GOVERNING BOARDS

Prepared by the Communications Division of the English Montreal School Board

COMPOSITION AND OPERATION

A Governing Board is a representative body established within each school composed of:

- Parents
- School Staff (teachers, non-teaching professionals and support staff
- Daycare member (elementary)
- Students (high school level)
- Members of the community

Section 42-46 EA

COMPOSITION

Question:

At the beginning of each year, each school determines their number of staff and parents.

False:

The composition of the governing board **is determined by the school board**

Question:

The staff must be equal to parents.

True:

The total number of staff **must be equal** to parents

Example:

5 parents

Equals 5

- 2 teachers
- 1 non teaching professional
- 1 support staff
- 1 daycare representative (elementary level)

Question:

The Governing Board is composed of no more than 20 members.

- ***True***

  Governing Boards must be composed of no more than 20 members *(article 42)* including:

  A) At least 4 parents

  B) At least 4 school staff members
     - At least 2 must be teachers
     - At least 1 non teaching professional or a teacher as a substitute
     - At least 1 support staff or a teacher as a substitute
     - 1 daycare representative (elementary level)

     2 students (high school level)

  C) 2 community representatives (non voting member)

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

TERM OF OFFICE

Question:

All governing board members are elected to a two-year mandate.

False

parents term is **two years**.

Except for the first year of a GB when half are elected for 1 year and half for 2 years

other groups term is **one year**.

Term of the chair is **one year**.

COMPOSITION

How to request for change in composition:

- Must be made in writing to the School Board
- Must include resolutions from the GB and staff
- Approved by Council
- Must be made by May to come into effect the following year

ELECTION OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

- **ALL representatives must be elected by September 30th**

ELECTION OF PARENT MEMBERS

The general assembly of parents:

- Elects parents' representatives and substitutes
- Elects delegate and alternate to the parents committee
- Decide on the formation of a PPO,
  - choose the number of members
  - decide how to elect the members

ELECTION OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

- Students are appointed by the students' council or the association representing the students.
- If they do not have an association, they meet elect their representatives with the principal presiding over the elections.

ELECTION OF STAFF MEMBERS

- Staff members meet to elect their representatives
  - Teachers
  - Non Teaching Professionals
  - Support Staff
  - Day care staff

The Community Representatives

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

The Principal's Role on Governing Board

- acts as the resource person.
- ensures that proposals are prepared and submitted and all necessary information is given before making decisions.
- By law; they are responsible for the minutes ensuring that they are completed, signed and stored safely. *(article 69)*

SUBSTITUTIONS

Question:

Substitutes can replace absent governing board members.

True:

Any member who is unable to take part in a governing board meeting may be replaced by a substitute member.

Section 51.1. EA

Any meeting called in accordance with sections 47 to 50 may elect substitute members to the governing board to replace the members who are unable to take part in a governing board meeting. Likewise, substitute members may be appointed or elected during the process carried out in accordance with section 51. The number of substitute members cannot be greater than the number of governing board members

How to Replace a Member that Resigns or leaves the GB

Parent Representative:
Designated by the remaining parents on the GB for the unexpired portion of the term.

Any Other Member:
Designated by the members they represent for the unexpired portion of the term.

Article 55: A parents' representative whose child no longer attends the school may remain a member of the governing board until the next meeting held pursuant to section 47.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON

- is elected at the first meeting of the governing board by **all** the voting members
- Presides over meetings
- Has the deciding vote in the event of a tie.

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

Article 60

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

What Constitutes a Good Chair

Question:

Before a discussion, the chair state his/her opinion.

False

- Is well prepared
- Presides over the meeting (starts and ends on time)
- Respects the rules of internal procedure
- Keeps a speaker list
- Keeps order and ensures speakers remain on topic
- Listens attentively
- Encourages **all** members to speak and explain their views
- Clarifies, gives information and summarizes
- Speaks no more than is necessary
- Ensures that discussions respect the mandate of the governing board

Role of the Treasurer

Gives updates on the annual GB operating budget

i.e. $250 allocated from the School Board.

(article 66)
The governing board shall adopt and oversee the administration of its annual operating budget and render an account thereof to the school board.

COMMISSIONERS

Question:

When carrying out a mandate by the council, proposed by the chair, a commissioner may take part in meetings of the governing board but is not entitled to vote.

True:

any mandate entrusted to them by the council of commissioners, on a proposal by the chair, for the purpose of providing information to the other council members on any specific matter

(Article 45)

ROLE OF COMMISSIONERS

taken from Education Act;

- Elected by the citizens
- determine orientations of the school board by taking into consideration the interests of students, parents and community.
- exercise responsibilities comparable to those of municipal councilors.
- Since 2014, chair is elected by universal suffrage – elected by all voters
- The council of commissioners meet once a month.
- Since the elected officials represent their community, they must take the time to become familiar with the issues that concern them and to inform parents, electors, the governing boards and the community as a whole of the decisions taken.

OBSERVERS

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

  Copies of the agenda should be made available to observers but they do not receive minutes or documents

  GB meetings are open to the public, however it is recommended that the meeting be closed to the public (in camera) if a matter being discussed could cause injury to a person (article 68)

QUORUM

Question:

The majority of governing board members in attendance at a meeting constitutes quorum.

False

A majority of the members of the governing board, who are in office, including **at least half the parents**, is a quorum of the governing board

QUORUM

EXAMPLE

A governing board with 13 members:	Seven (half) constitutes quorum:
• 6 parents • 4 teachers • 1 member of the support staff • 1 day care worker • 1 community representative (non voting member)	•3 parents (half) •2 teachers •1 day care worker •1 community representative (non voting member)

GOVERNING BOARD DECISIONS

Question:

The Chair does not vote.

False

The decisions of the governing board are made by a majority vote of the members present and entitled to vote

- A majority of members including half the parents
- Abstentions do not count
- Community reps are non voting members
- Decisions are made in public and recorded in the minutes

RULES OF INTERNAL MANAGEMENT

Question:

Under the Education Act, at the start of each year, the governing board must establish their rules of internal management. If these rules existed the year before, they are simply adopted as is.

False

The governing board establishes its own rules of internal management

The rules of internal management should;

- reflect the needs of the GB
- should be reviewed every year

RULES OF INTERNAL MANAGEMENT

Question:

Governing Boards must hold a meeting once a month.

False

Must provide for at least 5 meetings

RULES OF INTERNAL MANAGEMENT

Question:

Questions from the public do not all have to be answered at the same meeting.

True

Rules for public questions must be determined by the GB and should be included in the internal rules

Public question period is included on the agenda at the beginning and/or end.

Questions from the public are addressed during question period and are directed to the chair.

Questions do not have be answered right away.
You can come back with an answer at the following meeting.

RULES OF INTERNAL MANAGEMENT WHAT TO INCLUDE

Procedures for calling regular and special meetings:

- Number of days required to send agenda
- Who sends the agenda
- How is the agenda sent
- What else is sent with the agenda

Rules for the meeting:

- Location, schedule and duration, discussion process
- How and when to bring up a proposal
- Conduct of the members

Agenda

- Who drafts the agenda (content, priorities of items)
- Time Allocation and nature of discussion of items should be indicated

RULES OF INTERNAL MANAGEMENT
WHAT TO INCLUDE

Minutes

- Who records the minutes
- who receives the minutes (other than the members of the governing board)

Note:

Following approval, the minutes are signed by the chairperson and the principal or the person appointed by the principal.

The minutes must be kept by the principal in a register and are open to the public. (EA S69)

Budget

- Management operating budget (250$)

Usually used for refreshments, photocopying, babysitting, transportation

MINUTES

What do they include:

- Date, Time, and Location of the meeting
- Names of the members present
- Names of members who sent regrets or are absent
- Time the meeting was called to order
- Adoption of the agenda
- Adoption of the previous meeting minutes (with modifications)

  Corrections should not change the sense of what was recorded but should clarify any factual or clerical mistake
- Exact wording of a motion with the vote
- Brief summary of items discussed
- Items that have tabled or deferred
- Time of adjournment

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- **Governing** is setting goals
  - Governing Boards govern
- **Managing** is taking action to meet goals
  - School administrators manage and serve as resources to help guide the governing board in setting goals

ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

Governing board members;

- voice opinions of the groups they represent
- discuss general orientations
- work together
- work in the students' best interests
- encourage cooperation among people having a interest in the school

IMPORTANT: Conduct: *(article 71)*

- members of the GB 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.

IMPORTANT: CONFLICT OF INTEREST (Article 70)

A GB member who has a direct or indirect interest in an enterprise that puts that member in conflict of interest with the school must disclose the interest in writing to the Principal.

In such a case, the member should withdraw from the meeting while the issue is being discussed and voted on. (article 70)

Having a conflict of interest is not prohibited, but not declaring it could lead to forfeiture of office.

ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

- The Education Act defines the powers and responsibilities between the governing board and principal.
- The governing board powers are defined in *articles 74-95*
- The principal's powers are defined in *articles 96.12-96.26*
- The governing board is the focal point for decisions that affect the life of the school.

GB members should consult the relevant policies and by-laws on the EMSB website

Governing Boards;

- determine what the school should achieve through the educational project

- *seek collaboration of persons having an interest in the school.*

- *encourage communication and dialogue between all parties in order to achieve students success*.

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

The School Administrator;

- is the **academic** and **administrative** director of the school

- they ensure that the decisions of the governing board are implemented.

- objectives of the educational project are achieved

(article 96.12)
The principal, under the authority of the director general of the school board, shall ensure that educational services provided at the school meet the proper standards of quality.

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

DIFFERENT TYPES OF POWER

DECISION

- certain responsibilities (obligations) that it should assume and on which it should make a decision.

I.E. prepare the annual report and how to inform the community

ADOPTION

- the power to change, adapt, add or remove one or more elements of a proposal submitted by the principal.

I.E. Budget, Educational Plan, annual report

DIFFERENT TYPES OF POWER

APPROVAL

- accept or reject proposals without the possibility of making changes (say *yes* or *no).* If rejected, a new proposal must be submitted to the GB for approval before its implementation.

I.E. MESA, basic school regulation, educational activities, anti-bullying plan

INFORMATION

- receive information after a decision is made by the principal with no possibility to reconsider the decision

I.E. Local program of study, student achievement, instructional methods, enrolment criteria

CONSULTATION

- provides an opinion on any matter with the possibility of influencing the final decision.
- consulted by the school board and the principal on certain issues related to the operation of the school.
- may also take the initiative to advise the school board.

I.E. deed of establishment, criteria for principal, budget building

Article 78;
The governing board shall advise the school board concerning
(1) any matter the school board is required to submit to the governing board;
(2) any matter likely to facilitate the operation of the school;
(3) any matter likely to improve the organization of the services provided by the school board.

Subjects Outside the Mandate of the Governing Board

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

CONCLUSION

GB's principal function:

- Provide guidance and positive influence

- Promote the exchange of information and expertise in order to foster positive relationships.

  (article 74); *The governing board shall encourage the communication of information, dialogue and concerted action between students, parents, the principal, teachers and other school staff members and community representatives, and their collaboration in helping students to achieve success*.

TEAMWORK

is the key to a successful governing board!

Thank you!
Merci!

WHAT'S NEW

- The Council may now delegate certain functions and powers to a governing board (Section 174);
- The parent commissioners are now **entitled to vote** at council meetings and at executive committee (Section 148);
- The Council shall include **at least one parent commissioner** on the executive committee (Section 179);
- It is now possible to have **more than one parent** commissioner on the executive committee (their term of office is two years) (Section 145, 179);
- As of November 4, 2018, the parent commissioner cannot be a public servant of the *Ministère de l'éducation* or an employee of the school board (Section 145);
- The parent commissioner **can also be appointed as vice-chair** (Section 148);

WHAT'S NEW

- The strategic plan will be replaced by a commitment-to-success plan
- The success plan is **abolished.**
- The school board shall consult in the preparation of this plan, the parents' committee, the advisory committee on management, the governing boards, the teachers and the students (Section 209.1);
- The parents' committee may make recommendations on what should be included in the plan (Section 209.1);
- The plan will be sent to the Minister and made public on the expiry of 60 to 90 days after sending it (Section 209.1);
- The Minister may, after receiving the plan, require the school board to defer publication or to amend the plan (Section 459.3);
- Furthermore, the school board must present the content of the plan to the public once it is adopted (Section 209.1).
- The educational project will now include the elements of the previous management and educational success agreement (MESA)