

Matière Verte

Document presenting the Matière Verte
Support and Certification program from
ENvironnement JEUnesse

2021–2022



PROGRAMME
matière VERTE

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1. About ENvironnement JEUnesse

Founded in 1979, ENvironnement JEUnesse (ENJEU) is an organization dedicated to educating Quebec youth about environmental issues, training them via educational projects and encouraging them to take action in their community. The ENvironnement JEUnesse network encourages critical thinking and gives youth a platform to voice their concerns about, positions on and solutions to current environmental issues.

Our goals:

- To develop the knowledge, outlook and skills of young people so that they can take relevant action in a free and informed way
- To inform and train young people and various school actors and other participants on environmental issues
- To bring together and motivate young people, youth groups and other participants within a dynamic network and to promote discussion within and outside this network
- To design, share and update projects, activities and pedagogical material, as well as tools to support action, for young people
- To promote ENvironnement JEUnesse in the education, youth and environmental sectors
- To participate in public consultations and debates on environmental issues and to strengthen the presence of youth and of environmental education in these events
- To introduce young people to democratic life and to the governance of a community organization

ENvironnement JEUnesse's citizen involvement activities and educational projects deal with various issues, including waste management, transportation, energy and climate change, responsible consumption, water and the inclusion of environmental and sustainable development in institutional and commercial settings

2. Presentation of the Matière Verte program

Created in 2020, the Matière Verte Support and Certification program offered by ENvironnement JEUnesse is aimed at Quebec's **elementary and high schools**, both public and private.

The Matière Verte program has two components: Support and Certification. Via the **Support component**, the ENvironnement JEUnesse team offers adapted, year-round support to elementary and high schools. While the **Certification component** of the program encourages environmental education and facilitates sustainable management tailored to the school. The Certification component is sub-divided into five levels to recognize efforts and achievements as part of a long-term approach.

The Matière Verte program aims to inspire action from the entire school community. Leadership, teachers, support staff, specialists (social work, psychology, remedial education, etc.), parents and students are all involved in the activities, particularly through the environmental committee.

The Matière Verte program offers environmental expertise and guidance adapted to Quebec's elementary and high schools, allowing sound practices of sustainable management to be progressively introduced. The strength of the network lies in the sharing of best practices, adoption of inspiring initiatives, use of performance measures and promotion of promising projects.

Participation in the program entails a commitment to environmental education, which is defined below.

Environmental education (EE)

Environmental education (EE) is any form of education that relates to the environment. Via three complementary approaches, it aims to help improve the quality of the environment, to foster the full development of individuals and social groups and to contribute to improving pedagogy.

To achieve this, environmental education develops real-world personal and collective skills (“action skills”) particularly of an ethical, critical, political, aesthetic and heuristic (problem-solving) nature. Meanwhile, “action motives” and “action channels” are key to the application of these skills. As such, this is not education about the environment itself, but about the relationship that individuals and social groups have with the environment. Environmental education is therefore about more than just teaching people to do something. Instead, it is an integral part of a broader, more substantive education.

In the Matière Verte program, the training activities required at Level 2 of the program provide the “action skills,” which complement the development of personal and collective skills beyond awareness of a given issue. The “action motives” can be expressed in the wording, directions and priorities laid out in the school’s environmental policy. Finally, “action channels” might relate to students’ involvement in the environmental committee, or youth participation in public hearings and consultations.

In concrete terms, environmental education is characterized by a number of features, including:

- Integration of multiple pedagogical currents: naturalist, conservationist, problem-solving, systemic, ethical, bioregionalist, practical, critical, feminist, ethnographic, etc.
 - Supporting students in a concrete project that responds to a need or problem in their school or neighbourhood
- Diverse pedagogical approaches: experiential, interdisciplinary, problem-solving, reflexive, cooperative, holistic, critical, sensory, creative, etc.
 - Use of the surrounding environment (woodland, river) as a site of learning
 - Encouragement of skill sharing among peers, both for students and staff (community of practice)
- A range of pedagogical strategies: community projects, role playing, nature walks, environmental autobiographies, activities, gardening, landscape reading, collective actions, etc.
 - Classes held outdoors, whether in the schoolyard, in the neighbourhood or in nature

3. Support

Upon joining the program, elementary and high schools receive year-round support from the ENvironnement JEUnesse team. Schools also gain privileged access to the online member area and receive the following benefits¹:

- Personalized follow-up and support at any time, by phone or email
- Access to the member area, including access to adapted management tools (diagnostic tool, agenda template, action plan template, progress report template, etc.)
- Participation in an online training webinar on the basic elements of the program, environmental education and sustainable management in schools
- Participation in two training and networking events per year (\$)
- Workshops and training on a variety of topics (\$)
- Professional report analysis by an advisory committee, with personalized recommendations (letter of recommendation) (\$)
- Certificate of participation for students who took part in the activities (free)
- Certificate of participation following the end-of-school-year evaluation (free)
- Certificate of recognition for the level reached (\$)
- Private communication group for members, and monthly newsletters
- Scholarships available for schools in disadvantaged areas
- Increased visibility within the network through ENvironnement JEUnesse's communication tools (website, social media, etc.)

Our team is available throughout the year to provide personalized assistance and answer questions. The deadline for submitting an information request for the progress report is Friday, June 22, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. (i.e., seven days before the progress report deadline).

Training and networking events

Two or three training and networking events are offered to the Matière Verte network during the school year. The theme of these events varies each year based on requests and needs within the network.

An **annual certificate event** is held to highlight the consistent efforts of schools. It is also an ideal opportunity to interact with members of the Matière Verte community and to meet the various program partners. The presentation of certificates by the ENvironnement JEUnesse team is usually followed by a training and networking activity.

These activities are offered to all individuals involved in the Matière Verte program (leadership, staff, students, etc.) and are recognized as **valid training activities** under the Certification component.

¹ For ENvironnement JEUnesse, it is essential that schools of all backgrounds and sizes are able to access the program. The vast majority of the activities in the support component are offered completely free of charge.

A **bank of teaching resources** (including local and regional resources), both free and paid, is provided to schools. Fees are charged for in-person events, workshops and trainings, as well as for personalized recommendations by an advisory committee.

4. Certification

The program is sub-divided into **five levels of certification**. These recognize the integration of environmental education approaches, as well as the environmentally responsible management of school resources. The certification process provides a framework for improving school practices. The certificate is given in recognition of all the efforts made during the year. The certificate therefore testifies to the school's progress in incorporating environmentally responsible practices.

The program is based on the **progression through several levels, at each school's own pace**. Before aiming for a higher level of certification, the basics of sustainable management must be acquired. This is why schools in their first year of the program are initially required to achieve Level 1.

Level 1 familiarizes schools with the program and its resources, while laying the foundation for sustainable management. All schools must complete Level 1 before aiming for a higher level of certification. Once Level 1 is achieved, schools are free to move up to a higher level or maintain the level they are at.

The Certification component is optional. A school enrolled in the program can benefit from the program's support and resources without being certified.

4.1 Certification process

The Certification component, including **professional analysis of the report by an advisory committee**, is optional. An enrolled school can benefit from the program's support and resources without being certified. The **advisory committee** is responsible for reviewing applications and deciding whether or not to recommend schools for certification. The advisory committee includes experts, members of organizations working in environmental education and youth members (for example, students).

The school then has one year to meet the criteria for the level of certification it is applying for. At the end of the year, it must submit a progress report for review by a committee of experts (the advisory committee) who will evaluate the application based on the documents provided by the school. Be sure to number the attachments to facilitate the advisory committee's review process.

This brochure summarizes the certification criteria, but it does not replace the requirements mentioned in the progress report template and in the program management tools. As a minimum requirement, the school's report must include all the information requested in the progress report template and in the management tool templates. We also highly recommend that schools follow the format of the progress report template.

When participating in the program for the first time, schools must begin at Level 1. Level 1 familiarizes schools with the program and its tools. For a period of one to three years without certification or participation in the program, the maximum level that can be awarded is Level 3. For a period of three years or more, the institution is required to re-enroll at Level 1.

4.2 Certification level criteria

	Level 1:	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4:	Level 5:
Submit a letter of commitment to the process including the level targeted during the school year	•	•	•	•	•
Create and facilitate an environmental committee, hold a minimum of two meetings and provide meeting minutes	•	•	•	•	•
Complete the diagnostic tool and establish the school's priorities	•				
Get to know the program guides and resources available in the member area	•				
Attend the program introduction webinar	•				
Start using at least one environmental communication tool within the school community	•				
Conduct at least three environmental education awareness activities	•	•	•	•	•
Use at least one environmental communication tool	•	•	•	•	•
Accomplish between one and five significant environmental actions	• (1)	• (2)	• (3)	• (4)	• (5)
Host two training sessions on two different environmental topics (as a minimum requirement, these sessions must include committee members)		•	•	•	•
Develop an environmental action plan covering at least the current year		•	•	•	•
Conduct an annual review of the environmental action plan			•	•	•
Develop and adopt an environmental policy (to be updated every five years)			•	•	•
Complete the school's environmental assessment (to be repeated every five years)				•	•
Create an environmental fund					•
Introduce and maintain continuous improvement measures					•
Contribute to at least one ENvironnement JEUnesse activity					•

To achieve **Level 5 in the program**, the school must contribute to at least one ENvironnement JEUnesse activity; this could be supporting its students' participation in the annual symposium, attending a training and networking event, or participating in the network's joint campaigns or projects.

5. Registration

Registration for the program can be done in three easy steps:



Rates²

In order to benefit from the support and certification program, schools must be members of ENvironnement JEUnesse (membership is valid for three years). **Membership for schools costs \$100 for three years.** For schools wishing to participate in the Certification component, an additional fee is charged on an annual basis.

An early-bird rate is available until October 1, 2021.

	Registration without report analysis		Registration with report analysis	
	Until October 1, 2021	After October 1, 2021	Until October 1, 2021	After October 1, 2021
ENvironnement JEUnesse membership (valid for three years) for both components	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Participation in the Certification component of the Matière Verte program for the year 2021–2022 (renewable each year)	N/A	N/A	\$320	\$330

Please note that Matière Verte program membership is not renewed automatically; you must renew your registration each year.

² Membership is per school. For schools with more than one campus: if the environmental policies and measures, assessment and progress report apply to all campuses, then only one membership is needed. However, if these campuses have different policies and measures, different committees and multiple progress reports, then each campus will require a separate membership. Finally, if only one campus in a multi-campus school wishes to join the program, then the campus may enroll individually without the need for activities to be offered at all the school's campuses. In this case, only the campus that has joined the program will be eligible for certification.

6. Important dates

Fall 2021

Certificate ceremony and training and networking day with members of the advisory committee

September to December 2021

First remote follow-up meeting with committee members, including students

November 30, 2021

Deadline for Matière Verte program registration

October or November 2021

Annual youth environmental symposium (for secondary cycle 2, i.e. grades 9-11)

December 2021

Program introduction webinar: environmental education and sustainable management

February 2022

Second remote follow-up meeting by level

Spring 2022

Training and networking activities

May 2022

Third remote follow-up meeting by level (upon request)

June 22, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Deadline to submit a request for information regarding the progress report

June 29, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Deadline to submit progress report covering the period from August 1, 2021, to June 23, 2022³

July to August 2022

Review period for progress reports with advisory committee members

Fall 2022

Certificate ceremony and training and networking day with members of the advisory committee

³ No additional time will be allowed. Please note that requests for information on writing the progress report are accepted up to one week prior to the submission deadline.

Appendix Letter of commitment

[Your letterhead and logo]

Catherine Gauthier
Executive Director
ENvironnement JEUnesse
3000 Omer Lavallée Street, Suite 122
Montréal, QC H1Y 3R8

[City], on [month] [day], 2021

Subject: Letter of commitment to the Matière Verte program for the year 2021–2022

Dear Ms. Gauthier,

[Name of school] hereby commits to participating in the Matière Verte program from ENvironnement JEUnesse.

For participation in the Certification component:	For participation in the Support component only:
For the 2021–2022 school year, our school is aiming to achieve [specify target level]. To achieve this, [name of school] will make efforts to:	For the 2021–2022 school year, our school would like to participate in the Support component only.
[Here you can describe your commitment or the efforts you will make to achieve your goal. Tip: You can use the target level requirements listed on page 7.]	[Here you can describe your commitment or the topics you would like to learn about or get involved in.]
Achieving Level [specify target level] of the Matière Verte program will recognize [name of school]'s environmental commitment and achievements.	Our participation in the Matière Verte program will allow us to become familiar with environmental education practices and to learn about environmentally responsible practices in the school.

This commitment also aligns with our educational mission and will contribute to a greener society.

[Your salutation]

[Signature]
[Name], [Title or position]
[Name of school]
[Email] | [Phone]
[Full address]