

The Québec Education Program

Elementary Cycle One

Information for Parents

October 2001

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INTRODUCTION

A major curriculum reform is under way in Québec's elementary and secondary schools. This reform is the result of lengthy, careful reflection and of a series of public consultations held over a number of years, such as the Estates General on Education, which ended in 1996.

The schools have a threefold mission: to provide instruction, to socialize and to provide qualifications. The Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec (MEQ) supports this mission, and encourages schools to be more responsive to each student's potential and personal aspirations. With this approach, the MEQ aims to meet the educational needs of today's young people to help them face the challenges of tomorrow, where, given the growing number of problems confronting our knowledge-based society, it is difficult to foresee what lies ahead. With the reform, Québec is following the example of the United States, Belgium, Switzerland and many other countries that have also made major changes to their education systems. These reforms, like the one under way in Québec, are based on studies that have given us greater insight into how human beings learn and how learning can be lifelong and useful to us both as individuals and as members of society.

First introduced in the 2000-2001 school year, the **Québec Education Program** is now being phased in at the second and third cycles of elementary school, that is, up to grade six. The purpose of this brochure is to help you better understand the changes that will gradually occur in your school for the greater benefit of your child.

PART ONE

THE ORIENTATIONS OF THE QUÉBEC EDUCATION PROGRAM

In the following pages, you will read about the broad outlines of the **Québec Education Program**. Québec's schools are evolving in order to better educate your child. The changes taking place are based on a desire to help students achieve success according to their potential and to involve parents in helping their child to aim as high as possible.

A FAR-REACHING PROGRAM THAT BUILDS ON THE PAST

Your child is in **Cycle One**, that is, in either first or second grade. As your child embarks on this new phase of schooling and continues to discover the world of knowledge, he or she must be able to count on the school and on you to be there to applaud every success, to support every undertaking, and to offer reassurance in moments of doubt or hesitation.

The school is still a place for acquiring knowledge, where students learn to read, write and count, and also to think, make choices and get along with others. They will develop intellectually, socially and emotionally as they become familiar with the subjects traditionally taught to six- and seven-year-olds.¹ The emphasis will continue to be on reading, writing and math because these subjects are the basis for all other learning. In addition to these **basic skills**, however, and to the new knowledge that they enable children to acquire, the Québec Education Program aims above all to equip children to use what they learn to better organize their thinking and develop the intellectual skills required in a knowledge-based society.

The school provides students with many opportunities to reflect on contemporary culture, that is, on the beliefs, values and knowledge that guide our society. It is just as important, however, that students learn how men and women of earlier days wondered about many of the same things they do, how these men and women went about looking for answers, what life was like in their time and what they accomplished. Each subject holds a share of your child's cultural heritage and this heritage helps to give perspective and meaning to what he or she learns. By way of example, consider the history of number systems, the people behind scientific discoveries, the reasons for certain customs, or the associations we make between artists and their works.

1. Please see the list of subjects at the beginning of Part Two.

Even in Cycle One, reading involves more than simply putting consonants and vowels together to form words. By learning to make connections between their own world and the world that words open up to them, children gradually become aware of everything they can discover through reading and of the importance that reading has for them. Your child will learn not just by reading in class or by doing reading homework, but also by deciphering the writing in a newspaper headline, on a postcard, a cereal box or a poster, and by playing with words and sounds. The world of words will start to make sense and books will gradually become your child's faithful friends.

The curriculum reform in no way calls into question the main learning objectives pursued by Québec's schools until now. On the contrary, it strongly reaffirms them by encouraging students to take what they learn in the classroom and to use it in their everyday lives.

A COMPETENCY-BASED PROGRAM

Clearly, your child will be learning new things in school. But simply acquiring knowledge isn't enough to ensure that students are able to make connections between what they learn in class and how they use it in everyday life. That's why it's important to encourage them to pay attention, not only to what they learn but also to how they learn it, and to how they use this new learning. The goal is to have students become both **knowledgeable** and **competent**.

Developing competencies implies changing the way teachers work with students. Teaching no longer consists in delivering subject content to students while they passively take it in. Rather, it involves placing students in different situations by having them work on projects, participate in workshops or solve problems or puzzles. These hands-on activities stimulate their intelligence and help them to assimilate and organize all kinds of new facts, skills and knowledge. Little by little, as students grow more aware of their particular strengths, interests and weaknesses, they come to understand why they do well in some subjects and not as well in others. They also gain a better sense of what they need to do in order to improve in those subjects they find less appealing or more difficult.

On starting elementary school, children already have certain abilities (they can express their needs, interact with people, sing, draw and use a computer) that will serve as a basis for what they learn in school. Likewise, what they learn in school will help them to improve their emerging competencies and develop new ones.

The Québec Education Program is aimed at the development of two main types of competencies.¹ The first type are generic and, because they cut across all the subjects in the curriculum, they are called **cross-curricular competencies**. They consist of essential knowledges in four categories:

- **intellectual** (e.g. to use information, to solve problems, to exercise critical judgment, to use creativity)
- **methodological** (e.g. to organize one's work, to use available computer resources)
- **personal and social** (e.g. to know oneself, to cooperate with others)
- **communication-related** (e.g. to write without making mistakes, to express oneself effectively, to listen to others)

1. To better understand the interrelationships and interaction between these competencies, please refer to the table in the middle of this brochure.

The other main type are called **subject-specific competencies** because they are developed by gaining the knowledge that is specific to each school subject. By learning math, for example, your child will be able:

- **To solve a situational problem** (e.g. use his or her reading skills to grasp and select useful information, to develop a solution and to check whether or not it works)
- **To reason using mathematical concepts and processes** (e.g. to estimate time and temperature, to calculate length, area and volume, to associate mathematical discoveries with society's needs)
- **To communicate by using mathematical language** (e.g. to interpret a situation using tables, diagrams, numbers or mathematical signs)

As with math, each of the other subjects focuses on three or four competencies that are specific to it; these competencies are outlined in Part Two. As you can see, with this approach, learning is not limited to memorizing facts in order to give the correct answer on an exam. Consider the following types of situations that encourage the development of cross-curricular or subject-specific competencies.

- When your daughter, in addition to realizing that she can draw an “a” or an “o,” has fun using these letters to make words and putting the words together into a sentence to express an idea, e.g. to send Grandma a birthday greeting, she is engaging in an activity through which she can acquire a competency specifically related to English Language Arts: **to write self-expressive texts**.
- When your son tells you a story and you have him clarify the order in which the events happen, you are helping him to organize his ideas and to make himself understood. This is another of the competencies in English Language Arts: **to use language to communicate**.
- When, after a talk on bicycle safety by a police officer, your daughter follows the safety rules, she is demonstrating that she understood what the police officer said and why safety is important. She has developed an important cross-curricular competency: **to exercise critical judgment**.

By keeping informed of what your child is learning at school, you will be better able to help him or her acquire and gradually master different competencies through the many opportunities that come up in everyday life.

A PROGRAM BASED ON EVERYDAY LIFE

In addition to helping children develop competencies, the **Québec Education Program** is designed to help them **make connections between what they learn in class and their everyday lives**.¹ The Program features **five broad areas of learning** that more or less correspond to the big questions that confront young people and are part of their major life issues. These questions extend beyond the school subjects but, in order to answer them, students must have a good grasp of all that they have learned in the various subjects. As children acquire new knowledge, do activities or projects, on their own or with others, and interact with adults and classmates, they construct their own answers to these questions in an effort to give meaning to their present and their future.

The **broad areas of learning** aim to meet the expectations often expressed by society with respect to the education system:

- **health and well-being:** to learn to develop good lifestyle habits
- **personal and career planning:** to learn to know oneself and carry projects through to completion
- **media literacy:** to learn to develop critical judgment and creativity with respect to the media
- **environmental awareness and consumer rights and responsibilities:** to learn the importance of being a smart consumer and to learn to exercise responsible behaviour with respect to the environment
- **citizenship and community life:** to learn to play an active role within a group by showing openness and respect

These are the objectives that guide our schools in everything they do. You can make these goals your own by integrating them into your daily life with your child.

1. To better understand the interrelationships and interaction between these competencies, please refer to the table in the middle of this brochure.

A PROGRAM ORGANIZED IN TWO-YEAR CYCLES

The elementary level is now divided into **three two-year cycles**. The reason for this change is that helping students to develop competencies requires more time than simply teaching them subject content.

Two-year cycles allow schools to better **adapt to students' individual learning rates and styles**. They also allow homeroom teachers and subject specialists to coordinate their efforts more closely. Teachers have a more comprehensive picture of how your child is progressing and can therefore provide more effective support.

Thus, students starting out in Cycle One will have two years to complete the learning outlined for this cycle. For each competency, the Québec Education Program clearly states benchmarks for what may be expected of your child by the end of the cycle (these benchmarks are called “end-of-cycle outcomes”). The teacher will be careful to identify any difficulties your child is having and the school, with your approval, will develop support measures to help your child. Parents can support their children throughout the cycle by helping them to overcome problems, bolstering their motivation, helping them to recognize their achievements and encouraging them to persevere.

Today's classroom is a meeting place where students, who are all different and unique, form a small community. Each member of this community is important and has something to contribute. The children learn to get along and to help each other. Together, they ask questions and look for answers. In a school that is attentive to each and every individual, all students make progress according to their abilities and are motivated to do their very best.

A PROGRAM THAT LETS YOU FOLLOW YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ONGOING EVALUATION

Evaluation is a means to an end, not an end in itself. In other words, the goal of evaluation is to help students to learn better. This, in a nutshell, is how the Québec Education Program defines evaluation, a much-debated aspect of the curriculum reform.

Schools use various communication tools to let you know how your child is doing so that you can offer support and encouragement. Some of these tools, like report cards and progress reports, have official status. Other less formal communication tools are equally important. These “unofficial” tools are more detailed and are produced on a more frequent basis. They provide you with useful information about your child's achievements, difficulties and challenges and allow you to work more closely with the school on a day-to-day basis. Here are some examples:

- the teacher's written comments about your child's work
- your child's journal
- the school agenda
- various evaluation instruments used in class: observation checklists completed by the teacher; learning verification checklists completed by your child; self-evaluation forms; peer evaluation forms; quizzes
- your child's portfolio (a portfolio is a collection of the main pieces of work done by your child in a given subject, such as Visual Arts, that show his or her progress)

In addition to giving you a more rounded picture of your child than can be provided by marks alone, this type of information is a valuable guide that will help you to regularly monitor your child's progress in acquiring knowledge and developing competencies. Evaluation is a means of preventing or reducing difficulties, whether they relate to content or method. Since no two students learn at the same pace or in the same way, evaluation is intended to show them how to make regular adjustments to their learning in order to attain the outcomes stated in the Québec Education Program. Here, your support is of vital importance to your child's understanding and motivation.

It should be stressed that the objective of success for all will under no circumstances result in a lowering of the standards established for the acquisition of competencies. Essentially, evaluation provides students with an opportunity to recognize the progress they are making and to resolve to continue their learning efforts.

Evaluation also plays another role which consists in making a more formal and official judgment as to the degree to which your child has acquired knowledge and developed competencies. This judgment takes the following forms:

- report cards issued during the cycle
- the end-of-cycle progress report
- compulsory examinations in designated program areas at the end of Cycle Three

The report card indicates whether your child is making progress, the kind of progress being made and how far along he or she has come in relation to the benchmarks set out in the Québec Education Program.

The end-of-cycle progress report presents the teachers' judgment of the extent to which your child has acquired the subject-specific and cross-curricular competencies at the end of the second year of Cycle One.

Provincial examinations in designated program areas will be compulsory for all students finishing Cycle Three, i.e. in sixth grade, as of June 2005. These examinations will be prepared by the MEQ and are intended to assess the extent to which students across Québec have acquired the expected knowledge and competencies stated in the Québec Education Program.

Regardless of the form it takes and of whether it is official or informal, the evaluation of learning is based on justice, equality, equity, openness, rigour and coherence and relies to a very considerable extent on the professional judgment of teachers.

A PROGRAM THAT RELIES ON THE SCHOOL TEAM'S PROFESSIONALISM

The Québec Education Program relies on the expertise of teachers to help your child succeed and go on to Cycle Two of elementary school. You can count on the support of competent, specialized people who will help your child find the necessary motivation to learn and to progress.

While students have the primary responsibility for their own learning, it is nonetheless the professional role of teachers to observe and encourage students and provide remedial help as needed or enrichment that will allow them to keep learning and to become aware of how they learn.

In fact, the school team as a whole (i.e. teaching, administrative and school daycare staff), under the leadership of the school principal, is called upon to develop educational measures that will start students off on the road to success so that, young as they are, they can begin to develop goals in life and set about attaining them.

You can trust the school team not only to offer your child meaningful learning situations but also to ensure his or her continued learning progress.

A PROGRAM THAT STRENGTHENS TIES BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND THE FAMILY

As a parent, you too have a pivotal role to play in this collective undertaking. Your child must understand that school is important and that what he or she learns in school is useful. Your role, then, is to make sure that conditions at home are conducive to helping your child do well in school. This means:

- nurturing your child's love of learning
- recognizing your child's strengths and weaknesses
- helping your child through the difficult times
- making sure that your child does his or her homework
- placing neither too little nor too much importance on evaluation
- trying to understand what the school expects and letting the school know what you expect

By keeping informed about what the governing board¹ and the parent participation organization² are doing, and by being closely involved in school decisions on pedagogical matters, you are showing your child that you are interested in every aspect of his or her life. Above all, however, it is essential that you work with your child's school so that the development of competencies will become an exciting, stimulating adventure and so that your child will enjoy school now and for years to come!

1. Every school has a governing board. It is responsible for adopting the school's educational project, overseeing its implementation and evaluating it.

2. Parents attending the annual meeting for parents may decide whether or not to form a parent participation organization. The purpose of this organization is to encourage the collaboration of parents in developing, implementing and periodically evaluating the school's educational project and their participation in fostering their child's academic success.

Table 1

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PART TWO

THE SCHOOL SUBJECTS

Part Two describes how each of the subjects taught in Elementary Cycle One will help your child develop competencies. The subjects are listed in the following table.

Each subject calls on you to find appropriate ways of supporting your child's academic progress and overall development. Your support is all the more important because what your child learns in school can be reinforced by what he or she learns outside school and vice versa.

Table 2

ELEMENTARY CYCLE ONE SUBJECTS

- English Language Arts
- French as a Second Language
- French Immersion
- Mathematics
- Arts Education

Students take two of the following subjects: Drama, Visual Arts, Dance, Music

- Physical Education and Health
- Moral Education
- Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction
- Protestant Moral and Religious Education

Parents choose one of these three subjects for their child.

- Geography, History and Citizenship Education
- Science and Technology

In Elementary Cycle One, your child will be introduced to these subjects through various classroom activities.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The new English Language Arts program for the elementary level is the work of dedicated master teachers who are very aware of the concern of parents that their children be well prepared for the demands of a rapidly changing society. The focus of English Language Arts is on creating readers and writers for life, as well as individuals who exercise critical judgment in their use of media and technology, who work cooperatively with others, who are confident about expressing their ideas, values and knowledge and who are aware of their rich literary and cultural heritage. By the end of Cycle One, your child will:

- be a beginning reader who reads a variety of written texts, including stories and brief information texts, that represent the range of reading material we encounter in our daily lives
- be writing, with an emphasis on writing about those subjects and experiences that are important in his or her life and that fulfill a need to communicate with friends and family
- be comfortable expressing personal views, ideas and needs to others
- be aware that the texts he or she reads and writes have certain features, such as titles and illustrations, that allow them to convey messages and meaning to others
- be confident about taking risks as a learner and eager to express personal creativity
- be beginning to learn some of the basic features of the media and be using computers, as well as the Internet, for different purposes
- be aware of some of the features of written, spoken and media texts, such as simple punctuation, organizational structures and the use of combinations of images and words
- be a collaborative participant in activities in the classroom

FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

In learning French, your child will realize that knowing a second language makes it possible to discover another culture and broaden his or her horizons. By being exposed to a rich linguistic environment that includes reading children's literature and viewing or listening to media productions that are appealing to young francophones in the same age group, he or she will have the opportunity to explore certain aspects of the French culture originating here and elsewhere. Your child will also develop an open mind by discovering the French-speaking world through cultural explorations geared to his or her level of development or through the pursuit of social, scientific, sports or other personal interests.

By the end of Cycle One, your child will be able to understand and respond to simple instructions in French with gestures, words or very short sentences. With the help of peers or an adult, he or she will also be able to read and understand signs and picture books, and to explore or play with educational CD-ROMs.

In addition, your child will be able to express personal appreciation of what he or she has heard, seen or read. This will be done orally or through the use of symbols and drawings. Your child will also be able to create short stories consisting of drawings or collages accompanied by words or short sentences. Using word lists and with the help of peers and the teacher, your child will also be able to modify or add to a short sentence or two, to produce an invitation, greeting card or text related to school life or social activities.

Even if your child has still not mastered all the vocabulary required to express personal or school-related needs, he or she will be able to understand what is expected of him or her and to respond appropriately through actions, if necessary.

FRENCH IMMERSION

In the immersion program, your child will learn the French language through other subjects in the curriculum also taught in French, such as math and science; in addition, he or she will gradually be introduced to the English Language Arts program. By offering a rich linguistic and cultural environment, the immersion program provides your child with the conditions that will allow him or her to become fluent in French and able to communicate with native speakers. Also, in learning French through other subjects, your child will develop a broader view of the language and its culture.

By the end of Cycle One, your child will be able to understand and respond to instructions as well as short texts; he or she will understand the main idea in reading material related to the other subjects taught in the immersion program. Your child will also read and understand short children's books and play with educational CD-ROMs.

In addition, your child will participate in short French dialogues with peers; he or she will be exposed to a range of written texts that include illustrated books and short stories for children. With the help of the teacher and a variety of resources such as a bank of words or a dictionary, your child will also be able to produce short texts that can be shared with classmates. Your child will be able to express preferences regarding media productions such as short films, excerpts from children's magazines, commercials or television programs.

Your child will be able to communicate with other individuals and express personal needs related to the class or the social setting of the school. The daily opportunities to listen to French, either spoken or read, will expose your child to a wide range of vocabulary that will enable him or her to become more fluent and ultimately to communicate outside the school setting.

MATHEMATICS

By the end of Cycle One, your child will be able to count up to 1 000. He or she will be able to do mental and written calculations that involve adding or subtracting numbers according to a given situation. By learning to calculate the length of certain objects, such as a stick, or to read a calendar, students will grasp specific mathematical concepts such as measuring length and time. They will learn to recognize and construct geometric objects such as a rhombus or a cylinder. Students will experiment with activities related to probability, such as predicting possible outcomes when tossing a coin. They will interpret and create diagrams representing situations around them, such as the distribution of classmates' birthdays over the year.

Students will use a calculator or a computer to carry out activities. They will be able to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems encountered in everyday life, both at home and at school. Examples might include calculating the number of hours or minutes left until bedtime, or the number of weeks until their birthday.

By learning about mathematics, your child will develop his or her reasoning. Students use their powers of observation and their understanding of measurement to describe what they see, to represent their environment and to move about in it. They learn a few facts about the history of mathematics that relate to what they are learning, such as why numbers were created.

NOTE: In Elementary Cycle One, your child will be introduced to science and technology through the curriculum set for this level by the Québec Education Program.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In becoming familiar with science and technology, your child will become more aware of the world in which we live. The study of these subjects responds very directly to children's intellectual curiosity about everything around them, and introduces them to knowledge and concepts that they will learn more about in cycles two and three. In Cycle One, the emphasis is on direct observation, the exploration of phenomena in the natural environment (the seasons, the falling of leaves) and the built environment (the construction of a bridge or a building). Through learning how to handle and use various tools, students develop abilities such as observation and measurement. They also develop a way of reasoning that is specific to science and technology.

Throughout Cycle One, your child will become familiar with this specific way of observing and understanding the world. Students will share their questions, discuss their observations and things they have done, and compare results with their classmates. This in turn will kindle their interest in people who work in science and technology, and will lead them to think about the positive and negative ways in which these fields affect their everyday lives.

The teaching of science and technology will help your child to reflect on how these fields affect everyday life and will encourage the development of creativity and critical thinking.

NOTE: In Elementary Cycle One, your child will be introduced to geography, history and citizenship education through the curriculum set for this level by the Québec Education Program.

GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

In Cycle One, students learn how to locate things and use simple maps, how to read the calendar and situate certain events from their own lives or those of family and friends on a timeline. They recognize different groups (scouts, sports teams, etc.), can explain the rules by which these groups operate and are aware that they are interdependent. They will have explored the landscapes and social realities (school, the neighbourhood, the street, etc.) of the past and present, here and elsewhere, in order to find similarities, differences and changes.

ARTS EDUCATION

(Drama, Visual Arts, Dance and Music)

Arts Education includes four subjects: Drama, Visual Arts, Dance and Music. Two out of these four subjects are compulsory in elementary school. Your child's timetable will include the same two arts subjects each year in order to ensure that he or she reaches the expected level of competency at the end of elementary school. Your child will develop competencies in the arts by learning the language, rules and tools specific to the two subjects that his or her school has chosen to offer.

In Cycle One, Visual Arts students produce individual works such as drawings, paintings and collages. In the other subjects of Arts Education, they invent and interpret dramatic scenes, simple dances or short musical pieces. These productions give them the chance to use the elements of artistic language learned, while thinking about what interests or is meaningful to them in particular. Students also watch or listen to short excerpts from dramatic works, choreographies and musical compositions, or are exposed to works of art, media images and various cultural objects. This process of appreciation, combined with those of creation and interpretation, enables students to develop their critical and aesthetic faculties and helps them understand how the arts contribute to their daily lives.

By experiencing the arts through two subjects in Arts Education, your child will develop his or her sensitivity and enjoy discovering, learning, creating and communicating using different artistic languages. Having contact with different artists, visiting museums, attending shows and participating in cultural activities of a diverse nature, either with classmates or the family, will help your child strengthen his or her personal identity, develop an openness toward others, and gradually learn to make intelligent choices so as to take full advantage of the invaluable benefits of the arts and culture.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

By the end of Cycle One, students will have learned various ways to maintain their balance, coordinate their movements and manipulate different objects (balls, hoops, etc.). These activities help children gain a more accurate perception of their bodies and what they are capable of doing.

Students will have developed ways of acting that will help them cooperate with their classmates during physical activities, while showing good sportsmanship (observance of rules, respect for classmates and referees, self-control, acceptance of defeat, etc.).

Students will have become familiar with the concepts of health, lifestyle habits and well-being that are part of a healthy and active lifestyle. Your child will have tried different kinds of physical activities of various duration and intensity, and will be able to share his or her successes and difficulties with you.

This first step toward adopting a healthy and active lifestyle will allow your child to become aware of the physical activities he or she prefers and to practise them on a regular basis.

NOTE: Parents choose one of the following three subjects for their child: Moral Education, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, or Protestant Moral and Religious Education.

MORAL EDUCATION

In Moral Education at the elementary level, your child engages in personal reflection and discussion with others to understand what life is about and to discover the reasons why people choose to act in certain ways, influenced not only by their values, but also by prohibitions, rules, rights and responsibilities. Students learn to solve moral problems that occur in everyday life. Faced with a moral issue, students try to understand the exact nature of the problem and its consequences and to find solutions that are in the best interests of a group of people. In engaging in dialogue with others to understand their world or solve problems, students learn to respect themselves, to be respectful of others and to work with others to find answers to moral questions.

By the end of Cycle One, your child will understand the interdependence of humans as well as the interdependence between humans and plants and animals. He or she will better understand the ways in which all living things need each other in order to survive. Students will have learned to recognize permissible and prohibited behaviour towards living things in their environment, and they will have explored why such prohibitions exist. They will also have experimented with values necessary for maintaining a quality of life in harmony with others and the natural environment. Students will have solved simple moral problems involving one or more living things. They will have learned to become aware of their own ideas, to share them and to show respect for others when they are speaking.

Moral Education will enable your child to recognize moral problems that arise from living with other living things and to solve these problems while taking into account their consequences and possible solutions. Increasingly, your child will come to think before acting. Students will be able to make choices and to explain the reasons for their choices, whether based on values they feel are important, prohibitions present in their environment or a way of seeing human beings.

NOTE: Parents choose one of the following three subjects for their child: Moral Education, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, or Protestant Moral and Religious Education.

CATHOLIC MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Catholic Moral and Religious Instruction offers children a unique opportunity to explore answers to questions they have about themselves, about others and about life. To guide them in their search for meaning, students will be introduced to Bible stories (e.g. the story of creation, the liberation of Egypt by Moses, the Good Samaritan, the disciples of Emmaus). By the end of Cycle One, students will be able to choose the story that deals with a question that is important to them. This question, which may sometimes be surprising, might have to do with sharing, the origin of life, or even death.

Students will be able to tell their favourite Bible story in their own words, to say what happens to the characters and to explain why the story is meaningful to them. Other cultural and religious traditions will be used to enrich the learning and reflection process. Students will then be able to make a connection between an aspect of these traditions and the Bible story they have learned to tell.

These learnings will help your child develop an attitude of openness to others and to diversity. As well, faced with a familiar situation in which they are able to identify and describe a problem, children will be able to find a solution appropriate for their age and to explain the reasons for their decision.

Catholic Moral and Religious Instruction will enable your child to draw upon the living Catholic tradition in his or her search to find answers to questions about life and the world in which we live.

NOTE: Parents choose one of the following three subjects for their child: Moral Education, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, or Protestant Moral and Religious Education.

PROTESTANT MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

By choosing the Protestant Moral and Religious Education Program for your child, you are giving him or her the chance to learn about the Protestant tradition, to become familiar with Biblical stories and figures, and to discover their influence in history and on culture. Students will identify behaviours and attitudes conducive to self-respect and respect for others as well as to a spirit of openness to religious and cultural diversity.

By the end of Cycle One, your child will be able to relate Bible stories and explain their influence on everyday life: the story of creation, the story of Abraham, etc. Students will be able to describe and state the meaning of religious celebrations and symbols, such as the commemoration of the Reformation or Christmas. In a familiar situation where they are faced with a simple moral issue, they will be able to identify the problem, find a solution appropriate for their age and explain the reasons for their choice in light of their experiences and religious and cultural heritage.

The Protestant Moral and Religious Education Program deals with religious and ethical questions using an approach that aims to develop children's critical judgment and uphold individual conscience and liberty. The primary source of inspiration is the Bible. In addition to Christianity, a significant part of the program looks at other religions in a spirit of openness to diversity. Since children have the primary responsibility for their learning, the program encourages them to construct their own world vision, drawing on the two principal ethical values of Protestantism: responsibility and conviction.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about the education reform, visit the MEQ Web site (www.meq.gouv.qc.ca) or contact your school, school board or the MEQ regional office closest to you.