



12 The Governing Board At the Heart of the School

Objective of the Document

Information leaflet no. 12 "The Governing Board at the Heart of the School" is published as part of the FCPPQ training program. It is intended in particular for Governing Boards members and for everyone who wants to learn more about the Governing Board's role and how it operates in elementary and secondary schools.

Please note that the Education Act is not cited verbatim; for any legal interpretation, we recommend you refer to the official version of the Education Act (*Revised Statutes of Québec, c.I-13.3*).

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Resources

For answers to your questions, to learn more about a subject or to find the right tools or resources... contact the FCPPQ.

We offer:

- Advice;
- Information brochures;
- References;
- Training workshops.

Visit our web site www.fcpgg.qc.ca or contact your regional association through the Parents' Committee at your School Board.

Acknowledgement

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The Governing Board: A brief outline

The end of the 90s marked the arrival of a widespread reform in the field of education in Quebec. The Estates General on Education resulted in meaningful consensus on how to improve the Quebec school system. In fact, it seemed essential to redefine the mission of the schools and to confer on them greater autonomy coupled with increased responsibilities. It was also decided that school development should be a collective responsibility, in other words, a responsibility belonging to students, parents, the school principal, teaching staff, other staff members, and to the community as a whole.

Governing Boards made their first appearance in schools in 1998, their purpose: To achieve these objectives. You will recall that these Boards are composed of parent and community representatives, teachers, and school staff members, and of students in the case of schools providing secondary 4 and 5 education.

In order to redefine the functions and powers of the various educational bodies, significant modifications were made to the Education Act. In the wording of these new provisions, the principle mission of the school board is to ensure that the persons who come under its jurisdiction are provided the educational services to which they are entitled and that these services are delivered effectively. To this end, school boards establish elementary and secondary schools and appoint a principal for each school. The principal, under the authority of the Director General, ensures that educational services provided at the school meet proper standards of quality.

The school is the ideal place to carry out educational activity and now has improved powers to make its own choices in order to ensure quality. The Education Act also divides the functions and powers of the Governing Board and the principal. Generally, the Governing Board holds important powers in respect to policy orientations while the principal monitors the quality of the educational services provided, ensures pedagogical and administrative leadership of the school and manages the resources made available to the institution by the school board.



Full and complete responsibilities



The primary responsibilities of the Governing Board described below have important repercussions on the school's policy orientations. In fact, the Board has full powers on these points since it adopts, with or without modifications, the proposals referred to it.

** Adopting a proposal, a project, or a document means that it can be modified, amended or accepted as originally submitted.*

The Educational Project (*Education Act, s. 74*)

The Act focuses on the main powers conferred on the Governing Board, to adopt, to oversee the implementation of, and to evaluate the school's educational project. The school fulfils its mission to provide instruction, to socialize and to provide qualifications to students within the framework of this educational project. It is the result of a collective process and contains orientations specific to the school as well as measures to ensure it is implemented and evaluated.

Leaflet no 4 "The Educational Project: A path towards success for each school" contains all the information necessary to complete this discussion on the educational project.

The educational project will serve as a reference and guide for the subsequent decisions the Governing Board will make. In concrete terms, the measures the educational project must include are the same as those in a yearly plan of action. It should be noted that all of the work of coordinating the educational project is the responsibility of the school principal.

In the follow-up to the educational project, the Board should also deal with the Success Plan that the Ministère de l'Éducation requires in all Quebec schools.

"Every decision of the governing board must be made in the best interests of the students."
(*Education Act, s. 64*)

Board of Directors or Governing Board?

Some people tend to equate the Governing Board to a Board of Directors in the sense typically accepted in the private and public sectors. A Board of Directors usually pursues the policies adopted at the shareholders' or members' meeting, appoints and manages executives of the company or organization, and ensures that its standards are respected. A Governing Board is not like that at all.

Though not in charge of the school, the Governing Board was given a central place in the school so it could ensure that those interested in the education of young people work together toward common goals and the harmonious development of the educational services offered.

Information, participation, and concerted action

(Education Act, s. 74)

Please consult leaflet no 3
"Getting the Facts About Parent
Participation in the School."



In connection with the preceding subject, the Act confers on the Governing Board the task of ensuring the participation of people interested in the school. It also prescribes how to accomplish this, through information, dialogue and concerted action between students, parents, the principal, teachers, other staff members, and community representatives. The Governing Board must also foster the participation of everyone towards the goal of academic success for students, which is the primary objective of the current education reform.

The school's annual budget *(Education Act, s. 95, 96.24)*

Adoption of the school's annual budget is one of the major powers of the Governing Board. This responsibility is even more important since section 275 of the Act now stipulates that the school board must allocate its operating subsidies among its institutions, except for the amount necessary for its own needs.

The study and adoption of the budget are unique opportunities to make choices that will have important repercussions on school life. It is the responsibility of the principal to maintain a balanced budget, prepare the annual budget, submit it to the Board for adoption, administer it, and render an account thereof to the Governing Board. The conditions and procedures for rendering this account are defined in collaboration with the school principal.

Community services *(Education Act, s. 90, 91)*

The Governing Board also has full jurisdiction concerning the community services that may be organized, the social, cultural, sports, or even educational services, such as piano or painting courses, which go beyond the programs of studies.

The Governing Board may even, in the name of the school board, sign contracts to fulfil this responsibility. However, the Act stipulates conditions and procedures for seeking school board approval of such contracts. It must be emphasized that the school does not have a legal personality, in other words, it is not an autonomous corporate body and cannot conclude contracts on its own.

Special funding *(Education Act, s. 94)*

For more on this subject, see the
brochure published by the MEQ:
"Guidelines for Schools on Advertising
and Financial Contributions."

To add to the revenues allocated to it by the school board, the Governing Board may solicit and receive money in the form of donations, legacies, grants, and other voluntary contributions to support school activities. Donators may attach certain conditions; however, these must not be incompatible with the mission of the school or be related to any form of commercial solicitation.

Furthermore, the Act details how these revenues will be administered. While they belong to the school, they are paid into a designated fund created for that purpose by the school board. The Governing Board supervises the management of the fund.

Pooling of goods and services *(Education Act, s. 80)*

The Act offers the Governing Board the possibility of entering into an agreement with another education institution of the same school board to pool goods, services, or activities.

Shared responsibilities in respect to the life of the school



A guide may be obtained from the FCPPO that explains how to develop this type of policy.

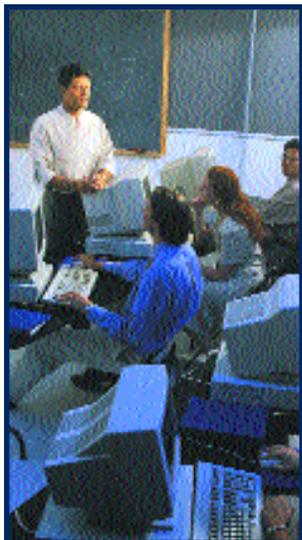
A second series of powers relates to elements that directly concern the life of the school. The Board has the right of review in that it approves the content of proposals submitted by the principal without, however, having the right to modify the proposal as it likes.

** To approve means, in this case, to give the Board's agreement. If the Board has reservations, it cannot modify a document immediately; it must be revised and resubmitted to the Governing Board before coming into effect or being implemented.*

In other words, the school cannot move ahead with a proposal unless the Governing Board has seen and accepted the proposal.

Student supervision (*Education Act, s. 75*)

The school must have a policy on student supervision. The Governing Board approves this policy that establishes, for example, how students are supervised by the teachers and other school staff, what types of activities are set up to foster academic success, how non-teaching and non-scheduled time will be used, and so on. This policy, prepared with the participation of all staff members, specifies how the staff will support students in relation to its three missions, to provide instruction, to socialize, and to provide qualifications. Of course, this policy is in keeping with the educational project, the rules of conduct, the various services offered at the school, the needs of certain groups of students, and so on.



Rules of conduct and safety measures (*Education Act, s. 76*)

Rules of conduct for students have always existed in schools, but they have become more refined, particularly as a result of the evolution of human rights.

Safety measures concern the adults in the school as much as the children themselves. For example, they may involve emergency measures that the school adopts just as any other public building does.

All these rules and measures, prepared with the participation of the entire staff, are also approved by the Governing Board.

Use of school premises (*Education Act, s. 93*)

A school may now decide how to use the premises placed at its disposal by the school board in the deed of establishment. It is the Governing Board's responsibility to approve the use of these premises. However, this power is subject to the following conditions:

- The school must respect the agreements entered into by the school board before the issue of the deed of establishment of the school.
- The school must obtain authorization from the school board for agreements that would exceed one year.

On the other hand, the school board must have Governing Board approval to organize on the school premises, any services it provides for cultural, social, sports, scientific, or community activities.

Sharing responsibilities related to educational services



The Governing Board also has the responsibility to approve a series of proposals submitted by the principal about the organization of various educational services. These are developed with the participation of teachers or the whole staff and are submitted by the principal who cannot take action in the areas outlined below without Governing Board approval.

To approve means, in this case, to give the Board's agreement. If the Board has reservations, it cannot modify a document immediately; the content must be revised and resubmitted to the Governing Board before coming into effect or being implemented.

Implementing the basic school regulation (*Education Act, s. 84*)

What is in this regulation issued by the government? First, there is the list of student and special services to which students are entitled, such as psychological services. It also contains the basic framework for the organization of educational services common to all schools in Quebec, such as the number of teaching days in the year, the list of required materials, the number of communications to parents via report cards, and so on. This item alone gives Governing Boards significant powers in respect to what is going on the school.

Local programs of studies (*Education Act, s. 85 and 96.15,1**)

Some schools develop local programs of studies or adapt or enrich existing programs of studies. Examples might be a program intended for all students about the fisheries or forestry to be offered in coastal or forested regions, an intensive French program (Editor's note: English program in French schools), computer graphics, or a program of an ecumenical, ethical and religious nature. Local programs are subject to the provisions of section 222.1 of the Education Act.

Thus, the Governing Board must approve the general orientation that the school intends to follow before such changes are initiated. The principal then has to give his or her approval of the program.



Subject time allocation *(Education Act, s. 86)*

The basic school regulation provides guidelines on the amount of time elementary schools must allocate to each subject. At the secondary level, the number of units of compulsory subjects and elective courses is determined by this same regulation, although there is some flexibility in the choice of elective courses. Actually, schools do not have a great deal of latitude in this area. However, the Governing Board might win agreement when the opportunity arises to make choices that support the educational project.

Programming of educational activities *(Education Act, s. 87)*

Schools organize many educational activities, which affect the students' regular schedule or require them to leave school premises. This program of activities, usually called educational outings, must be given prior approval by the Governing Board.

Implementing student and special educational services *(Education Act, s. 88)*

We have already noted that the basic school regulation contains a list of student and special educational services. How will these services—the promotion of student participation, education about rights and responsibilities, activities, library, counselling, psychological, psychoeducational, special education, remedial education, speech therapy, health and social services—be provided in the school? The answers to this question must be submitted to the Governing Board.

Being in tune with the school



The educational aspect (*Education Act, s. 96.13 and 96.15, 3**)

Because school board functions are being decentralized in favor of the schools, principals were given a variety of powers relating to educational services, but certain conditions were also imposed.

The first element is an important one: The principal must consult the Governing Board about the choice of tools the students will use in their learnings. These choices have an important impact on the school budget and often on the costs incurred by parents for materials "in which students write, draw, or cut out." (*Education Act, s.7*)

* To consult takes on the larger meaning of asking for an opinion. Since this requirement is written into the Act, an administrative decision may be illegal if proper consultation was not carried out.

As well, the principal must, on a regular basis, inform the Governing Board about the other educational powers given him/her by the Act. These are related to the implementation of new teaching methods, standards and procedures for evaluating learnings, and rules governing the placement of students and their promotion from one cycle to the other at the elementary level. It is the principal who approves these proposals from the teachers or staff members of the school.

Daycare services (*Education Act, s. 256*)

At the request of the Governing Board, the school board must provide daycare services for preschool and elementary school students. The school board and the Governing Board must agree on the relevant procedures, which may vary from school to school.

The administrative aspect (*Education Act, s. 96.22 and 96.24*)

Material and financial resources have important repercussions on school life, and the Governing Board is expected to take an interest in this aspect.

The Board has the opportunity to express its opinions about material resources since the principal must consult the Board before informing the school board of the school's requirements in respect to goods and services and any required improvement of the premises or immovables placed at the disposal of the school.

The principal is obliged to consult the Governing Board before approaching the school board. The Board is also expected to closely monitor the school budget. This exercise may take various forms during the school year and greatly facilitates decision-making in subsequent fiscal years.

A sounding board for the school board



The Governing Board also has an advisory power with the school board (*Education Act, s.78*). It can give advise on any matter likely to facilitate the operation of the school and on any matter likely to improve the organization of the services provided by the school board.

However, the school board must consult the Governing Board in two specific instances, these being the amendment or the revocation of the deed of establishment of the school and the selection criteria for the appointment of the principal (*Education Act, s.79*).

The deed of establishment

The school board establishes a school by issuing it a deed of establishment. The deed of establishment is something like a birth certificate in that it indicates the principal physical characteristics of the school: the premises, immovables, name and address, and the level of instruction provided.

The school board revokes the deed when it decides that the school should no longer exist as an autonomous establishment; the school board can merge two or more institutions under a single principal or can simply close the school.

The deed of establishment differs from a birth certificate in that it can be modified. The Governing Board must pay attention to these changes that can have important repercussions on the life of the school, repercussions such as a decrease in the space made available to the school.

Criteria for the selection of a principal

A change of principals is a pivotal occasion for a school. To be able to make a suitable response to the school board's consultation on the selection criteria for a prospective principal, it would be advisable for the Governing Board to refer to the educational project, the Success Plan, and the expectations and concerns frequently expressed by the community.

The scope of Governing Board functions and powers

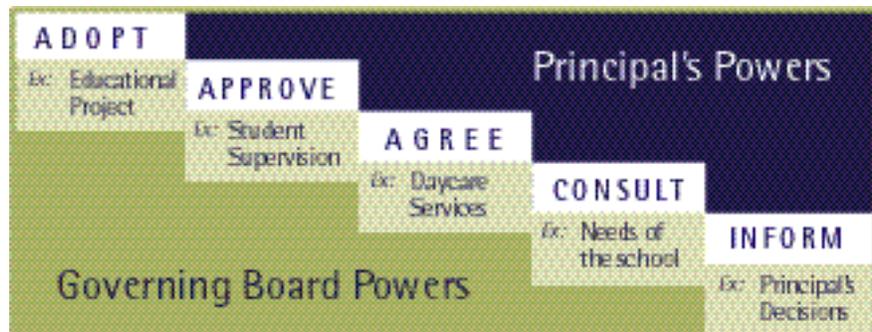


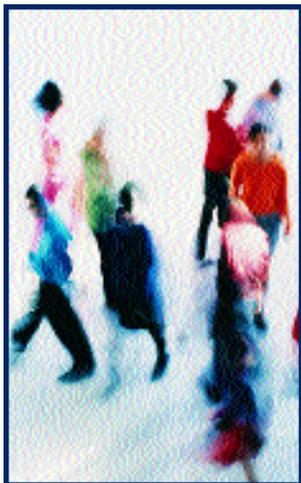
The information above helps us to understand the scope of the functions and powers vested in the Governing Board. But what are the limits of their implementation? Where do they begin and end?

To conclude this list of some twenty-five points concerning Governing Board functions and powers, let us take a closer look at just how far the Governing Board can go in its interventions.

First we will set out the general principles on the basis of which these functions and powers are assigned:

- The Governing Board is given very specific functions while the principal's powers are more comprehensive and deal with the quality of services, management of resources, etc.
- The principal is the source of the proposals debated at Board meetings; the Governing Board is not asked to develop content but rather to adopt or approve the proposals submitted by the principal.
- The Governing Board must take into account individual rights as well as the functions and powers that belong to the principal, teachers, the school board, and even the Ministère de l'Éducation. The rights of one group end where the rights of another begin.





That being said, the Governing Board cannot just limit itself to reacting to the documents presented to it. It must take certain initiatives, such as the following:

- React to events that have an impact on school life in order to improve an element under its jurisdiction, such as the educational project, student supervision policy, rules of conduct, safety measures, budget, etc.
- Ask at any time to reexamine any matter that a principal must submit to the Board for consultation.
- Advise the school board on any matter that might facilitate the operation of the school.

Limiting cases

The legislator provided the Board with special powers that apply to two specific cases.

In the first case, the Board can request that the principal submit a proposal on a matter within the purview of the Governing Board. It can even act without this proposal if the principal does not respond to the request within 15 days (*Education Act, s. 96.13*).

In the second case, the school board can request that an institution comply with the Act or with a regulation. The school board can even substitute its decisions for those of the institution if the school does not comply within the given time limit (*Education Act, s. 218.2*).

Formation of the Governing Board



Establishment of the Governing Board (*Education Act, s. 42-46*)

The Governing Board includes at least four parents, at least four members of the school staff (at least two of whom are teachers), two secondary level students and one member of the daycare staff, where applicable, and two representatives of the community, for a total of no more than twenty members.

The aim of this composition is, above all, to achieve a balanced representation of the different groups present. It is the school board's responsibility to prescribe the number of parent and staff representatives to ensure this balance. Each group concerned is consulted beforehand and may also request modifications to the existing composition, if it is thought to be necessary.

All members are elected by their peers during meetings scheduled for this purpose, except the community representatives who are appointed by the parents, staff members, and students, where applicable. All members are entitled to make proposals and to vote, except the community representatives who are not entitled to vote.

Take note of the following special features:

- Schools with fewer than 60 students may obtain a reduction of the number of members.
- A commissioner cannot be a member of a Governing Board of his/her school board; however, the commissioner may take part in meetings, if so authorized by the Governing Board.
- The principal takes part in the meetings but is not entitled to vote.

The elections (*Education Act, s. 47-51*)

Every year, during the month of September, each of the groups represented on the Governing Board, except the community representatives, are called to a meeting to elect their representatives.

The notice is sent to parents of the students by the Governing Board chair or, if there is none, by the school principal.

Teachers, non-teaching professional staff, support staff, and daycare staff meet in turn to elect their representatives, according to the procedure set out in their collective agreement or failing that, according to the procedures determined by the principal.

The Students' Committee or the association representing them appoints its representatives or failing that, the principal presides over the election of the students' representatives.

Failure to elect (*Education Act, s. 52*)

The Governing Board cannot be formed if the parents fail to elect the required number of representatives. The principal then exercises the powers of the Governing Board. If the other groups do not elect the required number of representatives, the Governing Board carries on with the representatives elected.

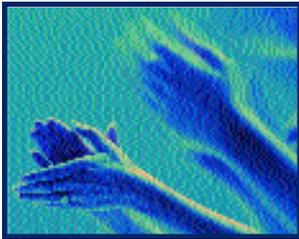
Term of office *(Education Act, s. 53-55)*

The parents' term of office is two years, half of their terms coming to an end each year. The term of office of the other members is one year.

Vacancies *(Education Act, s. 55)*

A parents' representative whose child no longer attends the school may remain in office until the next General Assembly. A vacancy resulting from the departure of a parent is filled, for the unexpired portion of the term, by a parent appointed by the other parent members of the Governing Board. In other cases, the Board follows the method prescribed for appointing a member to be replaced.

There are rules to follow... *(Education Act, s. 61-69)*



The legislator established certain procedural rules for the Governing Board.

Quorum

Quorum on a Governing Board is obtained if the following two conditions are met:

- **1st condition:** A majority of the members who are in office must be present, excluding vacant positions. For example:
 - If the number of members is 10 or 11, quorum is 6,
 - If the number of members is 12 or 13, quorum is 7;
- **2nd condition:** Half of the parents in office must be present. For example:
 - If 4 parents are members, 2 of them must be present,
 - If 5 or 6 parents are members, 3 of them must be present.

The vote

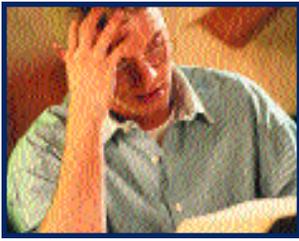
Decisions are made by a majority of the votes cast by the members present and entitled to vote. This means that a member may also abstain from voting.

If votes are tied, the chair has a casting vote, meaning that the chair can uphold his/her original vote, or if it seems preferable and in the interest of the students, can change his/her vote. When votes are so equally divided, it may be advisable to study the issue further, and if possible, put off making a decision until a later date.

Location of meetings and support services

The Act states that Governing Board meetings may be held on school premises, which implies that the Board may also conduct its meetings elsewhere. As well, the Board has the right to use, free of charge, the administrative support services and facilities of the school, subject to the conditions determined by the principal.

Administrative support refers to the work generally done by the support staff of the school, secretarial, accounting, provisioning and maintenance services. Facilities refer to the materials needed to perform these functions and conduct the meetings.



Meetings are open to the public

Governing Board meetings are open to the public; parents, staff, and students in the case of a secondary school must be informed of the date, time, and place of the meetings.

Because of this condition, it is recommended that time be set aside for a public question period that complies with generally accepted rules for such circumstances. The Board may, however, order a meeting closed to the public to examine any matter that could cause injury to a person. The word "person" here has the legal meaning that includes corporate entities as well. The principal and all Board members attend the closed session.

The minutes

The minutes are public; they are recorded in a register by the principal or by a person designated by the principal. The standard rules concerning the approval of the minutes and access to them are carefully outlined in the Act.

...And requirements to fulfil...*(Education Act, s. 66, 67, 70, 81-83)*

To effectively fulfil the requirements inherent to its mandate, the Board must appropriately organize its operations.

First, a budget

The Governing Board adopts its own annual operating budget, a separate budget from that of the school. The Board oversees administration of its budget and renders an account thereof to the school board, which allocates to the Board the financial resources for its operations. This budget must be balanced.

Rules of internal management

The Board has to adopt rules of internal management that deal with, for example, the number of meetings to be held (at least five meetings every school year). These rules are needed to clarify the various operating procedures: Notice of meeting, planning and content of the agenda, distribution of reference material required to conduct and follow up the meetings, and so on.

It is worthwhile to include rules about the conduct of the meeting, the role and the attitudes of members, and specifics about the relationships with other entities in the school, at the school board, and in the community.

Conflict of interest

As in all public bodies, Governing Board members must disclose any direct or indirect interest in an enterprise that places their personal interest in conflict with that of the body, in this instance, the school. It is usually sufficient to remember to fulfil this requirement at the beginning of one's term of office. Rules about voting, influencing, and being present during deliberations in a conflict of interest situation are all clearly spelled out in the Act.



Immunity

A Governing Board member cannot be prosecuted for an act performed in good faith in the exercise of Governing Board functions. The school board assumes defense costs, if any.

Rendering accounts

The Governing Board is required to furnish any information the school board requests. The Board must also prepare an annual activity report. On this point, one item merits our particular attention and that is the requirement that the Board report to the community. The methods used may differ greatly from school to school, but the Board must inform the community of the services provided by the school and report on the level of quality of these services.

Each Board is unique

Governing Boards are different in different communities, since the issues and challenges they face are also very diverse. For instance, some schools have several buildings, some are facing closure or amalgamation, and so on.

For any question concerning application of the Act, consult your school board, the Direction régionale of the MEQ, the Regional Association of the Parents' Committee, and/or the FCPPO.

Diversified roles

Leaflet no5 "Fullfledged Partners" closely examines the qualities Governing Board members need to create a climate of partnership within a Governing Board.
The role of the chair
(*Education Act, s. 56-60*)

The role of the members (*Education Act, s. 71*)

The Act makes few provisions for the role of members other than the fundamental values to be respected. It evokes principles of administrative law:

"The members of the Governing Board must act within the scope of the functions and powers conferred on them, and exercise the care, prudence, and diligence that a reasonable person would exercise in similar circumstances: they must also act with honesty and loyalty and in the interest of the school, the students, the parents, the school staff, and the community."

It is up to each person to interpret this provision and to act accordingly.

The work of Governing Board members is demanding. It is not limited to participation in the meetings but extends to their preparation: Studying the issues, consulting other people, and at times, searching for additional information.



Leaflet no17 "Chairing the Governing Board" provides additional information on this subject.

For further information on this subject, see leaflet no14 "The Parents' Committee, Focal Point of Parental Participation."

The role of the chair (*Education Act, s. 56-60*)

The chair of the Governing Board is chosen from among the parents' representatives. He/she is elected by all members who are entitled to vote at the first Board meeting, which is presided over by the principal. The chair cannot be an employee of the school or the school board. The chair's term of office is one year.

The Act assigns only one function to the chair, to preside at Board meetings. However, the chair is actually called upon to exercise many other responsibilities. For example, it is inconceivable that the chair and the principal would not plan Board meetings together.

In a context of partnership, the chair can play an extremely important role in respect to the relationships among Board members and the external relationships of the Board. Adopting rules of internal management can provide the opportunity to clarify the chair's role. The Board can also confer on the chair special mandates, such as advising the school board.

The Parents' Committee representative (*Education Act, s. 47, 189*)

During their General Assembly in September, parents choose, from among the persons elected to the Governing Board, a person who must represent them on the Parents' Committee, which acts in an advisory capacity to the school board. The primary role of this representative is to speak on behalf of all parents of the school. This function is of the utmost importance since it is through this person that parents may make their needs known to the school board and react to school board orientations and projects that inevitably affect the schools.

As a member of the Governing Board, the Parents' Committee representative is informed of what is happening in the school milieu and consequently, can better represent it. It is in everyone's interest that the representative consults the other parents on the Board and the members of the Parent Participation Organization (PPO) before speaking on behalf of the school and community. Finally, it is understood that the representative is not the official vehicle of Governing Board advice since the Governing Board, composed of representatives from various school agents, has the power to appeal to the school board directly.

The principal (*Education Act, s. 46, 96.12, 96.13*)

The principal's role on the Governing Board is extremely complex. Though not a member, he/she takes part in the meetings. It would be very difficult for the Board to function without the principal. Section 96.13 of the Act stipulates that the principal assists the Board in the exercise of its functions and powers and for that purpose has the following duties:

- To coordinate the development, implementation, and periodic evaluation of the educational project;
- To ensure that the required proposals are prepared and are submitted to the Board by the principal; failing this, the Board may act without such a proposal;
- To encourage concerted action within the school;
- To inform the Board on a regular basis of the proposals approved by the principal that are submitted by the teachers or by members of the staff.

Finally, the principal ensures that the decisions of the Board are implemented. Thus, the role played by the principal is a determining factor in the success of a Board, even though he/she is not a member.

Rising to the Challenges



Consult leaflet no1
 "Parent Participation Organization,
 Helping schools be their best!"

First, the interests of the students (*Education Act, s. 64*)

The Act stipulates that "every decision of the governing board must be made in the best interests of the students." This fundamental orientation originates in the education reform itself: The child, the adolescent must be the centre of every educational activity."

Maintaining a network of relationships

The Governing Board has no official relationships to maintain except that it must report on the level of quality of the services offered by the school. However, all members must maintain ties with the people they represent: the students, parents, teachers, other staff members and the community.

Since it is the Governing Board's responsibility to encourage the transmission of information both inside and outside the school, the Board must at the very least inform people of the work it does and the decisions it makes.

The Parent Participation Organization provided for in the Act to foster parent involvement in education and school operations represents a special situation. The ties uniting the parent members of the Governing Board and the PPO must be clearly established.

Conditions for success

The conditions necessary for the success of a Governing Board are many and varied. Leaflet no 5 "Fullfledged Partners" describes these essential elements, including the following:

- Believing in the advantages of partnership,
- Investing one's time and oneself,
- Accepting others,
- Exercising care in one's communications,
- Having confidence in the group and the desire to succeed,•
- Seeking consensus and showing solidarity,•
- Overcoming difficulties and solving the inevitable conflicts,
- Developing a true feeling of membership in the group.

The education reform has been instrumental in the creation of Governing Boards whose ultimate objective is to motivate everyone involved in education to talk to each other, work together, and share the same educational orientations. Every collaborative decision made by a Governing Board is a victory against the isolation and lack of cooperation or coherence in the work being done for young people.

Participating in an organization such as the Governing Board is an important social and community commitment. This volunteer service deserves to be supported, encouraged, and recognized by those who are committed to the harmonious development of the educational services in their community.

