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ASTTBC Presents to Legislature Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

An all-party committee of BC MLA's has been urged to "Build a Science and Technology Culture" in the province, to head off developing workforce shortages.

"There's a serious disconnect between Canadians' perceptions of the importance of science to society, and young people's desire to pursue a science-related career," John Leech, Executive Director of the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC told the Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services.

"BC lacks a strategic plan for technology education," Leech told the MLA's seeking public budget input in Courtenay. "We all salute the importance of university education, and trades training. Yet BC has not articulated a strategic focus and connection between education and the world of work in science and technology."

Leech urges government to devote serious attention to K-12 technology programming, lauding the recent BC "Year of Science" as a future-focused initiative that encouraged young students toward so-called "STEM" subjects - science, technology, engineering and math. "This innovative program ended abruptly, with nothing to take its place," Leech lamented. Citing the recent \$6 million dollar BC campaign to encourage careers in trades, Leech urged, "A similar effort and funding are needed to build awareness of technology education and careers!"

ASTTBC numbers 10,000 technology professionals, who together with engineers, architects and other professionals "design, construct, inspect, manage and maintain most of the world around us. All the systems we rely on, water and wastewater, transportation, telecommunications and internet, hydro and natural gas, environment, health, forestry – need qualified professionals working in the background. Yet a recent Angus Reid survey of 16 to 18-year-olds found that only 37 percent were interested in taking even one post-secondary course in sciences."

Outside the meeting, Leech commented that "Students – and their parents – frequently question where the good jobs and careers will come from! Technology increasingly permeates every workplace and job in BC. Both need and opportunity already exist. We need to communicate that, and to get K-12 boys and girls much more involved and engaged in applied sciences."

To view entire presentation click [HERE](#)

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