

*Complementary
Educational
Services:
Essential to Success*

*Innovative
Projects*

PRESENTATION

This document, which is intended to accompany the framework document on complementary educational services, describes a few of the projects that have been carried out in the school system and that illustrate some of the orientations of the Ministère de l'Éducation.

Our purpose here is not to provide models for reproduction, but rather to offer a few examples that show the value of working in partnership to create a true educational community around the students. We should not be afraid to be creative.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Between men	4
Carrefour des enfants de Saint-Malo	6
Joint action committee formed by the Commission scolaire des Premières-Seigneuries, the CLSC Orléans et La Source, and the Direction de la protection de la jeunesse.....	8
The Focus project of the Kekpart youth centre	10
International cooperation in Guatemala	12
The Club of Five.....	14
Learning centre	16
The Fluppy program	18
Lachine network project (Island of Montréal)	20
Guidance-oriented school project at the Polyvalente de Disraëli.....	22
Book-related classroom activities	24
Project Harbour	26
Model agreement on educational services for students with severe language impairments	28

Context

Québec statistics show that the school dropout rate is higher for boys than for girls. In addition, Québec has a high suicide rate, and here again, boys stand out. More participation by fathers in their sons' education seems to be needed.

Polyvalente Veilleux and the CLSC Beauce-Centre have designed a project for boys and their fathers. The purpose of the project is to help boys define their values and beliefs in relation to what they want to become. It is an opportunity for them to have a special experience with their father or another adult who is important to them, in a helping relationship in which the father gives up his role as an authority figure and becomes closer with his son through outdoor activities, pleasure and play.

Objectives

- To foster the growth of a boy's relationship with an adult male in his natural environment who is important to him, particularly his father
- To make boys and their fathers aware of the main values and beliefs they hold about what it means to be "a real man"
- To give boys and their fathers a positive model of self-affirmation and self-esteem as males in a variety of situations
- To help them acquire personal and social skills they lack in relation to self-affirmation
- To support fathers' parenting skills, specifically their ability to have a helping relationship with their sons
- To promote community awareness of the problems of boys and to encourage fathers' participation in their education

The project

When an individualized education plan is being designed for a boy who is having difficulties at school, the personnel invite the father to take part, with his son, in a monthly evening of recreational activities and discussions “between men” at the school. In addition, there is an intensive 24-hour outdoor session, with fathers and sons sharing recreational and adventure activities in the woods, strengthening their relationship and taking part in group discussions on self-affirmation and male role-models. Before the session, there is a preparatory meeting with the group of fathers and one with the group of sons.

The fathers and sons who have taken part in this activity are also given other opportunities to get together, to look back on the session and assess the results of the project as a whole.

Finally, a counsellor meets with each father and son alone in the following months, to help them strengthen their relationship and learn to cope with any crises that may arise.

Collaboration

A community organizer and two social work staff from the CLSC Beauce-Centre, and a principal, a pastoral animator, a special education technician and a psychologist from the Polyvalente Veilleux took part in the project.

Funding was provided by the Programme d’Aide à l’Action Concertée (PAAC) of the Régie régionale de la santé et des services sociaux Chaudière-Appalaches and the Fonds d’innovation pédagogique of the Commission scolaire de la Beauce-Etchemin.

The project was selected by the Université de Montréal in the fall of 2000 as one of the best projects in Canada on fathers’ participation in the education of boys, and similar projects are starting to be set up in other communities.



Carrefour des enfants de Saint-Malo

Context

The parish of Sainte-Angèle-de-Saint-Malo is located in the Saint-Sauveur neighbourhood, the second-poorest in Québec City. École primaire Saint-Malo is the fourth-poorest of the 52 elementary schools in the Commission scolaire de la Capitale.

The project arose out of the desire of various partners, including the school, the parish, the CLSC and community groups, to counter the socioaffective poverty of the children in the area and encourage their success. The school was already distributing snacks and clothing, but it wanted, together with its partners, to do more, and to give elementary school students a place where they would find people who would take the time to welcome them, talk to them and spend quality time with them.

The Carrefour des enfants de Saint-Malo was set up as a nonprofit organization that was open after school hours.

Objectives

- To counter the socioaffective poverty of children from 5 to 12 years of age
- To provide children with a place where they would be welcomed and listened to and given a sense of belonging to the community
- To foster the harmonious development of all dimensions of the children's personalities
- To make parents aware of their primary responsibility for their children's education and to help them in that role

Carrefour des enfants de Saint-Malo

Activities


The activities are divided into four categories. The *educational activities* consist of help with homework four times a week, supplementing the two periods provided by the school, as well as computer activities. The *cultural activities* involve stories and legends, puppet shows and other shows. The children can also take part in *social activities*, such as games, especially cooperative games, and outdoor activities, and *arts activities* (visual arts, music, dance, etc.).

Activities will be organized for parents in the future, which will give them an opportunity to interact with other parents, volunteers and professionals, and to discuss various subjects in order to better understand and meet their children's needs.

Collaboration

This project was carried out through the participation of the École Saint-Malo administration, the pastoral animator, members of the parish and parents. The teachers informed the students of the existence of the project and encouraged those who could benefit from the services to take part. Among the volunteers were retired teachers, who helped with homework.

The school is currently providing technical services (e.g. photocopying, group purchasing). The project is just starting out, but other exchanges of services are being considered. The funding comes from public bodies, governments, religious communities, foundations, businesses and residents of the area.



***Joint action Committee formed by the
Commission scolaire des Premières-Seigneuries,
the CLSC Orléans et La Source,
and the Direction de la
protection de la jeunesse***

Context

Administrators from the school board, the CLSC network and the Direction de la protection de la jeunesse agreed on the need to bring together the expertise and competencies of their organizations by sharing personnel for the benefit of their mutual clientele. The joint action committee was one of a series of measures established by these partners working with young people with difficulties in their territory.

The young people directed to the joint action committee are in elementary or secondary school. They have severe behaviour problems or attitudes that could lead to expulsion, or they are likely to be reported to the Direction de la protection de la jeunesse for serious behaviour problems with or without absenteeism.

The joint action committee is an extreme measure used only when a student fails to become actively involved despite the help and services provided at school.

Objectives

- To pool complementary expertise and competencies in order to more effectively meet the specific needs of young people and parents who are experiencing difficult situations
- To make complementary school and social services rapidly accessible to these young people and their parents
- To prevent the students' expulsion or, if that is not possible, provide favourable conditions for their integration into other schools

***Joint action Committee formed by the
Commission scolaire des Premières-Seigneuries,
the CLSC Orléans et La Source,
and the Direction de la
protection de la jeunesse***

Mandate

- To analyze problems that have led to formal intervention by the school and for which a request was made to the CLSC, and that were not resolved despite all the efforts normally made by the school and the CLSC
- To recommend guidelines for joint action by school and social services personnel and to provide support to the school administration
- To facilitate access to complementary services offered by the social services network in order to provide a collaborative solution to serious problems experienced by certain students and their parents
- To define information and monitoring mechanisms for use with young people and their parents

Collaboration

The joint action committee is made up of one representative from the school board's educational services, one from each CLSC in the territory and one from the Direction de la protection de la jeunesse, in addition to the school principal, the parents and the student. The student attends the meetings unless there is some reason for him or her not to do so. The presence of the parents is a major asset in solving problems; this is the reason for their participation.

The tasks of each partner are clearly defined and set out in writing. The partners carry out regular evaluations of the approach and the positive effects on the students involved.



The Focus project of the Kekpart youth centre

Context

The Kekpart youth centre, in Longueuil, in the Montérégie region, developed a project whose main goal was to reduce the practice of taxing in the school and on the street. It set up the project in 1999 in collaboration with its partners. The project is designed for all young people, including those at risk of committing violent acts and those at risk of being victims of them.

Objectives

- To determine, with the young people, the places where they feel most and least safe when they are out and to identify the places where taxing most often occurs and describe the nature of these acts
- To run focus groups with young people and adults in order to determine measures that could reduce the risk of aggression in the micro-environments identified
- To propose to the appropriate authorities integrated solutions for making certain micro-environments safer
- To implement a community works program to rehabilitate young taxers and enable them to make amends to their victims and the community in general
- To have young victims of taxing take part in a study to identify places in their environment that present risks, while providing them with individual support

The Focus project of the Kekpart youth centre

Activities

The activities are designed as possible solutions to the growing problem of taxing:

- participation by young people in a study to identify places in their environment that present risks and help them diminish their risk of becoming taxing victims
- presentation by the young people of their main observations and solutions to parents' committees, school administrations, the Société de transport de la Rive-Sud de Montréal, associations of taxi drivers and of business owners, elected officials and municipal administrators
- workshops or presentations in the schools, for students and their parents
- support for young people who have been victims of taxing: use of an educational game to reinforce their ability to identify situations of risk
- support for young people involved in taxing situations: analysis of the problem, search for solutions, aid in problem solving, accompaniment

The project carried out a survey of Elementary 6 students in ten schools and all students in three secondary schools in Longueuil. Such a survey is a first step toward an integrated intervention model for the prevention of taxing, one that focuses on identifying not the perpetrators of taxing but the places where it occurs. By collaborating in this analysis, schools obtain a picture of the places where conditions contribute to taxing. This diagnostic analysis allows the Kekpart youth centre and its partners to develop:

- programs to promote nonviolence in the school and its environment
- support programs for young people who have been victims of taxing
- programs for potential or actual perpetrators of taxing

Collaboration

The partners in this project are the Kekpart youth centre, schools in the Commission scolaire Marie-Victorin, two CLSCs, other youth centres in Montérégie, and the municipality. Financial support was provided by several provincial and federal ministries and the private sector (foundations or companies).



International cooperation in Guatemala

Context

Students are helping to build a community centre in Guatemala in a project started in 1995 by the pastoral animator at École secondaire La Découverte. Since then, every two years, some 20 Secondary IV and V students from École Les Seigneuries and École La Découverte, in the Commission scolaire de la Riveraine, have had an opportunity to experience community involvement and international cooperation.

Since 1997, a team consisting of two pastoral animators and a noon-hour supervisor or a teacher from each of the schools has been in charge of this activity.

Objectives

- To enable students to experience sharing with, helping and respecting others
- To develop team spirit
- To make students aware of poverty
- To enable students to discover a different culture, become familiar with the history of the country and learn Spanish
- To draw on the students' resources and talents
- To encourage students to work for peace and international solidarity through concrete actions
- To have the students communicate their experiences to the community after they come back

International cooperation in Guatemala

The project

The project lasts 16 months, from February to June. In February of the first year, students in Secondary III and IV are informed of the project. From February to May, students who are interested in participating take part in selection activities. The candidates also have to enroll in a Spanish course as an elective subject. From June to February, the students selected carry out:

- information activities on the history and culture of the country
- awareness activities on the philosophy of the Guatemalan organization building the community centre
- activities to prepare for the trip and for group living
- fundraising activities to help pay the costs of the trip and the building materials

These activities take place in class, in the evening, on weekends, at recess, during lunch hour and on pedagogical days. The two-week trip takes place in March of the second year, partly during spring break. From March to June, the students speak to groups and the public in general about their experience.

Collaboration

This project is carried out with the help of the two school administrations (rooms, photocopies, budget for substitute teachers, etc.), personnel from the two schools (volunteers for certain fundraising activities or preparation for the trip), parents of the students, secular and religious associations and groups in the community, Christian communities, businesses (help in organizing fundraising, donations, reception after the trip) and nurses from the CLSC (information and vaccinations).



The Club of Five

Context

The Polyvalente Horizon-Blanc in the Commission scolaire du Fer (Fermont sector) serves a population of about 220 students. Most of the resource persons working in complementary services (four out of five) work part-time, and they feel isolated. They feel a need to work together to be more effective and to develop more substantial projects.

Early in 1997-1998, the school nurse took the initiative of bringing her colleagues together to plan the school's psychosocial activities for the year. The planning centred on theme days and weeks organized by different people, such as a drug abuse prevention week, a suicide prevention week, a mental health week and World AIDS Day. The Club of Five was formed as a result of this meeting.

Objectives

- To plan theme weeks and days and distribute tasks related to their organization
- To share ideas and alleviate the colleagues' isolation
- To think and talk about their practices and everyday problems
- To draw on each person's expertise and encourage collaboration

The Club of Five

The project

The Club of Five consists of two employees of health and social services institutions—the nurse from the health centre and the human relations agent from Le CANAL (an alcoholism and drug abuse rehabilitation centre that is part of the Centre de protection et de réadaptation de la Côte-Nord)—and three employees of the Commission scolaire du Fer—the pastoral animator, the school psychologist and the academic and vocational guidance counsellor, who also works in drug abuse prevention. They meet five or six times a year.

Members of the group also belong to various umbrella groups involved in joint action in Fermont in such areas as services for young people and drug abuse. The relationships are valuable for the club members and partners in these groups and help them harmonize their actions.

The Club of Five took the initiative of forming a working group in the secondary school to deal with postvention following suicides or other disasters that might occur in the Fermont area.

The Club of Five is very dynamic. The fact that the community is small and isolated facilitates meetings and discussions among the members. However, they have encountered difficulties such as poor participation in activities and unwillingness to get involved in group meetings (e.g. a self-help group for teenagers whose parents are separated) on the part of young people. The closeness of the community makes young people fear that their confidentiality will not be respected by their peers.

Context

At École Christ-Roi, located in a disadvantaged area of Longueuil, in the Commission scolaire Marie-Victorin, two students in a bachelor's program in special education, the school's remedial teacher and a pedagogical advisor set up a learning centre based on collaboration by all personnel in the educational community. The remedial teacher was particularly involved in the planning of the project.

The project arose as a result of the need for more remedial services, sharing of expertise, help adapted to students' needs and a place for discussion and resource sharing by teachers, resource persons in the school and parents.

Orientations and objectives

The first year of the project was spent determining the orientations of the centre, defining the objectives and consulting school personnel and other members of the educational community. A good deal of time was also spent organizing individualized reeducation plans that could be applied partly at the centre and partly in the classroom and at home.

The orientations defined prior to the establishment of the centre were:

- To organize the centre and its activities in a manner consistent with the Québec Education Program (QEP)
- To provide help for students with difficulties who were integrated into regular classes
- To provide instructional materials and a physical setup that would encourage students to be active and to develop their competencies as much as possible

Objectives

These orientations gave rise to the following objectives:

- To create an environment conducive to learning
- To act quickly to overcome difficulties
- To organize services adapted to students' needs

In addition, the centre allows everyone working with the students to become familiar with the underlying principles of the reform.

Stages

Once the orientations and objectives of the project were defined, they were presented to the school personnel and the governing board. Funds were allocated by the school and the school board from the budgets for educational success and the implementation of the QEP.

In 2000-2001, educational resources were purchased and the instructional materials in the school were pooled to set up spaces adapted to classes in preschool education and Cycles One, Two and Three.

There was also discussion of the role of the remedial teacher in the context of the reform and of that teacher's indirect interventions with students, teachers, the administration and parents. Various reeducation plans were also tested.

Three types of activities were chosen, dealing with discovery, expression and imagination. The next stages involved structuring actions in these three areas and testing them with all personnel in the educational community, all with a focus on attaining the objectives of the project.

The Fluppy program

Context

École Hébert, in the Commission scolaire de Laval, set up the Fluppy program in 1996. This project arose from the observation that the children in preschool education, particularly the boys, were increasingly aggressive and violent.

The Fluppy program was developed by the Centre de psycho-éducation du Québec and has been tested in nearly 350 schools since 1984. It comprises three components, concerning children, families and teachers.

Objectives

- To develop the social skills of children in preschool education
- To help parents of children recognized as being at risk
- To support teachers who have children with these difficulties in their classes

Activities

Children's component

The aim of this component is to improve socialization, self-control and problem solving for all children in preschool education, especially those who have been recognized as being at risk for developing behaviour problems.

École Hébert holds a health festival every year, in May, which is organized by personnel of the school and of the CLSC des Mille-Îles. Future kindergarten students and their parents are invited to come meet the school administration, the teachers, the school nurse, and the dental hygienist and psychoeducator from the CLSC. This first activity allows the resource persons in these institutions to observe these children's behaviour in different contexts.

At the start of the school year, the teachers observe the children for about six weeks and give the administration the names of those who have behaviour difficulties. The teachers then fill out an observation form prepared by the psychoeducator from the CLSC des Mille-Îles for each of these children. The psychoeducator spends an observation period in the classroom in order to select children who can benefit from the program and to direct others to other professionals or services, if required.

The children of one class are divided into two groups, in which the children at risk mingle with those who have positive social skills. The teacher and the psychoeducator take turns working with each of the groups. Using a puppet representing a dog named Fluppy, they tell stories from Fluppy's life; then, they run workshops in which the children learn ways to be comfortable with others and to make friends. All the children in the class take part in this component.

The Fluppy program

Activities (cont.)

Families' component

The parents of those children who are considered at risk for adjustment problems are invited to participate in this component. If they accept, the psychoeducator from the CLSC visits the parents about once a month to discuss the children's difficulties and ways to overcome them.

The aim of these meetings is to help develop better relationships between parents and children and to broaden the parents' social networks. By building a closer relationship between the family and the school, the psychoeducator encourages joint action.

Teachers' component

This component provides teachers with the professional development and support they need in class management and strategies to use with children with difficulties. Through co-facilitation of the workshops, discussions with the psychoeducator after the workshops and three meetings per year, they adapt their actions to the needs of children at risk and ensure that the children apply what they have learned in the workshops.

This support is provided by the psychoeducator from the CLSC or personnel from the school's complementary services, depending on the nature of the children's difficulties. The school administration follows the progress of the program closely throughout the year. In some cases, teachers in Elementary Cycle One have continued the work begun by their colleagues in preschool education, with the support of the preschool teachers and the psychoeducator.

Context

*Pilot project for joint action by partners in a network:
Development of a service model in mental health, 2000-2001*

It is recognized that psychosocial and physical or mental health problems are often the source of social and emotional difficulties in school in disadvantaged areas. The most recent data from the Ministère de l'Éducation confirm this observation, bringing out the difference between the low rate of educational success of students in a disadvantaged area such as Lachine and that of Québec students as a whole.

These data highlighted the need to develop new types of services to better meet the needs of these populations. A pilot project was set up in September 2000 in Lachine at the initiative and under the coordination of two school administrations in the Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys.

Objectives

- To adopt a more global and concerted approach in services and interventions with students with social or emotional difficulties
- To promote collaboration by parents and local organizations
- To improve the rate of educational success of students in the area

The project

Two types of projects were set up and were carried out dynamically and effectively by the personnel through the 2000-2001 school year.

The first project involved a variety of community activities organized by the school, in the school, for families of students in the network, to give the parents a sense of belonging to the school and encourage them gradually to participate in school life.

The second project involved beginning to work together as a network of services for students experiencing mental health difficulties of a social or emotional nature. A subcommittee on mental health coordinated the work.

Lachine network project

Island of Montréal

The project (cont.)

The following are a few examples of the work accomplished in partnership in 2000-2001:

- creation of a telephone hotline for consultation by the school psychologists with two pediatric psychiatrists at Hôpital Sainte-Justine, the hospital serving the area
- participation by one of the pediatric psychiatrists as a speaker during a half-day focusing on mental health problems in school, for personnel of the four elementary schools in the network
- participation by the committee in the CLSC du Vieux LaChine's youth project in order to combine the efforts initiated by the committee with those of the Régie régionale as part of broader activities on mental health
- the possible setting up in 2001-2002 of a clinic for students with attention-deficit disorder/hyperactivity at the CLSC du Vieux LaChine
- development and distribution of a questionnaire on parents' needs, in collaboration with the Supporting Montréal Schools project; the answers will be analyzed by a group of researchers

In 2001-2002, phase two of the project will continue the development of activities to foster educational success through the participation of parents and organizations in the area. The mental health network will also be consolidated, and will prepare school personnel to better fulfill their role as frontline workers and to work closely with partners that can support their efforts with families and students experiencing social or psychological difficulties.

Collaboration

The four elementary schools, the Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys, the regional support service in psychopathology, the CLSC du Vieux LaChine, youth centres, community groups and parents, all facing the same challenge but approaching it in different ways, joined together to undertake a systemic process of joint action to better meet the needs of children and families in Lachine. Some people have been very active and have played an essential role: the principals of École primaire Paul-Jary and École primaire Philippe-Morin, backed up by the psychologist for these two schools and the psychoeducator, formed the core team. During the year they were joined by the administrations of École Martin-Bélanger and École Jardins-des-Saints-Anges. The pediatric psychiatry service of Hôpital Sainte-Justine was also invited to two meetings.



Guidance-oriented school project at the Polyvalente de Disraëli'

Context

Based on the concept of education for work, this project was developed in 1995-1996 by a core group made up of the vice-principal and three volunteers from the personnel of the Polyvalente de Disraëli, a geography teacher, a guidance counsellor and an academic and career information counsellor. Initially for students enrolled in a preparation for semiskilled occupations (option 2) program, the project was soon extended to the regular classes in Secondary One; the vehicle was the geography program. The project came under the social sciences and the broad area of learning Personal and Career Planning of the QEP.

Objectives


The team chose career-planning objectives involving occupational exploration as its frame of reference for Secondary I.

The learning objectives for the students were to acquire the ability to:

- describe the population of the world
- identify rich and poor countries
- make connections between income earned and diet
- state the consequences of poverty and wealth on living conditions

The personal and career planning objectives were for the students to learn about:

- another form of work: international cooperation
- working conditions in poor countries
- other realities
- occupations that are in demand in developing countries



1. *This description is a translation of a talk given in Québec City on May 30, 2000, by Jacques Beaudet, principal of the Polyvalente de Disraëli, during a province-wide meeting on the education reform.*

Guidance-oriented school project

at the Polyvalente de Disraëli

The project

The team adopted two modes of operation: **collaboration and infusion**.

Collaboration involves work in collegiality, a certain decompartmentalization of complementary services and cooperation among the members of the school team.

For example, a science teacher who is an astronomy buff is invited to the Secondary I geography class to explain astronomy concepts from the geography program, with the collaboration of the information counsellor. All the teachers in a cycle may even collaborate in organizing a medieval week.

Finally, collaboration is shown in partnership with students' parents, personnel of other educational institutions and workers in various companies and organizations. The activities meet career guidance objectives through shared pedagogical planning based on the second principle, that of infusion.

Infusion involves bringing together the processes of instruction and career guidance. This means making connections between the content in the various subjects and the world of work, thus infusing personal and career planning objectives into the objectives of the subject programs. The academic and career information and guidance personnel and the teachers thus work together to contextualize the students' learnings and integrate them into the students' lives.

This process combines two aspects of the school's mission, providing qualifications and imparting knowledge, by simultaneously developing competencies in career guidance and in the social sciences. According to the project's designers, some other subject area could just as well have been used.

While it started in the Secondary I geography course, the project is also used in the Secondary II history course. Teacher's guides for both of these programs have been prepared; they contain suggestions for activities.



Book-related

classroom activities

Context

Some hundred schools in disadvantaged areas on the Island of Montréal take part in the Supporting Montréal Schools Program. In 1998, it was observed that the libraries in these schools had few books in good condition to offer their students and that they had little access to the services of professional librarians.

The project arose out of a desire to remedy this situation and to increase students' access to local cultural resources. One of the measures of the program, "access to cultural resources," thus contributed to the creation of a model of partnership between schools and the local libraries.

Objectives

- To develop a love of reading in children
- To adopt new approaches for using books in the classroom
- To forge links between schools and local libraries
- To integrate cultural learning into instruction
- To build a closer relationship between teachers and librarians

Book-related

classroom activities

The project

The orientations are determined by the different partners. The project includes professional development for teachers on using books in the classroom, which is provided by the Association des bibliothèques publiques de l'île de Montréal (BPIM) in the municipal libraries, thus forging links between teachers and library personnel. Professional development days bring together teachers from neighbouring schools and thus encourage the creation of information-sharing and discussion networks.

The Association des bibliothèques publiques de l'île de Montréal (BPIM) also prepares a kit for teachers involved in the project, which consists of 25 children's books chosen for their quality and their capacity to elicit the children's interest, based on the ages of the children. Each kit contains a pedagogical guide and a minimum of 15 titles, and the students may use it at any time in the class.

In 1999-2000, classes from kindergarten for five-year-olds and the first year of Elementary Cycle One took part in the project. In 2000-2001, its second year, the project was broadened to include kindergarten for four-year-olds and the second year of Elementary Cycle One. There were 48 schools involved in this partnership. In the near future, the number of schools participating will be increased and Elementary Cycles Two and Three will be added.

The project forged links between teachers and personnel of municipal libraries. Some libraries saw an increase in their family memberships.

Collaboration

The partners in this project were the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, the Association des bibliothèques publiques de l'île de Montréal and the libraries of Montréal, Montréal-Nord, Outremont, Ville Saint-Laurent and Verdun. The Supporting Montréal Schools Program contributed to the project under the measure entitled "access to cultural resources."

Context

With the advent of inclusive education (placing most students with special behavioural, physical, social, emotional, academic and intellectual needs in regular classrooms), teachers and administrators have experienced growing stress and frustration with certain disruptive students who lack self-control and have poor peer relations in the school setting. It has been noted that many of these students lack clear boundaries and structured settings at home.

In 1992, in response to this growing phenomenon, the Protestant School Board of Greater Montréal Student Services Department, now part of the English-Montréal School Board, designed and implemented an on-site teacher support program, Project Harbour, to improve classroom climate by reducing negative behaviours presented by disruptive students.

Objectives

- To reduce the negative behaviour presented by disruptive students
- To provide additional support, strategies and tools to regular, special education and resource teachers and specialists
- To promote harmonious interpersonal relations in the classroom
- To reduce the overwhelming stress felt by teachers faced with situations for which they see no immediate solution
- To provide students with a sense of belonging, security and structure
- To empower teachers to feel more confident and at ease in reaching even their most difficult students
- To provide professional development and relevant resources for specific areas of difficulty

Project Harbour

The project

Project Harbour consists of a team of special education technicians all of whom have strong backgrounds working with students from K-11 with behavioural problems in a school setting. It was discovered that placing a competent and experienced worker inside the classroom for a given period of time is a very effective way of making positive change in the classroom.

Each member of the team makes a six-week commitment to the teacher and the class for five half-days a week. The first week is spent observing classroom dynamics, the physical structure of the classroom and any behaviour modification techniques that may already be in place. After this observation period, the Project Harbour worker meets with the teacher to share his or her observations and make suggestions that lead to innovative strategies and programs that are specifically designed to reduce acting-out behaviours in the classroom. The remaining five weeks are spent implementing these programs.

Each member of the Project Harbour team prepares a report analyzing the situation as he or she sees it, which includes innovations and strategies that have been agreed upon.

Once the teachers acquire the additional tools and strategies to cope with the students they find hard to reach and teach, a trickle-down effect occurs, resulting in classrooms that are more conducive to learning, an environment that stimulates growth and where students are motivated to produce quality work. Thus the teacher wins, the students with “problems” win and the other students win as well. Very

often, the school at large benefits from improvements made with that one class.

The Project Harbour team is available for in-servicing on topics such as conflict resolution, discipline and behaviour, communication and motivation techniques and other related topics.

Collaboration

Project Harbour favours a team approach involving the special education technician, teacher, school administrator and the school-based child care worker so that what has been learned is shared by the rest of the school staff. Work is also done in collaboration with school psychologists, special education consultants, subject consultants, speech and language consultants and social workers in order to address the various needs that may arise in the classroom. Depending on the specific situation being addressed, one or more community workers or agencies may be involved. These may include the police, a CLSC, a hospital or various community recreational facilities.



Model agreement on educational services

for students with severe language impairments

Context

In recent years there has been concern about the number of students with severe language impairments. This situation naturally has repercussions on the organization of services for students with special needs in terms of their integration into regular schools and instruction in special classes.

A model for the organization of services was developed at École des Pionniers, in the Commission scolaire des Découvreurs. In this elementary school, five students with severe language impairments were integrated into kindergarten in September 2000. There were also several other students in preschool education and Elementary Cycle One who had language difficulties.

The school board, in conformity with four of the lines of action of the policy on special education—those involving early intervention, adaptation of services, placing organization at the service of the students and acting in partnership—allowed the schools to set up projects that were adapted to their specific situations.

Service agreement project with the Centre Cardinal-Villeneuve of the Institut de réadaptation en déficience physique de Québec

The five students with severe language impairments were already receiving speech therapy and some of them were also receiving occupational therapy at Centre Cardinal-Villeneuve. Because the school had the space required, it was agreed that the therapy would be carried out as follows:

- Professionals from Centre Cardinal-Villeneuve have the use of a room one day and a half per week.
- Individual therapy and evaluations in speech therapy services are provided Monday mornings and individual therapy and evaluations in occupational therapy, Wednesday mornings.
- On Wednesday afternoons, there is a group activity for the five students with language impairments, provided jointly by the speech therapist and occupational therapist in the presence of the school's special education technician.

Thus each student receives one hour of speech therapy, one hour of occupational therapy and one hour of group therapy per week.

Model agreement on educational services

for students with severe language impairments

Repercussions

- maximization of the success of the individualized education plans (joint action by the personnel and their adoption of the objectives sought with the students, etc.)
- substantial increase in the rate of participation by parents in the therapy
- more application in the classroom of what was worked on in the therapy
- elimination of the transportation problems that had occurred when students had to receive their therapy outside the school

Professional development plan

- Professional development on language impairments and phonological awareness is offered to school personnel because several teachers will be called on to integrate students with language difficulties into their classes.
- More specialized professional development is offered to personnel providing services to students with language impairments, beginning in August (intervention strategies, class organization, etc.) by the regional resource group for severe language impairments.

Distribution of the students in classes

The five students with severe language impairments were put in two of the seven kindergarten classes. This decision was made in collaboration with the seven preschool education teachers because it entailed having the maximum student-teacher ratio in five classes and a lower ratio in the two classes with the students with language impairments.

The addition of services in special education was decided for these two classes on the basis of the budgets allocated.

Model agreement on educational services

for students with severe language impairments

Collaboration

The most significant element of this model for organizing educational services for students with severe language impairments is the collaboration established among the partners. The personnel appreciated having a role in the decision on the model to be used.

The project would not have been so successful without close collaboration between the school personnel (administration, teachers and specialists concerned, special education technician, psychologist) and the professionals from Centre Cardinal-Villeneuve, both in working with the students in the classroom and in the coordination of the services. In addition, the parents' participation in the individualized education plans and individual therapy was very valuable.

At the end of the year, everyone noted the effectiveness of the intervention with the students. This experience gave the school personnel a feeling of pride and competence concerning the integration of this type of student.

Each year the choice of services to be provided should be reviewed in relation to the student population.

