

May 9, 2023

To members of the Special Education Advisory Committee,

The WQSB Resource Allocation Committee would like to acknowledge receipt of the Recommendations from SEAC, as related to financial allocations for students with special needs.

Through the consultation process SEAC was asked to complete a questionnaire with the objective of obtaining recommendations and priorities related to the:

- Objectives and Principles governing the annual allocation of revenues
- Resources and supports for students with special needs
- Complementary Services staffing plan

At the RAC's meeting of March 14th, 2023, the recommendations provided by SEAC were reviewed and discussed in preparation of the recommendation for the Council of Commissioners on the annual budgetary allocations.

The top three identified priorities included professional services, staff training and transitions. Below are some of the elements that were highlighted during the March RAC meeting:

Objectives and Principles:

As previously noted, the objectives and principles defined by SEAC align closely with our current models for distribution. The recommendation emphasized the need for transparency and accountability in the allocation and budgetary process.

- *Accountability is inherent in the allocation and distribution process, with the MEQ budgetary rules defining the purpose and use for each grant. Collective Agreements oblige the WQSB to consult, allocate and report to the Complementary Services Parity Committee with respect to all allocations related to students with special needs. At the school level, the School Level Special Needs Committee oversees distributions and monitors changing needs and support for students with special needs, while schools are required to report on the budget to their respective Governing Board.*

Resources and Supports:

Questions #2-10 highlighted some of the key resources and supports currently offered through WQSB. Recommendations included improvements to practice as well as some that may have budgetary impact. RAC discussions following the review of the SEAC recommendation, identified some key themes that will be considered in budgetary recommendations made by the Resource Allocation Committee:

- Inclusive environments – planning for spaces that facilitate inclusive practices
- Systemic changes to address all factors in academic and social inclusion – in school and community
- Training and resources for all staff with the following to consider:
 - Increase disability rights awareness and sensitivity training
 - Bias aware and inclusive approach
 - Accessibility of our learning and play environments
 - Self-regulation and emotional coaching
 - Information, strategies, and adaptations on variety of disabilities, disorders, and conditions
 - Maintain and enhance RTN and TLN

- The essential role of the resource teacher (remedial and supporting teachers) to support with early intervention, transitions, and support for IEPs
- Recognition of and interventions to address the impact of the pandemic
- Professionals identified beyond current services – guidance at elementary, re-adaptation to support beyond early years, professionals in Intellectual Disabilities, more psychological services, inclusion consultant
- Continuity across the sectors and during transitions to, within and beyond youth sector
- Increase the number of specialized classes (for variety of needs and options)
- Augmentative communication considerations – professionals, tools, transitions, continuity
- Review of behavioural/discipline approaches and related procedures, policies, resources and supports

Complementary Services staffing plan:

SEAC recommended to increase staffing through the addition of:

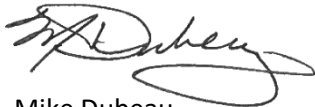
- Speech and Language pathologist
- Social Services officer
- Occupational therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Counselors

Other priorities noted were:

- Online services
- Stability in support staff posts
- Consideration of French resources, in absence of English ones

All these recommendations inform the Resource Allocation Committee of SEAC's perspective on financial allocations and essential services related to students with special needs. As the RAC finalizes the budgetary recommendation for the Council of Commissioners' final approval, this feedback provides another perspective and noted priorities for students with special needs.

Sincerely,



Mike Dubeau

Director General
Resource Allocation Committee Chair
Western Quebec School Board



Lisa Falasconi

Director of Complementary Services
Western Quebec School Board