

Preamble: In January 2014, Mr. Demers submitted an interim report to the Minister of Education, followed in June of the same year by a final report on College Program Offerings. This document includes all the recommendations made to the Minister of Education in both reports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1 – Interim Report

Students schooling pathways

Concerning, as a priority, regions with a declining population, it is recommended to the Minister:

- To support joint initiatives between schoolboards, CEGEPs and labor market representatives to design and implement activities that promote college education, including technical training and the creation of bridges between DPS and DCS available in the region;
- To financially support colleges as they design and develop projects to increase their ability to attract students, by providing them with rich and stimulating student life experiences as a complement to their academic experience;
- To analyze the experimentation of bridges between DPS and DCS since their inception, in order to understand their low attendance and to find ways of increasing it.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – Interim Report

Student mobility

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To design and implement a student mobility program for students who wish to study for a period of one session and more:
 - in a regional college with a declining student population;
 - and in a pre-university program whose size is under the viability threshold or in a career/technical program under the viability threshold for which there exists a demand validated by the labor market, provided the chosen program is above the viability threshold in the region of origin of the student;
- To ensure that this program is offered as a five-year pilot project to be assessed before the end of the fourth year of experimentation;
- To provide candidates with a financial incentive during the period corresponding to the normal duration of a program of study (2 years for a pre-university program and 3 years for a career/technical program);
- To develop and financially support regional admission services so they design an on-line admission system on a centralized website:
 - providing information on available space in eligible colleges and in programs of study under the viability threshold in regional colleges;
 - and describing the financial aid made available to students who wish to take advantage of the student mobility program;
- To develop and implement, in collaboration with the regional admission services, a strategy for promoting career/technical training in regions and for advertising the student mobility program making use of social media to share all the information ahead of time, several months before the Round I deadline set by the Regional Admission Services (March 1st);

- To support, as part of a potential intercollegiate collaboration program, the development of agreements and the launching of projects between regional and major urban centers with a view to exchanging students in a given program of study for one or several sessions;

RECOMMENDATION 3– Interim Report

International Students

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To ensure that, starting in 2014-2015, the Ministry develops and implements in CEGEPs an improved equivalent to the *Volet II* of the Internationalization of CEGEP Education Program, with appropriate resources and including:
 - coordination of network-wide initiatives;
 - collection, sharing and dissemination of best practices related to the welcome and supervision of international students and to the support by the host community;
 - support to collective initiatives for the participation in recruitment activities in countries targeted by the strategy;
 - support to colleges that wish to join together, either between colleges, with a schoolboard, a university or with one or several regional partners with a view to pooling :
 - ✓ Their strategies and tools for the promotion of college program offerings;
 - ✓ Their areas of expertise;
 - ✓ Recruitment and welcome strategies geared towards international students;
 - ✓ Projects of employability and integration of international students into the host community;
- To ensure that the ministry revises the budgetary rules on the funding of international students, particularly the ones that deal with the recovery of tuition fees, so that available resources can be redeployed in the colleges that host a critical mass of international students;
- To ask his ministry to undertake and lead the development and implementation of a specific strategy focusing on the attractiveness of pre-university and career/technical college program offerings, and to ensure the participation of college bodies and ministerial partners (Department of International Relations and Francophonie, Ministry of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusion, *Cégep international*, *Fédération des cégeps*, *Association des collèges privés du Québec* and Regional Admission Services); to schedule the completion and implementation of the project for July 2015;
- To ensure that the new ministerial strategy allows :
 - the production of user friendly comparative tools that make it possible for potential international students to situate college education in relation to foreign educational systems;
 - the definition of national norms for welcoming and integrating international students into their college environment;
 - the production or the revision of a centralized promotional and informative website comparable with those of other countries in terms of attractiveness, user-friendliness, ease of browsing, and also including an advanced search engine;
 - the development of a brand image focusing on the quality of College education in Quebec and on the application of quality assurance mechanisms throughout the Quebec college system;
 - language training opportunities offered to international students;
 - targets with regard to the number of international students to be recruited network- wide and across all programs, in order to get closer to the Canadian average;

- financial incentives for international students who would choose programs that meet the needs of the labor market, in colleges where a declining population threatens the program offerings (incentive approach);
- To solicit the Minister of International Relations and Francophonie asking that her ministry contribute, through its international network, to:
 - ensuring that college education offered in Quebec is both visible and accessible;
 - assisting future students as they enter the college system of Quebec;
 - informing future students about opportunities of learning French made available to them before leaving their country and on their arrival in a Quebec school;
- To solicit the contribution of the Minister of immigration, Diversity and Inclusion asking that her ministry help to :
 - examine the regulatory obstacles or constraints that could impede the achievement of the new strategy's objectives and propose appropriate adjustments to facilitate the recruitment of international students and their integration into the host society;
 - propose the framework in which on-line francization services currently available to future immigrants could be accessed by future students who have already been promised admission by a college;
 - propose means and tools that colleges could use to appropriately support international students who wish to immigrate to Quebec upon completion of their studies; ministries with an economic vocation, the department of Municipal Affairs, Regions and Land Use could play a role as well;
- To ask the ministry to study, together with colleges, the legislative and regulatory obstacles that hinder the welcome of international students, then to recommend the implementation of appropriate measures that eliminate those obstacles, and in particular to propose adjustments to the College Education Regulations. Matters relating to the ministerial examination of college French/English and to the general education acquired by international students upon completion of grade 11 could be reflected upon in the short term.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – Interim Report

The framework for the management of pre-university and career/technical program offerings

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To include, in the main orientations of the framework and over and above the impact on existing authorizations in other colleges that offer similar programs, the implications on the vitality of colleges, considering that the declining population affecting several colleges is likely to undermine their viability;
- To include, in additional orientations of the framework, the diversity of college program offerings available in a college, in its region and in adjacent regions when appropriate;
- To include, in additional orientations of the framework, a reference to minimal college program offerings;
- To include, in additional orientations of the framework, the consideration of a demand that would make it possible to increase the diversity of college program offerings to reflect the interests of the students, taking also into account the needs of the labor market and the viability of program offerings;
- Considering the demographic trend and for every program authorization requested, to ask colleges to review the viability of their authorized programs and propose adjustments to their program offerings.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – Interim Report

Process for managing the map of programs

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To design and implement a section of the ministry website that is accessible to the public and that provides all the information pertaining to the process for managing the map of programs;
- To include in this section:
 - the management framework;
 - the administrative guidelines;
 - Important dates for the processing of applications;
 - all the necessary forms;
- Upon their reception, to post the authorization requests completed by the colleges to enable candidates to transmit an advice to the Minister before the analysis takes place;
- As soon as a decision is taken and made public, to post the responses given to each request along with the main reasons for their approval or refusal.

RECOMMENDATION 6 – Interim Report

Management of the map of programs in the private college sector

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To set up appropriate provisions so he can fully exercise his power in the implementation of ministerial or governmental orientations, in both public and private college sectors, with regard to the management of the map of programs and of quotas;
- To circumscribe his power so that the ministerial orientations get included in the framework for the management of pre-university and career/technical program offerings, so that the orientations are well known to CEGEPs and private colleges, so that they can be validated annually by himself and that, when appropriate, they specify programs or sectors targeted by such orientations;
- To mandate the ministry of Justice to propose appropriate regulatory or legislative modalities.

RECOMMENDATION 7 – Interim Report

Distance Education

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To adopt a ministerial strategy for the deployment of distant education throughout the college network with regard to initial and continuing education and to allocate the resources necessary to its implementation;
- To develop and experiment with online technical DCS or portions of technical DCS programs, in response to the needs of the labor market. Priority could be given to regional colleges more particularly affected by a declining student population and to collaborative projects involving several institutions. The planning and program development phases of those programs will have to be financially supported. Those experimental projects should help to determine:
 - the stages of the development process from a network perspective;
 - the modalities of a joint authorization requested by several institutions;
 - the support to the necessary personnel ;
 - the modalities of student supervision;
 - a model of financing ;

- the selection of technologies that provide compatibility with the systems of several colleges and with the technologies used by students;
- In collaboration with colleges, to put in place a consortium dedicated to the development and implementation of distant college education, and which colleges and *Cégep-à-distance* will be able to join. The objective of the consortium will be to facilitate the collaboration between colleges, to contribute to the quality of the program offerings and to maximize the resources devoted to distance education. In this respect, the consortium should, in particular:
 - provide techno-pedagogical expertise in support to colleges involved in the development or in the implementation of distant college programs;
 - make the most of services and products offered by college network organizations that can contribute to supporting colleges with regard to professional development, technology, teaching and learning resources;
 - compile an inventory of and diffuse best practices with regard to distance education;
 - put in place a single information desk that makes it possible to disseminate to the public distant initial and continuing education courses and programs available in the colleges of Quebec;
 - collaborate, with partner organizations in the network, to the professional development of personnel;
 - support the evaluation process of experimental distance education projects;
 - promote distance education in collaboration with the institutions of the college network and the Ministry of Education.
- In the next negotiation of collective agreements for teachers, provide for a mandate in order to facilitate the deployment of various distant education delivery modes and to maintain an environment that is conducive to the completion of experimental projects.

RECOMMENDATION 8 – Interim Report

Support to the implementation of recommendations 1-7

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To assess, with the help senior officials, the possibility of adjusting the mandates and responsibilities of different administrative units concerned by the recommendations in order to initiate their implementation in collaboration with the college network stakeholders;
- To ensure, among his colleagues, that, when asked to take part in the implementation of specific recommendations, the personnel of other ministries will fully collaborate;
- To assign the \$1 500 000 budget allocated to the use of ICT to collective projects in line with the recommendations on distant education;
- To include, in annex S017 « Support to and development of technical education » and in the *Volet 3* of annex S026 « Consolidation of program offerings », provisions for the financial support to the implementation of the recommendations of this report;
- To evaluate the necessity of allocating the unused college portion of the amounts dedicated to the new college-university Alignment program to intra-network collaborative initiatives in line with the recommendations of this report;
- To insert, into the current budgetary rules and whenever it is relevant, an obligation to collaborate with other colleges in order to share with as many colleges as possible the results of the work invested and to operate a culture change in the college network.

RECOMMENDATION 9 – Final Report

Complementarity and viability of program offerings

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To rely on the dynamism of local and regional actors to define the means to put in place to foster the complementarity and viability of college program offerings;
- To put in place a program to financially support concerted projects whose objective is to stabilize the college network, knowing that a decline of student population is expected. This program should:
 - o be geared towards colleges affected by a significant drop in student population;
 - o foster sharing between colleges and the participation of local socio-economic partners;
 - o ensure that submitted projects, although their completion requires funding, do not ultimately lead to additional and recurrent costs;
 - o select projects that aim at realistic and stabilizing solutions;
 - o set an obligation of results, failing which a project and its funding should be discontinued.

With regard to programs that belong to the family of physical techniques programs it is recommended to the Minister:

- To develop and implement a network-wide strategy that will generate interest in those programs. This strategy should involve the participation of businesses likely to take advantage of a larger number of students holding a diploma.

With regard to admission conditions to technical DCE programs, it is recommended to the Minister:

- to determine, right now and in collaboration with the colleges, what programs apparently have inappropriate admission conditions;
- To undertake the review of special admission conditions to those programs in order to guarantee their validity, with a view to student accessibility and recruitment and in the interests of maintaining requirements that warrant student success.

RECOMMENDATION 10 – Final Report

The specific situation in the Outaouais region

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To authorize, in the Outaouais region, technical programs that are attractive and that cater to the needs of the region with regard to manpower;
- To consider the opportunity of authorizing, in the Outaouais region, technical programs from which Ontarian institutions recruit a good number of Quebecois students;
- To analyze available spaces that currently allow the delivery of college education in the Outaouais, in relation to possible program authorizations.

RECOMMENDATION 11 – Final Report

The development and review process of career/ technical programs

It is recommended to the Minister to:

- To review, in collaboration with the college network, the process that allows the closing of the feedback loop and to initiate changes to the objectives and standards. To that end, it would be necessary to:
 - o review the purpose and the articulation of the monitoring activities carried out by the Ministry;

- o redefine the contribution of colleges to the feedback on the performance of programs within the revision cycle, and provide appropriate resources to adequately support the process;
- To modify College Education Regulations in order to make provisions for the colleges to substitute one or two institutional competencies with ministerial program competencies, within the established number of units for a given program;
- To agree with the college network on the application modalities of this new college responsibility, in order to help ensure that the quality expected of ministerial programs is respected;
- To establish an approval framework for competencies submitted by colleges, that facilitates their implementation without delay.

RECOMMENDATION 12 – Final Report

Format of college programs of study

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To modify the college education regulations (RREC) by making it possible for the Minister to award, a posteriori and under certain conditions, a Certificate of College Technical Studies (CCTS) to students who request it and who have completed all the objectives and standards of the specific education component within a program leading to a DCS;
- To modify article 12 of the RREC in order to enable colleges to experiment with new ways of breaking down DCS programs into modules. These modules could generate an array of ACS programs, potentially leading to a DCS through the accumulation of Attestations of College Studies. The Minister would maintain the approbation of modules to make it possible to finance the new ACS programs from the regular education envelope since they would constitute a recognized pathway to the DCS. Modifying article 16 of the RREC could turn out to be necessary if the Minister’s interpretation prevents the introduction of general education objectives into an ACS program;
- To promptly clarify, in consultation with the college network partners, the orientations that need to be kept in order to develop and revise career/technical programs that are consistent with the efforts being made to optimize CEGEP programs of study.

RECOMMENDATION 13 – Final Report

Links and collaborations between secondary and college sectors

It is recommended to the Ministry:

- To modify article 4 of the College Education Regulations in order to ensure complete fluidity in the course of study from DPS to ACS programs, by automatically admitting students holding a DPS to an ACS program provided that, as it is currently the case, their training is deemed adequate by the college which may require successful completion of prerequisite courses prior to the admission;

RECOMMENDATION 14 – Final Report

Links and collaborations between college and university sectors

It is recommended to the Ministry:

- To explore, in the short term, the possibility of creating a new diploma, a degree in applied studies jointly delivered by a college and a university and consistent with the current structure of the higher education sector of Quebec;
- To resume the work of the Higher Education Liaison committee, entrusting it with the following mandates:
 - o to propose parameters to the Minister for the development and the implementation of the new diploma leading to a degree in applied studies;

- o to propose actions to the Minister to ensure the coordination of initiatives taken by institutions in order to publicize the different courses of study between the technical DCS and university undergraduate studies;
- To include, in the next college/university alignment program, the option to develop new links between college and university programs;
- To seek advice from the future National Council of Universities about possible college/university alignments through the implementation of a potential degree in applied studies;
- To evaluate the opportunity to make the National Council of Universities evolve towards a National Council of Higher Education possibly including the current mandate of the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*.

RECOMMENDATION 15 – Final Report

Links and collaborations with the labor market

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To monitor the development of work-study programs in the college network and identify, in collaboration with the college authorities, factors that slow down or hinder its use;
- To provide more ministerial support to colleges, particularly by structuring the networking between the stakeholders in order to keep the expertise in the network and by providing colleges with quality promotional tools;
- To foster the involvement of employers' associations in the promotion of the program and in the sensitization campaign to inform businesses about the importance of their commitment to the training of manpower through on-the-job training;

RECOMMENDATION 16 – Final Report

Management of continuing education program offerings

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To mandate his administration to initiate discussions with the *Fédération des cégeps* with a view to agreeing on the respective roles to be played by each of the stakeholders in the efficient management of continuing education program offerings, in conformity with the documents adopted by college managers and in compliance with the autonomy of the colleges concerning continuing education;
- To mandate his administration to initiate discussions with the private college sector in order to agree on similar modalities that would ensure that both networks have an equitable management of continuing education program offerings;
- To review, in collaboration with the managers of CEGEPSs and private colleges, annex S015 to the budget concerning ministerial funding of the development of programs leading to ACS, with a view to further enhancing the collaboration between colleges on network-wide development and sharing of programs, while avoiding an uncontrolled deployment of offerings that could affect its viability.

Insofar as the Ministry would like to foster the mixing of both regular and continuing education clientele, particularly in colleges of regions with a severe declining population, it is recommended to the Minister:

- To simplify funding mechanisms to facilitate such experimentations, particularly in the regions that could benefit from this approach to maintain their program offerings and the expertise of their faculty;

- To propose a method of calculating teacher' loads that takes into account the fluctuations in the continuing education student population, while offering an appropriate level of resources;
- To support the development of the expertise needed by teachers who have to properly manage their classrooms in an environment of mixed students.

RECOMMENDATION 17 – Final Report

Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC)

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To authorize the extension of the experimental Centers of Expertise in Recognition of Acquired Competencies (CERAC) for a five year period;
- To include, in the mandate of CERAC, expectations that:
 - o allow regional colleges to take advantage of the expertise developed by more experienced colleges;
 - o encourage them to join a ministerial distant education strategy, more particularly with regard to the development of modulated self-supporting courses that provide students with missing training components;
- To maintain a first evaluation of CERACs after two years, in order to adjust the approach to the original objectives;
- To begin the evaluation of the experimentation at the end of the fourth year;
- To secure the budget required for the five-year duration of the experimentation.

RECOMMENDATION 18 – Final Report

Student training needs with regard to continuing education

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To ensure that each college has the proper tools to define the literacy needs of ACS candidates;
- To provide a funding mechanism to make such activities available to students whose needs have been validated by a college advisor (for example a Pedagogical Counsellor or an API);
- To support the development of literacy activities, particularly through self-supporting modules, using distant education technologies accessible to all colleges in the network;
- To make it possible for parts of the objectives and standards other than the literacy ones and related to the consolidation of language of instruction or second language skills, to be integrated into ACS programs, and to facilitate the development of courses that answer the specific needs of adults;
- To explore, as part of a future revision of the general education segment of the DCS, the possibility of recording and recognizing those language of instruction and second language courses as contributing to the achievement of general education objectives of a DCS diploma.

RECOMMENDATION 19 – Final Report

Supporting student success in continuing education

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To include, in the revision of the funding method for college continuing education, parameters that will help colleges to have appropriate resources for the supervision of and support to student success, especially in small

colleges where insufficient student populations make it impossible to achieve enough surplus to pay for such services.

RECOMMENDATION 20 – Final Report

Consolidating the program offerings to deal with the anticipated decline in student population: annex S026 to the budget

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To maintain the provisions of the three *volets* of annex S206 to the budget;
- With regard to *volets* II and III of the budget, to ensure an appropriate level of funding, to provide special support to colleges collaborating on projects that significantly contribute to the improvement of the complementarity of program offerings in the regions, rationalization and viability of programs;

RECOMMENDATION 21 – Final Report

Financial compensation for CEGEPS with a declining student population: *volet* I of annex A007 to the budget

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To establish and maintain, during the transition period, an envelope of \$ 6,000,000 (including the existing \$ 5,000,000);
- To maintain the compensatory measure provided for in *volet* I of annex A007 to the budget:
 - by anticipating a financial decrease over a period of time to be determined, going from \$5,000,000 to its discontinuation;
 - by considering the opportunity to reduce the 85% guarantee threshold or to differentiate this threshold according to regions, in order to focus financial support on the most vulnerable colleges;
 - in order to help colleges plan for the gradual withdrawal of funding so that budgetary balance can be reached;
- To establish, for the most vulnerable colleges, a funding approach by project in order to induce colleges to take concrete actions with an obligation of results (see recommendation 9):
 - by starting with an annual funding of \$1,000,000 and adding resources released by the first portion of the envelope;
 - by annually following up on the implementation of measures and their performance through the joint financial resources committee, in order to decide upon the extension, maintenance or discontinuation of support measures based on concrete results;
- To evaluate, in collaboration with CEGEPs, the opportunity to reorganize the measures of annexes S026 and A007 (*volet* I) in order to ensure the coherence of the means provided to colleges to attain a new network-wide budgetary balance;
- To consider, when the student population decline affecting the network is over, a transition period during which funding could be withdrawn.

RECOMMENDATION 22 – Final Report

The distribution of the student clientele in the CEGEPs of Montreal and Quebec City: *volet* II of annex A007 to the budget;

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To maintain the provisions of annex 007 to ensure an optimal distribution of the student population in the regions of Montreal and Quebec City;

- To maintain the suspension of penalties to the colleges of the Montreal region that exceed their *Devis* up until the population decline justifies the restoration of penalties;
- To initiate discussions, within the joint financial resources committee, in order to agree on the addition of provisions with a view to ensuring an optimum distribution of the student population across all the metropolitan colleges during the penalty suspension period.

RECOMMENDATION 23 – Final Report

The funding of continuing education

It is recommended to the Minister:

- To continue, in collaboration with the managers of the colleges, the work on the revision of the funding model for continuing education, by carrying out simulations that will evaluate the impacts of revising the funding model;
- To ease and simplify without delay the current budgetary regulations, even before the new funding model is available;
- In the absence of an open envelope similar to the one dedicated to regular education, to establish a mechanism that makes it possible to annually adjust the level of the envelope, in order to reduce the gap between the demand and the program offerings;
- To modify the rules on admission fees that CEGEPs have to charge (chapter C-29, r. 2), and other relevant budgetary rules in order to make it possible for students who have completed a minimum of one full time semester in a DCS or ACS, to benefit from free tuition, should they wish to pursue their studies in the same program as full-time or part-time students.