

February 24, 2022

Parents/Guardians/Adult Education and Vocational Training Students,

Recently, the Quebec Ministry of Education acquired 90,000 carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) readers to be installed in all classrooms in Quebec with the purpose of ensuring a rigorous monitoring of the quality of indoor air in schools.

The Western Quebec School Board, upon receiving the readers, proceeds to the installation of these in all classrooms. The readers evaluate the level of concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the classrooms as well as measuring the temperature and the relative humidity. The data gathered is used to target areas where adjustments need to be made. The gathering and analysis of this data also provides a portrait, in real time, of the comfort parameters (air quality, temperature, humidity). School and centre administrators can then take the necessary steps to ensure the maintenance of the quality of air in the classrooms and building.

CO<sub>2</sub> is produced naturally when humans breath and it's presence in schools does not create health effects. It is, however, an indicator of the quality of the ventilation as well as a comfort indicator. The Ministry target for average daily concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> is less than 1000 parts per million (ppm). This target is used to inform and orient air quality improvement projects in schools and centres over the next few years. Please note that a daily average concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> less than 1500 ppm is an indicator of adequate ventilation.

To ensure that the average daily values outlined above are met, two approaches are employed to control the concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in a classroom:

1. By using the data on the CO<sub>2</sub> readers, school personnel ensure that the concentration levels do not exceed 1500 ppm. Teachers intervene directly through the opening of windows and doors as outlined in the management of air quality protocol.
2. The buildings department of the school board collects and analyzes the daily averages readings to plan and prioritize the work required to improve the quality of air and ventilation.

In the management of the quality of air in our schools and centres, it is important to remember that the Ministry of Education is working with the public health sector. This collaborative undertaking with independent air quality and ventilation experts aims to maintain schools well ventilated in the long term, beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information on the quality of air in Quebec schools, please consult the following web page: <https://www.quebec.ca/education/prescolaire-primaire-et-secondaire/qualite-air-ecoles>.



Mike Dubeau  
Director General  
Western Quebec