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**WORK-BOUND ONTARIO STUDENTS COPING WITH DOUBLE COHORT
DIFFERENTLY THAN THEIR UNIVERSITY-BOUND COUNTERPARTS**

-OAYEC SURVEY SAYS 30 % MORE STUDENTS PLAN TO WORK -

More than 3500 Students from 23 Areas across the Province respond from Welland to Fort Francis, Thunder Bay to Leamington, and Kenora to Cornwall

Toronto, April 3 – Findings from a survey released today by the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres (OAYEC) reveal that 30 percent more students will be seeking full-time work in the short-term as a direct result of the double cohort. The survey also shows that university- and college-bound students are much more concerned and prepared for the double cohort issue than those headed into the workforce, despite the anticipated increase in competition for full-time work.

The Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres (OAYEC) is a non-profit organization that supports and advocates for the development of youth employment services in Ontario. In 2002, 68 OAYEC member agencies helped over 100,000 high school graduates and ‘early leavers’ in their transition from school to work across the Province. Responding to the increased competition for jobs for youth as a result of the double cohort is a critical challenge for OAYEC member agencies.

The Survey polled more than 3750 Grade 12 and OAC students across the province in an effort to identify the concerns, plans and expectations of double cohort graduates as well as to anticipate the number of youth entering the workforce in the near future.

Matt Wood, Executive Director of OAYEC said: “We found that many students are aware of education policy changes such as the double cohort and have the capacity to adapt to them. However, those students who are less aware and less likely to change are the ones choosing to go to work rather than college or university.” He also indicates that these findings reinforce the need for “greater public intervention to raise these students awareness and adaptability to their employment challenges.”

A total of 3756 students from across Ontario responded to the survey, representing 39 schools in 23 communities from across Ontario. Of these respondents, 2511 (66.85%) were in Grade 12 and 1173 (31.23%) were in OAC as of September 2002. There were 2914 (77.58%) from the Public schools, 761 (20.26%) from the Catholic Schools, and 49 (1.30%) from other schools. 1833 (48.80%) were male students and 1907 (50.77%) were female students.

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OAYEC SURVEY RELEASE

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KEY FINDINGS

Work-Bound Youth

801 or 21% of respondents are going straight to work or taking a year off starting the summer of 2003. Of those responding in detail to ‘taking a year off’, 33% would not be doing so if not for the double cohort, and 73% of those students will be seeking full time employment. Of the students responding about their plans for work, 17% would not be going to work if not for the double cohort, and 39% of those will be looking for full time employment.

This means the number of youth looking for full-time work will be 30% higher than usual, in the short-term, as a direct result of the double cohort graduation in June 2003.

Change in Plans and General Concern for the Double Cohort

Overall, 2184 or 58% of all students surveyed reported they had *not* changed their behaviour as a result of the double cohort.

An interesting trend, however, is that those students bound for university and college more often have changed their behaviour and more often are concerned about the double cohort than work-bound youth.

While 1093 or 41% of all students surveyed *had* changed their behaviour or plans because of the double cohort, only 31.5% of those taking a year off and 28% of those working had done so.

While 1757 or 48% of all students are “concerned about the double cohort”, only 37% of students taking a year off are concerned and only 23% of students planning to work after graduation are concerned.

This lack of concern and lack of behaviour change among work-bound youth is troubling, especially given the anticipated 30% increase in work-bound youth.

Not all work-bound youth are unaware of the impending challenges, however, since some work-bound students do indicate their belief that the double cohort will increase competition for jobs in the year after graduation. Among students taking a year off, 238 (49%) feel that the double cohort will increase competition for jobs in the year after graduation, and among students planning to work, 140 (47%) feel the same way.

Since 1988, the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres and its network of 68 youth employment agencies have been committed to delivering accessible, high quality, outcomes-based employment services to young people to assist them in reaching their employment and life goals. To learn more about OAYEC and to download a copy of the Survey Report, please visit its web site at www.oayec.org.