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Version visionnée sur le site Internet d'origine le 23 juin 2009.

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WORKING TOGETHER TO INSTRUCT, SOCIALIZED AND PROVIDE QUALIFICATIONS





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The implementation of the education reform has been under way for more than 10 years now. Since this process requires time to pause and reflect, a provincewide meeting was organized last fall, with the theme *Taking Stock Before Taking the Next Step*, to provide an opportunity for administrators in the system to reflect on possible means to deal with a wide range of day-to-day situations and to share their experiences, always taking into account the orientations that form the basis for the reform. The guest speakers were all asked to talk about this theme, each from a different, complementary perspective. Pierre Collette spoke on systemic regulation, and Charles Caouette tackled the issue of academic success from a philosopher's perspective. After his address, *Schoolscapes* asked Caouette how his perceptions of academic success are translated into everyday reality at École Le Vitrail, where he works.

Evaluation remains essential for the successful implementation of the education reform, in every cycle of elementary and secondary school. However, when we're talking about evaluation in preschool education, the exercise can take on a particular flavour, as shown in an article in this issue.

Finally, the *Action Plan on Reading in School* is continuing. As part of this effort, the Ministère has created a summer camp devoted to online reading. This camp, which will be available to teachers and other educators during the summer of 2009, was offered to professionals at MELS. The *Schoolscapes* team attended this first camp.





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"TAKING STOCK BEFORE TAKING THE NEXT STEP": THE PROVINCEWIDE MEETING OF EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

Marie-Josée Lépine

Now that all the educational institutions are engaged in implementing the reform, school administrators participated in the provincewide meeting that took place in Laval last October 28 and 29 on the theme *Taking Stock Before Taking the Next Step*.

Presentations and workshops were oriented toward an active search for effective strategies to solve everyday problems. The questions of research, professional development, the improvement of educational services and the integration of new ministerial plans into school organization were revisited.

Taking stock together to focus on shared challenges

"Taking stock before taking the next step, means setting long-term goals: it means knowing where we're headed." It was with these words that Alain Veilleux, Assistant Deputy Minister for the Secteur de l'éducation préscolaire et de l'enseignement primaire et secondaire and the regional offices, opened the meeting. He added that "in order to be able to improve our organizations, it is essential for us to get together to take stock of our issues, our practices, our stumbling blocks, our successes and our weaknesses."

Since he was new to his job, Veilleux took the opportunity of this first meeting with the education administrators to invite them to continue the partnership work they had already begun with the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

The challenges they face revolve around a single reality: achieving academic success for the students of Québec. In the same vein, "the rate of student retention has remained steady over the years. It is a big challenge, not only for the Ministère, but for every school," he emphasized.

"Ensuring that as many students as possible succeed in school requires that we mobilize our strength and all pull in the same direction, in a way that is constructive and complementary," Veilleux observed. He highlighted the importance of supporting and consolidating change, from a perspective of mutual listening

and collaboration, while making sure that this change brings real gains.

Possible solutions were suggested for increasing the number of young people who stay in school, including providing ongoing support to each student, promoting partnership among certain stakeholders in the school system and ensuring constant adaptation of the schools.



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REVIEW OF THE WORK IN PROGRESS

Mélina Martin

Following the opening remarks by Alain Veilleux, Catherine Dupont, head of programs, Laila Valin, director of evaluation, Liette Picard, director of special education, and Richard Leblanc, coordinator of complementary educational services, reviewed the work in progress at the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport and presented a few key issues.

The programs

The Direction des programmes is currently working on initiatives in four areas: the action plan to improve French, harmonizing the transition from secondary school to college, developing a guide for the organization in schools of the *Personal Orientation Project (POP)* and *Integrative Project (IP)* programs, and options in Secondary V. Catherine Dupont presented a few of the priorities related to these issues.

Action plan to improve French

- Hire and train education consultants and develop regional expertise to improve the quality of French.
- Establish learning progress goals in French (language of instruction) at the elementary and secondary levels.
- Create a Web portal to make available all the documents related to the action plan to improve French.

Harmonizing the transition from secondary school to college

- Collaborate with the college system to promote secondary school/college harmonization (e.g. work to be done by subject area and presentation of the new teaching approaches used in secondary schools).

POP/IP guide

- Provide education administrators with a guide to help them put in place a form of academic organization that will favour the implementation of the Personal Orientation Project and Integrative Project programs.

Options in Secondary V

- Rewrite the optional Secondary V programs in history and geography and implement them in September 2010.
- Encourage the schools to take into account competencies already formulated in history and geography, while using the unrevised versions of the optional Secondary V programs slated for implementation during the 2009-2010 school year.

Evaluation

Laila Valin then reviewed changes to the certification of studies process and the action plan to improve French. She also provided information on the instruments put in place by MELS to support the schools and training in evaluation. Many tools will soon be made available to school staff.

Changes in the certification process

The Ministère intends to produce complementary examinations, and not uniform examinations, for the certification of studies in the following Secondary IV subjects: History and Citizenship Education, Mathematics (three sequences) as well as Science and Technology and Applied Science and Technology. To facilitate the administration of these examinations, the school system will be provided with the following two tools:

- a letter presenting the characteristics of each examination and a small question-and-answer insert
- a mini-guide produced following the exploratory study currently being carried out in the schools and containing a few strategies to help teachers use the certification examinations

Instruments

- The complete edition of the scales of competency levels for elementary school (all cycles, all subjects and all competencies) will be distributed in spring 2009.
- The scales of competency levels for Secondary III and IV.
- The updating of the evaluation frameworks for elementary and secondary schools.

Action plan to improve French

The Direction de l'évaluation is particularly concerned with measures 8, 9 and 12. Measure 8 consists in introducing two new compulsory examinations in French for Elementary 4 and Secondary II and defining how to take students' results on these examinations into account. Measure 9 is aimed at increasing requirements in writing, especially in Elementary 6. Measure 12 deals with the training of education consultants.

Valin also took the opportunity to remind everyone that the information on the various documents and training programs offered in evaluation will soon be available on the MELS Web site.

Special education

In the Direction de l'adaptation scolaire, work has focused on two priority issues, the [Action Plan to Promote Success for Students with Handicaps, Social Maladjustments or Learning Disabilities](#) and the Work-Oriented Training Path, which should become mandatory this year. To ensure that the implementation of these programs takes place under conditions that foster the successful integration of students who are experiencing difficulties, Liette Picard, director of the special education department, announced the following measures:

- Resource persons in each region will be given release time to support administrators in organizing services for special needs students.
- Guidelines will be established to determine the conditions that favour the successful integration of special needs students into regular classrooms.
- Parents will receive more information and support, and better tools.
-

Initial training of teachers will be reviewed, in collaboration with the universities, in order to prepare them to work with special needs students.

- Teachers will be released from part of their regular workload in order to receive students with individualized education plans in their classrooms.
- The funding rules for students with handicaps will be simplified.
- Planning for differentiated learning will receive special attention as part of the Work-Oriented Training Path.
- A support system will be established to foster implementation of this path in secondary schools.

Complementary educational services

The acceptance of the changes to the school system, the implementation of actions to promote student success and the integration of ministerial and government policies are the main subjects of concern that guide the actions to be carried out this year in the context of the coordination of complementary educational services. As explained by Richard Leblanc, coordinator of complementary educational services, several approaches could be used:

- Undertake efforts with complementary educational services staff to ensure that the new orientations given to Québec schools are well understood and put into practice.
- Enhance the Web page on [Healthy Eating and Active Living](#) and publish tools on this topic to help school staff and parents.
- Publish a semiannual newsletter and create a Web site to support the action plan [Violence in the Schools: Let's Work on It Together](#).
- Give training sessions on sex education using a guide that suggests implementing a concrete approach.
- Ensure the consistency and complementarity of ministerial actions through consultation meetings with the Ministère and its partners.





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SYSTEMATIC REGULATION FOR MORE EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION

Marie-Josée Lépine

Any system, whether it is mechanical, social or biological, maintains its balance through regulation mechanisms. Educational organizations are no exception, Pierre Colletette, a professor at the Université du Québec en Outaouais, pointed out. To achieve balance in an organization, from the collection of data to the implementation of corrective measures, administrators have to do more than suggest actions, they have to do whatever is necessary to implement them and verify their effectiveness.

The role of regulation

According to Colletette, "regulation consists mainly in making adjustments in a system to keep it in balance." Like a thermostat that turns on the heating system when the temperature in a room falls, the role of regulation consists in introducing corrective measures to re-establish or maintain optimal balance.

For example, in a school organization, regulation has an adaptive role. When the organization is disrupted, by internal or external factors, regulation makes it possible to make adjustments on the basis of information obtained. For example, a significant decrease in marks could indicate that the balance has been upset and that actions should be taken to help restore the situation.

Regulation in organizations or the improvement of practices

Certain forms of regulation can be seen regularly in the schools—from day to day, for example, or in reaction to certain unforeseen events. On the other hand, "periodic regulation that is structured and formal and produces more satisfying results, is more rarely used," Colletette observed.

This form of regulation involves a four-step process:

- Collect data on the effects produced (the results) and document the organizational practices.
- Process the data collected (to do this, compare with thresholds that are considered desirable).
- Decide which corrective measures are required.
- Take actions to introduce the corrective measures.

Collecting and processing data: focus on objectivity and small steps

"The collection of information should be carefully documented," warned Colletette. Although the temptation can be strong to use impressions or beliefs, only rigorous gathering and analysis of results will guarantee the effectiveness of regulation, so it is important to completely document the two variables at the core of regulation in management: the results obtained and the professional and organizational practices associated with them.

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The frequent collection of modest amounts of information should be favoured over more laborious and demanding data gathering. "From the perspective of regulation at the school level, we need instruments that are lighter, more flexible, and that can be used locally." For example, microtests could be done, whereby a given situation would be assessed three times a year, adjustments would be agreed on and introduced, and then a follow-up would be done by measuring the results.

Making decisions and initiating actions calls for boldness

To complete the regulation process, decisions must be made about practices in need of changing and the appropriate actions must be initiated. Administrators play a key role here, for without their impetus and a minimum of follow-up, implementation will lack resolve, Collette remarked.

This is where the need for boldness arises. "We have to be daring enough to take corrective measures in professional and organizational practices, knowing that the culture is not always conducive to this. In doing so, we will no doubt contribute to a certain evolution in the culture of the institution."

In some organizations, favourable conditions and teamwork are often combined. The managers can obtain the cooperation of other members of the organization in order to obtain a shared reading of the situation and determine together the corrective measures required. Otherwise, they would have to take a more controlling approach: a real challenge when it comes to changing organizational and professional practices, Collette admitted.

"Regulating an organization," the professor concluded, "is not a new responsibility for administrators; rather it is an integral part of their role of ensuring that the school attains the expected results, and does so using the available resources as effectively as possible."

A few practices to cultivate (based on the work of Jim Collins, a researcher on high-performing organizations):

- Act on the accessible perimeter (the school) and on the critical factors (professional and organizational practices).
- Set high standards for yourselves.
- Produce information and use it to gauge true performance.
- Emphasize ongoing improvement of practices rather than big changes.
- Be very disciplined and have the courage to identify the problems.

"Because educational institutions do not have natural regulation mechanisms, they have to establish them. Because administrators are responsible for performance, it is up to them to design, activate and manage formal regulation mechanisms." (Pierre Collette, professor at the Université du Québec en Outaouais)





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PROVINCWIDE MEETING: THE PRESENTATIONS

EDUCATION WITH A DIFFERENCE

Isabelle Claveau

Introduced as a humanist and a man of compassion and wisdom, Charles Caouette is a pioneer in the [alternative education movement](#). In 1974, he cofounded École secondaire Jonathan, the first alternative school in Québec. Today there are about 30 public schools of this kind in Québec, including [Le Vitrail](#), a secondary school under the Commission scolaire de Montréal, which was also founded by Caouette, in 2001. The values of respect, responsibility and cooperation advocated by this school accurately describe the education philosophy of this honorary professor in the psychology department at the Université de Montréal.



"Some people say that education will change when society changes, but many still don't see that education's highest role is to humanize and transform society."

(Charles Caouette, honorary professor in the psychology department at the Université de Montréal)

Customized learning

Le Vitrail was founded for young people who want to learn differently, who want to be more responsible and who want to make their own choices about their learning. Some go there by choice, because they are already familiar with the alternative movement; others find themselves there because they had adjustment difficulties, or because regular schools do not meet their needs.

The assisted self-directed learning approach used at Le Vitrail is based on the specific characteristics of the students: they are responsible for their own learning and construct their own programs according to their needs, their interests and what they want to learn. Learning takes place in a meaningful context that makes it possible to combine the different subjects in a way that helps students retain what they have learned. "It is the person who is being developed, not just academic learning," Caouette noted.

The students have a lot of control over and responsibility for their own education. This kind of approach is based on the idea that all young people have a natural desire to learn and develop. The students are not left on their own, of course. They can always count on very close guidance from a personal tutor who supports them in their learning and helps them assume this responsibility. Every teacher at Le Vitrail is at once a subject specialist, a homeroom teacher and a tutor.

The approach at this school is stimulating not only for the students, but also for the teachers. They find themselves becoming more creative. They discover their passions and come up with projects, which they then share with the students.

A conversation with Charles Caouette: reflecting on the meaning of education

Following his inspiring lecture *Réussir, notre défi le plus grand et le plus urgent* (Succeeding is our greatest challenge, and our most urgent one), *Schoolscapes* met with Charles Caouette.

Over and above the education reform, what do we need to make this major transformation in Québec education successful?

We have to have a vision of society that has a soul, a philosophy. We must aim to create a society that is more humane, healthier, happier and friendlier. For example, according to the Faure Report (UNESCO), education should contribute actively to the transformation and humanization of societies, by educating the whole person, who is consciously engaged in a process of collective and individual emancipation. In times of economic difficulty, people have to learn again how to share in order to survive. School, like the family, must therefore inculcate in young people the concepts of sharing and cooperation rather than individualism and competition.

You speak out about the lack of time for reflection allowed to teachers in the course of their workday. Why is that so important?

I think it's deplorable that, in a school, there are never moments of silence or quiet places that would allow teachers to think about the meaning of their work. They are not only responsible for disseminating knowledge, but also for constantly renewing their expertise and improving their skills. We have to make it possible for them to discover the extraordinary task, the opportunity they have to develop human beings who are unique and who have the basic right to succeed. This is a very demanding task. If we don't allow them time for reflection, they will get run down and burn out.

What do you mean by *the right to succeed*?

Less gifted students, whatever their limitations, their talents, their resources or their problems, have a basic right to have positive learning experiences at school, and to feel successful and valued. Caouette continued by noting that evaluation should be concerned more with the basic objectives of education.

What are the objectives of education that should be evaluated?

Education should develop individuals who are capable of learning, understanding, thinking, reflecting, solving problems and creating: individuals who are responsible and self-disciplined, capable of taking charge of their own lives and respectful of their own physical and spiritual health. Education should also contribute to developing individuals capable of cooperation, exchange, sharing, interdependence, respect and friendship. If we don't evaluate those things, we aren't evaluating the objectives of education.

What are you working on now?

At various meetings, I'm continuing to help people rediscover the pleasure of living, learning and developing themselves as human beings. It's a pity to see so many people who are always at the end of their tether or who are afraid of the future. I'm also working on improving the quality of life of people working in the

healthcare system. How can we ensure that they stay healthy themselves and that they find satisfaction in doing their work? Finally I'm trying to help elderly people live an "alternative" old age in which there is still enjoyment, passion and sharing, rather than loneliness, sadness and a feeling of being useless. In the human mosaic, there are pieces that are older, a little shrunken, but they're still very beautiful and they contribute in an important way to the beauty of humanity.



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PROVINCWIDE MEETING: THE WORKSHOPS

MANAGING THE USE OF RESEARCH DATA TO FOSTER SUCCESS IN SCHOOL

Alison MacKay

A rigorous approach, partnership and common purpose were the elements applied by the participants in an action research project in the Commission scolaire des Phares in order to use research to foster the academic success of boys in reading and writing in disadvantaged areas.

The challenge team, which presented this project in the workshop *Managing the use of research data to foster success in school*, was made up of Nancy Hallé, principal of École primaire Estran, Josée Lechasseur, education consultant, and Christine Marquis, assistant director of educational services.

The research context

The Commission scolaire des Phares, in the Bas-Saint-Laurent region, administers 26 schools, of which 16 are located in rural or disadvantaged settings. Observation of a recurrent problem in its territory, namely, the poor success rate among boys, was the catalyst for the action research project.

The project was carried out in the territory of the Commission scolaire des Phares from September 2002 to June 2007 with approximately 30 boys 9 to 13 years of age in two elementary schools and one secondary school in disadvantaged areas.

"We wanted to follow the boys for five years, through all their time in secondary school," Christine Marquis explained. The main purpose was to stimulate interests and develop habits and capacities in reading and writing among the boys in mixed classrooms, and in this way foster their academic success.

Partnership

According to Marquis, what was original about the project was the "partnership that lasted throughout the process and that is still in effect today." The Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR), the school board, the schools, the teachers, the research assistants, the students, the families, male role models in the community and a literacy organization all worked together throughout the project.

Thanks to this partnership, "the project is still alive, still active in the school board: there has been

continuity. The researchers involved are available and continue to provide us with support," Marquis added.

Funding was a key factor in ensuring the continuity of the project. MELS, the school board, the *New Approaches, New Solutions* intervention strategy (NANS) and the schools involved contributed to the success of the project through their constant support.

Colette Deaudelin, professor and assistant dean of research in the education faculty at the Université de Sherbrooke, commented during the workshop on the importance of partnership in research efforts to foster academic success.

Deaudelin feels the success of a partnership rests on a number of factors: there must be a general mobilization, regional priorities must be set, a relationship must be maintained between the research communities and those working in the field, researchers must be actively involved, the partners must know each other and there must be a certain leadership.

A rigorous process to ensure success

From the beginning of the project, the stages were decided and managed. The team had to assess the situation and establish a system of instruments, made up of training, teaching and analysis tools. A great deal of care was taken in putting in place reading and writing mechanisms.

Regulation mechanisms were important at every stage. "Meetings with the universities were organized every six or seven weeks to assess and regulate the various mechanisms," Nancy Hallé explained. Observation of the students' work and interviews and questionnaires distributed to the families were also used to support them throughout the process.

Josée Lechasseur, education consultant, added that these evaluations also contributed to establishing a feeling of belonging. "It was the first time I've taken part in training and been followed in this way. That gave me lots of energy to continue," she declared.

Closing the gap between teaching and research: improving knowledge transfer

Deaudelin pointed out that, in the field of teaching, there is a wide gap between research and practice. "Teachers look for what is good for their students and their classes, and researchers try to produce valid explanations on a given subject," she noted.

To bring these two worlds together, two conditions are essential: having a common purpose (in this case, the success of the students) and promoting a partnership process that makes it possible for the world of research and the world of practice to work toward this same purpose.

Réjean Landry, a professor in the management department of the administrative sciences faculty and holder of the CHSRF/CIHR Chair in knowledge transfer and innovation at Université Laval, agreed wholeheartedly. "Knowledge transfer is not a goal in itself, but rather a means to improve services and practice," he explained.

To successfully transfer knowledge, certain conditions are required. First the initiatives to use research have to be anchored in organizational processes. "We can't start with a single individual, because the project will soon fizzle out," Landry noted. To make the project sustainable, need has to be coupled with research knowledge and the process has to be managed by a network of people and support services, he believes.

Making the research accessible to everyone

Gilbert Moisan and Monica Rosales, from the Service de la recherche et de l'évaluation in the Direction de la recherche, de la statistique et de l'information at MELS, took part in the workshop as resource persons.

As part of the Research Program on Student Retention and Academic Success (RPSRAS), they developed a search engine for the MELS Web site to make research findings available in accessible language.

The *Target, Student Retention and Success* newsletter, which disseminates information online, reports on research findings, and offers food for thought along with suggestions for action and useful links. Other tools, such as summary documents, are also accessible for consultation on the RPSRAS Web site.





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PROVINCWIDE MEETING: THE WORKSHOPS

MANAGING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A CONTEXT OF CHANGE

Isabelle Claveau

Engaging in professional development individually and with others is one of the 12 professional competencies teachers should possess. However, it can be difficult to provide continuing education and training to all school staff in this period of education reform and increased mobility of staff. The [PROTIC](#) team has nevertheless accepted the challenge.

The Programme des technologies de l'information et de la communication (PROTIC), which is a training program integrating new pedagogical approaches with information and communications technology, was launched in 1997 after Thérèse Laferrière, a professor in the education faculty at Université Laval, proposed creating a special class that would be fully equipped to keep up with the latest information and communications technologies (ICT). The program today accommodates more than 400 students from Québec City's École secondaire Les Compagnons-de-Cartier, which has a student population of about 1200.

PROTIC in daily life

Several characteristics of this program make it a unique educational environment.

First, the classroom setup is different: the students are organized into small work teams, with each group around a table. Second, each student has a networked portable computer. The use of ICT is therefore omnipresent and supports the learning context.

Conception, management and evaluation of team projects: this multidisciplinary approach is facilitated by the fact that three teachers share a single class, each one teaching two or three subjects.

Authentic projects and socioconstructivist approaches form the basis for learning. Thus, the teachers are more mediators between the students and the sources of information rather than the unique source, the transmitters of knowledge, according to Martin Bélanger, a teacher in the program.

Training challenges

Beginning in 1997, this particular context created many needs in the area of vocational training.

First, the teachers had to learn ICT in order to use computers in their teaching. Second, they had to familiarize themselves with project-based learning and interdisciplinarity, and this was long before the education reform came to secondary schools. Finally, the teachers had to add to their training a second and sometimes even a third subject. To all this was added training needs in the evaluation of learning and classroom management in a project context.

"Everything had to be built from the ground up: learning activities, missions, projects, observation checklists, evaluation checklists and report cards," summarizes vice principal Jean-Philippe Caron, who is responsible for the program.

Valuable collaboration

Outside collaborators were actively involved, and continue to be, in the professional development of PROTIC teachers.

An important source of continuing education and training comes through the collaboration of many student teachers from the education faculty of Université Laval. There are six or seven level 4 student teachers for about 20 teachers. Their presence enables teachers to keep in touch with theory and with the latest breakthroughs in education research.

The school board also collaborated in teacher training by assigning education consultants during the first years of the program. At the time, meetings with these consultants were worked into the teachers' schedule, once a cycle. This system is still in effect.

Time and cooperation: the key to professional development

To meet their training needs, the teachers in the program opted for a self-managed and co-managed training model. According to Martin Bélanger, "as new needs emerge, you realize that the answers to certain questions concerning, for example, the use of new instruments can often be found within the team." When teachers are allowed time, they are able to share their expertise. The student teachers doing practicums, and even those who had completed theirs, also contributed during these presentations. It should be added that teachers for each cycle met in a single room. This arrangement facilitates discussion, feedback and the planning of multidisciplinary projects.

Mobilizing school staff

According to Patricia Gagnon, education consultant, the presence of a meaningful, shared educational project and the creation of conditions conducive to innovation in teaching explain the continued motivation of PROTIC teachers with regard to their professional development.

These are essential factors for the mobilization of staff throughout the school. Gagnon noted that innovation in teaching does not only mean implementing large-scale projects like PROTIC, but it also involves any new adaptations, new approaches and new processes that might be suggested by teachers who want students to learn better. Teachers who want to improve their pedagogical practices are teachers who are learning and, according to Gagnon, "such initiatives should be encouraged by principals."





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MANAGING THE IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BY ASCERTAINING THEIR QUALITY

Mélina Martin

The workshop *Managing the improvement of educational services by ascertaining their quality* allowed participants to think about the importance of analyzing data from outside evaluations and how to do this, in order to continually improve educational services.

Remarks from resource persons and members of the challenge team at École Louis-Joseph-Papineau, under the Commission scolaire au Cœur-des-Vallées, corroborates those made by Pierre Colletette in his presentation *Gestion disciplinée et régulation* (Disciplined management and regulation). The importance of applying methodical, regular regulation based on results as well as the importance of daring to change professional practices were mentioned by all.

École secondaire Louis-Joseph-Papineau: a model of student retention

Since the 2000-2001 school year, the administration and the school team of École secondaire Louis-Joseph-Papineau have implemented various means to increase the success rate of students by using their educational project as a common thread. To start with, experts carried out several studies to paint a portrait of the school community. "The studies enabled us to be more credible in the eyes of the teaching team," explained school principal Michel Gobeil. In 2001, the crisis management committee was set up, using the *New Approaches, New Solutions* intervention strategy, providing the different actors with means of action. The numerous projects and a climate of trust that were gradually established in the school made possible the evolution of pedagogical practices.

École secondaire Louis-Joseph-Papineau, Commission scolaire au Cœur-des-Vallées

Location: municipality of Papineauville

Socioeconomic environment index rank: 10

Number of students: 630 students from Secondary I to V (91 in continuous individualized paths for learning and 24 in special needs)

Improving educational services

According to Gobeil, improvements in educational services will come through the development of positive interdependence among the stakeholders (school boards, schools, universities and the general community). It should also be realized through collective projects shared by everyone. However, in order to be able to improve educational services, certain factors are essential: the stability of the community, regulation and mutual trust. Gobeil declared that today École secondaire Louis-Joseph-Papineau has achieved balance. "However, we have to stay vigilant, especially in a community like ours," he concluded.

Evaluation as a regulation tool

To regulate educational and organizational practices it is possible to use students' results as the basis, as long as you've ensured that that data is reliable. It is therefore of prime importance that the evaluation of students' achievements is based on observable, measurable elements. In her presentation on different approaches to the regulation of educational and organizational practices, Aline Buron emphasized the role of external evaluations in the regulation process: they make it possible to develop a portrait of the situation and establish a starting point for regulation.

Macro-monitoring and micro-monitoring

Macro-monitoring refers to external evaluations, which provide information on the achievements of all students at various key moments in their academic careers. It makes it possible to make the necessary adjustments to education systems in order to improve performance.

Micro-monitoring, on the other hand, makes it possible to use external evaluations within the school as means to assess the effectiveness of the actions of teaching teams by establishing a portrait of the achievements of their students in comparison with national standards. Subsequently, the work of regulation is carried out by implementing teaching and organizational strategies that are likely to improve results in each school.

However, internal evaluation should not be ignored for supporting learning or recognizing competencies, since it constitutes a supplementary point of view on the students' learning. Together, internal and external evaluation can improve the reliability of information on the students' achievements and thus contribute to better regulating educational and organizational practices.

NANS: analysis leads to improved intervention

The *Education Act* calls on governing boards to examine their school's situation so that better choices can be made regarding objectives and ways of improving students' success. Claude Girard, who is involved with the *New Approaches, New Solutions* (NANS) intervention strategy, talked about provincewide trends determined following the planning carried out by the schools. The four reports produced on these trends show a constant improvement in all criteria (variety of types of data used, quality of documentation, consistency among the different parts, etc.). However, certain aspects, such as depth and accuracy of the situation analysis, require improvement.

Plan, but make sure to follow up

The planning, implementation and evaluation process should be regularly updated, readjusted and improved. Research on the impact of planning on students' success highlights the importance of follow-up on means and the evaluation of objectives. Planning within a school therefore needs to be done constantly.

Even though the submission of a written document to the Provincial NANS Steering Committee is limited to once a year, the planning process required by NANS is more than a simple administrative demand: it is really the key to the intervention strategy.





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MANAGING THE INTEGRATION OF NEW MINISTERIAL PLANS INTO SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Evelyn Payne

In school organization, the practice of integrated management is a daily challenge that requires commitment from administrators in every area. In the workshop *Managing the Integration of New Ministerial Plans Into School Organization*, a school team and a regional team recounted their experience and proposed various processes to support administrators in their tasks.

Mobilize a school team around a coherent, meaningful project

Five years ago, Renée Tremblay was appointed principal of École Antoine-Hallé, under the Commission scolaire de l'Énergie, in Shawinigan. She made certain observations at the time. From the start, she found the team in place dynamic and committed. However, she was concerned about the fact that many projects were carried out individually, with no cohesiveness among staff members. She also noticed that the educational project and success plan were rather vague and ambiguous. In this context, Tremblay set herself the following objective: mobilize the school team around a shared vision to facilitate decision-making and guide the students toward success.

An observation process showed that health and nutrition were interests shared by all staff members. The *Success Plan* committee was then formed. The school team chose as their mobilizing element the broad area of learning *Health and Well-Being*. The educational project was directly related to it.

According to Tremblay's observations, the implementation of this specific educational project facilitated the mobilization of the school team by targeting a specific area that was of interest to all staff. The organization of sports activities in the school, a variety of lectures and health reports for the staff are just a few of the actions that were taken to rally the team around a single theme, health.

In addition to guiding young people toward healthy living habits, this process, which integrated the guidance-oriented approach into the project, was aimed at boosting their self-esteem. The students were encouraged to become engaged in their school community by offering their services. One way they could do

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this was by preparing a CV and then applying for a job as an assistant in the school.

The educational project was easy to harmonize with the new ministerial plans. In this way, the school team, by giving priority to certain specific objectives and needs in their institution and by applying precise, meaningful elements directly related to the success plan, was able to integrate in a coherent, targeted way approaches such as *Healthy Schools*, *Québec en Forme* and the *New Approaches, New Solutions* intervention strategy.

As Tremblay observed, "in spite of the problems, everyone is working with common purpose for the success of the students. Health has thus become a target to be integrated in various ways according to our objectives." Nothing can be taken for granted, however. The objective must be pursued in spite of staff mobility. Last year, when Tremblay left her position, there was concern about the continuation of the initiative. To manage continuity during this change, Suzie Boucher, current principal of École Antoine-Hallé, held fast to the values and objectives in the success plan.

Student success: the focus of the regional team's projects

In order to equip school principals dealing with multiple requests from MELS and the school boards, a regional task force was set up. Nathalie Cauchon, of the Direction régionale de la Mauricie et du Centre-du-Québec, Hélène Bossé, consulting director at the Commission scolaire des Bois-Francs, and Jean-René Dubois, consulting director at the Commission scolaire de la Rivéraine, were present to share their experiences.

Beginning in the first year, the members of the regional group—made up of a principal from each of the five school boards in the region—came to a common understanding of their mandate before analyzing the local and regional resources that had been made available to them. Two elements emerged from this discussion: the mission, which consisted in learning to work on the basis of co-development, at the regional level, to support school principals in the integration of the various plans, and the objective, which was to give more meaning and consistency to the actions carried out to guide students toward success.

To achieve this, a systemic vision was adopted, aimed specifically at establishing a global, inclusive approach that integrated the various facets of the task of school administration. Support would then take the form of training, individually or in small groups, under the responsibility of principals. Other tools developed during meetings were shared by the members of the group, and were then distributed to their colleagues and other school principals.

Throughout the support process, the members of the regional team noted the importance of focusing on the educational project and the success plan. These two guiding principles at the heart of school life would thus guide the coherent, meaningful actions for each of the schools, thereby fostering the success of their students. In this way, the regional team encouraged the stakeholders in the school community to practise a kind of management that was integrated locally rather than globally. This integrated management would act as a filter, ensuring the implementation of projects in a targeted and logical way.

Through their experience, the members of the regional team were able to make certain observations. In this context, regulation appeared as a necessity for making the adjustments called for in changing contexts. Likewise, they noted the importance of emphasizing the effectiveness of principals rather than trying to overcome the difficulties of their task in this regard.





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EVALUATION OF LEARNING AT THE PRESCHOOL LEVEL

INTERVENTION AT THE CORE OF EVALUATION

Isabelle Claveau and Christine Pérusset

In preschool education, it is not possible to talk about evaluation without referring to intervention. In this context, free play and workshops are the best times to intervene, since these activities provide opportunities for teachers to observe the transfer of the learning (knowledge, strategies, processes) offered to the children.

It should be recalled first of all that in preschool, observation is the favoured means of evaluation, since it makes it possible to follow the progress of children as they develop competencies. Teachers therefore need to observe the attitudes, behaviours, processes, strategies and achievements of the children in action in order to model their interventions with them.

According to the *Guide général d'interprétation et d'instrumentation pédagogique pour le programme d'éducation préscolaire* (MEQ, 1982, p. 8-13), the purpose of intervention is:

- to stimulate, i.e. encourage the child to be open to change, to apply an idea, to try something new or to use a familiar situation differently
- to support the child or the group in what they are thinking, feeling or doing
- to confront, i.e. criticize, judge, impose a rule or take an attitude that places the child in front of a reality he or she does not like, but which must be faced

The role of teachers is therefore crucial, since, through their actions, they motivate the children to go farther in their learning. In order to take appropriate action, teachers must always keep in mind the focus of their observation and the evaluation criteria for the competencies to be developed according to the [Québec Education Program](#).

Teach by asking questions

The best way to understand children and take action to help them develop their competencies is to ask questions. The children can thus structure their thoughts and go farther in their exploration and learning. Teachers should therefore get involved in free play, workshops and activities in order to observe children in action and question them appropriately. The questions teachers ask should be related to what they are aiming to observe. The children's answers should enable them to garner information on the development of competencies and thus guide their actions.

To choose which questions to ask children, teachers need to refer to the evaluation criteria. The teachers first define all the observable criteria, then, they question the children about those that cannot be observed. The question chosen should refer to something in the child's zone of proximal development.

Here are a few examples of questions related to each of the evaluation criteria for the six competencies of the Québec Education Program and their context for learning:

Competency 1 – To perform sensorimotor actions effectively in different contexts

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Context for learning: This competency is developed in motor and sensory play, art activities and activities outside the classroom or school. (Québec Education Program, p. 54)

Execution of various gross motor movements and execution of various fine motor movements

- "Where can you go?"

Adjustment of actions to the environment

- "Look around you." (Teach them to use the space with consideration for others.)

Recognition of factors that favour well-being (health and safety)

- "How do you feel?"
- "What did you do to make sure you're safe?"
- "What could you do to feel better?"

Competency 2 – To affirm his/her personality

Context for learning: This competency is developed through the children's everyday experience in play, projects, creative activities and relations with others. (Québec Education Program, p. 56)

Use of appropriate means to meet his/her needs

- "What do you need to continue doing what you're doing?"

Appropriate expression of his/her tastes, interests, ideas, feelings and emotions

- "Why do you think this is interesting?"
- "What do you like most about it?"
- "What would you like to do?"

Demonstration of autonomy in games, activities, projects and everyday life in the class

- "Why did you play this game, do this activity, this project?"
- "How did you pick it?"
- "What are you missing?"

Various manifestations of emotional security (setting challenges for himself/herself, speaking up)

- "What challenge have you given yourself for the next few weeks?"

Competency 3 – To interact harmoniously with others

Context for learning: This competency is developed in everyday classroom life through play and projects. (Québec Education Program, p. 58)

Demonstration of openness to others

- "What's your idea here?"
- "What could you do here?"
- "Does your friend agree? If your friend doesn't want to, what do you do?"

Participation in the group and observance of the group's rules of conduct

- "What would happen if we changed the rules?"

Application of a conflict-resolution process, with help

- "What could you do to make things work?"

Personal involvement with others

- "What role are you playing?"
- "What do you want to do?"

- "What can you do to help the other children?"

Competency 4 – To communicate using the resources of language

Context for learning: Communication is developed in real, meaningful, complex everyday situations, through the regular use of a variety of sound, visual or digital productions (documents, films, sketches, poems, songs, etc.) and children's literature. Symbolic games stimulate children's verbal expression. (Québec Education Program, p. 60)

Interest in communication

- "Why did you take this book?"
- "Why are you drawing this, painting this?"

Demonstration of understanding of the message

- "Can you tell me the story?"
- "Tell me about your favourite character."

Production of messages

- "Show me the different parts of your message."

Competency 5 – To construct his/her understanding of the world

Context for learning: Children develop this competency in everyday life, in both ordinary situations and those in which problems must be solved. They construct their understanding of the world as they discover the arts, the social sciences, mathematics, science and technology. (Québec Education Program, p. 62)

Demonstration of interest, curiosity and a desire to learn

- "What are you doing now?" "Why?"

Experimentation with various ways of exercising thinking

- "What could we do to change what you're doing and make it better?"
- "Can you do the same thing with a different material?"
- "What is this used for in everyday life?"

Use of pertinent information to learn

- "What do you see in this picture?"
- "How will this help you do your work?"

Description of the process and strategies used in learning

- "How did you make this?"
- "How did you get ready to do it?"
- "What did you start with?"
- "What did you do next?"
- "What problems did you have?"
- "What did you change along the way?"
- "What did you do to solve your problem?"

Competency 6 – To complete an activity or project

Context for learning: Children develop this competency by exploring their physical, human and cultural environment, and through work in the different subject areas. (Québec Education Program, p. 64)

Involvement in the activity or project

- "What do you want to do?"
- "What do you know about this?"

- "Who could help find out more about this?"
- "What's your plan?"

Use of his/her resources in carrying out the activity or project

- "Next time, how would you do it?"
- "What do you need?"

Perseverance in carrying out the activity or project

- "What else would you like to do?"
- "What's your project?"
- "What do you see?"
- "How are you doing with your project?"

Description of the strategies used in carrying out the activity or project

- "Are you doing okay? Do you need help?"
- "What have you done so far?"
- "What did you do to find out how to do your project?"
- "What did you try?"
- "What could you try?"

Assessment of the learnings acquired and difficulties encountered

- "What did you do to finish your activity?"
- "What did you find hardest to do?"
- "Who helped you?"
- "What do you know now that you didn't know before?"
- "Would you be able to do the activity again using other things?"

Expression of satisfaction with the activity or project

- "What are you the most proud of?"
- "How could you use what you know now?"
- "What did you like the best?"

A useful site

The Web site of the [Service national du RÉCIT à l'éducation préscolaire](#) contains a lot of resources for school staff, including many documents produced by MELS.





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EVALUATION OF LEARNING AT THE PRESCHOOL LEVEL

EVALUATION STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES ADAPTED FOR PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Isabelle Claveau and Christine Pérusset

The preschool education program is based on competencies that are closely related to children's overall development. The teachers should therefore always work with the children in their zone of proximal development. For this reason, certain aspects that are valid for teaching in elementary school cannot be taken into account in preschool. It is therefore important for the preschool teachers to get involved in the standards and procedures committee in their school to ensure that those standards and procedures apply to their teaching.

The standards and procedures for evaluation are used to specify how the evaluation of learning is carried out in a school. It should be recalled that, according to the guide [Renewing the Local Framework for the Evaluation of Learning](#) (part II, component 2), the evaluation process has five stages: planning, information gathering and interpretation, judgment, decision and communication of results.

Here are a few details on the stages to be considered in the evaluation of learning in preschool education, as well as examples of the related standards and procedures for evaluation.

Planning

Planning of evaluation has to take into account the mandate of preschool education (give children a liking for school, foster children's overall development and prepare children for their future schooling), knowledge of the child and the group of children, educational aims of the broad areas of learning, culture and the six competencies to be developed.

- Example of a standard: The planning of learning and evaluation complies with the Québec Education Program.
- Example of a procedure: The teachers develop learning situations based on the world of play and related to questions from children and their interests. They organize their classroom in a way that fosters the active participation of the children.

Information gathering and interpretation

In preschool, information gathering mainly takes place through observation, but also through interviews, comments from the children and achievements recorded in a logbook or portfolio by the child and the teacher. This information is then interpreted according to the learning progress of the child and in keeping with the expectations for the end of preschool education set by the Québec Education Program.

- Example of a standard: Information gathering takes place during learning throughout the year.
- Example of a procedure: The teacher uses the observation of the attitudes, behaviours, processes, strategies and achievements of the child as the primary means to gather information.

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Judgment

The collection and interpretation of information enables the teacher to make a judgment on the status of the development of the competencies during the year and the competency level attained by the child at the end of the year. In order to make a quality judgment, the teacher needs to collect information on all the evaluation criteria. If information is missing for one of the criteria, it is always possible to choose not to make an overall judgment on the development of the competencies during the year. The teacher can still make comments on the development of one or more competencies.

- Example of a standard: The six preschool education competencies are the focus of evaluation for making a judgment.
- Example of a procedure: The teacher uses the evaluation criteria for each competency to make a judgment.

The decision

Through the judgment, the teacher can make the best decisions to ensure the continued learning of the child.

- Example of a standard: Teaching is planned to ensure the continued learning of the child.
- Example of a procedure: Teachers in preschool education and teachers in Elementary Cycle One establish a model for the transfer of information at the end of year.

Communication

Decisions taken are then communicated through comments, meetings, the report card or the preschool end-of-year report. These communications can be intended for the child, the parents, the Cycle One teachers or other people concerned.

- Example of a standard: Each competency is assessed in the report card at least once in the course of the year.
- Example of a procedure: This assessment takes the form of comments on the development of the competency or uses the following legend: A = is developing the competency very well; B = is developing the competency well; C = experiences difficulties in the development of the competency.





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EGALITARIAN RELATIONSHIPS AT SCHOOL

EGALITARIAN RELATIONSHIPS AT SCHOOL: EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

Méлина Martin

The models offered by our society are often stereotypical and do not always give young people opportunities to explore and express their own true natures. The establishment of egalitarian relationships at school is a big step in the right direction. That is why the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport is offering school staff two stimulating training sessions on egalitarian relationships between women and men.

This is in keeping with the policy on equality between women and men, [Turning Equality in Law Into Equality in Fact](#), which was accompanied by an action plan (2007-2010). This government policy stipulates that for women, like men, freedom of choice depends on equalrights, responsibilities and possibilities.

Training adapted to current realities

Two training sessions are offered: one, [Rapports égalitaires: agir en leur faveur](#), is intended for administrators, and the other, [Rapports égalitaires au quotidien: agir pour contrer ce qui les compromet](#), is intended for teachers and complementary educational services staff. These training sessions contribute to developing a culture of equality through the nonstereotyped socialization of young people and encourage a pooling of efforts to achieve this. They provide all stakeholders in the school system with the tools they need to identify the egalitarian relationships to be established and to adapt their interventions to the new realities young people face today.

The training sessions enable the school team to support young people in their development and help them be themselves and make choices without fear of being judged. As mentioned by Stéphanie Houle, an educational sexologist who leads training sessions on egalitarian relationships, "it is essential for young people to be conscious that whatever a person's gender, everyone has the same rights and everyone has the same choices."

Effective work tools

The training sessions on egalitarian relationships suggest **concrete tools** for educating young people about egalitarian relationships and for developing strategies. Since the issue of egalitarian relationships can be approached through more than one area of learning, it can become a meaningful way to contextualize learning for young people and contribute, at the same time, to the development of subject-specific competencies.

Interested groups should contact the person responsible for training sessions in their regional MELS office. For more information, consult the [Training Offered](#) page online.

Working with students right from the start

Stéphanie Houle also noted the importance of integrating practices that promote egalitarian relationships with very young students. Many stereotyped perceptions are already present at an unconscious level in preschool children and elementary school students. "In secondary school, egalitarian relationships are essential," remarked Houle. Young people, who are developing rapidly and are very much influenced by society, are searching for their identity. In addition, in Cycle Two, they are asked to think about their future career choices. It is therefore imperative to broaden and diversify as much as possible their academic choices."

Egalitarian relationships and sex education

The training sessions on egalitarian relationships and sex education are complementary. For participants who have already begun a process of sex education with students, training on egalitarian relationships allows them to discover additional resources. "The training on egalitarian relationships is independent and very complete in itself," added Houle.

A global, integrated approach

Adopting a global, integrated approach will enable the school team to draw on interrelated experiences to develop students' competencies. "Often these are the same as the basic skills that young people need to develop to deal with the realities of life," explained Houle. "A broad range of actions drawing on sex education, egalitarian relationships, media education and even the prevention of violence, will be meaningful to young people. What we need is a global vision rather than dealing with themes separately."

Establishing egalitarian relationships at school

Many tools, ideas for reflection and practical exercises are offered to participants during the training sessions on egalitarian relationships:

- thinking up ideas for projects and learning situations that could increase awareness among the students
- establishing a new integrated, interdisciplinary vision
- developing means to mobilize the school team and prompt staff members to take on individual and collective responsibilities
- reflecting on their own attitude and their own vision of relationships between men and women in order to offer support to students
- looking critically at experiences in the school and at the values and models conveyed, both by the adults and the students, with regard to egalitarian relationships
- recognizing realities that can have a negative impact on egalitarian relationships in the school
- situating egalitarian relationships in the current educational context by becoming familiar with effective tools and by complying with the Québec Education Program

After taking one of the training sessions on egalitarian relationships, participants will be able to initiate their own strategies and quickly implement measures to establish egalitarian relationships and promote them in their schools.

This year, for the first time, the Secrétariat à la condition féminine put out a call for projects promoting equality between girls and boys at school. The goal was to encourage the development of new ways and means of countering sexist stereotypes, not only with respect to sexuality, but also in terms of attitudes toward relationships, career paths and roles within the family, the workplace and society in general.

For more information, consult the Web site of the Secrétariat à la condition féminine:

www.scf.gouv.qc.ca.



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EVALUATION OF LEARNING AT THE PRESCHOOL LEVEL

THE BASIS FOR FEEDBACK IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Isabelle Claveau and Christine Pérusset

In preschool, the teachers should pay particular attention to feedback, both oral and written, since certain remarks can be harmful to children. Feedback should above all emphasize the abilities of a child and what the child should improve.

The characteristics of good feedback

Feedback that is in keeping with the development of competencies in the Québec Education Program should:

- be linked to observable facts related to the evaluation criteria and the key features of the competency to be developed
- be constructive, i.e. specify what the children are capable of doing and emphasize their successes
- refer to the child's progress
- mention a child's special talent, where applicable
- describe what the child is doing in positive terms
- be understandable for parents (use concrete examples to illustrate the points being made)
- be timely and stress the element that needs improvement, where applicable
- recognize the work done at home
- ensure follow-up on the elements that need improvement
- involve the child (the child should know what comments have been included in the report card)

What to avoid

For feedback to be constructive, the teacher should avoid generalizations. They can even reflect prejudice since they describe the child as a whole.

Vague expressions such as "make an effort," "pay more attention," "concentrate," "take care in your work" or "apply yourself" should also be eliminated, since they do not indicate what the child needs to improve or how to go about it.

Finally, negative remarks ("lacks attention," "lacks perseverance"), value judgments and observations ("lazy," "stubborn," "not interested") should also be avoided.

Feedback in the report card

So what should be written in the report card? Following this reflection, the feedback given to parents through the report card should at a minimum:

■

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identify a strength or a newly acquired competency

- focus on a challenge in the child's zone of proximal development
- indicate how the teacher will help the child overcome difficulties (actions to be taken)
- identify, with the parents, the support they can provide to their child
- review the help that needs to be provided at home
- show the child's progress by indicating what has been improved



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READING CAMPS

READING CAMPS: A SUMMER ACTIVITY FOR SCHOOL STAFF

Catherine Gaumond

Every year, school staff members are invited to take part in reading camps over the summer. All school boards, grouped by region, can take advantage of them. Organized under the Action Plan on Reading in School, these camps are part of the measure adopted to *support the school system*.

Since their creation, they have continued to grow in popularity. This success is no doubt related to the fact that the themes are drawn from the concerns of school staff and students alike. The next reading camps, in the summer of 2009, will be organized around the themes *Online Reading* and *Young Readers*.

Last September, members of the professional staff at MELS were offered an opportunity to participate in an adapted version of the reading camps. The *Schoolscapes* team also attended the camp, which had as its theme, *Online Reading*.

Online Reading: an invitation to join the technological revolution

Facilitators and participants agreed that technology has taken over the daily lives of young people in an irreversible and conclusive way. In addition, as mediators, they all realize that it is urgent to better understand the meaning of the transformations that are taking place in the new *Google generation* in order to adjust to their needs and their world.

The key word is guidance

The advent of computers and other high tech devices has changed the way young people of the *Google generation* see knowledge and develop specific reading strategies. First, unlike traditional reading, which was organized in a linear, structured way, information on the Web comes to the reader in a chaotic, multidirectional mass. Faced with this reality, students have to learn to discriminate and use their judgement. Students need guidance to help them take full advantage of technology and apply it to their learning. Currently, the digital culture young people know is mostly about play, so it is up to mediators to steer them toward a culture of work. François Guité, a teacher at École secondaire De Rochebelle, who talked about his experience, maintained that "technology has extraordinary potential to create situations of exceptionally enhanced communication and to facilitate collaboration and sharing."

The integration of technology into teaching: getting everyone on board

What will it take to bring the technological revolution to schools? The willingness and involvement of everyone at all levels. The mission and priorities adopted will guide actions in this direction. Resisting new technologies will only widen the gap between students and teachers.

Additional information can be provided by your regional office of the [Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport](#).



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THE ACTION PLAN ON READING IN SCHOOL: NEWS

Catherine Gaumond

During their meeting last October, the members of the advisory committee on the Action Plan on Reading in School reviewed the work accomplished and the actions undertaken in reading in each sector. Reading is an area of learning that calls for collaboration by all stakeholders. Indeed, understanding the written word is the foundation of learning, and so it is of utmost importance that actions related to reading be coordinated.

Certain measures have been added to the Action Plan on Reading in School for the next three years, but the broad orientations remain unchanged.

Updates and additions

Recognition awards

Since 2005, [Recognition awards](#) have been given to schools that have developed projects to promote reading. To date, this measure has been very successful. A [catalogue](#) of these projects has been created so that other schools can draw on these initiatives to develop their own activities. A new criterion, effectiveness, was added in 2008-2009. It is aimed at promoting the development of projects that will encourage young people to acquire knowledge and develop the strategies they need to read a variety of texts effectively. For more information, consult the Web site of the [Action Plan on Reading in School](#).

Reading camps

Provincewide summer [reading camps](#) are organized by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. The first camp, which was offered for three consecutive years, helped participants think about their profiles as readers and equipped them to play the role of mediator more effectively. The second camp, offered in 2008, was on the theme of *Online Reading*.

The *Online Reading* camp will be repeated in the summer of 2009 to meet the growing concerns among school staff about the new realities affecting the *Google generation*.

For the first time, a camp on the theme of *Young Readers* will also be offered. In addition, MELS is currently developing a third reading camp theme for the summer of 2010.

Book fairs

Visits by school boards to the various book fairs are continuing in five regions of Québec. Participation in such events is a great opportunity to create contacts with the community while strengthening connections among students, parents, grandparents, the school and the school board.

Now hiring school librarians

As part of the renewal of the Action Plan on Reading in School, there is currently a program to hire school librarians in the school boards. In addition, the Action Plan provides for joint initiatives with the universities to upgrade the training of the librarians who will be working in the school system.

Communication plan

A communication plan was adopted for this new phase in the Action Plan on Reading in School. Watch for:

- the distribution in the schools of promotional material on reading
- an ad in the November 2008 issue of *Protégez-vous* magazine to promote reading among young people and make connections with the family
- the revision and updating on the MELS Web site of the section on the Action Plan on Reading in School





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CREDITS

Schoolscapes and *Virage* are produced under the responsibility of the Secteur de l'éducation préscolaire et de l'enseignement primaire et secondaire in collaboration with the Secteur des services à la communauté anglophone.

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