

**TRAINING IN THE
ADMINISTRATION OF AN
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION**



**ORIENTATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL
COMPETENCIES**

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It is my pleasure to present the document *Training in the Administration of an Educational Institution: Orientations and Professional Competencies*, which outlines the orientations established by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport concerning the training of administrators of educational institutions.

There is no doubt that school principals have a highly demanding role. In recent years, a number of factors have multiplied the challenges that school administrators must meet. To effectively manage an educational institution requires a high level of competency, as well as autonomous and ethical conduct on the part of the educators who assume these responsibilities.

It is also important to note that the style of management adopted by the school administrator has a tangible effect on the success of the students in his or her trust. Consequently, the interaction that management fosters among stakeholders in education, and the role it plays in different aspects of teaching and learning, testify to its influence on student success in Québec.

For these reasons, this orientation document concerning training in the management of an educational institution is in keeping with the movement toward professionalizing the job and it firmly advocates the coherent and integrated management of educational institutions. This training, according to its orientations, must foster the acquisition of knowledge, skills and know-how while at the same time preparing principals to apply appropriate and effective management practices in the context of the functions and powers conferred on them. This type of training can only be carried out with sustained collaboration on the part of universities and among the various departments of school administration and education management, as well as between the university and the school system.

The document *Training in the Administration of an Educational Institution: Orientations and Professional Competencies* has been the subject of several validation and consultation projects involving different partners in the educational community. It is now the official document of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport concerning training orientations for school administrators.

I know that both universities and schools have been waiting for a common reference framework concerning the competency development of administrators in educational institutions, and that such a reference will help to increase the coherence, relevance and complementary aspects of the measures to be implemented for their training, support and guidance. I therefore have every confidence that the various partners involved will pursue their commitment and combine their efforts in working for the compulsory and continuing training of school administrators.

In conclusion, I would like to express my satisfaction with validation committee's work in shaping the content of this document. This committee was made up of individuals from every sector involved in the training, support and guidance of school administrators. I thank them for their collaborative efforts toward the enrichment of this document throughout the period of its development.

Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Courchesne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MICHELLE COURCHESNE

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INTRODUCTION

In Québec, the role played by school principals and vice-principals in the restructuring of the education system has been a subject of ongoing interest in recent years. The policy of administrative decentralization and increased responsibility for institutions, initiated by the enactment of Bill 180 in the autumn of 1997, meant increased complexity for the job of school administrator. This increased complexity, in turn, led to the implementation of more sophisticated mechanisms for the selection of school principals and vice-principals, as well as increased concern regarding their qualifications. Building on this, in 2001 the regulation regarding the employment qualifications for school administrators stipulated a mandatory master's degree in management and emphasized the importance of continuing education and training for administrative staff. At the beginning of the 2000s, a significant wave of retirements by administrators raised certain questions and led to studies being done on the problems created by the need to replace them quickly. Two empirical studies were carried out in 2005-2006—one on professional integration (FQDE, 2006) and the other on the support and guidance practices for new school principals and vice-principals (MELS and partners, 2006). In the autumn of 2006, the results of these studies led to the joint development of this orientation document on the training, support and guidance of school principals and vice-principals.

The *Study of Support and Guidance Practices for New School Principals and Vice-principals*,¹ carried out jointly with representatives from all organizations concerned by the training, support and guidance of school principals and vice-principals, led to the development of the reference framework of core competencies for school principals and vice-principals. It should be recalled briefly that one of the development paths suggested by the coordination committee, following the *Study of Support and Guidance Practices for New School Principals and Vice-principals* (MELS and partners, 2006: abridged, 42), was the construction of a common reference framework of core competencies.

A round table made up of school administrators, and representatives of school boards, universities and professional associations should be organized by the MELS in order to explore these avenues and sustain or further develop these cooperative mechanisms. The round table could elaborate on the observations, thoughts and initiatives highlighted in this study and recommend a frame of reference that would both guide the compulsory and continuing training of school administrators, and orient support and guidance practices for those who are new to the job.

In response to this proposal, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport gave a team of designers the mandate to develop a document that would guide the training, support and guidance of school principals and vice-principals. As well as providing reference points, the mandated document was to: determine the required competencies to be developed during training, illustrate the application of these in the context of the exercise of the function in order to orient the field practices of support and guidance, and rally all the actors involved in training and in the development of the competencies of school principals and vice-principals. An advisory committee on the reference framework of core competencies was also formed, with a mandate to orient and validate the work of the development team¹(See the lists of members of the advisory committee the development team in Appendix 1).

Within this common frame of reference, which is aimed at supporting consistently and appropriately the development of the competencies of school principals and vice-principals, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport and its partners have identified the guidelines needed to orient and guide the training programs that are offered to them in the universities as well as the mechanisms put in place for their training, support and guidance in the settings where they practise their profession.

In doing this, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport and its partners hope that the courses designed in accordance with a competency-based approach for the training of school principals and vice-principals will be implemented and widely accepted. Such training courses are aimed at ensuring the acquisition of a wide array of knowledge and the development of competencies so that those who have taken them will be able to manage the constant change in education and have fulfilling professional careers.

1. The report of the *Study of Support and Guidance Practices for New School Principals and Vice-principals* (2006) can be consulted in full and abridged versions at the address: http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/dftps/_Formation_continue_Formation_des_gestionnaires_scolaires.

The orientations of training and the reference framework of core competencies contained in this document are based on the functions and powers conferred on school principals and vice-principals by the legal framework, on the expectations and requirements established by the context in which the job of school principal and vice-principal is exercised, on the explanations of the representations of their role, and on the definition of their needs in the area of training, support and guidance expressed in studies, research and recent experiences in training. The analyses and recommendations presented in the briefs submitted by Québec associations, institutions and organizations, as well as the comments of individuals in the universities and the education system, have been a valuable source of reflection and inspiration.

The document *Training in the Administration of an Educational Institution: Orientations and professional competencies* includes four chapters and a glossary. The first chapter gives a broad outline of the context in which the job of school principal or vice-principal is performed. The second chapter identifies two orientations aimed at guiding the development of the professional competencies of school principals or vice-principals, both in compulsory training and in continuing education and training. The third chapter establishes the competencies required for the appropriate, effective management of an educational institution, summarizes the dynamics of and the interrelations among the components of the reference framework and presents the application of the required competencies in the context of the professional situations that form the heart of the exercise of the function of school principal or vice-principal. Chapter four specifically focuses on the contributions of training from a perspective of professionalization and integrated *administration of the institution*. Finally, a glossary helps readers to better understand the meaning of the main terms and concepts that form the basis of the reference framework of core competencies for school principals and vice-principals.



CHAPTER 1

**THE CONTEXT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION
OF AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION**

The Québec experiment in the reform of public administration, begun in 2000, through changes to the Public Administration Act, was aimed at increasing transparency, responsibility and accountability in the administration of the public sector. While favouring organizational initiatives associated with a movement towards decentralization as well as improved quality and local access for the services offered, this reform was also aimed at the attainment of measurable outcomes. It encouraged the development of strategic planning or of an annual success plan, as well as the publication of an annual administrative report.

For its part, following the Estates General of 1996 and the Ministerial Plan of Action for the Reform of the Education System entitled *A New Direction for Success*, the Québec education system underwent its own process of decentralization. For this purpose, Bill 180, adopted in December 1997, emphasized the decentralization of powers and responsibilities towards the elementary and secondary schools, the adult education centres and the vocational training centres. This shift in responsibilities to the institutions makes it possible for the institution to better meet the specific needs of its community, and it gives the actors, including administrators, the capacity and the means to shape certain factors that determine students' success. The institution has therefore acquired greater autonomy in its capacity to make choices and take decisions on major aspects of its educational services. Since then, each institution has adopted its own project, which necessarily takes into account the specific characteristics of its community. The possibility of implementing a real project marks the transition from "the educational institution seen as an administrative unit" to "the educational institution seen as an organizational system." This process of developing a project thus transforms the internal and relational dynamics of an institution. The result is that all the actors and partners recognize, take into account and negotiate the new forms of partnership and the new rules of the game. It makes it necessary to establish new operational and administrative procedures to ensure the quality of services in diversity.

The three sections below are mainly concerned with the overall context in which principals and vice-principals actually work. The first looks at how the jobs of principal and vice-principal have been affected by major transformations in society over the past decade—particularly regarding the education of young people and adults in educational institutions. The second discusses legislation governing the jobs of principal and vice-principal. The third discusses the challenges that administrators of educational institutions face.

THE EFFECT OF NUMEROUS CHANGES ON THE JOBS OF PRINCIPAL AND VICE-PRINCIPAL

The transition into the twenty-first century has been marked by political, social and economic changes, which have each, in its own way, affected the world of education. Globalization imposes competition among all economies, and individuals who are not able to acquire occupational qualifications risk being condemned to a life of poverty. Science and technology are developing at an accelerated pace, forcing people to develop a large capacity for adaptation and constantly develop their skills in order to deal adequately with these new realities. In addition, migratory movements result in the encounter of multiple cultures, requiring a management of diversity that highlights the richness of differences while taking into account the related tensions that arise.

The pan-Canadian survey of principals, vice-principals and teachers in elementary and secondary schools conducted in 2005-2006 revealed that

... more than 85% of administrators consider very important or important the impact of pedagogical changes [...]. Many *changes in the methods of school regulation* have also been noted in most surveys, such as the new accountability policies (79%) [...], the distribution of powers between central and local bodies (72.2%) [...]. Most of the respondents find very important or important the impact of demographic changes, such as the movements within school staff (68.6%) and variations in the number of students (67.6%) and the impact of socio-economic changes in the environment (59.6%). (Cattonar et al., 2007: 199) [translation]

These major changes in the organization of the school system do not occur in an orderly sequence. They overlap each other and disrupt existing practices at various moments depending on the level of instruction where they occur. For the stakeholders in the system, they represent a loss of some familiar landmarks, yet they offer potential gains, which are sometimes difficult to anticipate and evaluate. All these changes, with all their attractions, challenges, uncertainties and insecurities, affect the role and functions of principals and vice-principals

This pan-Canadian survey also studied the effects of changes in the education system on the job of school administrator and it revealed that there

... have been many impacts, some of which are negative, on the content and conditions of their work. In particular, most find that their workload has increased (96% ...), that they have been obliged to develop new skills to adapt to the changes (92.1%), that they have become more aware of relationships in the school environment (80.1%), that they have been obliged to modify their management approach (79.6%), that they have to further clarify their school's operating rules (76.4%), that they have been obliged to stay the course on the most important aspects of their school's mission (75.8%), that they have to take further training (66.8%) and that they have to further reduce the human costs of the changes (61.2%). (Cattonar et al., 2007: 227) [translation]

The constancy of change and its many ramifications have undeniable effects on the mission of educational institutions, on all the actors who are developing in them and, consequently, on the principals and vice-principals who manage the educational services, the educational environment, the human resources, and the financial and material resources. However, as Mulford observes (OECD, 2003: 20), school principals "should bring all the staff into the decision-making and organisational change process rather than impose this 'top-down'." It should, however, be noted that the authors who took part in this study caution that one management approach should not be favoured over another, and instead argue for differentiated approaches. These approaches would be implemented according to the various operating contexts of institutions, in particular: their diverse structures and their varied socioeconomic environments.

Practised in such a context, the job of managing an educational institution involves complex situations requiring that the administrator demonstrate highly developed competencies and exercise professional judgment. Principals and vice-principals use the autonomy they have acquired in various ways, such as defining with their teams the policies that are best suited to the learning needs of their students and that represent most accurately the educational values of their communities. In addition, they coordinate the situation analysis process, which highlights the specific components of their contexts of operation and makes it possible to choose appropriate measures to implement policies. Principals and vice-principals also monitor the implementation of conditions favourable to the building of a common culture of reflection, sharing and pooling of resources. In all these aspects of their job, and also in the management of the daily activities of their institutions, administrators ensure the consistency of their actions with the provincial frameworks for the education of Québec youth, with the strategic plan, policies and standards in effect in their school boards, with their school's educational project, and with the collective agreements with the different categories of their staff. In addition to the complexity associated with the very nature of situations that need to be managed as part of the job of principal or vice-principal, as prescribed by the Education Act, the administration of an educational institution is also complex because of the uncertainty and unpredictability of its outcomes. As Brassard observes (2004: 43), the professional activity of administrators "is at the mercy of the many events and changes that have direct effects on the functioning of the institution or influence it significantly." [translation]

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS SPECIFIC TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

The provisions that define the functions and powers of principals and vice-principals of schools, vocational training centres and adult education centres are contained in the *Education Act*. A brief presentation of the legal framework that sets the parameters for their professional action will provide a better understanding of the flexibility of action and the areas of autonomy available to school administrators as well as the interdependencies that link this function with other actors and jurisdictions in the education system.

The appointment of the administrators of an educational institution

The administrators are always appointed by the school board, which establishes the selection criteria. However, the governing board is consulted by the school board regarding those criteria. As for the vice-principals, who assist principals in the exercise of their functions and powers and who replace principals when they are absent or unable to act, they are appointed by the school boards after consultation with the principals and vice-principals of institutions.

The general functions and powers of principals of educational institutions

The *Education Act*, amended in 1998 by the enactment of Bill 180, sets the parameters for the job of school principal as follows:

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.
(*Education Act*, s. 96.12).

The principal is responsible for approving,³ on the proposal of the teachers and staff members concerned (5), and after consultation with the governing board (3):

1. the local programs of studies developed to meet the special needs of students
2. the criteria for the introduction of new instructional methods
3. the textbooks and instructional material required for the teaching of programs of studies
4. standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement
5. the rules governing the placement of students and their promotion from one cycle to the other at the elementary level

The principal also establishes an individualized education plan adapted to the needs of a handicapped student or a student with a social maladjustment or a learning disability.⁴ The principal also has the power, following a request, with reasons, from the parents of a child to admit a student to preschool or elementary school education for an additional school year.⁵

The principal of a centre, on the proposal of the teachers, approves⁶:

1. the criteria for the introduction of new instructional methods;
2. the textbooks and instructional material required for the teaching of programs of studies, in keeping with the budget of the centre;
3. standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement.

The principal of a vocational training centre is required to establish an individualized education plan adapted to the needs and abilities of a handicapped student or a student with a social maladjustment or a learning disability.⁷ Like the principal of a school, the principal of a vocational training centre sees to the implementation and periodical evaluation of the education plan and informs the student's parents on a regular basis.

2. *Education Act*, sections 96.8 to 96.10 and 110.5 to 110.7.

3. *Education Act*, s. 96.15.

4. *Education Act*, s. 96.14.

5. *Education Act*, s. 96.17 and 96.18.

6. *Education Act*, s. 110.12.

7. *Education Act*, s. 110.11.

The principal of a school, or of a centre, is responsible for the management of the staff of the school⁸ and shall determine the duties and responsibilities of each staff member in accordance with the provisions of the applicable collective agreements or regulations of the Minister and, where applicable, with the agreements between the school board and university-level institutions concerning the training of future teachers or the mentoring of newly qualified teachers.

The operation of the governing board

In accordance with the changes to the *Education Act* that came into effect in July 1998, educational institutions are required to define their local educational project,⁹ while respecting the strategic plan of the school board as well as the provincial educational project. This obligation consists of formulating policies and in implementing measures to carry them out. The policies thus established are specific to each institution. They conduct, adapt or enrich the provincial project in accordance with the specific needs of the students served. The diagram entitled *Integrative Model of the Process of Managing the Educational Mission* (see Table 1, p. 15) shows the relationships between the provincial project, the strategic plan of the school board and the educational project of the institution (school project or centre policies).

Moreover, in 1998, new mechanisms for consultation and decision making within the institutions were implemented as the functions and powers of the governing boards came into effect.¹⁰ School principals, for their part, participate in the meetings of the governing board, but have no voting rights. They develop proposals that they submit to the governing board for approval. In doing so, they will, in many situations, consult teachers and other staff of the school. As part of their general responsibilities, principals of institutions should ensure that the decisions of the governing board are carried out and assist it in its functions.¹¹ They should also encourage the participation of persons having an interest in the institution and work in cooperation with them to develop, carry out and evaluate the educational project of the school or the policies and success plan of the centre. Governing boards, for their part, adopt the educational project of the institution, and see to its implementation and periodical evaluation. They also approve the success plan and the proposals for its actualization made by administrative staff.

Other functions and powers are conferred, by law, on the school principals and vice-principals. To those identified above, we can add the functions and powers related to the professional development of school staff (*Education Act*, s. 96.21) as well as the management of the physical and financial resources of the school (*Education Act*, s. 96.23, s. 96.24).

This quick examination of the general functions and main powers accorded by the *Education Act* to school principals is far from an exhaustive description of the distribution of powers and functions among the various authorities in the system. It does make it possible, however, to get an idea of the broad outline of the legal framework within which the job of principal is performed and, accordingly, to understand the overall context in which the powers of school principals and vice-principals are exercised.

8. *Education Act*, s. 96.21 and 110.13.

9. *Education Act*, s. 74, 75, 77 and 109.

10. *Education Act*, s. 96.13.

11. *Education Act*, s. 74 and 109.

INTEGRATIVE MODEL OF THE PROCESS OF MANAGING THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION

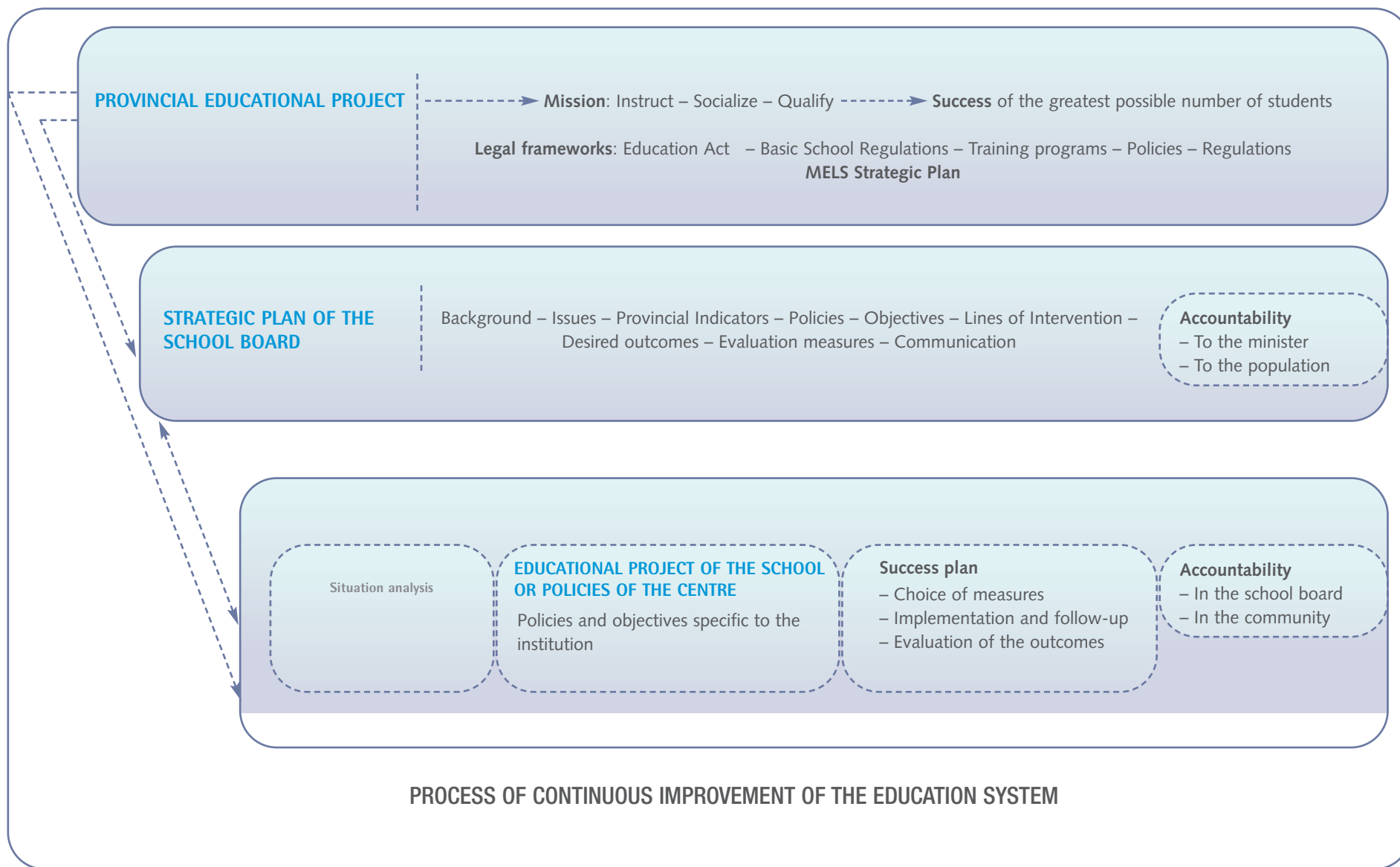


TABLE 1

Adapted from: Tardif, N., Royal, L., Lafontaine, L. L., Simon, L. *Mon école, mon projet, notre réussite*. Montréal: Éditions Hurtubise HMH Itée., 2003.

THE CHALLENGES OF THE JOB OF PRINCIPAL

In this evolving context, numerous important challenges characterize the professional lives of principals, who are expected to make well-adapted contributions to the quality of services offered in the institutions they administer and to ensure the appropriateness of the professional practices implemented.

First of all, managing the educational institution—while seeing that human resources are used to their fullest potential and while ensuring that individual and collective contributions are directed towards the fulfillment of the educational mission—represents a major challenge. This challenge is directly linked to the exercise of leadership by principals and vice-principals. This leadership is expressed through reciprocal appreciation and mutual trust in order to create a space for openness, dialogue and mutual influence conducive to the attainment of objectives and the completion of shared projects. It is developed therefore through their training and their experiences with the other actors in their organizations.

Constant interaction with the members of the group is based essentially on mutual trust, appropriate communication and mutual active listening. Leaders need to believe in the capacities of their groups and the groups have to believe in the competency of the leaders. The source of trust is credibility, and the foundation of credibility is knowledge of others, of their intentions and the relationship between the expression of intentions and the capacity to realize them. Leaders have to know their teams in terms of experience and potential, and they have to be known by their teams. (St-Germain, 2002: 146) [translation]

Second, mobilizing individuals and teams to accomplish the educational mission, while respecting the guidelines and provisions of the different collective agreements, establishing and maintaining collegiality internally and partnerships externally in order to welcome and encourage all possible contributions to the success of young Quebeckers requires a considerable investment of the resources of administrators. Whether in assisting the governing board, dealing with union organizations, or maintaining links with the community without neglecting contacts with the school board, the challenge of working in collaboration to achieve a common goal is constantly present. It should be added that this critical challenge is faced in a context of significant turnover of various categories of staff, their increased mobility and a widening intergenerational gap, making the widely called-for need for support all the more imperative. In addition, constant changes require sustained attention to the seeking out, processing and dissemination of relevant information, and making necessary adjustments.

Thirdly, administrators have to establish the most favourable conditions for the development of professional practices that can support the progress of students towards success. In this regard, individual and collective guidance for all those involved in academic success constitutes an area to be further developed. There are already precedents. Experiments in socio-constructivist support (Lafortune and others, 2001, 2004), research training (Simon and Desmarais, 2007) and action research (Savoie-Zajc, 2007) that have been tried in various settings have produced results that deserve attention. It is important to develop structured and organized types of support in order to maximize benefits.

Fourthly, school administrators need to take responsibility for the development and progress of their own professional competency and that of anyone working in their institutions. The profession of principal offers an opportunity to expand personal and professional limits in a legitimate quest for self-actualization. Determining priorities and sticking to them, learning to distinguish between the essential and the secondary, and setting aside time for self-renewal remain a permanent challenge if they wish to preserve their personal and professional effectiveness. The implementation of development plans that take into account the differentiated needs of individuals in order to provide for their professional development can contribute greatly to the quality of their interventions with students and consequently favour the success of the greatest possible number.

Fifthly, going beyond a representation of their role as fragmentary and divided, fraught with the tasks and responsibilities that accumulate and decrease their power to act is no doubt the greatest challenge that school principals face. Adopting an integrative vision, in which the meaning of the educational mission can become a focus of commitment for all stakeholders, working together, cohesively and appropriately, on an actual school project whose goal is student success, represents a challenge that is as demanding as it is stimulating. The autonomy and flexibility gained in this way make it possible to push back restrictive limits and make room for the creativity necessary for the fulfillment of this vital social project.

In short, the main challenges that need to be met by school principals centre around the development of a broader collective sense in which the contribution of each individual is still valued and recognized; the exercise of a leadership that is mobilizing and shared; the provision for the development of educational practices that foster student success and the support of professional development for the different categories of staff in their institutions. Finally, school administrators all need to maintain their personal balance.



CHAPTER 2

**THE ORIENTATIONS OF THE TRAINING
OF PRINCIPALS AND VICE-PRINCIPALS**

A full portrait of the training, support and guidance needs of school principals ought to include a presentation of the general functions and powers conferred on them, a review of the requirements of their professional practice and a summary of the challenges that they have to face. In this regard, the present document identifies two orientations aimed at guiding their compulsory and continuing training, namely: the professionalization of the job of school administrator and the integrated administration of the institution.

The choice of these two orientations is supported by the results of the *Study of Support and Guidance Practices for New School Principals and Vice-principals*, which shows that academic organizations look for people who are well prepared, who have a minimum of training and who are prepared to commit their internal resources (all their knowledge, skills, know-how, aptitudes, personal qualities and experiences) and to combine them with the resources in their environment to carry out effectively the activities related to the administration of an educational institution. Moreover, the work of Brassard et al. (2004) and the Fédération québécoise des directions d'établissement d'enseignement (FQDE, 2006) shows that a certain number of working principals are striving to counteract the dissipation of efforts and the fragmentation caused by manifold and relentless change by intensifying the search for meaning and coherence in their professional practice.

THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE JOB OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Faced with the complexity, uncertainty and constantly evolving nature of the structures and the diverse array of stakeholders who are interacting, individuals and organizations are working towards professionalization, which is becoming a reality through shared responsibility.

The foundations of a profession

Pelletier (2005: 8) attributes the existence of a profession to the four following basic elements:

1. the presence of complex activities, recognized as such, that require advanced competencies to carry out;
2. the recognition of a specific status that distinguishes this occupation from others, including closely related ones (such as teaching in the case of education management);
3. the existence of a corpus of progressive, pragmatic scientific knowledge that makes it possible to recognize practices that are considered exemplary and to codify them for communication purposes;
4. finally, the existence of socialization and training practices that enable individuals who occupy the function to appropriate this codified knowledge and translate it into practical knowledge in the progressive construction of their professional identity. [translation]

As with Brassard (2004) and Pelletier (2006), the postulate selected here states that the concept of professionalization of the job of principal or vice-principal encompasses many realities. There is no doubt that this job can be broken down into a large number of complex activities (see *The effect of numerous changes on the job of principal and vice-principal* p.11 et 12) and that the management of professional situations, which provides its reference points, requires autonomous action, not to mention professional judgment and a sense of ethics on the part of the manager.

Professionalization is based on two main logical suppositions. "The first refers to professionalism and calls for rationalization of knowledge and the construction of the competencies necessary to perform a given profession. The second, related to professionalism, defends the interests, values and status of a profession within society." (Uwamariya and Mukamurera, 2005: 140 [translation]). Even though they seem to be distinct, these two principles are, in fact, complementary, since they combine internal reality (acquisition and mastery of professional competencies) and external reality (the social recognition) of professionalization.

On the one hand, the quest for an affirmed professional identity, both individually and collectively, is substantiated through the importance and interest accorded to the development of a reference framework of core competencies common to all practitioners engaged in compulsory and continuing training for school administrators. A corpus of knowledge and a repertoire of recognized codified practices that can support the construction of knowledge in the field of education management or school administration will continue to develop.

On the other hand, professionalization refers to the social recognition and status of people who exercise a profession. In Québec, the foundations of the professionalization of school principals and vice-principals were established starting in 1979 by the statement of the powers and responsibilities of school principals and vice-principals in the Education Act. They were subsequently consolidated by the administrative decentralization carried out in 1998. According to St-Pierre (2004), this new context of decentralization marked the transition from a bureaucratic kind of management to a considerably more strategic management. The recognition of a specific status for school principals and vice-principals developed, in part, during a period of changes in personnel (with the arrival of a younger generation of administrators and with more women entering the profession) and changes in professional practice. This recognition has been particularly evident in the increased interest in the mechanisms for the selection of school principals and vice-principals as well as in the requirement for higher qualifications with the establishment of a mandatory master's degree in education management.

Professionals to manage complexity

According to a widely shared representation (Le Boterf, 2002, 2006; Rey et al., 2006; Tardif, 2006; Perrenoud, 2004), a person recognized as a professional has demonstrated a high level of competency in the management of complex situations, which is expressed in practice, for example, through autonomous, informed and appropriate handling of situations that arise in the exercise of their functions. Autonomous handling of situations cannot be guided exclusively by the application of directives, standards and detailed rules or by the faithful imitation of previously established procedures. On the contrary, it is characterized by the ability to acquire the flexibility necessary to manage the specific situations and circumstances. In addition, autonomous action cannot be taken without

the person who is acting choosing from a wide range of tools, procedures, strategies and means those best suited to the situation and, as such, calling upon his or her judgment and professional ethics. All the tasks and activities that principals and vice-principals are called upon to manage are related to their formal responsibilities, but also involve those of other actors and other functions. People recognized as professionals are conscious that their performance is related to their knowledge of the situations and contexts in which they are acting. Finally, they demonstrate practical knowledge as professionals when they are able to justify their choices.

Professionals define their identity in relation to a set of socially recognized competencies and also in terms of what they are capable of accomplishing. Professional identity is therefore constructed in action and is central to a dynamic of demonstration/recognition. When professionals make effective use of their internal resources and those of their environment to deal appropriately with the diverse array of professional situations they encounter, they demonstrate their competence. When they attain the desired outcomes through the exercise of their function and through their organization, they are recognized as being competent.

In fact, only practising principals and vice-principals or the individuals aspiring to these positions can decide to professionalize. To do this, they must be involved in processes to acquire and develop competencies that are recognized socially, have the means required, and develop in places conducive to their professionalization.

Given that teaching staff constitutes practically the sole recruitment pool for school administrators in Québec, professionalization of school administration cannot become a reality without an appreciated, recognized professionalization of teaching staff.

The professionalization of school principals and vice-principals, a shared responsibility

The process of professionalization begins first of all with new principals or vice-principals becoming aware of their personal resources and those which they can call upon in their environment in order to mobilize and combine them appropriately in their professional practice. One of the components essential to this process is the appropriation of a field of knowledge and a repertoire of competencies socially recognized as necessary to the exercise of the profession. Moreover, since the development of professional competency is never completely achieved, the process goes on continuously throughout the professional career and not only during compulsory training.

In Québec, the professionalization of principals and vice-principals has come about through the acceptance of responsibility shared among the individuals, their organization, the educational institutions, the professional associations and the Ministère. In this way, the responsibilities are divided between the principals and vice-principals themselves and the different structures in the school system.

- The individuals have primary responsibility for their own professionalization.
- The school board or the private teaching institution ensures that training, support and guidance structures are put in place to foster the involvement of school principals and vice-principals in a process of professionalization that is enriched and redefined over time and in evolving contexts.
- The universities, in particular through research activities, ensure the growth of a corpus of scientific and theoretical knowledge as well as the development and renewal of a repertoire of informed practices. They also design programs that enable administrators in training to acquire this knowledge and transfer it to the context of professional practice.

- The professional associations of principals and vice-principals support this professionalization in many ways. Specifically they: propose working conditions conducive to its actualization, establish policies and funding processes for the individual and collective training of their members, support the building and maintenance of a strong collective professional identity, contribute to the development of a repertoire of socially recognized practices, and design and make accessible activities for the sharing and improvement of practices.
- The Ministère, in collaboration with its partners from the educational and university communities, identifies training orientations and determines the professional competencies required for the appropriate, competent exercise of the management of all educational institutions.

INTEGRATED ADMINISTRATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Integrated administration of an organization requires, as the term implies, that administrators be able to observe and manage an entire set of situations, processes and operating procedures through a wide-angle (rather than a telephoto) lens. In other words, integrated administration is the outcome of a systemic view of the organizational structure. This vision makes it possible to grasp the interactions and interrelations between the different subsystems and fields of management that make up the organization. This vision makes it possible for the manager of an organization to go beyond administration that is fragmentary to achieve an approach to administration that is more integrated, more effective and more satisfying.

The cohesiveness among the various subsystems of an educational institution is key to the implementation of a school project.¹² This project is key to the fulfillment of the mandate of the institution and, as such, it is the central axis around which the organizational structure is built. In this respect, the adoption by the administration and staff of the institution of a global or systemic vision is necessary to ensure cohesiveness among its aims, actions and outcomes.

The school project requires the involvement of all the actors, collaborators and partners concerned with academic success. Its *raison d'être* is the success of the greatest possible number of students. Based on the definition of the specific educational needs of the students who attend the institution, the school project constitutes the main structuring element of the school organization, the organization of work, and the distribution of resources. It sets priorities. It guides and justifies the choice of teaching approaches and, at the same time, the choice of training approaches for the different categories of staff. It orients the use of various types of collaboration, and it clarifies the usefulness of partnerships and the implementation of coordinating efforts.

In addition, the school project can be a powerful lever for change, offering all those involved in student success, all collaborators and partners of the institution, the opportunity to build together the meaning of their individual participation, while sharing a vision of the desired results and the measures promoting the evolution of the whole system that is an educational institution.

Thus, it is on the basis of the results pursued by the implementation of the school project that the most relevant management strategies are identified and clarified. It is in the space and time that corresponds to the process being followed that the different actors position themselves with respect to the many possibilities offered by the expected results. The intermediary position inherent to the role and responsibilities of school principals and vice-principals has a decisive influence on the professional actions and progress of the team that they are managing. From this position, they are able to situate themselves in relationship to the action and to distance themselves from it in order to have a better overview, to analyze it and regulate it so as to avoid dispersed efforts and fragmentation. The choice of this perspective directs principals and vice-principals towards an integrative conduct of their management activities, enabling them to maintain steady progress toward all the desired outcomes while adjusting themselves, in a coherent manner, to the evolution of the project. Thus, within the limits set for them and according to the progress of the project, they have the power to choose the key actions that it is appropriate to take, such as: mobilizing, coordinating, merging, reframing, readjusting, explaining, foregoing, etc., while being aware of some of their effects on the system of their institutions as a whole.

12. The school project is a generic term that includes the educational project of schools and the policies of centres.



CHAPTER 3

**A REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF PROFESSIONAL
COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR THE MANAGEMENT
OF AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION**

A reference framework describes competencies essential to the appropriate and effective exercise of a profession, as agreed on by all the stakeholders involved. For those who enter the profession, these competencies constitute reference points in the process of professionalization.

Reference frameworks can take various forms, each of which has consequences for the implementation of strategies targeting the acquisition and development of competencies. Reference frameworks that establish links between resources to be mobilized and combined and key actions to be carried out, thus aiming for results in specific professional situations, will not focus on the same aspects of development as frameworks that are structured in the form of lists of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

This reference framework is based, first of all, on the functions and powers conferred on school principals and vice-principals by the legal framework, and secondly, on the explanations of representations of their role and the identification of their needs in training, support and guidance (Brassard et al., 2004; FQDE, 2006; MELS, 2006). This reference framework identifies the competencies required to meet the demands of an effective, appropriate professional practice, and is based on a curriculum favourable to the development of these competencies.

TRAINING FOUNDED ON A COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH

As noted in the introduction, this reference framework of core competencies was designed for the purpose of training administrative staff for schools and vocational training centres and adult education centres. Its first aim is to guide the theoretical and practical orientations of the compulsory training programs intended for these individuals. It is also aimed at supporting the training paths of principals and vice-principals throughout the course of their professionalization so that they are adapted to the requirements of the exercise of the function. Since support and guidance cannot be separated from training, they should take into account this reference framework of core competencies. Like the Québec Education Program (MEQ, 2001a, 2004; MELS 2007) and the reference framework of core competencies for teaching staff (MEQ, 2001b), this reference framework of core competencies for administrators has adopted an approach that:

- opts for the development of practical knowledge that is useful in real situations
- works toward the professionalization of administrators through an approach that integrates administration with the function
- aims for the implementation of relevant professional practice in keeping with the needs of the situations
- establishes explicitly the dynamic links between competencies (practical knowledge), the model professional situations and the expected outcomes

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A COMPETENCY

Along with a concern that appropriate training of administrators should prepare and train the "learners" to implement professional practices adapted to the challenges represented by the actual performance of their job, it is assumed here that a competency corresponds to complex practical knowledge that is actualized in the context of a concrete professional situation through a sequence of actions in order to attain an outcome. The characteristics of a competency set out below are based mainly on the work of Guy Le Boterf (2002, 2006, 2007) and of Jacques Tardif (2006). A competency is presented as:

Complex practical knowledge that is mobilizing and combinatory in nature

To solve a problem, to take an initiative, or to pilot a project, administrators of institutions must know not only how to select and mobilize resources (knowledge, abilities, attitudes, cognitive processes, etc.), but must also know how to organize them. They need to combine the multiple elements that enter into dynamic interaction and which can result in various configurations. A competency is therefore an outcome of a combination of various personal and environmental resources that can be mobilized in action. The selection and organization of the resources mobilized is based on the administrators' view of the situation and its particular requirements as well as on an intention or an expected outcome. These characteristics, namely the mobilization and combination of internal and external resources, contribute to ensuring that a competency corresponds to complex practical knowledge.

Practical knowledge that is developed throughout one's professional life

Learning that leads to the development of a competency is widely varied and its progressive acquisition is spread out over time. Moreover, the process of developing such learning requires a variety of settings, hence the importance of alternating between that which is carried out in formal educational settings and that which is carried out in the context of real work situations. Thus, in terms of professionalization, the development of competencies is continuously progressing towards a level of mastery and expertise in a practice that is autonomous and thoughtful. Accordingly, it is ongoing throughout one's professional life.

Practical knowledge adapted to a particular context, applied in a specific situation

This reference framework of core competencies emphasizes the professional situation, seen both as catalyst and as the organizational framework for action. It is the professional situation being managed that determines the outcome to be attained. At the same time, the context guides and directs the selection and organization of the resources being mobilized. The contextual nature of practical knowledge is crucial, since it makes it possible to introduce and sustain the idea that a specific competency is structured and applied for the attainment of an anticipated outcome. This characteristic makes it possible to apply the concept of a model professional situation, which constitutes the key to the profession and provides fertile ground for transfer to similar or related situations. This perspective proves to be indispensable during compulsory or continuing training, because no professional situation will ever be able to reflect all possible professional situations in which a specific competency could be applied.

A reflective dimension

Individuals cannot really be recognized as competent unless they are capable, not only of succeeding with an action, but also of understanding why and how the action was taken. The skill and the activity is not enough to identify a true competency. To be competent means not only being capable of doing or acting, but it is also being able to analyze and explain one's ways of doing things or of acting. The reflective dimension also makes it possible for those who develop it to self-regulate their actions, to know how to count on their own resources, but also how to look for supplementary resources, how to be able to transfer, that is, reinvest their competencies in different contexts.

THE STRUCTURE AND INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF CORE COMPETENCIES FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND VICE-PRINCIPALS

This reference framework of core competencies for school principals and vice-principals is intended as a reference tool, a representation highlighting the links that exist between the competencies required, the fields in which they are exercised, the model professional situations, the key actions and the outcomes expected through the handling of these professional situations. Since they constitute the heart of the professional practice exercised by administrators and reflect the functions and powers conferred on them by the Education Act, the model professional situations represent the focuses around which revolve the other components of the reference framework of core competencies. In keeping with the logic of the selected structure, the development of the reference framework of core competencies for administrators breaks down as follows:

- a competency (practical knowledge) that is employed in the context of a professional situation
- actions carried out in this context, organized and sequenced according to an expected outcome
- cross-disciplinary abilities that contribute to the structuring of the competent action, in any of the model situations

A reference framework of competencies centred on the management of the implementation of the project of the educational institution

The school project lies at the heart of the fulfillment of the mandate of the institution. Administrators should be capable of directing the implementation of activities, processes and operating procedures in accordance with the policies of the institution. The success plan sets the objectives to be met through the joint action of the various actors in academic success. In this way, the school project and the success plan constitute the focuses around which are modelled and organized the educational services, the decision-making structures, and the individual and collective contributions of the members of the school staff,¹³ and the distribution and allocation of financial and material resources. Principals and vice-principals should show that they have the competencies required to ensure the coherent action of these various aspects as well as their convergence towards the attainment of the objectives pursued by the implementation of the policies of the institution.

Model professional situations categorized into four interrelated fields of management

A professional situation is made up of a set of actual functions, tasks and activities that persons must carry out not only as part of their responsibilities, but also in relationship to other actors and other functions in their organizations and even outside of their organizations. Professional situations are authentic, they correspond to activities to be actually carried out at a given moment in the context of the management of educational services, the management of the educational environment, human resources management or even the management of the administrative services of the educational institution.

Competencies applied in model professional situations with the intention of producing an outcome

Competency is expressed through action. Moreover, an action carried out effectively implies the appropriate mobilization of many resources (knowledge, abilities, attitudes, cognitive processes, etc.). However, possessing these resources does not suffice to effect an outcome. For persons to be considered to be acting with competency and efficiency, it is necessary also that they be capable of mobilizing and combining these resources appropriately in real situations and, in addition, that they attain the anticipated outcome. Thus, complex practical knowledge is actualized in the context of a professional situation through a sequence of actions with a view to obtaining results. Ten competencies have been identified as required for the appropriate, competent management of an educational institution.

13. The school staff is a generic term that includes the teaching staff, the complementary educational services staff and the support staff.

Cross-disciplinary abilities interlinked with each of the required competencies

The cross-disciplinary abilities¹⁴ permeate all the competencies required for the administration of an institution and are interlinked with all the professional situations the administrator will have to face. As such, they constitute the aptitudes on which are structured and developed the specific competencies required for the appropriate administration of an institution. The cross-disciplinary abilities, of which there are six, are the common foundations of the ten competencies required for the administration of an educational institution. Combined with the competency applied and the key actions carried out in the context of each model professional situation, they contribute to an overall process of management that is rigorous and effective. These cross-disciplinary abilities are:

Method / Procedure

Exercised in a context characterized by complexity and unpredictability, the appropriate administration of educational institutions requires highly developed intellectual abilities as well as superior methodological skills on the part of administrators. Administrators need to rely on rigorous, proven cognitive processes in order to be able to ensure the appropriate transfer of formal and experiential knowledge to deal with all the situations they encounter.

In the daily exercise of their functions, principals and vice-principals construct links to connect the various structural elements in the school organization (laws, training programs, basic school regulation, educational policies, school project, success plan and accountability) and thus ensure cohesiveness between the different activities, the structures and the operations in place for the academic success of the students. In addition, they support the internal cohesiveness of the teams involved in implementing the school project. In addition to the above dimensions, they need to ensure that their assessment of the situation in the institution is based on a methodical gathering of information conducive to the accurate identification of factors influencing student success. It seems to be all the more important to identify them rigorously and accurately given that they guide the orientations and the priorities of the institution. Important also is the use of an intervention process that includes the stages of definition of the problem, analysis of the situation, and the exploration of suitable measures that guide effectively the development, implementation and evaluation of action plans.

Communication

Communication is the very foundation of an administration with mobilizing capabilities. Without effective communication, no shared meaning can be constructed. Accordingly, there is a danger of individual and collective contributions being at cross-purposes. Communication is the essential instrument to be mastered for all administrators who have to do the following: mobilize the educational stakeholders around choices, objectives and desired outcomes; construct a common meaning, a common language and a shared vision; legitimize, promote and create better understanding of the school project and obtain adherence to it; and advance the relevance of individual and collective educational practices.

Leadership / Political sense

School principals and vice-principals exercise their leadership when they are able to mobilize the members of the school team or centre team around a common project. This common project prompts each one to carve out a place, to commit fully to its achievement and to undertake a process of continuing education and training in order to increase their contribution to the attainment of the outcomes pursued in a spirit of collegiality. In addition, they supervise and direct the process of decision making in order to ensure that the focus is on the success of the students. They also ensure the development of the potential of the members of their team and the quality of human relationships among them. To achieve this, principals and vice-principals have to demonstrate innovation, creativity and adaptability, in addition to monitoring their own professional development and the maintenance of their personal balance.

14. An ability is an "aptitude, acquired or developed, that allows a person to succeed in the exercise of a physical, intellectual or professional activity It is genuine only if it is demonstrated It is developed through experience and through specific learning activities." Legendre, Renald (2005: 187) [translation]

An administrator who is attentive to the organization has a good political sense, and is capable of identifying critical social networks and decoding key relationships. This type of administrator understands the political forces at work in his or her organization as well as the unspoken values and rules that are prevalent among the organization's members. Principals and vice-principals of institutions who have political sense are capable of an informed reading of the situation of their institutions and maintain a strategic position adapted to the goals they are pursuing.

Interaction / Cooperation

In order for the activities of the academic institution to be enriched by the contributions of fruitful cooperation, administrators of an institution must foster the implementation and maintenance of an organization of work and an academic structure that provide conditions favourable to collaboration. The types of collaboration maintained within an educational institution are multidimensional, and varied in form, composition, infrastructure and duration. However, whatever form it takes, collaboration is aimed mainly at two complementary objectives: to facilitate exchanges and interactions that are likely to enrich professional practices, to stimulate the cultural development of the institution and thus foster the success of the students.

Principals and vice-principals assume, alternately or concurrently, two distinct functions with respect to cooperation. The first function consists of managing cooperative situations. In this regard, administrators ensure that the actors never lose sight of the mandate that has been entrusted to them. They thus ensure that the conditions for proper functioning have been fulfilled. The second function is assumed when administrators take part themselves in networks of cooperation, which can have various objectives: create a political force greater than any that isolated individuals can possess; make a significant contribution to the progress of the academic organization; take part in exchanges favourable to their own development and their professional enrichment.

Evaluation / Regulation

The evaluation and regulation of one's own professional practice are processes that cannot be separated from the process of professionalization. Many administrators sporadically include in their practice aspects of evaluation and regulation through dialogue with peers and thus adjust their professional practice. However, the systematic and rigorous use of evaluation/regulation fosters in particular a precise orientation of the course of continuing education and training, an increase in the relevance of professional practices, and the implementation of mechanisms for analysis and follow-up that make it possible to take measures to reduce the gap between the desired outcomes and the attained outcomes.

Ethics

Since the mission of the institution is actualized where the interests of the students and the values of the community come together, new relationships are established between the administrators of an educational institution and their professional environment. Collaboration is maintained with the members of the staff of the institution, members of the school board or private institution and the education system, representatives of the community served, people working in social services and other partners in public and private enterprises. With partnership playing an increasing role, the implementation of a culture of administration characterized by responsibility, transparency, impartiality and accountability becomes imperative.

Accordingly, in order to properly assume their role and its attendant responsibilities, principals and vice-principals of institutions commit to pursuing the public interest, to ensuring harmonious coexistence and to adopting behaviour that respects high ethical standards in the daily exercise of their functions.

Key actions

A key action is carried out in a specific context, combined with and linked to other actions for the purpose of attaining a specific outcome. In this reference framework, the list of key actions associated with competencies is not exhaustive, but aims rather to give an idea of the actions to be carried out and the orientation to be given to this sequence of actions in order to manage with competency the professional situation.

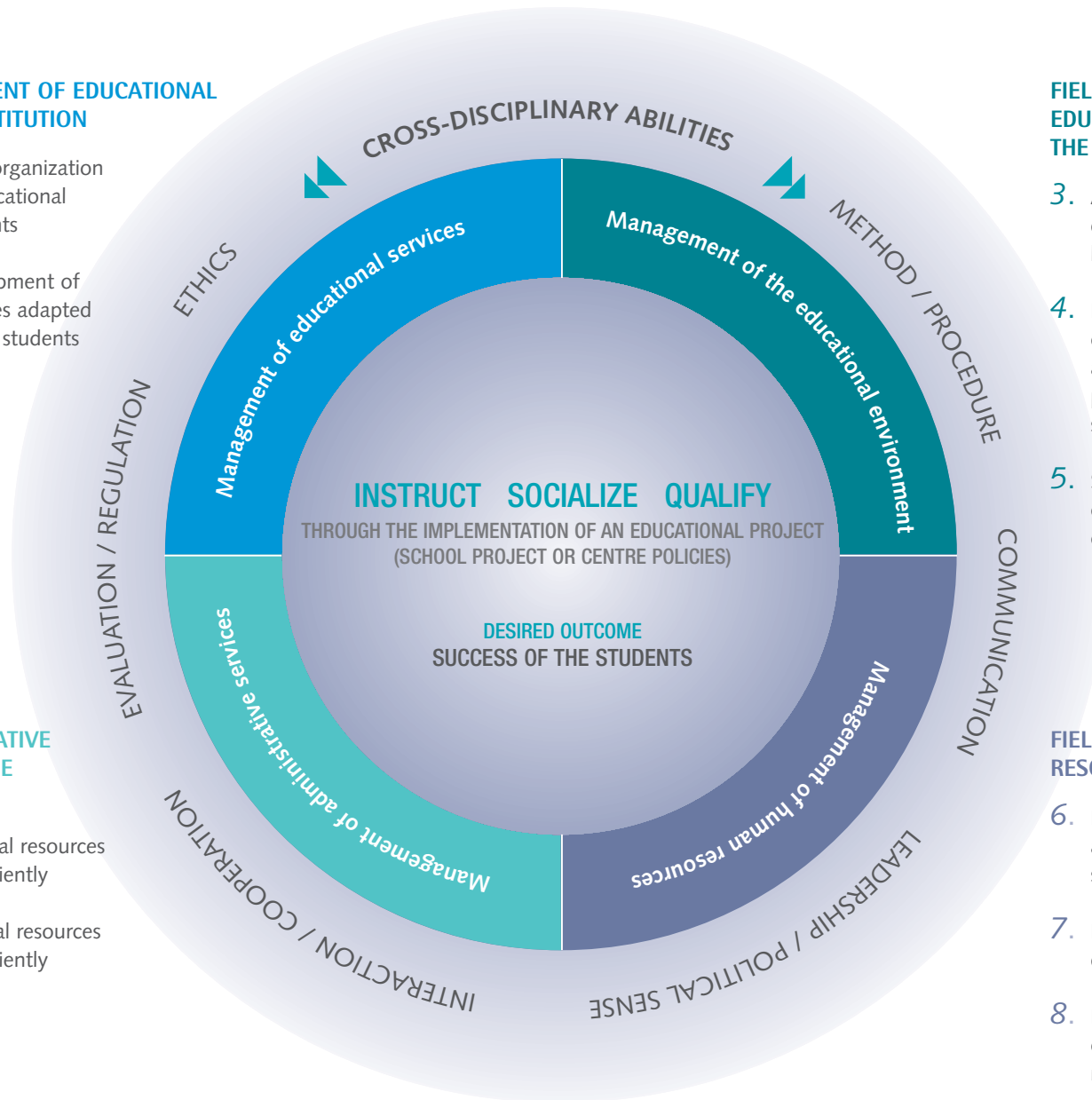
THE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF CORE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED TO MANAGE AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

FIELD OF MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN THE INSTITUTION

1. Structure a school organization centred on the educational needs of the students
2. Support the development of educational practices adapted to the needs of the students

FIELD OF ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE INSTITUTION

9. Manage the financial resources effectively and efficiently
10. Manage the material resources effectively and efficiently



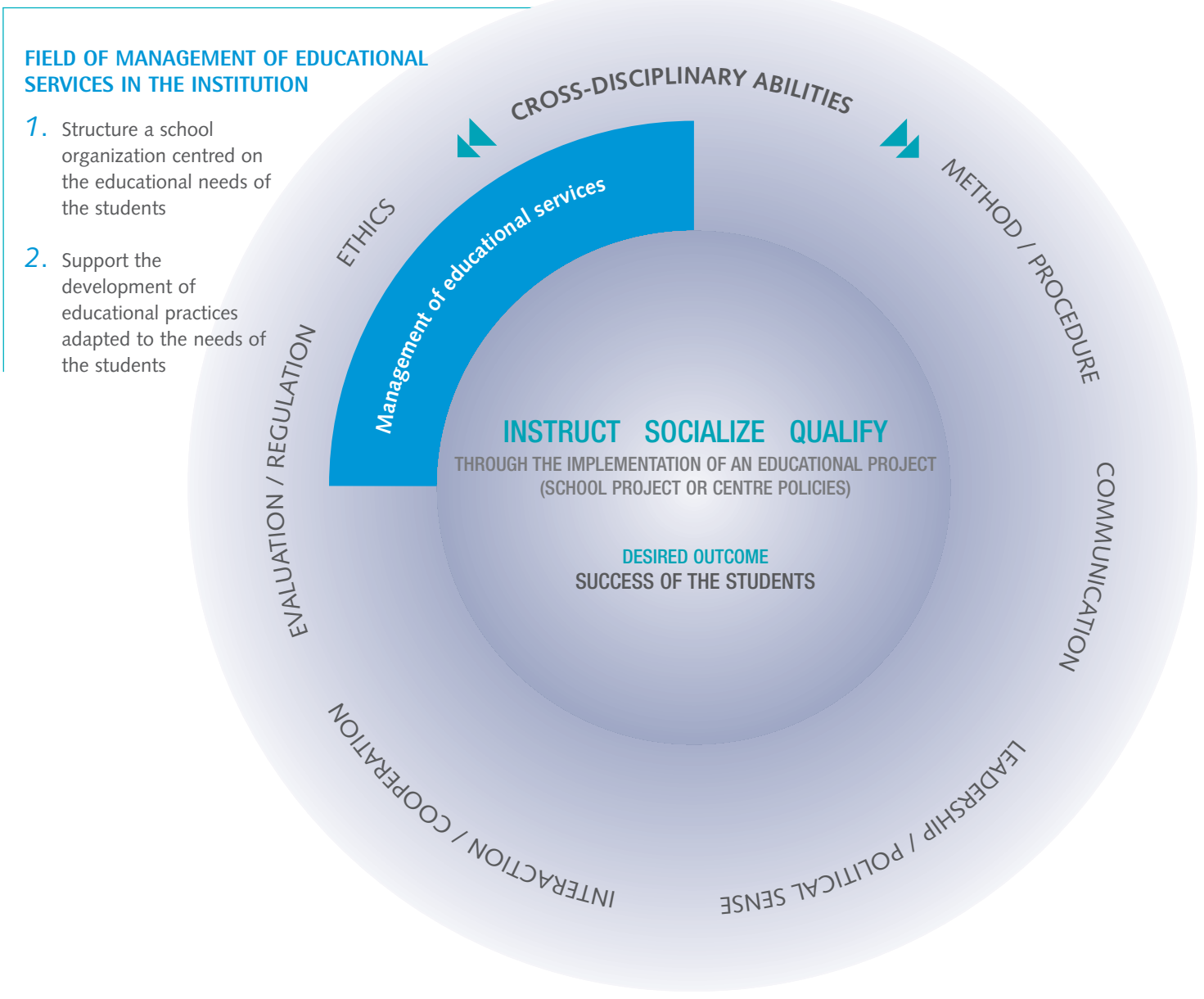
FIELD OF MANAGEMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE INSTITUTION

3. Assist the governing board in the exercise of the role conferred on it by the law
4. Direct the development of an educational project for the institution and the implementation of a success plan centred on the students' success
5. Support the development of cooperation and partnerships centred on the students' success

FIELD OF MANAGEMENT OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE INSTITUTION

6. Ensure competency in their practice and in that of every member of the staff
7. Ensure the competency of action of every work team in the institution
8. Ensure the development of their competencies and of those of all members of their staff

THE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF CORE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED TO MANAGE AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION OF THE INSTITUTION

COMPETENCY	CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ABILITIES	KEY ACTIONS
<p>1</p> <p>STRUCTURE A SCHOOL ORGANIZATION CENTRED ON THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE STUDENTS</p>	METHOD / PROCEDURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ by structuring the school organization of the institution on the basis of data from the situation analysis ■ by managing the implementation of an organizational structure that respects the educational project as well as the requirements for the implementation of the standard curriculum ■ in creating structures that bring together the conditions necessary for the work carried out collaboratively
	COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ by explaining clearly the agreement between the parameters of the school organization, the needs of the students, the policies of the institution, and the objectives and means of the success plan
	LEADERSHIP / POLITICAL SENSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ by mobilizing the staff of the institution around the conditions for success specific to the students of the institution ■ by identifying a clear vision of the strategy to be adopted in order to attain the objectives pursued
	INTERACTION / COOPERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ in optimally combining the resources available for the implementation of the success plan
	EVALUATION / REGULATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ in regularly reviewing and adapting the variables in the school organization according to the varied and different needs of the students of the institution
	ETHICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ by sharing and committing to the pursuit of the desired outcomes in the strategic plan of the school board or of the private teaching institution
<p>EXPECTED OUTCOME:</p>	<p>A SCHOOL ORGANIZATION THAT MEETS THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF ITS STUDENTS</p>	

ORIENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES ADAPTED TO THE NEEDS OF THE STUDENTS

COMPETENCY

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ABILITIES

KEY ACTIONS

2

SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES ADAPTED TO THE NEEDS OF THE STUDENTS

METHOD / PROCEDURE

- by ensuring that the educational practices in place meet all needs of the students
- by ensuring that the educational practices in place take into account both the objectives of the success plan, the policies of the school board or of the private teaching institution and the Québec-wide frameworks
- by optimizing the use of resources according to the priorities set by the success plan
- by ensuring the supervision, progress and coordination of student teaching according to services provided, the training activities of the cooperating teachers and the links to be maintained with the university
- by providing support and guidance to the members of the staff when they are being inducted into the profession
- by supervising the coordination of students' workplace practicums to acquire and integrate competencies according to the requirements of their learning paths
- by basing their actions on the results of research

COMMUNICATION

- by disseminating and promoting with the authorities of the school board or of the private institution the needs and the priorities chosen within the institution
- by disseminating and promoting with the staff of the institution the choices and priorities chosen by the school board or by the private institution
- by disseminating and promoting with the students, parents and various partners the choice of educational services made by the staff of the institution

LEADERSHIP / POLITICAL SENSE

- by steering the staff of the institution towards the implementation of a logic that guarantees the continuity and complementarity of educational interventions
- by encouraging initiatives and educational innovations aimed at meeting the needs of the students
- by being attentive to signs of changes in the climate in the institution and taking them into account in their interventions

INTERACTION / COOPERATION

- by supervising the educational practices of the members of the school team or centre team
- by supporting the work teams¹⁵ in the search for and application of the educational strategies that are best suited to the needs of the students they are intended for
- by adapting their interventions to the specific needs and distinct characteristics of the different actors involved in academic success
- by intervening, if necessary, in the regulation process of a team experiencing problems in functioning
- by feeding and sustaining the networks of collaboration inside and outside the school board
- by facilitating the integration of student teachers in initial training
- by encouraging the presence of the university in their institutions, not only by accommodating student teachers, but also by encouraging action research or cooperative research with the teaching staff, the complementary educational services and support staff and student teachers

EVALUATION / REGULATION

- by ensuring the follow-up and regular adaptation of the development plan for individual and collective competencies according to the varied and different needs of the students of the institution

ETHICS

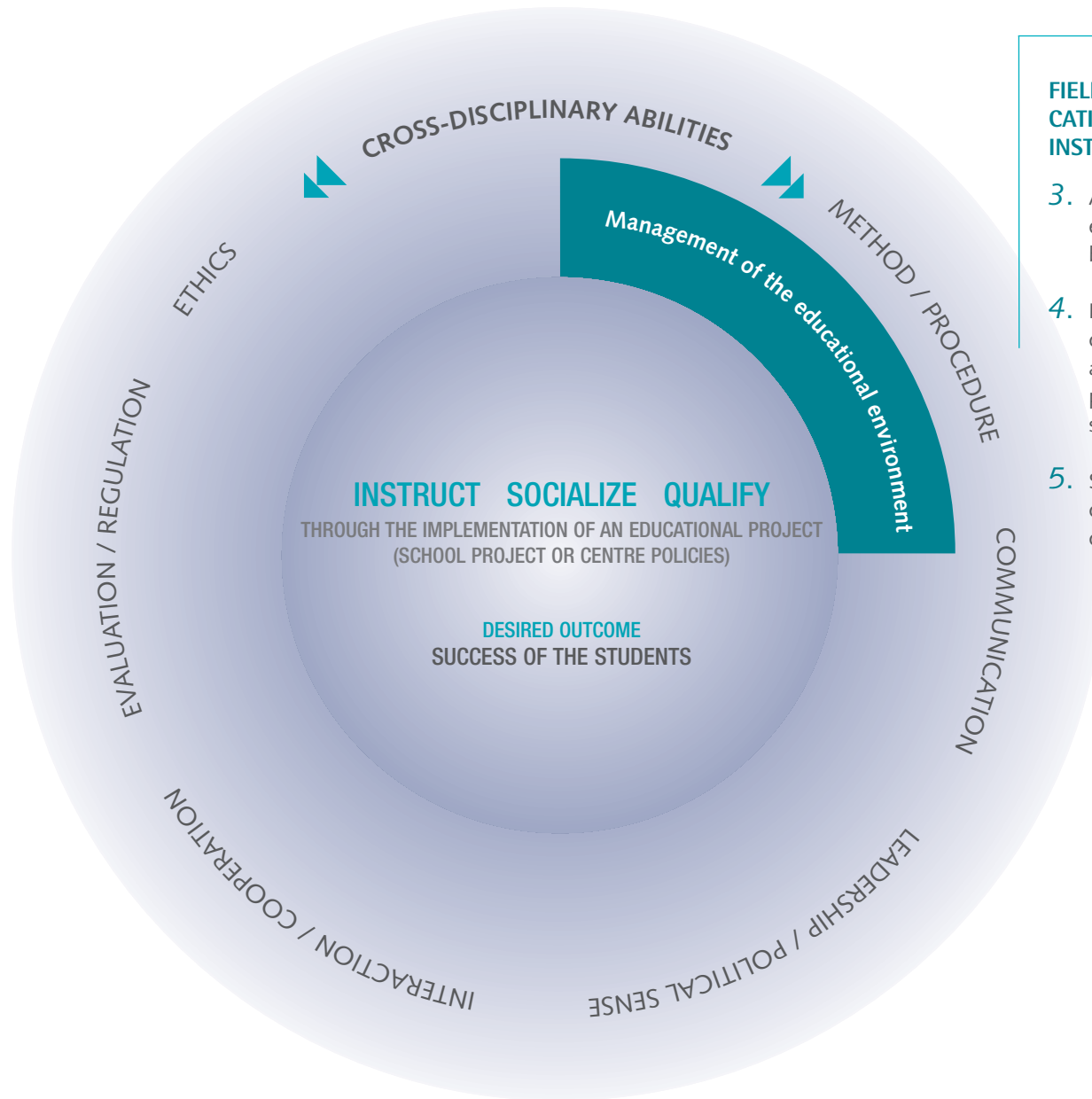
- by respecting the rules of equity in the distribution and sharing of means and resources while taking into account the needs of the students of the institution

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES APPROPRIATE TO THE NEEDS OF THE STUDENTS AND IN KEEPING WITH THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

¹⁵ The term "work team" is favoured because it includes any form of grouping. It can be a cycle team, a multidisciplinary team, a departmental team or others.

THE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF CORE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED TO MANAGE AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION



FIELD OF MANAGEMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE INSTITUTION

3. Assist the governing board in the exercise of the role conferred on it by the law
4. Direct the development of an educational project for the institution and the implementation of a success plan centred on the students' success
5. Support the development of cooperation and partnerships centred on the students' success

MODEL PROFESSIONAL SITUATION
SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

COMPETENCY

3

ASSIST THE GOVERNING BOARD¹⁶ IN THE EXERCISE OF THE ROLE CONFERRED ON IT BY THE LAW

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ABILITIES

KEY ACTIONS

METHOD / PROCEDURE

- by providing the information and the documents necessary for informed decision making
- by ensuring that the members of the governing board receive common initial training aimed at enabling them to understand their role and their responsibilities

COMMUNICATION

- by adapting their discourse to the individuals they are speaking to and the context in which they are speaking
- by promoting the development of a common language
- by explaining clearly and concretely their vision of the educational project
- by explaining clearly the beliefs, intentions and values underlying the projects and the actions

LEADERSHIP / POLITICAL SENSE

- by supervising the governing board's decision-making process
- by making proposals that are likely to rally the members of the governing board
- by decoding the informal networks that can influence the governing board and taking these into account in their interventions

INTERACTION / COOPERATION

- by supporting the governing board in the annual operations related to the evaluation of the realization of the success plan
- by promoting the proposals and decisions developed in collaboration and ensuing from consultation
- by developing a climate of trust between the school team or centre team and the governing board
- by adopting an attentive, open attitude

EVALUATION / REGULATION

- by ensuring that decisions made by the governing board are applied from a perspective of accountability

ETHICS

- by acting and interacting with integrity and transparency

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

THE DECISIONS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD ARE INTEGRAL TO THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT OR THE POLICIES OF THE INSTITUTION AND ARE ACTUALIZED IN THE SUCCESS PLAN

16. For the schools or centres having a regional or provincial role, the Education Act stipulates a different mode of administration and operation and for which a management committee takes the place of the governing board (*Education Act*, section 468).

MANAGING THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT AND THE SUCCESS PLAN

CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 4

APPENDIX

COMPETENCY

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ABILITIES

KEY ACTIONS

4

DIRECT THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT FOR THE INSTITUTION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SUCCESS PLAN CENTRED ON THE STUDENTS' SUCCESS

METHOD / PROCEDURE

- by coordinating:
 - the situation analysis
 - the development of the educational project and the success plan
 - the actualization of the educational project and the success plan
- by linking on a daily basis the educational activities and the success plan
- by directing the educational and complementary activities of the institution so that they converge towards the attainment of the objectives of the success plan
- by maintaining a flexible school organization that makes possible the adaptation of the success plan

COMMUNICATION

- by explaining clearly and concretely the common vision of the educational project and the success plan
- by regularly reiterating the orientations chosen and the desired outcomes in the success plan

LEADERSHIP / POLITICAL SENSE

- by defining and clarifying their personal visions of the educational project of the institution
- by sharing their leadership within the institution with a view to fulfilling the success plan

INTERACTION / COOPERATION

- by developing a shared representation of the educational project and the success plan of the institution
- by favouring consultation between the actors involved in the implementation of the success plan (the staff members of the institution, the members of the governing board, the parents, the students and the partners)
- by ensuring that the objectives pursued in the success plan of the institution respect the policies and the desired outcomes of the strategic plan of the school board or of the private teaching institution

EVALUATION / REGULATION

- by directing the implementation of the appropriate evaluation mechanisms
- by keeping up to date the data that influence the academic success of students in the institution

ETHICS

- by acting responsibly in a context of responsibility and accountability

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

THE ANNUAL EVALUATION OF THE SUCCESS PLAN SHOWS PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ATTAINMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES FOR SUCCESS THAT HAVE BEEN SET

MANAGEMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PARTNERS OF THE INSTITUTION

COMPETENCY

5

SUPPORT
THE DEVELOPMENT
OF COOPERATION
AND PARTNERSHIPS
CENTRED ON
THE STUDENTS'
SUCCESS

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY
ABILITIES

KEY ACTIONS

METHOD /
PROCEDURE

- by using the data from the analysis of the social, economical and political context in the success plan of the institution
- by encouraging the involvement of families, social partners and other educational partners in the success of the students of the institution
- by encouraging the involvement of the institution in its community
- by doing a reading of the expectations and interests characteristic of the various groups of collaborators, partners or others
- by distinguishing between educational issues, administrative issues and policy issues
- by participating in research initiatives that can nourish and facilitate the progress of the success of the students

COMMUNICATION

- by questioning in order to better understand different points of view
- by maintaining open, constructive dialogue

LEADERSHIP /
POLITICAL SENSE

- by identifying the main political issues
- by fostering the development and maintenance of harmonious relationships with partners

INTERACTION /
COOPERATION

- by establishing relationships of trust with the members of the community
- by establishing a network of communication with all partners
- by recognizing and respecting the diversity of perspectives in a group
- by promoting the exchange of ideas and discussions around the main issues faced by the institution
- by seeking agreements that promote the success of the students of the institution
- by managing conflicts related to ways of functioning with partners

EVALUATION /
REGULATION

- by regularly evaluating the effectiveness of partnerships in the implementation of the success plan

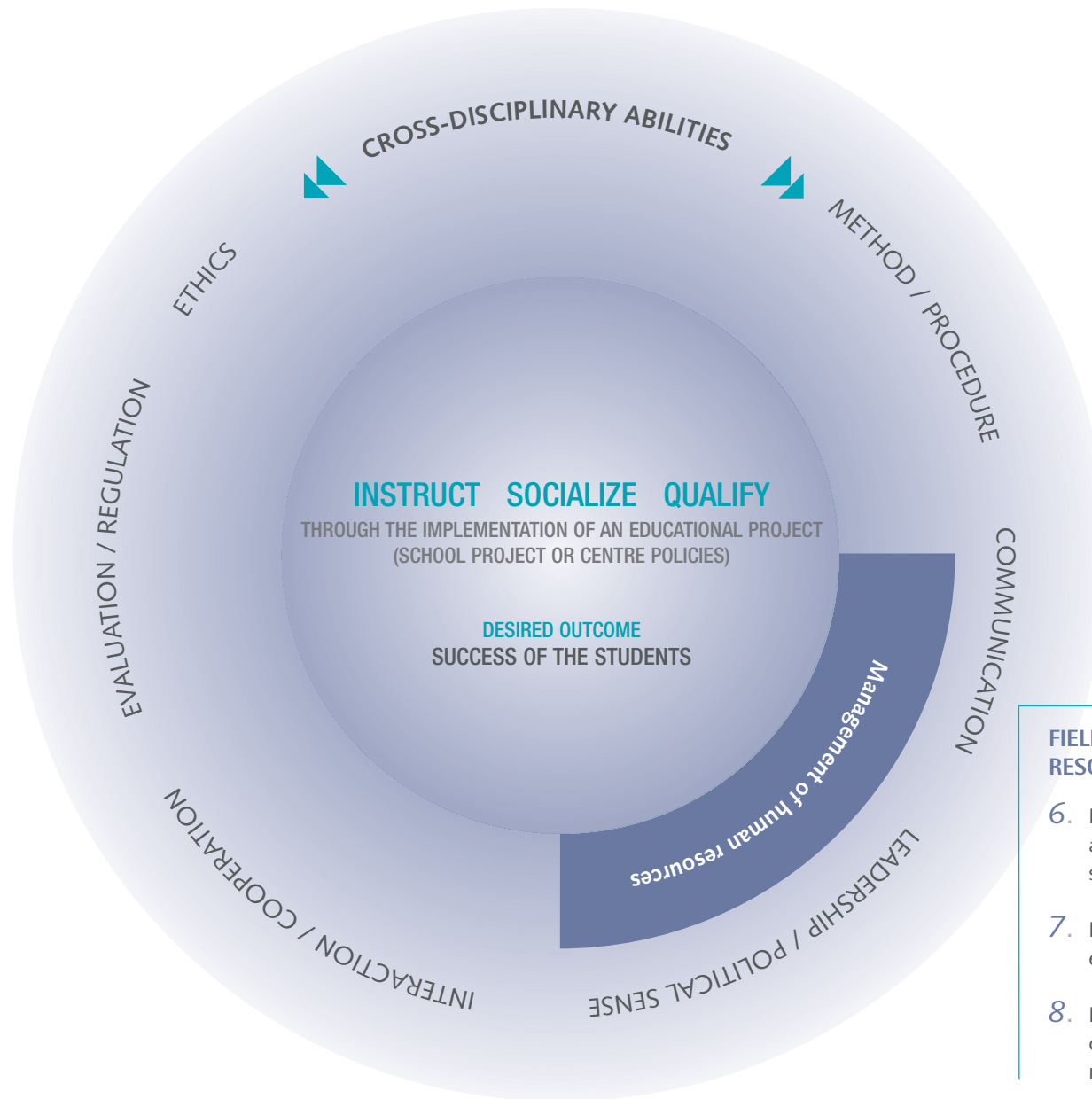
ETHICS

- by acting respectfully, without discrimination or prejudice against collaborators

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

CONTRIBUTIONS OF PARTNERS THAT ARE RELEVANT AND CONSISTENT WITH THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT
OF THE INSTITUTION

THE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF CORE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED TO MANAGE AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION



FIELD OF MANAGEMENT OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE INSTITUTION

6. Ensure competency in their practice and in that of every member of the staff
7. Ensure the competency of action of every work team in the institution
8. Ensure the development of their competencies and of those of all members of their staff

MANAGEMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STAFF MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTION

COMPETENCY

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ABILITIES

KEY ACTIONS

6

ENSURE COMPETENCY IN THEIR PRACTICE AND IN THAT OF EVERY MEMBER OF THE STAFF

METHOD / PROCEDURE

- by developing and maintaining a reflective practice of administration
- by providing all staff members with the conditions, means and information necessary for the fulfillment of their tasks or mandates
- by taking into account the different provisions related to the working conditions of the teaching staff, and of the complementary educational services and support staff

COMMUNICATION

- by expressing clear expectations
- by emphasizing individual contributions

LEADERSHIP / POLITICAL SENSE

- by seeking and maintaining a balance between their personal lives and their professional lives
- by working to optimize the potential of every staff member
- by working to produce positive outcomes from difficult situations

INTERACTION / COOPERATION

- by defining their own contributions to the achievement of the success plan
- by helping the actors define their personal contributions to the advancement of the success plan of the institution
- by helping the actors evaluate their contributions and regulate their actions towards the attainment of the objectives of the success plan

EVALUATION / REGULATION

- by evaluating the level of development of their competencies and identifying the points to be improved
- by establishing the process of supervision aimed at improving the professional practices of the staff members

ETHICS

- by committing to a process of continuing education and training that makes it possible for them to maintain the competency necessary for the performance of their functions
- by using sensibly the legal and regulatory framework governing their profession
- by intervening with every person with respect, justice and equity

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

RELEVANT INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS, CONSISTENT WITH THE POLICIES OF THE INSTITUTION

MANAGEMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SCHOOL TEAM

CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 4

APPENDIX

COMPETENCY

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ABILITIES

KEY ACTIONS

7

ENSURE THE COMPETENCY OF ACTION OF EVERY WORK TEAM¹⁷

METHOD / PROCEDURE

- by helping to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the team
- by providing the team with the conditions, means and information necessary to fulfill the task or mandate

COMMUNICATION

- by emphasizing the progress made by the team

LEADERSHIP / POLITICAL SENSE

- by ensuring the relevance and complementarity of resources in the constitution of the teams

INTERACTION / COOPERATION

- by helping the team members set common objectives and establish means of action that converge towards the attainment of the objectives of the educational project of the institution
- by fostering cooperation among individual competencies
- by helping the members of the team resolve complex and varied situations

EVALUATION / REGULATION

- by helping the team members evaluate their contributions and regulate their actions
- by establishing a process of supervision aimed at the collective improvement of professional practices

ETHICS

- by providing teams with appropriate attention and support

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

TEAM CONTRIBUTIONS LEADING TO:

- THE CONVERGENCE OF TEAM ACTIVITIES TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SUCCESS PLAN OF THE INSTITUTION
- BETTER FOLLOW-UP OF THE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS WITHIN A CYCLE, FROM ONE CYCLE TO THE NEXT, AND THROUGHOUT THEIR LEARNING PATHS
- ENRICHMENT OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES THROUGH EXCHANGE

17. The term "work team" designates any form of grouping. It can be a cycle team, a multidisciplinary team or others.

MANAGEMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCIES OF THE STAFF OF THE INSTITUTION

COMPETENCY

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ABILITIES

KEY ACTIONS

8

ENSURE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COMPETENCIES AND OF THOSE OF ALL MEMBERS OF THEIR STAFF

METHOD / PROCEDURE

- by committing to an individual and collective process of continuing education and training
- by supporting individual and collective projects to develop competencies
- by putting in place plans for continuing education and training that meet the training needs of the staff with respect to the fulfillment of the success plan

COMMUNICATION

- by explaining clearly the impact of the development of competencies of every category of staff on the success of the students

LEADERSHIP / POLITICAL SENSE

- by becoming aware of their conceptual representations and by adopting an open attitude that enables them to do so
- by influencing the members of the school team or centre team in the choice of effective professional practices

INTERACTION / COOPERATION

- by participating in discussion groups with peers
- by fostering mutual aid
- by supporting the analysis and sharing of professional practices
- by encouraging support by peers, in particular for those beginning in the profession

EVALUATION / REGULATION

- by evaluating and recognizing progress both in the development of individual competencies and in the development of collective competencies

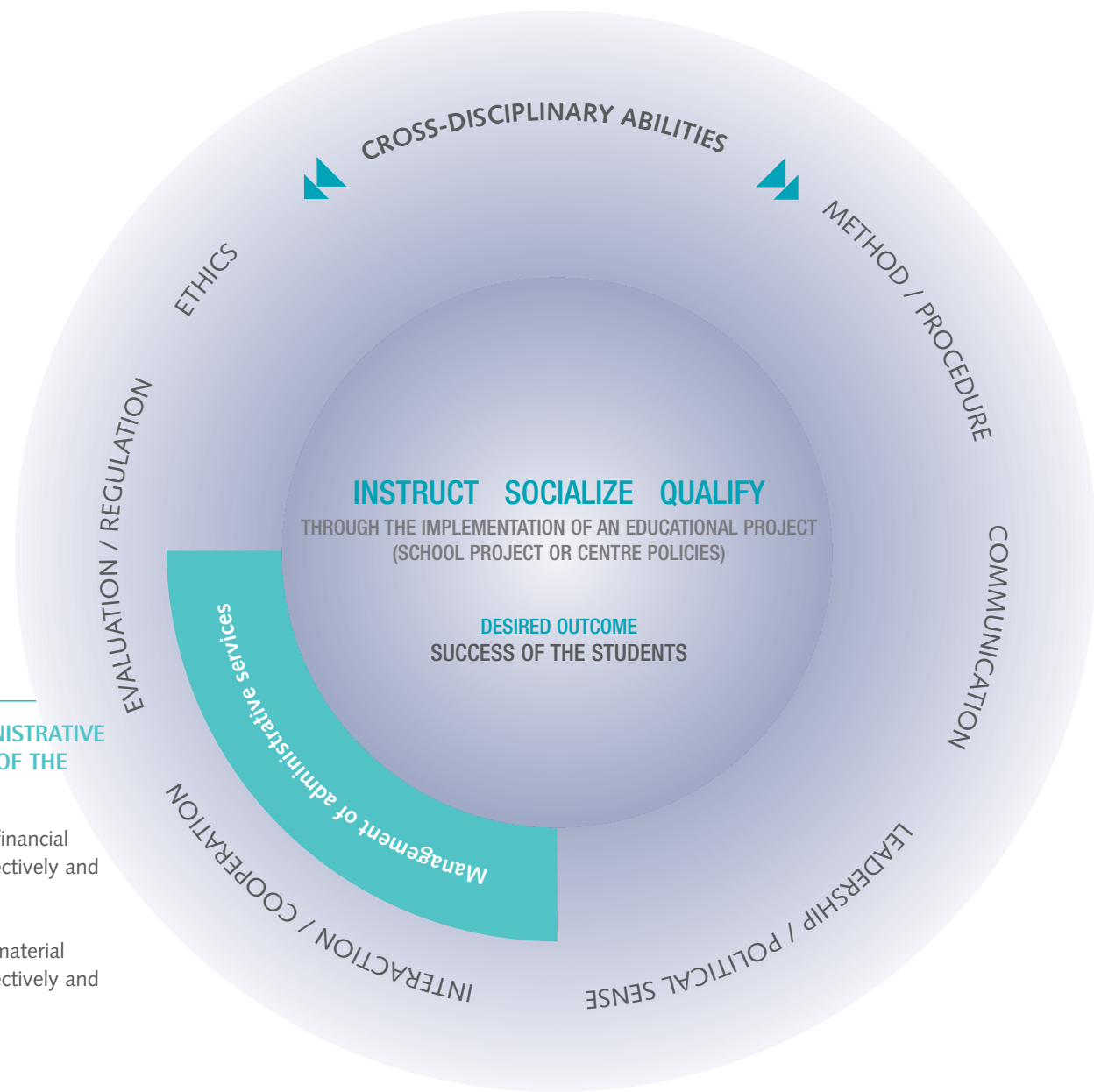
ETHICS

- by ensuring that support and guidance is differentiated according to the needs of individuals and teams

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF A CULTURE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING WITHIN THE INSTITUTION

THE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF CORE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED TO MANAGE AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION



FIELD OF ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE INSTITUTION

- 9. Manage the financial resources effectively and efficiently
- 10. Manage the material resources effectively and efficiently

MANAGEMENT OF THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF THE INSTITUTION

COMPETENCY

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ABILITIES

KEY ACTIONS

9

MANAGE THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY

METHOD / PROCEDURE

- by presenting the budget in accordance with the budgetary rules, and the standards of the school board or of the private teaching institution, and in observance of the policies of the institution and the success plan
- by ensuring the administration of allocations and revenues in observance of the policies of the institution
- by seizing opportunities for development of the institution

COMMUNICATION

- by using a clear and effective formulation in communicating the needs in the area of financial resources of the institution as well as its financial statement
- by disseminating and promoting with the staff of the institution the choices made by the school board or by the private teaching institution

LEADERSHIP / POLITICAL SENSE

- by adopting strategies of anticipation based on situation analysis to seek funding for educational activities

INTERACTION / COOPERATION

- by submitting the budget to the governing board for adoption

EVALUATION / REGULATION

- by effectively distributing the funds allocated according to the priorities set for the realization of all the projects of the institution

ETHICS

- by ensuring that accountability is characterized by clarity, precision and transparency

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

- A BALANCED BUDGET:**
- CONSISTENT WITH THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT OF THE INSTITUTION
 - FOSTERING THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTION

MANAGEMENT OF THE MATERIAL RESOURCES OF THE INSTITUTION

CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 4

APPENDIX

COMPETENCY

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ABILITIES

KEY ACTIONS

10

MANAGE THE MATERIAL RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY

METHOD / PROCEDURE

- by doing the inventory of material resources required for the fulfillment of the success plan
- by preparing a plan for the purchase and maintenance of the movable and real estate resources of the institution or, as the case may be, collaborating on its preparation
- by ensuring that the physical environment of the institution is healthy and safe

COMMUNICATION

- by justifying the funds allocated to the acquisition or maintenance of the material resources of the institution

LEADERSHIP / POLITICAL SENSE

- by creating and maintaining a context in which the material conditions are conducive to the attainment of the objectives of the educational project

INTERACTION / COOPERATION

- by promoting the needs of the institution in the area of material resources in order to realize the educational project
- by highlighting the impact of the quality of the environment on the quality of the processes of teaching and learning as well as on the image of the institution

EVALUATION / REGULATION

- by estimating the feasibility of the educational project with respect to the material resources available to the institution

ETHICS

- by ensuring that the management of the material resources of the institution observes the policies and aims of the school board or of the private teaching institution

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

SUFFICIENT RESOURCES FOR:

- CARRYING OUT THE ACTIONS IN THE SUCCESS PLAN
- A QUALITY ENVIRONMENT
- A PLAN FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE MATERIAL RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

THE PROCESS OF PROFESSIONALIZATION

The process of professionalization is carried out primarily through measures put in place to promote competency development in the individuals who embark on this path. The design and implementation of these measures should provide for and actualize:

- preparation for "acting with competency" and not only acquiring competencies
- training to mobilize the appropriate combinations of resources to deal with model professional situations
- cooperation among the actors involved in the process of professionalization
- varied and differentiated opportunities for professionalization
- consistency of tools with the desired development

In carrying out a process of professionalization, a person will acquire learning in a variety of situations (training and professional practice) that will be used to develop competencies.

If the goal of professionalization is to be attained through an approach by competencies, scientific and theoretical knowledge constitute an essential resource for applying practical knowledge appropriately and competently. It is not the only resource necessary, but it is an indispensable one. Critical reflection also has an important place in the training of professionals and constitutes a resource necessary for acting with competency.

While competencies need to be defined in terms of action (practical knowledge), their definition is always in terms of the organization of work, which both requires them and makes them possible (Le Boterf, 2002, 2006; MEQ, 2001a, 2001b, 2004; MELS, 2007; Lasnier, 2000; Perrenoud, 2004; Rey et al., 2006; Tardif, 2006). That is why a reference framework is never absolutely finalized. It reflects a vision of the profession at a given moment, and to remain relevant, it must be revised according to the evolution of the profession over time.



CHAPTER 4

**THE TRAINING OF PRINCIPALS AND VICE-PRINCIPALS
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE DEVELOPMENT
OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES**

This chapter deals with the training of principals and vice-principals from the perspective of the development of competencies. First of all, it describes the current context of compulsory training. Then it discusses the contributions of training to the development of professional competencies of principals and vice-principals and the integrated administration of their institution based on a systemic vision.

THE CURRENT CONTEXT OF COMPULSORY TRAINING

The compulsory training established in 2001 for the exercise of the job of principal or vice-principal created a particular context. It is therefore pertinent to outline here the conditions in which such training is currently acquired. This chapter also identifies the training issues arising from the types of training currently available and from the context in which principals and vice-principals actually work.

The field of study

School administration or education management lies at the crossroads of three major fields, namely general administration or management, education, and the humanities and social sciences. It benefits directly from these three fields of knowledge. The main topics in the field of administration that we are concerned with here are human resources management, material and financial resources management, project management, and governance. The contributions from the field of education involve pedagogy, didactics and the subject content taught in the classroom. The humanities and social sciences serve to broaden the field of school administration by developing its psychological, sociological and cultural implications.

These three major fields of knowledge cover a broad spectrum that exceeds the specific needs of education management. Barnabé and Toussaint (2002: 24) have explored, from a historical perspective, the existence of a knowledge base in education administration. They came "to the conclusion, prudently, that there was a sufficient accumulation of knowledge specific to education administration to assume that this field of study had a certain knowledge base, even though it is quite diverse." [translation] As for Brassard (2000: 25), he qualified the corpus of knowledge in these terms: "like layers of sediment accumulating one on top of the other, each period has added knowledge to the field of education administration, as it has the various fields of administration and general administration. The result is a rather disparate and heterogeneous collection." [translation] A corpus of knowledge and a codified set of recognized practices exist, but it would be advisable to identify them more clearly and compile them so that they can receive better scientific and social recognition.

A variety of training opportunities

Since 2001, the *Regulation regarding the conditions of employment of school administrators* has required that they earn 30 university credits in a master's program in administration. A minimum of 6 credits must be earned before the first posting and the rest in the five years following this posting.

This provision resulted in a substantial increase in registrations in universities offering programs in education management or school administration. It also induced the universities to review their training programs and adapt them to the new context in education, in particular to the numerous changes mentioned in Chapter 1 of this document.

Compulsory training programs are currently being offered to administrators and people who wish to become administrators. A glance at the programs offered in school administration and education management in Québec universities makes it clear that certain training themes are common to most of them: leadership, human resources management, management of educational activities, management of financial and material resources, the management of change, and the institution and its environment. However, there are important variations in the approaches to the design of the training programs. Some programs are based on the logic of the development of competencies; others are organized around the pursuit of general and specific objectives. Still others have adopted an approach based on problem solving or project management. Moreover, many of these programs offer seminars on the analysis of professional practice, a few include activities in support, synthesis and integration, and a small number have workplace practicums.

Diverse procedures

The training procedures presented below reflect the portrait that has emerged following many exchanges (both formal and informal) on the training situations offered in Québec universities (CPD-Universités, ACFAS). These procedures concern, for example, the times and locations of classes, the groupings of students, the status of students, the support measures that the school boards offer to new principals and vice-principals, and the links between them and the universities.

The classes are given either outside working hours, in the evening or on the weekend, or in full-day classes during working hours. When they are given time off during working hours, administrators are not usually replaced in their institutions. In addition, the classes are sometimes given on university campuses, sometimes in the facilities of the school boards, and sometimes in other rooms rented for the purpose. Some individuals are close to the training locations, while others have to travel sometimes significant distances to participate in the activities.

Several forms of student groups exist. Some students may be members of a cohort taking the same training together over several years, while others may join a different group for each course. Still others may move from one type of group to another during the course of their compulsory studies. These different configurations and their specific provisions influence the type of learning planned and carried out during the training.

In addition to the time when training activities are held and how the students are grouped, the definition of the status of "learner" plays a major role in the context of training. A survey of the training programs (accessible in the appendix of the information document of the Comité de perfectionnement des directions d'établissement) intended for administrators has shown that principals are considered to be the "main actors" in their training and that, accordingly, it is expected that they will play an active role in the learning process.

Conscious of the demanding requirements for new principals and vice-principals, many school boards provide them with welcoming measures and support structures to assist them. Information meetings with senior administrators and with the different departments are planned at the beginning of the school year in order to provide further information about the culture of the organization, its structure, its policies, its rules and operation procedures, the role expected of leaders and administrators, as well as mutual expectations. The new principals and vice-principals often have the support of a mentor or coach, with whom they meet periodically, according to the needs and availability of the individuals involved. In addition, the principals and vice-principals occasionally participate in

discussion groups formed to permit them to share their views with colleagues on their new reality and build their professional networks (MELS, 2006).

Initiatives have been taken in many communities between the universities, the school boards and the administrators to establish an annual schedule of training meetings. This planning makes it possible to avoid redundancy in the content of the training given by the different actors and ensures better balance between the information given, the training aimed at the development of competencies, and the learning resulting from the practice of administration. Experiences have shown that links between training situations and practice situations mutually reinforce the benefits of each situation. It has also confirmed postulates saying that professional competencies are acquired gradually and that their development is spread out over the phases of compulsory training, professional integration, and continuing education and training. Hence, this development of competencies cannot materialize without the combined efforts of the principals and vice-principals themselves, school boards or private institutions, the professional associations and the universities. As a result, the personal, professional, and organizational costs related to the professional integration of the new principals and vice-principals are reduced.

THE AIMS OF THE TRAINING OF PRINCIPALS AND VICE-PRINCIPALS

Two of the contexts presented in the first chapter—that of the training of administrators and that of their job performance—highlight, respectively, issues involving the professional development of individuals enrolled in training and issues involving the development of the system itself. These two perspectives on the future of training for administrators are closely linked.

The issues related to the development of individuals enrolled in training

Compulsory training has three aims. The first is to develop the broadest possible access to the internal and external resources that can be mobilized and combined in the service of the administrator's professional actions. The second is to prepare and train the aspiring administrator to employ professional practices that are progressive, relevant and effective. In fact, the objectives of professionalization cannot be attained through the mere accumulation of learning situations: They need to be interconnected, as well as related to the real demands of the situations that future administrators will have to manage in their professional practice. The third aim is to offer the administrators-in-training an opportunity to step back from their professional practice and learn how to reflect on their actions, both concurrently and after the fact.

After candidates have completed their compulsory training, continuing education and training makes it possible for them to develop expertise in professional administration practices by upgrading their resources and learning to reap the benefit of their experience. It makes active use of metacognition or the realization of how their own learning approaches function, and develops both awareness of their models for action and the ability to reassess those models.

The issues related to the development of the training system for administrators

The adoption of a common frame of reference makes it possible to not only develop a coherent training system, but also favour the production and organization of new, original knowledge to enrich both the study and the practice of school administration. Such a framework also facilitates the organization and structuring of existing knowledge and practices. According to Brassard (2004: 54-56), the training programs should meet the following requirements: "1) Have included all the essential knowledge useful for the effective exercise of management and all the accepted codified practices; 2) Have adopted 'the scientific approach'; [...] 3) Have

developed the capacity to evaluate the various solutions to a problem; [...] 4) Have developed the capacity to maintain a critical distance within themselves and in relationship to themselves; [...] 5) Have developed a sense of ethics; [...] 6) Have included the knowledge that makes them capable of influencing educational policies appropriately." [translation] The challenges of training are substantial and they call on actors who are open and who are willingly engaged in the process of revising and adjusting the current programs.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TRAINING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

In the context of a competency-based approach that emphasizes the mobilization and combination of resources, the role of training inevitably needs to be redefined and refocused. The development of competencies is no longer considered to be exclusively a matter of the compulsory training. It is the result of an ongoing process of professionalization made up of successive transitions between training situations and working situations that contribute to professionalization through distancing and enhanced awareness of one's own ways of doing things and acting.

From a perspective of professionalization, which is the prime orientation, training should prepare and teach administrators to manage appropriately and effectively any professional situation that is likely to arise in the performance of their job. Consequently, principals and vice-principals should be capable of meeting the challenges encountered in the actual practice of the administration of an institution.

In order to respect the second orientation, which concerns the integrated administration of the institution, the training should adopt an approach centred on the development of a global or systemic vision of the institution that makes it possible to recognize and construct the interactions and the interrelations between the different subsystems that make it up.

The training programs and structures for administrators of educational institutions should be redefined in accordance with the two orientations referred to above and based on the reference framework of core competencies presented in the preceding chapter. For the purpose of supporting the individuals involved in developing such programs, some suggestions are proposed here concerning the implementation of a curriculum structure conducive to the development of the professional competencies of administrative staff of educational institutions. These suggestions are based on the work of Argyris (2003), Argyris and Schön (2002), Le Boterf (2002, 2007) and Tardif (2003, 2006).

Foster the acquisition of resources essential to competent practical knowledge

Training contributes to the development of the professional competencies required by helping learners acquire and consolidate the resources (knowledge, abilities, attitudes, cognitive processes, etc.) essential to the effective exercise of the profession. These resources primarily include pedagogy, the management of the education system and its components, the administration of complex organizations, as well as the legal provisions and local and provincial frameworks that govern them. Although this knowledge is essential, its evolving nature means that not all of it is permanent. In this regard, administrators of educational institutions should learn from the beginning of their training to update their knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Prepare and train in order to apply professional practices that are progressive, relevant and effective

Training contributes to the development of the professional competencies required by enabling learners to mobilize and combine their resources to construct practical knowledge adapted to actual professional requirements. For this purpose, a few training activities are especially appropriate:

- Simulation permits learners to prepare to mobilize and combine the resources they have and which they can use to take into account a set of variables and dimensions that make up a professional situation. Simulation has the advantage of preparing learners for both the management of common professional situations and the management of exceptional professional situations.

- Practicums or training in work situations permit learners to mobilize, combine, transpose and transfer prior learning from training situations to related work situations. With the help of instructors, the analysis of practices experienced makes it possible to consolidate or modify the combinations being tested.
- Training activities that focus on solving the problems that arise in the actual performance of the job, case studies and the development of projects also require the mobilization and combination of multiple resources.

Develop abilities for reflectiveness and transfer

Training contributes to the development of professional competencies by prompting learners to explain their ideas, their ways of doing things and their processes. In addition to fostering deeper self-knowledge and the construction of professional identity, learners who can reflect on their own practices are better equipped to transfer, transform and develop their methods and actions. It is important for the instructors to organize and structure activities for distancing and analysis of professional practices so that the learners draw lessons from their experience and question the relevance of their professional practices.

Support learning loops founded on alternation, complementarity and cohesiveness

The emphasis on training centred on the development of competencies constitutes a step forward in the professionalization of administrators. However, it is important to avoid a situation in which training situations and work situations develop along parallel and independent lines. The objectives of professionalization cannot be attained through cumulative or juxtaposed learning situations alone. The development of practical knowledge relevant to actual professional situations

requires the implementation of an alternation between periods of theoretical training, in formal education settings, and periods of practical training, in the settings where the profession is exercised. A learning loop that supports the construction of integrated knowledge, by encouraging learners to go beyond conceptualization to experience and beyond experience to conceptualization, requires that the universities and the education system:

- maintain close collaborative relationships
- share a common frame of reference
- implement a training structure designed in a spirit of collegiality
- pursue the same goals
- act in accordance with a coherent and complementary approach

In order to foster the construction of responses relevant to the requirements of the profession, the professional situations to be handled must be the focus around which the entire training structure is developed.

Develop mechanisms for analyzing practices

The implementation of mechanisms for analyzing practices has the main goal of constructing the professional identity of practitioners in its different components as well as following the different stages in the evolution of their identities. That is why the mechanisms for analysis should vary over the course of the training according to, for example, the professional experience of the persons involved. Consequently, a training course that facilitates the development of a professional identity will put in place activities for the analysis of diverse and varied practices. In fact, some will be aimed at making candidates aware of the processes at work as well as the specific aspects of actions that they will have to take when they perform the job of principal or vice-principal; other activities will be aimed at the construction of the meaning of the practices implemented and the improvement of the professional techniques of new administrators when they begin their functions, and still others will be aimed at making it possible to raise the level of competencies acquired by experienced principals and vice-principals.

Put in place training structures intended for those responsible for the practical training of administrators

The alternation between theoretical training and practical training implies the presence of a person who supports and guides learners in work situations or on practicums. These mentors play a role as instructor insofar as they make possible the achievement of learning which, without their contributions, would be less accessible and more difficult.

Given that competency in this support role is not innate, training structures should be put in place in order to provide mentors with ways to acquire knowledge of the process itself. In addition, these structures will break the isolation in which the mentors find themselves; they will provide spaces and places for pooling and sharing experiences; and they will constitute opportunities for analysis and distancing of support and guidance practices.

To do this, efforts at consultation and sharing should be agreed upon and encouraged both in the theoretical training settings and in the practical training settings in order to clarify and construct together the competent practical knowledge of the mentor.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF TRAINING TO INTEGRATED ADMINISTRATION BASED ON A SYSTEMIC VISION

One of the major contributions of training, whatever the trade or the profession it is preparing someone for, is making it possible for learners to model their understanding of the role they will be playing within an organization. This understanding constitutes in a way the anchor point of their professional identity. The understanding that administrators have of their role orients such factors as the choice of processes that they put in place and the preference of certain strategies over others.

As such, the training of school principals and vice-principals can have real repercussions on their ability to perceive themselves as administrators of a dynamic system. Consequently, they will conceive of the structure of the educational institution no longer as an organizational chart of its various elements or as a set of operating procedures, but instead as the pattern of relationships among all its constituent elements.

In the context of training leading to integrated administration of institutions, learners will be trained to do the following:

- recognize the interdependence among the components of the organization they are directing
- define an educational project that induces a sense of belonging and involvement in all the actors who have a role in academic success
- ensure the convergence of the individual and collective contributions of actors in the institution towards the shared goals
- ensure the cohesiveness and relevance of all action or all measures put in place
- stimulate the practice of dialogue and discussion to remove misunderstandings and foster the development of a common language and consensus of thought
- question the paradigms and adapt the underlying structures of the organization
- put in place mechanisms for the implementation, follow-up and regulation of the success plan

GLOSSARY

Ability

An ability is the application of knowledge and skills: "to be able." Abilities depend on aptitudes, but they are more specifically the result of learning and training. Abilities are not directly observable. A competency can demand several different abilities.

Competency

A competency corresponds to complex practical knowledge that is actualized in the context of a professional situation through a sequence of actions with a view to obtaining results.

Compulsory training

The Regulation regarding the conditions of employment of school administrators, in effect since September 2001, stipulates that administrators must earn 30 university credits in a master's program relevant to the job of school administrator. In addition, the regulations stipulate that "a minimum of six credits must be earned before the first assignment to a job as school administrator and the remainder during the five years following this posting." [translation]

Cross-disciplinary abilities

Cross-disciplinary abilities permeate all the competencies required for the administration of an institution and are interlinked with all the professional situations the administrator will have to face. They are therefore the result of the combination of learning and aptitudes and constitute the focuses around which are structured and developed the competencies required for the appropriate management of an institution.

Integrated administration

Integrated administration is the outcome of a global, systemic vision of the organizational structure. This vision makes it possible to grasp the interactions and interrelations between the different subsystems and fields of management that make up the organization. This systemic vision makes it possible for the manager of an organization to go beyond administration that is fragmentary to achieve an approach to administration that is more integrated, more effective and more satisfying.

Key action

A key action is carried out in a specific context, combined with and linked to other actions for the purpose of attaining a specific outcome. In this reference framework, the list of key actions associated with competencies is not exhaustive, but aims rather to give an idea of the actions to be carried out and the orientation to be given to this sequence of actions in order to manage the professional situation with competency.

Professional practice

The combination of choices, decisions and actions brought into play by a person to deal with the requirements of a professional situation being managed.

Process of professionalization

In individual terms, the process of professionalization consists of persons becoming aware of their personal resources and those which they can call upon in their environment in order to mobilize and combine them appropriately in their professional practice. One of the components essential to this process is the appropriation of a field of knowledge and a repertoire of competencies socially recognized as necessary to the exercise of a profession. Moreover, since the development of professional competency is never completely achieved, the process goes on continuously, not only during compulsory training, but also throughout the professional career.

In collective terms, this process has a more social, external meaning. It refers to the social status accorded to the exercise of a function, to the values and collective interests that are protected and defended by it.

Professional situation

A professional situation is made up of a set of actual functions, tasks and activities that persons must carry out not only as part of their responsibilities, but also in relationship to other actors and other functions in their organizations and even outside of their organizations. Professional situations are authentic, they correspond to activities to be actually carried out at a given moment in the context of the management of educational services, the management of the educational environment, human resources management or even the management of the administrative services of the educational institution.

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APPENDIX 1

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF CORE COMPETENCIES

Members

Sylvie Turcotte, director of the Direction de la formation et de la titularisation du personnel scolaire (DFTPS), Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS)

Martine Gauthier, head of school administrators training, (DFTPS-MELS)

Lynda Boucher, Julie Simard (alternating), Direction générale des relations de travail, MELS

Marthe Van Neste, Direction générale de la formation des jeunes, MELS

Inno Sagbo, Comité de perfectionnement des directions d'établissement d'enseignement

Paul Peterson, Fédération québécoise des directrices et des directeurs d'établissement d'enseignement (FQDE)

Josée Lamontagne, Carl Barrette (alternating), Association québécoise du personnel de direction des écoles (AQPDE)

Gaétane Legault, Association montréalaise des directions d'établissement scolaire (AMDES)

Robert Forget, Association des administrateurs des écoles anglaises du Québec (AAEAQ)

Jacqueline Reid, Association des cadres scolaires du Québec (ACSQ)

Madeleine Piché, elementary school principal

Huguette Richard, Louise Savard (alternating), Association des directeurs généraux des commissions scolaires du Québec (ADIGECS)

Berthier Dolbec, Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec (FCSQ)

Lorraine Savoie Zajc, Université du Québec en Outaouais

Jean Archambault, Ginette Casavant (alternating), Université de Montréal

Mandate

The advisory committee (made up of fifteen representatives from the education network—from the youth sector and adult education and from the French-language and English-language communities, as well as representatives from the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport) had the mandate **to orient and validate the work of the development team for the document on training in management of an educational institution.**

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Members

Martine Gauthier, education specialist, project leader,

Direction de la formation et de la titularisation du personnel scolaire, MELS

Louise Simon, specialist in education management, training and support, associate professor at the Université de Sherbrooke

Mandate

The development team was given the task of designing the draft of the common frame of reference for the training, support and guidance of school principals and vice-principals. The mandated document was intended to:

- **establish the orientations** for the training of principals and vice-principals
- **identify the required competencies to be developed during** training
- **illustrate the application of these** in the context of the exercise of the function in order to orient the field practices of support and guidance
- **rally all the actors** involved in training and in the development of the competencies of school principals and vice-principals



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