VICTORIA – Students and teachers throughout the province will benefit from innovative concepts being put into action today as Education Minister Mike Bernier announced 15 new K-12 Innovation Partnership projects.

New projects announced today include opportunities for young learners to:

- use technology to conduct self-directed scientific research;
- partner with a local symphony orchestra to learn about Canadian history;
- participate in enhanced STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programs; and
- develop creative and critical thinking skills.

These are just a few examples of the 32 Innovation Partnership projects now in place in public and independent schools throughout British Columbia. In fall 2015, the first 17 projects were announced.

These projects reflect B.C.’s new K-12 curriculum by supporting teachers and students as they prepare for future success in our changing world. The curriculum provides a flexible and innovative plan to help B.C. students gain the knowledge and skills they need for the jobs of tomorrow.

Projects are selected by the Innovation Partnership Working Group (IPWG), a collaboration of education partners including the BC Teachers’ Federation, BC Schools Superintendents Association, BC Principals’ and Vice-Principals’ Association, the Federation of Independent School Associations of BC and the Ministry of Education.

Each project will receive $8,000 in financial support for teacher release time, research, and project expenses, plus there will be opportunities for project teams to collaborate with colleagues and explore how these innovative concepts could be adopted by other school districts.

The K-12 Innovation Partnership gives public and independent schools support to explore new programs and approaches to help students and teachers succeed.

Quotes:

Mike Bernier, Minister of Education –

“The world is changing and parents expect us to do everything possible to prepare their kids for future success. Innovation Partnership projects help us do that. It’s encouraging to see what is
possible when education partners come together and focus on students. Schools, districts, teachers associations – they are all valuable collaborators. I’m looking forward to seeing these projects in action.”

Rod Allen, chair, Innovation Partnership Working Group –

“It is clear from all the applications that educators in B.C. are committed to providing students with an education that gives them opportunities to succeed. The goal of the partnership is to provide these schools with some support to innovate and share their success with the entire province. Our goal is to learn from these projects, evaluate their impact, and share information on those practices that have positive impacts on the teaching and learning environments. We will all benefit from these projects, and we look forward to working with each team.”

Quick Facts:

• The working group received 119 project proposals for the first two intakes of the Innovation Partnership.
• Proposals for the partnership were received from 43 school districts and 19 independent schools.
• The IPWG will be bringing teams from each project together twice during the year to discuss their innovations.
• The Innovation Partnership is a key component of the K-12 Innovation Strategy announced at the ‘BC’s Focus on Learning’ forum in January 2015.

Learn More:

Find out more about the K-12 Innovation Partnership: www.k12innovation.ca

For the list of Innovation Partnership projects announced today, click here: http://ow.ly/XE08n

Details on projects announced fall 2015: http://ow.ly/XEqC2

B.C.’s New Curriculum: https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/

A backgrounder on the Innovation Partnership projects announced today follows.

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The following 15 projects were accepted by the Innovation Partnership Working Group for the second intake of the K-12 Innovation Partnership:

**Re-Storying Canadian History: The Interdependence of Creative and Critical Thinking**

**School(s):** Glenmore Elementary school  
**Community:** Kelowna  
**Proposal:** Six hundred kindergarten-to-Grade 6 students will learn Canadian history through a year-long interdisciplinary and arts-based study called “How Canada Came to Be”. Through dance, imagery, costuming, drama, song, creative writing and public speaking, students will explore both indigenous and non-indigenous histories that contribute to our Canadian identity. At the end of their study, students will tour with the Okanagan Symphony Orchestra to perform a one-hour show that tells the story of our nation.

**Developing an Innovative French Immersion Report Card**

**School(s):** École élementaire Belgo, École élementaire Casorso, École élementaire Dorothea Walker, École élementaire George Pringle, École élementaire Glenmore, École élementaire Peter Greer  
**Community:** Kelowna, West Kelowna, Winfield  
**Proposal:** The intention is to create a report card that supports the B.C. curriculum’s focus on communication, thinking, and personal and social competencies. Primary French Immersion teachers are collaboratively inquiring on ways to report students’ progress by specifically focusing on the district-wide shared value of nurturing effective communication and global citizenship.

**Inquiry in the Early Learning Classroom**

**School(s):** Oliver Elementary school, Oliver StrongStart, Osoyoos Elementary school, Osoyoos StrongStart, Okanagan Falls Elementary school, Cawston Primary school, Tul-el-Nuit Elementary school  
**Community:** Oliver, Osoyoos, Okanagan Falls  
**Proposal:** The purpose of our collaborative inquiry project is to bring primary teachers and StrongStart facilitators together to inquire about how we can use the strengths and passions of our students to help them become more engaged and to take ownership of their own learning. We will create learning environments and structure our instruction so that creativity, imagination and curiosity thrive. This action research will focus on all students; however, we are interested in having a close examination of how these strategies impact students who are vulnerable in some way.

**Mobile Makerspace**

**School(s):** All SD 22 schools
**Community:** Vernon, Lumby, Coldstream, Cherryville

**Proposal:** The school district’s Innovation Coordinating teachers want to provide STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math) learning opportunities through a “mobile makerspace” which will include a variety of technology such as robotics, microprocessors, coding, 3D printing, wearable computing and gamification learning experiences appropriate for grades K-12. The intent is for all students to experience the program and build skills such as collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking.

**Alternative Education – Dispelling the Myth**

**School(s):** Cowichan Valley Open Learning Cooperative, Cowichan Valley Distributed Learning, Cowichan Adult Learning Centre

**Community:** Cowichan Valley

**Proposal:** Cowichan Open Learning is an amalgamation of programs sharing one campus. Offering elementary and secondary DL, Adult, Alternate, dual credit, etc. on a single campus with a common staff allows and encourages students to move seamlessly between these programs. This enables us to offer a more flexible learning environment (more self-directed, personalized, and student driven) to better support the diverse learning, social, and emotional needs of our student population. The opportunity provided by the new curriculum allows us even greater capacity to blend program areas to accelerate our journey down the personalization road.

**Inquiry-based, Interdisciplinary, Competency-based Graduation Structure: Moving Beyond Translation to Transformation**

**School(s):** Pacific School of Innovation and Inquiry

**Community:** Victoria

**Proposal:** We propose to develop and to demonstrate a new structure leading to graduation from high school in B.C. This inquiry-based approach includes the building of an interdisciplinary portfolio management system that ties artifacts to key competencies as opposed to behavioural outcomes, and a reporting system that is tied directly to the portfolio.

**Authentic Science Partnership: Inquire, Research, Experience (ASPIRE)**

**School(s):** R.L. Angus Elementary school, G.W. Carlson Elementary school

**Community:** Fort Nelson

**Proposal:** The purpose of ASPIRE is to provide students with authentic science experiences. Students will follow the scientific method to conduct self-directed research. They will use leading edge technology and will be mentored by a network of university researchers and science professionals to enhance the authenticity of their experience.

**Re-Designing Assessment in a Middle School**

**School(s):** Trafalgar Middle school

**Community:** Nelson

**Proposal:** Trafalgar Middle school is working to incorporate more meaningful assessment practices into our work with students. Clear criteria, rubrics, self and peer assessment, and timely feedback from teachers form the basis for communicating student learning to parents. Our goal is to shift from three formal reporting periods to regular, ongoing communication about student learning through the use of e-Portfolios and letter grade free report cards.

**Dynamic Science Learning Through Student Choice**

**School(s):** Centre for Learning Alternatives, Peden Hill Elementary, and a secondary school
Community: Prince George
Proposal: Science students will work collaboratively with teachers to choose their assignments and areas of study based on student learning ability and interest following the new science curriculum. A blend between classroom and online instruction will be used to make learning more fun, flexible, and better meet student needs.

John Oliver STEM Program
School(s): John Oliver Secondary school
Community: Vancouver
Proposal: The goal is to enhance student engagement and interest in learning through a project-based STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) program. The John Oliver Secondary STEM program is a collaborative project between tech-ed, science and math teachers who are all working together to inspire students to use their hands and minds to solve real-world design problems.

Learning in Depth
School(s): St. Michael’s school
Community: Burnaby
Proposal: Learning in Depth (LiD), a project-based approach to learning, is being implemented in kindergarten-to-Grade 7 classes. LiD incorporates inquiry-based teaching and learning in order to help develop students’ creative and critical thinking skills while at the same time fostering a deeper understanding of the topics studied. This innovative style of teaching will allow students to develop the skills they need in order to be self-directed learners, while encouraging interpersonal and team skills.

Communicating Student Learning
School(s): Carson Graham Secondary school, Rockridge Secondary school, Mulgrave Independent school
Community: North Vancouver, West Vancouver
Proposal: The Communicating Student Learning innovation project transcends traditional school district boundaries by incorporating three school districts from both the public and independent educational sectors. The project focuses on the International Baccalaureate approaches to learning skills and the communication of students’ development of these skills through a standards-based report card.

Using a Module Approach for Teaching and Learning
School(s): Thomas Haney Secondary school, Pitt Meadows Secondary school, Garibaldi Secondary school, Westview Secondary school
Community: Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows
Proposal: A module design approach to learning English Language Arts will be piloted in high school environments. Two or three teachers will be assigned a multi-age, grades 10-to-12 student grouping. Teachers will choose areas of strength and passion to determine optional curriculum to develop. Students will select modules to rotate into over the year. Consideration will be given to students to complete a module in Independent Directed Studies (IDS) in areas of passion or interest and will be supported in creating cross-curricular connections with their study.

Making Room for Innovation
School(s): D.W. Poppy Secondary school and feeder schools (Peterson Road Elementary, North Otter Elementary)
Community: Langley
Proposal: Creating a collaborative space that challenges students and teachers to use the new Applied Skills curriculum with grades 6 to 9. This “maker” space provides a flexible, creative environment for students and teachers to pursue meaningful learning through quality design. A concept of innovation, inspiration and excellence.

Assessment and How We Communicate Student Learning Alongside the Shifting Curriculum
School(s): Elphinstone Secondary school, Langdale Elementary school, West Sechelt Elementary school, Roberts Creek Elementary school, Kinnikinnick Elementary school
Community: Gibsons, Sechelt, Roberts Creek
Proposal: We are investigating ways to shift our assessment so it aligns with the personalization and experiential learning of the renewed curriculum. Using Freshgrade, we will create e-portfolios to open a virtual door to student learning. This will allow students and parents to view learning as an ongoing process, and enhance the opportunities for interaction between all stakeholders.

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