



Western Québec School Board

Annual Report

2015-2016

Western Québec School Board
January 31, 2017

Resolution #:

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PREAMBLE

The Western Québec School Board's strategic plan, establishes a general framework under which decisions are made regarding our stated future outcomes, as well as how these outcomes will be achieved, measured, and evaluated. It states that our collective efforts and resources are focused on student achievement and professional development to foster an environment conducive to learning and striving for excellence. The strategic plan outlines directions for our organization in concert with the core strategies aimed at achieving our main objective—individual student achievement.

WESTERN QUÉBEC SCHOOL BOARD OVERVIEW

The Western Québec School Board territory borders the province of Ontario, and serves 155 municipalities spread across an area of over 90,000 square kilometers (twice the size of Nova Scotia). It is the third largest of the nine English boards in terms of geographic size. There are 25 schools for youth sector students, three of which are located above the 43rd parallel in the northern region of Abitibi-Témiscamingue. The remainder of the youth sector schools are in the southern region of the Outaouais, which partially surrounds the National Capital Region of Ottawa-Gatineau.

The Western Québec School Board's youth sector population is approximately 6,900 students from Kindergarten through Secondary V. Over 90 percent of this enrolment is in the Outaouais region, with the remainder situated in three schools in the northern region. There are also five Adult Education and Vocational Training centres—one in the northern region, and four in the southern region. Enrollment in the Adult and Vocational sector is more than 550 full-time students.

The Western Québec School Board employs more than 1,000 people in several categories of employment, most of them working directly with students.

Programs and services offered by the Western Québec School Board vary from General English programs and Enriched French academic programs, transition and induction programs, Work Oriented Training programs, Lifeskills programs, along with pre-kindergarten and daycare services. We also engage students by offering a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities in sports, cultural, character building, and community-oriented activities along with a variety of student-centred services offered in our schools and centres.

CHALLENGES

In addition to its large and partly remote territory, the Western Québec School Board faces many challenges that include socio-economic disadvantaged students, a significant rate of students who are identified as special needs, important ongoing budget cuts, a high mobility rate between provinces, high declining enrolment in several of our sectors, and capacity issues in our urban core buildings. Although the school board has put in place strategies to minimize and overcome these obstacles, it is important that the strategies put in place focus first and foremost on student success.

Law 101 and enrolment

The Western Québec School Board operates in a predominantly Francophone environment and the accessibility to English instruction is limited to the provisions of the Charter of the French language (Law 101). This can make it more difficult for children to access the public English school system in Québec. Only when a parent meets certain requirements can a child be educated in English. Consequently, the English school boards in the province, including the WQSB, are facing declining enrolment while French school boards are anticipating a significant increase in enrolment. Immigrants who move to our region and parents who received a French education in Québec or in another province can be denied access to English public schools.

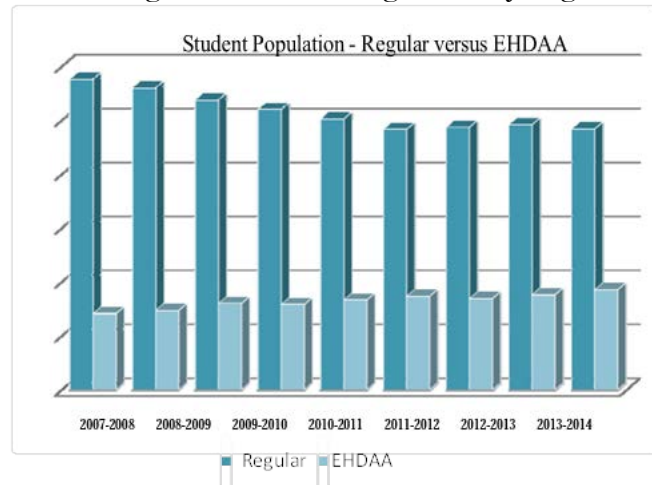
Since 2001 the Western Québec School Board's student enrolment has declined from 8,158 to 6,572, representing a net loss of 1,700 students. Although our schools have implemented different models of programs, and the board has developed marketing strategies to overcome declining enrolment, the birth rate in the province coupled with the requirements established by Law 101 to access English education, continue to be obstacles that limit the growth of enrolment. Despite these obstacles, as of 2015-2016, we have witnessed a growth in enrolment from previous years, and enrolment continues to increase.

Mobility rate

Many Western Québec School Board schools border the province of Ontario. People often move back and forth between the two provinces in search of the best living conditions. This trend results in a high mobility rate for the student population. Consequently, the school board's dropout rate is inflated because some high school students move out of the province prior to receiving a Québec high school diploma or certification. As well this has created a problem with retaining teaching staff.

Students with special needs

One of the Western Québec School Board's objectives is to increase the retention and the success of students with special needs. While we are proud of the strides we have made over the past few years in supporting students with special needs and securing success rates significantly higher than provincial ones, we continue to face challenges in this area. Equitable educational services must be accessible to all students; therefore, students with special needs must have the same learning opportunities as others regardless of their geographic location. As the proportion of students with special needs is growing, our prime challenge is to continue to provide the same level of quality education in all the schools within our jurisdiction.



Socio-economic context

In Québec, each school has been assigned a ranking number (1 to 10) based on the socio-economic factor. The socio-economic ranking is assigned based on mothers without high school diplomas and parents being inactive in the work force. A higher ranking means a higher socio-economic disadvantage, and that presents more challenges for students to achieve success. In schools with rankings of 8, 9, or 10, additional grants are allocated to support educational initiatives and programs.

Budget

In a time of provincial budget cuts, notably in the education sector, the Western Québec School Board budget has experienced its share of cuts over the last few years. In fact, these cuts were largely attributed to the precarious state of public finance in the province. As previously stated, the decline in enrolment has accelerated the loss of financial resources. Despite these budget constraints, we have managed to minimize the impact on the delivery of education while balancing the 2015-2016 school board budget.

Retention and recruitment

The Western Québec School Board employs approximately 1,000 full-time and part-time employees across its vast territory. Recruiting and retaining qualified personnel in rural areas remain a challenging reality, notably in the teaching and professional fields. Initiatives are in place to promote recruitment while new strategies are developed to retain qualified personnel.

WQSB ALIGNMENT WITH MEES STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2018

Considering the MEES Strategic Plan, the WQSB has undertaken the following:

Orientation 1 – Increase perseverance and school success

- Strategies are supported and embedded in school and centre management and educational success agreements.
- Promote teaching profession:
 - A New Teacher Induction Program offers mentoring for all new teachers to the board. This program provides support and contributes to the retention of staff.
 - Excellence in Teaching Awards to recognize outstanding teachers.
 - Teaching and Learning Programs in place to ensure continuous improvement in quality teaching and learning.

Orientation 2 – Respond to training needs of individuals as well as labour market

- The WQSB partners with other boards and regional and provincial partners to ensure that needs are met. Examples of this are a Carpentry program for the Algonquins of Barriere Lake, a Homecare Program to five First Nations communities, and project proposals to support AEVT in FN communities.

Orientation 3 – Pertains to higher (college and university) education sector

Orientation 4 – Maintain conditions that favour the pursuit of studies

- The WQSB supports academic advising activities, career days, student for a day activities, mini-university, annual reports for actions and strategies about this orientation.

Orientation 5 – Support an education system that meets the needs of communities

- The WQSB is an active partner in the *Comité d'amélioration de la perseverance scolaire* (CAPS).
- The WQSB has developed and offers a full vocational training program through e-learning and is using distance delivery (video conference) to deliver programs between centres.
- The WQSB uses LEARN services to provide small groups of students in distant schools with secondary studies optional courses.
- The WQSB has integrated Indigenous Success projects to support aboriginal students in its schools and centres.
- The WQSB has five Community Learning Centres.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The WQSB has created professional learning communities in all its core subjects (English, Language Arts, French, and Math) to which we refer as our networks. Teachers and consultants work on various components such as curriculum delivery, student assessment and evaluation practices, differentiated teaching strategies, and accommodations for students identified with specific learning needs.

The board continues to support the orientation of its New Approaches New Solutions (NANS) schools. These schools operate collectively in several areas to ensure progress and success in reading, math, student aspirations, and school leadership.

The WQSB has also grown and reinforced its knowledge and delivery of indigenous pedagogy and culturally responsive curriculum. This includes more collaboration with First Nations knowledge holders and communities, including elders and traditional language speakers.

Partnership Agreement

Our 2013-2017 Partnership Agreement clearly indicates the school board's core objectives, targeted results, and methods of assessing the achievement of objectives. The five objectives outlined in the Partnership Agreement are:

- Increase graduation and qualification rates of students under the age of 20
- Improve the quality of French Second Language and improve the quality of English Language Arts
- Improve the retention and academic success of certain groups of students including students with handicaps, social maladjustments, or learning disabilities
- Improve the health and safety environment in schools
- Increase the number of students under the age of 20 in vocational training

Objectives	Target 2017	Result 2015/2016
1. a. Increase the graduation rate and certification under the age 20.		
1. b. Decrease the number of school leavers.		
Increase the graduation rate and certification under the age 20.	80,0%	(2007-2008 – 7-year cohort) – 72.8%
Girls	81,0%	(2007-2008 – 7-year cohort) – 79.4%
Boys	80,0%	(2007-2008 – 7-year cohort) – 67.1%
First Nations	80,0%	Not available
Decrease the number of school leavers (from secondary 3 to 5)	147	107 (2007-2008 7-year cohort)
Rate of Sec. V students registered on September 30 who obtain Secondary Studies Diploma	85%	92,0%
Increase the success rate on uniform exams of Sec. 4 subjects mandatory for obtaining diploma		
History and Citizenship and Histoire	80,0%	64,6% - History 81,3% - Histoire Combined rate 68,0%
CST Math	80,0%	90,0%
Science Math	85,0%	90,1%*
General Science	85,0%	61,5% (very small cohort)
Applied Science	82,0%	69,5%
Increase the success rate of Cycle 3.2 primary (end of cycle exams)		
ELA (MEES)	80,0%	90,0%
FSL (CS)	80,0% FSL 95,0% IM	76,0% FSL 94,0% IM
Math (MEES)	75,0%	74,0%

Objectives	Target 2017	Result 2015/2016
2. a. Improve the quality of French Second Language. 2. b. Increase the mastery of English Language Arts.		
Increase the success rate on the reading component of the Secondary 5 MEES French Second Language exam.	88,0%	68,2% (if we include Français Enrichi the rate is 73.0 %)
Increase the success rate on the written component of the Secondary 5 MEES French Second Language exam.	87,0%	81,3% (if we include Français Enrichi the rate is 85.3 %)
Increase the overall success rate of First Nations students on the Secondary V MEES French Second Language exam.	60,0%	%
Increase the success rate on the Secondary V English Language Arts exam.	93,0%	94,1%
Increase the average mark on the reading and writing components of the secondary V ELA exam by 2% (from 71,0% to 73,0% and 70,7 to 72,7 respectively)	73% Reading 72.7 % Writing	67,5 % Reading 70,2% Writing
Increase the success rate of First Nations students on the Secondary V English Language Arts exam.	80,0%	88,3%
3.Improve the retention and academic success of certain groups of students including students with handicaps, social maladjustment or learning disabilities		
Pre-Work Program (2011 cohort who received qualification at end of three-year program)	75,0%	77,8%
Semi-skilled Training	70,0%	50,0%
The rate of students who obtain a high school diploma (*percentage of students with special needs registered in secondary V on September 30, 2015, who acquired Secondary Studies Diploma)	75,0%	100%
Increase the success rate of students with learning disabilities on uniform exams.	80%	Data to Come
4.Improving the health and safety environment in schools		
Decrease the rate of students who feel bullied.	Decrease from 20% to 17%	21% (Sec) 27%(Elem.)
Increase the rate of students who feel safe.	Increase from 84% to 87%	63% (Sec.) 56% (Elem.) Question re feeling safe has changed to include going to and from as well as in school
5.Increase the number of students in Vocational Training Program under the age of 20.	40	39

Complementary Services

The 2015-16 school year was the second year in a 3-year plan for our Resource Teacher Network (RTN) to explore and learn about Universal Design for Learning (UDL). This year, we moved beyond the basic introduction presented at a 2014 RTN session into a fully functioning Professional Learning Community (PLC). The PLC included participation from administrators and teachers from nine schools as well as the Consultants for Students with Special Needs. The PLC worked under the guidance of Dr. Frederic Fovet in learning about the UDL framework, which promotes full inclusion by addressing the diverse profiles of all the students in our classrooms. This involves teachers creating lessons with imbedded options, that give students choice, when the teachers are at the beginning of the lesson and evaluation planning process. The participants in the PLC ended the year with a great deal of enthusiasm and plans to expand the group, broaden the learning, and proceed with the implementation of UDL in their schools in the upcoming school year.

Response to Intervention (RTI) was another initiative that was introduced by Dr. Lynn Sennecal to our Resource teachers through the RTN. It involves expanding the reach of the regular classroom learning activities (tier 1) so that additional special education teaching (tier 2) can be more targeted to students' specific needs. RTI is complementary to UDL.

Dr. Julie Desjardins also worked with our resource teachers at the RTN on understanding the concept of Executive Functioning and its impact on learning. We continued to use the model classroom established at Chelsea Elementary to demonstrate the effective use of Daily 5 and Soundprints as regular teaching techniques and strategies as well as a very effective Resource model. Several school teams, including the principal and teachers, visited the model classroom where they could observe, have a debrief session, and discuss plans towards implementation in their own schools.

Our Consultant for the Work Oriented Training Program (WOTP) continued his work with teachers on linking the work placement experience to the classroom. A small team also worked together to enhance the students' transition from a modified academic program to the WOTP. Another small team also worked to create a WOTP Math curriculum. All this work is shared at the provincial level where the consultant plays a strong leadership role.

Last year we were very excited to learn of the new ministry curriculum being developed for students 6-15 years old on a life skills pathway. In preparation for full implementation, our Consultant for Students on a Life Skills pathway created a small WQSB team to study the new curriculum, plan training sessions for teachers, and develop a new Individual Education Program (IEP) that would complement the program. They attended provincial meetings and were an essential part of the provincial network. The new IEP was developed and in use by the spring and plans were made to begin training all our regular classroom teachers who have students with this profile in their classrooms.

Our social work technicians attended the National Issues of Substance Abuse Conference hosted by the Canadian Centre of Substance Abuse. Using material that was presented at the conference, as well as their experience working with youth to encourage healthy lifestyle choices, they developed and presented a Parent Information session. The feedback from this evening presentation was extremely positive and it was very well-received.

Our work with students with special needs is often intricately connected with the work done by our health and social services colleagues. The reorganization of these services into the *Centres intégrés de santé et de services sociaux* (CISSS) has been a huge undertaking in the province. We acquired the part-time services of a social worker who was tasked with the challenge of interfacing with our colleagues at the *Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux de l'Outaouais* (CISSSO) and disseminating the information to the Complementary Services Department as the services and personnel were reorganized and realigned.

Adult Education and Vocational Training Services (AEVT)

The WQSB Adult Education and Vocational Training Services provided education and training to approximately 1000 learners in 2015-2016. The five centres continue to remain a key resource to adult learners in region 07 and 08.

In Adult General Education, the centres continue to see a change in the number of part-time versus full-time students, with more learners opting for part-time schedules. The impact is a decrease in the generation of Full-Time Equivalent student funding but a need to continue to offer service to meet the needs in our five centres.

In Vocational Training, we have maintained and expanded in our rural centres through the offering of Accounting Studies and Secretarial via video conferencing. Pontiac Centre is the hub for this delivery with Maniwaki Centre and Val D'Or being the satellites. This delivery mode has allowed for small numbers of students to participate in the programs.

In 2015-2016, AEVT embarked upon an initiative to welcome international students to the Western Québec Career Centre. In 2015-16, approximately 70 international students undertook studies in Industrial Drafting, Residential and Commercial Drafting, and Health Assistance and Nursing. This initiative has allowed us to expand our offer of service to our local clientele.

Human Resources

The primary role of the Human Resources department is to hire, promote, and develop qualified and professional staff to ensure that our students achieve their potential. The department offers direction and guidance to management personnel for issues involving staffing and labour relations. In addition, we provide all our employees with services and advice related to career aspirations, compensation, benefits, and disability management.

During the school year, two of the six members of the department retired. Phil Bazinet joined the team in February 2016 and replaced Maralie Durrell as Coordinator of Human Resources. Later on, Krystal Boutin replaced Terri Clarke as Office Agent. The department implemented a training strategy to ensure a smooth transition for both Phil and Krystal.

The primary challenge during the 2015-2016 school year was that all unionized personnel contracts expired on March 31, 2015. Thus, the teachers' union continued their campaign of respectfully implementing various pressure tactics and awareness campaigns to enhance their negotiating position with the government. The teachers participated in strike action on October 26, November 9-10, and December 9. The support staff went on strike on November 4. The strike actions caused the cancellation of classes for all students. The Human Resources Department played a central role in developing a communications strategy for management personnel and provided ongoing advice and guidance to managers and principals pertaining to the various pressure tactics and strike action.

The Human Resources Department also has the responsibility for the New Teacher Induction Program. The aim of the induction program is three-fold:

1. To ensure that we support and grow good teachers through collaboration and coaching;
2. To establish a professional standard of high quality teaching for retention in every region of the Western Québec School Board; and,
3. To provide meaningful feedback to teachers and administrators that encourages professional conversations.

During the school year, the Western Québec School Board hired a total of 49 new teachers to add to the 35 teachers in year-two of the induction program. These teachers were supported by a team consisting of one teacher leader, one coaching and mentoring consultant, and 40 teacher coaches in 19 of our schools under the direction of the Director of Human Resources. In all, the team conducted 91 classroom observations and evaluations of new teachers. The retention rate for year-one teachers was 70% (34), with 12% (6) not being reengaged for performance reasons, 12% (6) leaving the board for various reasons, and 6% (3) not being rehired due to the unavailability of an appropriate position. Out of the 35 year-two teachers, 89% (31) were retained, while 11% (4) left the board for opportunities elsewhere.

The Induction Team took part in a four-day training with Robyn Jackson on instructional coaching and teacher feedback. We were then able to share our key learning with the Mentor-Coaches and administrators within the board.

Finance and Taxation

The Finance Department continued to monitor the school board's annual budget while supporting the departments, and the schools and centres in meeting their targets set within their Management Educational Success Agreements. A manager provided support to the schools for their grants and all budget matters including daycares, fundraising activities, parent fees, capital and any special projects.

School board taxes:

Since 2010-2011, the school board's taxation rate has decreased due to an increase in the evaluation base. The evaluation base is influenced by the municipal value of the property, the percentage factor of companies derived from the student population, and the number of properties designated for invoicing from the Western Québec school board.

In 2015-2016 the taxpayers became increasingly aware of the taxation articles in the Education Act and exercised their right to direct their taxes to the school board of their choice. By the annual deadline of April 1, the WQSB had received approximately 8,000 taxpayers' requests for the transfer of their 2016-2017 taxation. The result was an increase in the evaluation base and a further decline in the taxation rate.

The taxation rate in 2015-2016 was \$0.22542 per \$100 of evaluation. In June 2016, Council accepted the 2016-2017 taxation rate at \$0.17978. This taxation rate is lower than those of the French school boards on our territory by 8 to 15 cents per \$100 of evaluation. The exact variation differs for each French board.

The provincial regulation sets the annual maximum amount of taxes (PMT) that a school board is permitted to invoice by taxation. The formula is to ensure certain equities in the operating budgets of the school boards across the province. The province provides an equalization grant to school boards that do not have the evaluation base to collect the maximum taxation allowed.

More on school board taxation can be found on our website at <http://cswq.wqsb.qc.ca> under *School Taxation*.

Financial Statements 2015-2016

In November 2016, the Council of Commissioners adopted the school board's 2015-2016 financial statements with a surplus of \$575 365. As of June 30, 2016, the school board's accumulated surplus is \$14,457,238. It should be noted that the "unreserved" accumulated surplus is equal to \$8,344,279 excluding land values, sick leave, and vacation provisions in accordance to accounting practices (GAAP).

The 2015-2016 Financial Statements and the School Board Budget 2015-2016 are available on the school board's website at <http://cswq.wqsb.qc.ca>.

Procurement Activities

The Procurement Officer continues to oversee all procurement activities of the school board and provide training to the departments and the schools on By-Law 30—*By-Law establishing delegations of Powers and Functions of the WQSB*. In addition, our current procedures for procurement of goods and services have been updated with the new directives and requirements by the Treasury Board. Included in the annual report are the total amounts of service fee contracts awarded to businesses of a value of \$25,000 and above.

The following are the WQSB service contracts concluded under \$25,000 (excluding construction, renovations, and transformation) for the 2015-16 fiscal year.

	Contracts with physical person	Contracts with a company/legal person	Total
Number of Contracts	8	13	21
Amount for Contracts	\$ 346,445	\$ 1,946,054	\$ 2,292,499

The amount for the service contracts with company/legal person is very high due to the contract concluded for caretaking services at Philemon/Hadley, Pontiac High, and D'Arcy/Symmes.

Buildings and Equipment

The Buildings Department's main goal is to ensure that all students and staff benefit from a safe and healthy environment. Our caretakers and our maintenance team strive to offer clean and well-maintained schools.

In 2015-2016, we have invested in over 40 projects to either improve the status of the buildings, to increase their efficiency, or to offer new services. The following table lists the major projects completed this past year:

School	Project Description	Investment \$
Golden Valley School	Transformation of a wing to welcome the Val D'Or Adult Education Centre	140 000
Hull Adult Education Centre	Replacement of the gym roof	77 000
Maniwaki Woodland Elementary School	Replacement of a section of the roof	66 000
Noranda School	Replacement of the heating system and the installation of direct digital controls allowing distance control by computer	805 700
Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary School	Replacement of the gymnasium floor including modification of the structure and leveling of the floor	198 000
Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary School	Transformation of the cafeteria in classrooms	77 000
Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary School	Insulation of heating pipe in the crawl spaces	30 000
Philemon Wright High School	Renovation of the science laboratories and adjacent rooms	1 361 395
Philemon Wright High School	Reorganization of a wing to welcome Lindsay Place from Buckingham Elementary School	86 000
St-John's Elementary School	Reorganization of a section of the school for the addition of a new classroom	26 000
South Hull Elementary School	Transformation of the cafeteria in classrooms	53 000
South Hull Elementary School	Replacement of the heating system phase 1	382 445
Western Québec Career Center	Reorganization of classrooms for the creation of the drafting program	51 000

Information, Communication, and Technology

The Technology Department faces many challenges; the needs are numerous and various and the resources are limited. Most of our efforts have been concentrated on solidifying the infrastructure. We have implemented a standard configuration of the switches to simplify and stabilize the network. New servers have been configured to replace the SQL servers and the file servers that were at end-of-life. Tools and processes have been put into place to increase the quality of service.

School Organization and Transportation

The Department of School Organization & Transportation regroups portfolios to best serve the organization and to reduce costs.

The department's primary mandate is to develop and implement efficient tools and mechanisms that will ensure the ongoing support of both students and school administrators. The department's purpose is also, to deliver technical and administrative support to the organization and contribution to the overall planning of resources that benefit the educational system as a whole. The Department of School Organization also collaborates with other departments thus ensuring optimal support and guidance to all schools while continuing to keep students as our primary focus.

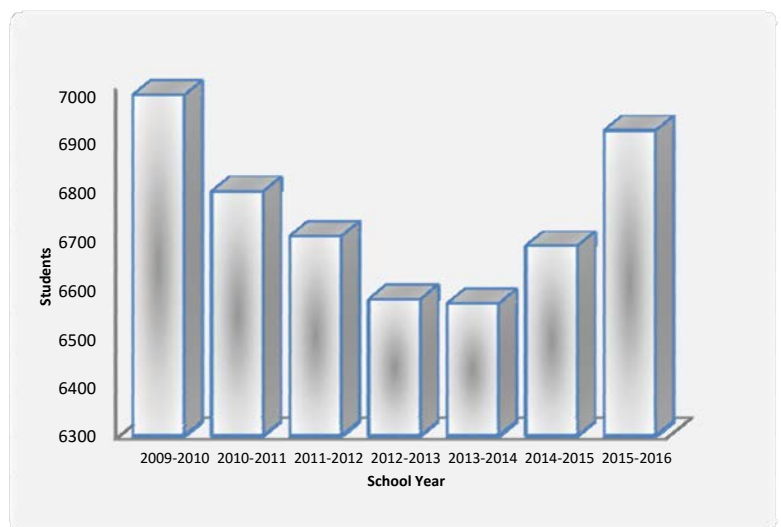
A cross-training plan has been developed and implemented to assist in specific areas where bottleneaking had become problematic. This plan created cohesion among team members and assisted in the sharing of corporate knowledge across the team rather than any one individual being the keeper of critical information.

Our department supports the following dossiers:

- Student registrations and procedures
- Bill 101 requirements and certifications
- Student enrolment
- Student certification
- School support with pedagogical software
- Report cards
- Timetables and scheduling
- Academic result transmission
- Data management
- Management and distribution of exams
- Cross-boundary requests and approval
- Transportation

Enrolment – student population

The student demographic projection indicated an increase in the population that we are currently experiencing. The school board's student population has positively shifted again. This year, the board has seen an increase of 231 students for a total of 6910 students. This is the second consecutive year that the enrolment has increased.



Transportation

The Transportation Department continued with its commitment to ensure efficient, reliable, and safe transportation for all its students. We continue to strive to improve customer service responding to the ever-changing needs of our community.

With a \$7.7 million budget, for the 2015-2016 school year, 118 buses travelled over 10,596 km daily for a total of more than 1,970,855 km for the year. While most of our students travelled by regular yellow school bus, some students required alternative modes of transportation designed to meet their specific needs, and were transported using seven-passenger vehicles. In total, 11 vans were in service travelling 588 km daily.

Among our student population, 89 percent use our transportation service to school—a challenge considering the size of our school board territory. While our transportation service experienced fewer accidents this year, nothing is taken for granted. Again our department, in collaboration with our carriers, organized an annual safety campaign to promote the continued safety and security of our students. The goal of the safety campaign is to educate preschool and primary level students on the importance of adopting a safe behaviour while on or around school buses. Professional trainers met with elementary students and made several safety presentations reviewing danger zones, safe behaviours, and bus evacuation procedures.

For the second year, our transportation workshop titled “First Rider Program” was introduced to new students and their parents to educate them on school bus environment and safety. This program was intended for students riding school buses for the first time in September. Its objective was to reduce both student and parent anxiety during the first few days of school. A school bus safety trainer reviewed the danger zones around the bus and the safety rules to be observed both inside and outside the bus. After the workshop, students and parents were taken for a short bus ride.

SECRETARY GENERAL

The Western Québec School Board's Secretary General coordinates, oversees, and ensures the efficient functioning of the activities and meetings of the Council of Commissioners and of the Executive Committee. The Secretary General oversees the board's policies, by-laws, official records, access to information and protection of personal information, copyrights, electoral process and legal services. The Secretary General provides advice and expertise to the Director General and to all administrators of the school board concerning legal and corporate matters.

During the 2015-2016 school year, the Council of Commissioners held a total of eight regular meetings and one special meeting. The Board's Executive Committee held seven regular meetings and one special meeting.

After public consultation, one policy was revised and adopted:

- Transportation Policy and Guidelines (G-1)
...and one new policy was adopted:
- Video Surveillance Policy (E-10).

In addition, four policies were rescinded:

- Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting (C32)
- Cheating and Plagiarism (C33)
- Flags (E-4)
- National Anthem (E-8)

LAW 17 – ACT RESPECTING WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

The following table outlines the total number of remunerated hours per employee groups for the period of January to December 2014, and April 2015 to March 2016. In comparing the two columns, the total number of remunerated hours for the Western Québec School Board has increased by 41 727.27 hours among the first trimesters.

Category of	January to March 2014	April 2015 to March 2016
Management	91738.80	92905.52
Professionals-Consultants	43639.13	46028.99
Teachers	774020.66	787459.07
Support Staff	405255.53	421912.44
Maintenance	92318.58	100393.93
TOTAL	1406972.69	1448699.96

The increase in remunerated hours is due to:

- a) The student population increased from 6679 to 6910 from the previous year or **a net gain of 231 students**. Our student population in the youth section increased by 3.3 percent while the increase in total remunerated hours was only 2.9 percent.
- b) There was an increase in remunerated hours covering all areas of employment due to the increased student enrolment, but the pace of the increase was less than the increase in student enrolment. Most the increase in remunerated hours was in direct services to students (teaching and special education support).
- c) Increase in the professionals' category due to the following:
 - engagement of a pedagogical consultant
 - maternity and medical leave replacement
 - part-time professional positions in guidance and new teacher program.

LAW 19 – COMPLAINTS CONCERNING BULLYING OR VIOLENCE REPORT

In June of 2012, amendments to the Education Act were enacted with a view of preventing and stopping bullying and violence in schools. As a result of these amendments, every school was required to adopt and implement an anti-bullying and anti-violence plan. These school plans must include:

- an analysis of the situation prevailing at the school
- prevention measures
- measures to encourage parents to collaborate in preventing and stopping bullying and violence and in creating a healthy and secure learning environment
- procedures for reporting or registering a complaint
- the actions to be taken when a student, teacher, or other school staff member or any other person observes an act of bullying or violence
- measures to protect the confidentiality of any report or complaint
- supervisory or support measures for victims, for witnesses, and for the perpetrator
- specific disciplinary sanctions for acts of bullying or violence
- the required follow-up on any report or complaint

All WQSB schools have adopted their anti-bullying and anti-violence plans, which are reviewed on an annual basis with their Governing Board.

Because of amendments to the Education Act, school boards now have to report annually on the following: the nature of complaints reported to the Director General, the measures taken, and the number of complaints filed and received by the Student Ombudsman.

During the 2015-2016 school year, no complaints were received by the Director General of the school board nor the Student Ombudsman.

CODE OF ETHICS REPORT

All school board Commissioners are subject to the “Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for the Commissioners of the Western Québec School Board”. During the 2015-2016 school year, no breach of this code was reported.

During the 2015-2016 school year, all members of the Council of Commissioners respected their duties and obligations as set forth in the code. The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct applicable to our commissioners can be consulted on the school board’s website.

OMBUDSMAN REPORT

GATINEAU

139, boul. de l'Hôpital, suite 127
Gatineau (Québec) J8T 8A3

Téléphone : (819) 243-1336
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Letellier Gosselin

AVOCATS - BARRISTERS

Gatineau, November 17, 2016

“WITHOUT PREJUDICE”
By email: rahern@wqsb.qc.ca

Mrs. Ruth Ahern

Interim Director General
Western Quebec School Board
15 rue Katimavik
Gatineau (Québec) J9J 0E9

Object: Ombudsman report for the school year ending July 1st, 2016
Our file: 17962-000 YL

Mrs. Ahern,

As for the school year ending the 30th of June 2016, I opened eighteen new files. Four out of the eighteen files I handled dealt with bullying. However, these were properly dealt with and I have closed the related files. The main subjects were eligibility transportation and assignment to a specific school.

As requested by law, I am pleased to submit my report for the school year 2015-2016 ending on June 30, 2016.

I closed at the end of school year 2014-2015, a total of fifteen files and as of July 1st, 2015, I had no outstanding files concerning students who are attending the schools of the Western Quebec School Board.

As you may be aware, for reasons of confidentiality, I am unable to divulge the names of the people involved.

I am looking forward to continue working with the students and parents of the Western Québec School Board and I am available to meet with Council if required.

Yours truly,

LETELLIER GOSSELIN

Per:



YVES LETELLIER, Lawyer and Ombudsman

YL/nm