

Western Québec School Board Annual Report

2024-2025

Resolution #: C-25/26-49

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PREAMBLE

The Western Québec School Board’s strategic plan serves as a guiding framework for our decision-making process, outlining our future goals and the methods we’ll use to achieve, measure, and evaluate them. Our collective efforts and resources are dedicated to enhancing student achievement and professional development, creating an environment that promotes learning and excellence. In 2023-2024, we introduced a new provincial commitment to success plan, which aligns with our strategic directions and reinforces our focus on individual student success. This plan sets the direction for our organization, aligning with our core strategies to achieve our primary goal: individual student success. We continued to cultivate the plan during the 2024-2025 school year.

WESTERN QUÉBEC SCHOOL BOARD OVERVIEW

The Western Québec School Board (WQSB) administers 25 schools and six adult education and vocational training centres across two administrative regions, 07 and 08. The board's jurisdiction is extensive, encompassing over 90,000 square kilometres and 155 municipalities. The schools and centres are distributed throughout this vast territory, with the largest concentration located in the urban area of Gatineau. The expansive nature of our territory and the dispersed English-speaking population necessitate a strategic organization of schools and centres to ensure accessibility for all our clientele.

The school configuration is as follows: 13 elementary schools, 2 junior high schools (secondary I and II), 2 secondary schools (secondary I to V), 2 senior secondary schools (secondary III to V), 1 kindergarten to secondary II school, and 5 kindergartens to secondary V schools. WQSB operates four joint adult general education and vocational training centres, one adult general education centre, and one vocational training centre. Additionally, several of our schools now offer full-time kindergarten programs for four-year-olds.

The youth sector of the Western Québec School Board serves approximately 8,000 students from kindergarten through secondary V. Over 90 percent of these students are located in the Outaouais region, with the remainder attending three schools in the northern region. The Adult and Vocational sector enrolls more than 600 full-time students, primarily in two centres in Gatineau.

The Western Québec School Board employs over 1,500 individuals in various roles, the majority of whom work directly with students. The programs and services offered by the WQSB include General English programs, French Immersion and Enriched French academic programs, transition and induction programs, Work Oriented Training programs, Life Skills programs, as well as several full-time kindergartens for four-year-olds and daycare services. The board also provides adult general education, vocational training programs, customized training, workplace training placements, career counselling, and referral services. Furthermore, students are engaged through a wide range of

extracurricular opportunities in sports, cultural activities, character building, and community-oriented initiatives, along with various student-centred services available in our schools and centres.

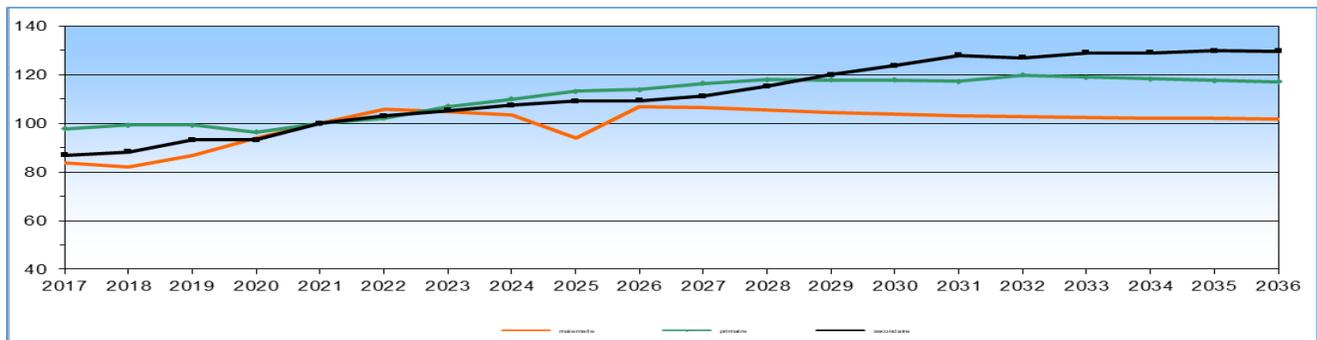
The Western Québec School Board has established four Community Learning Centres (CLCs) at St. Michael’s High School, St. John’s Elementary School, Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary School, and Eardley Elementary School. Each CLC is staffed with a community development agent whose role is to facilitate community partnerships, service-based learning, and enhance student life. Funding for the CLCs is provided through the Entente Canada-Québec.

GENERAL REALITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

While it is true that we face many challenges as a school board, we strive to see them as opportunities. The challenges listed below also appear in the WQSB Commitment to Success Plan (2023-2027) and serve as a focus for the strategies we employ as an educational organization towards achieving success.

Demographics

The youth sector demographics of the WQSB have shown a consistent upward trend, increasing from 7,298 students in 2017-2018 to 7,658 students in 2024-2025 (based on September 30 enrollment). This growth is observed across both rural and urban sectors. While enrollment is stable or growing in most schools, some rural schools face challenges in delivering the Basic School Regulation (BSR) offerings due to smaller student populations. Three schools have fewer than 80 students at the secondary level, necessitating additional staffing to maintain quality teaching and learning.



Projected youth sector enrollment WQSB _ Ministère de l’Éducation (MEQ) data line 1 – preschool enrollment; data line 2 – elementary enrollment; data line 3 – secondary enrollment.

Urban growth, particularly in the Gatineau corridor, has led to overcrowding in some schools, requiring the conversion of library and cafeteria spaces into classrooms and requests for additional construction from the ministry. In the Adult Education and Vocational Training sectors, demographic changes are harder to track due to variable entry and exit points. Generally, there has been a decline in rural centres and stability in urban centres, making it challenging to offer viable programs, especially vocational training. Resource allocation must be adjusted to accommodate smaller numbers to continue providing English-language adult and vocational training.

Socio-economic Factors

A significant portion of WQSB schools (12 out of 25) are identified as 8, 9, or 10 on the ministère de l'Éducation Indice de milieu socio-économique scale, indicating high socio-economic disadvantage. These schools, designated as New Approaches New Solutions (NANS) schools, focus on specific orientations to enhance student success. This includes three kindergartens to secondary V schools, eight elementary schools, and one secondary school ranked 8, 9, or 10. Additionally, one school is ranked 7. Although Adult Education centres are not designated on this scale, three centres are located in areas with schools ranked 8, 9, or 10, serving a significant population of learners without employment or initial diplomas.

NANS schools benefit from additional resources to support early literacy and numeracy, special needs students, and academic subjects at the high school level. These schools have shown significant progress in student achievement, particularly in uniform exams at the secondary IV and V levels, and in core subjects at the elementary level. The board has focused on providing additional support in core subjects and programs to improve teaching and learning quality. Schools have developed strategies for prevention and intervention for identified student groups.

Indigenous Learner Success

The WQSB serves a significant Indigenous student population (approximately 12%), with many schools and centres located on un-ceded Algonquin land. Several schools and centres have substantial First Nation, Metis, and Inuit student populations (40 to 78%). Recognizing the educational gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners, the board has developed culturally relevant curricula and Indigenous pedagogy. Community members and elders are engaged in resource development, staff training, and student support. Partnerships with Native Friendship Centres have been established.

The WQSB's core approach for Indigenous learner success focuses on cultural awareness and visibility, culturally responsive curriculum and Indigenous pedagogy, and bridging cultures and knowledge. The MEQ Indigenous success grant (15061) supports language instruction, French second language, certifying subjects in secondary, engagement, and retention. Progress is tracked termly, and a network of school/centre teams meets regularly for professional development.

The WQSB also has an Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Indigenous Education, fostering dialogue, collaboration, and partnerships to support Indigenous learner success. The committee's role includes relationship building, communication, collaboration, and action with Indigenous communities, and implementing reconciliation practices.

Students with Exceptionalities, Disabilities or Difficulties

The Western Quebec School Board supports the majority of students within inclusive settings, while also offering more adapted and specialized settings for students with complex developmental, intellectual, and/or physical needs. In the 2024-25 school year, WQSB added one new classroom to bring the total of specialized elementary centres to 7 in the Outaouais region.

The number of students with exceptionalities, disabilities and learning or social-emotional/behavioural difficulties has increased over the past years, with a total of 32.4% of students who currently have Individualized Education Plans. The student population meeting criteria for Ministry Exceptionality increased by 54.7% over the preceding five years.

The following chart demonstrates the number and percentage of WQSB students who have IEPs over the past 5 years. ‘At Risk’ students are students who present certain ‘vulnerability’ factors that may affect learning, social or adaptive development. Students with Ministry exceptionality codes are students who have disabilities that meet the criteria outlined by the Ministry of Education.

School year	“At Risk” students	Ministry exceptionalities	Total IEPs	% with IEPs
20-21	1587 (21.5%)	490 (6.65%)	2077	28.2%
21-22	1678 (21.8%)	516 (6.70%)	2194	28.4%
22-23	1733 (22.2%)	592 (7.57%)	2325	29.7%
23-24	1750 (22.4%)	680 (8.71%)	2430	31.14%
24-25	1716 (22.4%)	769 (10.0%)	2485	32.4%

Recruitment and Retention of Staff

The WQSB employs over 1,500 individuals in various roles, primarily working directly with students. Recruiting and retaining qualified personnel, especially in teaching and professional fields, is a significant challenge. This issue is particularly acute in specialized areas such as French, Math, Science, and Special Education. The province-wide labour shortage in education and supporting professional services continues to impact our schools and centres. Specific strategies are required to recruit and retain diverse staff as part of the board's recruitment and retention strategy.

Financial Management

The 2024-2025 school year was marked by significant fiscal instability resulting from abrupt changes to the Ministry of Education’s budgetary rules. A primary challenge was the imposition of strict limitations on the use of our accumulated surplus—funds that have historically allowed this Board to bridge funding gaps and tailor resources to the unique needs of our widely dispersed community. These restrictions, coupled with new directives mandating 'workforce optimization' and administrative reductions, placed an undue burden on our operational planning. Rather than focusing entirely on pedagogical support, considerable administrative energy was diverted toward navigating complex compliance measures to protect essential services. Consequently, the Board faced difficult decisions to ensure that these fiscal tightening measures did not erode the quality of support provided to our most vulnerable students, particularly in the areas of special education and mental health resources.

Hiring Freeze

The implementation of the government-wide hiring freeze (*gel d'embauche*) on November 1, 2024, introduced a significant layer of operational complexity to our staffing processes. While the Board remained committed to respecting the directive’s parameters regarding administrative optimization, the challenge lay in balancing the necessary compliance with Ministry directives while ensuring that the administrative efficiency required to support our schools and centres remained intact.

WQSB COMMITMENT TO SUCCESS PLAN

The plan objectives and intended outcomes focus on the following areas:

- Making Student Success a Priority in Quebec Society
- Making Vocational Education Truly Attractive
- Making Schools and Centres Welcoming Places

The table below outlines the Ministry objectives, the WQSB school board data and targets set for the 2023-2027 Commitment to Success Plan:

Ministry of Education Objectives

The tables below outline the Ministry of Education Objectives and indicators deployed to the school board and required to be reported annually by the school board.

Orientation 1 – Making Student Success a Priority of Quebec Society				
Objective 1 Increase the success of students	Provincial Data		WQSB Data	
	Baseline Data	Target 2026-2027	2024-2025 Results	Target 2026-2027
<i>Indicator 1: Rate of obtaining a first diploma or qualification after 7 years in secondary school</i>	84.10%	86.80 %	N/A	88%
<i>Indicator 2: Rate of obtaining a first diploma or qualification after 7 years in secondary school for boys</i>	80.10%	82.5%	N/A	86%
<i>Indicator 3: Rate of obtaining a first diploma or qualification after 7 years in secondary school for HDAA students</i>	62.20%	63.8%	N/A	72%
<i>Indicator 4: Proportion of students scoring between 70% and 100% on the Grade 6 compulsory mathematics exam (Problem-Solving competency)</i>	66%	75%	56.1%	77%
Orientation 2 – Making Vocational Training Truly Attractive				
Objective 2 Modernize and Promote Vocational Training	Provincial Data		WQSB Data	
	Baseline Data	Target 2026-2027	2024-2025 Results	Target 2026-2027
<i>Indicator 5: Graduation rate in vocational training programs after 3 years</i>	80.90%	84.9%	N/A	78%

Orientation 3 – Making Schools and Centres Welcoming Spaces				
Objective 4 Develop new specific Special Pedagogical Projects (Projets Pédagogiques Particuliers)	Provincial Data		WQSB Data	
	Baseline Data	Target 2026-2027	2024-2025 Results	Target 2026-2027
<i>Indicator 6: The rate of secondary student participation in Special Pedagogical Projects (PPP)</i>	44.60%	75%	5%	15%
Objective 5 Improve the climate of caring well-being, safety of students				
<i>Indicator 7: Schools and centres having access to a guide/framework on student well-being.</i>	0%	100%	N/A	100%

Western Québec School Board Directions and Orientations

The tables below outline the Western Québec School Board objectives, indicators, targets, and results. Each objective will be managed by the appropriate department (s) and will have targets developed through year one.

Safety and Security: To provide a healthy and safe environment for students and staff to maximize student achievement.

Objective 6 Improve the climate of benevolence (goodwill), well-being, and safety of students	Baseline Data	2024-2025 Results	2026-2027 Target
6.1 Improved student well-being and belonging in all schools and centres			
<i>Indicator: Percentage of schools and centres using student voice survey</i>	94%	100%	100
<i>Indicator: Percentage of students participating in extracurricular activities</i>	N/A	N/A	75%
6.2 Increased knowledge regarding mental health impacts in schools and centres			
<i>Indicator: Number of professional development opportunities offered to staff in schools and centres</i>	N/A	17	40

<i>Indicator: Percentage of Staff reporting positive comments on Wellness Survey</i>	N/A	N/A	75%
6.3 Increase employees training opportunities regarding the anti-racism and anti-discrimination			5
<i>Indicator: Number of JEDI meetings held during the school year</i>	3	7	10
<i>Indicator: Number of employees participating in DEI framework training</i>	50	150	500

Professional Responsibility and Management Accountability: **Maximize the use of all resources to support teaching and learning.**

Objective 7 Implement Systemwide approaches, tools, and resources for the effective management of schools/centres	Baseline Data	2024-2025 Results	2026-2027 Target
7.1 Increase the positive relationship between employer and employees.			
<i>Indicator: Percentage of staff trained in Dispute Prevention and Resolution (DPR)</i>	50%	65%	85%
7.2 Increase the number of teachers retained after year one and year two			
<i>Indicator: Percentage of qualified teachers retained at end of year one</i>	56%	70%	80%
<i>Indicator: Percentage of qualified teachers retained at end of year two</i>	84%	88%	90%
<i>Indicator: Percentage of staff who are still in place after five years</i>	82.5%	N/A	88%

Focus on Pedagogy to Improve Teaching and Learning: **To continually improve the quality of instruction so that students have the best possible opportunities to learn and achieve their potential.**

Objective 8	Baseline Data	2024-2025 Results	2026-2027 Target
Increase the success of students (graduation and certification of all student groups: overall, boys, HDAA students)			
8.1 Increase quality of teaching and learning among newly hired teachers			
<i>Indicator: Percentage of success after the first year of the TIP program</i>	92.6%	97%	96%
<i>Indicator: Percentage of success after the second year of the TIP program</i>	93.1%	95%	96%
8.3 Reduced disparity between school term and exam results			
<i>Indicator: Disparity between school term and exam results – Elementary</i>	N/A	N/A	8%
<i>Indicator: Disparity between school term and exam results - Secondary</i>	N/A	N/A	6%
8.4 Ensure integration of Indigenous pedagogy and culturally responsive curriculum in classrooms.			
<i>Indicator: Percentage of schools participating in Indigenous Pedagogy training opportunities</i>	N/A	N/A	72%

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Western Québec School Board Educational Services Department continued to lead and support professional learning throughout the 2024-2025 school year. An emphasis was placed on the development and advancement of Educational Projects in support of the Commitment to Success Plan in all schools in the youth sector.

Mathematics and Science

During the 2024-2025 school year, a team of three consultants (2 full-time, 1 part-time) supported mathematics and science teachers in the youth sector, with a focus on developing resources, providing meaningful assessment and evaluation tools, and increasing the repertoire of instructional strategies used by math and science teachers.

The consultant team led the coordination and management of local and provincial teams responsible for the creation and validation of exams and common assessments. This included the development of June Situational Problems for Grades 7, 8, 9, 10CST, 10SN, 11CST, and 11SN, as well as Reasoning Exams for Grades 7, 8, 9, 11SN, and 11CST. In science, assessments were developed for Grades 7, 8, 9AST, 10SE, and Physics. A key achievement was the successful rollout of the Grade 6 MEQ exam, with support provided to teachers in both administering and evaluating the exam. Additionally, the consultants facilitated a two-day professional development session focused on fact fluency in support of the Grade 3 Math Common Assessment.

The consultants coordinated and delivered a range of professional development webinars, including sessions through LCEEQ featuring Dr. Barb Dougherty, Kevin Dykema, and Marian Small, targeting educators from kindergarten to Grade 11. Webinars were also provided to support the understanding of moderation practices for guidance counselors and teachers.

In response to emerging technologies, AI-focused workshops were developed and offered to secondary teachers. The WQSB math team contributed to the AI Summit hosted by Lester B. Pearson School Board. Additional PD offerings included the TIP Teacher Math “Need to Know” session, aimed at familiarizing new WQSB teachers with curriculum and enhancing instructional practice in mathematics.

The consultants actively engaged with both provincial and local networks to promote collaboration and pedagogical innovation. Locally, focused support was provided through the Pontiac Rich Task Unit PDIG for Grades 3, 4, and 6 at Dr. S.E. McDowell, Onslow, and St. John’s. Provincially, contributions were made to the development of evaluation frameworks in secondary science and to initiatives focused on Competency 1 (Solves a Situational Problem) in mathematics.

Connections were maintained with Heritage College’s Math and Science departments, and national engagement was fostered through participation in the OAME Conference in Oshawa, where five WQSB teachers attended. The consultants also supported the Critical Thinking Project at Lord Aylmer in collaboration with DEEN.

The consultants provided direct support to schools through co-teaching, classroom visits, and collaborative planning focused on instruction and assessment. Digital resource drives were curated and shared to support K–11 math and science instruction. Targeted in-class support was delivered to French Math teachers in Kindergarten through Cycle 1 at Eardley, Lord Aylmer, and South Hull.

Individualized support was available to teachers across all WQSB schools. The consultants also contributed to broader instructional initiatives, including the Instructional Intelligence Symposium with Golden Valley and Noranda, Pi Day celebrations, elementary school math fairs, and Destination Imagination.

English Language Arts

ELA pedagogical support was led by a team of two full time consultants during the 2024-2025 school year. An important focus was the launch of an extensive multi-year Cycle 1 Network. Grade 1 teachers were invited to attend five PD sessions examining all aspects of early reading instruction, linking

current research and best practices with classroom practice. This initiative will span several years and aims to develop skill and expertise in early literacy instruction for all WQSB cycle 1 teachers.

A transition network of teachers in Cycle 3.2 Elementary and Cycle 1 Secondary gathered rich short stories to be used in classrooms. Teachers in this learning community collaborated to build a short list of texts and then crafted rigorous lessons specifically for response. The Secondary V Network sessions focused on unpacking the changes to the Secondary V Examination, notably the removal of talk during the response portion of the exam and the introduction of a new production task.

Book clubs offered in the 2024-2025 year included *Reading Above the Fray* by Julia B. Lindsey – a text focused on bringing current reading research into practice in Cycle 1 and 2 classrooms. The second option was *Micro Mentor Texts* by Penny Kittle examining writer craft moves in Cycle 3 and Secondary classrooms.

In collaboration with GRICS, WQSB was a part of creating an Evaluation Situation at the grade 8 level. This ES includes both response and narrative components and will be ready for use with grade 8 teachers in the 2026 school year.

In-school workshops were offered to all schools. Popular choices included Leveraging Impactful Talk, A Toolkit of Transferrable Reading Strategies, and Reader's /Writer's Notebooks.

Common marking opportunities were provided for the Cycle 3.2 exam, which, for the first time, invited Secondary Cycle 1 teachers to participate, with the goal of finding common understandings between elementary and secondary. Secondary V teachers also participated in a pilot marking centre reducing the number of days spent marking from five to two.

Over the summer, fourteen teachers from five schools took part in LCEEQ's Summer Literacy Symposium, which featured presentations by the WQSB consultants. This three-year PD initiative continues to build on current research around the science of reading. Participating teachers make up a study group focused on applying what they learned over the summer into their current classrooms.

Early Literacy and Numeracy

The Early Literacy and Numeracy consultant prioritized work in region 8 NANS schools. Working closely with classroom teachers, the consultant focused on developing teachers' understanding of teaching strategies that are aligned with the Kindergarten and Cycle 1 curriculum, encouraging students' love of learning and curiosity in the early grades.

The consultant continued to work closely with school administrators to address school specific needs and goals with an emphasis on embedding play-based learning at the kindergarten level, and developmental approaches to planning and assessment in Cycle 1.

French Second Language

In the 2024–2025 academic year, the FSL team, comprised of two full time consultants, provided extensive support to educators across the system, with a particular focus on those who were unqualified or new to teaching French as a Second Language. This individualized and responsive approach ensured that teachers received the guidance necessary to foster student success and confidence in FSL classrooms.

Professional learning opportunities were strategically designed and delivered to meet the evolving needs of teachers. Highlights included:

- The piloting of a Grade 4 common assessment, which involved training sessions on assessment tools, anchoring with student exemplars, collaborative marking, and the production of data reports for each participating school.
- Targeted support for the evaluation of the Interaction competency in Secondary V, including anchoring sessions and in-school assistance during the June 2025 evaluation period.
- Coordination of a common marking session for Secondary II end-of-year written production exams.
- Delivery of four sessions introducing the *Approche SigNature* to new or untrained teachers in Cycles 1 and 2 elementary.
- A series of workshops for secondary FSL teachers, covering topics such as:
 - Differentiation strategies and resources
 - Best practices in oral interaction and assessment
 - Direct vocabulary instruction
 - The integration of AI in lesson planning

Additionally, three customized workshops were offered to Dr. S.E. McDowell FSL teachers, focusing on oral communication, text production, and reading comprehension strategies. The team also contributed to the provincial Summer Institute, planning, and delivering sessions tailored to new FSL educators.

To further support classroom instruction, the consultants collaborated with teachers to develop and share a wide range of pedagogical materials. These included:

- Updated *Trousses pédagogiques* for both elementary and secondary levels, maintained through Teams collaborative sites.
- A dedicated Teams group for teachers trained in the *Approche SigNature*, featuring ready-to-use resources and thematic materials for early literacy.
- Learning activities based on adapted novels for secondary FSL students.
- A repertoire of rich cultural texts created in partnership with SWLSB, aimed at enhancing vocabulary development in secondary classrooms.
- Vocabulary support materials developed by Cycle 1 secondary teachers, aligned with frequently used classroom language.
- Emergency FSL plans and learning activities designed for elementary-level supply teachers.

Through these initiatives, the FSL team demonstrated a strong commitment to capacity building, pedagogical innovation, and equitable access to quality French language instruction across the system.

Culture and Citizenship in Quebec

The Culture and Citizenship in Quebec (CCQ) consultant supported teachers at the elementary and secondary level during the 2024-2025 school year and continued to be an integral contributor to the provincial teacher training website to introduce teachers to the CCQ program. The consultant curated and built an [online](#) home for resources accessible to teachers that support meaningful learning CCQ experiences for students.

In-school and virtual workshops were available to all schools to increase teachers' understanding, confidence and awareness of resources in relation to CCQ.

The consultant continued to facilitate networks of teachers, as well as participate in provincial networks as a means of building expertise and capacity for WQSB teachers, including the planning of a provincial session in collaboration with Concordia University that is being offered to teachers in the fall of 2025 that will focus on:

- How to teach the sexuality education portion of the CCQ with sensitivity.
- How to deal with controversial issues in classroom discussion.
- How to approach religion within the CCQ.
- How to teach about environmental issues in a post-truth age

Homeschooling

A part-time Homeschooling consultant worked in positive collaboration with homeschooling families who require advice and resources.

The consultant worked closely with the Educational Services department's Administrative Technician to oversee all procedures to be followed by homeschooling parents, including progress assessment, Learning Project requirements and Ministry of Education examination requirements. The consultant was responsible for the organization and supervision of the qualifying examinations for homeschooling students from preparatory activities to mark communication with the Ministry of Education.

The consultant helped homeschooling families to better identify and understand the resources, activities or services offered and the conditions for using them to support positive learning outcomes. These included, providing access to textbooks, instructional materials and offering complementary student services (academic and career counselling, psychological services, psychoeducational services, special education services, remedial education services, speech therapy services) and resources (library, science laboratory, computer laboratory, auditorium, art rooms, sports, and recreational facilities).

Technology

The Education Technology consultants continued their collaborative work with both the Education and Technology Departments to advance the development of Digital Competency for all members of the WQSB community.

The consultants facilitated the ICT Teacher Leader network, ensuring representation from each youth sector school and providing ongoing professional learning through two in-person full-day sessions and regular monthly check-ins.

Throughout the year, the consultants led a series of after-school professional development sessions open to all WQSB staff, covering a diverse range of topics such as artificial intelligence in education, digital citizenship and media literacy, graphic design with Canva, video editing with Clipchamp, coding with Scratch, and advanced usage of Microsoft 365 and Learning Accelerators in Teams. These sessions empowered teachers to leverage the hardware and software in their classrooms to enhance learning outcomes.

In-school professional development and student workshops focused on cultivating digital competence and technological skills, with particular emphasis on coding, robotics, and the practical application of

AI in educational settings. The consultants also worked with school staff and the Resource Teachers Network to deliver training on accessibility software such as Read & Write and OrbitNote, supporting the implementation of the Special Exam Condition model, and promoting the use of technology for inclusive teaching practices.

Centralization and refinement of resources remained a priority, with ongoing development of the WQSB Education Technology website (edtech.westernquebec.ca). Regular meetings with key members of the Technology department ensured that priorities remained aligned with the needs of the school community. Additionally, the team developed a centralized [Professional Development page](#) streamlining PD promotion, sign-up, and resource access, as well as enabling data-driven analysis of participation through an associated PowerBI dashboard.

Western Québec School Board Teacher Induction Program

The Teacher Induction Program (TIP) remains a cornerstone of WQSB's commitment to teacher success and student achievement. Through structured mentorship and targeted professional development, the program continues to strengthen instructional quality and improve teacher retention across the board.

The TIP is guided by three core principles:

- Continuous Professional Learning – Providing sustained opportunities for teachers and administrators to enhance their practice.
- Structured Mentorship and Coaching – Supporting teachers through a Mentor-Coach fellowship grounded in meaningful feedback and professional dialogue that fosters growth.
- Commitment to Excellence – Maintaining high standards of teaching quality and retention across all regions through a comprehensive, multi-faceted evaluation process.

In the 2024–2025 school year, WQSB hired 77 new teachers, joining 43 teachers in their second year of the induction program. Under the leadership of the Coordinator of Educational Services, these 120 educators were supported by 11 Mentor-Coaches.

Mentor-Coaches had a percentage of their workloads (between 20 and 100%, depending on the number of teachers being supported) dedicated to mentoring and coaching TIP teachers through activities such as:

- Lesson planning and instructional design
- Classroom observations and feedback
- Goal setting and progress monitoring
- Report card preparation.
- Differentiating content and assessment tools

Professional learning for Mentor-Coaches included:

- Network meetings
- A professional book club featuring *Arise* by Elena Aguilar
- Workshops and coaching sessions with Dr. Trista Hollweck, Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

In collaboration with WQSB pedagogical consultants, 15 virtual after-school training sessions were offered to TIP teachers focused on the professional teaching competencies. Year 1 teachers were required to attend a minimum of five sessions, each designed to deepen understanding of the teaching competencies and add instructional strategies to teachers' repertoire.

Retention data:

Of the 77 Year 1 Teachers (2024–2025):

- 54 (70%) retained
- 21 (27%) left for other opportunities
- 2 (3%) not retained for performance reasons

Of the 43 Year 2 Teachers (2024–2025):

- 38 (88%) retained
- 3 (7%) left for other opportunities
- 2 (5%) not re-engaged for performance reasons

COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Complementary Services are designed to strengthen collaboration and partnerships both within the school environment and with external community stakeholders. Complementary Services aim to integrate initiatives that build protective factors and minimize barriers affecting student growth and well-being. By fostering a positive and inclusive school climate that values and celebrates diversity, our school communities promote a culture in which every student feels supported. The department plays a key role in delivering learning supports, promoting student life, aiding services, and implementing prevention and promotion programs that contribute to student success.

Continuing our work within the WQSB Commitment to Success Plan, the Complementary Services focused on the following areas:

Focused Support from board and school professionals:

- The Speech and Language team supported within their collaborative approach at the early primary levels, and provided direct support and coaching for Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- The Drug Awareness Resource team supported and delivered prevention initiatives with outside partners and promoted healthy lifestyles for overall wellbeing.
- The Psychological services provided assessments for learning needs.
- The Pedagogical Consultant team supported school teams with program recommendations, curriculum guidance, and inclusive education practices.
- The Readaptation team supported early intervention, and recommended staff interventions to support autistic students.
- The nurse, a member of the Clinical team, supported protocol development for the administration of medication and provided health recommendations and guidance for school teams.

- Our newly hired Occupational Therapist, a member of the Clinical team, initiated support for our students with complex sensory and regulation needs.
- The Social Work team, as members of the Clinical team, provided direct services for secondary students, and consultation and service navigation support for elementary schools.
- The school-level Guidance Counsellor/Academic Advisor teams supported the academic and counselling needs of their respective schools.
- The Suicide Prevention and Intervention Team provided prevention initiatives and conducted risk assessments to foster and enhance student safety and well-being.
- The Crisis Prevention team (Behaviour Management System) supported school teams with training opportunities on theory and practice for personal safety, de-escalation, and intervention skills.

Quality Professional Development:

- The Resource Teachers' Network (RTN) provided sessions for Remedial and Supporting Teachers and their colleagues, on Comprehensive Literacy Instruction and Intervention, the Pyramid of Interventions (Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management), Intro to WQSB Drug Awareness Team (DART), Resilience with Dr. Michael Ungar, Universal Design for Learning and MTSS (multi-tiered system of support), Shifting the Balance (Science of Reading), ASD and Interoception, Assistive Technology, and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).
- The Technician Learning Network continued to support technicians in their professional learning with collaborative sessions with the RTN and a dedicated session on practical tools and strategies for classroom support.
- The Provincial Centres of Excellence provided ongoing professional development for staff, while our professionals provided ongoing accompaniment with implementation.

Program Specific Teaching and Learning Support and Quality of Teaching and Learning:

- Our Pedagogical Consultant for CASP/PII/Challenges provided direct support to school teams for program implementation, design of learning activities, and evaluation. Particular attention was given to our specialized centres to allow for continuous access to resources and networking opportunities.
- Our Pedagogical Consultant for the Work Oriented Training Pathway provided curriculum support, resources, mentoring and networking opportunities for WOTP teachers.
- Our School-based Pedagogical Consultants provided support for the implementation of adaptations and modifications within the Quebec Education Program at preschool and all cycle levels.

Data collection within the dossiers of Complementary Services:

Program decisions and recommendations are made with close analysis and consideration of standardized, quantitative, and qualitative data. New testing platforms were established at WQSB with the implementation of digital interactive testing for academic skills and speech and language development. System-wide abilities testing was maintained at elementary and some secondary

schools.

Transition Planning:

Transition initiatives are active at all levels of education. Partnerships with our Health and Social Services colleagues and Connexions facilitated projects to enhance our early transitions. Our school teams and professionals supported the transition from elementary to secondary. The Transition from School to Active Living (TSAL/TEVA) continued with the addition of a new professional to support the transition beyond the youth sector, for our students with special needs.

External Partner Support – ententes:

- Itinerant auditory services and consultation from the Montreal Oral School for the Deaf (MOSD)
- Itinerant visual consultation services from Philip E Layton School
- Le Jardin Educatif provided direct and integrated support services for student in the Pontiac region.
- MSSS professionals provided complementary services within some of our schools on prevention and the promotion of well-being.

ADULT EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING SERVICES

The Adult Education and Vocational Training Services supported a total of 1200 learners in 2024–2025. This includes part-time and full-time students as well as:

- 8 students receiving instructional services in a remote Indigenous community (Region 07).
- 239 students enrolled in distance education, up by 64 learners from 2023–2024.

The chart below illustrates the learner statistics over the past three academic years:

ADULT EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING STUDENT NUMBERS AND ETPS

YEAR	Number of Adult Education students	ETP's generated	Number of Vocational Training students	ETP's generated
2022-23	600	198.69	244	143.70
2023-24	694	234.62	327	158.68
2024-25	745	237.11	455	170.736

ETP = Equivalent temps plein. Our funding is calculated using the number of ETPs generated in a given year.

DISTANCE EDUCATION (ADULT EDUCATION – INCLUDED IN NUMBERS ABOVE)

YEAR	Number of students	ETP's generated
2022-23	158	13.94
2023-24	175	16.58
2024-25	239	24.61

Our six centres remain vital resources for adult learners across regions 07 and 08. While full-time in-person learning continues to be the preferred delivery method, distance education is steadily growing. Additionally, more learners are opting for part-time schedules, which impact ETP calculations and

could influence funding. Continuous innovation is essential to meet learner needs, reach a larger clientele and sustain funding.

Ministry of Education grants continue to provide additional support for complementary services, including personal and academic support, resource teachers, SARCA, and partnerships with external organizations.

Vocational Training Highlights:

- Continued success in health care programs, automobile mechanics and welding with strong recruitment and retention in the urban centre (WQCC).
- Commerce programs at both WQCC and PCEC are individualized to allow for multiple entries per year.
- PCEC has seen a steady decline in enrollment in all vocational programs, which has forced us to explore alternate delivery models. We have forged a partnership with a vocational centre in the Eastern Townships that offers hybrid vocational training options. We plan to begin implementation of hybrid secretarial and accounting programs in the fall of 2025 and a hybrid health care program in March 2026.

Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC) and Service to Business Highlights:

There has been an increased demand for Services to Business and Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC) services:

- RAC services grew from 16 clients in 2022–2023 to 45 clients in 2023–2024 to 63 in 2024-2025.
- Services to Business provided custom training for 102 employees in health care and 84 in the construction sectors in 2024-25.

Teacher Development:

Nine vocational training teachers are enrolled in a vocational teacher training program at the University of Sherbrooke to earn their Brevet and become licensed teachers. They are supported locally by five seasoned.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The Western Québec School Board employed 1,300 full-time and part-time staff. The Human Resources Department is proud to offer compassionate direction and guidance to all WQSB employees.

The Human Resources Department continued to provide services related to recruitment & staffing, talent management, health & safety, labor relations & compliance, and compensation & benefits. The operational theme for the department remains focused on the improvement of service to support our employees. Our goal is to continually improve and to maintain a high quality of services for all our employees.

Act Respecting Workforce Management and Control Within Government Departments, Public Sector Bodies and Networks and State-owned Enterprises

The following table outlines the total number of remunerated hours per employee groups for the period from April 2020 to March 2024. Since April 2020, the total number of remunerated hours for the Western Québec School Board has increased by 337,186 hours.

Category of Personnel	April 2020 to March 2021	April 2021 to March 2022	April 2022 to March 2023	April 2023 to March 2024	April 2024 to March 2025
Management	109,729.99	110,735.60	115,472.60	127,887.50	125,769.5
Professionals	84,879.44	90,044.69	91,772.86	102,839.48	128,661.1
Teachers	918,623.19	979,425.74	989,566.06	974,097.91	1,017,752.1
Support Staff	557,017.84	565,676.47	598,688.85	642,306.58	721,051.5
Maintenance	115,433.04	108,698.60	95,648.15	120,183.22	129,635.8
Total	1,785,683.50	1,854,581.10	1,891,148.52	1,967,314.69	2,122,870.0

The increase in remunerated hours is attributed to:

- a. A decision by the school board to increase support for students in the professionals' category.
- b. The Ministry has established significant Grants/Measures that are directed towards educational interventions in schools, resulting in an increase in remunerated hours in direct services to students.
- c. The WQSB benefits from the Ministry early intervention strategy in terms of our K4 classes.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT AND TAXATION

The Finance department is responsible for the financial management of the resources for all sectors of the school board.

It develops an annual budget and distribution models of allocations and revenues through collaboration and consultation in accordance with the Education Act. The consultation process includes the governing boards of schools and centres, Parent Committee, Resource Allocation Committee, and the Special Education Advisory Committee.

Budget Development

The budget process for 2024-2025 focused on providing the resources to support the objectives described within the board's Commitment to Success plan as referenced previously in this report. Consideration of basic school regulation, collective agreements, and equitable educational services across Western Québec school board territory is also an essential part of the process.

The Resource Allocation Committee continued to meet and exercise their role in the budget process.

The distribution of dedicated and protected funds respected their designations outlined in the budget rules and parameters issued by the Ministry of Education.

The schools' and centres' base operational budgets continue to include socio-economic ranking, distance from our urban cores, school programs, and the school/centre's population. Safe and healthy environment for students and staff is recognized as imperative to teaching and learning.

The 2024-2025 budget was presented with a deficit considering the MEQ regulations allows up to 15% of the available accumulated surplus to be accessed. The budget planned for 25.81% use, that being \$535,753 of the \$1,991,704. Although a projected deficit of \$2,076,140 was adopted, \$1,540,387 is

covered by obligations arising from collective agreements and is not included in the calculation of the appropriation of the accumulated surplus.

Details of the 2024-2025 budget can be found on our website at: <https://westernquebec.ca/>

Training, Support and Reporting

The finance department provides training and support to staff throughout the board who are implicated in financial activities. It ensured the accurate recording and reporting of expenditures. It continued to elaborate and maintain a coding structure of recording transactions in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Education, as well as for the analyzing and reporting needs of the centre and school administrators.

School Board Taxes

For the 2024-2025 school year, tax rates were published by the MEQ for the French School Board's territories and the Western Québec School Board, as with all English School Boards, were required to use the same rate as the French school board on common territory. This continued to protect disparity between the French and the English school boards on the shared territory, however, as a result the Western Québec School Board had 10 different taxation rates to calculate the invoice of its various sectors of territory.

In a strategic effort to modernize our administrative operations, the Board initiated a pilot project in 2024-2025 to transfer the management of school tax collection to the *Comité de gestion de la taxe scolaire de l'île de Montréal* (CGTSIM). By leveraging the specialized expertise and robust infrastructure of the CGTSIM, this partnership aims to streamline the taxation process for our ratepayers while allowing our internal finance team to refocus their efforts on supporting the Board's core educational mission.

Taxation revenues are calculated by applying a formula set forth by the ministry in the provincial budget rules to ensure equity in the operating budgets across all school boards in the province.

More on school board taxation can be found on our website at <https://westernquebec.ca/>

Financial Statements 2024-2025

The department completed the reporting mandates of the Ministry of Education, the Auditor General, the Ministry of Revenue, Canadian Revenue Agency, and other organizations as requested. It collaborated with its external auditors from the firm of Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton to fulfill the year-end audit. The finance department also informed the audit committee of the financial activities of the school board.

On November 25, 2025, the Council of Commissioners received the school board's 2024-2025 financial statements.

The 2024-2025 Financial Statements are available on the school board's website at <https://westernquebec.ca/>

MATERIAL RESOURCES & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

The Building Department remains steadfast in its mission to provide a safe, healthy, and inspiring environment for all students and staff. Our dedicated team—including caretakers, maintenance personnel, and other skilled professionals—works diligently to ensure our buildings are clean, well-maintained, and conducive to comfort and productivity.

We take pride in upholding the highest standards across several key areas:

- **Air Quality Management:** Following the *Reference Document on Air Quality in Educational Institutions* issued by the Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, as well as conducting air duct cleaning, systematic air filter replacements, and implementing rigorous housekeeping protocols to promote optimal air quality.
- **Water Quality Management:** Addressing all issues related to lead, conducting comprehensive water quality testing, and ensuring the prompt resolution of any detected concerns to maintain safe and reliable water systems.
- **Safety Management:** Addressing a wide range of building safety measures such as the inspection and maintenance of fire protection systems, regular playground inspections, and repairs, maintaining Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs).

Our approach is built on collaboration, adherence to best practices, and a steadfast focus on the well-being of our communities. By addressing both immediate priorities and long-term sustainability, we aim to create environments that inspire learning, innovation, and growth while maintaining a high level of comfort for all building occupants.

Investment Highlights:

For the 2024-2025 academic year, we received approval from the Ministry of Education for several building projects. Among these, the most prominent projects are outlined in the chart below:

Building	Description	Allocated Budget
Lord Aylmer Junior	Renovation of the washrooms 1.220 / 2.312 / 2.314 / 2.318	\$750,000
Dr. S.E. McDowell	Corridors renovation of elementary side: lights, floor, ceiling, lockers, interior doors, and asbestos encapsulation of all interior walls	\$1,550,000
Dr. S.E. McDowell	Roof renovation - 6 sections	\$1,000,000
Philemon Wright High School	Parking Phase 4 - South side of the building	\$3,000,000
Multiple Schools	Replacement of exterior lights in St. Michael's, St. John's, DWK, LAJ, Eardley, GG, Envol, Golden Valley, Maniwaki AEC,	\$300,000

	Chelsea, LAS, South Hull, WQCC	
Golden Valley	Renovation of the exterior masonry - Renovation of the "Bloc arrière" Phase (Gymnasium)	\$1,000,000
Multiple Schools	Schoolyard pavement for South Hull and Lord Aylmer Senior	\$963,440
Chelsea	Roof renovation of B11 - 12 - 14 - 15 - 16 sections	\$673,797
Multiple Schools	Replace the fire alarm panels and intrusion alarm panels that have exceeded their lifespans. Replace problematic detectors and correct the mapping – Phase 1	\$800,000
Multiple Schools	Installation of backflow, water meters, and shut-off systems - Phase 1 - Replace components that have exceeded their lifespans and ensure conformity to RBQ requirements.	\$500,000
Lord Aylmer Senior	Replace the ventilation system isolation	\$60,000

Information Technology

IT Infrastructure & Security, and Support Services ensures its mission within the organization by providing a functional, innovative, and secure IT environment for all students and staff. Our team of Support Technicians, Senior Technicians and Specialized IT Analysts work with dedication to enable the use of tools and systems that improve productivity, communication, and decision-making, while ensuring the security and reliability of operations. In this way, we contribute to ensuring a technological environment that supports the organization's mission.

Investments and maintenance

- Continue the upgrade of core network components to ensure network reliability.
- Migrate all Windows devices to Windows 11

Enabling Innovation

- Continue the replacement of old projectors by installing over 70 Smart TVs in some of our schools.
- Add / replace over 500 Chromebooks and 56 carts in all schools as per the upgrade cycle.
- Add / replace over 400 new up-to-date Windows devices in all schools as per the upgrade cycle.

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

The 2023-2024 school year marked the successful finalization of new transportation contracts, a significant milestone for the Transportation Department. Despite facing challenges such as a shortage of drivers, the department remained committed to providing efficient, reliable, and safe transportation for all students.

Throughout the year, the school board engaged in negotiations with transportation companies to enhance communication channels, particularly concerning student safety. These efforts included a commitment to ensuring that buses were equipped with high-functioning cameras and GPS systems to improve safety and accountability.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENT

The Department of School Organization maintained its primary mandate to develop and implement efficient tools and mechanisms that ensure ongoing support for both students and school administrators. Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, the department continued its efforts to deliver technical and administrative support efficiently and effectively. In fulfilling its mission, the Department of School Organization collaborated with other departments to ensure that all schools received optimal support and guidance, keeping students as the primary focus. Notably, the department continued the implementation of the Parent Portal, enabling parents from all WQSB schools to access marks, report cards, student timetables, and other information.

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Department of School Organization supported various dossiers, including student registrations and procedures, student file audits, Bill 101 requirements and certifications, student enrolment, student certification, pedagogical software support for schools, report cards, timetables and scheduling, academic result transmission, management and distribution of exams, cross-boundary requests and approval, Mozaïk Portal implementation (Parent, Student, Teacher), archives, and file retention for both the board office and schools.

SECRETARY GENERAL

The Western Québec School Board's Secretary General coordinates, oversees, and ensures the efficient preparation of the activities and meetings of the Council of Commissioners and of the Executive Committee. The Secretary General oversees the creation and revision of the board's policies, by-laws, official records, access to documents and protection of personal information, copyrights, insurance, board elections, legal services, formal complaints, whistleblowing, compliance of contract rules and legislation, communication matters, media relations, as well as matters touching on ethics and integrity. The Secretary General provides advice and support to Council as well as to the Director General and to all administrators of the school board concerning legal and corporate matters.

During the 2024-2025 school year, the Council of Commissioners held a total of nine regular meetings. The Board's Executive Committee held eight regular meetings.

New legislation was adopted during the 2024-2025 school year including: the introduction of restrictions to the use of cell phones and other personal devices in class, various changes to purchasing and contracting rules, as well as the implementation of bills 47 and 94 to name a few. A prescribed Code of Ethics for Employees and Volunteers was also adopted by Council. The annual risk management plan mitigating the potential for corruption and collusion in the organization was also adopted by Council. The secretary general assisted the Designated Person, tasked with investigating cases involving contraventions to Council's Code of Ethics (By-law 15). Me Vincent Guida submitted two reports on such investigations from July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025, which are referenced in his report, annexed to this annual report.

Training sessions were also prepared for commissioners in 2024-2025 covering topics that included governance, roles and responsibilities of Council, the contract management process, conflict of interest, lobbying, risk management against corruption and collusion, whistleblowing legislation, navigating the Education Act, and various policies and by-laws dealing with purchasing, delegation of powers, governance, and Council's Code of Ethics for Commissioners (By-law 15). Commissioners also

received two training sessions from an outside DEI consultant on Brave Spaces and Unconscious Bias, both organized by the secretary general's office.

Board Elections

The school board elections held in November 2024 saw the swearing in of 10 Ward commissioners and a new chairperson. Ward 7 for Greater Gatineau did not have any candidates and remained vacant. A call for candidates was then held but did not attract a candidate to the ward. The government was advised as required and the school board was later notified that the vacancy would be filled through a government appointment. The position was officially filled in September 2025. This brought Council numbers to 16 commissioners with 11 ward commissioners, 4 parent commissioners, and the chair.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

The communications department, in addition to the day-to-day work on messaging through the websites and social media platforms, undertook a number of initiatives focusing on key objectives: recruiting through the promotion of the board to prospective employees, attracting prospective families, promoting diversity across the school board, and attracting students to vocational education. Achieving the goals was accomplished through several initiatives such as creating a photo bank for the WQSB's schools and centres, creating a promotional video for the vocational education programs offered throughout the school board, the publishing of a monthly newspaper (The Gazette) highlighting the school board's employees. The department organized a major event for the unveiling of the Lab-École wing at Pierre-Elliott-Trudeau Elementary School and updated the parent notification tools for emergency and general notice purposes.

Complaints Concerning Bullying or Violence

In June of 2012, the Education Act was amended with a view of preventing 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 that must include:

- an analysis of the situation prevailing at 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 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 adopted their anti-bullying and anti-violence plans, which are reviewed on an annual basis with their respective Governing Board.

School boards are required 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 Regional Student Ombudsman.

During the 2024-2025 school year, schools and centres reported 1060 incidents involving violence, 25 acts of sexual violence and 283 bullying incidents that led to a major intervention or suspension from school.

Of the incidents of bullying, violence or acts of sexual violence, parents communicated satisfaction with the handling of the situation by the school principal and were not interested in filing a report or a complaint with the school board or Regional Student Ombudsman. Parents and victims were presented with internal as well as external supports. The parents of students who had committed the acts were also offered support from the school as well as from outside services. Consequences were applied according to Codes of Conduct and Anti-bullying and Anti-violence plans.

The regional ombud's annual report is available as an annex at the end of this report.

Code of Ethics Report

School board Commissioners are subject to the "Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for the Commissioners of the Western Québec School Board" (By-law 15). During the 2024-2025 school year, two investigations were submitted by the Designated Person, M^e Vincent Guida for complaints filed the previous year. For both, M^e Guida found that no contravention to the Code of Ethics had taken place and the complaints were rejected. The cost for the first investigation was \$26,613.49 and for the second, \$55,508.38.

No complaints were submitted to Me Guida for contraventions to the Code of Ethics in the 2024-2025 school year.

The Designated Person's Annual Report is available as an annexe at the end of this document.

Regional Ombudsman Report and Designated Person Report



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Annual report Ethics
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