoria is extremely difficult due to high rent, lack of housing, high competition, and illegal and discriminatory practices by property owners/managers”.

It was also found that lack of housing and housing conditions had a “negative impact on students' finances, mental health and diet” (Lotay & McGovern, 2017). In order to attend the post-secondary institutions, students have resorted to staying in cars and other extreme measures to live near the university campuses located in Saanich, leaving students at risk (Depner, 2017).

**AFFORDABILITY**

These barriers don’t exist in isolation from one another. If there was a West Shore option that enabled students to continue to live with their parents or obtain local housing at a lower cost than what is available in Victoria, then the long commute and transit times to UVic and Camosun colleges cease to become an issue. If the total cost of post-secondary education was more affordable, students may be able to afford to spend more on housing — or have to work fewer hours, somewhat reducing the time crunch long commutes exacerbate.

However, for West Shore students considering their options, these are all factors that significantly influence their decision to pursue a post-secondary education. Based on SD 62’s historic trend of below average transition rates to PSE, it appears the barriers are having a material effect.
Victoria and the West Shore are currently experiencing strong economic growth, including one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country – 3.6% in January 2019 compared to BC’s 4.4% unemployment rate and the 5.8% national average (Stats Canada, Labour Force Survey, January 2019). Among all other Canadian metropolitan areas measured by Statistics Canada, only Kelowna (3.1%); Guelph, Ontario (1.9%); Hamilton, Ontario (3.9%); and Quebec City, Quebec (3.8%) also had sub-4.0% unemployment during the same period.

The strong demand for workers will continue. The provincial economy is projected to lead Canada in growth in 2019 and 2020 (BC Budget 2019).

The BC Labour Market Outlook (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2017) estimates that 917,000 job openings will be created over the next decade. These job openings will be a combination of new job creation and job vacancies resulting from the aging labour force. Almost half (48%) of these job openings are expected to be filled by young people entering the workforce for the very first time, and 78% of these 917,000 jobs will require some form of post-secondary education or training. Thirty-six percent of all new openings will need at least a bachelor’s, graduate or professional degree from a university.
Current West Shore high school graduate transition rates to post-secondary education do not meet the projected need for job openings in the next decade. The five-year (2011-12 to 2015-16) historic average is 43.2% (compared to 52.5% in all of BC). The gap was smallest in 2015-16, the most recent year with data available, when 47% of SD 62 graduates immediately entered post-secondary against the average of 52.3%. While this may be a positive indicator, the single year of data reflects too small of a sample size to draw conclusions or presume the improvement is a long-term upward trend.

Assuming the strongest recent PSE transition rate (47% in 2015-16) remains stable, it falls well short of the 78% of job openings expected to require some form of PSE training. Furthermore, the approximate 17% transition rate of West Shore students to university would meet less than half the expected need to fill the 36% of new jobs requiring a university degree.

Based on the current trajectories of SD 62 graduate transition rates to PSE, and the types of jobs forecast to be available, the West Shore will not have the skills needed to support a strong, sustainable economy in the future. Without strategic investment and intervention now to address the barriers currently discouraging SD 62 students from PSE, the region is potentially at risk of falling behind the rest of the province, despite its booming growth and strong employment today.
Benefits of a Post-Secondary Campus

**IMPORTANCE OF A CAMPUS TO STUDENT LEARNING**

Research has found that a physical campus in proximity to learners greatly impacts student learning and success, particularly for younger and disadvantaged students and those in their first and second year of post-secondary education (Kirk & Lewis 2015; Wilson & Allen, 2011; Mancini et al., 2015; and Xu & Jaggars, 2014; Frenette, 2002).

For most students, attending a physical campus is an indicator for success (Kirk & Lewis 2015; Wilson & Allen, 2011; Mancini et al., 2015; and Xu & Jaggars, 2014). A physical campus can provide the support systems necessary for success, and research shows that a physical campus leads to lower likelihood of dropping out and quicker program completion when compared to courses taken exclusively online (Mancini, et al, 2015).

**A CAMPUS AS A COMMUNITY PILLAR**

Distance and commute times are key barriers for West Shore students considering a post-secondary education. Research has demonstrated the clear benefit to students who have a local PSE campus in their home community; placing a new campus in the West Shore could reasonably be assumed to increase high school-to-post-secondary transition rates. A local campus will allow students to stay in their home community while they continue their education, increasing the probability that they will also choose to work in the region.

There are many economic benefits for communities that host post-secondary campuses. The construction of a new campus is a significant construction project that generates a short-term increase in employment and an influx of new local spending that wouldn't otherwise occur. Once operating, a PSE campus is a significant new source of employment. In addition to encouraging SD 62 students to stay in the West Shore, a post-secondary campus would bring new PSE students to the region – who would potentially choose to live and spend in the local economy.

A recent Vancouver Island University (VIU, 2018) report found that the total impact of VIU on the regional business community in 2016-7 was $624.5 million (VIU, 2018). This example is not to suggest a similar impact for a West Shore campus – VIU is a mid-sized university with more than 1,200 employees and approximately 11,000 students, but demonstrates how a post-secondary campus also serves as a true economic engine for its host community.
High school graduates today face an increasingly complex landscape of social, economic and environmental upheaval and challenges unimagined by previous generations. The pace of technological development over the past 20 years is unparalleled. Very few roles in the workplace today are the same as they were 20 years ago. In fact, many of the jobs that are expected to become available in the next few years did not even exist a decade ago.

While some would claim that post-secondary education institutions have been slow to respond to these changes, there is a growing awareness that students will need a new set of literacies and competencies to thrive in the emerging economy. In addition to literacy in math, reading, and writing, there should be a focus on technological, data and design literacy, as well as on critical and systems thinking, cultural agility, and entrepreneurship. These skills cannot be taught in the abstract but are best acquired through real world environments such as co-ops and internships.

In addition to new skill sets better matched to the demands of a rapidly changing world, students are increasingly looking for more dynamic, adaptive, personalized and student-focused learning. They expect significantly more flexibility, whether that be in admissions and prior learning assessments; in ubiquitous 24/7 access and mobile learning; in accelerated and integrated learning (available on campus and online, at home and at work); or in learning that focuses less on credentials and more on competencies, including micro-credits. Given financial challenges, students often juggle part-time jobs with classes to make education more affordable. All of this suggests that we need to radically rethink how we deliver post-secondary education.

On-line courses offered in addition to their in-person counterparts have blurred the lines between traditional distance education and face-to-face instruction. In fact, the majority of on-line undergraduate students are also taking courses at their local institution (Magda & Aslanian, 2018). The advantage of this blended learning approach provides students with more flexibility in pathways to degree completion. A recent study at the University of Arizona found that students who take 40-60% of their courses on-line complete their degrees in 3.9 years versus 4.3 years for those that take exclusively traditional, in-person programs (The Boston Consulting Group, 2018).

Blended learning can also better prepare students for university education before they arrive. As an example, Royal Roads University has launched a very successful on-line course open to all registered students prior to arrival. “The Launch Pad” effectively introduces new students to university values, technologies, academic support strategies and services. Students seeking additional support to improve skills such as academic and critical thinking can also take on-line courses prior to university arrival.

A well-designed blended approach promotes active learning by engaging students in on-line programming where appropriate, and allowing more interactive classes. Research shows measurable and significant increases in student learning and reductions in failure rates for courses that have been redesigned with the use of appropriate on-line pedagogy (The National Centre for Academic Transformation, 2014).
There is an opportunity to prepare West Shore secondary school graduates for high-demand career opportunities through an innovative, student-centred, and personalized program of learning that cultivates the competencies, skills, and dispositions necessary for today’s complex and changing sociocultural and economic landscape.

The aim of the program would be to engage students in the acquisition of foundational knowledge in traditional disciplines using non-traditional pedagogies aligned with BC’s new K-12 curriculum. Students will be empowered to apply this knowledge to real life contexts to build their competencies as changemakers and leaders in their workplaces and communities. The program would incorporate individualized and experiential learning, with options for short field study and/or term work experiences.

The development of such a university experience will improve affordability, access and convenience, and provide choice for West Shore secondary school graduates who wish to enter university. It will allow them to study and live close to amenities and services offered in the region, which will positively affect the vibrancy and economy of the West Shore region. In addition, fewer commuting hours will provide students with more time for part-time employment.

Collectively, removing barriers to university participation, providing greater opportunities to earn money while studying, and delivering relevant and attractive programs, will increase the number of students who pursue and obtain university degrees.

The program will be designed to enable participation by all qualified West Shore graduates, and will also include targeted strategies like specialized pathway programs to enhance access of first generation and Indigenous students. An example of an innovative first and second year program is shown on the following page, and students completing this program could continue into third and fourth year programs on-site or transfer to other institutions to complete their degrees.

Royal Roads University looks forward to working with educational partners and stakeholders to further refine this model for expanding post-secondary access on the West Shore to better serve the needs of business and the community, and is confident that it could serve as a pilot for the rest of province.
A Proposed First and Second Year Program

**EXPLORE**

Semester one grounds the student in the post-secondary setting in terms of expectations, personal growth and opportunities. The emphasis is an interdisciplinary exploration of global challenges that familiarizes students with the competencies they will develop throughout the program, including changemaking and leadership components that provide community engagement experiences.

**EXPLORE YEAR 1 SEMESTER 1**

- GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP
- Four three-week themes drawn from disciplines including business, economics, science, math, geography, anthropology, tourism, political science, sociology, justice, literature, film, art and communications. Includes studio component.

**ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

- Math 11
- English 12
- interest in civic engagement
- desire to participate in a learning community

**INQUIRE**

Semester two challenges students to dig deeper into societal issues through posing “big” questions and using research, reason, reflection, analysis and effective articulation of diverse perspectives on these questions. Four core courses in different knowledge areas—science, math, social science, and arts and humanities—are intentionally broad in nature to expose students to a range of disciplines and subject areas. Two-week interdisciplinary field study opportunities follow semester two.

**INQUIRE YEAR 1 SEMESTER 2**

- MATH
- SCIENCE
- SOCIAL SCIENCE
- ARTS & HUMANITIES

**EXAMPLES:**
- climate change
- critical media
- literacy
- global initiatives
- social movements

**DIRECTION**

Semester three advances all the competencies and provides students with opportunities to explore their personalized area of interest. They design their own learning direction with courses in the general knowledge areas of natural science, math, social science, arts and humanities, and business. The core course, Leader as Changemaker, involves a community-based project that runs throughout the semester. Students build on relevant competencies gained from the community engagement in semester two, along with an elective work preparation course.

**DIRECTION YEAR 2 SEMESTER 1**

- LEADER AS CHANGEMAKER
- ELECTIVES
- PATHWAY COURSES

**MOMENTUM**

Semester four guides students in decision-making about academic and work-related pursuits beyond the program, preparing them personally, professionally and academically to move into the next phase of their lives. Students continue to hone their course selections to align with their personal and professional next steps, whether in further education, training or employment. The required Leadership Capstone Project sees students synthesize and apply learning by grappling with the complexities of a real-world issue they identify as relevant to their lives. The term supports students engaged in work search, with elective field study courses available at the end of the semester.

**MOMENTUM YEAR 2 SEMESTER 2**

- LEADERSHIP CAPSTONE PROJECT
- ELECTIVES
- PATHWAY COURSES

**COMPETENCIES**

- collaboration
- creativity
- communication
- leadership
- global citizenship
- interdisciplinary exploration
- research
- ethics
- values
- critical analysis

**ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

- Math 11
- English 12
- interest in civic engagement
- desire to participate in a learning community

**PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

1. Work collaboratively across and within community contexts
2. Explore and analyze solutions to real-world issues and problems
3. Use communication skills to effectively articulate understanding and ideas
4. Challenge assumptions by applying ethical judgement, inquiry, reasoning and logic
5. Reflect on expanded knowledge and growth based on individual position in the world
6. Work with different bodies of knowledge to communicate ideas and positions
7. Integrate global perspectives to demonstrate appreciation and respect for diversity
8. Show attentiveness to local and global issues through being informed, open-minded and responsive to pressing issues, events and emerging frontiers of knowledge
9. Demonstrate changemaker and leadership potential
10. Engage in research concerned with pertinent social issues
The West Shore is in the middle of a remarkable and transformational period of growth. From 2001 to 2016, the region’s population grew by an astounding 49% to 77,460 people. During this same time, the 0-14 age group grew by 11%, foreshadowing an impending need for enhanced education services in the region. With a younger population and more development planned in the region, the expansion is not over. The West Shore’s population is projected to increase to 113,000 by 2031 (Matrix, 2018).

Recently, the West Shore has experienced an economic boom and a very low unemployment rate. However, the economy is changing and the demand for more skilled workers is rising. The skills required for jobs today will not be the same as those required in the future. The economy of the West Shore is likely at greater risk of disruption than some other regions due to the prevalence of jobs in more traditional industries. Labour market forecasts predict that 917,000 jobs will be created or become available in British Columbia due to retirements over the next decade. Seventy-eight percent of these jobs will require some post-secondary education or training, and more than a third will need at least a university degree.

Although SD 62 graduation rates are below the provincial average, they are improving and reached a high of 76.3% in 2016-17. This improvement in graduation rates provides an opportunity for more students to qualify for post-secondary education. However, graduates in the West Shore are not transitioning to post-secondary education at the same rate as the rest of the province. The five-year (2011-12 to 2015-16) immediate transition average was 43.2% compared to 52.5% provincially. Moreover, West Shore students are transitioning to university, in particular, at much lower rates; in 2016-17, 17.2% of SD 62 graduates transitioned directly to university, roughly half the BC average.

Decisive action is needed to remove the barriers facing West Shore students and to provide them with the opportunity to get the skills they need to succeed in the future.

There is conclusive research showing that distance to a post-secondary institution is a significant determinant of participation in post-secondary education. Surveys of students, parents and educators on the West Shore identified distance and commute times, along with the lack of affordable housing, as significant barriers to pursuing a post-secondary education.

With a significant number of job openings in the coming years there should be ample opportunity for students to find good employment. However, based on current PSE transition rates, many young people in the West Shore will not have the requisite skills to participate fully in the emerging economy.

Expanding post-secondary access on the West Shore – most likely in the form of a collaborative venture involving Royal Roads University, Camosun College and the University of Victoria - would greatly benefit SD 62 students and local adult learners, and support the development of a strong, sustainable community driven by a vibrant economy.

The West Shore is one of the fastest-growing regions in the province, a trend expected to continue over the next 10-plus years. Creating access to post-secondary education in the West Shore will drive sustainable economic development and foster community building. This will enable West Shore students to stay in the region for their entire education and it will increase participation rates in post-secondary education, thus equipping future generations to benefit from the opportunities of the emerging economy.
This report recommends that the BC government support the expansion of post-secondary access on the West Shore.

NEXT STEPS
This report concludes that there is a need for a new post-secondary option in the West Shore region. If the government accepts the recommendation, funding will be required to support the development of a full business case.

The business case would include:

- **Advanced Student enrolment modelling**
- **Detailed Academic curriculum design**
- **Identification of Infrastructure needs**
- **Site Selection + Design**
- **Financial analysis and Timelines**
References


