

Staff to provide support to students in disadvantaged areas – Measure 15021, component 3



Context: The pandemic has affected the education system, and the repercussions appear to be more significant for those in vulnerable situations, particularly students from disadvantaged areas. To address the widening gaps in success rates between students in disadvantaged areas and those from advantaged areas, the Minister has identified, among the priorities of the Revitalization Plan for Educational Success 2021-2022, the urgent need to work on reinforcing the relationship between schools and families. In order to support the network in its interventions to strengthen this relationship, a budget measure has been allocated to schools in disadvantaged areas.

*This component allows for the **hiring of support staff** to reinforce the relationship between schools and families. These staff members will help to **build and strengthen the relationship between schools and families**, in order to create a safety net for young people who are from disadvantaged backgrounds and who are particularly vulnerable.*

Aims of the measure

The role of parents and families is at the heart of student success. Their involvement is a key factor in the perseverance and educational success of students. This involvement can take various forms, including school-family collaboration. With the pandemic, parental involvement has been tested in many families, especially those in vulnerable situations. This reality may have affected the collaboration between some families and school staff.

The hiring of support staff could take the form of resource persons made available to the school, families and the community to provide support in maintaining collaboration. Thus, staff will be called upon to support families in their parental involvement. They can also work with school staff to guide them in maintaining the trust relationship, in collaboration with community organizations.

Goal

Narrow the gap in success rates between students from disadvantaged areas and those from advantaged areas by working with students whose schooling may be affected by the lack of a positive school-family relationship.

Objectives

Reinforce the school-family relationship by working with families and school staff.

Work with community partners to foster this relationship and create a safety net for families alongside the school.

Target groups

- Families more detached from the school culture
- Families with fewer resources

Conditions conducive to applying the measure

Build bridges between families and schools and reinforce this relationship by putting certain conditions in place, for example:

- **Prioritize students and families:** Develop and maintain a trusting relationship takes time. This requires the necessary resources to prioritize the families that need to be reached.
- **Foster collaboration between stakeholders:** Reflect on methods and winning strategies in which everyone's expertise will make it possible to rely on a collective and coherent skill set for families.
- **Rely on the educational project as a lever for mobilization and support:** Establish a common objective that contributes to the mobilization of stakeholders and the sharing of responsibilities and expertise.
- **Pool available resources:** Allow the different stakeholders involved in the school-family-community relationship to work together and benefit from each other's expertise.
- **Ensure a continuous follow-up of the actions carried out:** Maximizing school-family collaboration will be possible if it is planned, evaluated and adjusted to the needs of the stakeholders.

Questions to guide the application of the measure

In Québec, the school network puts considerable effort into establishing positive school-family collaboration that fosters continued parental involvement. However, before developing actions, programs and strategies to reach out to families, there are some questions that must be asked, for example:

Who? Who are the students whose schooling may be affected by the lack of a school-family relationship? Who are their families?

Ensuring a collective vision of the groups that need to be reached, both within the work teams and in consultations, will help determine whether the objective has been achieved.

Why? What are some reasons that might affect the relationship between schools and families?

Understanding the reality of families and questioning the actions and attitudes of school staff toward them is a key goal in finding solutions to maintain parental involvement in their children's success.

How? Considering the obstacles encountered, what actions should be planned to create and strengthen the school-family relationship? Who are the stakeholders that the school team can collaborate with to overcome these obstacles and create a safety net around students and families?

The effects of positive school-family collaboration

It is well known that a positive school-family collaboration is good for the students' educational success. This collaboration also yields benefits for all the stakeholders involved:

- **For families:** An actualized power to act through a recognized and valued parental involvement
- **For school staff:** A better awareness of the living conditions of families and recognition of their expertise
- **For community partners:** Consistency in the actions proposed by the various community stakeholders

The effects observed with students are, among others: an improvement in academic, social and emotional learning, an increase in time spent on school tasks, a sense of well-being and satisfaction, better school attendance as well as a decrease in behavioural problems in the classroom and at school.