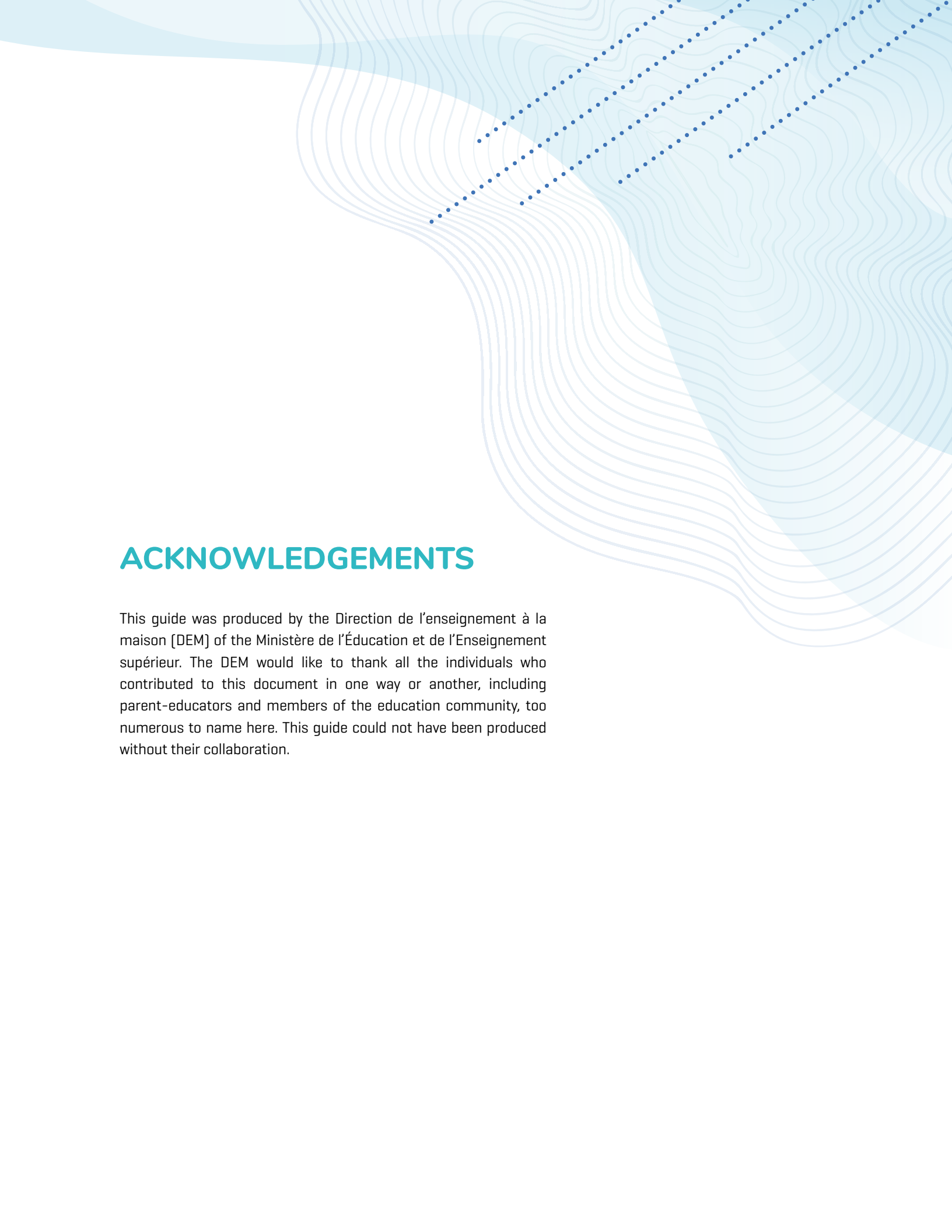


HOMESCHOOLING

SUPPORT GUIDE





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guide was produced by the Direction de l'enseignement à la maison (DEM) of the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur. The DEM would like to thank all the individuals who contributed to this document in one way or another, including parent-educators and members of the education community, too numerous to name here. This guide could not have been produced without their collaboration.

This document was produced by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur.

Title of original document

Enseignement à la maison – Guide d'accompagnement

English version

Services linguistiques en anglais
Direction du soutien au réseau éducatif anglophone
Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

A PDF version of this document is available for download from the website of the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur at:
www.education.gouv.qc.ca

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Legal deposit

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2020
Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur
ISBN 978-2-550-85863-8 (print)
ISBN 978-2-550-85864-5 (PDF)

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INTRODUCTION

In Québec, any child who receives appropriate homeschooling is exempt from compulsory school attendance, provided the homeschooling complies with the legal framework. This framework aims to ensure that homeschooling contributes to the development of a child's full potential, educational success and qualification in preparation for admission to higher education or integration into the job market. Homeschooling must thus allow the child to have access to high-quality learning.

This guide is designed primarily to advise and support parents who wish to provide homeschooling or are already in the process of doing so. It is also intended for school boards and other stakeholders in the education community. It provides answers to questions raised by this educational model and allows everyone involved to make a positive contribution.¹

This guide also deals with the pedagogical, organizational and collaborative practices that contribute to the educational success of children in a family environment. These best practices² refer, on the one hand, to the development and implementation of the learning project and, on the other, to the monitoring and evaluation of the children's learning progress and the collaboration among the various stakeholders. The roles and responsibilities of these stakeholders are defined, and a calendar of the major steps to be completed is given in the conclusion.

In addition to this guide, tools have been developed to support parent-educators in complying with their legal obligations. These tools are templates that may be used to prepare the learning project, the status reports and the reports on the child's progress. They can be found on the Ministère's website.

1 This guide aims to provide support for homeschooling. Further details can be found in the *Education Act* and applicable regulations.

2 The list of best practices referred to in this guide is not exhaustive. Moreover, their effectiveness and relevance depend on the context, the children, their families, and their needs and preferences.



1 FIRST AND FOREMOST

The roles and responsibilities of the various education partners, including the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, the school boards and the parent-educators, aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to succeed, whatever their needs may be.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENT-EDUCATORS

The parent-educators send a notice to the Minister and their school board. They work with their child on developing a learning project, which they submit to the Minister in accordance with the requirements and deadlines specified in the legal framework. They attach any documents or information relevant to the examination of this project. They implement the learning project, prepare a status report and participate in a follow-up meeting with their child and the Ministère's resource person. Additional meetings may be necessary if the parents are having difficulty implementing the learning project or if the child is not making adequate progress. The parent-educators monitor their child's progress using one or more evaluation methods and submit a mid-term report to the Minister as well as a completion report. In addition, they ensure that their child will take any ministerial examinations imposed under the *Homeschooling Regulation*. In order to allow for the evaluation required for the granting of a diploma recognized by the Minister, they send a copy of their child's learning project to their school board. This same procedure is followed whenever the parent-educators apply for access to textbooks, instructional materials or complementary services. Lastly, the responsibility of the child's learning project rests primarily with the parent-educators, who are also the main contact for any homeschooling-related communications with the Ministère.

ROLE OF THE MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION ET DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR

The Ministère provides ongoing monitoring of families' homeschooling and supports families by examining the children's learning projects and assisting parent-educators who are having difficulty developing or implementing the learning projects. The Direction de l'enseignement à la maison (DEM) was created for this purpose and acts in an advisory capacity, particularly with respect to the activities, pedagogical resources and ministerial programs of study. It monitors the children's progress, examines the reports, and makes recommendations or provides information on ministerial examinations and the certification of studies, for example. Finally, it evaluates the learning progress of children whose parent-educators have submitted a portfolio to the Minister.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTÈRE

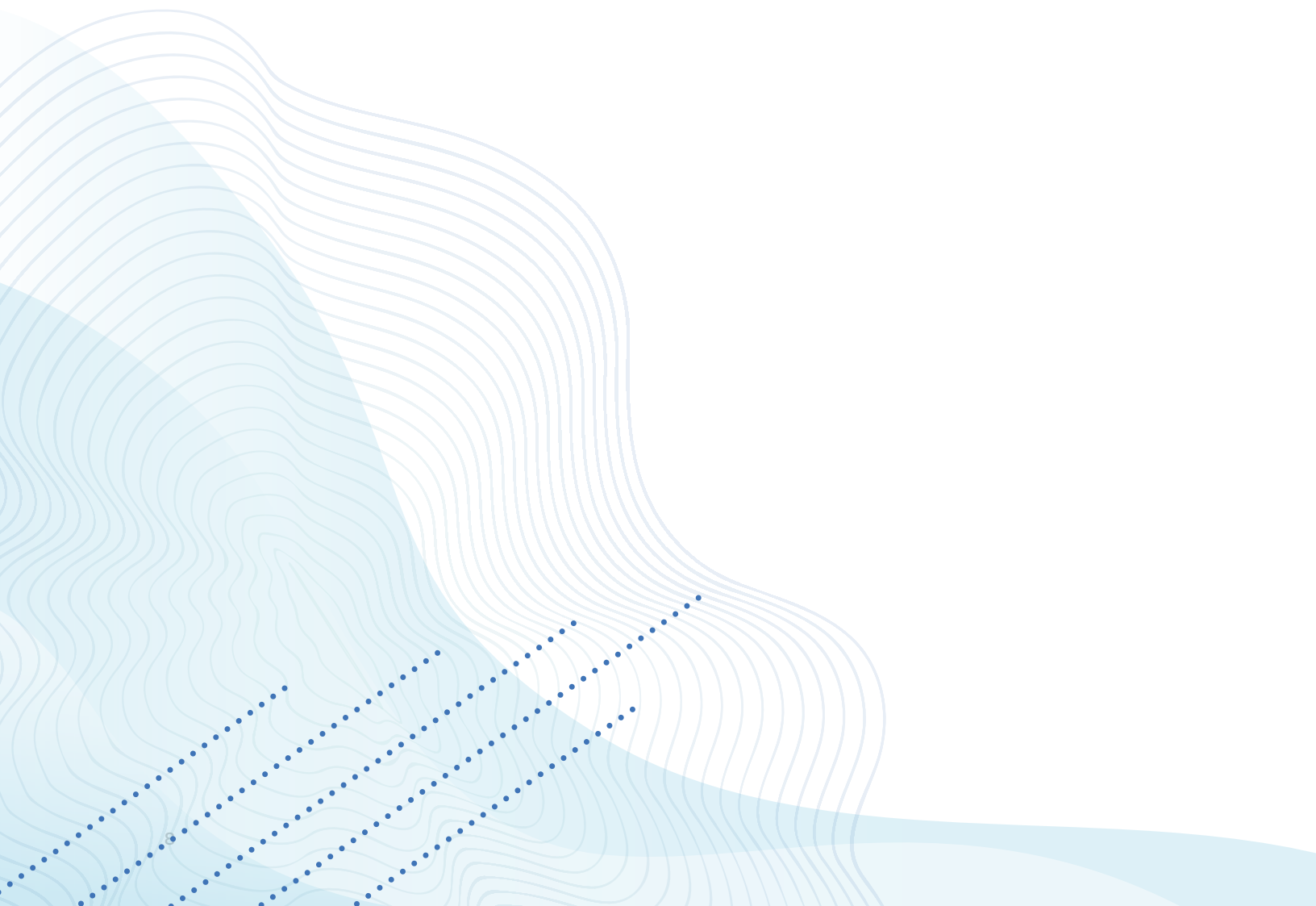
Further information on the Ministère's role and responsibilities with regard to homeschooling can be found at:
<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/school-boards/support-and-assistance/homeschooling>

SUPPORT OFFERED BY SCHOOL BOARDS

On the conditions determined by each school board, and at the request of the parent-educators, school boards provide homeschooled children with access, free of charge, to the following:

- textbooks that are approved by the school principals and required for teaching
- instructional material that is offered free of charge, approved by the school principals and required for teaching, subject to their availability
- certain complementary student services, subject to their availability and the needs of the child
- certain resources and the equipment required for using them in at least one of their schools, subject to availability

To assess the learning progress of homeschooled children, the school board that has jurisdiction conducts an evaluation of learning in accordance with the procedures it determines. When required under the *Homeschooling Regulation*, the school board must take the necessary measures to provide homeschooled children with access, in one of the school board's rooms and at no charge, to the examination imposed by the school board or the Minister as well as to any preparatory activities. The school board must also take the necessary measures to permit the children to be evaluated, free of charge, in order to obtain the credits they need to earn a diploma recognized by the Minister, without having taken the corresponding course, provided the pedagogical and organizational requirements are met.





2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEARNING PROJECT

2.1 QUÉBEC EDUCATION PROGRAM

To ensure the quality of the children's educational experience and of instruction aimed at developing competencies and acquiring knowledge, the *Homeschooling Regulation*³ stipulates that the development and implementation of a learning project must comply with the programs of study established by the Minister.

The mission of education in Québec is threefold: to provide instruction, to socialize and to provide qualifications. This mission is essentially embodied in the *Québec Education Program* [QEP], which constitutes a frame of reference for all school and community stakeholders. The QEP serves as a tool for teachers and as a key reference for the school administration, staff, members of the governing board and parents, including parent-educators. Its implementation is based, among other things, on the concept of competency, which is defined as "a set of behaviours based on the effective mobilization and use of a range of resources."⁴ It also focuses on the acquisition of a body of knowledge, constructed on the basis of various subjects and competencies spread over three cycles in elementary school, and two cycles in secondary school. Learning to take effective action implies that children integrate knowledge and skills harmoniously.

³ *Homeschooling Regulation*, CQLR, c. I-13.3, r. 6.01, s. 4.

⁴ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Québec Education Program, Preschool Education; Elementary Education* [Québec, 2001], section 1.4, 4.

The primary components of the QEP are general in scope, namely the *cross-curricular competencies* and the *broad areas of learning*. The cross-curricular competencies are composed of transferable learning that is intellectual, methodological, personal or social, and communication-related in nature. The broad areas of learning deal with aspects of contemporary life and issues that young people face, individually or collectively, in different spheres of life. The broad areas are health and well-being, personal and career planning, environmental awareness and consumer rights and responsibilities, media literacy, as well as citizenship and community life. Within the broad areas of learning, the Minister also prescribes the following learning content:

- Sexuality Education content for each year of elementary and secondary school⁵
- Academic and Career Guidance content for Elementary Cycle Three and Secondary Cycle One⁶
- a cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR] training activity for Secondary III students⁷

In a homeschooling context, the parent-educators can choose to include this content in the learning project.

The programs of study correspond to the subjects in the QEP, which are associated with subject-specific competencies and specific content. These official pedagogical documents define the essential learning, in a structured format, for providing instruction, socializing and providing qualifications for students and children over a set period of time.

The *Progression of Learning* complements each program of study and provides details about the essential knowledge that must be acquired and applied every year in each subject. Schools and parent-educators use this document to assist them in planning both their teaching and the learning that their students and children are to acquire.

2.2 LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Literacy and numeracy skills are widely acknowledged for their valuable contribution to constructing an individual's future. These competencies go beyond reading, writing and arithmetic. They also encompass the ability to use information and access knowledge by means of a variety of materials and digital media and make it possible to make informed decisions in a variety of contexts.

Literacy is founded on the ability to read, write and express oneself orally. The Réseau québécois de recherche et de transfert en littératie defines literacy as:

... the ability of an individual or a community to communicate information through language presented in various forms in order to participate actively in society in different contexts [translation].⁸

Competencies in this area are indispensable, since language acquisition is not simply a question of studying grammar and spelling. Indeed, language provides access to learning in all areas and promotes participation in society and openness to the world. Literacy also contributes to creating personal relationships that enrich the quality of each individual's life.

5 <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/teachers/dossiers/sexuality-education>

6 <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/school-boards/support-and-assistance/services-complementaires/academic-and-career-guidance-content>

7 A ministerial allocation makes it possible for all schools to offer cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR] training to all Secondary III students.

8 Nathalie Lacelle, Lizanne Lafontaine, André C. Moreau and Raïka Laroui, "Définition de la littératie," *Réseau québécois de recherche et de transfert en littératie* [Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative du Québec, 2016].

Frequent family literacy activities in childhood are also known to foster motivation and educational success.⁹ Parents are examples of readers and writers who greatly influence the development of their children's literacy skills.

SOME ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS THAT ARE PARTICULARLY USEFUL IN DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S LITERACY SKILLS:

- ☐ Present projects to people within or outside the family circle.
- ☐ Conduct interviews with family or education community members.
- ☐ Share family stories.
- ☐ Read about current events and discuss social issues, bearing in mind the children's age and interests.
- ☐ Make regular visits to the library or do volunteer work there.
- ☐ Do the research required to plan a trip.
- ☐ Read aloud with family members [parents and children or children among themselves].
- ☐ Form a family reading club or join one with other families.
- ☐ Use online collaborative editing.
- ☐ Use digital writing tools to improve written productions.
- ☐ Use a notebook to express ideas in free-form writing.
- ☐ Participate in writing competitions.
- ☐ Create a comic strip or graphic novel, perhaps using software designed for this purpose.
- ☐ Create a board game.
- ☐ Produce a video and publish it online.
- ☐ Participate in collaborative writing.
- ☐ Draw up lists [e.g. groceries, things to do, ideas].
- ☐ Write a personal diary.
- ☐ Write a family diary.
- ☐ Correspond with a pen pal.
- ☐ Keep a blog.
- ☐ Use notebooking.¹⁰
- ☐ Keep a nature notebook.

⁹ <http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/education/alphabetisation-litteratie/motivation-lecture.pdf> [available in French only]

¹⁰ Producing a document in which notes on a subject, comments, drawings, photos or other visual components are recorded.

NUMERACY IS DEFINED AS:

... the ability to access, use, interpret and communicate mathematical information and ideas in order to engage in and manage the mathematical demands of a range of situations in adult life. To this end, numeracy involves managing a situation or solving a problem in a real context, by responding to mathematical content/information/ideas represented in multiple ways.¹¹

Numeracy encompasses all of the mathematical knowledge and skills that enable an individual to participate actively in society, making it a goal for young people, whatever their profile.¹² Children build a set of tools to solve situational problems. They learn to communicate appropriately using mathematical language and reason effectively by making connections between mathematical concepts and processes and everyday situations.

SOME ACTIVITIES THAT ARE PARTICULARLY USEFUL IN DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S NUMERACY SKILLS:

- ☐ Plan and make purchases.
- ☐ Manage a building project.
- ☐ Estimate and measure the dimensions, area, volume or mass of different objects using conventional and unconventional units.
- ☐ Count collections of objects.
- ☐ Measure distances covered when travelling.
- ☐ Participate in budget planning or do the accounts.
- ☐ Estimate and measure time (e.g. number of days before an activity, length of an activity in hours or minutes).
- ☐ Compare the quantities or sizes of objects.
- ☐ Follow instructions to do crafts (e.g. include geometrical shapes).
- ☐ Draw an object to scale.
- ☐ Conduct a survey and share the results.
- ☐ Use virtual or augmented reality to measure angles or distances.
- ☐ Produce the plan of a room or an outside area.
- ☐ Read books that refer to mathematical concepts.
- ☐ Convert units of measure to follow a recipe or carry out a renovation project.
- ☐ Make clothes (e.g. knitting, sewing).
- ☐ Introduce programming to children using robots that move over an image map.
- ☐ Participate in a family business.

11 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Skills Outlook 2013; First Results From the Survey of Adult Skills* (OECD Publishing, 2013), 59.

12 Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *Progression of Learning in Elementary School; Mathematics* (Québec, 2009), 3.

In addition to the development of literacy and numeracy skills, digital skills are essential for learning and progressing in the 21st century. Digital competency is described as:

... a set of skills necessary to the confident, critical and creative use of digital technologies to achieve objectives with regard to learning, work, leisure, and inclusion or participation in society.¹³

2.3 EDUCATIONAL CHOICES AND PLANNING OF LEARNING

There are a large number of educational approaches that may be used in a homeschooling context. Flexibility must be kept in mind when selecting these approaches so they can be adapted over time and to the children's needs.

The learning project is, above all, a planning tool and a starting point for monitoring a child's progress. It deals with the parent-educators' educational choices regarding the planned learning and the activities and resources that will be used to acquire it.

The learning project identifies the educational aims and objectives for acquiring knowledge and developing competencies. These aims and objectives refer to what the children are expected to know and be able to do at the end of a set period of time. Children should know and understand these aims as well as the criteria for success. Indeed, children benefit from being included in discussions that concern planning the learning project and choosing resources and learning activities.

The planning process involves choosing specific activities and projects that are in keeping with the learning aims, and deciding on ways to evaluate the children's progress.¹⁴

It is impossible for a learning project to describe all the learning to be acquired and all the activities planned. However, it is important to ensure that the activities are varied and stimulating and that they will enable the children to acquire knowledge and develop basic skills. The *Homeschooling Regulation* provides for the application of the programs of study established by the Minister in the following subjects: a subject in the language of instruction and a subject in the second language, depending on the parents' choice, one in French and the other in English; and the compulsory subjects in the subject areas of Mathematics, Science and Technology, and Social Sciences.

The subjects are chosen from those that would be offered in the cycle of education that the child would be in if attending school. The same progression of learning must be applied as that at school. However, no time frame for teaching subject-specific content is established within the cycle.

A child's learning project may include knowledge and competencies other than those provided for by the QEP. For example, some elements of learning complete and enrich a child's existing knowledge [e.g. sign language or another language, babysitting, wilderness orientation, crafts, horticulture, mechanics, farming].

¹³ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, *Digital Competency Framework* (2019), 7.

¹⁴ Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, Expanded 2nd edition (Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005).

A separate learning project must be prepared for each child in the same family. Learning projects are inevitably different from one another and call for differentiated strategies and methods. Personalizing a learning project means taking into account to a greater extent each child's individual needs, abilities, skills, learning pace, interests and ambitions.

Obviously, core curriculum subjects can be learned through identical activities carried out by children of different ages in the same family. However, the preparation, materials, tools or other resources may be different or adapted for each child. It may also be necessary to provide feedback individually when the learning outcomes, reactions or challenges are different for each child.

Under the *Homeschooling Regulation*, a child's learning project must include the following elements:

- a description of the chosen educational approach
- the targeted programs of study and a brief description of the associated activities chosen
- the other subjects that will be taught and a brief description of the activities chosen for that purpose
- the other knowledge and skills that the child is expected to acquire, as well as a brief description of the relevant teaching and learning activities chosen
- the educational resources that will be used
- a plan indicating the approximate amount of time that will be allocated to learning activities
- the name and contact information of each organization that will contribute to the child's learning, as well as a description of the organization's contribution, which must include the type (e.g. online course, workshop, tutoring) and scale (e.g. personalized or group activities) of the contribution
- the evaluation methods that will be used to assess the child's progress
- the last level of educational services that the child received in an educational institution

2.4 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES OR DIFFICULTIES

It is in the interests of children to maintain high expectations regarding their learning and to present stimulating challenges that will help them discover their aptitudes and enable them to persevere in finding solutions that guarantee success. It is not always easy to identify difficulties, and in some cases it can be helpful to turn to the appropriate services, such as the complementary educational services offered by the school board or health services in the private sector. Specialized services include psychological, psychoeducational, special education, remedial education and speech therapy services.

When a child has difficulties and a consultation process has been initiated, all parties concerned should analyze the child's abilities and needs in order to draw up an action plan for implementing support services and measures to foster the child's learning. The steps taken with the child and the results should be documented.



The measures implemented to foster learning should also be monitored on a regular basis, for example at the end of each cycle, so as to evaluate their relevance and effectiveness over time and take account of the child's progress and changing needs. This review process allows parent-educators and other stakeholders involved in the process to make the necessary adjustments and consider reducing or removing certain adaptive measures, as the case may be.

Finally, parents of children with moderate, severe or profound intellectual disabilities can develop a learning project based on other education programs established by the Minister, namely the CASP Education Program [a competency-based approach to social participation] for students aged 6 to 15,¹⁵ the Challenges adapted curriculum [an educational approach that facilitates social integration] for students aged 16 to 21,¹⁶ and the EPPH [Education Program for Students With a Profound Intellectual Impairment] for students aged 4 to 21.¹⁷

If parent-educators believe that their child should be exempt from one or more subjects because of a disability, social maladjustment or learning difficulty, they may submit a request to the Direction de l'enseignement à la maison.

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE DIRECTION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT À LA MAISON

The DEM can assist parents in developing a learning project that meets their child's individual needs and complies with the *Education Act* and the *Homeschooling Regulation*. It can also offer advice on pedagogical matters, suggest resources and participate in the reflection process regarding certain choices to be made. A template for developing the learning project is made available to parent-educators by the Ministère.

15 Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche, *CASP Education Program, Preliminary Version; A Competency-Based Approach to Social Participation; Education Program for Students Aged 6 to 15 With Moderate to Severe Intellectual Disabilities* [Québec, 2015].

16 Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Challenges – An Educational Approach That Facilitates Social Integration* [Québec, 1998].

17 Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *Education Program for Students With a Profound Intellectual Impairment* [Québec, 2011].

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEARNING PROJECT

3.1 LEARNING ANYWHERE, ANY TIME

For many children and parent-educators, organizing their time, space or materials is of major importance when planning and carrying out learning activities. Adjusting organizational strategies has an impact not only on learning, but also on routine and daily tasks. Flexibility and freedom can still be part of a routine and a relatively structured learning process.

3.1.1 LEARNING SPACES

At home, some parent-educators and their children prefer to reserve spaces for more formal learning or for specific projects. These spaces can be organized to accommodate activities such as reading, writing, art or science projects, educational or board games, or free play activities. Other parent-educators and children choose spaces based on other factors, for example the need to concentrate, the rate of fatigue, the availability of a room or the requirements of individual or group work.

Different spaces can provide different opportunities and conditions that foster learning. In fact, the home is not the only setting that provides opportunities for learning; cultural, sports, social or other settings also allow children to explore various subject areas.

Since the child's learning project must include various subject areas, parent-educators can take advantage of environments such as school or municipal libraries, recreation or community centres, or museums to foster their child's learning or to allow the child to participate in different types of pedagogical or educational activities.

3.1.2 TIME FOR LEARNING

The relationship with time is different in a homeschooling context where, unlike at school, the boundaries between time for learning and time for other activities are not so clearly defined. Whether it be in the day or evening, during the week or on the weekend, in summer or winter, any opportunity or real-life situation can be used for learning purposes.

Some parent-educators prefer to set a schedule for more formal learning, sometimes depending on the area of learning or subject. Mornings are often a good choice, especially for learning activities that are aimed at younger children or that require more concentration.

Nevertheless, flexibility can help optimize learning conditions, which vary not only from one individual to another, but also from one day to the next. A flexible schedule allows children to maintain momentum when they are particularly interested in a subject or project. It allows them to start work immediately or to take time to think about an activity before or after completing it.

Several parent-educators have mentioned that time management is easier when teaching in an individualized context or to small groups. Often supervised by a parent, group situations allow children to learn in a non-formal setting. An individualized context also allows parents to make the most of the time reserved for formal learning, which leaves extra time for children to enjoy periods of reading, play, outdoor activities, etc.



It is difficult to evaluate how long learning activities will take. It may be helpful to keep a record of the duration and frequency of an activity, or the distribution of activities over time [e.g. total amount during a typical day, week or month].

Learning takes place over time in different situations and contexts, to varying degrees, and depends on several factors [the children's age, interests, strengths and challenges, etc.]. Developing competencies is time-consuming. Students have to use and reuse them regularly to increase their scope and depth.¹⁸

3.2 ACTIVATING LEARNING

Organizing relevant activities and designing situations that are suitable for homeschooling are demanding tasks for parent-educators.

3.2.1 LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Parent-educators are required to seize any opportunities for learning that arise, create them to meet the educational aims, or promote them when the children themselves wish to engage in a particular learning activity. In this respect, parent-educators can deliberately leave books, materials and other resources within the sight and reach of their children, who will then discover them for learning and creative purposes. The ability to detect the potential for learning in different situations is a major asset for parent-educators, who are also motivators, mediators and guides, even when they do not themselves initiate a given activity or project.¹⁹

However, the freedom of choice in approaches, materials and learning contexts does not mean that learning takes place without planning, guidance and monitoring by the parents. Moreover, simply carrying out an activity is not always synonymous with learning.

¹⁸ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *Québec Education Program; Secondary, Cycle Two* (Québec, 2007), 18.

¹⁹ Benoît Dumas and Mélanie Leblond, "Les rôles de l'enseignant en pédagogie de projet," *Québec français*, 126 (2002), 64–66.

Learning related to a theme, an activity or a project will be enhanced by advance groundwork [e.g. discussions or readings on the subject]. It may also be appropriate to review previous learning, even if it was acquired during free play or an informal discussion. With the guidance of the parent-educator, these situations are conducive to the development of the children's ability to assess, exercise critical judgment, form opinions, communicate, react or interact with others.

3.2.2 STIMULATING ACTIVITIES

Learning activities, whether or not they are fully organized and planned ahead of time, should be adapted to the children's abilities. They must present a challenge yet be achievable; children must be able to perform them autonomously within their comfort zone, yet not be at the limits of their rupture zone, where the challenges and expectations are too high even when guidance is available.²⁰

In order to foster their children's success, parent-educators can turn to differentiated instruction²¹ and use a wide range of teaching methods. Parent-educators can adjust their choice of content, structure, processes and projects to suit each child's profile.

HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION:

- ☐ Content: vary what the child must learn, understand and do; diversify subjects, types of texts, etc.
- ☐ Structure: plan for the child to work alone, with a parent or with a peer; vary the instructional approaches, workspaces, etc.
- ☐ Processes: vary the time allocated to a task; diversify the materials or tools in terms of the child's needs; vary the degree of support and the types of instructions provided, etc.
- ☐ Projects: vary the means with which the child shows what was learned and understood [orally, in writing, with a drawing or a model, etc.]

Activities are meaningful and authentic when they enable children to easily relate them to the different spheres of life; such activities are thus more likely to provide lasting learning opportunities. Activities are stimulating when they are meaningful, authentic, interesting, motivating and adapted to each child's abilities; they thus help children improve their self-knowledge, self-perception and understanding of the world. There should be no disconnect between living and learning.

Moreover, play figures prominently in the learning process in terms of emotional, social, physical, language and cognitive development, as well as in terms of promoting innovation and creativity.

²⁰ See the concept of "zone of proximal development" in Lev S. Vygotsky, *Thought and Language* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1934/1986).

²¹ Carol Ann Tomlinson, *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* (Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2014).



Certain video games can also offer learning opportunities (information and communications technology, second language learning, use of mathematical reasoning or problem solving, etc.) when they are used responsibly and wisely, either individually or with friends or family members.

3.2.3 PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

Learning activities can be part of a large- or small-scale project. Project-based learning²² allows children to be active and motivated learners by producing a concrete piece of work (journal, play, art exhibition, itinerary, etc.). A project is designed to integrate different subjects and develop the knowledge and vocabulary related to an area of interest. It can be carried out individually or in a group (with other children or family members) and allows special emphasis to be placed on research and information processing. Children must make choices, take decisions, and develop and experiment strategies, among other things, in order to solve any problems that arise during the production process. They may also be required to develop cross-curricular competencies (critical judgment, effective work methods and cooperation). At the end of the process, the project can be presented to the family or to others.

22 Lucie Arpin and Louise Capra, *L'apprentissage par projets* (Montréal: Chenelière, McGraw-Hill, 2001).

3.2.4 INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Several subjects can be combined in a single learning situation. This does not mean juxtaposing learning objectives taken from several subject areas, but rather treating them as complementary in the course of an activity or project. Interdisciplinarity²³ enables children to approach a learning situation from different angles, promotes a wide range of learning that is interlocked with a problem-solving process, increases their motivation and reaches out to their experiences, interests and values.

Interdisciplinary learning and the decompartmentalization of subjects can be extremely stimulating; they are also facilitated by a homeschooling context in which parents provide educational support.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING:

- A real or virtual trip can provide a learning opportunity: in geography [read a simple plan or map]; in history [plan research on the country's development]; in mathematics [use mathematical reasoning to convert currency]; in second language [interact in French]; as well as an opportunity to develop cross-curricular competencies [use information].
- An outing to a museum provides an opportunity to apply learning: in visual arts [appreciate works of art, personal productions and those of friends]; in history [construct historical reference points]; as well as an opportunity to develop cross-curricular competencies [use creativity].
- Planning purchases for preparing a meal can become a learning opportunity: in mathematics [use mathematical reasoning with fractions, estimate costs, make connections between units of measure], in English [read a variety of texts] and in physical education and health [adopt a healthy and active lifestyle]; as well as an opportunity to develop cross-curricular competencies [adopt effective work methods].
- Producing a play can be a learning opportunity: in English [write a variety of texts and communicate orally] and in drama [use performance techniques]; as well as an opportunity to develop cross-curricular competencies [co-operate with others].
- Discussing a news event can become a learning opportunity: in English [react to a variety of written texts] and in history [interpret a social phenomenon from a historical perspective and construct a consciousness of citizenship through the study of history]; as well as an opportunity to develop cross-curricular competencies [use critical thinking].
- Volunteering at a senior citizens' home can also become a learning opportunity: in ethics and religious culture [engage in dialogue and reflect on ethical questions]; as well as an opportunity to develop cross-curricular competencies [communicate appropriately, achieve their potential by recognizing they are part of a community].

²³ Anne Lowe, "La pédagogie actualisante ouvre ses portes à l'interdisciplinarité scolaire," *Éducation et francophonie* XXX, vol. 30, no. 2 [2002], 188-219.



3.2.5 MOTIVATION

The children's interests are often at the source of activities that correspond with learning content. Obviously, it is easier to learn something that is enjoyable or useful, addresses a need, etc. The motivation to read, for example, can be linked to the pleasure of relaxing, discovering new information or communicating with a friend. Reading is also required to understand instructions for completing a task [playing a board game, filling out a form, assembling a toy, following directions to reach a destination, etc.].

Children's motivation is also linked to their self-esteem, which prompts them to choose an activity, become involved, persevere and succeed to reach a goal.²⁴ Children's perception of competency, also known as their "sense of personal effectiveness," is derived from their interpretation of an activity before starting it and their assessment of their ability to successfully carry it out. Generally, children will be more interested in activities that they believe they are capable of completing successfully.²⁵

Motivation can also be rooted in the variety of activities made available to children, including "free" activities. Striking a balance between the type and level of structure of activities [reading, writing, observing, thinking, creating, playing, moving, resting, discussing, listening, etc.] will have a positive impact on learning. It is essential that teaching and guiding children focus on the pleasure of learning without systematically rewarding them.

Parents who position themselves as partners and foster constructive and collaborative discussions with their children have better chances of success in their educational mission.

²⁴ Rolland Viau, *La motivation en contexte scolaire* (Québec: Les Éditions du Renouveau Pédagogique inc., 1994), 7.

²⁵ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *Motivation, Support and Evaluation: Keys to Student Success; Research Program on Student Retention and Academic Success* (Québec, 2008).



3.2.6 PARENT-LEARNERS

Children's motivation for learning often depends on that of their parents. Parents who are curious, who like to learn, and who discuss their passions and share their own learning and learning strategies become models of learning for their children.

Parent-educators should themselves take the opportunity to learn about their role as educators. Some parents refer, among other things, to their needs with respect to developing their children's literacy and numeracy skills, guiding children with disabilities or difficulties, or supporting children of different ages or with different learning paces or interests.



3.3 USING RESOURCES

The resources required for teaching and learning in a homeschooling context are usually readily available and easily accessible to parent-educators and their children. The Internet comes to mind as a world in itself that can, when used properly, make a positive contribution to supporting children and their learning.

The numerous resources available to parent-educators include educational and board games; arts, science and sports materials; documentaries and films; television, radio and online programs; educational magazines and workbooks; and children's books. Indeed, children's literature is a key learning tool; any environment rich in literature will inevitably include a good selection of books for children of all ages. Many families mention the importance of frequent visits to libraries because of the number and variety of resources and services they provide. Educational outings to cultural or sports events, such as going to the museum, the theatre or a swimming pool, are also excellent resources.

SOME STRATEGIES FOR USING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES:

- ☐ Share or exchange materials with other parents.
- ☐ Buy second-hand materials to cut costs.
- ☐ Use interlibrary loan and other library services.
- ☐ Visit an educational software library or resource centre.
- ☐ Consult blogs and websites of teachers or of parents with experience in homeschooling.
- ☐ Borrow materials from the school board.
- ☐ Register children in an online course.²⁶
- ☐ Consult public websites that offer free information and activities related to cultural, scientific, governmental, educational and televisual resources.
- ☐ Attend workshops and visit kiosks at conventions and seminars to gather resource ideas.
- ☐ Give children subscriptions to educational magazines for young people.

Parents can also use different strategies to plan and conduct learning activities, including strategies that help children concentrate and create a calmer environment [using earmuffs, a diffuser, etc.]. Some parent-educators also recommend the use of whiteboards, blackboard paint on walls, timers [for certain activities], visual aids, reference tools, manipulative materials, etc.

²⁶ According to the Office québécois de la langue française, “online learning” is a method of learning based on the use of new technologies providing access to online, interactive and sometimes personalized education on the Internet in order to develop competencies, making the learning process independent of time and place. “Distance education,” on the other hand, is a pedagogical method that allows students to receive an education while physically at home or at work.



SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE DIRECTION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT À LA MAISON

Resource persons at the DEM are qualified to assist parent-educators who are having difficulty implementing their child's learning project. They can make recommendations to remedy certain situations, offer monitoring and guidance services that provide opportunities to discuss the challenges presented by children's strengths and weaknesses, or initiate discussions regarding any substantial changes to be made to the learning project, in keeping with the guidelines and programs of study of the QEP and as set out in the *Homeschooling Regulation*.

While homeschooling necessarily involves a certain flexibility in its instructional approach, as mentioned previously, this flexibility does not extend to making substantial changes to the learning project. A substantial change is any major change made to the planned learning, irrespective of how the learning is acquired. A change in the resources or activities planned is not considered substantial if the planned learning remains unaffected. However, a substantial change may be necessary if the planned learning has to be discontinued, for example, because of health reasons or another reason that interferes with acquiring the learning. Parents must notify the Minister, in writing, within 15 days of making any substantial change to the learning project.

Close collaboration between the resource persons at the DEM and the parent-educators will foster a mutual understanding of the children's strengths and weaknesses with regard to their progress. It will also ensure that appropriate measures can be put in place to support children's educational success.

4. MONITORING THE CHILDREN'S LEARNING PROGRESS AND THE CERTIFICATION OF STUDIES

Evaluation has two primary purposes: support for learning, which leads to implementing conditions conducive to learning, and recognition of competencies, which consists in verifying whether the expected level of competency development has been attained.²⁷

Certain values, such as justice, equality, equity, coherence, rigour and openness, constitute the basis for the practices of all those involved in the evaluation of learning in an education system which strives to provide equal opportunities and to ensure success for all.

4.1 EVALUATION FOR MORE EFFECTIVE LEARNING

The desire to foster success for all children is based on the concept of evaluation as an important lever for learning. Evaluation is not an end in itself in the sense that children do not learn in order to be evaluated but are evaluated so that they can learn more effectively.²⁸

Evaluation aims to support not only learning, but also teaching. It helps children learn, guides teachers and parents in their work, and improves the decisions and actions that influence learning, both on a daily basis and at more strategic moments.

Parent-educators may require support, feedback and encouragement with respect to their ability to effectively guide and support their children. They must regularly re-evaluate the impact of their actions and adjust them if necessary. They can only do this by regularly assessing the situation.

Evaluation of learning is not limited to tests and examinations and should not take away from the time for learning during different activities and life experiences. However, reviewing the learning project and assessing the progress made with respect to planned or unplanned learning will show if any adjustments are necessary. When lack of progress is observed, the situation must be assessed and corrective measures taken, while keeping in mind that some learning may take longer than initially planned.

²⁷ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Policy on the Evaluation of Learning; General Education in the Youth Sector; General Education in the Adult Sector; Vocational Training* (Québec, 2003), 24-25.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.



4.1.1 DAILY MONITORING

PARENT-EDUCATORS WILL MONITOR THEIR CHILDREN’S LEARNING PROGRESS ON A DAILY BASIS BY ASKING THEMSELVES QUESTIONS SUCH AS:

- ☐ What learning was the easiest for my child?
- ☐ What learning has been the most difficult and continues to present challenges for my child?
- ☐ What did my child not understand or know how to do at the beginning of the learning project but understands or knows how to do now?
- ☐ What new learning has been acquired during the activities and projects carried out?
- ☐ What is the pace of the learning progress by subject area, subject or competency?
- ☐ How independent is my child when carrying out certain learning activities?
- ☐ What evidence of learning illustrates my child’s progress?

Feedback is a teaching strategy that, when used effectively, is a primary factor of success. It aims mainly to support learning and is guided by goals that were set beforehand. In the same way that the children should be involved in the planning process, it is important that they understand their targeted learning, the elements that will be evaluated and the criteria used to evaluate them. Criteria-based evaluation of learning lets children know where they stand in relation to the established outcomes, particularly with respect to the programs of study, and not in relation to other children. Whether the feedback is given immediately or later, it can be part of a discussion with the children that focuses on their strengths, the challenges and difficulties they have encountered, as well as the means to overcome them, all while establishing new aims or objectives. Feedback is provided on the result of a task and the methods used to carry it out, as well as the children’s ability to regulate their own work

process.²⁹ Learning is partly acquired through trial and error, which is a natural way for both children and parent-educators to regulate the learning process.

Feedback can also take the form of observations and comments that are written next to the children's work. Moreover, it is strongly recommended that a system for documenting a child's learning activities be set up.

4.1.2 STATUS REPORT AND REPORT ON THE CHILD'S PROGRESS

It is impossible to provide an account of all the activities that have taken place and all the learning that was acquired in a status report or a report on the child's progress.

Generally speaking, the status report is a short account of the implementation of the learning project, whereas the mid-term and completion reports aim to describe the child's progress using the parent educators' observations and comments as well as evidence of the child's learning. Moreover, the mid-term and completion reports are based on formal or informal evaluations that assess the progress of the child's learning with respect to the expected learning outcomes and competencies of the programs of study targeted in the learning project. The parents' comments in the completion report must demonstrate the changes that have occurred since the initial implementation of the learning project or since the mid-term report.

Templates for preparing the status report and the reports on the child's progress (mid-term and completion) are made available to parent-educators by the Ministère.

Finally, preparing a portfolio to demonstrate the acquired learning can be enjoyable and rewarding for both children and parent-educators.

²⁹ John Hattie, *Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2017).



4.1.3 PORTFOLIO

THE PORTFOLIO IS A TOOL FOR KEEPING EVIDENCE OF THE CHILD'S LEARNING PROGRESS AND CAN INCLUDE:

- ☐ samples of written texts
- ☐ formal evaluations (tests, examinations, etc.)
- ☐ informal evaluations (observations and feedback by parent-educators or other educators, or discussions with the children)
- ☐ audio and video recordings
- ☐ photographs
- ☐ artistic works
- ☐ lists of books read
- ☐ presentation of the child and the child's education path
- ☐ evaluations conducted by professionals³⁰
- ☐ evaluations conducted by tutors or sports coaches
- ☐ records of other educational experiences
- ☐ comments made by the child concerning personal learning

³⁰ Sharing evaluations conducted by professionals must comply with the *Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information* or any other applicable law that aims to protect personal information.

The portfolio is a record of learning and progress designed to support and assess the child's learning. It can also provide information on objectives, steps taken, difficulties encountered and means taken to overcome them or make improvements.

The portfolio should also contain sections in which the children write comments to express their motivation, their satisfaction, etc.³¹ By participating actively in reflecting on their own progress, children learn, with the support of others, to accurately assess the knowledge they have acquired and the way in which they use it. Through self-evaluation, they develop metacognitive and self-regulating abilities, which they can use to continue learning throughout their lives. This practice is essential to successful learning.³²

There are two important facets of the introspection required by the metacognitive process: what you must know about the task and the procedures involved, and what you must know about yourself and your abilities to perform it [translation].³³

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE DIRECTION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT À LA MAISON

Parent-educators have the opportunity to take stock of their children's learning progress during meetings with the monitoring and guidance services of the DEM. By participating in these meetings, children will be able to measure their strengths, as well as the challenges they need to overcome. This will encourage them to play their rightful role in their own learning process and strengthen their commitment. Sharing different perspectives can be encouraging and helpful when looking for ways to improve progress.

31 Gérard Scallion, *Le portfolio ou dossier d'apprentissage, Guide abrégé, 3^e version* [January 3, 2003], [Online], http://www.fse.ulaval.ca/gerard.scallion/valise_bep/portfolioguide.pdf.

32 Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Québec Education Program; Secondary School Education, Cycle One* [Québec, 2006], 13.

33 Renald Legendre, *Dictionnaire actuel de l'éducation*, 3rd edition [Montréal: Guérin, 2005], 871.

4.2 EVALUATION TO PROVIDE QUALIFICATIONS

Evaluation also serves to recognize competencies in relation to the requirements of the programs of study, and this in all cycles of education.

Government recognition of successfully completed studies must reflect the acquired competencies and thus uphold the value that society accords to official certification documents. Since the education programs or programs of study specify the expected outcomes, the competencies serve as references for the official evaluation of learning. In keeping with the values of justice, equality and equity, confirmation of successfully completed studies and the granting of a result must comply with the outcomes and evaluation criteria of the programs of study prescribed by the Minister. It is also important that any judgment regarding the acquisition of learning be made based on relevant, valid and sufficient information that has been gathered with formal or informal instruments.

4.2.1 MINISTERIAL EXAMINATIONS

The Minister is mandated to ensure quality in the educational services provided by school boards,³⁴ particularly in drawing up the list of subjects for which he imposes examinations.³⁵ Ministerial examinations are important evaluation tools for verifying the extent to which Québec students have acquired prescribed competencies.

In Québec, students take these ministerial examinations under uniform conditions. Each year, the Minister publishes an official examination schedule that educational institutions must follow without exception.³⁶ Educational institutions are responsible for administering these examinations. School boards must take the necessary measures to ensure that children receiving homeschooling who are eligible to sit for an examination set by the Minister under the *Education Act* may be present at an examination sitting held in one of their rooms. Taking examinations and participating in preparatory activities are free of charge.

The Minister is responsible for informing parent-educators of the standards and procedures for the certification of studies, and for making available preparatory documents for the ministerial examinations as of July 2020.

Starting in the 2021-2022 school year, in addition to the evaluations chosen by the parent-educators to assess learning progress, homeschooled children will be required to take all of the compulsory and uniform examinations set by the Minister.³⁷

³⁴ *Education Act*, CQLR, c. i-13.3, s. 459.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, s. 463.

³⁶ <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/parents-and-guardians/exams/schedule-for-the-examination-session-and-retake-of-examinations>

³⁷ *Homeschooling Regulation*, CQLR, c. i-13.3, r. 6.01, s. 15.1.

COMPULSORY EXAMINATIONS

The compulsory examinations are designed to verify that students meet the requirements of certain programs of study in Elementary Cycles Two and Three and in Secondary Cycle One.

THE COMPULSORY EXAMINATIONS ARE:

- ☐ Elementary 4: Français, langue d'enseignement [reading and writing]
- ☐ Elementary 6: Français, langue d'enseignement [reading and writing] **or** English Language Arts [reading and writing], and Mathematics
- ☐ Secondary II: Français, langue d'enseignement [writing]

UNIFORM EXAMINATIONS

The uniform examinations are designed to verify that students meet the requirements of certain programs of study in Secondary IV and V in subjects which must be successfully completed in order to earn a Secondary School Diploma. Three sessions are scheduled yearly for the uniform examinations, in June, August and January.

THE UNIFORM EXAMINATIONS ARE:

- ☐ Secondary IV:
 - Mathematics: Science Option **or** Technical and Scientific Option **or** Cultural, Social and Technical Option
 - Science and Technology **or** Applied Science and Technology
 - History of Québec and Canada
- ☐ Secondary V:
 - Français, langue d'enseignement **or** English Language Arts
 - English as a Second Language [core or enriched program] **or** French as a Second Language [core or enriched program]

To be admitted to a uniform examination, a child must have been legally enrolled in a school board, and must have taken the corresponding program or received equivalent and appropriate instruction at home following an exemption from school attendance.



4.2.2 REQUIREMENTS FOR A SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA

In order to obtain a Secondary School Diploma (SSD), homeschooled students are subject to the same certification of studies regulations as children who attend school.³⁸

STUDENTS MUST EARN AT LEAST 54 CREDITS AT THE SECONDARY IV OR V LEVEL.³⁹ AMONG THOSE CREDITS, THERE MUST BE AT LEAST 20 CREDITS AT THE SECONDARY V LEVEL, AS WELL AS THE FOLLOWING CREDITS:

- ☐ 6 credits in Secondary V language of instruction
- ☐ 4 credits in Secondary V second language
- ☐ 4 credits in Secondary IV Mathematics
- ☐ 4 credits in Secondary IV Science and Technology or 6 credits in Secondary IV Applied Science and Technology
- ☐ 4 credits in Secondary IV History
- ☐ 2 credits in Secondary IV Arts Education
- ☐ 2 credits in Secondary V Ethics and Religious Culture or Physical Education and Health

Parent-educators who require more information concerning the administration of ministerial examinations or the certification of studies should contact their school board or the DEM.

³⁸ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche. *Administrative Guide – 2015 Edition; Certification of Studies and Management of Ministerial Examinations; General Education, Youth Sector; General Education, Adult Sector; Vocational Training* (Québec, 2015).

³⁹ Credits earned in a vocational training program leading to a Diploma of Vocational Studies or an Attestation of Vocational Specialization are also taken into account when awarding the Secondary School Diploma.

4.3 EDUCATION PATHS

Secondary Cycle Two opens up a diversity of educational choices and optional subjects. Homeschooled children follow programs of study that are part of a General Education Path [high proportion of science courses] or an Applied General Education Path [high proportion of technology courses]. Both paths can lead to a Secondary School Diploma as well as to vocational training, college-level studies or university.

4.3.1 POSSIBILITY OF STUDIES IN A SCHOOL OR A CENTRE

Depending on their needs and abilities, homeschooled children may take the Work Oriented Training Path.⁴⁰ This Secondary Cycle Two path enables young people with learning difficulties to pursue their studies through adapted instruction in different contexts, and to obtain certification through qualifying training which prepares them for the job market. It offers two training options, namely Training for a Semiskilled Trade [TST] and Pework Training [PT].

After completing general education studies, students can choose to enrol in vocational training, which targets skilled trades and corresponds to secondary-level education. Requirements for admission to a vocational training program vary, but a person without a Secondary School Diploma must be 16 years of age on September 30 and have successfully completed Secondary III or Secondary IV studies, depending on the program of study. After Secondary III, students may also pursue vocational training at the same time as their general education. This training path is intended for students who have made their career choices among the trades offered by vocational training and wish to develop the competencies required to fulfill their roles as workers in the job market.⁴¹ It also allows them to pursue their general studies if they wish to do so.

Students who are 16 years of age on June 30 can also enrol in adult general education.⁴² Adult education centres offer 10 instructional services that enable students, among other things, to:

- obtain a Secondary School Diploma
- obtain a qualification [e.g. Training Certificate for a Semiskilled Trade]
- complete the prerequisites for vocational training or college studies
- enrol in programs that meet specific needs

⁴⁰ <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/contenus-communs/school-administrators-public-and-private-schools/work-oriented-training-path>

⁴¹ <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/references/publications/results/detail/article/vocational-training-services-and-programs-of-study>

⁴² <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/school-boards/support-and-assistance/adult-education>

5 COLLABORATION AMONG STAKEHOLDERS OF THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY

The choice of homeschooling does not necessarily mean that contact with school is rejected, and vice versa. Whether children receive instruction at home or at school, they must have equitable access to the services and resources required for educational success. This is beneficial to everyone involved: the children, the parents, the educators and the members of the education community at large (community organizations as well as partners working in cultural, municipal, governmental and economic settings).⁴³

Collaboration among the different stakeholders of the education community will undeniably help support the children's learning. The knowledge and experience of surrounding resources will enrich the children's learning and contribute to their competency development in various subject areas. Indeed, education is an essential part of life, family, community and society.⁴⁴ This is why, when the children's educational success is placed at the heart of the decisions taken by all parties, collective success is achieved.

5.1 THE MINISTÈRE

The Ministère provides leadership that enables all those involved in homeschooling to benefit from mutual respect and co-operation, while concentrating their efforts on the children's educational success. Parent-educators and school boards can communicate with the DEM for further information, if necessary.

5.2 SCHOOL BOARDS

There are several models of successful collaboration between parent-educators and school boards. This collaboration is based on mutual trust, openness and respect for the choice of educational practices.

Teaching staff and other education professionals can offer valuable pedagogical expertise that was acquired through their training and work experience. A number of parent-educators enjoy the support of school counsellors, friends or family members who are teachers, or the advice of specialists published on numerous websites. Research-based pedagogical practices implemented by education professionals are known to be effective, in the fields of literacy and numeracy among others, enhance students' development, motivate them, improve their learning experience and increase their chances of success.⁴⁵

The school administration, the support staff and the persons in charge of homeschooling have an important role to play in creating a climate conducive to establishing positive collaboration with families who may require advice, resources or services.

43 Rollande Delandes, *Les conditions essentielles à la réussite des partenariats école-famille-communauté* [Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative du Québec, 2010], 3.

44 Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, *Policy on Educational Success: A Love of Learning, a Chance to Succeed* [Québec, 2017], 12.

45 *Ibid.*, 17.

5.2.1 RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Homeschooled children may have free access to the following resources and services:

- textbooks that are approved by the school principals and required for teaching
- instructional material that is offered free of charge, approved by the school principals and required for teaching, subject to their availability
- certain complementary student services, subject to their availability and the needs of the child

The targeted complementary educational services are:

- support services designed to provide children with conditions that are conducive to learning
- counselling services designed to help children throughout their studies, with their academic and career choices and with any difficulties they encounter

The specialized services available in a homeschooling context are:

- support services for the use of the documentary resources of the school library
- academic and career counselling and information
- psychological services
- psychoeducational services
- special education services
- remedial education services
- speech therapy services

Homeschooled children also have free access to the following resources in at least one of the school board's schools:

- library
- science laboratory
- computer laboratory
- auditorium and art rooms
- sports and recreational facilities

School boards can publish information, particularly on their websites, to help parent-educators and their children better identify and understand the resources, activities or services offered and the conditions for using them.

The best practices of school boards are not limited to observing regulatory obligations. Often, they also draw on local or joint initiatives which, depending on the available resources, the terms and conditions and the necessary support required, include homeschooled children in extracurricular, cultural, sports and other activities. Some school boards allow on-site consultation of materials or use of a documentation centre by parent-educators and their children. Other school boards work together to share facilities or discuss procedures that help better meet homeschooled children's needs.

In turn, the school boards benefit from the support of the DEM in establishing procedures that comply with the *Homeschooling Regulation* and also participate in discussions on good homeschooling practices.



5.2.2 EVALUATION

It is important that the school board's procedures in matters regarding homeschooling be clearly defined and known to personnel. In this way, practices will include a fair evaluation procedure and ensure collaboration with the parent-educators.

"The school board must take the necessary measures to allow a student receiving homeschooling to be evaluated free of charge to earn the credits required for the issue of a diploma recognized by the Minister, without having taken the corresponding course, provided the pedagogical and organizational requirements are met." (Homeschooling Regulation, CQLR, c. I-13.3, r. 6.01, s. 23.1)

The evaluation of learning context can create difficulties for children who are unfamiliar with or unprepared for it. Lack of knowledge about the certification rules, the procedures for taking examinations, the different types of examinations or the wording of instructions can affect homeschooled children's results, not to mention the stress involved in dealing with unknown situations. The different factors that could be detrimental to children's interests in an evaluation situation must be recognized. Some children could be wrongly identified as being slow learners or as having a social maladjustment or learning difficulty. Procedures for taking examinations should be discussed with everyone involved, including the homeschooling families, and children must be prepared for evaluation situations to ensure that they are positive experiences for those who are not accustomed to them.

5.2.3 TRANSITION

While there are several reasons for choosing to homeschool a child, there are others that support the child attending or returning to school. This decision could stem from the need to obtain certification of studies, to acclimatize the child to the school environment before entering college, to respond to the challenges involved in homeschooling an older child, to meet the social needs of certain adolescents, to comply with the child's request to attend school, or to resolve any other difficulty that may lead the family to end their homeschooling project.

Children who are removed from school to receive homeschooling usually require a certain amount of time to adapt (because of a change of learning pace, environment, relationships with peers, etc.). Conversely, when homeschooled children start attending or return to school, the disparity in the educational approaches, the learning contexts and the individual knowledge and experience can present a challenge for the children, their parents and the school personnel. This disparity occasionally makes it difficult to place children at the appropriate level. Although the decision concerning placement is taken by the school principal, it is useful for the school personnel to discuss this matter with the parent-educators, who can shed light, beyond the results of evaluations, on their children's knowledge, competencies, experiences, talents, learning pace, degree of autonomy, etc.

When homeschooled children start to attend school, a lack of knowledge about the school's organization and culture can create challenges and even cause frustration. Understanding certain rules and routines that do not exist at home (raising a hand to ask a question, asking to go to the bathroom, using a padlock, remaining seated, following a schedule, recognizing authority, understanding the concept of evaluation, etc.) are some of the aspects of school life to which the children must adapt. The school personnel should be aware of these issues and accept that the adaptation period may take a certain time, while recognizing the value of the knowledge and competencies of children who attend school after being homeschooled.

5.3 WORKING TOGETHER AND HELPING EACH OTHER

The family environment is a particularly important resource when homeschooling. Parent-educators refer to the significance of extended family and friends—some of whom may even develop teaching skills of their own—as well as of support groups, associations, clinical practitioners, tutors, school board resource persons, etc. They also mention that the flexibility of time management in a homeschooling context makes it easier to establish relationships with these people.

5.3.1 EDUCATION COMMUNITY

Members of the education community can participate in activities connected to different subject areas.

SOME ACTIVITIES THAT INCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY OR EDUCATION COMMUNITY:

- ☐ guided tour of a museum or historical site
- ☐ tour of a fire station to learn about the occupation and the equipment used by firefighters
- ☐ visit to a chiropractor to learn about the different parts of the body
- ☐ spending a day with a family member who works in a garage to learn about car mechanics
- ☐ spending a day with a store owner to learn how to interact with customers, among other things
- ☐ piano lesson given by a family member to learn to read music
- ☐ spending a day trapping in the forest with a family member
- ☐ sewing and cooking activities with a family member
- ☐ visit to an architect to help plan a home project
- ☐ second language workshops with neighbours
- ☐ sharing information, resources, advice and knowledge
- ☐ forming groups to benefit from reduced rates
- ☐ joining a virtual group

By making use of the education community's strengths and interacting with its members, prejudices about homeschooling can be overcome.

5.3.2 ORGANIZATIONS

Different organizations, such as associations, centres or support groups, can contribute to homeschooled children's learning and provide assistance for numerous families, whether the families in question are beginners in homeschooling or not.

Despite this, the parent-educators continue to have primary responsibility for teaching their children, since the parents' commitment, presence, availability and support are necessary for their children's educational success. Although third parties may make complementary contributions, the parents cannot completely delegate their responsibilities to such parties. Moreover, any contribution to a child's learning by an individual or organization must comply with the *Act respecting private education*.⁴⁶ Cases not covered under the *Act respecting private education* must comply with section 15 of the *Education Act*.

COMPLEMENTARY CONTRIBUTIONS BY PARTNERS MAY INCLUDE:

- ☐ meeting places and spaces for sharing resources, experiences, knowledge and mutual support
- ☐ support tools
- ☐ resource centres or an educational software library
- ☐ mentoring programs
- ☐ advice on educational, organizational, legal and other matters
- ☐ activities on different subjects
- ☐ spaces for children to organize their own activities or make presentations to a group
- ☐ suggestions for resources
- ☐ day camps or summer camps
- ☐ outings, trips or short stays abroad
- ☐ conferences for parent-educators
- ☐ educational, social, cultural, art, sports and other activities or outings, as well as free play and unsupervised projects

These partners can help build relationships among children and parents alike. They often make spaces available for parents and their children to socialize and to assist and encourage one another, which helps create a sense of belonging and contributes to the children's learning.

⁴⁶ *Act respecting private education*, CQLR, c. E-9.1.

CONCLUSION

The following schedule presents the information and documents to be submitted to the Minister, in accordance with the *Homeschooling Regulation*.

HOMESCHOOLING CALENDAR

	NOTICE	LEARNING PROJECT	STATUS REPORT	MID-TERM REPORT	COMPLETION REPORT
WHEN THE CHILD IS BEING HOMESCHOOLED	July 1 [at the latest]	September 30 [submission and implementation]	Between the third and fifth month following the implementation date of the learning project	Between the third and fifth month following the implementation date of the learning project	June 15 [at the latest]
WHEN THE CHILD STOPS ATTENDING AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR	Within ten days after having stopped attending an educational institution	Within thirty days after having stopped attending an educational institution	Between the third and fifth month following the implementation date of the learning project When the child stops attending an institution between January 1 and March 31 , the report must be submitted no later than June 15 . When the child stops attending an institution after March 31 , the status report is optional .	Between the third and fifth month following the implementation date of the learning project When the child stops attending an educational institution after December 31 , the mid-term report is optional .	

Templates designed to facilitate the transmission of this information are available on the Ministère's website.

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Adult Education:

<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/school-boards/support-and-assistance/adult-education>

Challenges, adapted curriculum:

http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/formation_jeunes/defis_secondaire_prog_adaptes_ang.pdf

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