

Introduction to the Project

The Social Integration team across the province has become a dynamic group through various projects and initiatives over past two years, to the benefit of our students. This PDIG project was one element of a growing community of collaboration between school boards. Social Integration programs are unique in the landscape of Adult Education in Quebec; for several boards, there are one or two programs, often geographically distant from one another, making collaboration and professional exchanges more challenging. Through this project, teachers, consultants, social work technicians, and other professionals came together from different boards to identify and discuss the challenges and create resources and best practice guides that can be shared via the SIS website.

Each meeting had a different theme, and participants worked in small groups before coming together to share the resources they had created. Unfortunately, as Covid-19 and the shutdown and the challenges this caused interfered with this project, and our final two meetings had to be cancelled.

Our Goals

Our initial goals were to provide a place and time for teachers and others involved in Social Integration programs to come together and exchange to brainstorm and share best practices for the various challenges of this program and to create resources that could be shared throughout the SIS network via the website. Throughout the course of the project, we had participants from six different school boards. Each meeting was held in a different centre,

so that participants could visit the school and see the program in action, which helps us plan our space and programs, and get ideas we can try with our own students.

In our first meeting, we defined the many challenges of SIS, and then narrowed down our focus for the future meetings. Among the challenges in the image below, we selected several key ones to focus on for the upcoming meetings: laying the foundation for a joint SIS event for the students, looking at evaluation tools for the LESs already created by Endeavour (LBPSB), mental health challenges, sexuality, and creating age appropriate materials for social skills. Time was set aside each meeting for “et cetera” discussions related to other challenges, as well.



Achieving Goals and Challenges

The creation of evaluation materials (rubrics), age-appropriate social scripts resources went well. We were not able to hold the workshops on mental health and sexuality due to Covid19 and the subsequent closure. While discussions were held about get togethers between the students of the various programs, that sort of activity is not feasible in the medium-term future, and those plans have been paused.

Other challenges included the fact that centres offering SIS in English are far apart. The clientele in these programs are often highly attached to teachers and routines, which provide security, so being absent can be difficult for teachers in these programs. Different school boards have different calendars, meaning there are few, if any, shared pedagogical planning days between all the boards.

Professional Gains and Reinvestment

- At each meeting we shared different tools that could be used to create resources for that day's theme, any beyond.
- Resources that can use, best practice guide for social scripts, have tools and knowledge on how to further create resources.
- Ideas for programs, each SIS program has a very different flavour to it; not a dearth of info available, able to
- At each meeting, we toured the centre and saw its programs in action, created resources, discussed best practices, shared what we had created in smaller teams, looked at tools for creating resources, and had time for free discussion.

Future Ideas and Recommendations

- Networking with French school boards, creation of a provincial bilingual SIS group
- Sexuality, mental health are huge issues for which there isn't a great deal of age appropriate, research-based best practices readily available for this clientele. Having access to funds to facilitate bringing in professionals from this field to create kits and

offer training to participants that could then be passed on to other teachers/SWTs/SETs would be hugely beneficial.

- An annual SIS pedagogical day shared by all boards where all those involved with SIS (teachers, consultants, special education technicians, social workers and social work technicians, administrators) can come together and dialogue, receive training, and plan.
- Online meetings to incorporate further boards and to take into account geographical constraints.

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