



Commission scolaire
English-Montréal

English Montreal
School Board

Training Session on Governing Boards

Governing Boards

On July 1, 1998, linguistic school boards were formed as part of a wide reform of the educational system in Quebec.

Governing Boards are a component of the educational reform. They were created to decentralize powers so that they are concentrated at the school level.

A Governing Board is a group of people, either **elected** or **appointed** who are genuinely interested in education. Every member has the same goal, which is to **promote student success**.

The **Governing Board** has an important role to play in interpreting and achieving school success through the school's **educational project**, its **success plan** and its **MESA Plan**.

Composition and Operation of the Governing Board

1. Governing Boards must be composed of no more than 20 members including:

A At least 4 parents

B At least 4 school staff members

At least 2 must be teachers

At least 1 non teaching professional or a teacher as a substitute

At least 1 support staff or a teacher as a substitute

1 daycare representative (elementary level)

2 students (high school level)

C 2 community representatives (non-voting member)
(article 42)

The parent members (A) must be equal to the staff members (B)

The community representatives should not be parent members or staff members of the school. The governing board chooses whether or not they want to have community representatives.

The **principal** acts as a resource person.

He/she ensures that the proposals are prepared and submitted to the governing board and that the governing board is provided all necessary information before making decisions.

The principal by law is responsible for the minutes of the governing board ensuring that the minutes are duly completed, signed and stored safely. (article 69)

2. The composition of the governing board is **determined by the School Board** (article 43)

3. The total number of seats for staff representatives **must be equal** to those for parents' representatives. (article 43)

❖ Requests for a change in composition:

a. must be made in writing to the Board

b. must be approved by the Council of Commissioners

c. must be made prior to June to come into effect the following year

Election of Governing Board members

ALL representatives must be elected by September 30th

- ❖ The general assembly of parents:
 - elects parent representatives to the governing board (article 47)
 - elects delegate and alternate to the regional parents' committee (article 47)
 - decides if it wishes to form a PPO, decides on the number of members and elects them (article 96)

- ❖ Staff members hold meetings in September to elect their representatives (articles 48, 49, 50)

- ❖ Students are appointed by the students' council or the association representing the students; if they do not exist, students meet in September to elect their representatives with the principal presiding over the elections. (article 51)

<p>4. The term of office for parent representatives is two years; the term for representatives from other groups is one year. (article 54)</p>

*The Chairperson is elected at the first meeting of the governing board by **all** the **voting members**.*

*The governing board **does not elect a vice-chair**.*

Article 60; If the chair is absent or unable to act, the governing board shall designate a person from among the members who are eligible for the office of chair to exercise the functions and powers of the chair.

Substitution

5. A governing board member cannot be temporarily replaced by a substitute (article 54)

- ❖ A member is replaced only when there is a vacancy created by a resignation or disqualification
- ❖ A parents' representative whose child no longer attends the school may remain a member of the governing board until the next meeting held pursuant to section 47. (general assembly)
- ❖ A vacancy resulting from the departure of a parents' representative shall be filled, for the unexpired portion of the representative's term, by a parent designated by the other parents' representatives on the governing board.
- ❖ A vacancy resulting from the departure or disqualification of any other member of the governing board is filled, for the unexpired portion of the term, according to the mode of appointment prescribed for the member to be replaced. (article 55)

Commissioners

- ❖ Commissioners elected or appointed pursuant to the Act respecting school elections (chapter E-2.3) cannot be members of the governing board of a school under the authority of the school board.
- ❖ However, when carrying out a mandate under paragraph 4 of section 176.1, (carrying out any mandate entrusted to them by the council of commissioners, on a proposal by the chair, for the purpose of providing information to the other council members on any specific matter) a commissioner may take part in meetings of the governing board but is not entitled to vote. (section 45)

6. Commissioners when carrying out a mandate by the council of commissioners can take part in meetings, but are not entitled to vote (article 45)

Observers

- ❖ do not take part in governing board meetings
- ❖ are given an opportunity to ask questions addressed to the chair during question period

Quorum

7. A majority of the members of the governing board, who are in office, including **at least half the parents**, is a quorum of the governing board. (article 61)

Example

A governing board consists of 13 members:

- 6 parents
- 4 teachers
- 1 member of the support staff
- 1 day care worker
- 1 community representative (non voting members)

A quorum consists of 7 members:

- 3 parents (half)
- 2 teachers
- 1 day care worker
- 1 community representative (non voting members)

Governing Board Decisions

8. The decisions of the Governing Board are made by a majority vote of the members present and entitled to vote (section 63)

Community representatives are non voting members.

Role of the Chairperson

- ❖ Presides over meetings of the governing board. (article 59)
- ❖ Has the deciding or casting vote in the event of a tie. (article 63)

9. What Constitutes a Good Chair

- ❖ Is well prepared for the meeting.
- ❖ Respects the rules of internal procedure; keeps a speaker list, keeps order and ensures speakers remain on topic.
- ❖ Listens attentively and encourages **all** members to speak up and explain their views
- ❖ Clarifies interventions and summarizes the various opinions.
- ❖ Speaks no more than is necessary, but helps to clarify and gives information.
- ❖ Starts and ends meetings on time.

Role of the Treasurer

- ❖ Gives updates on the allocation of the annual operating budget (\$250) given to the governing board from the School Board.

(article 66)

The governing board shall adopt and oversee the administration of its annual operating budget and render an account thereof to the school board.

The budget must maintain a balance between expenditures, on the one hand, and the financial resources allocated to the governing board by the school board, on the other.

Rules of Internal Management

10. The governing board shall establish rules for its internal management.

11. Must provide for at least 5 meetings.

The internal management rules shall provide for at least five meetings every school year.

The governing board shall fix the date, time and place of its meetings, and inform the parents and the members of the school staff.
(article 67)

The Internal Rules of Management may include the following:

- ❖ The principles and procedures for the management of the annual operating budget that belongs to the governing board (allocation of 250\$ from the School Board)
- ❖ The procedures for calling regular and special meetings:
 - Number of days required to send notice of meetings;
 - Who sends the notice (e.g.: chair, principal, etc. ...);
 - By which means (e.g.: mail, e-mail ...);
 - What should be sent (notice, agenda, relevant documentation ...)
- ❖ The procedural rules for the meeting
 - Location, schedule and duration of meeting, discussion process.

12. Rules for questions from the public may be determined by members of the governing board and be included in the rules of internal management.

The Internal Rules of Management may include the following:

- ❖ Agenda
 - Who is responsible for drafting and distributing the agenda, number of days required to send the agenda before the meeting (and receive feedback), content: priorities in the choice of items, time allocation and nature of the discussion should be indicated beside each item.

- ❖ Minutes
 - Who is responsible for drafting and distributing them, content, who should receive the minutes (other than the members of the governing board).

Following approval, the minutes must be signed by the chairperson and countersigned by the principal or the person appointed by the principal. The minutes must be kept by the principal or a person specially designated by the principal (article 69). The minutes must be kept in a register and they are open to the public.

Role of the Governing Board

Role of the Governing Board

- ❖ The Education Act defines the powers and responsibilities of the school between the governing board and principal.
- ❖ The governing board powers are defined in the Education Act under articles 74-95, while those of the principal are formulated under article 96.12-96.26.
- ❖ The governing board is the focal point for decisions that affect the life of the school.
- ❖ The members of the governing board must act within the scope of the functions and powers conferred on them, and exercise the care, prudence and diligence that a reasonable person would exercise in similar circumstances; they must also act with honesty and loyalty and in the interest of the school, the students, the parents, the school staff and the community. (article 71)
- ❖ The governing board members voice the opinions of the groups they represent.
- ❖ The governing board discusses general orientations.
- ❖ The governing board should work in a collegial manner.
- ❖ The governing board should work in the students' best interests.
- ❖ The governing board encourages cooperation among people having an interest in the school.

“Governance” and “Management”

- ❖ **Governing** is setting goals
- ❖ **Governing boards govern**; they do not manage
- ❖ **Managing** is taking action to ensure that these goals are met and ensuring that the decisions of the governing board are implemented.
- ❖ **School administrators manage** and serve as resources to help guide the governing board in setting goals.
- ❖ **Governing boards** determine what the school should achieve through the educational project;

(article 74) The governing board shall analyze the situation prevailing at the school, principally the needs of the students, the challenges tied to student success and the characteristics and expectations of the community served by the school. Based on the analysis and taking into account the strategic plan of the school board, the governing board shall adopt, oversee the implementation of and periodically evaluate the school's educational project.

In exercising such functions, the governing board shall seek the collaboration of persons having an interest in the school.

To that end, the governing board shall encourage the communication of information, dialogue and concerted action between students, parents, the principal, teachers and other school staff members and community representatives, and their collaboration in helping students to achieve success.

- ❖ **School administrators** ensure that the objectives of the educational project are achieved; they coordinate the analysis of the school situation and the work related to the educational project.

(article 96.13.1)

The principal shall assist the governing board in the exercise of its functions and powers and, for that purpose, the principal shall

(1) coordinate the analysis of the situation prevailing at the school and the development, implementation and periodical evaluation of the school's educational project;

(1.1) coordinate the development, the review and any updating of the school's success plan;

(article 96.14)

The principal shall see to the implementation and periodical evaluation of the education plan and inform the student's parents on a regular basis.

- ❖ **School administrators** are the **academic** and **administrative** directors of the school; they ensure that the decisions of the governing board are implemented.

(article 96.12)

The principal, under the authority of the director general of the school board, shall ensure that educational services provided at the school meet the proper standards of quality.

The principal is the academic and administrative director of the school and shall see to the implementation of the decisions of the governing board and of the other provisions governing the school.

**Different Types of decision making
taken by the Governing Board**

Different Types of Decision Making

Decision

The governing board has certain responsibilities (obligations) that it should assume and on which it should make a decision.

Adoption

The governing board has the power to change, adapt, add, or remove one or more elements of a proposal submitted by the principal.

Approval

The governing board accepts or rejects the proposal without the possibility of making changes (the power to say *yes* or *no*). If rejected, a new proposal should be submitted to the governing board for approval before its implementation.

Due to the fact that the proposals to be approved are connected to the responsibilities attributed to the school staff, the nature of this power is more limited (restrictive) than the power of adoption.

Before a proposal of this nature is presented to the governing board, the principal has an obligation to develop the proposal with the participation of the staff.

Consultation

The governing board provides an opinion on any matter with the possibility of influencing the final decision.

The governing board has to be consulted by the school board and the principal on certain issues related to the operation of the school.

The governing board may also take the initiative to advise the school board.

(article 78)

The governing board shall advise the school board concerning

(1) any matter the school board is required to submit to the governing board;

(2) any matter likely to facilitate the operation of the school;

(3) any matter likely to improve the organization of the services provided by the school board.

Information

The governing board receives information after a decision is made by the principal with no possibility to reconsider the decision.

SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD FUNCTIONS AND POWERS				
	GOVERNING BOARD	PRINCIPAL	STAFF MEMBERS	SCHOOL BOARD
GENERAL TERMS				
Educational project	Adopts, oversees the implementation of and evaluates (s. 74) Informs the community (s. 83)	Coordinates the development, implementation and periodical evaluation (s. 96.13)	Participate (s. 74)	Facilitates its accomplishment (s. 218)
success plan	Approves (s. 75) Informs the community (s. 83)	Coordinates the development, implementation and periodical evaluation (s. 96.13)	Participate (s. 74)	Facilitates its accomplishment (s. 218)
Management & Educational Success Agreement (MESA)	Approves	Coordinates the development, implementation (s. 209.2)		Coordinates the development, implementation (s. 209.2)
Rules of conduct and safety measures	Approves (s. 76)	Ensures that they are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (ss. 75 and 76)	Participate (s. 77)	
Governing board annual report	Prepares, adopts and transmits a copy to the school board (s. 82)			Prepares a report on the educational and cultural activities of its schools (s. 220)
Services provided by the school	Informs the community and reports on their level of quality (s. 83)			
Amendment or revocation of the deed of establishment	Is consulted (s. 79)			Consults & decides (ss. 40 & 217)
Selection criteria for the appointment of the principal	Is consulted (s. 79)			Consults & decides (ss. 79 & 96.8)
Matters pertaining to the proper operation of the school or to the improved organization of the service provided by the school board	Advises the school board (s. 78)			
Principles for determining the cost of the documents	Establishes (s.77.1)	Ensures that they are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (s. 77.1)		
List of objects required by students	Approves (s. 77.1)	Ensures that they are prepared (s. 96.13)		
governing board parents may consult parents of children in the school on any matter relating to Educational Services	May consult (s. 89.1)			
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES				
Approach proposed for the implementation of the basic school regulation	Approves (s. 84)	Ensures that proposals are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (s. 84)	Participate(s. 89)	Ensures that the basic school regulation is implemented (s. 222)
Overall approach in terms of enrichment and adaptation of programs	Approves (s. 85)	Ensures proposals are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (s. 85)	Participate (s. 89)	Ensures that the programs are implemented (s. 222.1)
Time allocation for each subject	Approves (s. 85)	Ensures proposals are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (s. 85)	Participate (s. 89)	
Local programs of study	Is informed	Approves (s. 96.15)	Propose (s. 96.15)	
Criteria for the introduction of new instructional material	Is informed	Approves (s. 96.15)	Propose (s. 96.15)	
Instructional material	Is consulted	Consults the governing board and approves (s. 96.15)	Propose (s. 96.15)	Ensures that only the approved textbooks and instructional materials are used by the school (s.230)
Standards and procedures for evaluation	Is informed	Approves (s. 96.15)	Proposes (s. 96.15)	Ensures that each school evaluates student achievement and administers the examinations imposed by the Minister (s. 231) May impose internal exams (s. 231)
Rules governing the placement of students and their promotion from elementary to secondary and from cycle 1 to cycle 2 of secondary	Is informed	Approves (s. 96.15)	Proposes (s. 96.15)	Establishes rules governing promotion from elementary school to secondary school and from the 1st cycle to the 2nd cycle of the secondary level (s. 233)

SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD FUNCTIONS AND POWERS

	GOVERNING BOARD	PRINCIPAL	STAFF MEMBERS	SCHOOL BOARD
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (con't)				
Programming of educational activities which entail changes in the students' regular time and arrival and departure or which require the students to leave school premises	Approves (s. 87)	Ensures that proposals are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes(s. 87)	Participates (s. 89)	
Implementation of the student services and special educational services programs	Approves (s. 88)	Ensures that proposals are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (s. 88)	Participates (s. 89)	Establishes the programs (s. 224)
Student enrollment criteria	Is informed (s. 239)			Sends to governing board 15 days before the beginning of the enrollment period (s. 239)
MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES				
Use of the premises	Approves (s.93)	Proposes (s. 93)		Authorizes if terms of agreement exceeds one year (s. 93)
Gifts and contributions	May solicit and receive a gift or contribution and supervises the management of this fund (s. 94)			Creates a designated fund, keeps separate books and accounts (s.94)
School's annual budget	Adopts (s. 95)	Prepares (s. 96.24)		Allocates resources among the school (s. 275) Approves the school's budget (s. 276)
Requirements of the school as regards goods and services, and premises	Is consulted (s. 96.22)	Consults with the governing board and informs the school board of the requirements (s. 96.22)		
Establish objectives and principals governing revenue distribution	Is Consulted (s. 275)			
OTHERS				
Extracurricular service	May organize (s. 90) May conclude a contract after having sent a draft of the contract to the school board (s. 91)			May indicate its disagreement (s. 91)
Noon hour supervision	Agrees with the school board on the manner in which supervision is ensured (s. 292)			Ensures noon hour supervision after having agreed upon the manner with the governing board and on such financial conditions as it may determine (s. 292)
School childcare services	May request (s. 256)			Must provide childcare (s. 256)
Establish procedures for examining complaints and before appointing a student ombudsman	Is consulted (s. 220.2)			

Subjects Outside the Mandate of the Governing Board (not exhaustive)

- ❖ Personnel management (hiring, assignment of workload, choice of supply teachers, discussion about members of staff);
- ❖ The situation of a particular student;
- ❖ Teaching methods: choice of approaches, activities and types of homework to achieve the objectives of the programs;
- ❖ The choice of report card and exams;
- ❖ Class size and organization;
- ❖ The school calendar;
- ❖ Professional development of the staff.

Conclusion

- ❖ Providing guidance and positive influence is the governing board's principal function.

(article 74)

The governing board shall encourage the communication of information, dialogue and concerted action between students, parents, the principal, teachers and other school staff members and community representatives, and their collaboration in helping students to achieve success.

- ❖ The governing board should promote the exchange of information and expertise in order to foster positive relationships.
- ❖ Teamwork is the key to a successful governing board.

EXAMPLE

_____ GOVERNING BOARD (school name)

RULES OF INTERNAL MANAGEMENT

A governing board is a legally established body, mandated by Section 42 of the Quebec Education Act. Furthermore, it is also mandated by Section 67 that rules for the internal management of the governing board shall be adopted and Sections 70 and 71 establish a standard to be followed by members of a governing board.

1. **Composition** The governing board is composed of:
(Section 42, EA)
 - ___ parents who are not members of the school staff
 - ___ members of the school staff
 - ___ daycare representative (elementary level)
 - ___ students of the second cycle (secondary only)
 - ___ members of the community

2. **Term of Office** – The term of office of the parent representatives is two years and the term of office of the representatives of the other groups is one year.

3. **Chair**
 - **Election of Chair** – The chair is elected by the governing board from amongst the parents’ representatives who are members of the personnel of the school board. (Section 56, EA)
 - **Term of Office** – The term of office of the chair is one year. (Section 58, EA)
 - **Meetings** – The chair presides at the meetings of the governing board (S59, EA)
 - **Substitute Chair** – Should the chair be absent or unable to act, the governing board will designate a person from among the eligible members for office to

chair that meeting. (section 60, EA) (this is not a vice chair. The law does not provide for one)

▪ **Role of the Chair**

- The Chair prepares the agenda in collaboration with the school principal and ensures that meetings unfold in accordance with the rules of procedure that are in place.
- The Chair maintains order and decorum at meetings. The Chair is the official spokesperson for the governing board.

4. **Quorum** – A quorum is the majority of the members in office, including at least half of the parents’ representatives.

5. **Vote** - Decisions of the governing board are made by majority vote of the members present and entitled to vote. If the vote is equally divided, the chair has a casting vote. Every decision must be made in the best interest of the students. (Sections 63 & 64, EA)

6. **Meetings**

- ✓ Regular meetings are held _____ (must be at least 5) times per year (or once a month) from _____ p.m. to _____ p.m. and may be extended by 10 (or 15, etc) minutes by resolution.
- ✓ The annual calendar of meetings is normally adopted at the October meeting and is distributed to all parents.
- ✓ A meeting may be adjourned to a specific date and time if it appears that important business will not be concluded within the time limit of a regular meeting.
- ✓ A special meeting may be called to consider a matter that cannot wait until the next regular meeting. A notice shall go out to the governing board members and parents prior to the special meeting. If the governing board is unable to hold a special meeting within the time required to consider the **urgent topic**, all members will be contacted by email or telephone to state their opinions on the urgent matter. The topic **must be voted on** at the next regular meeting of the governing board.

Members cannot vote by email. *Decisions of the governing board are made by a majority vote of the members present and entitled to vote.* (Section 63, EA)

- ✓ In order to provide a welcoming atmosphere for the public, the members of the governing board will have name cards placed in alphabetical order. It is suggested that tables be set up in a u-shape in order so that all members face the public.

7. **Closed Session Meetings** – The meetings of the governing board are public may move into closed session if the matter to be discussed may cause injury to a person. This is done by resolution. (Section 68, EA).
8. **Public Question Period** – A public question period is included on the agenda at the beginning and/or at the end of the meeting. The governing board sets aside time for questions addressed to the Chair of the governing board. Persons interested in making a presentation must make a request to the school principal at least one week prior to the meeting.
9. **Rules of Decorum** – Members of the governing board and of the public must:
 - Be recognized by the Chair for the right to speak
 - Address the Chair when speaking
 - Show respect for the points of view of others
 - Respect the right of others to speak
 - Refrain from speaking out of turn
 - Refrain from using profanity
 - Maintain a respectful tone at all times
10. **Reports**

Oral reports from the principal, commissioner or regional delegate will be permitted and the governing board sets aside time for each report.
11. **Agenda**
 - The agenda is sent to the members prior to the meeting (by email, etc.) and is posted in the school.

- The items are listed on the Agenda by order of priority
Decisional items first
Consultation items second
Information items, third
- Items can be added to the agenda at the meeting subject to approval by the members.

12. **Minutes of the governing board**

- The minutes of the proceedings of the governing board must be sent to the members with the documents for the following meeting.
- The minutes of a meeting are approved at the beginning of the following meeting and will be modified if they are inaccurate.
- After being approved by the governing board, the minutes should be signed by the chair that adopted them and countersigned by the principal or a person designated by the principal, who keeps them in the register of the minutes.
- The principal or a person designated by the principal is responsible for the registers and documents of the governing board.

13. **Modifications to the Rules of Internal Management** – The Rules of Internal Management are reviewed in October of each school year and any modifications deemed necessary are proposed at that time. Proposals for changes to the rules must be adopted by the members.

Example

School X GOVERNING BOARD Action Plan

Suggested Topics

- October:** Selection of the chairperson and the secretary; approval of the calendar meetings; selection of community representatives; adoption of the governing board's budget; approval of the programming of educational activities, review of internal rules.
- November:** Decision about fund-raising activities for the year; follow-up on the school budget; approval of the use of premises.
- December:** First revision of the educational project.
- January:** Approval of the rules of conduct and safety measures; discussion on the possibility of organizing extra-curricular activities in the school for the next school year.
- February:** Approval of time allocation for compulsory and elective subjects; final revision of the educational project; follow-up on the school budget
- March:** Decision on the organization of extra-curricular activities for the next school year; receive information about school organization for the following year.
- April:** Discussion on the content of the annual report for the school board; discuss the method and the content of the information to be given to the community about the services offered by the school.
- May:** Presentation of the school's annual budget for the following year; decision on the information to be given to the community; prepare the annual report for the school board.
- June:** Adopt the school budget for the following year; approval of the year end financial report.

The discussion about the content and the time line of the action plan should be done, if possible, at the first meeting, understanding that it could be modified over the course of the year.

SAMPLE AGENDA FOR A REGULAR MEETING

SUMMERSIDE SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD

**Wednesday, November 15, 2006, 7:30 p.m.
Staff Room, Summerside School, 12 Souris, Montreal**

1. Adoption of Agenda
 2. Adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting of October 11, 2009
 3. Business Arising from the Minutes
 - 3.1 Guidelines for Conduct of Members
 - 3.2
 4. Question Period
 5. Reports
 - 5.1 Regional Parents' Committee
 - 5.2 Treasurer's Report
 6. New Business
 - 6.1 Adoption of the Governing Board's Annual Budget
 - 6.2 The Educational Project
 - 6.3 Follow-Up on School's Annual Budget
 7. Varia
 8. Adjournment
-

* The initials following agenda items indicate if these items are for Decision, Information or Consultation.

Example Meeting Evaluation

Date of Governing Board Meeting: _____

	Yes	No
We discussed general orientation rather than details related to day-to-day management.		
The chairperson guided the meeting, following the rules of internal procedure established by the Governing Board.		
Materials relevant to the discussions were sent in advance.		
Members were prepared to discuss materials they received in advance.		
Reports were clear, concise, well-prepared and provided adequate information.		
Printed materials the board received were easy to understand and use.		
Discussion was confined to agenda items only.		
The agenda was well balanced and included positive issues as well as problems.		
The meeting was business-like, results-oriented, and we functioned as a team.		
We dealt successfully with controversial items and attempted to come up with solutions acceptable to all members.		
All members contributed to the discussion (not dominated by only a few members).		
Members were in attendance and on time, and the meeting began and ended on time.		

This form could be filled out after each meeting, or even after every two or three meetings. It could be filled out by the group together at the end of the meeting or on an individual basis. If it is on an individual basis, the chairperson could wrap-up the results and make a presentation at the following meeting to allow discussion, if need be, on the aspects that need to be improved in order to have efficient meetings.

P.S. Include the procedure to evaluate the meetings in your rules of internal management (suggestion).