



**Ontario**  
Home Builders'  
Association

## **OHBA Welcomes the Ontario Government's Renewed Commitment to Supporting Increased Entrants into the Skilled Trades.**

**May 8, 2024**

The Ontario Home Builders' Association (OHBA) applauds the recent announcement by the Ontario Government, in collaboration with the Ministries of Education and Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development, of the **Focused Apprenticeship Skills Training (FAST) program**. This initiative is designed to bolster the skilled trades workforce by integrating high school students into the trades starting in grades 11 and 12.

### **Enhanced Collaboration for Skilled Trades**

OHBA is optimistic about the enhanced cooperation among ministries, which is crucial to overcoming the challenges associated with the skilled trades sector. This comprehensive strategy aims to spark both interest and engagement among youth to consider careers in the trades early in their educational journey.

This program, as described, has the potential to be a tangible part of the solution to achieving the government's commitment to building 1.5 million new homes by 2031.

### **Key Details of the FAST Program**

- **Program Announcement:** Originally part of the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), the expanded FAST program was announced on May 1.
- **Collaborative Effort:** A collaboration between the Ministries of Education and Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development.
- **Eligibility:** Open to students in grades 11 and 12 who are working towards an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).
- **Structure:** Students will spend up to 80% of their school time in co-op placements while completing mandatory English and math credits.
- **Job Matching:** The creation of a job bank by the Ontario government to connect students with suitable employers.

- **Program Start:** Set to commence in September 2025. To foster early interest, students will be required to take at least one technological education course starting September 2024.
- **Certification:** Participants who successfully complete the co-op program will receive a special seal on their OSSD, denoting their achievement in the FAST program.

### **OHBA's Role and Ongoing Commitment**

OHBA is committed to collaborating with the involved ministries, including the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, to maximize participation opportunities within the home building industry. OHBA's efforts will also extend to aiding the development and implementation of the new job bank matching system.

Further details about the FAST program and upcoming regulations will be shared as they become available.