

EDUCATIONAL PROJECT 2023-2027
St Monica Elementary
English Montreal School Board



The educational project is a strategic tool for an educational institution that defines its policy orientations, priority actions and expected results. It is a tool to inform its community with a view to ensuring educational success for all students regardless of age. The educational project reflects the characteristics and needs of the students who attend the educational institution, as well as the community's expectations regarding the education they receive. The educational project is prepared and implemented through the collaborative efforts of the various school stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, and other school staff members as well as community and school board representatives.

The educational project is part of a process designed to promote coordinated action and synergy among the various levels of the education system (MEQ, school boards and educational institutions), with due regard for their specific areas of autonomy and characteristics. This educational project must align with the English Montreal School Board's Commitment to Success Plan.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

According to the Education Act, Sections 37 and 97.1, an educational institution's educational project must include:

- a description of the context in which the institution acts and the main challenges it faces, particularly with respect to educational success and, in the case of a vocational training centre, the relevance of the training to regional or provincial labour market needs,
- the specific policy orientations of the educational institution and the objectives selected for improving educational success,
- the targets to be achieved by the end of the period covered by the educational project,
- the indicators to be used to measure achievement of these objectives and targets,
- the intervals at which the educational project is to be evaluated, determined in collaboration with the school service centre or school board.

The educational project must:

- respect the students', parents' and school staff's freedom of conscience and of religion (EA, Section 37),
- cover a period that is harmonized with the period covered by the school service centre or school board's Commitment to Success Plan and the period covered by the MEQ strategic plan (EA, Section 37.1, 97.2 and 209.1),
- comply with the terms established by the Minister to coordinate the entire strategic planning process between the educational institutions, the school service centre or school board and the MEQ (EA, Section 459.3),
- be consistent with the school service centre's or school board's Commitment to Success Plan (EA, sections 37 and 97.1).

COMPOSITION OF THE SCHOOL TEAM

This educational project was created by a school team that included: the principal, five teachers, a behavior technician, and a daycare technician.

GROUPS CONSULTED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

Parents, teachers, support staff, daycare staff and Governing Board.

SCHOOL PROFILE

St. Monica Elementary School has 260 students from preschool to grade six. Our school offers a bilingual academic program, serving primarily the population of south and western NDG. Our bilingual program offers 50% English and 50% French curriculum – by the time students graduate from elementary school they have been highly exposed to both languages. Approximately 20% of our student population has an I.E.P (Individualized Education Plan) with 30 coded students and 15 waiting to be assessed. These I.E.P. numbers do not include our newly arrived international and temp stay students who are English Second Language (ESL) learners. The challenges we face in the instruction of our curriculum include the differentiation required when teaching students with special needs and learning disabilities, as well as our ESL population. The acquisition of language, especially with our ESL population, who are also learning French as a third language varies from cycle to cycle.

St. Monica School is situated in an urban area of the Montreal borough of Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG) and was built in 1955. It houses children from pre-kindergarten through cycle 3. It is a school that belonged initially to the Montreal Catholic School Commission. With the creation of linguistic boards in 1998, St. Monica School became part of the English Montreal School Board (EMSB). St. Monica welcomed students from Somerled School in 2000, John XXIII School in 2001, and St. Ignatius of Loyola School in 2005 when these schools closed. In the school year 2015-2016 the number of students enrolled increased dramatically where we are now nearing the capacity of the building. The school population continues to grow, and the school adapts to the needs of the diverse population it serves. The population of St. Monica is ethnically diverse. Many students speak English and French as their second and third languages.

Our student population comes from diverse economic backgrounds, some families have difficult economic situations, and some are composed of economically strong families, many of whom are working middle class and property owners. We have received an increase of temporary stay students, whose registrations are ongoing throughout the year.

Our programs encourage students to celebrate their cultural heritage while building mutual respect and a strong sense of community.

The poverty index for the school is 7, with 10 being the maximum according to the IMSE index issued by the MEES. St. Monica continues to have strong links with several neighborhood organizations (e.g., St. Monica Church, Benny Farm Sports, and Summer Camp, NDG Community Council, NDG Food Depot, NDG sport facilities operation, Westhaven Community Centre, Prévention NDG, Collective Community Services (CCS), Éco-Cartier, Quebec Board of Black Educators, and more). A neighborhood police officer is linked to our school. Members of the local CIUSSS (Benny Farm CLSC) serve our community (nurse, social worker, dental hygienist.) These important community relationships strengthen our presence in the neighborhood and make a broader range of community connections and services available to our families.

PROGRAMS AVAILABLE IN OUR SCHOOL

St. Monica's bilingual program serves children from pre-kindergarten through cycle 3. At a K4 (Pre-Kindergarten) and K5 (Kindergarten) level the students are receiving bilingual instruction every day. Our Cycle 1 (Grade 1 and 2) receive bilingual instruction daily with mention that Math and Music are taught in French and all other subjects in English. Our Cycle 2 (Grade 3 and 4) as well as Cycle 3 (Grade 5 and 6) receive full day instruction in one language or the other and half days on Friday. Math, English Language Arts and Phys-Ed are taught in English and all other subjects are taught in French.

Students have access to technological devices such as Smartboards, iPads, and Chromebooks to develop their digital knowledge and digital citizenship competencies and skills. St Monica has a TIF (Technology Integration Facilitator) to help students and staff increase the use of technology in the classroom through project-based learning.

Being that the population of the students in the school is quite varied in socio-economic status, behavior and academic needs, students who require additional support can be assisted by our school team. Additional support is available for challenges related to learning, social or emotional.

Our multicultural school staff is comprised of one administrator, two secretaries, two caretakers, English, French and Bilingual classroom teachers, English and French Resource, Specialists in Music, Science and Phys-Ed as well as, a team of support staff that includes Behavior Technicians and Child Care Attendants. We are fortunate to have the B.A.S.E. (Before and After School Enrichment) Daycare Program that includes a Daycare Technician and many experienced Daycare Educators. Lunch time at St Monica is an exciting time where lunch monitors ensure that our students are well taken care of.

Due to the inner-city status of St. Monica, the MEES provides the school with special funds, such as Inner-City Operation Renewal (ICOR) and A Montreal School for All (AMSFA). Other allocations include the Homework Assistance Program, the Wellness Program, Joining Forces, and Support for Students with Special Needs, and tutor support for ESL and FSL. These funds are used to support student success and student engagement.

The school holds regular activities for the families of students: family fun night, an event with our Steel Drum Student Group, concerts, and graduation ceremonies to name a few. Establishing contact with the local high schools has proven to be very valuable in assisting students with the transition to grade 7. The Cycle 3 students often visit the high school for sporting tournaments and event visits.

St Monica students love playing sports and our basketball teams the TITANS, have proven to be fierce competitors in intramural and intermural sporting events coordinated by our teachers. Jamborees for volleyball, flag football, and soccer are also available to our students. Many of our Cycle 2 and 3 students participate in team sports with the GMAA. Numerous teachers offer free club and activities during lunch hour for our students at no cost to the families.

St Monica's unique Green Club provides an academic learning experience as well as a hands-on practical application of life skills. Our Green Club is a community garden that grows plants and participates in composting, sells seedlings, and provides produce for families who wish to participate.

Our Breakfast Program is run by community volunteers to ensure that our children are ready to learn and start their day on a positive note. We appreciate the sponsorship that we receive to make this possible.

St. Monica is very fortunate to have a dedicated and passionate group of individuals who volunteer their time by being members of the Governing Board, the Parent Participation Organization (PPO), or by volunteering their time for special events (Breakfast Program, Breakfast with Santa, Book Fair, Teacher Appreciation Week, Graduation Committee, Career Day etc.) Our parent and community volunteers have become an integral part of our school success. Their presence and participation in fundraising (book fairs, Spirit of Giving, walk-a-thons, pizza lunches and car wash) have made many projects possible. Our students also participate in a variety of activities with a nearby senior citizen residence which provides enriching intergenerational experiences and learning.

MISSION AND VALUES

Our Mission

At St. Monica, our mission is to provide bilingual instruction, to socialize and to provide qualifications to all our students. Instruction in both the English and the French languages focuses on the communication competencies of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The staff strives to enhance these competencies across the curriculum. We provide our students with a stimulating and challenging educational program. Our goal is to help each student reach his/her potential by helping them develop knowledge in a variety of areas (intellectual, emotional, moral, cultural, digital, and physical). We also emphasize the importance of building strong respectful relationships with both peers and adults.

Our Values

St Monica Elementary values the individual child’s right to develop in an educational environment that is supportive and inclusive. We value that the students have respect for oneself and for others, that they have a sense of belonging and the fostering of respect for the environment and a connection to the community. A school is not just a combination of students and teachers, but it is also an integral part of the community in which it finds itself. St. Monica graduates bilingual students who possess self-esteem, self-motivation and the skills required to pursue both lifelong learning and exemplary citizenship.

THE CONSULTATION

The consultation, held from October to November 2023 through surveys, engaged staff, parents, and Cycle 3 students to gather feedback on the Educational Project goals. The survey results were carefully reviewed to identify stakeholders' concerns within the school community.

According to the student feedback, there is a positive perception of feeling safe and supported. The student body has responded well to our initiatives aimed at enhancing a sense of citizenship. We are committed to maintaining consistent efforts in effective behavior interventions.

Insights from parent and staff consultations indicate that our team approach aligns with expectations, providing support and fostering a learning environment that promotes both individual and collective well-being. Notably, our use of restorative approaches and behavior specialist consultations has proven beneficial, aiding students in developing self-regulation skills and contributing to a streamlined approach for maintaining a positive school climate.

In the parent consultation, positive feedback was received regarding our ongoing efforts to build strong relationships between teachers and students. Parents appreciate the bilingual

environment and acknowledge the positive impact of support staff interventions and conflict resolution strategies.

School staff have expressed a specific need for strategies to assist students with learning difficulties. We are actively addressing this concern by leveraging professional development opportunities and collaborating with the school board, with a particular focus on areas that enhance positive personal learning experiences.

ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES

The academic section of the educational project is aligned to the school board's Commitment to Success Plan. While the EMSB acknowledges the significance and contributions of all subjects and grades in shaping student development, the primary focus for reporting is on the core subjects at the end of Cycle 3. The end of cycle 3 serves as an indicator of progress for students as they prepare to enter secondary school.

END OF CYCLE 3 MATHEMATICS

EMSB's Objective:

To increase the proportion of end of cycle 3 students demonstrating proficiency (70% to 100%) on the uniform exam (C1) from 61.5% in 2023 to 69% by 2027.

**Table 1: Percentage of End of Cycle 3 Students
Success Rate on the Uniform Math Exam (C1)**

	2019	2022	2023
St Monica	96%	82%	61%
EMSB	68%	55%	68%

Source: Lumix, GPI, 2023

Interpretation: The EMSB goal is to monitor the proportion of students who are proficient according to the MEQ's definition of proficiency (70% to 100%). To provide some context for the school, in previous years, elementary schools reported on Competency 2, which provided more indication of students' grasp of concepts. Competency 1 looks at how a student solves a situational problem. As a result, language skills and reading comprehension can sometimes inhibit students from understanding what is required in the answer.

Table 1 shows that in 2019, St. Monica's success rate on Competency 1 was 96%. This showed that most of our students were passing the competency, and likely proficiency would be a reasonable new goal for the upcoming educational project. In 2022, that rate decreased to 82%. We expected that after the pandemic, there would be a decrease given that there were various models of instruction in place, and the learning gaps of students would take some time to appear. In 2023, the success rate decreased significantly to 61%, likely for the same reasons. It will take time to bring the success rate back to where it was. At this time, the school will not pursue a goal towards monitoring proficiency, but instead report on the recovery of the success rate.

Objective: To increase the success rate of end of Cycle 3 students on the uniform exam (C1) from 61 % in 2023 to 69% by 2027.

END OF CYCLE 3 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

EMSΒ's Objectives:

To maintain the success rate of elementary students on the end of cycle 3 English Reading component of the June examination above the 90% range through 2027.

To maintain the success rate of elementary students on the end of cycle 3 English Writing component of the June examination above the 90% range through 2027.

Table 2: St Monica and EMSB Success Rates on the End of Cycle 3 English Language Arts June Examination by Component (%)

	2019	2022	2023
St Monica Reading Component	96%	96%	52%
St Monica Writing Component	92%	100%	76%
EMSB Reading Component	93%	87%	92%
EMSB Writing Component	96%	95%	93%

Source:

Interpretation: Table 2 shows that in 2019 and 2022, St. Monica students were relatively stable in English Language Arts above 90% in both components. In 2023, the success rate on the reading component decreased to 52%. Similarly, the writing component success rate decreased to 76%. The decrease in student success rates may be attributed, in part, to challenges related to staffing, particularly with the turnover and onboarding of new teachers needing to acclimate to the school environment.

At this time, we are unable to determine whether the last year of data indicates a trend. We will set a goal to improve from our most recent results to 90% or above.

Objective: To increase the success rate of elementary students on the end of Cycle 3 English Reading component of the June examination from 52 % in 2023 to 90 % or above by 2027.

Objective: To increase the success rate of elementary students on the end of Cycle 3 English Writing component of the June examination from 76 % in 2023 to 90 % or above by 2027.

END OF CYCLE 3 FRENCH SECOND LANGUAGE:

EMSB's Objectives:

To maintain the success rate of elementary students on the end of cycle 3 French Second Language, reading component of the June examination at 90.0% through 2027.

To maintain the success rate of elementary students on the end of Cycle 3 French Second Language, writing component of the June examination at or above 90.0% through 2027.

Interpretation: In working with Educational Services, we have determined that setting a goal in this particular area is not feasible at this time. This decision is based on the lack of sufficient data and the need for further expertise with the evaluation measures. The school will collect data from the June 2024 results and set appropriate goals at a later date.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

EMSB's Objectives:

To decrease the rate of elementary students' victimization, as reported by the students, resulting from bullying on the OURSCHOOL Survey from 31% in 2023 to 25% in 2027.

To increase the rate of elementary students' feeling safe at school, as reported by the students, on the OURSCHOOL Survey from 59% in 2023 to 65% in 2027.

To decrease the rate of elementary students' moderate to high perceptions of anxiety, as reported by the students, on the OURSCHOOL Survey from 31% in 2023 to 22% in 2027.

Table 4: St Monica Student Perceptions of Selected School Climate Factors (%)

Factor	St Monica			EMSB		Canadian Norm (2022)
	2019	2022	2023	2019	2022	
Bullying and Victimization	44	58	47	28	31	29
School Safety	42	52	62	60	59	61
Anxiety	29	29	24	22	31	30

Source: OURSCHOOL Survey (The Learning Bar), 2022-2023

Interpretation: The OURSCHOOL Survey is a tool that allows students to convey their perceptions of school life. Students take the survey annually; it is anonymous and covers a variety of topics including bullying, school safety, the students' sense of belonging, student anxiety and student-teacher relationships. The survey is one of many tools that schools use to implement the Ministry's policy on bullying and intimidation (Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Action Plan). It should be noted that students are asked what they perceived in the last 30 days preceding the survey.

It is worth noting that the Board's Commitment to Success Plan will continue to report on the overall student perceptions of school safety, whereas schools will report on perceptions of school safety during the day. The percentages in the table concerning this factor include student feelings of safety on the way to school and home. This allows schools to give more context to their contribution to this factor.

The rise in the perceptions of bullying and victimization from 44% in 2019 to 58% in 2022 is alarming. In 2023, the rate decreased to 47%. EMSB data for 2023 is not available yet for comparison, however, we expect this rate will continue to decrease. For a detailed understanding of the strategies that are in place, please refer to the appendix.

Student perceptions of safety while at school has steadily increased from 42% in 2019 to 62% in 2023. This is in line with the Canadian norm. Our approach to conflict resolution in using restorative practices may be positively contributing to this increase.

Considering the improvement in perceptions of school safety, it is worth noting that the rate of students reporting moderate to high levels of anxiety was stable from 2019 to 2022, and has now decreased to 24% in 2023. We believe that using restorative approaches have helped to significantly improve the school climate.

Objectives:

To decrease the rate of students' victimization, as reported by the students, resulting from bullying on the OURSCHOOL Survey from 47% in 2023 to 30% in 2027.

To increase the rate of students' feeling safe at school, as reported by the students, on the OURSCHOOL Survey from 62% in 2023 to 70% in 2027.

To decrease the rate of students' moderate to high perceptions of anxiety, as reported by the students, on the OURSCHOOL Survey from 24% in 2023 to 20% in 2027.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Connecting with parents of preschoolers is crucial for preschools to establish positive ties with the community. By building relationships, sharing information, and addressing common concerns, preschools contribute to creating a supportive and engaging community for both children and families. Reaching out to parents not only builds trust but also strengthens the sense of partnership and collaboration with families. This partnership goes beyond the child's early education, creating a lasting and meaningful connection.

The MEQ has created a document titled *the Guide to Support the Parent Component: Preschool Education for 4-Year-Olds* (August 2021). This guide offers suggestions for schools to facilitate a minimum of 10 meetings over the academic year for parents of 4-year-old preschoolers. The guide recognizes that families care about their children's well-being and success and that part of doing their best to support their children's development is to be collaborative partners with the school and the school team.

The following list outlines a sample of the events and activities planned for parent outreach in our preschool program. We will report on our activities every year.

- **Welcome to Kindergarten**
- **Transition to grade 1**
- **Reading effectively**
- **Promoting independence and encouraging cooperation**
- **Disciplining effectively**
- **Improving pre-school vocabulary**
- **Benefits of play and learn**
- **Establishing limits and routines**
- **Activities to keep kids busy**
- **Creative outlets**
- **Tips for supporting learning at home**
- **NDG community support organizations**
- **Once a month (starts in Spring), older siblings reading to younger siblings**
- **Once a month (starts in Spring), grandparent visits for reading or storytelling**

DIGITAL COMPETENCY

In 2018, the MEQ launched its Digital Action Plan which was its blueprint for the integration of digital technology and associated innovative pedagogical practices into the education sector. In 2019, the MEQ published its Digital Competency Framework with 12 dimensions, which was derived from the Digital Action Plan.

The ICT-RÉCIT team has been working with schools to train TIF teachers and integrate technology with students that develops their competency through the 12 dimensions. Currently, there is a TIF facilitator on staff who continues to receive training from the EMSB and who is the leader in ensuring that any projects a teacher would like to implement receives the guidance and support needed. The collaboration may also be guiding a colleague to the right resources to receive help. Some teachers have engaged in specific trainings such as use of graphic design that allows them to enhance the delivery of their lessons and compliment their teaching activities. In general, teachers continue to receive professional development through the EMSB exploring new ways to engage students in what is familiar and what is innovative for their learning.

APPENDIX: OBJECTIVES AT A GLANCE

OBJECTIVE	Specific Initiatives Towards Improvement
<p>Objective: To increase the success rate of end of Cycle 3 students on the uniform Math exam (C1) from 61 % in 2023 to 69 % by 2027.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will place extra emphasis on identified areas of concern, identified from item analysis data related to arithmetic and calculating in a situational problem • We will continue to work closely with our math consultant through individual and group sessions – for useful resources and sample exam questions and teaching strategies, the consultant will be invited into the school to give the teachers a one-day session on arithmetic and calculating activities • The resource teachers will work with students during class time (individually, or in a small group – using the RLTN model) on identified areas of weakness • Tutors will also be implicated in working with students on areas identified as weaknesses • Professional development will be dedicated to 1) the use of manipulatives, and 2) the understanding of students’ thought processes in higher order thinking • Improve teachers’ knowledge of mathematical concepts and instruction through the school board’s numeracy initiative

<p>Objective: To increase the success rate of elementary students on the end of Cycle 3 English Reading component of the June examination from 52 % in 2023 to 90 % in 2027.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library collection – modernize the collection of books found in the school library. • Work with Paul Kettner and Julie Tytler for access to books and workshops • Virtual Libraries • Students choose a book and book report style, technological options as well • Work with Andrea Prupas, EMSB consultant regarding assistive technology needs for individual students. • Implement strategies to promote reading and comprehension at all levels K4 to Grade 6 • Reading Week emphasized with engaging activities • Benny Farm Library visits • Active project partnership between teachers and Benny Farm Library • Invite literacy professionals and storytellers to St. Monica
<p>Objective: To increase the success rate of elementary students on the end of Cycle 3 English Writing component of the June examination from 76 % in 2023 to 90 % in 2027.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Paul Kettner and Julie Tytler for access to writing prompts and diverse writing activities • Paul Kettner or Julie Tytler will be invited for a workshop held at St. Monica • Virtual Libraries • Students choose a book and book report style, technological options as well • Work with Andrea Prupas, EMSB consultant regarding assistive technology needs for individual students.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to promote creativity in writing at all levels K4 to Grade 6 • Writing journal – students have personal choice of topic • Invite authors and storytellers (drama based) to St. Monica, Nicholas Doyon can assist • Sports column in the monthly newsletter, articles written by students
<p>Objective: French Reading Component</p> <p>In working with Educational Services, we have determined that setting a goal in this particular area is not feasible at this time. This decision is based on the lack of sufficient data and the need for further expertise with the evaluation measures. The school will collect data from the June 2024 results and set appropriate goals at a later date.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teachers will put extra emphasis on vocabulary and inference • Teachers will teach vocabulary explicitly, and focus on key words, use of picture walk through text • Promote active engagement of students in new vocabulary, using new words in discussion, conversation and authentic situations – French show and tell • Library collection – modernize the collection of books found in the school library. Work with Marie-Claude Bergeron and EMSB school board librarian • Pictographic book purchases for classrooms and school library with the assistance of EMSB French consultant and EMSB school board librarian • Comic book and graphic novel production workshops for students with experts in the field of graphic arts • Work with Andrea Prupas, EMSB consultant regarding assistive technology needs for individual students • Theme-based books chosen by teacher with student in reference to their interests • Implement strategies to promote reading and comprehension at all levels K4 to Grade 6

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage parents/guardians to use websites where students can have French books read to them and can be done together as a family • Active partnership between teachers and Benny Farm Library
<p>Objective: French Writing Component</p> <p>In working with Educational Services, we have determined that setting a goal in this particular area is not feasible at this time. This decision is based on the lack of sufficient data and the need for further expertise with the evaluation measures. The school will collect data from the June 2024 results and set appropriate goals at a later date.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comic book and graphic novel production workshops for students with experts in the field of graphic arts • Work with Andrea Prupas, EMSB consultant regarding assistive technology needs for individual students • Implement strategies to promote creativity in writing at all levels K4 to Grade 6 • Students choose a book and book report style, technological options as well • Writing journal – students have personal choice of topic • Invite authors and storytellers (drama based) to St. Monica, Nicholas Doyon can assist • French Friday school-wide initiative to promote additional use of the French language