REFERENCE MANUAL FOR INTERVENTION IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS

ONE SCHOOL

SUCCESS FOR ALL

Votre
gouvernement

Québec

Message from the Minister

Education is a top priority for the Québec government, which considers that each and every child in Québec should have the opportunity to fulfill their potential, regardless of their socio-economic background. This vision highlights the importance of schools and centres which focus on success for all students, and which carry out their mission with vital support from their communities. The Ministère therefore intends to continue to support the school networks by paying special attention to the most vulnerable students, including those from disadvantaged areas. Even today, the figures show that socio-economic context is still a major factor in educational success.

Although significant progress has been made in recent years, we must continue to work on reducing social inequality at school. To do this, we must use proven methods to provide young people with an environment conducive to their development, learning and success, and we must all work together to achieve this goal. We therefore rely on the wealth of experience and commitment to success that you bring to your work, and on the skills of our various partners. Through a culture of collaboration that gives priority to learning and interventions based on scientific knowledge and experiential findings, we can help to close the gap in success rates and ensure that all students from disadvantaged backgrounds have equal opportunities for success.

I hope this reference manual will provide food for thought on the issues involved in school perseverance and educational success in disadvantaged areas, and offer inspiration to help enrich your practices.

Jean-François Roberge

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Foreword

This reference manual is based, among other things, on the socio-economic environment index (SEI), which is used to determine the deprivation level of elementary and secondary schools in disadvantaged areas. Although adult education and vocational training centres are not assigned an SEI rank, some of their students may nevertheless come from disadvantaged areas, and it is entirely possible that some students enrolled in adult general education or vocational training will experience difficulties with their learning process because of their socio-economic status.

Despite this distinction between schools and centres, the vision, values and key components presented in this reference manual apply to all affected students. The manual, based largely on the results of the evaluation of the *New Approaches, New Solutions* (NANS) intervention strategy, covers a broad range of situations observed in the youth sector, but many of the same situations can be found in the adult general education and vocational training sectors.

The reference manual therefore forms part of an effort to provide common ground for cooperation among the stakeholders working with young people and adults alike, in the context of a training continuum for students, centred on the common goal of school perseverance and educational success for all.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Fair and inclusive education is one of the most powerful levers available to make society more equitable.[1]

Why the need for a reference manual?

Although school perseverance, also called student retention or encouraging students to stay in school, is a province-wide issue, there is a marked difference between the dropout rates for students from schools in advantaged and disadvantaged areas. In 2014-2015, for example, there was a 13.5 percentage-point difference in the rates for students leaving school without a diploma or other qualification in the public system, depending on whether they attended a school located in an area rated as highly advantaged or severely disadvantaged according to the socio-economic environment index (SEI).[2]

Figure 1   School leavers WITHOUT a diploma or qualification (2014-2015)

Highly ADVANTAGED area
(SEI 1)

10.0 %

Severely DISADVANTAGED area
(SEI 10)

23.5 %

Source: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, provincial indicators, special compilation.

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1. Field, S., M. Kuczera and B. Pont, No More Failures: Ten Steps to Equity in Education (Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2007). Also available online: https://www.oecd.org/education/school/45179151.pdf.

2. Schools located in disadvantaged areas are schools with a socio-economic environment index (SEI) decile ranking of 8, 9 or 10 on a scale of 1 to 10. They are classified as disadvantaged based on two indicators: a low level of education for the mother and level of parental economic activity in the job market. A school's SEI is determined by the characteristics of the area where the students attending the school live on September 30.

The economic conditions some families must contend with can have an impact on their children's chances of succeeding at school. Responsibility for the success of students from disadvantaged areas is shared by all community stakeholders. Family and child support provided both before and after children start school can help to reduce the effects of disadvantage.

As a community stakeholder, the school system makes a significant contribution to the collective effort to help students from disadvantaged areas achieve success at school. Over the past several years, MEES has introduced a number of initiatives in schools and centres to foster success for these students. Although these initiatives have helped narrow the gap between the success rates of students from schools in advantaged and disadvantaged areas, it nevertheless remains significant. We must therefore continue and increase our efforts to adopt fair practices and to reduce inequality.

Some MEES initiatives in disadvantaged areas, and in improvement and maintenance of literacy skills

Implemented several years ago	More recently
• *New Approaches, New Solutions* (NANS) intervention strategy	• The Policy on Educational Success and its various orientations, including the *Strategy for Children From Birth to Age 8*
• *Une école montréalaise pour tous / Supporting Montréal Schools* program	• Full-time kindergarten for 4-year-olds in disadvantaged areas
• Reception, referral, counselling and support services (SARCA)	• More resources for success in reading, writing and mathematics for students in disadvantaged areas
	• Support for the regional coordinating authorities (RCAs) to involve partners in activities complementing those offered in classrooms
	• More funding for interventions with the most vulnerable groups during their schooling[3]

3. These measures are available to adult education centres.

The purpose of the reference manual

With this in mind, MEES has prepared a reference manual for intervention in disadvantaged areas. The document is designed to support the thinking process and offer guidelines to help education communities[4] with their choice of actions. Its aim is to provide avenues for reflection on how to foster educational success for students from disadvantaged areas, including multi-ethnic disadvantaged areas.[5]

Who should use the reference manual?

The reference manual is intended for all school system stakeholders working in disadvantaged areas, and in particular for school and school board administrators and staff working in elementary and secondary schools with an SEI decile ranking of 8, 9 or 10, and in schools or centres that receive students from disadvantaged areas.

Content

This document contains information on intervention in disadvantaged areas. Its content is inspired by research into schools in disadvantaged areas whose students generally succeed well[6] (referred to as *effective schools*), as well as promising practices tested in the school system and the evaluation report for the *New Approaches, New Solutions* (NANS) intervention strategy.[7]

The publication of this reference manual is also consistent with the orientations proposed in the *Policy on Educational Success*, and is one of the ministerial measures intended to assist the school system in its interventions with vulnerable student groups, including those from disadvantaged areas. It also takes into account the ministerial frameworks currently in force.

The reference manual is divided into sections, as follows:

- **Knowledge** of deprivation, how it is manifested in schools, and the results of research on effective schools in disadvantaged areas
- **Understanding** the influence of key determinants of school perseverance and educational success and the impacts of the environments in which students live and work
- **Action** in disadvantaged areas, based on tried-and-tested interventions identified from scientific and experiential knowledge

The Appendix provides examples of actions that have proven effective.

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4. An education community is composed of all school staff members, including the principal and personnel from the school and school board, as well as parents, students and partners in the community.

5. In this document, the term "disadvantaged areas" includes multi-ethnic disadvantaged areas.

6. Archambault, J., R Garon and L. Harnois, *Diriger une école défavorisée: Des caractéristiques des écoles performantes provenant de la documentation scientifique* (Montréal: Université de Montréal, 2011) and A Montréal School for All. Also available online (in French only): https://www.cssdm.gouv.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Profil-Direction-Diriger-ecole-milieu-defavorise-Caracteristiques.pdf.

7. Janosz, M. et al., *Aller plus loin, ensemble: synthèse du rapport final d'évaluation de la stratégie d'intervention* Agir autrement. (Montréal: Groupe de recherche sur les environnements scolaires [GRES], Université de Montréal, 2010).

The main elements of the reference manual

Interventions in disadvantaged areas should be based on a number of elements, including a vision grounded in values that the education community in general, and school staff in particular, must take into account in their actions.

VISION

A school that receives students from disadvantaged areas, and stakeholders whose collaboration, commitment and professionalism combine with the efforts of partners to provide all students with equal opportunities for success.

VALUES

Certain values are of primary importance when selecting the best possible interventions for disadvantaged areas:

- **Equality** means that students have equal opportunities for success.
- **Fairness** means that the differences and needs of all students are reflected in the services offered and choice of interventions. This may, among other things, be achieved through compliance with the principle of subsidiarity,[8] i.e. by bringing decision centres closer to the students, citizens and communities concerned.
- **Social justice** is a principle based on equal rights and opportunities for success, without discrimination, and on collective solidarity to ensure that resources are allocated as fairly and evenly as possible. Equality and fairness are key aspects of social justice.

FOUNDATIONS

Classroom and school practices directly affect student success. In disadvantaged areas, these practices must be built upon the following foundations:

- **Believing that everyone can be educated** means believing that every student, regardless of social and economic background, culture or language, has the capacity to learn and succeed.
- **Believing in our ability to influence learning** means believing in the capacity of school stakeholders[9] to support learning by all students.

This vision, in which all students from disadvantaged areas can succeed, is both challenging and realistic. Although some students come to school with baggage that may not match the school's expectations, **they nevertheless have the same potential for success as any other student**. The values and foundations established by research serve as points of focus that, when combined with a better knowledge and understanding of the complex nature of disadvantaged areas, can lead to fair practices and fewer inequalities.

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8. Section 207.1 of the *Education Act* (CQLR, chapter I-13.3) states that, "In fulfilling its mission the school board must show due regard for the principle of subsidiarity, supporting the educational institutions in the exercise of their responsibilities." In this section, the principle of subsidiarity is defined as "the principle whereby powers and responsibilities must be delegated to the appropriate level of authority so that decision-making centres are adequately distributed and brought as close as possible to the students, citizens and communities concerned."

9. **School stakeholders:** everyone involved in steps taken to foster educational success – in other words, school staff members, in collaboration with families and community partners.

Section 1
Knowledge

If we are to be more effective in attacking problems as complex as academic failure and dropping out of school in disadvantaged areas, we must make more systematic use of proven knowledge and expertise.[10]

Deprivation: One situation, many aspects

Generally speaking, deprivation is a state in which individuals, families or groups find themselves at a relative disadvantage compared to the unit to which they belong, i.e. a local community, region or nation.[11] Deprivation arises from a set of personal, economic, social or cultural conditions and may have a significant impact on the family or individuals concerned. For example, job loss, part-time employment, low levels of education, health problems, changes to family structure, housing difficulties, food insecurity and recent immigration can all destabilize individuals, families or communities and be instrumental in creating a state of deprivation.

My name is Maya.

My family came to Québec two years ago. My dad still doesn't have a stable job. He takes French classes with my mom when my sister, my brother and I are at school. When I first started school, it was hard for me to do things. Everything seemed rushed and I didn't always understand. The school staff were kind to me, and they knew I'd succeed in the end. I get a lot of help from my teacher, Lydia, who meets with my brother, my sister and me, and with other children from other countries. She helps us learn French and she helps my parents to understand what happens at school meetings.

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10. Janosz, M. et al., 2010 [*translation*].

11. Townsend, P., "Deprivation" in *Journal of Social Policy*, 16, 2, pp. 125-146 (1987).
Also available online: http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0047279400020341.

Deprivation arises from a combination of complex situations. If school staff members and the school's partners are familiar with these situations, they can identify the challenges and also the strengths on which they can build.

ISOLATION

It can be hard for some families to maintain social contacts if, for example, they do not have the financial resources to pay for activities, transportation or childcare. These families are sometimes isolated and absent from community life. Recent immigration or lack of common language skills can compound the situation. This isolation can have harmful consequences for individuals' well-being. In addition, isolation can sometimes lead to social exclusion or marginalization. Social support and assistance for these families would help prevent them from being excluded.

My name is Paul.

I'm in Grade 3 and I love my school because we play a lot of sports in the after-school program, during physical education classes and even at lunchtime. At home, I can't do that because we don't have a park or anywhere to play nearby. Also, we can't afford to enrol in recreational activities. At school, there's a football team for students in Grades 5 and 6. I want to join it when I'm older. On Tuesdays and Thursdays at lunchtime, it's my job to put away the equipment in the changing rooms and the gym. I love it! It's a privilege, and obviously I have to do all my schoolwork to earn it, but it's worth the effort.

THE INTERGENERATIONAL CYCLE OF DEPRIVATION

Deprivation can, in some cases, carry on from one generation to the next. Disadvantaged families face challenges that they may feel are impossible to overcome, and in some cases they may lose hope of ending the intergenerational cycle of deprivation – for example, if they cannot find jobs and participate fully in society. Generally speaking, the longer deprivation persists, the more apparent and more marked its impact will be.

My name is Brandon.

I'll be leaving elementary school soon. It hasn't always been easy for me. When I'm with adults or other students at school, I tend to react quickly and strongly to things I don't like. I do this with my friends and neighbours too. My parents didn't always understand why the school wanted me to talk to people to solve my problems. However, over time, my parents and I have learned to trust the school staff because they've taken the time to listen to us. We've also understood the methods they've suggested to help me improve.

TEMPORARY DEPRIVATION

Some families may find themselves in temporary difficulty as a result of a major change or a combination of problems (e.g. the death of a spouse and a subsequent drop in family income, becoming a single parent, job loss, illness, immigration). The data suggest that temporary deprivation is the most frequent form.

In and of itself, immigration is not a risk factor for deprivation, but it does pose a significant challenge for the individuals concerned during their first few years in the host country (e.g. stress related to learning a new culture and a new language, and non-recognition of qualifications obtained abroad).

I'm Rosalie and Christopher's mom. They're in Grades 3 and 4, respectively.

When my children first started school, I was 20 years old and I was still at school myself, in the adult education system, finishing my secondary school diploma. The transition was a difficult time for me and my children: keeping up with the daycare schedule, helping them with homework and lessons, and attending all the meetings at the school, which is several kilometres from my home and from the adult education centre. Also, I'm a single parent and my family lives more than 300 kilometres away. I was lucky to have the support of the daycare director and the school principal. Thanks to them, I was able to keep going and find services in my neighbourhood. I also discovered an organization that helped me to meet new people and create a support network. It's not always easy, but the children are happy at school.

CONCENTRATION

When a population sharing the same difficult conditions (e.g. poverty, single parenthood, low level of education, unemployment or criminality) gathers at a single location, the impact of those conditions may be intensified. In situations such as these, the individuals concerned, instead of being brought into contact with models of success, are exposed to situations that are likely to destabilize them even further. This type of phenomenon is often seen in urban areas, and also in schools in highly disadvantaged areas.

My name is Audrey.

I got a teaching contract this year at an elementary school in a rural area with a deprivation index of 9. The municipality's main employer closed down about five years ago, and although the region hasn't really recovered economically, families have stayed anyway. It took me a few months to adapt, but I now understand my environment better and I've realized that the students and their parents are truly committed to their school. The parents don't have a lot of financial resources and some of them don't have much education. But they're very grateful for what the school does for their children and they place a lot of value on education. I can't do everything, but with the help of my colleagues we've been able to identify priorities. I'd like to teach at this school again next year. It would be hard to leave.

Deprivation in Québec's schools

Although the realities of disadvantaged areas would suggest that students do not all start school on the same footing, every single child nevertheless brings their own cultural baggage composed of experience, knowledge, points of reference, interests, skills and a relationship with language and learning. This baggage may or may not be consistent with the social standards expected by the school, and it is important to **pay attention to any gaps between baggage and expectations**, since they will affect the nature of the interventions and hence the students' success.

Schools in disadvantaged neighbourhoods have a concentration of students who have been exposed to a range of factors that could hinder learning. The greater the number of students from disadvantaged areas, the higher the risk that they will encounter problems or drop out of school. This is due to the "social background effect" triggered by the many different situations the students face, which adds to the complexity of the learning climate and, consequently of the interventions to be used. The research is unanimous on this.

Practices that are applied by all school staff members have been shown to mitigate the impacts of the social background effect. In order for principals and their staff to analyze their institution and gain a better understanding of the challenges related to deprivation, they must pay attention to the manifestations of these challenges at the school or centre, as well as their effects on the students and all stakeholders involved.

The table showing determinants of school perseverance and educational success in disadvantaged areas (see page 22) may be useful in helping to identify these manifestations.

This is what the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) wrote in 2013:

> *Improvements in equity can be achieved at the same time as improvements in overall performance, and in a relatively short time. Ideally, school systems provide high-quality educational opportunities for all students, irrespective of the students' backgrounds. Students from socio-economically advantaged families and those from disadvantaged families should be equally likely to succeed in school.*[12]

12. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "Are Countries Moving Towards More Equitable Education Systems?" (*PISA in Focus*: 25, 2013). Also available online: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/fr/education/are-countries-moving-towards-more-equitable-education-systems_5k4bwpbqrz9s-en.

What survey data and certain indicators of success have shown

Survey data and certain indicators of success are presented in this reference manual to illustrate the impacts of deprivation on student success, and to provide food for thought for school staff members.

SURVEY DATA

National Household Survey (NHS)

In 2011, in Québec, nearly 94 000 children aged 0 to 5 (17.9%) lived in areas considered to be the most materially deprived. The percentage varied, sometimes considerably, from one region to another.[13]

Proportion of children aged 0 to 5 living in areas considered to be the most materially deprived, by region of Québec

In some regions of Québec,
nearly 1 child in 10 lived in areas
considered to be the most
materially deprived.

In other regions,
more than 1 child in 2 lived in areas
considered to be the most
materially deprived.

Source: Statistics Canada, *2011 National Household Survey*, data adapted by the Institut de la statistique du Québec.

13. Observatoire des tout-petits, *Dans quels environnements grandissent les tout-petits québécois? Portrait 2016* (Montréal: Observatoire des tout-petits, 2016). Also available online (in French only): https://tout-petits.org/media/1314/portrait_des_touts-petits-2016-observatoire-des-tout-petits-20161124.pdf.

Québec Survey of Child Development in Kindergarten (QSCDK)

The 2012 QSCDK findings show that students from disadvantaged areas are less prepared to start school. The survey examined the following five areas of development: physical health and well-being, social skills, emotional maturity, cognitive and language development, and communication skills and general knowledge.

Proportion of children aged 0 to 5 who are vulnerable in at least one area of development, by region of Québec

In **ADVANTAGED** areas

In **DISADVANTAGED** areas

Roughly **1 child in 5** (21%)
is vulnerable in at least one area
of development.

Roughly **1 child in 3** (31%)
is vulnerable in at least one area
of development.
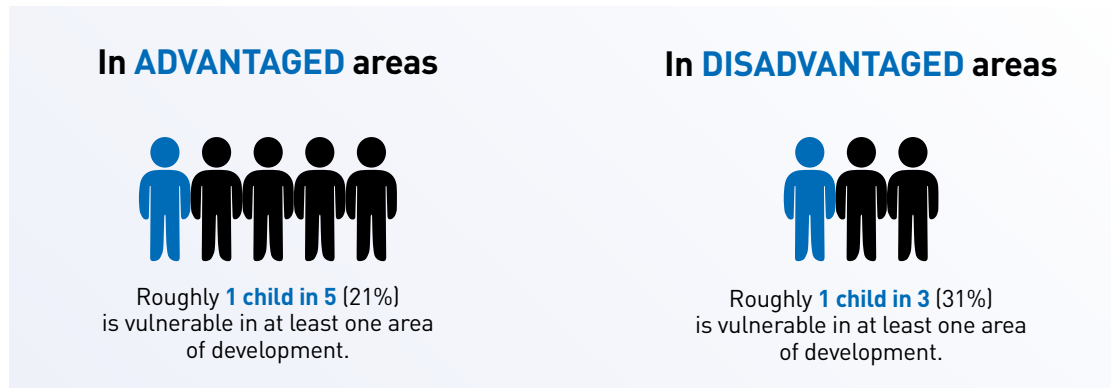
Source: Institut national de santé publique du Québec, *Analyse contextualisée sur le développement des enfants à la maternelle.* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2016). Also available online (in French only): https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/2124_analyse_developpement_enfants_maternelle.pdf.

Québec Longitudinal Study of Child Development (QLSCD)

Some of the QLSCD's findings highlight the potential impacts of deprivation on the students' educational path. These impacts include:

▪ Differences in motivation and sense of competency were observed in Grade 1 students from different socio-economic backgrounds. It was apparent that Grade 1 students from more advantaged areas were more motivated and more confident in their reading skills. A similar trend was observed for writing.

▪ The success rate in Grade 6 compulsory reading, writing and mathematics examinations was lower among children from disadvantaged areas.

▪ Students from disadvantaged areas were more likely to start smoking or drinking in the first year of secondary school.

▪ The mother's level of education, a factor significantly correlated with dropout risk, influenced performance in language of instruction among 15-year-old students in secondary school. The parents' academic aspirations for their children and parental support throughout their time at school may also partly explain this finding.

Source: Desrosiers, H. et al. "The SurvEd kit for success in school." *Québec Longitudinal Study of Child Development (QLSCD 1998 2010): From Birth to Age 12*. (Montréal: Institut de la statistique du Québec). Also available online: http://www.jesuisjeserai.stat.gouv.qc.ca/publications/trousse_synel/trousse_synel_an.html.

Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

The PIAAC was implemented in 2011-2012 among a portion of the Québec population between the ages of 16 and 65, and focused in particular on literacy skills. It found that people from disadvantaged areas were more likely to have poor literacy skills. It is reasonable to believe that some of the adults in this age group with poor literacy skills are also the parents of school-age children attending schools in disadvantaged areas.

Literacy skills among Québec's adults according to PIAAC 2012 findings

Among people between the ages of 16 and 65,	**61.51%**	said they had one or more children.
Among those with at least one child,	**21%**	had poor literacy skills.[14]
Among those whose children were between the ages of 6 and 12,	**15%**	had poor literacy skills.
Among people between the ages of 25 and 44,	**13.5%**	had poor literacy skills.

Sources: Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) (2012). Special compilation.

Desrosiers, H. et al., *Les compétences en littératie, en numératie et en résolution de problèmes dans des environnements technologiques: Des clefs pour relever les défis du XXIe siècle. Rapport québécois du Programme pour l'évaluation internationale des compétences des adultes (PEICA).* (Montréal: Institut de la statistique du Québec, 2015). Also available online (in French only): http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/education/alphabetisation-litteratie/peica.pdf.

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14. Having poor literacy skills is defined as being able to read short texts on familiar subjects and to locate, within the text, information that is identical to that provided in a question.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

Profile of schools in disadvantaged areas

In Québec, in 2015-2016, more than 234 000 students attended public elementary or secondary schools located in areas that were considered disadvantaged. The number of students and schools in disadvantaged areas are revised annually before being published on the MEES website.[15]

Profile of the public school student body in 2015–2016

- More than **234 000 students** attended schools located in disadvantaged areas.

- **725 elementary schools** were located in disadvantaged areas.

- **216 secondary schools** were located in disadvantaged areas.

Source: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur.

Rates of academic delay

Academic delays are more common among students in schools located in disadvantaged areas. Delay indicators for the beginning of Elementary Cycle Two and Secondary Cycle One show that delay rates are higher in disadvantaged areas than in advantaged areas, with a difference of nearly 10 percentage points. Accumulated delays significantly increase the risk that students will drop out of school.

Rates of academic delay at the beginning[16] of Elementary Cycle Two and Secondary Cycle One by SEI decile ranking (2013-2014)
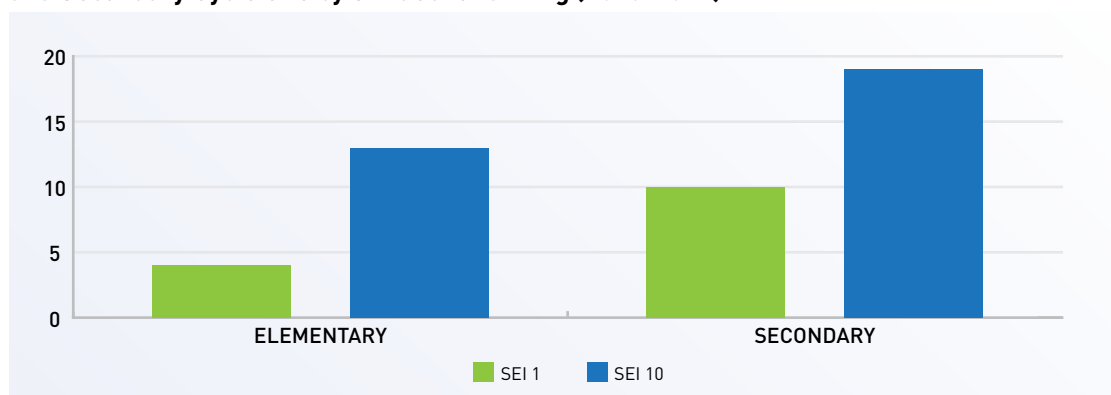
Source: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, provincial indicators, special compilation.

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15. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, *Indices de défavorisation* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2017), http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/references/publications/resultats-de-la-recherche/detail/article/indices-de-defavorisation. (Accessed August 7, 2018) [online, in French only]

16. This refers to the percentage of students whose age at September 30 is higher than the norm.

Percentage of students with individualized education plans

In Québec, individualized education plans are used for students with special needs, for students with social maladjustments or learning difficulties, and in other special cases. The indicators show that more students with individualized education plans are found in schools located in the most disadvantaged areas (SEI decile ranking of 10). The difference between severely disadvantaged and highly advantaged areas is approximately 10 percentage points.

Percentage of students with individualized education plans enrolled in elementary and secondary schools (2013-2014)
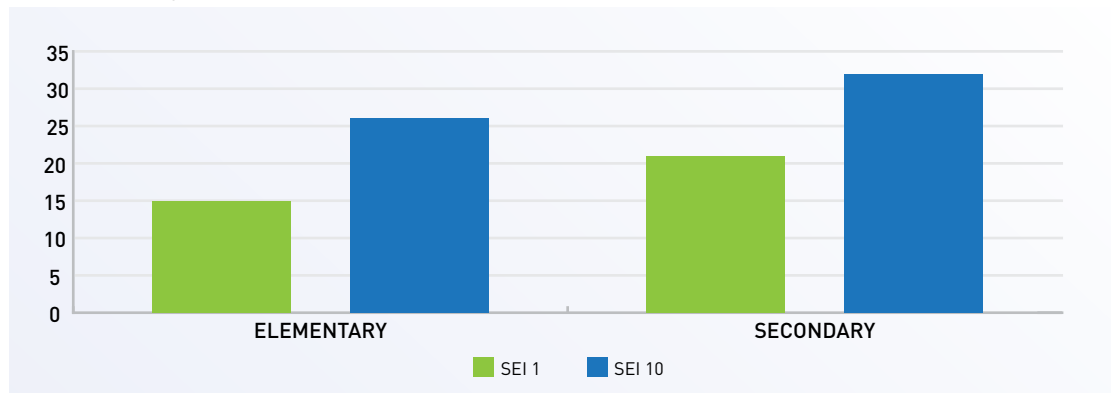
Source: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, provincial indicators, special compilation.

Dropout rate

The school dropout rate has fallen in the last 12 years, in very disadvantaged areas as well as in very advantaged areas. The initiatives taken by the school system may have been a contributing factor. However, in 2014-2015, there was still a difference of more than 13.5 percentage points between the students attending schools in very advantaged areas and those in schools located in very disadvantaged areas.

Difference between dropout rates among students in advantaged and disadvantaged areas

Source: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, provincial indicators, special compilation.

Percentage of graduates with diplomas or other qualifications versus students with no diplomas or other qualifications, among school leavers in general education in the youth sector

The indicators for 2013-2014 show that, in general education in the youth sector, fewer students attending schools located in disadvantaged areas obtained a diploma, but more obtained another qualification or left secondary school without a diploma or other qualification.

Breakdown of graduates with diplomas or other qualifications versus school leavers with no diplomas or other qualifications, by school SEI decile ranking, in the public system, among all students leaving general education in the youth sector at the end of secondary school, in 2013-2014
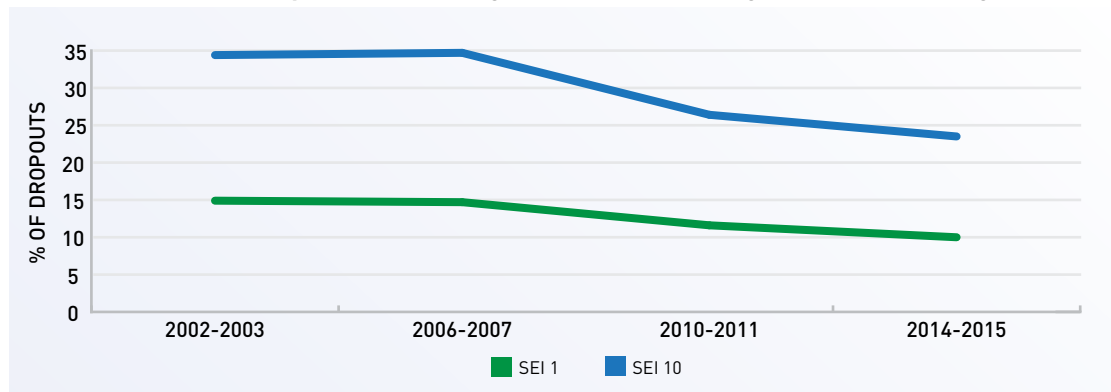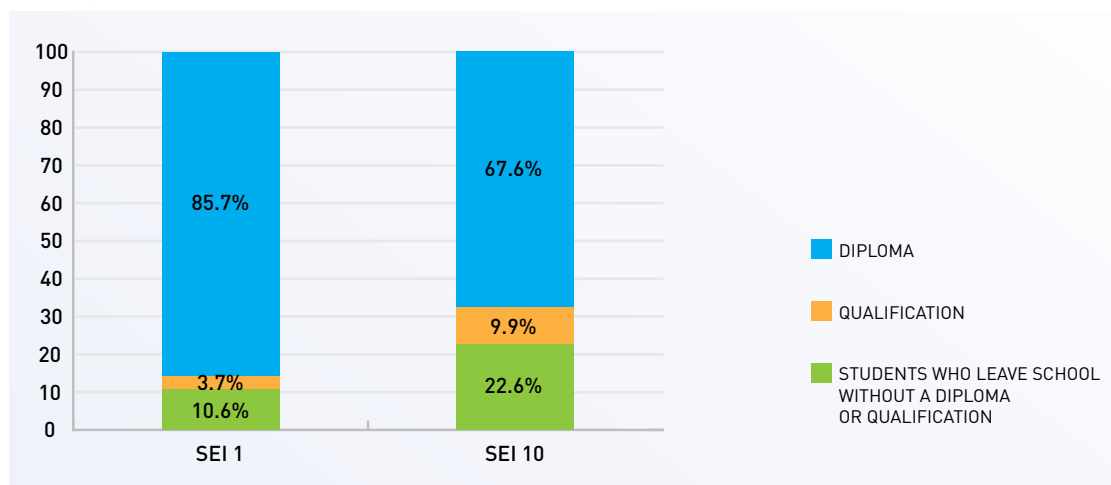

Source: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, provincial indicators, special compilation.

Percentage of students under 20 years of age with a diploma or other qualification in the adult general education sector

The indicators show that, in recent years, the graduation rates for diplomas and other qualifications has tended to increase among students under 20 years of age in the adult general education sector.

Percentage of students leaving Secondary Cycle Two in the adult general education sector with a diploma or other qualification before age 20, by last year of enrolment
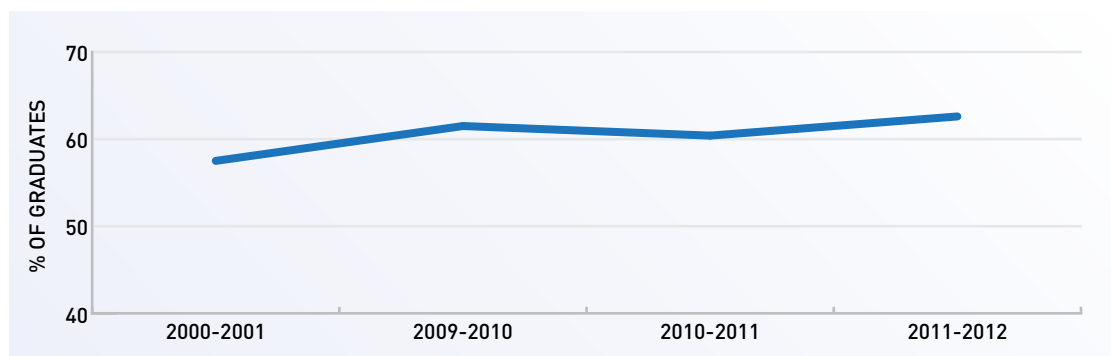
Source: Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche, *Education Indicators: Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Education*, 2014 Edition, section 3.1. (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2015).

Young people from disadvantaged areas also attend adult education centres, meaning that adult general education plays a sizeable role in their success. Recent research has highlighted the qualitative contribution of adult education centres, which not only provide diplomas and other qualifications, but also play a role in the academic success of their students in the broader sense, by providing young people with opportunities to build a positive vision of themselves and their future.[17]

The connection between a student's academic success and the socio-economic background of the school the student attends is well known. Fortunately, despite the wide range of observations and findings, numerous studies have shown that the quality of the learning environment can play a significant role in reducing the success gap between students from disadvantaged areas and those from advantaged areas. Among other things, the evaluation report for the NANS intervention strategy and studies of effective schools in disadvantaged areas have provided all school staff members with food for thought, in particular with regard to the interventions that should be encouraged in classrooms and schools.

Follow-up to the *New Approaches, New Solutions* evaluation report: Avenues for reinforcement

According to the NANS evaluation report, the goal of improving success rates among students attending schools in disadvantaged areas has been only partially achieved. However, the report also suggests that the NANS strategy should be reinforced, because it has the potential to foster success, among other things through the mobilization and collective reflection initiatives it proposes to generate recognized structured, concerted action.[18] A number of evidence-based reinforcements have therefore been identified, to help guide schools in their choice of interventions. These reinforcements can be summarized as follows:

- Continue to involve key players in the planning process, through clear leadership.
- Provide professional development activities for school staff members (including principals, teachers, professionals and support staff) so that they can apply complementary approaches focused as needed on prevention and targeted interventions, using recognized practices to encourage learning of reading, writing and mathematics.

17. Marcotte, J., R. Cloutier, and l. Fortin, *Portrait personnel, familial et scolaire des jeunes adultes émergents (16-24 ans) accédant aux secteurs adultes du secondaire: Identification des facteurs associés à la persévérance et à l'abandon au sein de ces milieux scolaires* [online, in French only] (Trois-Rivières: Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, 2010), http://www.frqsc.gouv.qc.ca/documents/11326/535055/PT_MarcotteJ_rapport+2010_PRS+16-24+ans-secteur+adulte+secondaire/5444d2ff-1ee2-4cea-9bd0-9e10d6fe7713 [translation] (Accessed August 27, 2018).

18. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *La stratégie d'intervention Agir autrement (SIAA): Contrer les écarts de réussite entre les milieux défavorisés et ceux qui sont plus favorisés* [online, in French only] (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2013), http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/adaptation_serv_compl/AgirAutrement_ContrerEcartsReussite_Feuillet_f.pdf, (Accessed August 7, 2018).

Research on effective schools in disadvantaged areas

Researchers have examined schools located in disadvantaged areas where the students succeed as well as or better than students at schools in advantaged areas. Their findings show that it is possible to promote equal opportunities for success for all students in disadvantaged areas.

These schools, referred to here as "effective" schools, share a number of characteristics.[19] For example, they:

- have a shared, clear educational vision that is focused on learning and is respectful of differences

- provide a safe, welcoming environment for students, staff, families and the community

- give priority to learning, among other things through the conviction that everyone has the capacity to learn

- lead in a way that takes into account the situation of the students and their families, and that focuses on reducing inequality by introducing fair structures and practices

- are organized in a way that serves learning

- have a structure that provides the conditions needed to encourage and promote collaboration between key players at school and shared responsibility for the students' educational success

- treat families respectfully and view school-family cooperation as a key aspect of educational success

- continually involve partners in the pursuit of a common goal: educational success for all students

- provide ongoing recognized professional development that is valued by the institution, in conditions that encourage staff members to think about the practices applied in the classroom and at school

- use data, among other things to fuel thinking about the relevance and effectiveness of pedagogical, educational and administrative practices

19. Archambault, J., R. Garon and L. Harnois, 2011.

Food for thought: Some questions

- What do we know about deprivation?

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- How is deprivation manifested in our area?

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- How is deprivation addressed in our practices? How is what we do conducive to learning for all students?

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For further information (French only)

Duru-Bella, M., _Les inégalités sociales à l'école: Genèse et mythes_ (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2002).

Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, _Atlas de la défavorisation_ [online, in french only] (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2018), https://infogeo.education.gouv.qc.ca/public/Atlas_Defavorisation (Accessed August 7, 2018).

Tondreau, J., _L'école en milieu défavorisé_ (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2016).

Section 2
Understanding

The fact that they have not learned what is considered desirable when they start school, or the fact that they do not know something, does not mean that they have a learning difficulty.[20]

Determinants of school perseverance and educational success in disadvantaged areas

Although there is a difference in the success levels of students from advantaged and disadvantaged areas, the learning capacity of the latter group is not at issue and should not be doubted. Every student comes to school with their own baggage shaped by personal experience, and it is vital that this be taken into account.

Some studies have tried to explain the difference in success levels by focusing on what students from disadvantaged areas lack, and the characteristics of their families or the communities to which they belong. However, by blaming academic failure directly on students and families, they may have ignored certain institutional practices that could prevent students from developing their full potential (e.g. reduced expectations for educational success, use of learning situations that do not call on the students' knowledge or are not meaningful to them).[21]

Living in a disadvantaged area may constitute an additional challenge for students wishing to obtain a first diploma or other qualification, but deprivation should not be regarded as the systematic cause of higher dropout rates. Other factors are also at play.

School perseverance and educational success are part of a complex process that is affected positively or negatively by a number of factors relating to the student's academic experience and characteristics, and the characteristics of their family, school and community. Disadvantaged areas usually have more of the factors that make young people vulnerable, which increases the influence of these factors.

20. Archambault, J., "Pourquoi y a-t-il en proportion davantage d'enfants pauvres en difficulté d'apprentissage?" in *Vivre le primaire*, vol. 23, no. 3: 2, 2010 [translation].

21. Boulanger, D., F. Larose and Y. Couturier, "La logique déficitaire en intervention sociale auprès des parents: Les pratiques professionnelles et les représentations sociales" in *Nouvelles pratiques sociales*, vol. 23, no. 1: 152-176, 2010. Also available online (in French only): https://www.erudit.org/fr/revues/nps/2010-v23-n1-nps1519579/1003174ar.

Some of these factors play a key role in school perseverance and educational success. They are often divided into four categories and are cited as determinants of school perseverance and educational success.[22] If the school team is familiar with and understands these determinants, it will be better able to identify the students' strengths and needs, to set priorities and to identify those actions that will have a positive impact on all students' learning.

PERSONAL FACTORS

- **Academic learning:** Performance at school in reading, writing and mathematics
- **Social learning and lifestyle habits:** Self-control, social conduct and behaviour, self-esteem, relations with peers, diet and physical activity, smoking, alcohol and drug use, work-school balance, depressive feelings
- **Commitment to school:** Motivation and academic and career aspirations

SCHOOL FACTORS

- Pedagogical and educational practices
- Administrative practices
- Teacher-student relationship
- Support for students experiencing difficulties
- Climate in the classroom and at school
- School-family-community connections

FAMILY FACTORS

- Parents' level of education
- Socio-economic status
- Value placed on education
- Parental support
- School-family connection

SOCIAL (COMMUNITY) FACTORS

- Student's home neighbourhood and surroundings
- Community resources


22. The classification is based on the work of the Réunir Réussir team. Réunir Réussir, Fact Sheets, [online] (Montréal, 2013): http://reunirreussir.org/pdf/doc_fiches_pratiques_determinants_eng.pdf (Accessed February 15, 2019). [Practical information to accompany the reference document Taking Effective Action on the Determinants of School Perseverance and Educational Success].

The determinants related to the school are those on or with which the school can act in order to have a positive impact on success rates among students from disadvantaged areas. Practices applied in classrooms and schools and by school boards all affect the determinants related to the students and their academic experience (personal factors). These are recognized as the most important determinants of educational success: academic and social learning, lifestyle habits and commitment to school.

Although the school has less influence over the determinants related to the family and the community, it must nevertheless take them into account, because they also contribute to the student's success. In situations where contacts are forged between schools, families and community partners, where each player has their own role, interventions will have the most impact and be beneficial for all students.

All the determinants shown in the diagram below combine to form a dynamic system where the student's various environments have a reciprocal impact throughout their schooling.

Determinants of school perseverance and educational success in disadvantaged areas
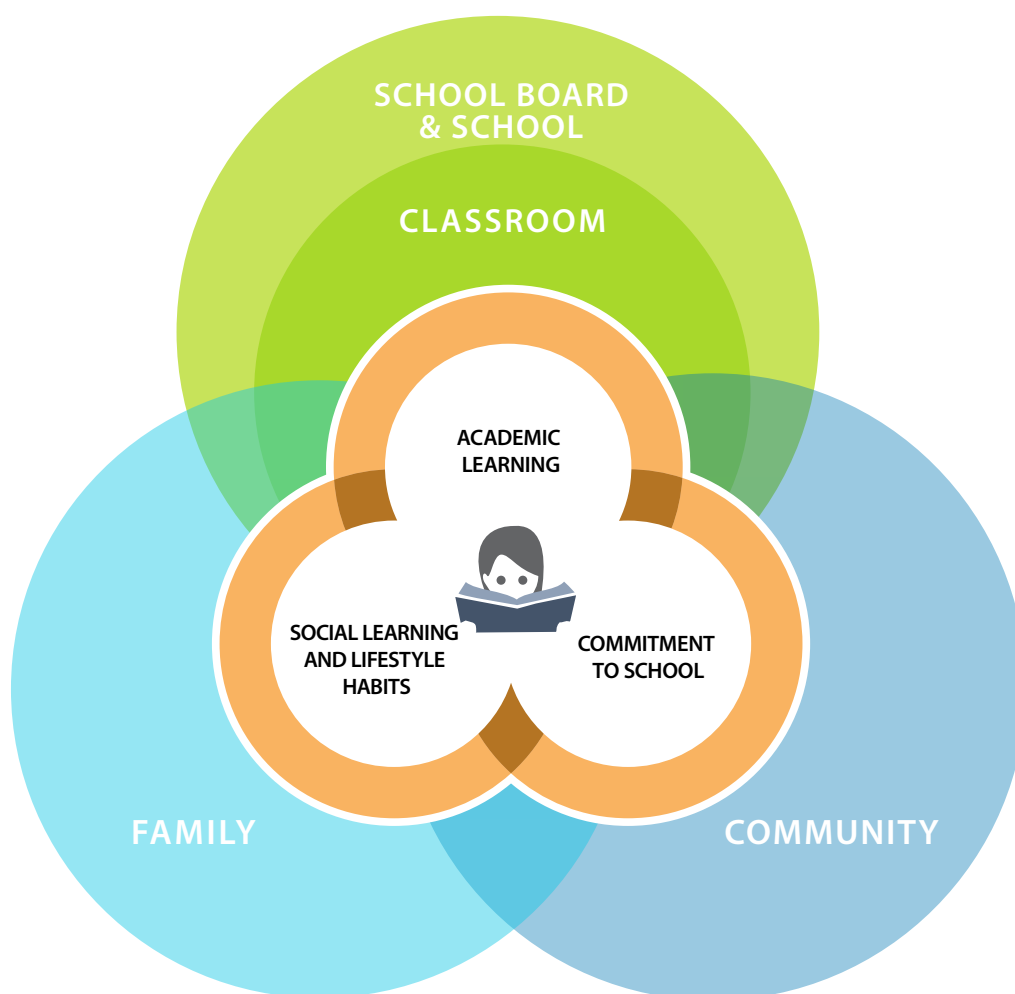
Source: Diagram inspired by the models proposed by Michel Janosz (Université de Montréal). [*Translation*]

Some authors have studied the impact of this system on the students' educational path and have identified the following effects:

- the teacher effect
- the classroom effect
- the school effect
- the school board effect
- the family effect
- the community effect

All these effects are presented in more detail below.

THE TEACHER EFFECT

Student learning is directly influenced by **pedagogical practices** and by the **teacher–student relationship**, the quality of which is impacted by the teacher's belief in the student's potential, and hence the expectations communicated to the student. A quality relationship takes into consideration the student's personal characteristics and needs, as well as the support provided to the student. The teacher effect is therefore the outcome of a process of interaction.[23]

The teacher's practices and attitudes play a major role in reinforcing the students' commitment to school. Students will have a more positive attitude and be more motivated to study if they feel their teacher is interested in them, will support them as needed, and will allow them to express themselves and make their own decisions.[24]

The students' commitment to school, especially from a behavioural, emotional and cognitive standpoint, tends to change over time and during important school transitions (from preschool to elementary school and from elementary to secondary school). This tendency can be seen among different groups, including students from disadvantaged areas. Since dropping out is the ultimate step in a process of declining commitment, it is vital to take action at the first signs of disengagement. Teachers are in the best position to be able to identify the precursory signs of declining commitment to school.[25]

23. Bressoux, P., "Réflexions sur l'effet-maître et l'étude des pratiques enseignantes" in *Les dossiers des sciences de l'éducation*, vol. 5, no. 1: 35-52, 2001. Also available online (in French only): https://www.persee.fr/doc/dsedu_1296-2104_2001_num_5_1_949.

24. Pitzer, J. and E. Skinner, "Predictors of Changes in Students' Motivational Resilience Over the School Year: The Roles of Teacher Support, Self-Appraisals, and Emotional Reactivity" in *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, vol. 41, no. 1: 15-29, 2017. Also available online: https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025416642051.

25. Archambault, I. et al., *Étude comparative de l'engagement scolaire des élèves de milieux défavorisés issus ou non de l'immigration: Contributions de l'environnement scolaire et des pratiques enseignantes* (Montréal: Université de Montréal, 2015). Also available online (in French only): http://www.frqsc.gouv.qc.ca/documents/11326/552404/PRS_ArchambaultI_rapport_%C3%A9l%C3%A8ves-immigration-ou-non.pdf/324adbae-2887-4b18-ae5a-6c506b5ce46e.

THE CLASSROOM EFFECT

The classroom should be an environment that is conducive to learning for all students.[26] A **classroom climate** is said to be conducive to learning when it offers multiple opportunities to learn and when the students are focused on the task at hand and engaged in learning situations. Classroom climate also has an impact on quality of life at school.

Some **classroom practices** are more conducive to learning, including those that encourage students to work together and allow them to play a supporting, motivational and protective role with their peers. The use of differentiated instruction in the classroom, and the application of approaches favourable to active participation and emotional investment by students, also help to improve the quality of an environment conducive to learning.

Dynamics **between students** play an important role in the classroom, and their influence can generate both desirable and undesirable effects. Heterogeneous groups (classes composed of students with different performance levels) and activities that require students to work together are known to have a positive impact on learning. Students develop their own understanding by working together and talking to one another. Heterogeneous groups and team projects also allow students to adopt other norms and behaviours.

THE SCHOOL EFFECT

School climate also plays a role in creating an environment conducive to learning. The school is one of the students' main living environments, and the place where they learn to live in society. By guiding students toward healthy relationship habits, school staff members can play a role in creating a **positive, safe and caring school climate**.[27]

Leadership that focuses on learning plays a major role in the professional development of all staff members and affects their attitude toward enhancing and improving their practices. **Collaboration** between all the school's players, along with **mutual support**, are also known to foster student learning. It is true that teachers influence the students' success, but they cannot do it alone: they need support.

Information on the school environment and student learning can be used to prepare a profile of the situation, so that decisions can be based on an analysis of the needs of both the students and their environment. The importance given to **transitions** and **the school staff's high expectations of students** are other essential factors that have positive impacts on learning for all students.

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26. Bressoux, P., ̈Les recherches sur les effets-écoles et les effets-maîtres ̈ in Revue française de pédagogie, no. 108: 91-137, 1994. Also available online (in French only): https://www.persee.fr/doc/rfp_0556-7807_1994_num_108_1_1260.

27. Beaumont, C., ̈L'engagement du personnel scolaire dans un projet collectif de prévention de la violence: un défi de taille! ̈ in Benoît Galand, Cécile Carra and Marie Verhoeven (Eds.), *Prévenir les violences à l'école* (Paris: PUF, 2012).

THE SCHOOL BOARD EFFECT

The organization of resources **to support learning** for all students, along with the school boards' **pedagogical leadership**, have a direct impact on student learning and the quality of school practices.

One of the conditions that school boards must fulfill in order to guide decisions by schools is to understand the context surrounding each school. This allows them to set precise objectives and identify priorities for those actions and contributions likely to have a positive impact on learning by students from disadvantaged areas.[28] The practices set out in *Pour une gestion décentralisée réussie: De la commission scolaire vers l'établissement*[29] are useful in this respect.

THE FAMILY EFFECT

The **benefits** of involving parents in **monitoring their children's educational success** and **progress at school** are well known. Parental involvement can take different forms: emphasizing the value of school, supervising homework, encouraging children to stay in school, taking an interest in life at school and attending school meetings, for example.[30] Students should be able to count on the partnership between their family and the school in helping them to develop and grow.

Although it can be challenging to build a true partnership based on mutual trust and respect for each party's competencies and role, partnerships such as these are an excellent way of involving parents in their child's education.[31]

THE COMMUNITY EFFECT

Support for the educational project from **community partners** is essential. Partners such as these can impact the lives of students and their families, for example by helping to provide positive, healthy, safe and welcoming environments. Schools have access to a wide range of different partners from the health, labour, community and municipal sectors, and they can all help to **create a safety net for students** and their families.

28. Wozney, L., *Les commissions scolaires et l'amélioration de la réussite des élèves: synthèse de la documentation consultée* (Montréal: Centre d'études sur l'apprentissage et la performance, 2006). Also available online (in French only): https://docplayer.fr/45184168-Les-commissions-scolaires-et-l-amelioration-de-la-reussite-des-eleves-synthese-de-la-documentation-consultee.html.

29. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, *Pour une gestion décentralisée réussie: De la commission scolaire vers l'établissement* [online, in French only] (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2018), http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/education/reseau/Gestion-decentralisee-Fascicule8-Inspirer.pdf (Accessed August 7, 2018).

30. Larivée, S. J., "L'implication des parents dans le cheminement scolaire de leur enfant: comment la favoriser?" in *Éducation & Formation*, e-297: 1-16 [online, in French only] (Québec: Université de Montréal, 2012), http://revueeducationformation.be/index.php?revue=13&page=3 (Accessed August 23, 2018).

31. Kanouté, F., "Point de vue de parents de milieux défavorisés sur leur implication dans le vécu scolaire de leur enfant," in *Interactions*, vol. 9: 17-37 (Sherbrooke: Université de Sherbrooke, 2006). Also available online (in French only): https://www.usherbrooke.ca/psychologie/fileadmin/sites/psychologie/espace-etudiant/Revue_Interactions/Volume_9_no_2/V9N2_KANOUTE_Fasal_p17-38.pdf.

Food for thought: Some questions

■ What are the reasons for the gaps between the success rates for students from advantaged and disadvantaged areas?

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■ What meaning do you give to the following statement by Jean Archambault: "The fact that a student doesn't know something doesn't mean that they are socially maladjusted or have a learning difficulty"?[32]

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■ What can we do to help reduce the success rate gap between students from advantaged and disadvantaged areas?

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For further information

Réunir Réussir, _Fact Sheets_, [online] (Montréal, 2013), http://reunirreussir.org/pdf/doc_fiches_pratiques_determinants_eng.pdf (Accessed February 15, 2019). [Practical information to accompany the reference document _Taking Effective Action on the Determinants of School Perseverance and Educational Success_].

Réunir Réussir, _Taking Effective Action on the Determinants of School Perseverance and Educational Success_, [online] (Montréal, 2013), http://reunirreussir.org/pdf/doc_reference_determinants_eng.pdf (Accessed February 15, 2019).

32. Archambault, J., 2011.

Section 3
Action

Rather than creating a hierarchy of students, the education system should be recognizing the potential of each and allowing (them) to fully develop in the right conditions, in other words, at their own pace and with the support needed.[33]

The first step in reducing inequality in educational success is to find a way to remove the obstacles that stand in the way of success for all students. Through actions that have been shown to have positive impacts, schools in disadvantaged areas can take steps to improve their learning environment and the potential for learning for all students.

Students as the focus of intervention

Schools implement a broad range of interventions, **but the question remains as to what can be done to make sure those interventions have the desired effects for students**. In the model shown in the diagram below, students are at the core of interventions built on the values and foundations described above. The figure shows the different environments in which students evolve: school, family and community. It highlights the importance of ensuring that roles and responsibilities are shared among all the stakeholders in the education community, and that actions are planned properly. The model also shows five key components known to have the potential to enhance the impact of actions taken by schools with students from disadvantaged areas. The more a given action involves these key components, the greater the potential for student success will be.

These key components, like the actions themselves and the conditions for their implementation, are relevant to all schools and centres. However, they are of capital importance in disadvantaged areas, because of the significant concentration of students exposed to more factors that are detrimental to educational success.

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33. Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Steering the Course Back to Equity in Education: Report on the State and Needs of Education 2014-2016* (Summary) [online] (Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 2016), http://www1.cse.gouv.qc.ca/fichiers/documents/publications/CEBE/50-0494Summary.pdf (Accessed August 7, 2018).

Intervention in disadvantaged areas

SCHOOL BOARD & SCHOOL

CLASSROOM

ACADEMIC LEARNING

SOCIAL LEARNING AND LIFESTYLE HABITS

COMMITMENT TO SCHOOL

FAMILY

COMMUNITY

VISION

A school that welcomes students from disadvantaged areas, and stakeholders who take concrete action, through collaboration, commitment and professional practices, and who contribute, with partners, to ensure equal opportunities for success for all.

Provide leadership in the area of social justice

Involve the education community

Continuously develop and use expertise

Intervene early and throughout the students' schooling

Acknowledge and legitimize the students' life experiences

BELIEVING THAT EVERYONE CAN BE EDUCATED

BELIEVING IN OUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE LEARNING

EQUALITY I FAIRNESS I SOCIAL JUSTICE

Key Component 1
Acknowledge and legitimize the students' life experiences

The knowledge children bring to school, derived from personal and cultural experiences, is central to their learning. To overlook this resource is to deny children access to the knowledge construction process.[34]

In disadvantaged as well as in advantaged areas, students start school with a variety of experiences and different levels of the knowledge, skills and self-awareness they need in order to develop and learn. For some, their experiences may be similar to those they will have at school, while for others, they may be further removed. For students in disadvantaged areas, the cultural gap is often greater than for students in advantaged areas, and this may have an adverse effect on their commitment to school. For example, some students may have had fewer opportunities to develop their social skills, and this may have consequences for their learning and their relationships with other students.

The cultural gap between students from disadvantaged areas and those from advantaged areas cannot be ignored, nor should it necessarily be associated with learning delays or difficulties. This type of association can increase the risk that answers based on misunderstandings (incorrect interpretation of a question) will be viewed as mistakes, or that a student's inability to sit still will be regarded as a behavioural difficulty.[35]

A student's life experience is necessarily influenced by the cultural context in which they live. Regardless of the socio-economic environment, that baggage will always include the student's strengths and weaknesses. Children from disadvantaged areas tend to have less exposure to reading, stories and discussions about books when they are very young. On the other hand, they may be more used to situations in which they must demonstrate responsibility and manual skills at an earlier age.

By considering each student's experience, school staff members can make sure that existing knowledge is used and can also encourage the students to learn new things. By planning learning based on a class profile, teachers can prioritize certain focuses of learning, provide a stimulating environment and enrich each individual student's experience.[36]

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34. Villegas, A. M. and T. Lucas, cited in Ontario Ministry of Education, "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, Towards Equity and Inclusivity in Ontario Schools," in Capacity Building Series, no. 35, Toronto: 2014 (Secretariat Special Edition). Also available online: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/CBS_ResponsivePedagogy.pdf.

35. Québec. Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 2016 [*translation*].

36. Galant, B., *Conditions de réussite: quels sont les effets de la différenciation pédagogique sur les dimensions cognitives et socio-affectives?* [online] (France: Conseil national d'évaluation du système scolaire, 2017), http://www.cnesco.fr/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/170313_18_Galand.pdf (Accessed July 27, 2018).

Acknowledging and legitimizing the students' life experiences means:

- **Allowing the students to use their resources**,[37] for example:

  - making the school into a warm environment where all students and parents feel welcome
  - taking the students' strengths and prior learning into account to enhance their sense of competency and foster their commitment
  - acknowledging and valuing each student's life experiences and culture
  - diversifying learning contexts
  - using approaches that allow teaching and learning to be adjusted to the students' various, changing needs
  - making explicit connections between the students' experience, knowledge and learning

- **Enriching the students' experience**,[38] for example:

  - giving the students opportunities to experience a variety of situations in the classroom and in activities that allow them to experience success
  - encouraging social interactions centred on learning
  - providing students with access to a range of reading material so that they become familiar with written texts
  - supporting parents in their role by taking family situations into account
  - encouraging the practices of greeting parents and talking with them at formal and informal meetings

Conditions for implementation:

✓ Emphasis on the importance of parents in the school

✓ Teaching materials (e.g. books and videos) that are available to families and, where necessary, to partners

✓ A meaningful physical layout that reflects the students' different situations

✓ Planning of time for reflection and dialogue with staff members

37. Rousseau, N. et al., *Les enjeux de l'intégration et de l'inclusion scolaire des élèves à risque du primaire et du secondaire: Méta-analyse et méta-synthèse* (Trois-Rivières: Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, 2015). Also available online (in French only): http://www.frqsc.gouv.qc.ca/fr/la-recherche/la-recherche-en-vedette/histoire/les-enjeux-de-l-integration-et-de-l-inclusion-scolaire-des-eleves-a-risque-du-primaire-et-du-secondaire-meta-analyse-et-meta-synthese-lx36yjhh1464804790606.

38. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Québec Education Program: Preschool Education and Elementary Education* [online] (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2001), http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/PFEQ/educprg2001.pdf (Accessed July 27, 2018).

Sample Action
My Family Treasure

The activity entitled *Mon trésor de famille* (My Family Treasure) was created as part of a research project and developed by the ELODIL (language learning and linguistic diversity) team at the Université de Montréal. It has since been used in many schools in Greater Montréal. It can easily be adapted to disadvantaged areas, and targets the development of motivation and writing skills among students.

The learning situation is implemented over several sessions in Elementary Cycle One or Cycle Two classes. The educational aim is for the students to write descriptive texts about a family treasure. Suggested procedure:

- Session 1: Read the children's book *Something From Nothing*
- Session 2: Choose words to describe a family treasure
- Session 3: Write a descriptive text
- Session 4: Present the text to the other students and to parents (optional)

Results: The activity allows students to highlight the most positive aspects of their family history. It also provides an opportunity to strengthen their identity, uniqueness, self-esteem and sense of belonging. Several basic elements of reading and writing are used. The situation also provides an opportunity to strengthen the school-family relationship.

Source   (in French only): ELODIL, *Trésors de famille* [online] (Québec: Université de Montréal, 2013), http://www.elodil.umontreal.ca/videos/presentation/video/projet-tresors-de-famille-et-ecriture (Accessed July 27, 2018).

ELODIL, *Des histoires familiales pour apprendre à écrire! Un projet école-familles-communauté* [online] (Québec: Université de Montréal, 2013), http://www.elodil.umontreal.ca/guides/des-histoires-familiales-pour-apprendre-a-ecrire (Accessed July 27, 2018).

Food for thought: Some questions

■ What can be done to improve the relationship between the school, the students and their families?

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■ What can be done, in the school or in the classroom, to learn more about the students' experiences and family cultures?

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■ What can be done to enrich the students' life experience, in particular in literacy and numeracy?

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■ Given the available resources, what can be done to learn more about and take into account the cultural and social diversity of the school population?

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For further information

Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens, *À l'écoute de chaque élève grâce à la différenciation pédagogique* (Toronto: Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens, 2007). Also available online (in French only): http://www.edu. gov.on.ca/fre/teachers/studentsuccess/a_ecoutepartie1.pdf.

Bureau de l'Éducation Prioritaire de la Direction Générale de l'Enseignement Scolaire, *Enseigner plus explicitement: situation et gestes professionnels au quotidien* [online, in French only] (Paris: Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, 2016), https://www.reseau-canope. fr/education-prioritaire/fileadmin/user_upload/user_upload/actualites/enseigner_plus_ explicitement_cr.pdf (Accessed July 27, 2018).

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Centre Alain Savary, *Éducation prioritaire: Difficulté des élèves, difficulté des enseignants, quels leviers?* http://centre-alain-savary.ens-lyon.fr/CAS/education-prioritaire/ressources/ theme-1-perspectives-pedagogiques-et-educatives/travailler-sur-ce-qui-donnent-lieu- a-de-fortes-inegalites/difficultes-des-eleves-difficultes-des-enseignants-en-education- prioritaire-quels-leviers (Accessed August 7, 2018).

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Further resources in English

Department of Education, *First Steps Literacy* [online] (University of Western Australia: Government of Australia) http://det.wa.edu.au/stepsresources/redirect/?oid=com.arsdigita. cms.contenttypes.FileStorageItem-id-13797081&stream_asset=true (Accessed March 5, 2019). The project *Continuum en lecture* is adapted from First Steps.

Ontario Ministry of Education, *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12*, 2013. Also available online: http://www.edu.gov. on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/learningforall2013.pdf.

Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, *Québec Reading Connection* [online], https://www.quebecreadingconnection.ca.

Key Component 2
Provide leadership in the area of social justice

The school team's concern with fighting injustice and making sure all students are treated fairly has a significant impact on the learning climate and on student success.[39]

In disadvantaged areas, families face a variety of situations that are often more complex than those encountered by families in advantaged areas. As a result, biases or false beliefs may arise when the past experiences of students and their families are brought to light, and this may, in turn, impact the students' educational success. Leadership in the area of social justice can help to promote values and attitudes that are respectful of students and their cultures, and help staff members to become aware of any prejudice.

Providing leadership in the area of social justice means:

- **Adopting a vision focused on student learning**, for example:
  - devising a vision of educational success tailored to the potential and aspirations of the students, a vision rooted in the values of equality, fairness and social justice
  - promoting this vision within the education community
  - encouraging the school team to be aware of the different situations of families and any biases or false beliefs that may arise, to protect the students from injustice
  - making the education community aware that the school has the power to restore equal opportunity for learning and success for all students

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39. Archambault, J., "Des directions qui se préoccupent de justice sociale" in AQEP, *Vivre le primaire*, vol. 27, no. 1: 58-59, 2014.

■ **Believing that all students can be educated**,[40] for example:

- exercising a form of leadership that conveys a vision of educational success focused on the fulfilment of every student's potential
- believing that all students can succeed and that learning is a priority for everyone
- making choices that provide all students with access to competency and knowledge development and to education without discrimination
- establishing high expectations for everyone to succeed (students and school staff members)

■ **Continuously developing behaviours to promote fairness**,[41] for example:

- adopting organizational and administrative practices that support fairness and inclusion, specifically those practices that require choices adapted to local or regional situations[42]
- taking different needs and experiences into account by becoming more aware of the context in which students live, for example by using different types of data
- creating a positive, safe and caring climate
- denouncing inequality and taking action against all forms of exclusion and discrimination

Conditions for implementation:

✓ Prioritization and planning of actions based on a profile and analysis of the area (school board and school)

✓ Powers and responsibilities divided in a way that brings them as close as possible to students, individuals and communities concerned[43]

✓ Implementation of an educational project that promotes high expectations for all students

✓ Planning times for reflection and dialogue on social justice and fairness, with all staff members

✓ Fair allocation of resources that takes into account the needs of schools and centres, based on recommendations made by the resource allocation committee and presented to the council of commissioners[44]

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40. Trouilloud, D. and P. Sarrazin, "Les connaissances actuelles sur l'effet Pygmalion: processus, poids et modulateurs" in *Revue française de pédagogie*, no. 145: 89-119, 2003. Also available online in French only: http://ife.ens-lyon.fr/publications/edition-electronique/revue-francaise-de-pedagogie/INRP_RF145_7.pdf.

41. Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 2016.

42. See *Pour une gestion décentralisée réussie: de la commission scolaire vers l'établissement* [online, in French only] (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec) http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/contenus-communs/commissions-scolaires/pratiques-de-gestion/gestion-decentralisee (Accessed August 24, 2018).

43. *Education Act* (CQLR, chapter I-13.3), section 207.1.

44. *Education Act* (CQLR, chapter I-13.3), section 193.3.

Sample Action

False beliefs and prejudices concerning children and families from disadvantaged areas

In areas where deprivation is present, it can be challenging for school staff members to believe that all students can be educated, to have high expectations for them and to work with their families, partly because of prejudices or false beliefs concerning children from disadvantaged areas. School principals must use a variety of methods to apply fair practices at school, so that staff members will:

- understand the characteristics and recognize the strengths of the area in which they work
- deconstruct thoughts of "deficiency" in connection with students and parents from disadvantaged areas
- become aware of their representations of the students and their families, and where applicable, eliminate any false beliefs and prejudices that may be conveyed at school

To do this, the principal can introduce activities that involve reflection. The administration can use information to raise awareness and to analyze and handle specific situations. Whenever an opportunity arises, principals should remind staff members of the school's vision of social justice.

Results: The reflection process helps to eliminate practices that marginalize students and casts doubt on attitudes that place blame on students or their families, and on the "deficit"-related discourse.

Source: Archambault, Jean and Li Harnois, *La justice sociale en éducation: les faits saillants tirés de la littérature scientifique et professionnelle* (Montréal: Université de Montréal, 2010).

Food for thought: Some questions

■ Why is it so important to talk about fairness in disadvantaged areas?

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■ What can we do to support reflection and dialogue within our team, so that we are able to question our prejudices and beliefs?

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■ In what ways do our practices help maintain or reduce inequality?

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■ What can we do to promote the values of social justice, fairness and equality at our school?

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■ What can be done to create conditions in which everyone's potential can be maximized?

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For further information

Archambault, J. and F. Dumais, *Des données pour diriger: Utiliser ou produire des données et prendre des décisions. Un cadre de référence pour les directions d'écoles en milieu défavorisé* (Montréal: Une école montréalaise pour tous, 2012). Also available online (in French only): https://www.webdepot.umontreal.ca/Usagers/archaj/MonDepotPublic/Diriger/1-%20 Diriger%20une%20%C3%A9cole%20en%20milieu%20d%C3%A9favoris%C3%A9/ Documents%20professionnels/Archambault%20et%20Dumais%2C%202012%2C%20 DesDonneesPourDiriger.pdf.

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Centraide Québec and Chaudière-Appalaches, *Un préjugé, c'est coller une étiquette: La lutte contre la pauvreté s'arrête là où commencent nos préjugés, 4e document de réflexion* (Québec: Centraide Québec et Chaudière-Appalaches, 2011). Also available online in French only: http:// www.100prejuges.ca/medias/fichier/pages/un-prejuge-c-est-coller-une-etiquette.pdf.

Janosz, M., *Le changement de pratiques à l'école: Leçons de l'évaluation de la mise en œuvre de la stratégie d'intervention* Agir autrement [online, in French only] (Montréal: GRES, Université de Montréal et Université du Québec à Montréal, 2011), https://www.inspq.qc.ca/ sites/default/files/jasp/archives/2011/JASP2011_29nov_8_40_MJanosz.pdf (Accessed August 24, 2018).

Légal, J.-B., *Effets non conscients des stéréotypes sur les comportements et les performances* (Reims, France: AFPS et Ministère de la Recherche, 2015). Also available online (in French only): http://www.prejuges-stereotypes.net/espaceDocumentaire/legal.pdf.

Leithwood, K., Ontario Leadership Framework 2012: *A Discussion of the Research Foundations* (Ontario: Institute for Education Leadership, 2012). Also available online: https://www. education-leadership-ontario.ca/application/files/2514/9452/5287/The_Ontario_Leadership_ Framework_2012_-_with_a_Discussion_of_the_Research_Foundations.pdf.

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Réunir Réussir, *Taking Effective Action on the Determinants of School Perseverance and Educational Success*, [online] (Montréal, 2013), http://reunirreussir.org/pdf/doc_reference_ determinants_eng.pdf (Accessed February 15, 2019).

Key Component 3
Involve the education community

School, family and community are the three core elements of a form of cooperation that is key to the educational success of students. Cooperation is based among other things on equality and mutual respect between partners, and on well-planned actions that are relevant to the school's educational project.[45]

In disadvantaged areas, school staff members cannot work alone to address the key determinants of educational success for all students. School perseverance and dropping out are complex phenomena that require the involvement of partners from the community who combine their efforts with those of school staff members to form a true education community. The involvement of this education community is vital in reinforcing the overall power to act on educational success and hence in meeting the needs of students and their families. By forming a partnership, the various stakeholders can work in a coordinated, complementary way that is respectful of their roles and responsibilities, for the benefit of all concerned.

Involving the education community also means welcoming families in an open, non-judgmental way. Parents' perceptions of school are forged by their own experience, culture, skills, representations, concerns and doubts. Some of the basic conditions for creating a true partnership are to give parents opportunities to see for themselves what their children experience, do and learn in the classroom, and to engage them in dialogue and encourage them to discuss and express their concerns.

In addition, involving the education community means working with the different local organizations. These community partners who are involved with the educational project are essential in implementing recognized, structured, joint actions that can affect students and their families. By nature, these organizations can contribute to a positive, healthy, safe and welcoming environment.

45. Deslandes, R., *Les conditions essentielles à la réussite des partenariats école-famille-communauté* [online] (Trois-Rivières: Réseau d'information pour la réussite éducative, CTREQ and Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon, 2010) [translation], http://rire.ctreq.qc.ca/media/pdf/Coeureaction_Cond-essent_FINAL.pdf (Accessed August 24, 2018).

Involving the education community means:

- **Helping families to become engaged in their child's education**,[46] for example:

  - welcoming parents and acknowledging their skills as their children's primary educators
  - building parental trust in the school, step by step, through dialogue and a positive relationship
  - allowing parents to learn about and understand the school by forging connections with them
  - explaining the school's expectations and taking the parents' expectations into account
  - getting parents involved in the process of supporting and assisting their children, among other things by asserting the value of school and educational expectations
  - giving parents an opportunity to see what their children experience, do and learn in the classroom and at school
  - acknowledging the support and assistance parents might need

- **Fostering the involvement of families and partners**[47] **so that they can contribute to the students' educational success**, for example:

  - exercising a form of leadership that gives priority to learning and requires contributions from families and partners
  - sharing a common vision of learning in which everyone wants to be involved and make a contribution
  - acknowledging the legitimacy, expertise and complementary nature of all the stakeholders
  - acknowledging the benefits of complementary actions for everyone concerned

- **Working together to establish a shared project focused on learning**,[48] for example:

  - implementing a rigorous, structured process to prepare an educational project[49] for the school, based on an understanding of the issues, challenges and needs that is shared by everyone in the education community[50]
  - using qualitative and quantitative data to understand, analyze and assess the impacts of interventions on success, taking into account the students' characteristics
  - ensuring that the educational project is clear for the entire education community
  - devising ways of providing students with conditions conducive to learning, by offering projects corresponding to their interests that will fuel their motivation and enhance their sense of belonging

46. Bernardin, J., *Le rapport à l'école des élèves de milieux populaires* (Louvain-la-Neuve: De Boeck, collection Le Point sur, Pédagogie, 2013).

47. Larivée, S. J. et al., *Les pratiques de collaboration école-famille-communauté efficaces ou prometteuses: Synthèse des connaissances et pistes d'intervention* (Montréal: Université de Montréal, 2017). Also available online, in French only: http://www.frqsc.gouv.qc.ca/documents/11326/448958/AP_2014-2015_Larivees_rapport_ecole-famille-communaute.pdf.pdf/9a254d5f-da94-47fd-939c-d69f1419b2c5.

48. Janosz, M. et al., 2010.

49. Since Bill 105 was adopted, the educational project includes the school's educational project **and** success plan.

50. Luc, É., *Le leadership partagé: Modèle d'apprentissage et d'actualisation* (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, Paramètres, 2010).

Conditions for implementation:

✓ Recognition of the families' and partners' expertise and clarification of their specific, complementary roles

✓ Recognition of time spent promoting and maintaining connections with families and partners

✓ Availability of rooms for meetings or joint activities with families and partners

✓ Clear, shared understanding of the school board's policy orientations

✓ Availability of financial and human resources

Sample Action

Support mechanism designed to develop coherent practices for families, schools and communities

A child's level of writing proficiency and skill depends on what they have learned in the different areas of life, and will vary according to certain factors (socio-economic background, parental practices, etc.).

A parental support mechanism for learning to write was devised as part of an action research project carried out in collaboration with a number of partners. To ensure consistency between the practices used in the different areas of a child's life, it was decided to focus on direct interventions with the child and their parents, using theme-based writing activities. The mechanism, used first in the home, was then implemented by community organizations (in small groups), and finally by schools. Authentic writing activities were carried out, based on work done in the classroom on topics such as sentence structure and spelling. These activities gave parents the opportunity to:

- see their children in action, in a learning activity presented as a game
- see how their children worked in a classroom
- learn more about the teacher within a learning framework
- receive support from a community worker to strengthen their relationship with the child, within the specific context of writing
- test support strategies tailored to the child's learning in the classroom

Results: The new mechanism helped ensure that practices used by families, schools and communities were consistent and were designed to help improve the writing skills of Grade 1 students. In addition, family-school-community collaboration also appeared to benefit.

Source: Puentes-Newman, G., *Quel soutien scolaire et communautaire offrir aux parents afin de favoriser la réussite de l'entrée dans l'écrit chez les enfants?* (Sherbrooke: Université de Sherbrooke, 2015). Also available online (in French only): http://www.frqsc.gouv.qc.ca/documents/11326/449040/PT_Puentes-NeumanG_resume_sou-tien-parents.pdf/8ed9a4ec-4a39-4551-8676-947f204610cf.

Food for thought: Some questions

- How are parents welcomed into our school? How is our welcome expressed? What form could it take?

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- With which partners (early childhood education centres, health and social service network institutions, the community, family or cultural milieu, municipalities, companies, etc.) could we work to help meet the needs of children, students and their families and adjust our services to suit their characteristics?

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- What does our school do to work with families and partners? What does it do to encourage collaboration? What do we want this collaboration to become? How can we take it further?

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For further information

Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative du Québec, *Guide d'élaboration d'un plan d'action école-famille-communauté selon une approche écosystémique* (Québec: CTREQ and Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon, 2013). Also available online (in French only): http://www.ctreq.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/CENT_9893_GUIDE_LR.pdf.

Dumoulin, C., P. Thériault and J. Duval, *Répertoire d'activités: Collaboration école-famille-communauté* (Chicoutimi: Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, 2012). Also available online (in French only): https://crepas.qc.ca/medias/2020/06/67_RepertoireDActivitesCollabEFC-1-1.pdf.

Larivée, S. J, *Parler aux parents, oui, mais comment?* [online, in French only] (Montréal, 2014), http://recitpresco.qc.ca/sites/default/files/documents/larivee-pformation-mars-2014-revci-05-03-2014.pdf (Accessed on August 24, 2018).

Office National d'Information sur les Enseignements et les Professions, "Changer de regard pour changer de posture," in *La mallette des parents* [online, in French only] (Paris: Ministère de l'Éducation nationale), http://mallettedesparents.onisep.fr/Construire-la-confiance/Changer-de-regard-pour-changer-de-posture (Accessed July 28, 2018).

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, *Equity and Equality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools* [online] (Paris: OECD, 2012), https://www.oecd.org/education/school/50293148.pdf (Accessed July 28, 2018).

Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, "Partenariat – École, famille et communauté," in *Accueil et intégration des élèves issus de l'immigration au Québec : Cadre de référence* [online, in French only] (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2014), http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/education/diversite/AccueilIntegration_4_Partenariat.pdf (Accessed July 28, 2018)

Other resources in English

Deslandes, R., *Crucial Conditions for Successful School-Family-Community Partnerships*, https://www.ctreq.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Conditions-essentielles-anglais.pdf (Accessed February 25, 2019).

The *Australian Parenting Website*, Teachers: Involving Parents in Schools [online] https://raisingchildren.net.au/for-professionals/working-with-parents/communicating-with-parents/involving-parents-in-school (Accessed February 25, 2019).

Key Component 4
Continuously develop and use expertise

If we haven't thought about poverty and deprivation, we can't address it effectively.[51]

In disadvantaged areas, people encounter many personal and professional challenges. To help meet these challenges, school staff members must be able to count on the necessary support to help them do their jobs. Professional development is known to help improve motivation and commitment to deal with challenges. The people involved in helping students to achieve educational success are usually more satisfied with their work, and with their students' behaviour and learning, when their sense of self-efficacy is high and when they believe they can influence their students' success.

Professional development covers a broad range of topics in the field of education. Although the topics addressed may differ from one school to the next, depending on the needs of school staff members, professional development activities focusing on student learning and commitment, on consistent actions taken in the classroom and at school, and on school-family collaboration deserve special attention in this context. Many teachers say they are ill-prepared to work with families[52]. An introduction to the intervention context in disadvantaged areas is an important topic for professional development for all new staff members working in schools in these areas.

Teacher involvement in the choice and planning of professional development topics, along with a collaborative approach that encourages peer support and sharing of methods, will help teachers to transfer their learning into practice, and will ensure continuity and consistency in classroom and school interventions.

51. Kanouté, F,. *Faire une différence* [video recording]. Produced by: Guy Fradette (Montréal, Québec, 2010): Programme de soutien à l'école montréalaise. DVD, 27 min 06 s. [translation].

52. Archambault, I. et al., 2015.

Continuously developing and using expertise means:

■ **Acting on factors that have the most impact**,[53] for example, for principals:

– giving priority to professional development for all school staff members, based on the needs they express (school boards and schools)

– taking steps to prepare a profile of the area in order to understand the situation of students and families, with a view to questioning practices and giving meaning to pedagogical innovation

– identifying strategies with a view to devising an individual and collective development plan based on the needs of students and families from disadvantaged areas

■ **Believing in one's ability to have a positive impact on the students' academic progress**,[54] for example, for teachers:

– questioning and strengthening their practices

– continuing to develop their expertise with respect to the main predictors of educational success (the student's commitment; academic and social learning)

– ascribing importance to continuing to improve their skills

■ **Encouraging a culture of collaboration**,[55,56] for example, for principals:

– encouraging and creating conditions conducive to collaboration between school staff members

– fostering the creation of different collaborative working mechanisms (co-development, creation of professional learning communities [PLCs] or communities of practice, support, etc.) in order to continue to develop expertise based on best practices for disadvantaged areas

– exploring different ways to facilitate the sharing of pedagogical practices (e.g. time for planning, collaboration, observation, testing and reflection)

53. Talbot, L., "Les recherches sur les pratiques enseignantes efficaces" in *Questions vives, recherches en éducation*, vol. 6, no. 18 [online, in French only] (France: OpenEdition, 2012) http://journals.openedition.org/questionsvives/1234 (Accessed August 27, 2018).

54. Rousseau, N. and S. Thibaudeau, "S'approprier une pratique inclusive: regard sur le sentiment de compétence de trois équipes-écoles au cœur d'un processus de changement" in *Éducation et francophonie*, vol. 39, no. 2: 145-164 (2011). Also available online (in French only): https://www.acelf.ca/c/revue/pdf/EF-39-2-145_ROUSSEAU.pdf.

55. Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Professional Development: Enriching the Entire Teaching Profession: Brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports and Minister of Higher Learning, Research and Science. Summary* (Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 2014). Also available online: https://www.cse.gouv.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/50-0483-SU-developpement-professionnel.pdf (Accessed August 7, 2018).

56. Leclerc, M., *Communauté d'apprentissage professionnelle: Guide à l'intention des leaders scolaires* (Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2012).

- **Fostering a culture of collaboration**,[57,58] for example, for teachers:
  - fostering joint responsibility for students by carrying out shared training and teaching activities
  - becoming involved in learning communities or other pedagogical networking activities, as needed

- **Providing support and following up on actions**,[59] for example, for principals:
  - supporting and encouraging staff initiatives that foster educational success for all students
  - assisting school staff members as needed, with due regard for effective practices in disadvantaged areas
  - supporting the testing of new practices by assisting staff members and monitoring the impacts of the practices
  - supporting the professional integration of new and young teachers

Conditions for implementation:

✓ Clear policy guidelines for professional development, at both the school and the school board

✓ Availability of resources to support professional development, along with differentiated assistance as needed

✓ Identification of professional development topics and methods, based on the profiles of students and teachers and an analysis of their needs

✓ Staff involvement in identifying professional development topics

✓ Monitoring of actions and impacts (school boards and schools)

✓ Assistance for staff as part of a collaborative, thoughtful approach

✓ Use of scientific and experiential knowledge (theorize practices)

57. Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Professional Development: Enriching the Entire Teaching Profession: Brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports and Minister of Higher Learning, Research and Science. Summary* (Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 2014). Also available online: https://www.cse.gouv.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/50-0483-SU-developpement-professionnel.pdf (Accessed August 7, 2018).

58. Leclerc, M., *Communauté d'apprentissage professionnelle: Guide à l'intention des leaders scolaires* (Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2012).

59. Janosz, M. et al., 2010.

Sample Action

A principal's leadership in establishing practices for teachers

Strategies used by the principal:

- present an abstract for a research report

- have teachers analyze students' results in English writing assignments (via the cycle team's working committee), in accordance with the outcomes set out in the Québec Education Program

- share the desire to improve success rates of at-risk students who obtain average results (motivation of teachers)

- identify needs (training, assistance, support, etc.)

- explicitly teach pedagogical practices (training)

- monitor and support (provide guidance), and carefully monitor results

- demonstrate the effectiveness of teaching practices through observations directly related to evaluations (finish line)

- create a community of professional learning

Results: The results show that this process, when applied to the introduction of a new practice, had a positive impact on the students' grammatical writing skills, which improved at an above-average rate. A transfer of creative writing skills, with more marked progress in writing among **average and weaker** students, was also observed.

Source: Rodrigue, M.-C. and N. Morin, *Diriger un établissement scolaire en appliquant des résultats issus de la recherche...*, [online, in French only] (Québec: CTREQ, 2016), http://3symposium.ctreq.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Diriger-un-etablissement-scolaire_Rodrigue-Morin.pdf (Accessed July 29, 2018).

Create a guideline for teaching mathematics in Elementary 1 to 6

The purpose of the project was to develop winning strategies for teaching the meaning of operations and number facts, and to establish a guideline for teaching elementary-level mathematics. All the school's elementary teachers were involved in the process, along with the remedial teacher, the principal, the school board's pedagogical advisor, a researcher from Université Laval and a MEES resource person. A three-year plan was prepared, covering training, field-testing, feedback at cycle team meetings, guidance, access to the necessary materials, and regular monitoring. The parents of Cycle One students were asked to use specific tools for homework, and were also offered training.

Committees – a pedagogical committee, a supervisory committee and a steering committee – were set up to ensure consistency.

Results: Results: Training has been given, the committees have been set up and the action has been implemented. The impact of the project has not yet been measured because the project is still underway.

Source: Veilleux, Marie-Josée, École du Buisson, Commission scolaire de la Capitale.

Food for thought: Some questions

- What steps has our school taken to support for the professional development all staff members? What are the desired impacts?

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- What conditions have been created to support the professional development of all staff members?

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- What can be done to create a climate that is open to change while providing assistance for staff members?

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- What steps will the school/school board team be taking? Which partners could play a role?

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- What can the school do to set up professional learning communities or other structures that would meet the professional development needs of school staff members?

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For additional information

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Key Component 5
Intervene early and throughout the students' schooling

Québec schools have to meet the challenge of dealing with the increasing heterogeneity of their students and of supporting their progress along various paths.[60]

In disadvantaged areas, students need assistance tailored to their needs that will allow them an enriched experience and that will foster their overall development and success. Assistance can take the form of preventive support for all students, combined with more targeted support and closer monitoring for those most at risk of having difficulties or dropping out. Interventions that start early in the student's lives, before problems arise, and continue throughout their schooling, will provide the means they need to prevent or address situations that may develop into problems. To help reinforce the New Approaches, New Solutions strategy, the schools concerned have been asked to adopt universal and targeted approaches to support all students in their learning.

To improve the students' chances of success, it is important to take preventive action and apply monitoring mechanisms throughout their time at school. This includes intervention during the transition from home to school which, like subsequent transitions from preschool, elementary and secondary school, is a key time in their lives. Steps to prevent problems in the development of literacy and numeracy skills are also important in providing equal opportunities for students from disadvantaged areas.[61] In addition, large numbers of people will be working with the students and their families, and it is therefore important for them to work together, know the expectations and choose the actions to be taken. Consistent and continued action, both during the school year and from one year to the next, is a basic condition for school perseverance and educational success.

Practices that reflect the heterogeneous nature of classes can help to ensure that teaching is both universal and targeted where necessary. Staff members have access to a variety of information on each individual student's schooling, which they can use to guide their practice and develop a collaborative approach.

For preventive interventions, it is important to remember that a student's willingness to learn depends partly on their commitment to school. Some of the factors known to promote commitment include a positive relationship with school staff, particularly teachers, and assignments that come with high expectations.

60. Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *Québec Education Program: Secondary Cycle Two* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2007).

61. Berger, M.-J. and A. Desrochers, (Eds.), *L'évaluation de la littératie* (Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 2011).

Intervening early and throughout the students' schooling means:

- **Continuously screening, filtering and identifying the students' needs**, for example:

  - observing and recognizing the students' strengths and needs
  - devising ways of evaluating the child's development, commitment to school and educational success through holistic analysis of their situation
  - gathering qualitative and quantitative data to monitor the students' commitment to and performance at school, and intervening at the first signs of difficulty
  - systematically monitoring actions and measuring their impact for students

- **Prevention**,[62,63] for example:

  - identifying needs relating to the students' determinants and experience at school
  - taking action on the determinants of school perseverance and educational success to maximize the impacts of interventions on student development and success
  - promoting the creation of a meaningful relationship between school staff members and students, to strengthen the students' commitment to school
  - planning different actions to assist the students and their families before and during transitions
  - using co-teaching to facilitate differentiated pedagogical support for students

- **Intervening early with young children and their families, and continuing with older children**,[64] for example:

  - establishing partnerships with families
  - supporting parents who struggle with literacy
  - guiding parents toward the services available in the community to help them improve their reading skills

- **Supporting students and their families**, for example:

  - helping the family to become involved in the child's schooling, so that they feel competent and confident
  - targeting specific learning objectives and explaining them clearly to families and students
  - providing flexible support tailored to the student's own strengths and needs

62. Janosz, M. et al., "Les élèves du primaire à risque de décrocher au secondaire: caractéristiques à 12 ans et prédicteurs à 7 ans," in *Étude longitudinale du développement des enfants du Québec (ELDEQ 1998 2010): De la naissance à 12 ans*, Vol. 7, Fascicule 2 (Montréal: Institut de la statistique du Québec, 2013). Also available online (in French only): http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/education/frequentation-scolaire/decrochage.pdf (Accessed August 7, 2018).

63. Potvin, P. and J.-R. Lapointe, *Guide de prévention pour les élèves à risque au primaire* (Québec: Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative du Québec, 2010). Also available online (in French only): http://www.reussiteeducativeestrie.ca/dynamiques/biblio_ens_prof/Guide-primaire_web.pdf (Accessed August 7, 2018).

64. Lessard, A. and S. Schmidt, *Recension des écrits sur la gestion de classe* (Sherbrooke, Université de Sherbrooke, 2011). Also available online (in French only): https://www.csrs.qc.ca/fileadmin/user_upload/Page_Accueil/Enseignants/Fenetre_pedagogique/PEPS/Gestion-classe.pdf (Accessed August 7, 2018).

Conditions for implementation:

✓ Fair division of resources, taking each school's needs into account, based on recommendations made by the resource allocation committee and presented to the council of commissioners[65]

✓ Planning of learning objectives while maintaining high expectations for all students

✓ Decisions made on the basis of data obtained from scientific and experiential knowledge, and from monitoring of students

✓ Creation of a culture of collaboration in which all staff members are encouraged to work together on actions aimed at prevention

✓ Alliance with parents

✓ Introduction of continuous monitoring mechanisms for students, focused on the learning process and competency development

Sample Action

A professional learning community to facilitate the transition from elementary to secondary school

A vice-principal set up a learning community for the school's three campuses, all located in disadvantaged areas, with a view to harmonizing pedagogical practices at the elementary and secondary levels.

Since the goal of the exercise was to facilitate the transition from elementary to secondary school, it was necessary to establish pedagogical connections between teachers of French and mathematics in Elementary 6 and Secondary Cycle One. The professional learning community proved to be the best way of developing shared approaches.

Results: Observations and results have shown that changes were made to professional practices, and the organization of services was adjusted to meet the needs of students at both levels. Continuity of teaching practices, constructive dialogue and valuable pedagogical experiments were also observed.

Source: École secondaire Natagan, Commission scolaire Harricana.

65. *Education Act* (CQLR, chapter I-13.3), section 193.3.

Food for thought: Some questions

■ How do early intervention and intervention throughout the child's schooling meet the needs of students at our school?

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■ What could our school do to identify our students' needs more clearly?

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■ What types of support are available to students for literacy and numeracy or to foster their commitment to school?

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■ Which of our practices will help ensure a smooth transition for our students (into preschool, from preschool to elementary school and from elementary school to secondary school, back to school, and workplace integration)? With whom, when and how are they applied?

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Conclusion

All students, regardless of where they are from, have the capacity to learn and succeed. This is clear from research findings and from the results obtained by effective schools in disadvantaged areas. However, for some students and their support networks, especially those from disadvantaged areas, it can be challenging to complete school successfully. Although education data tend to show that the success gap between students from advantaged and disadvantaged areas is shrinking, inequalities still persist.

Because deprivation affects a student's educational path, school staff members need to understand the different aspects of this situation and the impacts deprivation can have, so that they can focus on the most important determinants. They have not only the duty but also the power to intervene, in collaboration with families and partners from the community, to help these students become successful at school and hence meet the challenge of reducing the impacts of social inequality on schooling.

Five key components with known impacts on educational success have been identified from studies of effective schools and initiatives implemented in Québec's schools. This reference manual presents some individual and collective thoughts on how these key components can be applied, and schools can use them to maintain, reinforce or prioritize the interventions most likely to help all students learn. Through these interventions, all the stakeholders in the education community can come together and have a positive impact on the educational paths of students from disadvantaged areas by restoring equal opportunities for success.

These key components will be improved over time by ongoing research and experiments carried out in schools in disadvantaged areas. For this to be possible, school staff members must monitor progress and continue their own professional development, so that they can learn about and understand the complexity of interventions in disadvantaged areas, and hence be in a position to work effectively with students from those areas.

Appendix

Schools and centres, after considering the characteristics of the area in which they are situated, can decide to focus their interventions on one or more determinants, for example by implementing specific pedagogical, organizational, collaborative or administrative practices.

The following sections briefly present some of these practices. Their purpose is to foster reflection and dialogue among school staff members, and inspire new practices.

Emergent literacy

The Saint-Cœur-de-Marie school in the region of Portneuf has 36 students who live in a cultural environment that does not necessarily provide optimal conditions for them to develop and use a rich and varied vocabulary, partly due to the fact that it has no library and no activities involving the written word. In addition, according to a recent census, most of the parents have had little formal education.

In recent years, with support from the school board's director general and educational services, teachers from kindergarten, Elementary Cycle One and Elementary Cycle Two joined forces with school daycare staff and five community volunteers to organize activities that would bring children and parents into contact with books. Their aim in doing so was to share the pleasure of reading, enrich the students' vocabulary, enhance their scientific and cultural knowledge, and make sure children aged 0 to 5 had access to books at home.

The activities involved:

- providing every classroom with two opportunities per cycle to take part in playful reading activities at the library
- providing preschool students with access to activities designed to develop reading and writing skills
- the special education technician delivering a monthly "book box" directly to the homes of participating families

Results

Observations and comments from parents revealed that students had more fun with reading. School staff members noted that the students' reading grades had improved. The students were also more committed to reading, and found more pleasure in learning. Since the reading and writing activities were first introduced, several mothers have taken adult education classes to obtain their secondary school diplomas.

Conditions conducive to implementation:

- Involvement of people who believe in the importance of the activities
- Access to interesting books
- Extensive knowledge of emergent literacy practices

Source: École Saint-Cœur-de-Marie, Commission scolaire de Portneuf.

Sacs d'histoires (The story bag project)

With this project, school staff members and families work together to promote reading to children. The basic aim of the project is to:

- bring schools and families closer together
- support and encourage family literacy activities in French, while asserting the value of the family's language of origin

The Story Bag is a bag containing a children's book and related play materials made by parents and school staff members. A budget was needed for the project, among other things to buy the materials and books, and was provided by the participating schools. Play materials were also donated by families and the community.

Source: Une école montréalaise pour tous, *Les sacs d'histoires, Offres de formation et d'accompagnement* [online, in French only] (Montréal: F51, 2017), https://ecolemontrealaise.info (Accessed July 31, 2018).

Bridges to provide support for school dropouts and young people at risk of dropping out, and continuity of services

Transitions are especially difficult for young people who have dropped out of school or are at risk of doing so, and a vision shared by the entire education community is needed to help them develop personal, social and professional autonomy, and to join and commit to a project. In addition, the stakeholders concerned must work together to provide the necessary psychological, social and behavioural support. Many partners, including youth employment organizations, youth centres, health and social service centres, community organizations, employers and others, have a role to play, in addition to school staff members from general education in the youth and adult sectors, and from the vocational training sector.

Personalized support and assistance is required throughout the process, from development of a young person's autonomy to their commitment to a project. In some cases, a young person might not commit to a project despite the support received. Where this is the case, they receive a "leaving kit" comprising a DVD on dropping out, information on the programs available at the adult education centre and vocational training centre, enrolment forms, information on community organizations and a list of important telephone numbers.

Conditions conducive to implementation

The education community and participating partners devised a continuity protocol to ensure that the bridges were solid.

The principals of the local secondary schools and adult general education centres, and the guidance counsellors, all approved and took part in the process.

Source: Carrefour FGA, *Programme d'aide pour favoriser le retour en formation des 16-24 ans: Le plaisir d'apprendre, j'embarque quand ça me ressemble*, sheets 4248, 4249 and 4250, p. 5 to 9 [online, in French only] (Québec: Carrefour FGA, 2011), http://www.carrefourfga.com/16-24ans/fiches/classe/1-attitude_des_intervenants/adicom.pdf (Accessed July 31, 2018).

Coup de poing (The in-your-face project)

The *Coup de poing* project is designed to promote reading in disadvantaged areas, in collaboration with schools and neighbourhood libraries. Its purpose is to:

- develop young people's reading, thinking and discussion skills using books from the *Coup de poing* collection
- create connections between books, young people, schools and neighbourhood libraries
- foster collaboration between school staff and library staff
- develop a habit of reading aloud and discussing picture books

The books in the *Coup de poing* collection deal with topics that are well-suited to discussion, such as self-affirmation, differences, racism, mourning, war, immigration, families and violence.

Conditions conducive to implementation

The project requires library staff and teachers to work together to create a forum for reading and discussion.

The teachers must provide support in carrying out the project and developing the practice.

Source: Une école montréalaise pour tous, *Coup de poing 2019, Offres de formation et d'accompagnemen*t [online, in French only] (Montréal: F41, 2018-2019), http://ecolemontrealaise.info/formations (Accessed July 31, 2018).

Adaptation of training services using methods and approaches focused on quality teaching

Several innovative projects were carried out under the program to encourage 16- to 24-year-olds to go back to school. These projects required input from numerous partners. Some of the achievements are listed below:

- program activities carried out in the community, outside the adult education centre, and diversification of learning activities (individual learning, workshops, cooperative projects, etc.)

- continuation of the Young Entrepreneurs program (organizing a hockey tournament, decorating gift boxes, repairing used books, etc.)

- inclusion of practical achievements in mathematics and science classes: preparation of prototypes, and production of pedagogical materials and wooden toys for children with visual impairments

- creation of pedagogical programs in multimedia and visual arts (two projects: cinema and group murals)

Conditions conducive to implementation

Partnerships between the schools and community organizations can be extremely productive, provided the partners' expertise is recognized and respected.

Sources: Carrefour FGA, *Programme d'aide pour favoriser le retour en formation des 16-24 ans: Le plaisir d'apprendre, j'embarque quand ça me ressemble* [online, in French only] (Québec: Carrefour FGA, 2011), http://www.carrefourfga.com/16-24ans/fiches/classe/4-methodes_et_approches/qec.pdf (Accessed July 31, 2018).

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A professional learning community (PLC)

The influence of reading on student success in all subjects, and the impacts of students from disadvantaged areas developing reading habits before starting school, are well known. To foster reading success, the Notre-Dame-du-Canada school set up a professional learning community (PLC) to which all school staff members contributed. Workshops were also organized to encourage parental participation.

Results

Post-PLC monitoring revealed clear progress by students from preschool to the end of elementary school. The teachers, by reflecting on the problems encountered and sharing practices at meetings, were able to understand their students' strengths and the challenges they faced.

Conditions conducive to implementation

The conditions for success included respect for professional autonomy, optional participation and recognition of time spent on the project.

Source: École Notre-Dame-du-Canada, Commission scolaire de la Capitale.

Mathematics games

A common concern for teachers is to ensure that all their students acquire mathematical skills. By using mathematics games in the classroom, they are able to build on the understanding of math acquired by students outside school, while making connections with what is taught at school. These activities therefore act as a bridge between the school's culture and the family's culture.

Since schools are required to use methods that bring them closer to families, the mathematics games designed by the *A Montréal School for All program* build on what students already know and involve families in game-based activities.

Results

The students acquire positive math-related experiences through the games, which also foster the development of mathematical language and serve as a bridge between school and home.

Conditions conducive to implementation

■ Consideration of the school's specific features, and any local issues affecting the educational success of students

■ Methods that encourage family involvement

Source: *A Montréal School for All*, "Numeracy Development in Inner City Schools" Training and Workshops [online] (Montréal: W-11, 2018-2019), http://www.ecolemontrealaise.info/formationsanglo (Accessed February 25, 2019).

A mentoring project

A secondary school set up a mentoring program so that previously identified students could develop a caring relationship with a significant adult, in the hope that this would encourage them to stay at school. The school used a guide to mentoring in schools (see the reference below), based on recommendations drawn from scientific texts and experiential knowledge, to plan and implement its program.

Results

The mentoring program was designed for students who had minor problems or needed additional support. It helped to create a climate based on respect and collaboration, and had beneficial impacts for the mentored students. In addition, mentoring is usually inexpensive and is often provided on a volunteer basis.

Research has shown that mentoring generates the following benefits for mentored students:

- better performance at school
- fewer incidents involving misbehaviour and antisocial behaviour observed by school staff
- improved perception, by the students, of their own academic skills
- better relationships with adults
- a more positive attitude toward school
- less absenteeism

Source: Potvin, P., *Guide d'implantation d'un programme de mentorat en milieu scolaire* (Québec: CTREQ, 2014). Also available online (in French only): http://www.ctreq.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Guide-Mentorat.pdf.

Involvement of school principals in all strategic decisions

Background information

The *Education Act* (CQLR, chapter I-13.3) provides that the principals of schools and centres must be involved in preparing the school board's strategic plan, policies and regulations. Participation takes place through the advisory committee on management (ACM), which is composed of school and centre principals and members of the school board's executive staff.

A school board set up three strategic committees under the ACM: a budget priority committee,[66] an educational mission committee and an organizational development committee. Principals appointed by their peers represented their respective geographical sectors on these committees.

Application

Each committee was composed of one principal per sector, appointed by their peers, along with one member of the school board executive and one representative of the administrative services concerned. The committees' discussions were aimed at reaching a consensus and making decisions on the needs of the schools and centres. The purpose of the committees was to expand on the consultation function of the ACM by establishing two-way communication and by dividing up responsibilities while respecting the autonomy of the schools and centres concerned.

For example, the educational mission committee was able to present the ACM members with a review of the method used to allocate professional services and support for students.

Results

- Application of a participatory approach to improve the quality of the collaboration between the organization's various stakeholders and increase the level of administrative accountability
- Updated operations through consultation of the administrators involved in the process

Conditions conducive to implementation

- Commitment from the administrators concerned, plus monitoring of the coordination mechanisms for the administrative choices made
- Vigilance to ensure that objectives are not lost in administrative strategies
- The school or centre as a whole must be considered when decisions are made: the characteristics of each individual school or centre, differences in workforce size, geographical factors, social and economic inequalities, etc.

Source: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, *Pour une gestion décentralisée réussie: De la commission scolaire vers l'établissement* [online, in French only] (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2018), http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/education/reseau/Gestion-decentralisee-Fascicule8-Inspirer.pdf (Accessed July 27, 2018).

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66. The budget priority committee was replaced by the resource allocation committee on July 1, 2017.

Éducation

Québec