

Chinook's Edge students reflect on aviation experience and share excitement for next steps

Chinook's Edge is wrapping up its aviation career pathways program, which allowed six students to attend ground school during April. The Chinook's Edge students, as well as six students from Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools, were sponsored in the program by Sky Wings Aviation, with students covering the cost of books and transportation to the ground school. Students attended the facility three times each week during evenings, and on weekends.

Of the Chinook's Edge students all six are considering pursuing next steps in aviation, including gaining a private pilot's license.

"This was a great opportunity," said Brooke Rosevear, a Grade 11 student from Sundre High School. Rosevear said she hadn't considered aviation until a staff member at her school mentioned the program. Rosevear says attending it ***"has motivated me to continue in this career."*** Rosevear said highlights of the experience included being in the control tower.

"This has really opened my eyes as to how much information goes into flight," she said.

Maxine Bates, a Grade 10 student from Didsbury High School, said she found ground school to be a lot of information. She appreciated looking at flight plans, and ***"looking at all the different planes and learning more [about them]."***



Above: Owen Hillman from Spruce View School. Below: Maxine Bates from Didsbury High School

"Also, I enjoyed meeting all the people and learning about this industry. It was a lot but I loved taking it all in," said Bates.

"This experience has motivated me to become a commercial pilot, and then eventually get into bigger aircrafts with Westjet or Air Canada," she said.





James Ellingsgaard, a Grade 12 student from Olds Koinonia is also interested in taking next steps in aviation. ***“This program has motivated me to pursue my pilot license,”*** he said. ***“A highlight of the program was learning about all the parts of the plans and the tower tour. The most challenging part of the program was navigation.”***

Owen Hillman, a Grade 12 student from Spruce View School, wants to pursue a private pilot’s license as well and, similar to other students, enjoyed ***“checking out the planes and the tower tour.”***

Caleb Leismeister, a Grade 12 student from Penhold Crossing School, said he enjoyed learning about weather navigation and reading meteorological charts. He is considering continuing on to a private pilot’s license.

Dane Nielsen, a Grade 12 student from Didsbury High School, said the experience was “worth it! [I liked all the] different insights and learning how much work gets put into aviation.” Nielsen said he also enjoyed learning about “the weather and planning phases as simple as a 30 minute flight.” Nielsen said he too left the program with a desire to get a private pilot’s license.

“We are thrilled with the positive response to the program, and that this introductory exploration of aviation has been motivating and inspiring for students,” said Brianne Fletcher, *Chinook’s Edge Career Connections Coordinator.* ***“Our work in Chinook’s Edge with careers, is to help students explore and eventually make meaningful connections with a career pathway, so that they transition well after post secondary, and so that before graduation they have greater success with their academic courses.”***

Chinook’s Edge will offer the program again in the fall of 2024, and plans to offer it twice each school year moving forward. There is already a wait list for the program.



Top left: Brooke Rosevear - Sundre High School

Top right: Dane Nielsen - Didsbury High School

Middle row: James Ellingsgaard - Olds Koinonia Christian School

Bottom: Caleb Leismeister - Penhold Crossing School

