

Western Quebec School Board
Western Quebec Teachers' Association

PIC

Professional Improvement Committee

Policies and Guidelines – Region 7

FINAL

July 1, 2025

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GENERAL POLICY STATEMENTS AND GUIDELINES

PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Professional improvement is the process of enhancing your skills, knowledge, and abilities to advance your career. It involves continuous learning, whether through formal training, self-study, or gaining practical experience.

PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

The Professional Improvement Committee (PIC) is a parity committee whose responsibilities and operations have been defined by the Local Collective Agreement (Chapter 7: clause 7-2.00).

These responsibilities include:

- Administering the funds allocated for the professional improvement of teachers; and
- Assisting teachers in enabling them to attain and maintain a high level of professional competency.

The PIC is comprised of six members: three (3) WQTA teachers, and three (3) WQSB administrators.

ROLE AND GOALS OF THE PIC

The Ministry of Education (MEES), as per Chapters 7 & 11 of the Provincial Collective Agreement, allocates professional improvement funds. The PIC is responsible for administering how the funds are allocated:

- To assist teachers in participating in professional improvement activities
- To foster a collaborative climate conducive to ongoing, focused professional improvement throughout the system
- To promote an awareness of recent developments in educational research and the use of new technologies
- To assist the network of teachers and schools in the development and growth of ideas, methods and innovations in teaching
- To enable educators to share with other colleagues within the board the skills and knowledge that they have acquired

DEFINITIONS

Workshops, Seminars and Conferences

Platforms that provide learning opportunities, knowledge sharing, collaborations, and skill development.

Credit Courses

Courses that are designed to provide college or university credits toward a degree or certificate.

Non-Credit Courses

Courses designed to provide general knowledge, learn a new skill, upgrade existing skills or develop personal interests. Non-Credit courses do not provide college or university credits toward a degree or certificate.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PIC FUNDING

Every school year, the board shall have \$240 per full-time equivalent teacher in the service of the board on September 30, excluding teachers on availability. (clause 7-1.01

Who is eligible	Who is NOT eligible
Full-time teachers, part-time teachers, replacement teachers and teachers by the lesson in the employ of the school board on September 30 of that school year	Teachers on a leave of absence (from July to June), hourly paid teachers and casual supply teachers are NOT eligible for PIC funding
Part-time percentage teachers will be eligible for funding proportionate to the percentage of contract (on that year)	Full-time teachers, part-time teachers, replacement teachers and teachers by the lesson who are NOT in the employ of the school board on September 30 of that school year
Teachers on a deferred sabbatical plan shall be eligible	
Teachers on maternity/paternity leave shall be eligible	

PIC MEETINGS

Each year, the PIC shall hold a minimum of 4 meetings to consider applications for events being held within the time frames specified below, and to review the quarterly financial statements. A meeting shall be held in mid-June to deal with year-end business such as policy changes.

Quarter

- 1 July 1st – September 30th
- 2 October 1st – December 31st
- 3 January 1st – March 31st
- 4 April 1st – June 30th

Meeting Date

Mid October
Mid January
Mid April
Mid June

APPROVING COMMITTEE

To avoid stalling the application approval process, a two-person committee comprised of the WQTA President and the WQSB Director Human Resources is appointed to consider and approve the teachers' applications on a weekly basis when possible.

BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

The general PIC fund will be annually allocated during the first PIC meeting to account for the events listed below and the remaining funds will be divided equitably in each quarter.

- Global Day allocation is set at \$5,000 maximum every 2 years.
- MEQ Workshops are funded to a maximum of \$4,000 every year.
- School Based Projects are funded up to four (4) allocations per year of \$2,000 each according to established criteria.
- Allocation for QPAT Teachers' Convention is set annually at \$100,000.
- The maximum annual eligibility per teacher is set at \$2,500.
 - Within the maximum annual eligibility per teacher, a maximum of \$1,200 may be used toward funding credit courses; and
 - Within the maximum annual eligibility per teacher, a maximum of \$1,000 may be used toward funding non-credit courses.
- The funds allotted to teachers for a professional improvement event is limited to a maximum of four (4) teachers per school per event, with the exception of the QPAT Teachers' Convention.

After allocating funds for items above, the remaining funds shall be divided into fourths, each to cover the following periods:

- July 1st to September 30th
- October 1st to December 31st
- January 1st to March 31st
- April 1st to June 30th

The applications falling within each of the quarters shall be considered until the quarter allowance is depleted.

PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATION

The professional development session must be relevant to the applicant's current teaching assignment. However, applications to activities related to a prospective teaching assignment may be considered if accompanied by a letter of intention.

At least two weeks prior to the event, every applicant shall submit for approval their completed application form by e-mail, fax, or mail, supported with a descriptive brochure of the intended event, to the WQTA office.

Applications received after the deadline specified in the above paragraph or after completing a course will be considered by the PIC only during the June meeting and will be subject to funding availability.

Events held after the end of the school year may be approved, but applicants will be reimbursed **only if they maintain a link of employment with WQSB for the next school year.**

Applications submitted during the summer will be reviewed even without the principal's signature. For events held during the school year, the applicant will have to confirm that their principal authorize their participation before proceeding.

Given the exchange rates and increased travel costs, applicants are encouraged to review events within Canada prior to seeking out of country opportunities.

Note: Teachers who have benefited from PIC funds may be requested to report to their colleagues on the event they attended.

NOTIFICATIONS TO APPLICANTS

Applicants shall be notified of results of their applications by the WQTA. This information is to be communicated as soon as possible after the review of their application by the PIC.

PROCEDURE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

All expense claim requests must be supported with receipts/vouchers and submitted to the WQTA office by email, fax, or mail.

All credit courses and non-credit courses claim requests must also include a proof of successful completion. Only tuition fees of courses relevant to the teaching assignment may be reimbursed. The PIC will not reimburse textbooks, manuals, workbooks, membership fees, administrative fees, registration fees, exam fees, students' association fees, nor any other similar expenses. Travel fees and supply teachers' costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis for non-credit courses only.

The reimbursement will not exceed the funding allocated when the request was approved.

An expense claim form shall be submitted even if the only expenses incurred are the supply teacher costs.

EXPENSE RATES

Registration fee:

- Actual cost to register to the event as an early bird if applicable are eligible.
- Membership fees are excluded.

Accommodation:

- Hotel: Maximum \$350/night
- Hostess Fee: \$50/night (Address of place claiming the hostess fee is required)
Note: For event more than one day in duration, the night preceding the first day of the event will be considered for refund. Accommodation expenses will normally not be paid for the final day of the event.

Meals:

Teachers are reimbursed a per diem cost upon presentation of a receipt. Meals included in the registration fee or with the hotel booking are not reimbursed.

- Breakfast: \$20
- Lunch: \$25
- Dinner: \$35

Transportation:

- Use of economy public transportation, car-pooling and taxi-pooling is encouraged.
- Public transportation will be reimbursed at the economy rate.
- Use of personal car will be reimbursed at a flat rate for the following destinations:
 - To Montreal area and return: \$250
 - To Toronto area or to Quebec City area and return: \$350
 - To Niagara Falls area and return: \$400
- To other locations and return: the cost of economy public transportation or \$0.59/km for a maximum equivalent to the economy public transportation costs.
- Teachers using their personal car shall provide a gas receipt from the destination area. The gas receipt shall be for an amount covering the distance between the applicant's home and the destination. Same applies for electric car where a proof of recharge payment from the destination shall be presented.
- Teachers living in the areas of Campbell's Bay, Shawville, Kazabazua, and Poltimore shall be entitled to a travel supplement of \$75, added to the flat rate.
- Teachers living in the areas of Chapeau and Maniwaki shall be entitled to a travel supplement of \$100, added to the flat rate.
- Teachers living in the areas of Namur shall be entitled to a travel supplement of \$100, added to the flat rate, when travelling to Toronto and Niagara Falls areas.
- Parking: Maximum \$50/day
- Taxi: Maximum \$50/trip, for a maximum of \$100/event

Supply teaching costs:

Calculated in accordance with the teachers collective agreement, and shall be the first item paid.

Alcoholic beverages are not covered under the PIC policy and will not be reimbursed.

OBSERVING WORKING COLLEAGUES

Following the application procedures noted above, a teacher may visit another classroom of a teacher, within the province of Quebec, up to a maximum of three (3) times per teacher.

Other limits for this professional development are the following maximums:

- Up to 5 days per school/centre; and
- Maximum of \$3,000 from PIC fund per school/centre.

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES PROJECTS

Requests to fund curriculum guidelines projects shall be submitted at least two months before the start of the project. Projects must meet the following criteria:

- The purpose of the project must be briefly and clearly articulated. Why is the project necessary? Does it represent innovative activities?
- The cost factors associated with producing the project must be detailed.
 - supply teacher days required
 - travel expenses (if applicable)
 - paper, photocopying and other costs
- The end product must be a package of practical ideas and suggested teaching strategies which could be shared by all teachers of that subject or level in the board.
- The time-line for producing this package should be indicated.
- Teachers producing the project must be prepared to share their project with teachers at a meeting specifically organized for this event or at an applicable Global Day session.
- A clear proposal on how the practical aspects of the project are going to be evaluated must be included.
- Teachers preparing curriculum development packages are encouraged to collaborate with consultants.

SCHOOL-BASED PROJECTS

Every school is eligible to submit a proposal identifying a school project to PIC and apply for project funds. There shall be a maximum of 4 allocations per annum.

Applications must be submitted to PIC at least 2 months before the event.

Project proposals are discussed and developed at school level and subsequently ratified through the School Council. Voting is based on majority decision and a copy of the resolution must accompany the projects application.

The school-based funds can be used to assist an on-going professional development school project.

Each school project proposal must:

- Conform to the school professional development plan referred to in the Education Act (96.20 and 96.21).
- State the objectives and the impact on student outcome.
- State the action goal: a statement(s) of a critical issue(s) that must be dealt with in order to reach the objective.
- State the action strategies: more specific statement of things to be done to realize the action goal (workshops, research, meetings, conferencing, etc.).
- Be submitted with a detailed costing (a breakdown showing all costs).
- Be applicable to a significant part of the school, department or group of departments.
- Show how the expected outcomes will be observed and measured.
- Submit a summary to PIC at year's end detailing the successes of the project.

The approval of the project will be based on the following criteria:

- School Council approval
- Teacher impact – pedagogical value
- Number of teaching staff reached by project
- Impact on student outcome (has some instrument to assess been developed/proposed?)
- Costing for project realistic (can it be reduced?)
- Is the outcome measurable / observable?
- Does the action goal/strategies demonstrate the action to be taken?

QPAT TEACHERS' CONVENTION

Teachers wishing to attend the QPAT Teachers' Convention must apply to PIC by the announced deadline, using the applicant's form specific to the event.

The funding used toward the QPAT Teachers' Convention shall be part of the teacher's maximum annual eligibility.

Participation to the QPAT Teachers' Convention is not limited in number of teachers per school, depending on funding availability.