

**BRIEF BY THE CONSEIL SUPÉRIEUR DE L'ÉDUCATION
ON THE *DRAFT REGULATION AMENDING THE
COLLEGE EDUCATION REGULATIONS***

SUMMARY OF THE CONSEIL'S POSITION

JULY 2007

SUMMARY

On June 27, 2007, the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation received a request from the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sport, Michelle Courchesne, for a brief on the *Draft Regulation Amending the College Education Regulations*. The latter concerns the concurrent amendments for incorporating the progressive application of the *Basic School Regulation For Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Education*.

The proposed amendments modify the admission requirements for programs leading to a Diploma of College Studies (DCS) for holders of a Secondary School Diploma (SSD) or a Diploma of Vocational Studies (DVS).

The Conseil has studied these amendments with respect to some key aspects that it had identified in previous briefs, notably on conditions for secondary school certification of studies, prerequisites for admission to college, and transition between education sectors, namely:

- The increased requirements to obtain a SSD;
- The importance of appropriate basic instruction to foster success at the college level;
- The importance of a support framework to facilitate transition between sectors;
- The importance of fully supporting remedial courses.

Following examination of the proposed amendments and consultation with organizations in the college education network, the Conseil has formulated the following conclusions.

Regarding amendments pertaining to college admission based on a Secondary School Diploma (SSD):

- Considering the increased certification requirements for obtaining a SSD;
- Considering that these new requirements would ensure, as of 2010, a sound basic instruction for pursuing a college education;

The Conseil concurs with the proposed amendments, that is, college admission based on a SSD.

However,

- Considering one of the new requirements to obtain a SSD is successful completion of Secondary IV Mathematics, rather than Secondary V Mathematics;
- Considering the progressive application, between now and 2010, of a new Mathematics program for secondary schools, whose content will be enhanced;
- Considering that since 1997, the prerequisite regarding Mathematics for admission to college has been successful completion of Secondary V Mathematics, and that its instruction has contributed, together with other SSD+¹ requirements, to an increase in the rate of success and the number of graduates at the college level;

The Conseil recommends to the Minister to ensure that students pursuing a college education who obtain their SSD in 2010 have an instruction in Mathematics comparable to that required since 1997, that is, the equivalent of a Mathematics 514 course.

Regarding college admission based on a SSD during the transitional period of 2007–2010:

- Considering that the *Draft Regulation* makes a provision for college admission based on a SSD;
- Considering the transitional period for the progressive application of a new Mathematics program in Secondary Cycle II;
- Considering that, during this transitional period, the required level of mathematics for general admission to college is Secondary IV rather than Secondary V Mathematics;
- Considering that Social Science and Liberal Arts programs were conceived based on the prerequisite of successfully completing Secondary V Mathematics for the course in quantitative methods;
- Considering that, during this transitional period, some students may consequently be admitted to Social Science and Liberal Arts programs without the appropriate basic instruction, and that this may hinder their success;

The Conseil recommends to the Minister to establish, during the transitional period, successful completion of Secondary V Mathematics as a specific prerequisite for admission to Social Science and Liberal Arts programs.

1. Successful completion of the following courses: Secondary V language of instruction and second language, as well as Secondary IV Physical Science and History. These are the same prerequisites for obtaining a SSD in 2007, with the exception of successful completion of Secondary V Mathematics.

However,

- Considering that a special 15-hour remedial course for the 2007–2008 academic year has already been announced for Social Science and Liberal Arts programs, and that measures to this effect have already been undertaken by some colleges;
- Considering that the proposed plan is raising some concern with regard to its efficacy;

The Conseil recommends to the Minister to allow college-level institutions to offer, for the 2007–2008 academic year, additional remedial courses in Mathematics to students who may require more than 15 hours, and to ensure funding of these courses.

Lastly,

- Considering that, during the transitional period, successful completion of Secondary V Mathematics is a specific prerequisite for 15 technical studies programs, similar to the recommendation that the Conseil formulates in the present Brief for admission to Social Science and Liberal Arts Programs;
- Considering that, during the transitional period, there are no specific remedial courses to replace the missing instruction in Mathematics;

The Conseil recommends to the Minister to ensure that during the transitional period, remedial courses be offered to students admitted to college studies who do not meet this specific admission prerequisite.

Regarding amendments pertaining to college admission based on a Diploma of Vocational Studies (DVS):

- Considering that the *Draft Regulation* proposes that holders of a DVS in a non-continuous program² must successfully complete Secondary V language of instruction and second language and Secondary IV Mathematics;
- Considering that these requirements place students in a context that facilitates success in the continuation of their studies;
- Considering that college-level institutions may require remedial courses that the Minister may establish;
- Considering promising preliminary results from trials conducted since 2003 in programs leading to a DVS in ongoing studies regarding to school retention and success in a given program of studies;
- Considering that the support environment and criteria for determining a continuous education path between programs leading to a DVS and those leading to a DCS constitute a framework that fosters transition between education sectors and student success;

2. These are programs leading to a DVS for which there are no links to programs leading to a DCS.

The Conseil concurs with the admission criteria for DVS holders proposed in the *Draft Regulation*.

However, the Conseil requests to the Minister:

- To undertake a careful monitoring of the progression of college-enrolled students admitted based on their DVS to ensure that existing conditions foster academic success and facilitate the transition between education sectors;
- To establish and offer, at the college level, remedial courses in Science and Technology as well as in Secondary IV History and Citizenship Education for DVS holders who have not obtained the prerequisite credits for these courses.

