

Joint Orientation for Governing Board Members Participant's Workbook



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Acknowledgments

The Ministère de l'Éducation and its partners involved in the design of joint orientation wish to thank the school boards Val-des-Cerfs, Bois-Francs and Fleuve-et-des-Lacs for having held several joint initial orientation sessions for governing board members in their respective territories. This testing of orientation tools and strategies enabled their designers to adapt the activities, adjust their sequence, and clarify some of the instructions to ensure that joint initial orientation will fully meet the needs of governing board members.

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Joint initial orientation

Message to participants

The facilitators of this session are pleased to greet you both on their behalf and on behalf of all the students from the schools in which you are involved as governing board members.

An orientation session for governing board members was developed in response to a concern shared by those who have experience in this area, regardless of the group to which they belong: students, parents, teaching, professional and support staff and school child-care services staff, community representatives and school principals.

The results of two surveys conducted among governing board members showed that a majority of them wished to receive joint initial orientation. The respondents also stated that they would like the people introducing them to their role to show the same spirit of collaboration that is required of them as governing board members.

In organizing this initiative, we took stock of our own ideas, considered the views of other organizations and worked to overcome our differences to attain the targeted goal: to provide you with a common vision of what a governing board fundamentally is. In so doing, we experienced first hand, the same kind of collegiality that must lie at the heart of your commitment.

We hope that you will derive great satisfaction from this process, as we have done, and that you will help your colleagues at your school take optimal advantage of it.

Have a great session!

Session Agenda

Introduction	15 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation • Objectives of the session 	
Activity 1 <i>The evolution of participatory bodies</i>	20 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation • Small-group activity • Conclusions 	
Activity 2 <i>The governing board: Component of the education system</i>	30 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation: Provincial framework • Presentation: Educational project and success plan • Presentation: Scope of the governing board's decisions • Small-group activity: Functions and powers of the governing board • Presentation: Extent of the governing board's powers 	
Activity 3 <i>The governing board: Composition and areas of jurisdiction</i>	30 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation: Composition of the governing board • Presentation: The governing board's areas of jurisdiction 	
Activity 4 <i>Quiz</i>	30 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation • Answer key 	
Activity 5 <i>Conclusions</i>	15 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation • Small-group activity • Plenary meeting 	
Evaluation of the orientation session	5 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion • Evaluation 	



Objectives of the session

The session targets the following objectives:

- To enable participants to understand the role of the governing board and to become familiar with its responsibilities
- To give meaning to the commitment of members within this structure and reinforce their motivation
- To motivate participants to pursue ongoing learning

Small-group activity

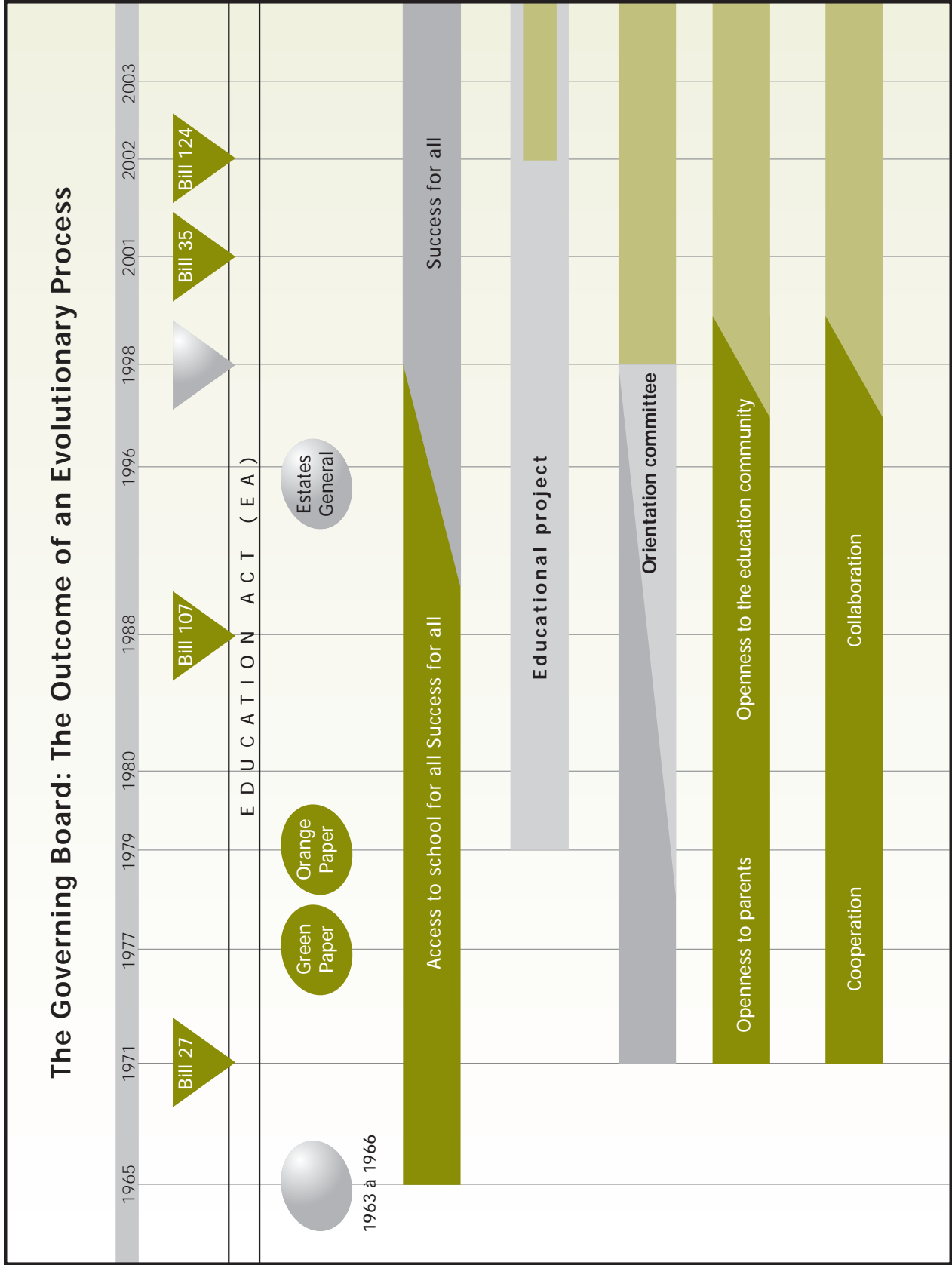
The diagram entitled *The Governing Board: The outcome of an evolutionary process* (page 5) shows the major stages that led to the establishment of governing boards as they exist today.

Break up into small groups. Work with your partners to fill in the blanks with the appropriate items from those listed below:

- Bill 180
- Parent Report
- Collegiality
- Governing board
- School committee
- Success plan
- Openness to the community

This activity should take you about five minutes.

After your group has completed the diagram, the entire group will share their answers.



Provincial framework

All schools in Québec must respect their mission by complying with the provincewide framework that includes:

- The *Education Act* (EA), adopted by the National Assembly of Québec
- The *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education*; this regulation specifies the educational services that must be provided to students and certain operating procedures common to all schools
- The programs of study established by the Ministère de l'Éducation

The school's mission

Education Act, section 36

A school is an educational institution whose object is to provide to the persons entitled thereto under section 1 the educational services provided for by this Act and prescribed by the basic school regulation established by the Government (...) and to contribute to the social and cultural development of the community. A school shall, in particular, facilitate the spiritual development of students so as to promote self-fulfilment.

In keeping with the principle of equality of opportunity, the mission of a school is to impart knowledge to students, foster their social development and give them qualifications, while enabling them to undertake and achieve success in a course of study.

A school shall pursue its mission within the framework of an educational project implemented by means of a success plan.

Educational project

Excerpt from the brochure on Bill 124: *The New Provisions of the Education Act*, MEQ, 2003

Important changes have been made to the educational project. It must now be based on an analysis of the prevailing situation at the school, principally the needs of the students, the challenges tied to student success and the characteristics and expectations of the community served by the school (s. 74, para. 1). For the purpose of this analysis, the governing board will seek the collaboration of persons having an interest in the school (s. 74, para. 2), under the coordination of the school principal (s. 96.13, para. 1). The educational project will also be based on the school board's strategic plan (s. 74, para. 1).

The educational project will set out the specific aims and objectives of the school in order to improve student success (s. 37, para. 1). The educational project must be evaluated periodically s. 36, para. 1). The objectives will therefore have to be determined in such a way as to allow for the evaluation of their implementation. The educational project may also include actions promoting these aims and their integration into the life of the school (s. 37, para. 1).

The governing board will therefore continue to fulfill the important function of adopting the educational project (s. 74, para. 1). Every governing board will have to review its educational project in light of the new provisions of the Education Act. The exercise will be based on greater familiarity with the school's environment and will undoubtedly be more demanding for all parties involved.

Success plan

Excerpt from the brochure on Bill 124: *The New Provisions of the Education Act*, MEQ, 2003

To ensure the implementation of the aims and objectives defined in the educational project, the principal (s. 96.13, para. 1.1) and his or her team (s. 77) will develop the school's success plan, which will then be submitted for approval to the governing board (s. 75). The plan will contain measures to be taken, in particular those relating to the supervision (encadrement) of students and methods for evaluating the implementation of the success plan (s. 37.1). This evaluation exercise will ensure the school's ongoing adaptation and improvement.

The school principal will ensure that the governing board is provided with the necessary information before approving the success plan, as he or she will from now on for all proposals submitted for approval (s. 96.13, para. 2.1).

Source: Després-Poirier, Micheline and Philippe Dupuis. *Le système d'éducation du Québec*, 3rd ed. Québec: Éditions Gaëtan Morin, 1999.

Other references may be consulted. Here are some examples:

Audet, L.P. and A. Gauthier. *Le système scolaire du Québec*, Montréal: Librairie Beauchemin Ltée, 1967.

Gagnon N. and J. Gould. "De l'école à l'université : quelle scolarisation ?" In Dumont F. (ed.), *La société québécoise après trente ans de changements*, 131-141. Montréal: Institut québécois de la recherche sur la culture, 1991.

Langlois, L. "L'institutionnalisation de la démocratie scolaire au Québec et la gestion de l'éducation." In St-Pierre M. and L. Brunet (eds.), *De la décentralisation au partenariat*, p. 45-64. Montréal: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2004.

Sénéchal, G. *La décentralisation en éducation : situation et conditions de développement*. Étude réalisée par le Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, Rapport annuel 1992-1993, Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 1993.

La portée des décisions du conseil

The decisions of the governing board are of varying scope. The *Education Act* uses distinct terms to provide distinct definitions for each function and each power of the governing board. It is important to fully grasp the meaning of these terms. The sole purpose of using a range of terms is to respect the responsibilities entrusted to the different groups with an interest in the school.

Obligations

The governing board acts...

The *Education Act* entrusts the governing board with specific responsibilities. The governing board must act in accordance with these requirements.

Examples _____

The power to adopt

The governing board adopts...

When the governing board is authorized to adopt a proposal that has been submitted by the principal, it may amend it in whole or in part.

Examples _____

The power to approve

The governing board approves...

The power to approve is more limited since it concerns proposals affecting the responsibilities assigned to school staff. Teachers and all school staff members may participate in the preparation of these proposals. The principal must ensure that proposals are prepared and then submit them to the governing board.

The governing board may approve or reject this type of proposal, but it may not amend it. It may reject a proposal it deems unsuitable and require that another version be submitted for approval before implementation.

In this case, the governing board has the power to approve or veto the proposal. When the governing board endorses the proposal, it assumes responsibility for it, just as it does when it uses its power to adopt. In both cases, it may be held accountable for its decisions.

Examples _____

Consultation

The governing board is consulted or gives its opinion...

The governing board must be consulted by the school board and the principal on certain aspects concerning the operation of the school.

The governing board may also take the initiative to give an opinion to the school board.

Examples _____

Information

The governing board is informed...

In other circumstances, the governing board is simply informed of the principal's decisions.

Examples _____

Agreement with the school board

The governing board agrees...

There are two cases in which the governing board must come to an agreement with the school board about procedures for the organization of services.

Examples _____

School Governing Boards: Functions and Powers

General Terms	Governing Board	Principal	Staff Members	School Board
Educational project* (aims and objectives for improving student success) (s. 37)	Analyzes the school's situation (s. 74) Adopts it, oversees its implementation and periodically evaluates it (s. 74) May determine actions to promote those aims and objectives and to integrate them into the life of the school (s. 37) Makes it public (s. 83)	Coordinates the analysis of the situation prevailing at the school, and the development, implementation and periodical evaluation of the school's educational project (s. 96.13)	Participate (s. 74)	Ensures that each school has adopted an educational project to be implemented by means of the success plan (s. 221.1) Facilitates the implementation by means of the success plan (s. 218)
Success plan	Approves the school's success plan, and any updated version of the plan (s. 75) Makes it public (s. 83)	Coordinates the development, review and any updating of the school's success plan (s. 96.13) Proposes and updates it (s. 75)	The proposal is developed with their participation, according to established procedures (s. 77)	
Accountability	Reports each year on the evaluation of the implementation of the success plan (s. 83) Ensures the distribution of a document explaining the educational project and reporting on the evaluation of the implementation of the success plan to the parents and school staff. The governing board shall see to it that the wording of the document is clear and accessible (s.83)			Informs the population in its territory of the educational and cultural services it provides and reports on the level of quality of such services (s. 220) Makes public the strategic and updated plans (s. 209.1) Gives the population in its territory an account of the implementation of its strategic plan (s. 220)
Rules of conduct and safety measures	Approves (s. 76)	Ensures that they are prepared (s. 96.13)	The proposal is developed with their participation, according to established procedures (s. 77)	
Annual activity report	Prepares it, adopts it and transmits a copy to the school board (s. 82)	Proposes them (s. 76)		
Services provided by the school	Informs the parents and the community served by the school of the services provided by the school and reports on the level of quality of such services (s. 83)			
Amendment or revocation of the deed of establishment	Is consulted (s. 79)			Consults and decides (ss. 40 and 217)
Selection criteria to appoint the school principal	Is consulted (s. 79)			Consults and appoints (ss. 79, 96.8 and 217)
Matters pertaining to the proper operation of the school or to the improved organization of services provided by the school board Advises the school board (s. 78)	Advises the school board (s. 78)			

* The purpose of a parent participation organization is to encourage the collaboration of parents in developing, implementing and periodically evaluating the school's educational project and to support parents' participation in fostering their child's success (s. 96.2)

Educational Services	Governing Board	Principal	Staff Members	School Board
Approach proposed for the implementation of the <i>Basic school regulation</i>	Approves (s. 84)	Ensures that proposals are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (s. 84)	Participate according to the established procedures (s. 89)	Ensures that the basic school regulation is implemented (s. 222)
Overall approach in terms of the enrichment and adaptation of the objectives and suggested content of the programs	Approves (s. 85)	Ensures that proposals are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (s. 85)	Participate according to the established procedures* (s. 89)	Ensures that the programs of studies established by the Minister are implemented (s. 222.1)
Time allocation for each subject	Approves (s.86)	Ensures that a proposal is prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (s. 86)	Participate according to the established procedures (s. 89)	
Local programs of study	Is informed	Approves (s. 96.15)	Propose * (s. 96.15)	
Criteria for the introduction of new instructional methods	Is informed	Approves (s. 96.15)	Propose * (s. 96.15)	
Selection of textbooks and instructional materials	Is consulted Is informed	Consults the governing board and approves the selection (s. 96.15)	Propose textbooks and instructional materials* (s. 96.15)	Ensures that only the textbooks, instructional materials or class of instructional materials approved by the Minister are used by schools for the teaching of any program of studies established by the Minister (s. 230)
Standards and procedures for evaluation of student achievement	Is informed	Approves (s. 96.15)	Propose * (s. 96.15)	Ensures that each school evaluates student achievement and administers the examinations imposed by the (s. 231) May impose internal examinations at the end of each cycle at the elementary level and at the end of Secondary Cycle One (s. 231)
Rules governing the placement of students and their promotion from one cycle to the next at the elementary level, subject to the rules prescribed by the basic school regulation	Is informed	Approves (s. 96.15)	Propose ** (s. 96.15)	Establishes rules governing promotion from elementary school to secondary school and from the first cycle to the second cycle of the secondary level, subject to the rules prescribed by the basic school regulation (s.233)
Programming of educational activities which entail changes in the students' regular time of arrival and departure or which require the students to leave school premises	Approves (s. 87)	Ensures that proposals are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (s. 87)	Participate according to the established procedures (s. 89)	
Implementation of the complementary educational services and special educational services programs	Approves (s. 87)	Ensures that proposals are prepared (s. 96.13) Proposes (section 88)	Participate according to the established procedures (s. 89)	Establishes programs (s. 224)
Student enrollment criteria	Is informed (s. 239)			Sends to governing board at least 15 days before the beginning of the enrollment period (s. 239)

* Teachers

** Staff members involved

Material and financial resources	Governing board (CE)	School Principal	Staff	School board (CS)
Use of the premises or immovables	Approves (s. 93)	Proposes (s. 93)		Authorizes if term of the agreement exceeds one year (s. 93)
Gifts and contributions	May solicit and receive a gift or contribution and supervises the management of the fund (s. 94)			Creates a designated fund, keeps separate books and accounts (s. 94)
School's annual budget	Adopts (s. 95)	Prepares Submits the budget to the governing board Administers the budget Renders an account to the governing board (s. 96.24)		Allocates resources among the schools (s. 275) Approves the school's budget (s. 276)
School requirements as regards goods and services and the premises or immovables	Is consulted (s. 96.22)	Consults the governing board and informs the school board of the school's requirements (s. 96.22)		

Others	School Principal	Staff	School board (CS)
Extracurricular services	May organize (s. 90) May conclude a contract on behalf of the school board, after having sent a draft contract to the school board (s. 91)		May indicate its disagreement (s. 91)
Lunchtime supervision			Ensures lunchtime supervision after having agreed upon the manner with the governing board and on such financial conditions as it may determine (s. 292)
School child-care services	May request (s. 256) Comes to an agreement with the school board on the manner in which services are organized (s. 256)		Must provide child-care services (s. 256)

Source: "School Governing Boards: Functions and Powers." (poster, 2003) Code 69-2137

Extent of the governing board's powers

How can the real status of the governing board be described?

Here are some benchmarks:

- The *Education Act* divides the school's powers and responsibilities between the governing board and the principal.
- The governing board is the focal point for decisions that affect the life of the school. The principal assumes the pedagogical and administrative management of the school.
- The powers of the governing board are defined in the *Education Act*, whereas those of the principal are formulated in general terms.
- The division of responsibilities between the governing board and the principal requires a high level of cooperation from both in order to properly carry out the school's mission and educational project.
- The school is also subject to the legislation, regulations, agreements and provisions that govern it

Phase 1 Composition of the governing board

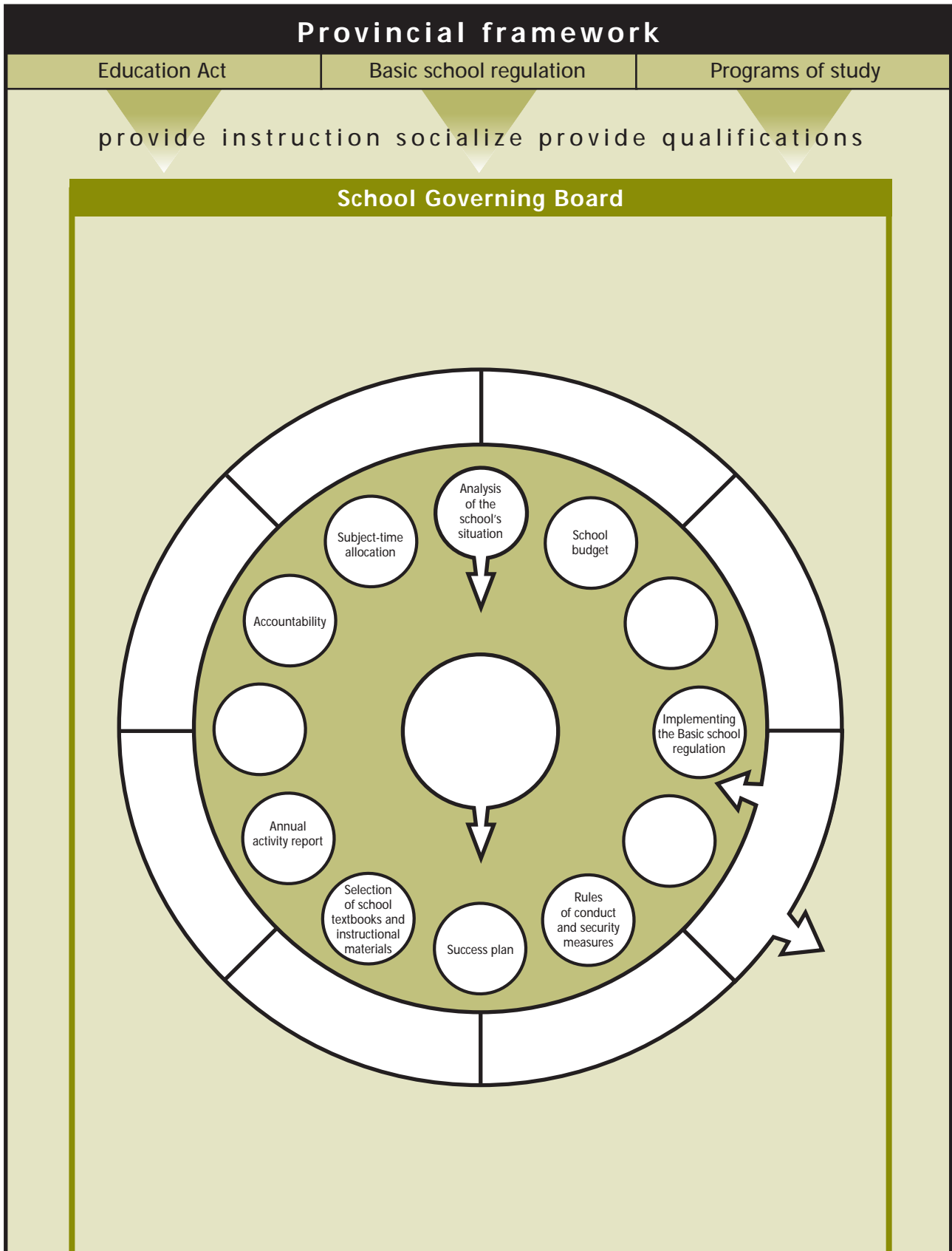
Small-group activity

The diagram below shows a table surrounded by eight empty chairs.

Instructions

Complete the diagram on by filling in the name of each of the eight categories of governing board members (parents, teachers, etc.).

When the diagram is completed, you will discuss the answers provided by each of the small groups together in the larger group.



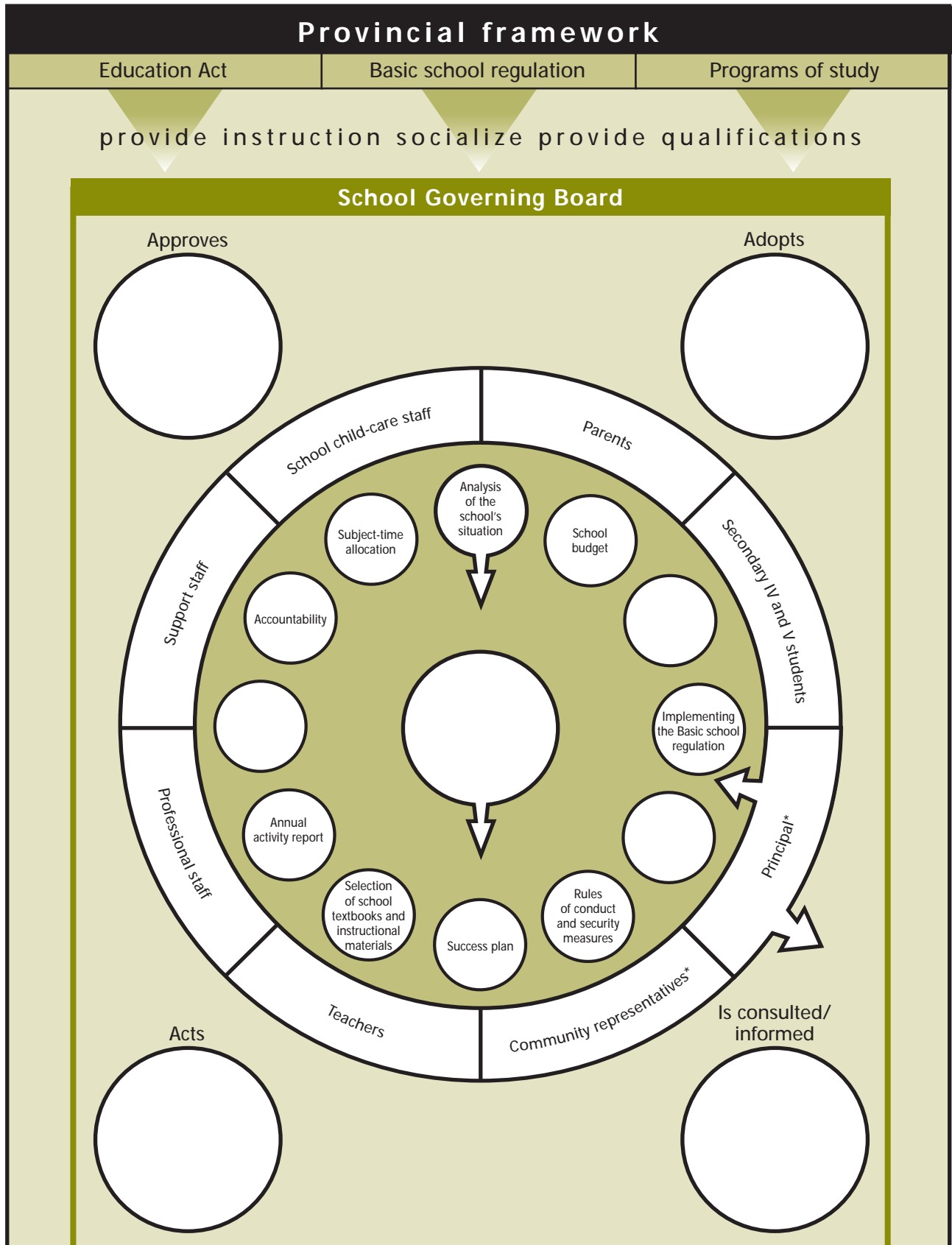
Steps 2 and 3 The governing board's areas of jurisdiction

Small-group activity

The diagram below shows a table seating several participants. It also shows the matters dealt with by the governing board (success plan, school budget, subject-time allocation, etc.). The circles in the four corners of the diagram correspond to the types of decisions made by the governing board.

Instructions

Indicate the element that occupies the central place in the blank circle in the middle of the table. Complete the diagram by linking each type of decision (approves, adopts, acts, is consulted/informed) to the corresponding elements on the table.



* These participants are not entitled to vote.

Assess your knowledge

Composition of the governing board

Fill in the blanks

Complete the following sentences

- 1- The governing board can have eight to _____ members.
- 2- The number of staff representatives must be _____ to of the number of parent representatives.
- 3- Substitutes are not _____ to sit on the governing board.
- 4- School principals are not members of the governing board, but they may _____ meetings without the right to vote.
- 5- School-board commissioners may attend the meetings without the right to vote if they are authorized by _____.

Constitution of the school

Multiple-choice questions

- 6-The school is established by:
 - a. the Ministère de l'Éducation
 - b. the municipality
 - c. the school board
 - d. the regional municipality
- 7-Under the *Education Act*, the school principal is under the authority of:
 - a. the executive director of the school board
 - b. the governing board
 - c. the chairman of the school board
 - d. the human resources director of the School board
- 8-The governing board:
 - a. exercises authority over the school staff
 - b. tells the principal what to do
 - c. holds the powers of a real board of directors
 - d. fulfills the functions and powers entrusted to it by the *Education Act*
- 9-The functions and powers of the governing board are defined in:
 - a. Bill 180
 - b. Bill 124
 - c. the *Education Act*
 - d. the Canadian Constitution
- 10- The school's financial resources come directly from:
 - a. the regional directorate of the Ministère de l'Éducation
 - b. the school board
 - c. the MNA
 - d. the Conseil du trésor

Meeting topics **True or False**

The agenda of a governing board may contain:

- 11- a draft success plan submitted by a member
- 12- a discussion about a school employee
- 13- a public question period
- 14- a discussion on the selection criteria to appoint the school principal
- 15- an article in the local newspaper about drug use in the school

Operation of the governing board **Trick questions**

Indicate inaccuracies in the following statements:

- 16- The chair does not vote.
- 17- A member may discuss school materials purchased by the school from his or her business.
- 18- The mandate of members lasts two years.
- 19- The governing board may hold meetings behind closed doors.
- 20- The governing board may elect an executive committee composed of a vice-chair, a treasurer and a secretary.
- 21- Regulations governing the internal management of the governing board are set out in the Education Act.
- 22- The chair administers the governing board's operating budget.
- 23- The governing board is informed of the school's annual report.
- 24- The school board may make decisions in the place of the governing board.
- 25- The governing board must hold ten meetings per year.

Evaluation

- Did you obtain between **18 and 25** correct answers? Congratulations! You have what it takes to sit on your school's governing board. Don't forget to check the *Education Act* and the regulations for the internal management of your governing board, as mistakes easily happen!
- Did you obtain between **12 and 17** correct answers? You're on the right track. Check which questions gave you the most trouble and find out the answers you missed.
- Did you obtain between **6 and 11** correct answers? That's not too bad but there's still much to learn.
- Did you obtain between **0 and 5** correct answers? The education system is indeed complex and requires a great deal of knowledge. Don't be discouraged; seek advice on what you can do to acquire that knowledge.

Small-group activity

Instruction 1:

In light of the information shared throughout this orientation session, complete the following sentence (individually).

Based on what I have learned during this session, the governing board that I hope to see in my school . . .

Instruction 2:

Each of the small groups designates a spokesperson.

Each member of each of the small groups shares his or her thoughts about the kind of governing board he or she would like to have (Instruction 1). The team must now agree on another response to the following statement:

Based on what we have learned during this session, the governing board that we would like to see in our school . . .

My own conclusions

Points to remember

References

Points for further exploration

Final assessment

lation > prevention > communication recognition > progress > supervision > encouragement > initiative > responsibility > involvement > creativity
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 effort > autonomy > stimulation > prevention > communication recognition > progress > supervision > encouragement > initiative > responsibility > involvement
 autonomy > stimulation prevention > communication > recognition > progress > supervision > encouragement > initiative > responsibility > involvement > creativity

The following organizations took part in the preparation of this document:



ASSOCIATION DES CADRES SCOLAIRES
DU QUÉBEC



ADIGECS

Association des Directeurs Généraux
des Commissions Scolaires du Québec



L'ASSOCIATION MONTRÉLAISE
DES DIRECTIONS D'ÉTABLISSEMENT
SCOLAIRE



Association québécoise
du personnel de direction
des écoles



CSQ



Fédération
des comités de parents
du Québec



La Fédération
des commissions
scolaires
du Québec



FSE
Fédération
des syndicats
de l'enseignement (CSQ)



Fédération québécoise des directeurs et directrices d'établissement d'enseignement

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