

Charting the Way



Education Governance Discussion Paper

**Prince Edward Island
Education Governance Commission**

www.peieducationgovernance.com

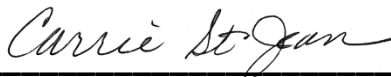
October 2011

Foreword

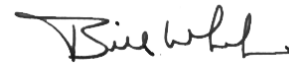
The Prince Edward Island Education Governance Commission is pleased to present this Discussion Paper to the Island community. This Discussion Paper was developed to help frame the conversations on education governance that will take place over the coming weeks, as the Commission members travel across the province to hear from students, parents, principals, teachers, school staff, school board staff, superintendents, trustees, the Minister and staff of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the community at large.

This Discussion Paper serves two main purposes: 1) to provide you with background information about education governance in Prince Edward Island and education trends in other jurisdictions, and 2) to seek your input on a series of questions that will define the future framework of the education system in Prince Edward Island. Simply put, who should do what, and how should things be done? You are invited to participate through any or all of the input options listed at the end of this document.

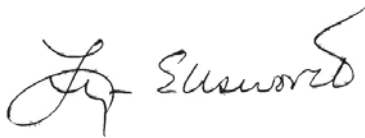
We can all agree that education is a shared responsibility, as it has a profound impact on the future careers, health, and quality of life of all Island youth – but we also recognize that there are diverse views and ideas on how to shape the best possible system. We encourage you to take this opportunity to have your voice heard, and to offer your insights and ideas on how best to structure the education system in Prince Edward Island.



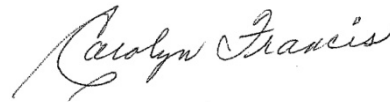
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1. Introduction

Education is at the heart of our social and economic progress, and will shape our future in a world increasingly based on human knowledge and skills. Education also has a profound impact on the lifelong opportunities, health, and quality of life of every Islander. Children born this year will be adults in 2030, in a world in which the only certainty is that it will be very different from today. The responsibility of preparing them for the future is shared among parents, the education system, and the community. Our education governance structures and processes – or more simply, who does what, and how things are done – are critically important to the fulfillment of that shared responsibility to our children.

To address these issues, and to better realize these opportunities, Government announced in April 2011 that a commission would be appointed to review education governance in Prince Edward Island. On June 12, 2011, a five-member Education Governance Commission* was announced, with a mandate to “examine and make recommendations on governance structures, mechanisms, and processes to ensure leadership and accountability for student learning outcomes and for the effective, efficient, responsive operation of Prince Edward Island’s educational system...”

The Terms of Reference call for the Commission to carry out research, develop a discussion paper, and actively engage a wide range of Islanders, seeking their views on education governance. Building on this input, the Commission is to submit its recommendations by March 1, 2012.

This paper has been developed to support and frame discussions with Islanders over the coming months. It opens with a brief history of education governance in Prince Edward Island, an overview of the current system and some information on national and international trends in education governance. Next, the paper poses questions arising from the elements of our Terms of Reference, seeking your views on the structure of the education system in Prince Edward Island, and how it can better support the key goals of clear roles and responsibilities, accountability, equity and consistency, engagement and inclusion, and efficiency. For each theme, a brief description is provided, followed by several questions. In closing, the paper provides information on the various ways in which you can provide input, and acknowledges the value of your participation to the future of education in Prince Edward Island.

Governance is “... the exercise of authority, control, and direction over an organization to ensure that its purpose is achieved. It refers to who is in charge of what; who makes decisions about what; who sets performance indicators, monitors progress, and evaluates results; and who is accountable to whom for what.”

BC Centre for Non-profit Development

*The Commission’s Terms of Reference are contained in Appendix I. Further information on the Commission can be viewed on its website, at www.peieducationgovernance.ca

2. History of Education Governance in Prince Edward Island

Prince Edward Island has a proud history in public education. Legislative measures dating back to the 1820s provided for public funding of local schools, a provincial Board of Education, and provincial supervision of teachers. In 1852, the *Free Education Act* was passed, making the Island the first jurisdiction in North America to provide universal publicly funded education to all its citizens. The *Public Schools Act*, in 1877, provided for the provincial government to administer school legislation, determine curriculum, regulate school standards and administration, and license teachers. As well, the *Act* strengthened provincial governance structures, and increased the provincial funding share.

These measures laid the foundation for a system that was to endure for almost a century. Reflecting Prince Edward Island's densely settled rural nature, the education system was comprised of over 450 school districts, each about five square miles in size, most served by one-room schools with 20 to 40 pupils in Grades 1 to 10. Each school was governed by its own board of trustees, overseen by the provincial Board of Education, and funded through a mix of local taxation, local in-kind supports, and provincial funding. This system featured wide variations in teacher training and pay, level of learning resources, student learning outcomes, and school completion. During the first six decades of the twentieth century, a succession of reports¹ recommended various changes and improvements to the system, including a recurring call – never heeded – for consolidation of schools and of school districts. By the 1950s, recognition was growing of the critical importance of secondary education, and the major disparities in access between urban and rural Prince Edward Island. By 1965, a network of sixteen regional high schools had been built across the Island, each comprising about 25 local districts.

School Boards and Units:
In this paper, the term 'board' or 'school board' means the elected board of trustees, which is the corporate entity in which powers are vested under the School Act.

The term 'school district' or 'school unit' refers to the geographic area administered by a school board.

The pace of change accelerated in the mid-1960s. In response to new federal supports for rural development, the provincial government commissioned a series of reports on sectors of Prince Edward Island's economy and society. The report on education², in 1967, was highly critical of the existing education system, which then consisted of 412 schools, including 268 one-room schools, in 403 school districts. The report proposed that all local schools be closed and replaced by consolidated schools by 1972. Local school districts were to be consolidated into a system of five regional administrative units, intended to eventually evolve to three school units – the two cities and a province-wide rural unit. To achieve these major changes, the report recommended a phased strategy: first centralize financing, then consolidate school districts, and finally consolidate schools and reform educational services.

An educational planning group of stakeholders was established in 1969 to develop a detailed strategy.³ Their work shaped a decade of massive change in the education system. In 1971, the *School Act* was passed, abolishing the 270 school districts then existing, creating five regional administrative units (four English units and a French unit in the Evangeline region), and placing funding totally with the

Department of Education. The *Real Property Tax Act* was also passed, removing from school units the responsibility to levy and collect taxes, “thus allowing them more time to devote to strictly educational matters.” A network of schools based on elementary/intermediate/senior high schools (urban) and consolidated/high schools (rural) was developed across Prince Edward Island, absorbing the vast majority of one- and two-room schools. The curriculum was updated, and innovative teaching methods were introduced, such as continuous progress, non-grading, team teaching, integrated curricula, and individualized instruction. The Block Program was established to enable all teachers to upgrade their credentials to the degree level, and a collective agreement was reached with the Prince Edward Island Teachers’ Federation which provided for a professional structure and improved salary scales.

A major formative evaluation of these changes in 1973 found that both the public and those within the education system saw improvements in a number of areas, including financial administration, access to specialists and resources, consistency, and fairness of policies. Perceptions of board representativeness and communications were less positive. Overall, however, respondents were “reasonably optimistic about the ability of the boards to lead to a better educational future [and saw the changes as] a major administrative improvement.”⁴

The 1980s built on those gains. A mid-decade review⁵ found continued general acceptance of the five-board governance system, although concerns persisted about communications and weaker connections to the local level. The report called for some refinements, including more professional development for trustees, some minor modifications to election provisions, more planning, greater openness, upgrading of board staff credentials, and more consultation mechanisms. A follow-up report endorsed many of these recommendations.⁶ In early 1987, the newly elected government released a seven-point *Plan of Action for Education*, including development of a new Philosophy and Goals for Education, which was completed in 1990. This Philosophy still serves as the vision and mission statement for our education system today.

The late 1980s also saw growing recognition of the need to enhance governance of French language education in Prince Edward Island. At the time that the five-unit system had been created in 1971, French schools were concentrated in the Evangeline region; however, in 1980, a new French language school had opened its doors in Charlottetown. On July 1, 1990, the French Language School Board became responsible for administering and promoting French language education throughout the province. Subsequently, French language schools have been opened in Summerside, West Prince, Rustico, and Souris.

The early 1990s saw a strong focus on government reform in Prince Edward Island, echoing international trends and lent impetus by economic recession and fiscal constraint. From 1991 to 1993, no fewer than five processes⁷ examined the education system, with a strong focus on governance matters and accountability. These processes resulted in major changes in 1993, with significant amendments to the *School Act* to create a new four-tier system of education governance, featuring the Minister and Department largely as before; a new Educational Services Commission to provide province-wide services and policy development in areas where efficiency or consistency was desired; a redefined role for the local boards focusing more strongly on educational matters and engagement with their communities; and a new School Advisory Council mechanism at the school level.

This structure existed for only six months, and then was terminated as unworkable. In its lieu, the four English school boards were consolidated to create the present two, the Eastern School District and the Western School Board, and most of the powers of the erstwhile Commission were returned to the boards. School Advisory Councils, meanwhile, have established some presence in the system, following several years of confusion about their role vis-à-vis the existing Home and School Associations. Today, in most schools the Home and School Associations fulfill the Advisory Council function, a few schools have Advisory Councils rather than Home and School Associations, and a handful of schools have no formal parent or community advisory mechanism.

No substantial structural changes have taken place since the mid-nineties. But since that time, the education system has faced a variety of challenges and pressures. Throughout, a series of national and international student assessments have raised growing concerns about student achievement in Prince Edward Island. This led to the appointment of the Task Force on Student Achievement in 2005. Reporting in 2006,⁸ the Task Force called for a number of new measures to increase student literacy, improve learning outcomes, and more fully engage students and their parents in education. Government responded with a three-year plan which resulted in the investment of significant resources and effort to implement those measures, and to strengthen assessment of student achievement.

As well, during the past decade Prince Edward Island's education system, like those elsewhere, has faced mounting pressures from the demographic forces of declining birthrate and rural-urban shift. In turn, these pressures have placed major stresses on education governance structures, especially at the board level. As the new decade began, it became increasingly clear that a review of governance was needed. In April 2011, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development announced a review of school governance, and in June 2011 the Commission was appointed.

Beyond the specific governance challenges currently faced by the system, the foregoing history indicates that this initiative is timely. Since the 1930s, Prince Edward Island has undertaken a major review of educational matters every ten to fifteen years, to adapt to changing needs, opportunities, and public expectations. The current system has been in place for almost two decades, throughout a period of rapid change and growing emphasis on education as the key to future well-being and prosperity. This review offers an opportunity to build a system that provides leadership and ensures accountability, while creating the best future possible for our children and our society.

3. Context: National and International Trends

The structure and governance of education in Prince Edward Island have been shaped not only by our history, but also by trends and developments beyond our shores. In turn, education systems internationally are influenced by broader social, economic, and philosophical trends. Educational leader Andy Hargreaves, in his recent book *The Fourth Way*,⁹ describes these trends as follows.

The ‘First Way’ of educational change, in the 1960s and 1970s, occurred during a time of optimism about the future and a belief in the capacity of government and society to achieve positive change. It was an era of creativity and experimentation in education, during which local boards played a major role in governance and often funding of education. Educators had a high degree of professional autonomy.

The 1980s saw economic recession, retrenchment, a shift to market-driven approaches, and strengthened requirements for accountability and results across all spheres of government activity. In the education sector, this resulted in the ‘Second Way’ – a shift to market-based approaches of testing, evaluation, competition and choice. The effect of these trends on educational governance was to:

- increase central authority through centralization of funding, standardization of curriculum and outcomes, greater use of measurement and competition, and interventions with underperforming schools; and
- increase the power of parents as ‘consumers’ of education services through market information and greater choice.

These approaches reduced the role and autonomy of both school boards and educational professionals. During this period, many jurisdictions consolidated their school districts in pursuit of efficiencies, making the districts larger and the boards more remote from their communities.

Since the 1990s, many countries have sought a middle way that seeks to combine the best of markets and public sector – the ‘Third Way’. This approach features broader, more participative decision-making; more emphasis on partnerships, both vertical and horizontal; a continued emphasis on outcomes, measurement, and accountability; and a shift away from purely market-type competitive approaches to more supportive, developmental approaches. The ‘Fourth Way’ advocated by Hargreaves seeks to build yet more collaborative approaches, grounded in local partnerships among educators, parents, and communities.

The effect of past trends on education governance has been to reduce the power of school boards – shifting it upwards to central education authorities and downwards to school administrators and school-level bodies. New Zealand and Australia have gone the furthest, eliminating school boards altogether, and replacing them with a system of school-level elected bodies operating within a centrally developed operating framework.¹⁰ In North America, most states and provinces have retained their board systems, but have constrained their scope through various mixes of the ‘Second Way’ measures described above.

In Canada,¹¹ central control has increased over both education expenditures and outcomes. Across Canada, provinces have:

- increased central control over curriculum;
- mandated central assessment, monitoring, and evaluation processes;
- limited or eliminated the power of school boards to raise their own revenues;
- imposed increasingly tight control of spending through formulas; and
- created larger school districts through amalgamation.

As districts have become larger, and boards have become more remote from their schools and communities, the school level has taken on a greater role, in several ways:

- site-based decision-making and management of resources;
- communities of practice among educators; and
- a greater role for school-based governance bodies, although mostly advisory in Canada.

In addition, provinces have introduced varying levels of parent choice into their system through such approaches as charter schools (Alberta), increased public funding to parents choosing private schools, and greater openness to home schooling. As well, provinces have, in varying degrees, expanded partnerships and formal relationships with other departments and organizations providing health and social supports to children.

Looking to the future, it is widely believed that educational approaches must change in order to better prepare our children for an increasingly interdependent global society of ever-advancing and expanding knowledge and technology. Such initiatives as Prince Edward Island’s June 2010 Summit on 21st Century Learning,¹² and Alberta’s *Inspiring Education* renewal of its education legislation call for a shift in approaches from imparting knowledge to building learning skills. This shift has been characterized as becoming ‘knowledge-able’ – able to find, assess, integrate, and apply knowledge in a constantly changing environment.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) found several factors that contributed to successful reform trajectories among its 70-plus PISA countries over the past decade.¹³

Successful Education Reform Trajectories		
Area	The Past	The Most Successful Systems
Student inclusion	Some students learn at high levels	All students learn at high levels.
Curriculum, instruction, and assessment	Routine cognitive skills, rote learning	Learning to learn, complex ways of thinking, ways of working
Teachers	Few years beyond secondary	High-level professional knowledge workers
Work organization	Hierarchy	Flat, collegial
Accountability	Primarily to authority	Also to peers and stakeholders

The OECD analysis indicates that resources alone do not explain differences in performance, and that some countries with high investments in education perform less well than countries with lower spending. The study identifies three factors that make a difference in student learning across socio-economic levels:

- High performance expectations and standards that define a shared vision of good performance, supported by a focused and coherent curriculum, and strong systems of teacher selection, preparation, professional development and support;
- Measures to enable the school level to become the driver of educational improvement, supported by strong national systems of accountability, individualized supports to schools, and networking of schools; and
- A focus and supporting measures on enabling every student to reach his or her potential, without the options of having students repeat grades or transfer to educational tracks with lower performance requirements.

In *Inspiring Education*,¹⁴ Alberta identified the following directions for overall change in education, and the changes in governance needed to align to these policy changes:

Policy Changes to Achieve the Vision	
<i>LESS....</i>	<i>MORE...</i>
Focused on the school	Focused on education
Centred on the system	Centred on the learner
Centred on content	Centred on competencies
Technology to support teaching	Technology to support the creation & sharing of knowledge

Education Governance Changes to Achieve the Vision	
<i>LESS....</i>	<i>MORE...</i>
Rules-based	Principles-based
Operational focus	Governance teams
Central influence	Local direction
Accountability to bureaucracy	Accountability for learning excellence

Several other provinces have also recently undertaken examinations of education governance, including a major review by Ontario on improvements to board governance and board accountability for student achievement;¹⁵ and an initiative by Nova Scotia to strengthen legislative provisions to address concerns about board functioning and trustee conduct.¹⁶

These findings offer some clear themes as context for conversations over the coming months on how to create an education governance system in Prince Edward Island for the needs and opportunities of today and the coming years. The section that follows explores the elements of the Commission’s mandate, providing a context and several detailed questions for each of the themes as a starting point for our work together.

4. Discussion Questions

Overall, we are seeking your views, ideas, and advice with regard to 1) who should do what, and 2) how things should be done in our education system to better facilitate student learning.

The system is currently made up of:

- The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development
- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- School boards
- Superintendents and school board staff
- School administrators (principals, vice-principals)
- Teachers
- Non-instructional staff
- Home and School Associations / School Advisory Councils
- Parents
- Students

We would also appreciate your comments and advice on any or all of the following specific questions that address topics identified in our Terms of Reference:

- *School board role and selection*
- *Roles and responsibilities*
- *Accountability*
- *Equity and consistency*
- *Engagement and inclusion*
- *Efficiency*
- *System infrastructure*

4.1 School Boards

Our Terms of Reference require us to make recommendations on “the future governance role of school boards in Prince Edward Island, including duties and responsibilities, number of boards, and method of election or appointment.”

- Under the *School Act*, the Minister may establish school units or change their boundaries. The units established by the Minister are administered by school boards in accordance with the *Act*.
- Legally, boards of trustees are corporate entities and have the powers granted by the *Companies Act*. They also have the power to make policies in areas specified in the *School Act*.
- All decision-making powers are vested in the board as a corporate body. Individual trustees have no decision-making role in their own right except where delegated by the board. Their responsibilities under the *School Act* are to attend meetings, act in good faith, and comply with legislation and regulations.
- School boards are responsible for the delivery of educational services, including instruction, staffing, facilities, transportation, financial management, evaluation of school effectiveness, ensuring school improvement planning, and community relations. (The full list of responsibilities and powers is set out in Appendix II.)
- Trustees are currently elected for four-year terms. The last election was in May 2008, and the next election is to be held in May 2012.
- Long-standing concerns exist in Prince Edward Island, as in most other Canadian provinces, about the very low level of voter engagement in school board elections and the relatively high proportion of acclaimed and appointed trustees. Over the past decade, Prince Edward Island has seen an improving trend, but the numbers are still very low:
 - Voter turnout increased from 2.1% of eligible voters in 2002 to 3.6% in 2008.
 - Elected rather than acclaimed or appointed trustees increased from 28% of total seats in 2002 to 48% in 2008.
- School unit boundaries, electoral processes, and electoral zones are set out in the School Boards Regulations. Electoral boundaries are different from school attendance zones; under the governance model, trustees are members of a board, not representatives of specific schools.
- Trustees must be adults, Canadian citizens, and resident for at least six months in their zone. Candidates for the French board must also meet eligibility criteria related to their French language status.

School Boards and Units:
In this paper, the term ‘board’ or ‘school board’ means the elected board of trustees, which is the corporate entity in which powers are vested under the School Act.

The term ‘school district’ or ‘school unit’ refers to the geographic area administered by a school board.

Questions:

1. Should education services continue to be delivered by corporate entities at arm's length from Government?

a) If boards should continue to be part of the governance model, what role and responsibilities should they have? What method(s) of trustee selection should be considered? How many school districts/units should there be?

b) If boards should no longer form part of the governance model, what new or existing structure(s) should assume their roles and responsibilities?

2. If elected school boards are retained, what can be done to better engage and involve Islanders in trustee elections?

a) How often should elections be held?

b) Should school board elections be held at the same time as other elections (e.g. provincial elections)?

c) Should the basis for trustee electoral boundaries be changed, (e.g. representation at large, aligned with 'families of schools')?

d) What processes might be used to better inform and engage voters? Who should be responsible for voter education?

e) Should limits be placed on the total or consecutive number of terms that a trustee may serve?

f) Should additional qualifications be established for trustee eligibility criteria, and if so, what should they be?

- g) What approaches might help to more fully engage Islanders in electing their trustees?

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Our Terms of Reference also require us to make recommendations on “Clear, appropriate roles for the other elements of the educational governance system, including the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department, school administrators, and parent advisory structures.”

There are a number of levels in the education system, each of which has certain responsibilities. Major areas of responsibility include:

- Planning and establishment of goals and standards
- Curriculum
- Assessment and evaluation
- Human resources
- Funding and financial management
- System infrastructure

Following is a partial listing of the major responsibilities of various educational partners as outlined by the School Act (please see Appendix II for a complete listing):

- The Minister is responsible for the overall leadership of the education system. His or her duties include system planning and adaptation, curriculum development, establishment of goals, standards and outcomes, and assessment. The Minister is given extensive powers to fulfill these duties, and may delegate any of these duties and powers to the **Department**. The Minister’s powers may be exercised through Directives, which have the force of law.
- The responsibilities of **school boards** and of **trustees** have been described in the previous section. The Act also assigns responsibilities to board **Superintendents** for general leadership of the educational programs and services and the operations of the school board.
- **Principals** are responsible, with regard to student learning, to provide instructional leadership, ensure the curriculum is delivered, evaluate teachers, ensure assessments are conducted, initiate school development planning, and teach if required. They also have a wide range of responsibilities for the management of their school.
- **Teachers’** responsibilities include teaching the prescribed curriculum, encouraging students in the pursuit of learning, keeping up to date on the content and pedagogy of their teaching fields, and attending to the safety and well-being of the students.
- Parents of students in a school may establish a **school advisory council**.

- **Students** are responsible to attend classes, respect others and the code of conduct, and “be diligent in the pursuit of learning.” **Parents** have the right to information on their child, and the responsibility to “encourage the student in the pursuit of learning.”

Questions:

1. The roles and responsibilities among the partners in the education system need to be clearly defined. Specifically, what roles and responsibilities would you allocate to each of the following?

- The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

- School boards

- Superintendents and school board staff

- School administrators (principals, vice-principals)

- Teachers

- Non-instructional staff

- Home and School Associations / School Advisory Councils

- Parents

- Students

2. What is needed to ensure these roles and responsibilities are in fact carried out as intended?

3. What is needed to ensure that the education system is focused on student learning?

4.3 Accountability

Our mandate requires us to make recommendations on: “governance structures, mechanisms, and processes to ensure leadership and accountability for student learning outcomes...”

- Across Canada and internationally, education systems have seen growing demands from the public and from Government for greater accountability in achieving a high level of learning among all students.
- As described earlier in this paper, most jurisdictions have pursued accountability through a mix of increased central direction, and strengthened evaluation and assessment mechanisms.
- Governance theory indicates that accountability is founded on several elements:
 - Clear goals, objectives, desired outcomes, and targets
 - Clear definition of roles and responsibilities
 - Fair, appropriate, and rigorous approaches to monitoring, assessment, and evaluation
 - Effective, open reporting processes and mechanisms.
- With regard to goals, Prince Edward Island’s Philosophy of Education was established in 1990 and the *School Act* last saw major revisions in 1994. The Department’s existing strategic plan was developed a number of years ago; a new plan is currently being developed. Curriculum is updated and implemented on an ongoing basis, but there is no formal long-term plan.
- External assessments, notably the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), indicate low and generally declining student achievement in Prince Edward Island compared to other provinces. Within the past five years, Prince Edward Island has begun to undertake system-wide common assessments, using instruments developed by Island educators and reflective of Prince Edward Island’s curriculum. The system is gradually being expanded to include additional grade levels and learning areas. Some improving trends are emerging, particularly in the area of early literacy.
- Detailed PISA results are released every three years, and school- and district-level results of Prince Edward Island’s common assessments are made public annually. As well, parents are informed of their own child’s achievement level in the common assessments.
- Insights into the functioning of accountability processes were provided by the Auditor General’s *2011 Report*, which examined special education at the Eastern School District. The report identified concerns that the accountability framework in the Ministerial Directive on Special

Education was not operating as required with regard to evaluation and reporting by the Department, monitoring of expenditures, or deployment of staff to schools. As well, the report noted that formulas for allocation of staff were based on 1998 incidence rates, staff standards had not been established, criteria were unclear, and there was no process to ensure that findings of assessments were reflected in student intervention plans.¹⁷

Questions:

1. How should the education system establish clear goals and targets for student learning? How should they be renewed?

2. How should each of the following education partners be held accountable for student learning?

- The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

- School boards

- Superintendents and school board staff

- School administrators (principals, vice-principals)

- Teachers

- Non-instructional staff

- Home and School Associations / School Advisory Councils

- Parents

- Students

3. What accountability mechanisms or processes, including assessment, evaluation and reporting, are needed at all levels, with regard to:

a) Literacy and numeracy learning outcomes?

b) Implementation of curriculum?

c) Special education?

d) Management of budgets, operations and facilities?

4.4 Equity and Consistency

Our Terms of Reference require us to make recommendations on “measures to ensure that the governance model provides equitable, consistent opportunities to all Island learners and to educational system human resources.”

- Historically, local boards have been seen as a key link in the education governance system to bring flexibility by adapting provincial rules and approaches to local circumstances, needs, and expectations.
- Several trends are combining to affect perceptions on the appropriate balance between system-wide consistency and local flexibility:
 - Throughout Canada, board consolidation has made school districts larger and boards more remote from their local communities.
 - The growing role of the school in children’s development has broadened the range of areas in which policies are required.
 - Public emphasis on equity is increasing, particularly with regard to access to opportunity, students’ health and safety, and how students and parents are treated.

- Prince Edward Island’s education system features a relatively high level of consistency through:
 - Long-standing provincial control of funding
 - The provincial curriculum
 - The existence of province-wide approaches in many areas through Minister’s Directives
 - The existence of only three boards, reducing the diversity of policies and approaches.
- Despite this, numerous variations exist with regard to both:
 - Formal policies: variations exist among the boards in what areas are covered by policy, and how those areas are addressed when policies do exist.¹⁸
 - Informal practices: variations can exist in how policies are implemented at the school level with regard to both board policies and Ministerial Directives.
- Concerns about equity and consistency were the key factor cited by the Prince Edward Island Home and School Federation in its resolution, at its 2009 Annual Meeting, calling for “the provincial government and local Home and School Associations [to] study the viability of consolidating the Eastern School District and Western School Board into one English language school board that would operate under a unified set of policies and regulations to ensure consistent and equitable delivery of education programming and services across the province.”¹⁹

Questions:

1. What is needed to provide equitable, consistent opportunities for all students?

2. What is needed to provide equitable, consistent opportunities for teachers, administrators and other personnel?

3. How should system-wide equity and consistency be balanced with local school flexibility and responsiveness to community expectations and wishes?

4. In policy or practice, is it appropriate or acceptable to have regional or school-level variations? If so, in what areas and to what degree?

4.5 Engagement and Inclusion

Our Terms of Reference require us to make recommendations on “measures and processes to ensure engagement and inclusion of all stakeholders in the shared leadership and development of our educational system.”

- Historically, the small scale of school districts enabled substantial local involvement in and direct control of education.
- As described earlier in this paper, in Prince Edward Island as elsewhere, board consolidation has resulted in greater distance between boards and the community and a corresponding increase in the role of school-level parent and community bodies.
- School councils were first included in the *School Act* in 1994. Here, as in most other Canadian provinces, their role is advisory. However, in some provinces or school districts, and in other countries, school-level bodies have a direct role in school management.
- In its report, the Task Force on Student Achievement placed high priority on enhancing parent engagement at the school level and building the capacity of parent organizations.²⁰ Currently, parent engagement is one of three areas of focus in school improvement planning.

- The Task Force also placed high priority on enhancing student engagement, although it did not identify inclusion in governance as a strategy to achieve this. Currently, the Act identifies responsibilities of individual students, but is silent on the matter of students’ collective role in leadership and development of the education system.
- As well, schools have an expanding role in children’s lives both directly and as a delivery site for various non-educational services related to health and social supports.

Questions:

1. How should each of the following be engaged in the shared leadership and development of our education system?

- Parents/guardians

- Students

- Community organizations

- Related service providers

- The community at large, including employers

- Other (please identify).

4.6 Efficiency

Our Terms of Reference require us to make recommendations on “means to ensure that the governance model makes efficient use of resources to contribute to the sustainability of the educational system and to maximize the share of resources that can be focused on direct services to learners.”

- Governance structures and processes affect the efficient use of resources both directly and indirectly:
 - Direct impacts arise from how responsibilities are allocated to different levels, the number of governance structures, and the potential for duplication of activities, e.g., overlap between Departmental and school board operations, duplication among school boards.
 - Indirect impacts result from:
 - the quality of decision-making and clarity of direction arising from existing structures, mechanisms, and processes; and
 - the way in which existing structures and roles shape opportunities for high-quality, equitable, cost-effective use of resources, ranging from specialist services to bus routes.
- While it is often believed that school board consolidation would result in operational efficiencies and net savings, evidence from other jurisdictions and from past reforms in Prince Edward Island is mixed.²¹
- There is a risk that any savings that may result from elimination of duplication in some areas could be offset, initially by transitional costs, and in the longer term by rising expenditures in other areas such as increased specialization and more hierarchy.

Questions:

1. What is needed to maximize efficient use of resources and funding?

2. What is needed to minimize duplication?

3. What is needed to ensure that resource allocation is focused on student learning?

4.7 System Infrastructure

Our Terms of Reference require us to make recommendations on: “1) the assignment of responsibility for planning, ownership, management, and renewal of the educational system’s physical plant; and 2) roles and duties associated with long-term capital planning.”

- Currently, the school boards own school facilities, buses, and most equipment.
- The formal responsibilities of principals, as outlined in the *School Act*, focus almost entirely on educational leadership. In practice, however, operational matters related to buildings and transportation take up a substantial amount of administrators’ time.
- Boards are provided with funding under a formula which is based on square footage for ongoing maintenance and based on student numbers for minor capital repairs and renovations to schools. Funding for capital projects in excess of \$25,000 must be approved by the Minister and is provided separately.
- The Minister’s Directive on Staffing and Funding does not stipulate the basis on which boards must allocate this funding to schools, unlike, for example, funding for program materials. Boards annually gather information from principals on their schools’ needs and priorities, allocate funding accordingly, and follow up to ensure that funds are spent on the approved activities.
- Boards are responsible for planning of their overall school systems and recommendations to the Minister with regard to closures, attendance zoning, location of new buildings, and major repairs, renovations, additions, and new construction.
- Under Section 129 of the *School Act*, the Minister, after consultation with boards, makes recommendations to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal for capital additions or construction.
- Boards are responsible for transportation planning and service delivery, school bus safety, and driver training. Since 2006, the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal has been responsible for school bus inspections and maintenance. Bus purchases are determined as part of the capital budget process and must be recommended by the Minister.
- With regard to information technology systems, the boards own most of the equipment, the Department owns some servers, and Information Technology Shared Services manages and maintains IT systems.
- Insights into the functioning of governance in the area of system infrastructure are found in the Auditor General’s *2011 Report*. With regard to school maintenance in the Western School Board in his *2011 Report*, the Auditor General found that the Department had not established standards for, or offered guidance, on school maintenance, and that the Board did not have a documented policy on school maintenance, a well-structured preventive maintenance program, or an integrated, modernized work management system.²²
- Issues related to management of system infrastructure have been much in the public eye in recent years, including:
 - The process related to closure of eight small schools in the Eastern School District and the as yet unaddressed restructuring of school attendance zones;

- Numerous changes in direction and priority with regard to new school construction and expansion, and a lack of clarity as to planning and decision-making roles;
- The short-term shutdown of the education system in May of 2008 owing to pressing issues with school bus safety and the ensuing replacement of over half the fleet over the next two years;
- The shut-down of several schools due to mould issues in January 2010, the subsequent province-wide process of school inspections, and the identification of issues requiring a \$17 million remediation program.

Questions:

1. With regard to the education system's infrastructure, who should be responsible for the following functions? Why?

a) Long-term capital planning?

b) Major renovations and new construction?

c) Ownership, management, and maintenance of buildings and properties?

d) Ownership, management, and maintenance of the bus fleet?

e) Ownership, management, and maintenance of information technology?

5. Having Your Say: Options for Participation

The views, values, expectations, and ideas of Islanders are vitally important to the outcome of this work. The questions in the document address the specific matters set out in the Commission's terms of reference; however, they are intended as a guide only. The Commission welcomes comment and suggestions on any and all aspects of education governance that may be of concern or interest to Islanders. In keeping with its mandate to consult widely, the Commission is seeking input through a number of ways.

Written Input Your written input is welcomed, and will form part of the public record of the Commission's work. Please submit your views through the channel most convenient for you:

- By mail: Education Governance Commission
PO Box 2000
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N8
- On-line, at www.peieducationgovernance.com : Comment forms are available for each of the questions posed in this discussion paper, as well as an open comment form for any other views that you wish to provide.
- By e-mail, to commission@peieducationgovernance.com
- This document is also available on the website as a workbook that can be downloaded, saved or printed for your records if desired.

In order to allow the Commission to consider your views fully while meeting its completion date of March 1, 2012, it is requested that written comment be submitted no later than Friday, December 16, 2011.

Meetings To explore specific issues in greater depth, during November the Commission will meet with a number of partners within the education system.

Community Conversations Also in November, the Commission will hold public forums at five locations throughout the province. Background information will be provided, after which participants will be invited to engage in facilitated discussions based on the questions in this paper.

- Westisle High School, Elmsdale
- Evangeline School, Abram-Village
- Athena Consolidated School, Summerside
- Charlottetown Rural High School, Charlottetown
- Montague Regional High School, Montague

Public Hearings As well, public hearings will be held in early December, to provide interested groups and individuals with the opportunity to make formal presentations if desired.

The Commission sincerely thanks you for your interest in education governance. Your views and advice are essential to help the Commission recommend the governance structures and approaches that will best fulfill our society's deepest obligation: the education of our children.

References

¹ The early history is examined in detail by Jordan Walker, *The Funding of Prince Edward Island's Schools: A Historical Review to 1973* (unpub. paper, PEI Department of Finance and Municipal Affairs, 2011) In 1910, the MacLeod Commission reviewed the education system and recommended consolidation and a reduction in the number of one-room schools to 31. In 1930, the MacMillan Commission recommended school consolidation. In 1957, the LaZerte Commission on education financing and administration recommended that local school districts be consolidated into five large districts.

² Acres Planning and Research Ltd., *Development Planning for Prince Edward Island: Education*, 1967

³ Elections PEI, *Brief History of the Administration of PEI Education and the Role of PEI Trustees*, <http://www.electionspei.ca/schoolboard/2002/history.php>

⁴ Verner Smitheram and Robert Mahen, *An Evaluation of Elementary and Secondary Education in Prince Edward Island*, Volume I, 1974, p. 189

⁵ Wendy Paquette, School System Review Commission, *Expectations and Excellence: Meeting the Needs*, 1984

⁶ Tom Wilkinson, Chair, *Report of the Advisory Committee on the Paquette Report*, 1986

⁷ The series of reports in the early 1990s were as follows:

- Advisory Committee to the Committee on Government Reform, *Education for the 90's and Beyond*, June 1991;
- PEI Task Force on Education; *Education: A Shared Responsibility* March 1992;
- Working Group on Structure and Accountability, report not made public;
- Albert Fogarty. *Towards Excellence: Report on the Review of the Structure and Governance of the PEI Educational System*; June 1993;
- Community Consultative Committee. *Public Response to "Towards Excellence"*, July 1993

⁸ Task Force on Student Achievement, *Excellence in Education: A Challenge for Prince Edward Island*, January 2006

⁹ Andy Hargreaves and Dennis Shirley, *The Fourth Way: The Inspiring Future of Educational Change*, 2009

¹⁰ T.R. Williams, "Educational Governance: A Paper Prepared for the Panel on the Role of Government," Queens University, 2003

¹¹ Claude Lessard and Andre Brassard, "Education Governance in Canada: Trends and Significance," U. de Montreal, 2005; "The Learning Partnership, Educational Governance: A Look at the Landscape – Background Notes for the Summit on Educational Governance," 2003

¹² *Proceedings of the Minister's Summit on Learning*, 2010

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/publications/index.php3?number=publications&dept=&id=1768>

¹³ Andreas Schleicher, Indicators and Analysis Division, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "Strong Performers and Successful Reformers: Lessons from PISA," Presentation to the National Governors Association, February 2011, Washington DC

¹⁴ Steering Committee Report, *Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans*, Alberta Ministry of Education, 2010

¹⁵ Governance Review Committee, *School Board Governance: A Focus on Achievement*, Report to the Minister of Education of Ontario, 2009; Ontario Ministry of Education, *Provincial Interest Regulation Consultation Paper*, 2009

¹⁶ Nova Scotia Education, *Inc reasing the Effectiveness of School Board Governance in Nova Scotia*, July 2008; *Consultation Report and Recommendations*, September 2008

¹⁷ Auditor General, "Special Education – Eastern School District," *2011 Report*, April 2011, pp. 15-39

¹⁸ School board policies may be reviewed and compared at the following web pages:

Eastern School District: http://www.edu.pe.ca/esd/main/policies_regulations.htm

Western School Board: <http://www.edu.pe.ca/wsb/schoolboard/policiesproceduresguidelines/index.html>

Commission scolaire de langue française : <http://www.edu.pe.ca/csrf/politiques.html>

¹⁹ Prince Edward Island Home and School Federation, Discussion Paper: English Language School Boards on Prince Edward Island, 2010 <http://www.edu.pe.ca/peihsf/takingaction.html>

²⁰ Task Force on Student Achievement, *Ibid.*, p. 27

²¹ Williams, *Ibid.*, p. 11

²² Auditor General, "School Maintenance – Western School Board," *2011 Report*, April 2011, pp. 58-79

Appendix I

Terms of Reference: Education Governance Commission

Introduction

On April 12, 2011, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development announced a systematic review of education governance in Prince Edward Island's school system. A Commission will be appointed to conduct research and consultations and make recommendations on a governance model that addresses matters of accountability, responsibility, and authority.

Commission Members

The Commission will be comprised of five persons with demonstrated understanding of educational governance, and diverse experience and knowledge of education matters in Prince Edward Island. The Commission's work is strategically important to the future of Island children and of our Province. Members of the Commission bring the following competencies to their task:

- Demonstrated capacity to deal with governance issues
- Familiarity with educational issues including stakeholder perspectives
- An awareness of the broader policy context of the work and its implications for the Province's long-term goals
- Strong communication and public engagement skills
- Strong teamwork and decision-making skills

Resources

The Commission will have as its lead resource, the Assistant Clerk and Secretary to Policy Board (Ms Wendy MacDonald) and senior officials of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. In addition, as required, the Commission may engage outside expertise to assist in fulfilling its mandate.

Mandate

The Commission's purpose is to carry out research and consultations to develop a vision and detailed recommendations on the governance model for Prince Edward Island's school system.

The Commission shall examine and make recommendations on governance structures, mechanisms, and processes to ensure leadership and accountability for student learning outcomes and for the effective, efficient, responsive operation of Prince Edward Island's educational system, including:

- The future governance role of school boards in PEI, including duties and responsibilities, number of boards, and method of election or appointment.

- Clear, appropriate roles for the other elements of the educational governance system, including the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department, school administrators, and parent advisory structures.
- Measures to ensure that the governance model provides equitable, consistent opportunities to all Island learners and to educational system human resources.
- Measures and processes to ensure engagement and inclusion of all stakeholders in the shared leadership and development of our educational system.
- Means to ensure that the governance model makes efficient use of resources to contribute to the sustainability of the educational system and to maximize the share of resources that can be focused on direct services to learners.
- Advice on the assignment of responsibility for planning, ownership, management, and renewal of the educational system's physical plant.
- Advice regarding roles and duties associated with long-term capital planning.
- Recommendations on legislative and regulatory amendments arising from the Commission's recommendations.
- Other matters in keeping with the overall goals of the Commission, as agreed by the Commission and Government.

Process and Timeframes

While the Commission will determine its own detailed work plan and timeframes, it is expected that its work will include the following components:

- **Research:** The Commission will investigate and examine matters associated with the mandate set out above, including approaches and best practices in other jurisdictions. Based on its research, the Commission will develop discussion materials including a White Paper, which outline options and analysis to assist Islanders through the consultation phase.
- **Public Engagement:** The Commission will use multiple approaches to actively engage a wide range of Islanders and seek their views on school governance and on the findings and options presented in the White Paper.
- **Analysis and Recommendations:** The Commission will prepare and deliver a comprehensive final report to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development by March 1, 2012.

Appendix II

The School Act: Excerpts re Roles, Responsibilities, and Powers

Please note that these are selected excerpts of the Act. For complete information, the full text of the School Act is available at http://www.gov.pe.ca/law/statutes/pdf/s-02_1.pdf

Minister and Department

A. Administration and Delegation of Powers

2. (1) The Minister is responsible for the administration of this Act, for ensuring the provision of educational services through the Department, and the school boards, and for overall leadership of the educational system in the province.

(2) The Minister may delegate to employees of the Department any of the powers, responsibilities and functions of the Minister as the Minister considers advisable.

D. Minister's Responsibilities

7. (1) The Minister shall

- a) define the goals, standards, guidelines, policies and priorities applicable to the provision of education in Prince Edward Island;
- b) research and assess changing needs, trends and approaches in education and develop and implement strategic plans;
- c) provide leadership and coordination in developing curriculum, define curriculum, articulate curriculum standards and assess and evaluate programs at each level from kindergarten to grade 12;
- d) establish expected outcomes and standards of performance and assess the extent to which outcomes are achieved and standards are met;
- e) establish policies for the provision of special education services;
- f) establish rules respecting the granting of credits, provincial certificates and diplomas;
- g) establish the school calendar in accordance with the regulations;
- h) establish an accountability framework for the school system.

(2) The Minister may

- a) approve and establish courses of study, including the amount of instruction time;
- b) approve educational programs and instructional material for use in the schools and educational resource materials in support of educational programs;
- c) prohibit, where the Minister considers it necessary, the use of educational programs or instructional materials in schools;
- d) approve the conduct of pilot, experimental or local programs in schools;
- e) establish such policies respecting educational services as the Minister considers necessary;
- f) establish policies respecting the assessment and evaluation of students;
- g) establish classes and categories of instructional licenses and authorizations to substitute for teachers;
- h) determine the number and type of positions in each school board;
- i) take such action as the Minister may consider necessary for the purpose of carrying out the Minister's powers, responsibilities or functions under this Act.

E. Minister's Directives

8. (1) The Minister may issue such directives as the Minister considers necessary to carry out the Minister's responsibilities under this Act.

(2) The Minister may, after consultation with school boards, develop and issue directives respecting policies, guidelines and rules for the provision and coordination of educational and administrative services by school boards, with respect to

- a) the administration of collective agreements;
- b) the roles and responsibilities of trustees, principals and supervisory personnel of school boards;
- c) recruitment, hiring procedures and mobility of school board employees;
- d) performance evaluation procedures and criteria for all school board employees;
- e) assessment and coordination of staff and leadership development needs;
- f) procedures and criteria for the evaluation of schools;
- g) capital expenditure needs and priorities;
- h) utilization of school board facilities, equipment and services;
- i) the making of agreements with governments;
- j) the development of combined or shared services for school boards;
- k) such other matters as the Minister considers necessary to carry out the Minister's responsibilities under this Act.

School Boards, Trustees, and Superintendents

A. Establishment of School Boards

27. (1) The Minister may establish such school units as the Minister considers necessary, each of which shall have the boundaries prescribed by the regulations and shall be administered by a school board in accordance with this Act.

(2) A school board for each school unit shall consist of not fewer than nine trustees or such larger number as determined by the Minister.

(3) Subject to the limitations contained in this Act and the regulations, a school board is a company with the powers granted to a body corporate by the *Companies Act R.S.P.E.I.*

(4) When a new school unit is established under this section, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint the initial members of the school board for that unit for a term not exceeding two years.

N. Responsibilities of School Boards

49. A school board shall, subject to the regulations, the Minister's orders under subsection 63.2(5) and the Minister's directives:

- a) provide for instruction in an educational program to all persons who are enrolled in its schools and eligible in accordance with the Act and the regulations;
- b) provide for the recruitment, employment, management and evaluation of staff of the school board and identification of staff development needs;
- c) provide for and manage such facilities and equipment as may be necessary for the safe and effective operation of the school unit;
- d) provide for the transportation of students;
- e) provide for effective and efficient management of the financial affairs of the school board;
- f) monitor and evaluate effectiveness of schools;

- g) ensure the development of, and approve and monitor school development plans;
- h) encourage good relations among schools, parents and the community and promote family and community awareness of the importance of education.

50. A school board may, in carrying out its responsibilities under section 49, develop policies for the effective operation of the unit and, in particular,

- a) respecting the provision of educational programs and services;
- b) respecting the administration and management of
 - i. staff employed by the school board,
 - ii. facilities and equipment owned or used by the school board,
 - iii. the financial affairs of the school board;
- c) respecting suspension of students and expulsion of students;
- d) respecting student attendance;
- e) respecting the educational assessment of students;
- f) enabling teachers to assist in the development, implementation and evaluation of pilot or local programs in the schools;
- g) respecting the management of volunteer services.

G. Responsibilities of Trustees

39. School trustees have the following responsibilities:

- a) to attend meetings of the school board and exercise the powers and duties of a trustee in good faith;
- b) to comply with the requirements of the regulations respecting conflict of interest;
- c) to comply with all other requirements of this Act, the regulations, the Minister's orders under subsections 63.2 (5) and (6), the Minister's directives and the policies of the school board.

U. Unit Superintendent

61. (1) Each school board shall appoint an Unit Superintendent who shall be the chief executive officer of the school board.

(2) Subject to the direction of the school board, the Unit Superintendent shall

- a) exercise general supervision and management over the employees of the school board;
- b) be responsible for the general organization, administration and supervision of educational programs and services;
- c) be responsible for the operation of the schools in the unit; and
- d) fulfil such other responsibilities as are set out in the regulations or assigned by the school board.

Principals and Teachers

J. Responsibilities of Principals

99. The principal of a school shall, subject to the Minister's directives and the policies of the school board

- a) be responsible for such school as may be assigned by the school board;
- b) provide educational leadership in the school;
- c) ensure that the instruction provided by teachers employed at the school is consistent with the courses of study and education programs prescribed, approved or authorized pursuant to this Act;
- d) perform the supervisory, management and other duties required or assigned by the Unit Superintendent or the school board;

- e) evaluate or make provision for the evaluation of teachers under the principal's supervision and report to the Unit Superintendent respecting the evaluation;
- f) perform teaching duties as assigned by the school board;
- g) maintain proper order and discipline in the school and on the school property and during activities sponsored or approved by the school board;
- h) foster co-operation and co-ordination of effort among staff members of the school;
- i) ensure records are maintained in respect of each student enrolled in the school in accordance with the regulations and school board policy;
- j) ensure that teachers conduct such assessments as are appropriate to determine the progress and promotion of students, as required by the Minister or the school board;
- k) consult with teachers and promote such students as the principal considers proper and cause to be issued to students such statements, report cards or certificates as are appropriate;
- l) report to the Unit Superintendent or to the school board as required on matters concerning the school;
- m) attend to the health, comfort and safety of the students;
- n) report notifiable, nuisance and regulated diseases to the Chief Health Officer;
- o) encourage the establishment of and consult the School Council on matters relevant to its functions;
- p) initiate the development of a school development plan.

I. Responsibilities of Teachers

98. Every teacher shall, in accordance with the Act, the regulations, the teacher's contract of employment and the collective agreement

- a) teach the educational programs that are prescribed, approved or authorized pursuant to this Act and assigned to the teacher by the principal or the school board;
- b) encourage students in the pursuit of learning;
- c) consult with parents where necessary and encourage parents to co-operate with and encourage their children's participation in school programs and activities;
- d) assist in developing co-operation and co-ordination of effort among staff members of the school;
- e) maintain, under the direction of the principal, order and discipline in the school, on school property and during activities sponsored or approved by the school board;
- f) attend to the health, comfort and safety of students under the teacher's supervision;
- g) immediately report to the principal the possibility that a student has a regulated, notifiable or nuisance disease;
- h) conduct classes and carry out such other responsibilities as are assigned to the teacher by the principal or by the school board;
- i) keep up to date on the content and pedagogy of the fields in which they teach;
- j) deliver class attendance and other records, the school key and other school property in the teacher's possession to the school board on demand, or when the teacher's employment ceases for any reason.

Parents and Students

School Councils

66. (1) Parents of students attending a school may establish a school council for the school.
- (2) The majority of the members of the school council of a school must be parents of students attending that school.
- (3) The Minister shall make policies respecting the establishment of a school council, the election of members and the dissolution of the school council.
- (4) The school council shall determine its own procedure.
- (5) A Home and School Association in any school may be considered a school council.
67. The functions of a school council are
- a) to advise the principal on various matters related to school operations and administration, including the following:
 - i. repealed by 1996, c.40, s.8,
 - ii. scheduling, calendar for that school, school opening and closing hours, noon hour policies, timing of exams and other events,
 - iii. extracurricular activities, field trips, winter carnival, dances,
 - iv. student discipline and behaviour management approaches
 - v. fund-raising,
 - vi. community access to school facilities,
 - vii. school-based services including social, health, and nutrition services,
 - viii. parent-school communications and parental access to information on their children,
 - ix. any other matters that have a significant impact on the day-to-day life or financial resources of the family or the quality of life of the student in the school;
 - b) to provide a channel of communication between the school and the community, and to build awareness among parents of school programs, activities, and issues;
 - c) to advise, where required by the school board, with respect to the development of the school development plan;
 - d) to advise, where requested by the school board, with respect to the selection of a principal for the school.

J. Parents

80. (1) A parent of a student attending a school is entitled to be informed of the student's attendance, behaviour and progress in the school.
- (2) A parent of a student has the responsibility to encourage the student in the pursuit of learning.

D. Student Responsibilities

72. Students enrolled in a school have the following responsibilities:
- a) to observe the code of conduct and other rules and policies of the school board and of the school;
 - b) to attend classes regularly and punctually and participate in the educational programs in which the student is enrolled;
 - c) to be diligent in pursuing the student's studies;
 - d) to respect the rights of others.