

Drone Education Program Launches in Manitoba School Division *Enabling Students' Learning Using UAV Technology*

(Winnipeg, MB) 6 November, 2018 – Do you remember making paper airplanes in grade six science class to learn about the principles of flight? It appears that drones have replaced paper in that lesson throughout the Frontier School Division (FSD).

Several northern and remote communities are getting a technological transformation using unmanned air vehicles (UAVs) as a learning tool in the classroom. The *UAV Pilot Program*, designed by FSD Science Coach Arif Kassum, is a teaching and implementation guide filled with curricular connections for teachers throughout the division.

“It’s a way for teachers to engage students at a new level in their studies,” Kassum says, adding that “students will learn about concepts such as forces, properties of air, lift and gravity; while at the same time learning how to operate these aircraft in a safe and responsible manner.”

The program is the first of its kind in Canada, with teachers and administration first completing a professional UAV Ground School training program prior to bringing the drones into their classrooms. Matthew Johnson is the President and CEO of M3 Aerial Productions, a Winnipeg-based UAV training company that has partnered with FSD in this program. Johnson spent five years as a Manitoba secondary school teacher, where he first introduced drones to the classroom at Elmwood High School in Winnipeg, where he also started an afterschool Drone Club.

Manitoba is becoming a hot spot for UAV education, as this is also the second year that Brandon University has been running a UAV Ground School program within the Faculty of Science. “Safety is paramount,” says Johnson, “and we need to make an effort to include youth in the discussion as the regulatory environment continues to develop.”

The announcement of the program came from Johnson during the Unmanned Systems Canada conference in Vancouver in early November. During his presentation on *Youth Today as the Future of the UAV Industry*, Johnson indicated that the teaching guide currently being implemented by FSD is a pivotal tool, “a road map that provides teachers from many subject areas access to full lesson plans, assessment tools and ongoing support resources.”

Kassum says the program adds credibility, provides structure, and enables teachers to use UAVs effectively in the classroom environment; and that the northern communities implementing the program are extremely excited to start using this new technology. The division has invested in a number of consumer and professional-level UAV platforms, some of which will be used by students, and some by teachers. Kassum stressed that students will only be using the drones indoors, and that any time a teacher operates a UAV outdoors, it will always be in compliance with Transport Canada regulations.



These Frontier School Division teachers are back in the classroom. M3s Matthew Johnson's ground school engages them in flight theory; step one to becoming a drone pilot. They are excited to be the first school district in Canada to bring this technology to their students.



It's outside to learn how to fly and control the drone.

For more information, or B-roll footage or images, please contact:

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