

SCHOOL BOARDS

WHY DIDN'T YOUR HIGH SCHOOL MAKE YOU LEARN THIS?

MATT CRAWLEY IS THE TEACHER you always wished you had. Dynamic. Creative. He teaches advanced woodworking at William Aberhart High School in Calgary, and though his job may sound kind of dry, the 38-year-old is having a grand time. Why? Because he helps kids build their own skis and snowboards.

Crawley launched the high-school pilot program in 2011 and has received positive feedback from parents and the school administration, but his greatest kudos have come from the students. "I'm extremely happy with the program," says student Justin Doyle, who completed the class in the spring of 2013. "There's nothing better than making something yourself and then shredding with it."

Currently, the program is running full force, and grade 11 and 12 students are spending the semester building their very own boards. In over 50 hours of class time, the teenagers mill the wood and laminate it into blanks; use the CNC machine to cut out the cores; cut the base; bend the edges; prep the glass cloth; mount the sidewalls; VDS rubber strips, carbon fiber strands, tip-tail spacers and top sheet; and, finally, layup and press the boards. "I love seeing students who are excited and empowered about what they're working on," says Crawley. "Plus, last year, I skied the whole season on a pair of skis made in our shop. That was pretty sweet too."

—Chantal Tranchemontagne

THE KID'S GOT AN EDGE NO LATHED CANDLE HOLDERS OR PLYWOOD BIRDHOUSES HERE. SHOP STUDENTS AT CALGARY'S WILLIAM ABERHART HIGH PUT THEIR LEARNIN' INTO TURNIN'.

