



April 9, 1998 - N° 5

The first issue of this newsletter devoted to **Bill 180** (the Act to amend the Education Act and various legislative provisions) focused on the main policies concerning the new powers of schools, the mandate of the governing board and the role of teachers. This issue explains the composition and operation of the governing board and the role of the school principal. A timetable on the reverse side of this sheet shows when the various provisions of the new Act are to be implemented.

THE GOVERNING BOARD: A TRUE DECISION-MAKING TEAM

The Bill creates a new form of partnership between users of the school (i.e., parents) and the school staff, and also recognizes that the school must maintain links with the community. This is reflected in the composition and rules of operation of the governing board.

COMPOSITION

The Bill does not fix the number of seats on the governing board so that the size of the board may be adapted to the needs of the school. It does, however, set a maximum of twenty seats.

The basic principle for determining the composition of the governing board is that there must be equal representation of school staff and parents. Furthermore, the chair must be a parent elected from among the parent representatives on the governing board.

The governing board is therefore made up of the following members:

Voting Members:

- at least four parents of students attending the school;
- at least four members of the school staff including at least two teachers and, if the interested persons so decide, at least one non-teaching professional and one support staff member;
- in elementary schools providing day care services, a member of the daycare staff.

Non-Voting Members:

- two representatives of the community;
- in secondary schools offering the second cycle, two student in the second cycle.

The school principal takes part in meetings of the governing board but is not entitled to vote.

Commissioners may take part in meetings, when authorized to do so by the governing board, but are not entitled to vote.

The Bill sets out the procedures for electing or appointing the members of the governing board.

RULES OF OPERATION

The governing board may meet as often as necessary but must meet at least five times a year. Its meetings are open to the public.

To have a quorum, half of the members must be present, including half of the parent representatives. Decisions are made by a majority vote of the members present and entitled to vote. If votes are equally divided, the chair has the casting vote.

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL: A STRATEGIC ROLE

Given the powers that have been handed over to the school, the responsibilities and powers exercised by the school principal are vital. The school principal is in fact the key person of the reform and plays a triple role.

First, the principal assists the governing board. He or she receives all proposals to be considered by the governing board, prepares these proposals by consulting the school staff concerned, and follows up on all decisions.

Second, the principal provides greater leadership in pedagogical matters, in keeping with the new powers devolved to the school. The principal must approve teachers' proposals regarding local programs, the standards for the introduction of new teaching methods, the choice of textbooks and teaching materials, the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement, and the rules for the placement of students and their promotion from one cycle to another in elementary school.

Last, the management role of the school principal is broadened to include new areas of responsibility. It is now the principal's duty to:

- determine the school's needs in terms of human resources, professional development, goods and services, and the management and improvement of school premises;
- organize the professional development activities agreed upon with the school staff;
- prepare and manage the school's budget and present it to the governing board and the school board for approval.

TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL FOR THE 1998-99 SCHOOL YEAR

The new provisions of the Bill will have obvious consequences for school organization. The school boards and their provisional councils must take its amendments into consideration in planning and preparing the start of the new school year in September 1998.

The following table lists the main steps, the party responsible for each step, and the applicable sections of the Education Act (amended by Bill 180).



PERIOD	STEP	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	SECTIONS OF THE EA
January and February 1998	ADMISSION OF STUDENTS		School board	209 518.1
January to April 1998	Allocation of the rights of ownership in the immovables of existing school boards		School board	519
January to April 1998	PREPARATION OF THE LIST OF SCHOOLS AND CENTRES AND ISSUE OF DEEDS OF ESTABLISHMENT		School board	211 520
15 days before enrolment	ESTABLISHMENT OF ENROLMENT CRITERIA	Desirable consultation with existing parents' committees	School board	239
February to May 1998	ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS FOR THE PURPOSES OF A SPECIFIC PROJECT	Consultation with parents' committees	School board	240
February to May 1998	ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS IN THESE SCHOOLS	Request for the Minister's approval	School board	4 239
May and June 1998	APPOINTMENT OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR OF THE PRINCIPAL OF THE CENTRE		School board	96.8 110.5
May and June 1998	ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES TO THE SCHOOLS AND CENTRES	Allocation of staff Allocation of budget	School board	261 275
April to July 1998	EXEMPTION FOR SPECIAL SCHOOL PROJECTS INTENDED FOR GROUPS OF STUDENTS	Request for the Minister's approval if departure from subject-time allocation	School board	222
July and August 1998	APPOINTMENT OF A PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO CONFESSIONAL SCHOOLS	Request for approval from the bishop of the Catholic diocese and of a committee formed by the Protestant churches	School board	262
Early September 1998	DETERMINATION OF THE NUMBER OF SEATS ON THE GOVERNING BOARDS	Consultation with groups concerned	School board	43, 44
September 1998	ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SCHOOLS' AND CENTRES' GOVERNING BOARDS	Holding of meetings of students and parents to elect representatives to the governing board, the parents' committee and the students' committee	School principal	47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 96, 96.5, 102,103
September 1998	APPOINTMENT OF COMMUNITY GROUP AND BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES	Consultation with socio-economic and community groups	School board	103
September 1998	DECISION REGARDING THE GRADUAL IMPLEMENTATION OF CERTAIN POWERS DEVOLVED TO THE GOVERNING BOARDS	Consultation with each governing board. Gradual implementation over the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 school years.	School board	Section 198 of Bill 180
September 1998	DECISION REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE GOVERNING BOARDS	At the request of the governing boards when several schools share the same premises	School board	211
September 1998	ORGANIZATION OF DAY CARE SERVICES	Obligation to organize such services at the request of the governing boards	School board	256
September 1998	EVALUATION OF NEEDS AND ABILITIES OF STUDENTS WITH HANDICAPS OR LEARNING OR ADJUSTMENT DIFFICULTIES		School board	234
September 1998	DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN FOR EACH STUDENT WITH A HANDICAP OR LEARNING OR ADJUSTMENT DIFFICULTY	Taking into account the school board's evaluation Participation of the student and his or her parents	School principal	96.14
End of September 1998	ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEES	Parents' committee, advisory committee on services for students with handicaps or learning or adjustment difficulties, advisory committee on student transportation	School board	189, 185, 186



The purpose of *Education Reform Update* is to keep readers up-to-date on the progress of the reform set out in *A New Direction for Success: Ministerial Plan of Action for the Reform of the Education System*. The newsletter is published by the communications branch of the ministère de l'Éducation, in cooperation with the office of the Deputy Minister of Education.

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Legal Deposit:
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
ISSN: 1480-3054 — File: 97-0656
Code: 55-1852-05A

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