

Response to Ministerial Order 2020-004

March 19th, 2020

To: ALL WQSB STAFF,

I am writing to everyone in response to the Ministerial Order 2020-004 (please see attached) as of March 18th, 2020. And, with the understanding that all measures decided by the government are designed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Quebec. The Ministerial Order dated March 18th, 2020 deals with unforeseen emergencies that school boards will be faced with concerning COVID-19 until the government calls an end to the emergency.

We have prepared our response, on the basis of information available and announcements made to date by the government, and in consultation with our Union and Associations. In the event of other announcements or changes in government priorities, adjustments may be necessary.

Present Context

In accordance with the Ministerial Order dated March 18th, 2020, the following measures have been agreed upon to respond to recruitment needs in “*school-based emergency child care services*” in light of COVID-19. We currently have *school-based emergency child care services* (daycares) open for children whose parents work in the health sector, emergency services and other essential services (please see attached “Les Services Essentiels Visent”). Each *school-based emergency child care services* (daycares) must remain fully staffed to receive students. We will continue to closely monitor the enrolment as the MEES has added more children eligible for daycare services by expanding the list of those that are considered “essential services”.

The Ministry selected the sites and established the availability of *school-based emergency child care services* (daycares) reserved for children of parents designated to provide “essential services”. This service is also available to the children of staff providing emergency child care. This is an exceptional service for these individuals who would have no other alternative. These services are made available for students who are currently attending a preschool or primary school (public or private, English or French). There is no charge to parents for the emergency child care services.

Immediate Impact on the WQSB

To insure that services for our *school-based emergency child care services* (daycares) remain available in the coming week(s) during the continued “state of emergency”, the WQSB will require staff to provide services at all designated *school-based emergency child care services* (daycare).

WQSB staff, from all classifications and all categories, may be called upon to insure essential services are maintained. These essential services such as administrative services, maintenance, payroll and HR, and school-based emergency child care services. These essential services will be required until they are no longer needed. All decisions regarding staffing will be made with this mandate in mind. And, in accordance with the Ministerial Order, no extra compensation is allotted to meet the mandates of the measures imposed on school boards.

WQSB staff, from all classifications and all categories, may be called upon to insure essential services are maintained or can resume. All decisions regarding staffing will be made with this mandate in mind.



Below is the relevant to the education sector excerpt from the Ministerial Order 2020-004:

(1) Les conventions collectives ou ententes, de niveau national, local ou régional en vigueur entre les commissions scolaires d'une part, et l'ensemble des syndicats d'autre part, sont modifiées suivant ce qui suit:

- 1° les articles relatifs au mouvement de personnel ayant trait, notamment, au comblement des absences ou au remplacement, à l'affectation, la réaffectation ou au déplacement du personnel sont modifiés pour permettre à l'employeur d'affecter le personnel à l'endroit et au moment où les besoins le justifient. Le personnel peut ainsi être affecté à des tâches d'un autre titre d'emploi, dans une autre unité d'accréditation ou chez un autre employeur;
- 2° les articles relatifs aux horaires de travail sont modifiés pour permettre à l'employeur de répondre aux besoins;
- 3° les articles relatifs à l'octroi d'une rémunération ou d'une compensation additionnelle à celle versée pour la rémunération des heures normales et du temps supplémentaire lorsque des services doivent être maintenus, notamment en raison d'un cas de force majeure, sont inapplicables. (...)

Provincial collective and local agreements or understandings, presently in force between school boards and all unions on the other hand, are amended as follows:

- (1) the articles relating to the movement of personnel relating, in particular, to the filling of absences or the replacement, assignment, reassignment. The travel of staff shall be modified to allow the employer to assign staff where and when the need arises. For example, staff may be assigned to work under another job title, in another classification or with another employer;
- (2) the articles relating to work schedules are amended to enable the employer to meet needs;
- (3) the articles relating to the granting of remuneration or compensation additional to that paid for regular hours and overtime when services must be maintained, in particular because of Quebec's "state of emergency", are inapplicable.

Furthermore, it is important to note that a decree is an official order. For this reason, it is not within the school board or any union's control.

We all need to work together in these challenging times to help meet the collective needs. We thank you all for your patience, flexibility and understanding during these challenging times.

Terry Kharyati
Director of Human Resources
Western Quebec School Board

