PART 2: EDUCATING YOUTH IN THE CSB

Part 2 presents our analysis relating to the education of 'youth' in the nine schools of the CSB, from kindergarten to secondary V (see definition of youth students opposite Exhibit 2-2.).[a]

It deals with all levels of the performance pyramid introduced in Part 1, as they apply to youth. The first chapter begins at the top of the pyramid with student results (Chapter 3), while the others deal with four successive layers of support from the classroom (Chapter 4) to the community (Chapter 7). The bottom layer of the pyramid, school board support, will de dealt with in Part 4.

This part of our report is concerned with school performance as much as school board performance; however, we do not attempt to present a separate analysis of each school. Each section and sub-section introduces the object being evaluated, and then presents our analysis and recommendations.

EXHIBIT 2-1: DATA COLLECTION IN SCHOOLS

Source	Method	Number*		
		Sch	Act	Par
Current Students	Focus Group	9	43	369
Former Students	Focus Group	6	6	37
Classroom instruction	Observation	9	50	
Teachers	Questionnaire	9	9	212
	Focus Groups		6	51
Administrators	Interview	9	25	25
Other Staff	Questionnaire	7	7	41
Commissioners	Interview	5	5	5
School Committee Chair	Interview	2	2	2
Band Council Ed Rep	Interview	3	3	3
School Committee, Parents	Focus Group	6	6	55
Elders	Focus Group	6	6	46
Community Members	Community Radio	3	3	
All sources			**155**	**677**

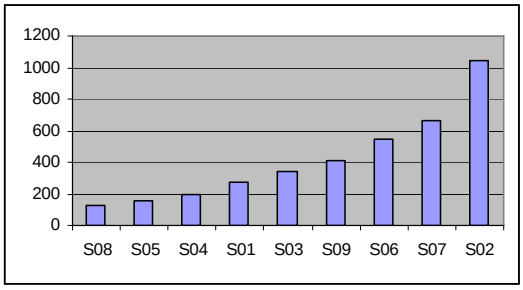
* This columns displays the number of: schools (Sch), separate data collection activities (Act) and participants (Par).

[a] All parts of the CAFSI report can be found on the CSB Educational Review website in English and French: **http://www.cscree.qc.ca/Edreview/ed_review.htm**, **http://www.cscree.qc.ca/Edreview/Fr/Etude_Ed.htm**. These parts are not written as 'stand-alone' texts. They are published separately because the report is too large to be downloaded as a single text. Thus, for example, the Reference List for all works cited in this Part can be found at the end of Part 5.

As shown above in Exhibit 2-1, more than 150 data collection activities were carried out in schools, involving almost 700 participants. When participants are regrouped as (1) students, (2) administrators, (3) school staff, (4) commissioners and (5) parents and community members, commissioners are the only group with a significant number of schools not represented.[a] In addition to these data, we gathered data on schools from interviews with Board personnel and various documents and records.[b]

In considering the data analysis presented in this chapter, it is important to keep in mind the definition of youth students and relative size of the nine schools of the CSB.[c] For purposes of this analysis, we define **youth students** as those who are eligible for admission, from 4 to 21 years of age (and beyond for handicapped students), and enrolled in a school of the CSB.

EXHIBIT 2-2: STUDENT POPULATION



As shown in this graph, three schools (S04, S05, S08)[d] have fewer than 200 students, five vary between 270 and 663, and one school (S02) exceeds 1000. Overall, 62% of these students are at the elementary level and 38% at the secondary level. Most schools have three streams of instruction: Cree, English and French. Overall instruction in Cree is offered to approximately 27% of all students, while the remainder is split between 52% in English and 31% in French.[e] These percentages vary considerably from one school to another.[f] We begin the presentation of our analysis of school-related data with some comments by **teachers**.[g]

School Strengths		School Weaknesses
Freedom in class for teachers to teach		*No consequences for students' actions*
Good resources		*Low expectations*
Students can learn in their language		*No accountability*
Small classes		*Poor communication*
We have leaders who care ...	*but*	*they are not able to handle staff/student problems*

[a] The focus groups with students and teachers, as well as classroom observations, were constructed 'purposefully,' that is, to connect with participants from different levels and language of instruction; they were not intended to be representative of all students, teachers or classrooms. Questionnaires were supposed to be made available to all teachers and other staff members, though this did not always happen. Interviews were envisaged for all administrators and commissioners. The number of commissioner interviews reported here does not include the Chairperson of the Board, who was interviewed during the Educational Symposium. We endeavoured to reach out to commissioners not available when we visited the communities by offering interviews in conjunction with Council meetings or submission of written responses. Unfortunately, none of these attempts was successful.

[b] Deficiencies in these data will be dealt with as applicable, in each section.

[c] The data for this summary were supplied by individual schools and should only be considered as indicative of the actual number recorded in official counts which were not supplied to the evaluation team.

[d] Following the convention established in Part 1, schools are identified by the number assigned to their community: S01 Whapmagoostui; S02 Chisasibi; S03 Wemdinji; S04 Eastmain; S05 Nemaska; S06 Waskaganish; S07 Mistissini; S08 Ouje-Bougoumou; S09 Waswanipi.

[e] This approximation does not include Cree as a subject of instruction in secondary school.

[f] See Exhibit C-1, Appendix A.

[g] As noted in Part 1, throughout this report, input from stakeholders will be presented in italicized script. These extracts use the words expressed by stakeholders. However, in some cases, their words may be summarized or modified to fit the syntax but in no case have we altered the meaning intended.

3.0 STUDENT RESULTS

Although schools contribute to a range of social and economic outcomes, their mission is focused on students. Therefore, in this performance theme, we posed the following question:

- What results does the school expect for its students and how effective is it in achieving them? [a]

Q: *Are you satisfied with student results?*

A: *No. No I'm not. I'll say it that bluntly.* (Outside stakeholder)

This theme comprises three evaluative objects, each of which represents a major result area:

- student engagement;
- curricular learning; and
- social & personal learning.

These results areas flow from the mission of the CSB, expressing what it wishes to achieve in terms of youth education. As discussed previously in Part 1, results need to be specified so we know precisely what we wish to accomplish. This is usually done by defining performance standards. These standards are provided in each of the sub-sections that follow. Setting standards may involve the use of ***targets*** and ***benchmarks***, terms that are often confused.

Simply put, targets express an ***expected*** level of performance in relation to a given standard. For example, our standard for student attendance might be: Students are present in school for a minimum of 175 instructional days per year. If attendance is very low, this standard will be difficult to attain in the short term We might chose, therefore to set incremental targets for three years, say: 160, 168 and 175 days.

Benchmarks are points of comparison used to set standards and targets. They are usually found in statistical norms, such as the average graduate rate in the province, or in examples of 'best practice' such as characteristics of an effective school culture. For attendance, therefore, we might look to see the average attendance in other boards to set our standard but use our past performance on attendance to help set targets.

- ***Standards*** express what we want our students to achieve.
- ***Targets*** express what we can expect to achieve in a given year.
- ***Benchmarks*** help us to determine desirable standards and realistic targets.

3.1 Student Engagement

Educators, parents and members of the public are familiar with the problems of student absenteeism and school dropouts. An equally serious problem, but one that is often ignored, is the number of students who are physically present in school but not really 'tuned in' to learning. In some cases, this condition is a step on the route to dropping out. In others, it signals an education that is passive and uninspired. On the other extreme, are students who are actively involved in learning and school life, who not only complete school, but who become life-long

[a] We experienced severe difficulties in obtaining the necessary data to determine the level of results in the CSB which are discussed in Appendix B, under Data Collection: Schools: Students.

learners. These extremes of drop-out and life-long learner provide the ends points for a continuum of ***student engagement*** (see text box).[63]

> [Student engagement] starts from students being in school, to being actively involved in an activity, to participating in their own learning, to understanding themselves and their cultural roots.... [It depends on] strong ... positive relationships built on mutual respect with other students, staff and other adults in the wider school community.

"Engaged students 'delve' into their interests, needs and talents and 'reach out' to connect in satisfying and productive ways with their educational and social environments."

Student engagement, or disengagement, often reflects home environment, a theme which we will explore in chapter 7. However, research on schools indicates that engagement is largely dependent on a range of school-based conditions,[64] making student engagement a legitimate object for the evaluation of school performance.[a]

Performance Standard

- Students attend school regularly and take an active part in learning and school life.

3.1.1 Attendance

Before students can become truly engaged in learning, they must be present in school. It goes without saying that student attendance is first dependent on schools to be open to receive them. According to data presented to the Council in December, 2007, schools were closed for an average of 8 days in 2006-07, for weather, school maintenance problems, and various other reasons, including funerals. In addition, this report stated that additional days may have been lost because of late school openings. Assuming some late school openings, we can estimate that approximately 5% of instructional time is lost before students walk through the door.

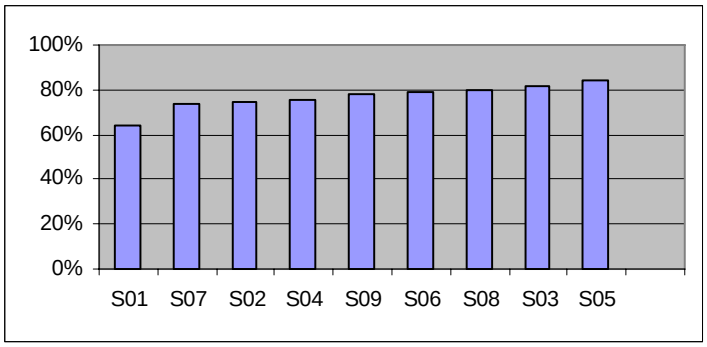
Q: ***Are kids really engaged in their learning here?***

A: ***I would say none of them is really engaged. Sports is more important than education.*** **(Vice-Principal)**

Student absenteeism was a major concern in virtually every school we visited, as it was when Henry Mianscum visited these same schools in 1999. Noting that parents and school committees were very alarmed by the high rate of absenteeism, he made the following observation: "The students' attitude to the school and the importance of education plays a major role in student absenteeism. These students would rather do other things than go to school. Their priority is not in education."[65] Unfortunately, the situation has not improved in the intervening years.

[a] Thus, Coleman (endnote 64) argues: "The dropout data constitute by far the best measure we have of the quality of the school system. That 35 percent of our students find it irrelevant or useless, despite knowing (or at least saying that they know, when asked) that education is essential to their economic and social well-being, constitutes vitally important data."

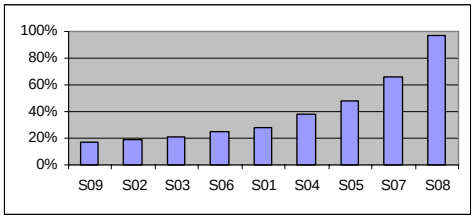
EXHIBIT 2-3: STUDENT ATTENDANCE, 2006-07



We did not collect raw data on student attendance but relied on the attendance reports,[66] that are produced annually for the CSB.[a] In 2006-07, the average attendance in all schools of the CSB was 77%. As can be seen in this graph, attendance rates vary by school, from a low of 64% in Whapmagoostui (S01) to a high of 84% in Nemaska (S05).[b] These rates also vary somewhat by level within each school. Not surprisingly, attendance tends to decrease at the higher levels. However, what is most striking about these data is that attendance is low everywhere. school attendance rates of 64 to 84% means that students are absent between 29 and 66 days per year, for an average of 43 days per student.

In order to see if these data were typical of other years, we looked at the reports for the six preceding years. The average attendance was highest seven years ago in 2000-01 (87%), dropped to 82% in 2002-03, climbed to 85% the following year (and 2004-05), then declined to the present average of 77%.[c]

EXHIBIT 2-4: SPECIFIC REASONS FOR ABSENCES, 2006-07



The annual attendance reports also include the percentage of different reasons given for absences, from a standardized list adopted for all schools. This list provides for sixteen specific reasons,[d] as well as "Reason A" (authorized absences) and "Other." As illustrated in this graph, specific reasons appear to be the exception, rather than the rule to explain student absences. The most notable exceptions are Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini where the overwhelming reasons noted is 'skipping' (80% and 60% respectively). Over the past seven years, the percentage of specific reasons for absences has declined almost steadily from 67% in 2000-01 to 35% in 2006-07. However, these data may not accurately reflect the real reasons for absenteeism, and do not begin to explain why so many students are absent from school, an issue we deal with in other chapters of Part 2.

3.1.2 Perseverance

Not only do we want student to attend school regularly each year, we want them to continue to do so until they complete both their elementary and secondary education. In other words, we want them to ***persevere*** until they graduate from high school.

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[a] For many years, these reports have been produced by Gérard Poulin, an external consultant who collects and manages much of the Board's school-based data.

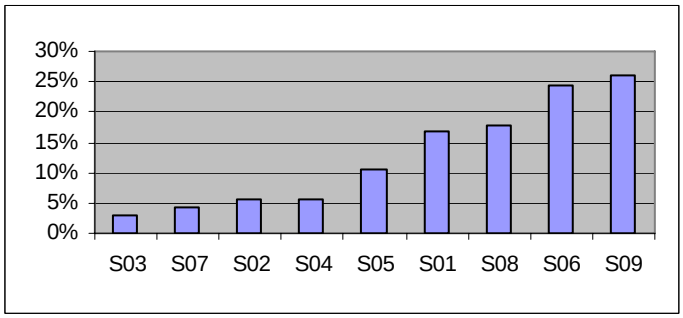
[b] The attendance rates shown here were computed by counting the average number of student days of presence in relation to a norm of 185 teaching days. These data should only be considered as ***indicative*** of student attendance and not an accurate depiction (see comments accompanying Exhibit C-2 in Appendix C).

[c] Data tables on various aspects of attendance showing the details for each school for all seven years are provided in Exhibits C-2 to C-8, Appendix C.

[d] The specific reasons are: in bush with parents; at clinic or hospital; sick; slept in; no baby sitter; skipping; CSB tournament; school or CSB activities; in school suspension; suspension; out of school appointment; out of school tournament; community activities; out of town with parents; wedding of funerals; and not at work placement.

When absence from school becomes permanent, we are confronted with the phenomenon of drop-outs,[a] students who leave school without completing their secondary education and, in some cases, their elementary education.[b] Once again, the Mianscum report sounded the alarm about the high rate of drop-outs in the CSB: "The concern that the Cree Nation is producing future generations without a formal education is indeed frightening."[67]. Since that time, the situation has deteriorated even more.

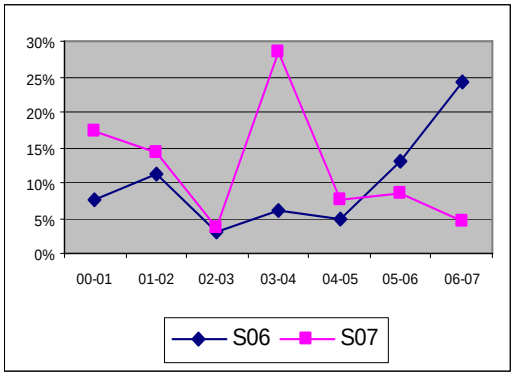
EXHIBIT 2-5: SECONDARY STUDENT DROP-OUTS, 2006-07



The annual attendance reports also include data on students who drop out during the year (September to June). As shown in this graph, the rates for secondary dropouts in 2006-07 vary considerably from one community to another.[c] Waswanipi (S09) and Waskaganish (S06) have the highest. rates, followed by Whapmagoostui (S01) and Ouje-Bougoumou (S08). This represents an average of 11% across all nine schools. One would not expect to find any drop-outs at the elementary level; however, Ouje-Bougoumou has a drop-out rate of 7% at this level, and Mistissini (S07) and Waswanipi each report 2% elementary drop-outs in 2006-07.

As shown below in Exhibit 2-6, the average drop-out rate changed very little over the past seven years; however, rates of individual schools change considerably from year to year. This variance is illustrated using two schools: Waskaganish and Mistissini.[d] The reason for this variance is one of the many unanswered questions of this Review.

EXHIBIT 2-6: SECONDARY DROP-OUT RATES: 200-01 TO 2006-07



School	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	Var
S01	14%	11%	12%	8%	11%	6%	17%	0.04
S02	20%	14%	12%	17%	23%	11%	6%	0.06
S03	8%	9%	11%	7%	15%	7%	3%	0.04
S04	5%	7%	14%	11%	9%	6%	6%	0.03
S05	14%	10%	3%	5%	8%	8%	10%	0.03
S06	8%	11%	3%	6%	5%	13%	24%	0.07
S07	17%	14%	4%	28%	8%	8%	4%	0.09
S08	7%	0%	6%	0%	6%	6%	18%	0.06
S09	5%	7%	22%	20%	24%	24%	26%	0.08
All	13%	11%	8%	14%	13%	11%	11%	0.02

***** The final column of the table (Var) displays the variance of each school over the seven-year period.

Research on successful schools emphasizes '***time-on-task***,' that is, the amount of time devoted to actual teaching and learning. Attendance and perseverance are necessary but not sufficient

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a Drop-out rates are the negative expression of perseverance (as absenteeism rates are the negative expression of attendance).

b Graduation rates may be used as a proxy measure of engagement but they also reflect curricular learning, which is where these data are reported (see section 2.2.1, p. 52).

c It should be noted that the data used to construct these drop-out rates do not take transfers from one school to another into account.

d The variance is measured as the standard deviation in each school's drop-out rates over the seven years.

conditions for achieving high levels of time-on-task, which also require engaged students, as presented below, and engaged teaching, as presented in section 4.2.1.

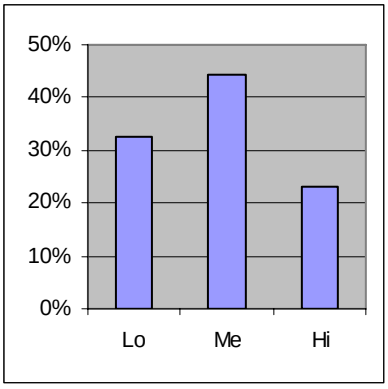
3.1.3 Engagement in Learning

True engagement is not only difficult to measure but even developing some sense of the level of engagement in a school requires structured observation over a long period of time. We knew that this was beyond our reach, so we were obliged to rely on limited classroom observations, and feedback from students and teachers. Research on student engagement tells us that students engage when learning is *real* to them and disengage when it is not. As one **secondary teacher** observed:

> *I get the sense in my classes, or just generally, that classroom activity is one great abstraction [for students].... I think most of the time they spend in class is an abstraction from reality. I work hard trying to make some kind of connection between that abstraction and their real lives. There are some children who want to learn and be there and they get it but, I'd say the majority don't.*

There were five items on the questionnaire completed by teachers. They were asked to rate the engagement of their students on a scale of 1 to 6. Exhibit 2-7 summarizes their responses in terms of the percentage of teachers who gave a low, medium or high rating to each item.[a]

EXHIBIT 2-7: TEACHER RATING OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



Items	N	Rating*		
		Lo	Me	Hi
1. My students are motivated to succeed.	105	23%	50%	27%
2. My students come to class ready to learn.	107	36%	43%	21%
3. My students actively participate in class discussions.	105	42%	32%	26%
4. My students complete work assigned to them.	103	25%	51%	25%
5. My students are able to work independently.	104	37%	45%	18%

* Each item was rated on a six-point scale, where **1**= virtually none of my students exhibit this characteristic to **6**=virtually all of my students exhibit this characteristic. In this exhibit, the responses have been regrouped here as follows: **Low** = 1 or 2; **Medium** =3 or 4; **High** =5 or 6; **N**=number of respondents.

When considered together, these five items provide a very rough measure of student engagement, as seen through the eyes of teachers. As shown in the graph, 23% of teachers rate student engagement as high; 44%, assign a medium rating and 33% a low rating. As can be seen from the data displayed above, There is a similar distribution for each item, while noting that smaller number of high responses for item 5 (independent work).

The average rating for all items was 3.32, a 'middle-of-the-road' rating.[b] There was some variance across schools, the average ranging from 2.69 to 3.49. Respondents were asked to indicate their language and level of instruction.

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[a] For the number of responses for each of the six categories and mean response for each item, see Exhibit C-22 in Appendix C.

[b] The average for each item varied from 3.11 (item 5) to 3.56 (item 1).

- In relation to language, the average score was highest among Cree teachers (3.99) and lowest among English teachers (3.13).

- In relation to level, the average score was highest among kindergarten to grade 3 teachers (4.25) and lowest among secondary teachers (2.89).[a]

We asked students and former students about their engagement in school. Since engagement is a rather abstract concept, we asked them what they liked or didn't like about school, what kind of feeling they got from their school - happy, sad, excited, bored, etc. A former student, now a parent herself, recounted the experience of her son:

Q: *Why is the absenteeism so high?*

A: *Well, I have a 7 year old and he says: 'Mom, I don't want to go to school.' 'Why?' 'It's boring. We don't do nothing. We just colour.'*

Q: *And that's in Cree?*

A: *Yeah. He's in Grade 2. But sometimes when I try to encourage him to go, I say, well maybe you're going to learn something. Maybe they're going to teach you today. No, they won't. And he would start crying because he says, no, I'm telling you, we don't do nothing there. It's boring, boring. That's what he says.*

Grade 4-6 students in one school said they liked coming to school "sometimes." When asked to explain why sometimes and not others, the answer was "bullying." When parents in another school stated that the school had a 'zero-tolerance' policy toward bullying, they expressed the opinion that bullying had decreased dramatically. However, when we asked secondary students: Are there any serious problems that make this school the kind of place you really do not like? The answer was: "bullying." This case illustrates that the experiences of students in school cannot be taken for granted on the basis of adult opinion. We need to let them speak for themselves.

> The only way to understand students' experiences in school is to let them speak for themselves.

Many students talked about their experience in classes. One could not predict favourite classes by the subject being taught. For example, secondary students in one school identified math as their favourite class. When asked: Is it because of the subject or is it because of the way the teacher teaches it, or what? their response was unequivocal:

The way the teacher teaches it.

Students did not like classes because they were easy. In fact, they complained about classes that did not provide any challenge:

It's easy for us, but when we get to college it's probably going to be really hard for us because of the level that the school is here, I think it's kind of low - like secondary 1 [the students were in secondary V].

Similar comments were heard from grade 4-6 students in another school:

Q *Is the work that you have hard? Is it hard for you to do, or easy?*

[a] The average for French teachers was 3.13; for elementary teachers (grades 4-6), 3.72; for teachers who taught in more than one language and at more than one level of instruction, the averages were respectively 3.35 and 3.76.

A: *Easy.*

Q: *It's easy most of the time? Does that make it a little bit boring?*

A: *Yes.*

Former students reflected on their experiences and many recalled the positive and negative influences of their home environment on their engagement in schooling:

> *My parents or my grandparents didn't graduate; they didn't pass grade four. But they still valued education and they really pushed us. Sleeping in was not an option.*
>
> *A cousin of mine always got into trouble and he was kicked out. In secondary 3 he comes back and he's totally different, totally changed. He was there every day and he was working hard. I'm not too sure what drove him to do it, but I think it had something to do with thinking about his future, what he was going to do.*

As these brief extracts illustrate, student engagement - or disengagement - in learning and school life is multi-layered. It starts at home with parental attitudes that value education and parental practices that support education, beginning with ensuring that children attend school regularly. Engagement is fostered by a variety of school conditions, beginning with a safe and welcoming climate. The core of engagement is found in the classroom: caring relationships and effective classroom practices. We will explore these issues in subsequent chapters of Part 2. At this stage, our concern is to focus on our expectations for student engagement.

3.1.4 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether student engagement meets the stated standard:

- Students attend school regularly and take an active part in learning and school life.

We analyzed student engagement in relation to three issues: attendance, perseverance (staying in school) and actual engagement in their own learning.

Student attendance was a major concern in virtually every school we visited. In 2006-07, the average attendance in all schools of the CSB was 77%. This means that, on average, students are absent for 43 days of the school year. Even more disturbing is the fact that attendance has been getting worse over time.

When absence from school becomes permanent, we are confronted with drop-outs, students who do not *persevere* until they graduate. In 2006-07 11% of secondary students dropped out between September and June, a rate that has not changed much over time.

Many of the students who remain in school are not truly *engaged* in learning. We attributed this situation to a combination of a variety of factors dealt with in later chapters of Part 2.

Based on our analysis of student engagement, we recommend:

R7 **THAT** the Board use available data from other schools in Québec to identify suitable ***benchmarks*** for student attendance, perseverance in school and engagement in learning.

R8 **THAT** the Board set appropriate ***standards*** for student attendance, perseverance in school and engagement in learning, applicable to all schools in the CSB.

R9 **THAT** each school, in collaboration of the Board, set appropriate ***targets*** for student attendance, perseverance in school and engagement in learning.

R10 **THAT** the ***capacity*** to achieve the standards and targets set for student attendance, perseverance in school and engagement in learning (recommendations 8 & 9) be developed in accordance with other recommendations of this report.

The importance of the relationship between recommendation 10 and recommendations 8 and 9 cannot be overstated. Merely stating desired results (standards and targets) might help to sharpen your focus and the commitment of stakeholders, but it will do nothing to achieve them. The path to improvement first requires a clear understanding of the issues, which begins, but does end, with the insights provided by this and other sections of this report. The focus in many of these other sections is on performance and capacity which are required to achieve results. Any statement of results without improved capacity and performance amounts to nothing more than ***wishful thinking***.

Capacity ➔ Performance ➔ Results

3.2 Curricular Learning

Curricular learning can be understood as the mastery of the 'competencies' expected by the curriculum that is taught at each level of instruction.[a] Our understanding of how well students have mastered the relevant competencies is dependent on how student achievement is assessed, how these assessments are communicated and on the availability of data from this process. Values are implicit in any assessment system. "We all know from our own school days, what gets measured ... gets valued. If schools do not measure what they value, what others choose to measure will be valued."[68] Thus, for example, if we value the importance of critical thinking, an assessment based on regurgitation of facts is woefully inadequate. Unfortunately, many student competencies that we value (e.g. social and emotional competencies) are often neglected because they are difficult to assess (see text box).[69]

> "We must learn to measure what we value rather than valuing what we can easily measure."

Assessment of student achievement is typically done by one or more of the following:

- classroom assessment by teachers;
- standardized tests; or
- uniform examinations.

Teacher assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning and ought to form the core of any assessment system.[b] Teachers are in the best position to match assessments to learning. However, it is widely acknowledged that standards vary considerably, depending on the expectations and expertise of individual teachers.[70] Hence the reliance on external 'large scale' assessments, using standardized tests.

Large scale assessments of student achievement using standardized tests have become the policy option of choice around the world. The Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA] and the Third International Mathematics and Science Study [TIMSS] exemplify this trend. Governments and the general public tend to have a lot of faith in these types of assessment and use them to rank schools.[c]

By contrast, the denunciation of the 'cult of testing'[71] by the Canadian Teachers' Federation reflects the opposition of both teachers and school administrators to large scale assessments (see text box).[72] We believe that this opposition is justified,[73] as are concerns that some tests may be culturally biased. However, standardized tests can be useful to provide a common measure of achievement of language and math competencies, providing stakeholders with some measure, however imperfect, of how their students are doing in relation to those from outside the school board.

> "Many current student testing policies ... contain flaws that detract from what should be our primary goal: improving learning."

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[a] See the discussion of curriculum in section 4.3 (p. 83).

[b] Thus, the *Public Education Act* that applies in other school boards in Québec recognizes the prerogative of the teacher: "to select the means of evaluating the progress of students so as to examine and assess continually and periodically the needs and achievement of objectives of every student entrusted to his care" (s. 19(2)). this is subject to: (a) the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement approved by the principal following input from teachers; (b) the *Basic School Regulation*; and (c) uniform examinations imposed by law. None of thee provisions are included in the *Education Act* that applies to the CSB.

[c] See discussion of school evaluation in section 6.4 (p. 136).

Uniform examinations may be developed at a school board level but more often at the ministry level. In Québec, uniform exams have been used for years to measure student achievement in compulsory secondary subjects, mostly at the secondary IV and V levels. Like standardized tests, they provide a common basis of comparison, with the added advantage that they are based on the mandated curriculum.

Performance Standard

- Students demonstrate acquisition of the required competencies specified in the curriculum for their level of instruction.

For several years, students from the CSB did not write ministry exams; however, this moratorium ended in 2006. As will be seen in the presentation of data that follows, the results of CSB students on these exams ought to have sounded an alarm to the Board that its students were not mastering the same curriculum as students in other boards. In fact, in many cases, they were not even being taught that curriculum.[a]

We endeavoured to collect data on student curricular achievement from published MELS data and board data on:

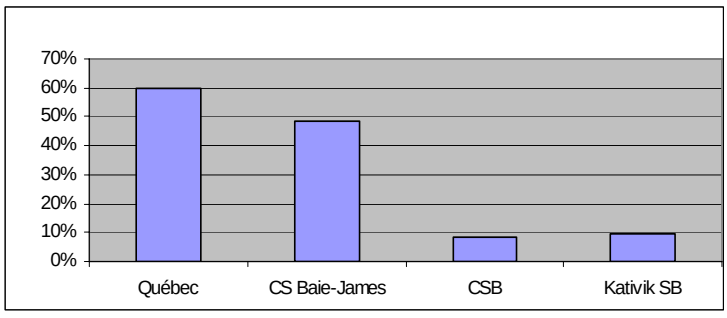
- graduation rates;
- curricular subjects; and
- standardized tests; as well as

data from teachers and other stakeholders.

3.2.1 Graduation Rates

Graduation rates are indicators of engagement, curricular learning and overall school success. They tell us the percentage of students that complete school, the remainder, being those who dropped out.[b] Graduation rates are typically measured by designating a group of students (usually called a '**cohort**') entering secondary school in a given year.[c] The graduation rate is equal to the percentage of students in this cohort who graduate, ideally, at the end of five years. However, because some students graduate in subsequent years, graduation rates often include percentage of graduations after 6 years, 7 years, etc.

EXHIBIT 2-8: COMPARATIVE GRADUATION RATES, 2001 COHORT



As shown in Exhibit 2-8, using the most recent Ministry data, 60.1% of the 2001 cohort for the entire Québec school system graduated in five years. Although the Minister is very concerned about this graduation rate, the results for the CSB pale by comparison - 8,6%. In terms of other northern boards, the rate for Kativik is only slightly higher (9.6%), whereas the rate of the

[a] See discussion on teaching in section 4.1 (p. 67)

[b] See discussion on drop-outs in section 2.1.2 (p. 45).

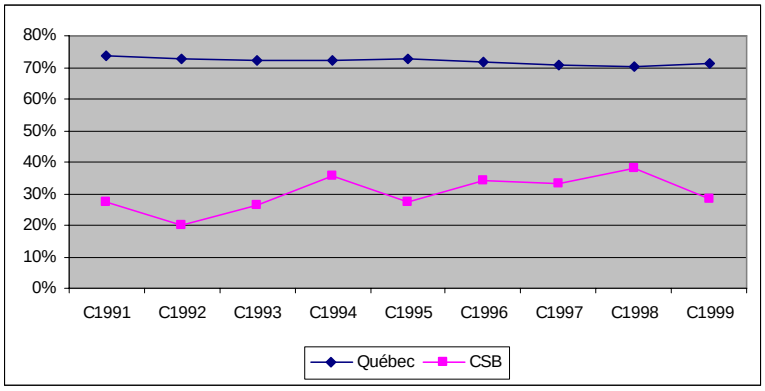
[c] We identify a cohort by prefixing the letter 'C' to the year in which the students began secondary school. Thus, C2001 designates the group of students who began in 2000-01, with graduation anticipated in 2005-06.

Commission scolaire de la Baie-James (48.6%) is much closer to the provincial average.[a]

Over the past four years for which data are available (cohorts C1998 to C2001), the graduation rate after five years of secondary school has risen slightly across Québec, while it has fallen dramatically in the CSB. A similar change can be seen for graduation after six years over the three years for which data are available (C1998 to C2000). However, three or four years is not a long enough time span to see any true patterns in the evolution of gradation rates.

When one looks at graduation after seven years shown in Exhibit 2-9, the provincial rate has remained very stable. By contrast, the rate of the CSB has fluctuated a great deal. However, even the 'high points' of the CSB rates fall well below provincial averages. We do not know why this has happened so this question remains unanswered.

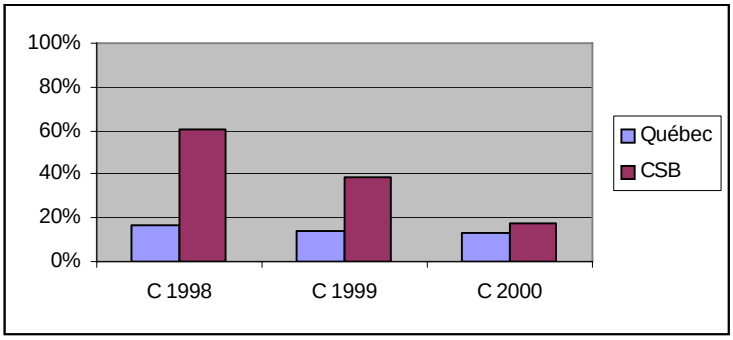
EXHIBIT 2-9: GRADUATION AFTER 7 YEARS (VARIOUS COHORTS)



There is another comparison that is very revealing about the performance of the CSB over time: the increase in graduation rates when additional time is provided. In other words, if the graduation rate after 5 years is X%, how much does that rate improve when measured after 6 years, after 7 years, etc.?

By allowing one additional year, the provincial graduation rate for the 1998 cohort went up 9.4 points from 57.7 to 67.1, which is equivalent to an increase of 16%.[b] The increase for the next two cohorts for 1999 and 2000 were similar but not quite as high.

EXHIBIT 2-10: INCREASE IN GRADUATION AFTER 6 YEARS



However, when we look at the data for the CSB, we see a very different picture, as shown in Exhibit 2-10. For the 1998 cohort, the increase in the CSB graduation rate is more than three times the provincial increase, 61 compared to 16%. For the 1999 cohort, the CSB still shows a higher increase but not nearly as much, 39 compared to 14%. For the 2000 cohort, the CSB increase is only slightly better than the provincial rate, 18 compared to 13%.

Aside from demonstrating the importance of additional time for students to successfully complete school, these data show that this additional time is not as advantageous to CSB students as it was a few years ago. A quick glance at the three bars representing CSB data in Exhibit 2-10 shows how this advantage has declined from 61 through 39 to 18%. The data show us that in the past more CSB students continued their schooling after 5 years and graduated

[a] Determining graduate rates is a technically demanding exercise as one must ensure that students entering school who were not part of the cohort are excluded and students who leave and return to school are counted. If students transfer to another school in the system, they can still be tracked by a provincial data system, but not if they transfer to an out-of-province school. However, it is extremely difficult for an individual school board, let alone a school, to track such transfers. Hence almost all reliable cohort studies use provincial data.

[b] This increase is calculated as follows: 9.1÷57.7x100.

after 6 years. (We also know that the graduation continued to increase after 7 years.) This decline from 61 to 18% suggests that fewer CSB students who fail to graduate after 5 years are continuing their studies. In the past, they took longer but kept at it. Now they are simply dropping out altogether.

Additional time to complete secondary schooling is most likely to be advantageous when:

- students are motivated to continue or return to school;
- conditions provided by the school board are supportive for such continued study; or
- some combination of the two.

Further study is required to determine what factors are actually at play here. However, given other evidence from this Review, it would not be unreasonable to hypothesize that students are less motivated and supportive conditions have deteriorated.

In order to gain some insight into the relative rate of graduation in different schools within the CSB, we obtained board data concerning the number of graduates by school for a period of ten years (1997-98 to 2006-07), in which the total number of graduates in the CSB was 542. Comparing the number of graduates between large and small schools is not very instructive and we had no way of constructing graduation rates for individual schools. We therefore decided to base the comparison on the number of graduates relative to the total student population in each school.

EXHIBIT 2-11: GRADUATES BY SCHOOL

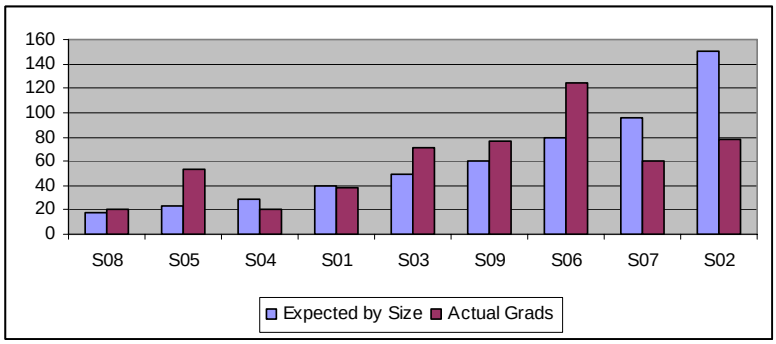


Exhibit 2-11 ranks the schools from smallest (S08: Ouje-Bougoumou) to largest (S02: Chisasibi), using current student population for purposes of comparison. In each case, the first bar shows the number of graduates out of the total of 542 that one would expect, given the size of the school. The second bar shows the actual number of graduates for the school.

As shown in this graph, the number of graduates for Whapmagoostui (S01) is about the same as the number expected, given a total of 542 for the Board as a whole. By contrast, the number of graduates for Nemaska (S05) is considerably higher than the number expected, given a total of 542 for the Board as a whole. A striking contrast in the opposite direction can be seen in the case of Chisasibi (S02), where the number of graduates is considerably lower than the number expected, given a total of 542 for the Board as a whole.[a]

It is important to remember that this comparison is based on the actual number of graduates in the CSB (542) which is extremely low. If the number of graduates in each school were compared to the number expected for a school of similar size in other jurisdictions in Québec, then every school would be low by comparison with this norm. Some would simply be even lower than others.

[a] See Exhibit C-9 in Appendix C, for details about how this comparison was made, as well as data for each of the schools.

3.2.2 Curricular Subjects

The analysis presented here focuses on 32 subjects at the secondary IV and V levels in first and second language subjects (Cree, English and French), history, math and science.[a]

EXHIBIT 2-12: CORE SECONDARY SUBJECTS

Subject Areas	English Stream	French Stream
Cree Language & Culture (8)	Cree Mother Tongue IV	Crie langue maternelle IV
	Cree Mother Tongue V	Crie langue maternelle V
	Cree Culture IV	Culture crie IV
	Cree Culture V	Culture crie V
English (4)	English Language Arts IV	
	English Language Arts V	
	English second-language IV [b]	
	English second-language V [b]	
French (4)		Français langue maternelle IV [b]
		Français langue maternelle V [b]
	Français langue seconde IV	
	Français langue seconde V	
History (2)	History of Québec and Canada	Histoire du Québec et Canada
Math (10)	Mathematics 416	Mathématique 416
	Mathematics 426	Mathématique 426
	Mathematics 436	Mathématique 436
	Mathematics 516	Mathématique 516
	Mathematics 536	Mathématique 536
Science (4)	Physical Science 416	Sciences physiques 436
	Physical Science 436	Sciences physiques 436

The graduation rates discussed above can be thought of as the summation of achievement in curricular subjects throughout students' years of schooling. However, graduation rates only tell us the percentage of students who completed the minimum requirements for a secondary diploma; they do not tell us how well students did in terms of individual courses of study.

We were not able to collect any data on curricular achievement at the elementary level and at the secondary level we were limited to published data on June exam results,[74] and course marks retrieved from the Ministry data bank.

EXHIBIT 2-13: AVERAGE MARKS ACROSS THE YEARS

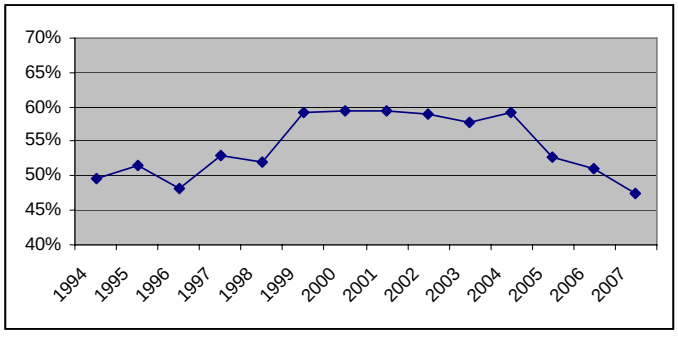


Exhibit 2-13 looks at the average marks for all fourteen years for which data were available.[c] Here we see that they rose to a plateau from 1999 to 2004 and then began to decline to the present low in 2007 of 41%. There is also some variance across schools, from a low average mark in Eastmain (46%) to a *relatively* higher average in Waswanipi and Ouje-Bougoumou (61%). However, none of these averages, nor any of the pass rates,

[a] Further analysis on curricular learning can be found under in Exhibits C-10 to C-14 in Appendix C.

[b] English and French second-language courses are taken by students in both streams.

[c] The data for this graph are drawn from Exhibit 2-14 which follows.

which vary from 42% in Eastmain to 68% in Nemaska and Ouje-Bougoumou, is acceptable. Furthermore, as low as these results are, they present an inflated picture of curricular learning in the CSB, as they only include the number of student results submitted to MELS.[a] The average mark and success rate for each year for which data were available and for each school (for all years) are shown below in Exhibit 2-14.

EXHIBIT 2-14: COURSE RESULTS, 1994-2007

All Years					All schools			
Year	**N***	**Avg**	**Pass**		**School**	**N***	**Avg**	**Pass**
1994	6	50%	17%					
1995	12	52%	50%					
1996	40	48%	33%					
1997	206	53%	43%					
1998	462	52%	48%					
1999	971	59%	63%		S01	766	57%	63%
2000	1572	59%	65%		S02	2001	54%	54%
2001	1232	59%	67%		S03	1753	56%	57%
2002	1616	59%	65%		S04	761	46%	42%
2003	1689	58%	62%		S05	1292	60%	68%
2004	1803	59%	66%		S06	2834	59%	65%
2005	1594	53%	58%		S07	2562	53%	55%
2006	1761	51%	48%		S08	430	61%	68%
2007	1068	47%	41%		S09	1633	59%	60%
All	**14032**	**56%**	**59%**		**All**	**14032**	**56%**	**59%**

* N=number of examination results for each year or school as the case may be.

To sharpen our understanding of student results, we looked at the average marks and success rate in each of the 32 subjects considered in the most recent year (2006-07) and in previous years (since 1993-94). What is most striking about the data for 2006-07 is the total absence of any results for students in twelve subjects, including Cree culture at both the secondary IV and V levels:

- Cree Culture IV (En, Fr);
- Cree Culture V (En, Fr);
- English Second-Language V;
- Math 436 (En, Fr), 514 (Fr), 536 (En, Fr); and
- Physical Science (En, Fr).

This means that in 2006-07, not one student in any school of the CSB received any credit for any of these twelve core subjects. In the remaining twenty subjects, the results ranged from a 73% average mark in Math 514 down to 20% in Math 426, as shown in Exhibit 2-15.

[a] Excluded from the total on which the average is computed are students enrolled in school but not registered for the exam, those registered but for whom no mark was submitted, as well as all those who ought to have been enrolled in school but who dropped out. Furthermore, for most years covered by this analysis (1994 to 2005), none of these marks were based on Ministry exams or standards.

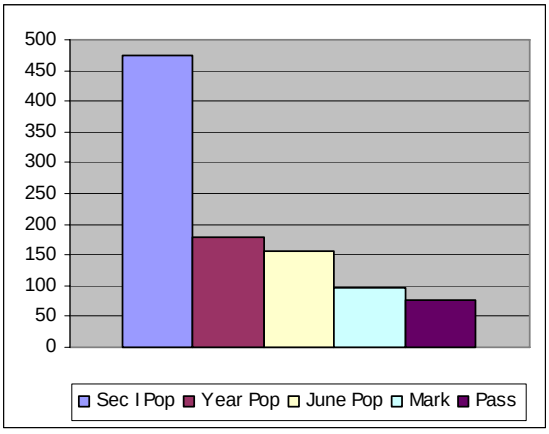
EXHIBIT 2-15: STUDENT RESULTS IN CORE SUBJECTS, 2006-07

Subjects	N	Avg*	Suc
Mathematics 514	3	73%	100%
Crie langue maternelle V	29	70%	83%
Crie langue maternelle IV	40	69%	75%
Cree Mother Tongue V	67	66%	78%
Cree Mother Tongue IV	120	61%	68%
Sciences physiques 416	48	51%	54%
English Language Arts V	26	48%	42%
History of Québec and Canada	207	48%	37%
Histoire du Québec et Canada	89	46%	34%
Physical Science 416	101	46%	34%
Français langue seconde V	58	43%	28%
Français langue seconde IV	28	41%	21%
English second-language IV	64	41%	39%
Français langue maternelle IV	51	33%	18%
Français langue maternelle V	23	30%	22%
Mathématique 416	15	28%	7%
Mathématique 426	10	27%	0%
English Language Arts IV	28	26%	14%
Mathematics 416	44	26%	5%
Mathematics 426	17	20%	6%

* The solid bar across this exhibit indicates the dividing line between average marks that are above or below the pass mark of 60%.

As can be seen in Exhibit 2-15, an average mark equal or greater to a passing grade (60%) was only achieved in five subjects. When individual student records are counted, only 41% of all students whose mark was submitted (436 out of 1 068) received a passing grade.

EXHIBIT 2-16: CREE V EXAM RESULTS, 2006-07



As alluded to earlier, when one considers the total number of students in secondary IV and V, as well as the number that ought to have been enrolled, then this picture darkens even more. The percentage success rate is computed in relation to the number of students whose mark was submitted to the Ministry. When this rate is computed in relation to the total number of students who should have had a mark submitted, the percentage drops. It drops even more when computed in relation to the number of students registered in the entire year and more again when the basis is the number of students who ought to have been in school, if there had been no drop-outs. The different rates are illustrated in Exhibit 2-16 with data for Cree mother tongue exams in secondary V in 2006-07 (English and French sectors combined).

- The first bar on the left shows the number of students in all schools of the CSB in secondary I in 2002-03 - the number one would hope to see in secondary V in 2006-07;
- the second bar shows the number of students in secondary V in all schools of the CSB in 2006-07, the difference reflecting drop-outs in the intervening years;
- the third bar shows the number of students in secondary V at the end of June, the difference reflecting drop-outs during the year;

- the fourth bar shows the number of students with a mark submitted for the Cree mother tongue V exam; and
- the final bar shows the number of students who passed.

These data enable us to take a different view of the success rate of students in this subject:

- when compared to the number of marks submitted, the pass rate is 79%;
- when compared to the number of students present in June, the pass rate drops to 48%;
- when compared to the number present during the year, the pass rate drops to 42%; but
- when compared to those enrolled in secondary I five years ago, the rate drops to 16%.[a]

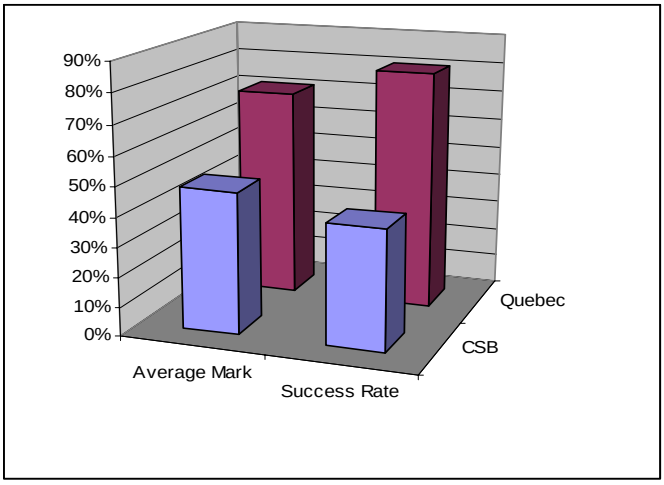
It will not come as a surprise to anyone that these results do not appear in a better light, when compared to those observed in other schools in Québec. To make this comparison, we focused on the eight subjects that MELS reports for all schools. The results for 2006 are shown below.

EXHIBIT 2-17: COMPARISON OF 2006 STUDENT RESULTS

Course	Average		Success	
	CSB	QC	CSB	QC
English Language Arts V	47%	73%	43%	93%
English second-language V	52%	80%	46%	94%
Français langue maternelle V	45%	70%	20%	84%
Français langue seconde V	54%	77%	52%	93%
History of Québec and Canada	54%	69%	53%	76%
Mathematics 436	18%	65%	5%	69%
Mathematics 514	48%	70%	44%	81%
Physical Science 416	45%	69%	31%	77%
All Subjects	48%	71%	40%	81%

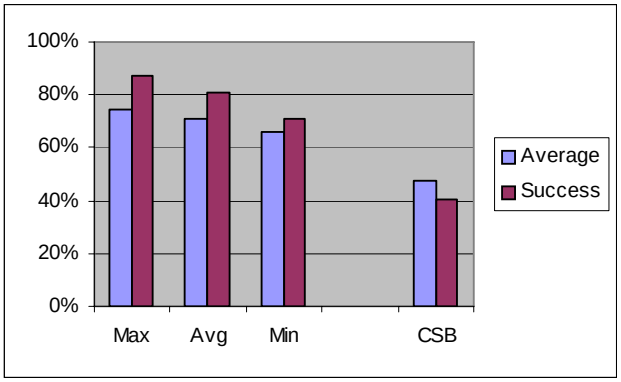
As shown in this exhibit, both average marks and success rates in the CSB fall considerably below the provincial norm. Exhibit 2-18 illustrates the 'bottom line' of this comparison for all subjects listed in Exhibit 2-17.

EXHIBIT 2-18: A SNAPSHOT OF CURRICULAR LEARNING: 2006-2007



[a] It should be noted that these data only provide an approximation of the number of students that should be considered and do not take into account exact number of transfers, etc. They are meant to provide a ***proxy*** measure of success.

EXHIBIT 2-19: CSB IN RELATION TO OTHER BOARDS



While the average mark across Québec varies from 69 to 80% in the subjects reported, for an average of 71% for all eight subjects, average marks in the CSB vary from 18 to 54% with an average of 48% for all eight subjects. Similarly, the success rate in the CSB varies from 5 to 46%, for an average of 40%, while across Québec, the range is 69 to 94%, for an average of 81%.

The provincial norms come from the results in all public school boards, except those in the Cree and Kativik school boards. In order to see how the results for the CSB compared to all public boards, not just the average, we looked at the results for each of the 70 boards reported for 2006. The summary of our analysis as presented in Exhibit 2-19, which shows that the CSB falls completely outside the range of all boards in Québec.[a]

The range of results by board varies from a minimum of 66% to a maximum of 75% for the average mark on all eight subjects, while the range of the success rates varies from 71 to 87%. The CSB scores of 48 and 40% for average mark and success rate fall well below these minimums. No results have yet been published for 2007 but it is reasonable to expect that this already very wide performance gap will get even wider, as marks on CBS exams declined even lower in 2007.[b]

There was a general recognition by virtually all stakeholders that the level of curricular learning is very low and a general perception that it has been getting worse, year after year. Much of their feedback will be dealt with in subsequent chapters in Part 2 which endeavour to explain why these results are so low. At this stage, we are only dealing with the results themselves.

Predictably, language is a major issue cited by many, especially first versus second (and even third) language expectations. We do not have any data on the language first learned. However, we assume that for the vast majority of children that language is Cree. For these students, English is a second language, but one which most use in daily life. (Again, we have no data on the relative use of each language outside of school.) French is often considered as a third language, because, in many communities, it is not used by students in daily life.

Expectations regarding language learning vary considerably. Some **elders**, for example, worry that students are not learning Cree:

> *In our school we are only teaching our children basic Cree. They only know half of the language. There are a lot of Cree words that they don't know. Some of the children do not understand all the Cree words. When I tell my children stories in Cree, sometimes they don't understand all the words. Then I have to explain them.*
>
> *I think it is very important that they learn how to write in our language.*
>
> *Children should learn English too but we should place the importance on our language. If we are not diligent in trying to preserve our language we can lose it. We can lose our language very fast.*

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[a] Kativik is not included but it also falls completely outside the range of all other boards in Québec.

[b] As shown previously in Exhibit 2-14, the average mark in all 32 subjects considered declined from 51 to 47% from 2006 to 2007, the success rate falling from 48 to 41%. For these eight subjects, the average mark dropped to 46% and the success rate to 35% in this same period.

Not surprisingly, there are many other stakeholders, including parents, teachers and administrators, who feel that language skills in English and/or French is the major concern. (We say 'and/or' because some feel that students should learn one of these two languages, others that they should learn both.) As one **teacher** expressed it: *Students now enter high school with little knowledge of either French or English.*

There is an evident need to clarify language expectations at all levels of instruction for students in Cree, English and French, specifically with respect to:

- oral language, reading and writing;
- first versus second language levels of proficiency; and
- general expectations for all students versus specialized expectations for some students.

These expectations provide the basis for setting requirements for curriculum, instructional materials and classroom teaching to be discussed in subsequent sections. However, this basis is not merely the foundation of language programming. You cannot expect students to master a range of other subjects whose language of instruction is English or French mother tongue, if the language expectations for these same students are based on second language levels of proficiency.

Acquisition of skills in Cree language is closely associated in many people's minds with mastery of Cree culture. Here again, results are poor and vary considerably across schools within the Board. Beyond vague notions of 'preserving Cree culture and traditions' there do not seem to be any clear expectations for what students should master in this important area in any given year, let alone over the course of their education. There is no evidence of any progression in the expectations for students from one grade to the next.

Although issues of language tend to overshadow every discussion of student results, curricular learning in math, science and other subjects is of equal concern. Several teachers and administrators spoke about the low level of math skills in the early grades. Since math skills are cumulative, these shortcomings mean that the problem gets progressively worse so that virtually no students are graduating from high school with the level of math skills that would enable them to be admitted to, let alone succeed in, pure and applied science programs in CEGEP.

Clear and progressive learning expectations for other subjects are equally lacking. In fact, setting appropriate expectations for student learning does not seem to be a priority. Expectations are low and, as almost always happens when this occurs in schools, students live down to this level of expectations.

Although, as stated above for language, expectations set the basis for setting curriculum, if the CSB adopts, in any meaningful way, the curriculum contained in the Québec Education Program,[a] then it will be adopting the expectations for learning that are part of this program.

Finally, as presented earlier in this chapter, setting the standards and targets for every type of curricular learning depends on building the capacity of the schools and the board to deliver the services that will lead to these results. Setting standards for Cree language and culture, for example, is merely an exercise in wishful thinking if there are no instructional resources to support the attainment of these results.

[a] See section 4.3 on curriculum on page 83.

3.2.3 Standardized Tests

As alluded to at the beginning of section 2.2, there has always been a fair amount of controversy surrounding the use - and misuse - of standardized tests. It is not the purpose of this report to explore this controversy. While acknowledging the perils of large-scale assessments,[75] we concur with the view that a "balanced model"[76] of student assessment is important for making data-based decisions about educational achievement.[a] Standardized tests are limited in scope but they can offer a reliable portrait of common skills and areas of knowledge considered important, provided the results are interpreted appropriately. The also provide a 'check-and-balance' of in-school assessments of student achievement. If, there is a considerable gap between the achievement levels reported by these two means of assessment for students at a given grade level, then something is wrong. The mere existence of such a discrepancy does not tell you what is wrong but it does indicate that this cause should be investigated so that appropriate action may be taken.

However, it is important to remember, as one **secondary teacher** stated in a focus group, that we do not fall into the trap of 'teaching to the test.' The test should help us see what students learn in school; they should not determine what they are taught:

> *We're not teaching them to learn anything. I was with [name of Board consultant] yesterday and he said well, you teach so that they can pass the CAT. I said, why? Teach them so they can be able to learn and not to pass a CAT test that's set once a year.*

The CSB administers the Canadian Achievement Tests [CAT] and the Comprehensive English Language Test [CELT]. The basic battery of the CAT-3 (third edition) consists of a reading/language test that integrates comprehension, vocabulary and language questions and a mathematics test that includes questions from all strands as defined by each province. The CELT measures English language proficiency for English as a second language [ESL]. In the CSB, these tests are administered to students in the English language stream in grades 6 and 9, and to students in the French language stream in grade 6.[b]

Test results provide both 'normative' and 'criterion-referenced' data about student achievement. Normative data indicate how well students perform in relation to various reference groups. Criterion-referenced data indicate how well students perform in relation to the competencies being tested. Thus, for example, normative data tell us how well grade 6 students are doing in math in relation to other grade 6 students in Canadian schools; criterion-referenced data tell us how well they are doing in terms of number concepts, geometry and spatial sense, etc. In this report, we present the analysis of criterion-referenced CAT data for the three groups referred to above (grade 6 & 9 English; grade 6 French) for the past four years: 2003-04 to 2006-07.

---

[a] "The model includes the use of teacher-made measures, program level assessments, standardized tests, and credentialing examinations. Each of these measures serves different purposes and is an important component of an effective evaluation model" (see endnote 76, p. 4).

[b] For more information about the CAT-3 and CELT, see the website of the Canadian Testing Centre: http://www.canadiantestcentre.com/.

In any given year, the CAT comprises three tests and several sub-tests as listed below:

Reading
Fiction
Non-Fiction
Poetry
Words/Phrases in Context
Stated Information
Visual Materials
Central Thought
Analysis of Text
Critical Assessment

Language
Sentence Structure
Writing Conventions
Paragraph Structure
Information Management

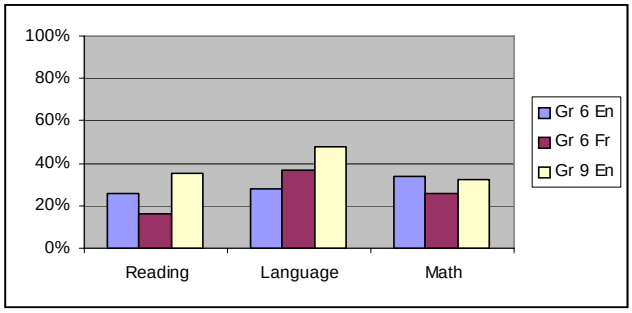
Mathematics
Number Concepts
Measurement
Patterns
Data Analysis and Probability
Geometry and Spatial Sense

The results are reported as follows in relation to the competencies being tested:

- **Low**: does not meet end-grade expectations [**L**];
- **Competent**: meets end-grade expectations [**C**]; and
- **Proficient**: exceeds meet end-grade expectations [**P**].

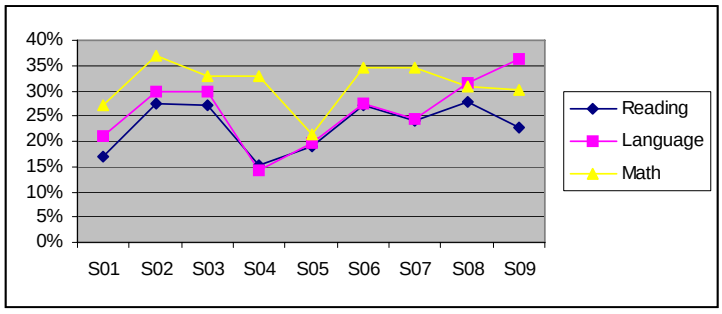
When sub scores are combined it is possible to provide a profile of student competencies in reading, language and math. The results of our analysis are summarized in this graph for all four years for which data were available. Because almost no students surpassed the level of expected competencies,[a] the graph in Exhibit 2-20 combines the scores for competent [C] and proficient [P].

EXHIBIT 2-20: STANDARDIZED TESTS RESULTS, 2004-07



In no case do even half the students being tested attain the expected level of competencies, the highest score being 47% on the grade 9 English language test. The lowest score is 16% on the grade 6 French reading test.

EXHIBIT 2-21: TEST SCORES ACROSS SCHOOLS



There is almost no variance across schools in terms of the percentage of students who surpass expected competencies.[b] There is some variance in terms of the number that meet (but do not exceed) expected competencies, as illustrated in Exhibit 2-21 for grade 6 English tests. As one would expect, the scores for each school in reading and language, are, with one exception (S09), very similar. The math scores tend to vary as the reading and language scores but are generally higher. Overall, all scores vary between 14 and 37%.

[a] Approximately 1% of students surpassed expected competencies in five of the nine tests: Gr 6 En, Gr 6 /Fr; Gr 9 En Reading, Gr 6 En language and Gr 6 Fr math; approximately 3% surpassed expectations in Gr 6 Fr and Gr 9 En language, while no students surpassed expectations in Gr 6 En and Gr 9 En math.

[b] For 74 observations (9 schools and 9 tests = 81 minus 7 cases where no scores from a school provided), there is one score of 7%, three scores of 4% the remaining 69 scores vary from 0 to 3%.

It should also be noted that not all students write these tests and some schools do not participate in the administration of a given test. There ought to have been 25 sets of results each year (grade 6 English and grade 9 English for 9 schools; grade 6 French for seven schools) for each of the four years considered. Excluding the grade 6 French test for 2004-05 which there are no test results, there ought to have been a total of 93 sets of results, when in fact there were only 82 sets.

EXHIBIT 2-22: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TESTED FOR READING IN 2006-07

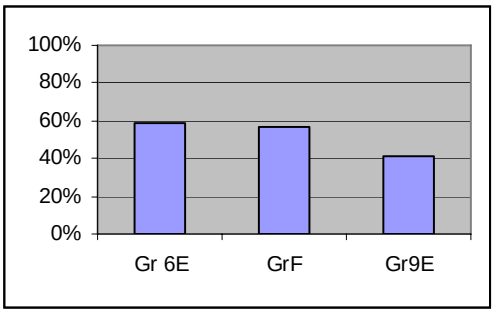


Exhibit 2-22 shows the percentage of students who wrote the reading test in each grade level tested in 2006-07. In this year, only 58 and 56% of students in grade 6 English and French streams wrote the test, while only 41% in grade 9 English wrote it. The percentages varied across schools, from 13% in grade 9 English in Nemaska to 100% in grade 6 French in this same school, not counting the five instances where no scores at all were reported.[a]

It is obvious from this brief presentation that students in the CSB do not possess the basic reading, language and math skills that are a prerequisite to success in school and beyond.

3.2.4 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether curricular learning meets the stated standard:

- Students demonstrate acquisition of the required competencies specified in the curriculum for their level of instruction.

Curricular learning can be understood as the mastery of the 'competencies' expected by the curriculum that is taught at each level of instruction. We looked at graduate rates, success in mastering curricular subjects, scores on standardized tests and feedback from stakeholders.

Using the most recent Ministry data, the average graduation rate in Québec, five years after starting of secondary school, is 60.1% while in the CSB, it is only 8.6%. Graduation rates increase when measured six (or more) years after starting of secondary school. In the past, CSB rates went up much more than other boards after six and seven years but that is no longer true. This means that instead of taking longer to complete school, students are simply dropping out altogether.

We also looked at various secondary IV and V subjects. In the exams written in June 2006, the average mark in Québec on a selection of these subjects was 71%, while the average mark in the CSB was 48%. Across Québec, 81% of students passed these subjects, while only 40% of students in the CSB passed. Excluding Katikik, CSB students are 30 points below the lowest success rate in any other board in the province.

Results on standardized tests in reading, language and math at the grade 6 and 9 levels in English and grade 6 French show that students do not have the basic literacy and numeracy skills needed to successfully complete school. Over the past 4 years, only 24% of grade 6 students in English and 16% in French showed mastery of reading at their expected level.

[a] For a breakdown by school, see Exhibits C-15 to C-20 on standardized scores in Appendix C.

Stakeholders know that the level of curricular learning is very low and realize that it has been getting worse, year after year. Cree language must be maintained but you cannot expect students to master a range of other subjects whose language of instruction is English or French mother tongue, if the language expectations for these same students are based on second language levels of proficiency. Based on our analysis of curricular learning, we recommend:

R11 **THAT**, following consultation of stakeholders in each community, standards be set for the mastery of speaking, reading and writing Cree, as well as for learning Cree culture, at every grade level of instruction, applicable to all schools in the CSB, while providing for progressive learning outcomes at each of these grade levels.

R12 **THAT** the standards for student learning in all other subjects be based on the QEP, including any locally modified programs that meet Ministry standards.

R13 **THAT** recommendations 11 and 12 be pursued in accordance with recommendation 33 (progressive implementation of new curricular model).

R14 **THAT** the means required to effect recommendations 11 to 13, including enhanced performance and capacity of schools and the Board offices, be developed in accordance with other recommendations of this report.

3.3 Social & Personal Learning

As recognized by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, education must develop the whole child, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically. Any conversation with teachers or parents about 'what matters' in student learning will invariably include social and personal learning (see examples in text box).[77] Most of us realize that not all learning comes from books - something that as been recognized in First Nations communities for millennia. Similarly, we now know that intelligence comprises multiple forms,[78] including emotional intelligence, which enables people to realize their own potential and get along with others.[a]

Social & Personal Learning

- Makes health lifestyle choices;
- Is physically fit;
- Has good self-image;
- Respects cultural and individual differences;
- Gets along with other people.

Performance Standard

- Students demonstrate a range of social and personal behaviours, skills and attitudes appropriate for their age level.

Based on the examination of a number of school report cards, social and personal learning is not formally assessed, except to the extent that it is covered by physical education, moral and religious education or 'cross-curricular competencies.'[b] Most schools do not collect any other data or report on the social and personal learning of students. We were not surprised, therefore, that such data were not readily available from schools of the CSB. We did attempt to gain some

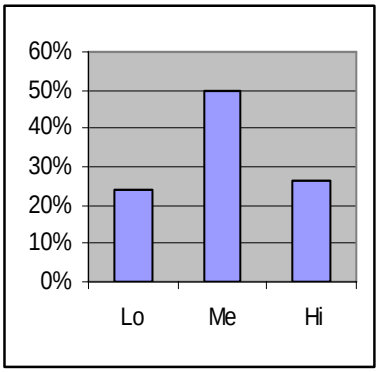
[a] Following Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, Goleman (see endnote 78) defines emotional intelligence in terms of five broad domains: emotional self-awareness; managing emotions; harnessing emotions productively (motivating oneself); empathy (reading emotions in others); and, handling relationships.

[b] See discussion of curriculum in section 4.3, beginning on page 83.

insights into this type of learning from stakeholders, beginning with five items on the questionnaire completed by teachers.

Teachers were ask to rate students' social and personal learning in terms of five items, using a scale of 1-6. Exhibit 2-23 summarizes their responses in terms of the percentage of teachers who gave a low, medium or high rating to each item.[a]

EXHIBIT 2-23: TEACHER RATING OF SOCIAL & PERSONAL LEARNING



Items	N	Rating*		
		Lo	Me	Hi
6. My students take proper care of their textbooks and other materials.	196	29%	45%	26%
7. My students demonstrate respect for other students.	203	20%	53%	27%
8. My students demonstrate respect for teachers and others.	204	17%	47%	37%
9. My students are tolerant of differences in others.	200	21%	55%	24%
10. My students find peaceful ways to deal with conflicts.	190	34%	48%	18%

* Each item was rated on a six-point scale, where **1**= virtually none of my students exhibit this characteristic to **6**=virtually all of my students exhibit this characteristic. In this exhibit, the responses have been regrouped here as follows: **Low** = 1 or 2; **Medium** =3 or 4; **High** =5 or 6; **N**=number of respondents.

As shown in the graph, 26% of teachers rate social and personal learning as high; 50% assign a medium rating and 24% a low rating. The distribution for each item is similar, while noting that item 8, respect for teachers and others, has the largest percentage of high score and item 10, peaceful conflict resolution, the smallest.

The average rating for all items was 3.57, slightly higher than the rating presented earlier for student engagement (3.32).[b] There was little variance across schools, the average ranging from 3.05 to 3.89. Respondents were asked to indicate their language and level of instruction.

- In relation to language, the average score was highest among Cree teachers (3.72) and lowest among teachers who taught in more than one language of instruction (3.29).

- In relation to level, the average score was highest among kindergarten to grade 3 teachers (3.78) and lowest among teachers who taught at more than one level of instruction (3.31).[c]

School administrators had little input to offer and tended to see this issue in terms of student behaviour in school. However, everyone is aware of the high level of social problems within each community which, in many cases, reflect low levels of social and personal learning of children and youth. We also know from the data cited in chapter 1 of Part 1 that the life style habits and health of children and youth is a major issue throughout the region.

Social and personal learning is closely associated with Cree culture and tradition, both in terms of transmitting values and connecting to family and community. As one **elder** put it:

---

[a] For the number of responses for each of the six categories and mean response for each item, see Exhibit C-22 in Appendix C.

[b] The average for each item varied from 3.19 (item 10) to 3,67 (item 7); for the data on student engagement, see Exhibit 2-7 (p. 47).

[c] The average for English and French teachers were 3.45 and 3.62 respectively; for elementary teachers (grades 4-6), 3.71 and secondary teachers, 3.51.

> *Our parents taught us the cultural skills from the time we were born. To-day the young people are not learning the cultural skills and are not able to pass them on to their children.*

These cultural skills are not only those required to live off the land; they include all the social behaviours associated with Cree values, including honesty, integrity and respect.[a]

Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether social and personal learning in the CSB meets the stated standard:

- Students demonstrate a range of social and personal behaviours, skills and attitudes appropriate for their age level.

We were not able to collect very much data on social and personal learning. This is unfortunate for three reasons. First, social and personal learning is closely associated with Cree culture and tradition, both in terms of transmitting values and connecting to family and community. Second, this type of learning includes physical and emotional well being, two important issues given what we know about youth in the region. Third, this type of learning reflects student's ability to interact with others, an essential skill for adulthood. Based on our analysis of the little data we did collect, we recommend:

R15 **THAT**, following consultation of stakeholders in each community, standards be set for the social and personal learning of students at every grade and level of instruction, as part of the cross-curricular competencies envisaged by the QEP.

R16 **THAT** the means required to effect recommendation 15, including enhanced performance and capacity of schools and the Board offices, be developed in accordance with other recommendations of this report.

[a] See Exhibits 1-8 and 1-10 in Part 1.

4.0 CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

The first layer of support for students occurs in individual classrooms, the primary interface of teaching and learning. Accordingly, in this performance theme, we posed the following question:

- How successful is the school in providing quality classroom instruction to its students?

This theme comprises three evaluative objects:

- teaching;
- instructional resources; and
- curriculum.

The standards used to evaluate each object are provided in each of the sub-sections that follow.

4.1 Teaching

Teaching is the core of education. As Fullan says: "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think - it's as simple and as complex as that."[79] No one in the school system is more important to promoting student success than teachers. In a study conducted for the National Union of Teachers in England, a group of students composed the portrait of a good teacher shown in the text box.[80] Commenting on this portrait, the authors of this study stated:

> If there is in this an over emphasis on the 'soft' inter-personal qualities of the teacher it in no way undermines the importance of the 'strong' qualities - having high expectations, motivating and challenging young people to do better. One young person spoke about being 'overcared for' to the extent that her educational needs were being forgotten. Although she had difficulties at home and a turbulent emotional history she wanted to be treated like others, to be given homework, and encouraged to succeed.

The Good Teacher
is kind
is generous
listens to you
encourages you
has faith in you
has time for you
keeps confidences
likes teaching children
likes teaching her subject
takes time to explain things
helps you when you're stuck
tells you how you are doing
allows you to have your say
makes sure you understand
helps people who are slow
doesn't give up on you
cares for your opinion
makes you feel clever
treats people equally
stands up for you
makes allowances
tells the truth
is forgiving

This short paragraph points to the two essential dimensions of teaching - the personal and the professional. The relationships between teachers and students create the conditions of trust and respect that are necessary, if not sufficient, conditions for learning. Relationships are always important but are especially for students who have social or emotional problems or who have experienced little success in school. However, teachers are not simply caregivers; they are professionals who are expected to be knowledgeable about their subject areas as well as the art and science of teaching.

Over the years, numerous studies have demonstrated the expectations for effective teaching.[a] Although this traditional skill-set is still important, we expect even more of teachers today, if they

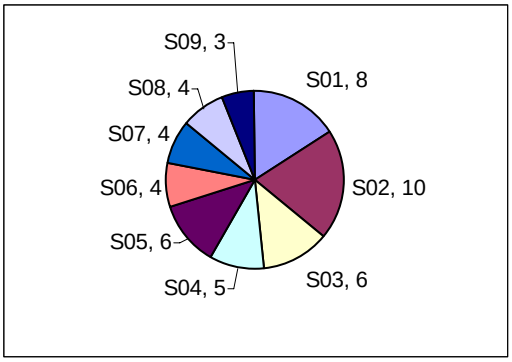
[a] "Research confirms the necessity for effective lesson planning; the need to groups students according to academic and affective needs; the importance of the efficient use of time; smooth efficient classroom routines; the importance of higher-order questioning to encourage thinking and reasoning; the significance of explicit, consistent and equitable standards for classroom behaviour; focussed lessons; high expectations for student

are to help students to become successful in the emerging 'knowledge society' where knowledge, not capital or labour, is the basic economic resource of society.[81] The teacher's role is no longer to transmit a fixed body of knowledge to students but to teach them how to learn.

Performance Standard

- Teaching meets the following criteria:
  - ◊ teaching reflects teacher mastery of subject area and planning of lessons;
  - ◊ teaching methods and organizational strategies match curricular objectives and needs of students; and
  - ◊ student work is assessed thoroughly, constructively and consistently.

During the Educational Review, we observed instruction in 50 classrooms from kindergarten to secondary V, distributed by level/language and school as shown in the text box and graphic respectively. These classes provide insight into the range of quality to be found in classroom teaching at each level of instruction. However, they cannot be considered as a representative sample of all classes in each school or the Board as a whole.



Level/Language	Cree	En	Fr
Kind to grades 1/3	13		3
Grades 2/4 to 6	1	11	4
Secondary	2	14	3
Total	**15**	**25**	**10**

In each case a member of the evaluation team observed the class but did not interact with students. He or she recorded observations using a structured observation protocol, which included a scale for rating the twelve criteria displayed below in Exhibit 2-24.[a]

EXHIBIT 2-24: RATING OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

Criteria	Rating*		
	Lo	Me	Hi
1. Demonstrates a mastery of the subject area being taught.	13%	56%	31%
2. Teaching reflects planning	23%	53%	23%
3. Uses appropriate Instructional strategies.	17%	60%	23%
4. Effectively uses appropriate strategies for classroom management.	23%	45%	32%
5. Treats students with respect.	6%	47%	47%
6. Exhibits high expectations for student learning.	26%	48%	26%
7. Provides constructive assistance to individual students.	8%	61%	31%
8. Engages students in learning.	24%	49%	27%
9. Makes good use of homework.	21%	68%	11%
10. Checks to see that students understand what is being taught.	16%	54%	30%
11. Teacher is culturally sensitive to the learning needs of his or her students.	14%	57%	29%
12. Teacher incorporates aspects of Cree culture and tradition in his or her teaching.	33%	42%	25%

* Each criterion was rayed on a six-point scale, which have been regrouped here as follows: **Low**: **1**= Very unsatisfactory; **2**=Unsatisfactory; **Medium**: **3**=Adequate; **4**=Good; and **High**: **5**=Very good; **6**=Excellent. The percentages reflect the proportion of classes that were given a low, medium or high rating for each criterion.

learning as well as maximum interaction between the students and the teacher; and a work-centred environment" (see endnote 68, p. 127).

[a] A copy of the protocol is included in Appendix E.

As shown in Exhibit 2-24, the majority of ratings for most criteria are in the middle range, from a low of 42% (item 12) to a high of 68% (item 9). The average rating on a six-point scale varied from 3.42 to 4.45, for an overall average of 3.76 on all twelve criteria, the equivalent of an 'adequate' rating. When all items are considered together, 18% of teachers were given a low rating, 53%, a medium rating and 29% a high rating. These ratings appear to reflect a reasonable level of classroom instruction. However, if, as we assume, schools tended to invite us to observe better classes then the fact that almost one fifth of them were assessed to be unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory casts the level of teaching in a different light. It appears, once again, that the serious concerns over teaching expressed in the Mianscum report (see text box) are still present.

> "Students are reporting little or no instruction in the classrooms. The teacher attempts to teach with limited success and the students are unreceptive. Therefore, the standard becomes that the students merely attend class to satisfy the education requirements for that course. The only requirement placed on students is that they remain in the classroom and occupy themselves with something (Mianscum report)".

The observations and the ratings were then analyzed in terms of:

- teacher preparedness (rating # 1, 2,6);
- human relationships (rating # 5);
- instruction and classroom management (rating # 3, 4, 7, 10);
- attentiveness to Cree culture (rating # 11, 12);
- student engagement (rating # 8);
- instructional resources;
- school organization; and
- other issues (including (rating # 9).

Preparedness included the teacher's mastery of the subject area, planning and his or her level of expectations for students. In most cases, the level of preparedness seemed reasonable and in one case, it was evident that the teacher spent considerable amount of time planning her lesson. On the other extreme, one class illustrated what happened when little or no preparation was done and little was expected of students:

> *The teacher does not acknowledge them as they come in. She is busy looking at papers on her desk There was no teaching taking place in the introduction of the lesson. It was just an explanation of what the worksheets were on. It seems that not much thought went into this lesson. It seems that the students were just given some busy work as the teacher seemed to be doing some correcting during this lesson.*

Human relationships received the highest ratings during observations; not one class was given the lowest rating and 47% received a high rating. In one class the observer noted: *The teacher has excellent rapport with the students and the students reciprocate to the best of their ability.*

The third theme, instruction and classroom management, received much more varied ratings. The following observations reflect what went on in the better classes:

> *This teacher is very good at questioning. She re-phrases questions that the students seem to have a hard time understanding. The teacher probes to get them to answer with*

complete sentences. The teacher has very good classroom management skills and knows how to motivate her students.

The teacher uses a lot of manipulatives and asks the students a lot of questions to which they have to respond. She changes activities every twenty minutes taking into account the attention span of her students. There is a lot of interaction between the teacher and her student and between students themselves.

Excellent modeling of the language for the students and routines are well established. It is clear that everyone tries to speak French in the class and seems to enjoy it. Children in this class are actually speaking French. They seem to understand and can respond in French.

By contrast, the following reflect classes where teaching was ineffective:

Students seemed to turn up when they wish. There was no formal instruction, just help with the book exercises.

There really was not much teaching happening in this classroom. The teacher rushed students through the lesson and it is clear they did not understand her and were not engaged in the lesson. She needs to manage her class better and evaluate whether her students are meeting the objectives of her lesson. She is inconsistent and needs to be more clear about her expectations for students.

The teacher does not welcome or acknowledge the students when they come in. She does a lot of yelling during free play. Students are told that they have to stay in their designated play area and she yells at anyone who tries to wonder off to another area.

We were particularly interested in the extent to which teachers were attentive to Cree culture in terms of their interactions with students and their handling of subject material. Little was observed that was noteworthy in this regard. However, it is a sad reflection on what is happening that item 12 - Teacher incorporates aspects of Cree culture and tradition in his or her teaching- received the lowest rating of all twelve items. The following comment about Cree culture classes in one school reflects the poor practice in some of these classes:

Not much was happening in the Cree Culture and Language classes in this school. It seems the teachers did not plan much and are not even using what is available for them from Cree Programs. No real learning is going on in the classroom. Teachers show no interest and students are not engaged or even interested.

Student engagement was also treated as a separate theme. Some classes were quite engaging; others were not:

The students seemed to really enjoy this activity and they were very motivated. All the students were participating.

In spite of the constant disruptions the majority of the students seem to be on task.

The work students were doing was not very challenging and they did not seem very motivated.

I found the students did not really take part in the discussion. They seemed rather afraid to say anything.

In terms of resources, the use of photocopied materials was widespread despite the amount of money spent on textbooks. In many cases, the size of classrooms is a problem; many are too

small for the number of students in them. Moreover, the state of many classrooms is problematic, often because of vandalism:

> *Many of the windows are broken. This along with small or window-less classrooms situated within the school makes for an unappealing learning environment.*

Our tight schedule did not allow for much interactions with teachers whom we observed. However, the little discussion we did have provided insights into other classroom issues:

> *One teacher would like to have more training in working with children with special needs because she feels that this is an area she is weak in. Also, she is seeing more and more children with special needs and most of the time there is no support for them. It takes a long time when you want a child to be assessed and the educators that are hired are not trained. Some are not even suitable for this role; they let the children with special needs order them around and they are not firm or strict enough with some of these children.*

> *Teachers feel there is not much support from the administration for the issues they deal with: chronic absenteeism, lateness, and other issues relating to students and the difficulties they have in their teaching.*

> *One teacher said that the administration is inconsistent so it is hard to stay on track with students. In addition, she feels there are too many interruptions due to community events.*

The final aspect of the analysis of classroom observations consisted in trying to establish the 'big picture' of what had been observed. The following presents these summative comments:

EXHIBIT 2-25: SUMMATIVE COMMENTS OF OBSERVED CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

While we saw a few examples of excellent teaching we also saw numerous examples of teachers who appeared to have the right attitude and the desire to do a great job, but they lacked the capacity. This does give one hope for increased levels of instruction if the proper resources can be provided to help those willing teachers to develop their capacity.

As in any cross section or continuum, we also saw people in classrooms that showed no evidence of a desire or the capacity to do a good job. Some went through the process, seemingly oblivious to the lack of student engagement and lack of student learning going on in their classrooms.

The best classes are those that are organized, with teachers who plan, interact with students, engage students, set goals and expectations, and have good classroom management skills. These teachers use a variety of teaching approaches (i.e., oral, multi-sensory, use of manipulative material (tactile), visuals, and more).

In most classes, much of the content and activities are below the expected grade level. Students seem to be behind academically. In many situations, teachers do not have high expectations for them in relation to the level at which they are working.

Lateness seems to be tolerated in many classes without consequence. Also, students seem to come and go as they please in some.

There are great examples of teachers who are effectively teaching CLIP but there are also examples of teachers who are lacking skills to effectively teach Cree and need much more professional development, support, and sharing from other teachers.

Many teachers expressed the lack of or unclear understanding of the QEP and expected programs and/or curriculum to be used within the Cree School Board. Many were uncertain as to how they could cover content while also teaching students skills they are lacking. In addition, these teachers seemed to lack the skills that would assist them in second language teaching or the teaching of a language in general.

We also used focus groups and interviews to speak to students, teachers, school administrators, parents and other stakeholders about the quality of teaching in CSB schools.

Although focus groups were held to provide students with a confidential non-threatening opportunity to talk about school, it was often difficult to get them to express themselves. However, even when their answers were monosyllabic, they revealed a great deal about what it is like for them in school. Take this sample exchange with one group of secondary students:

Q: *Do you have homework?*

A: *Yes.*

Q: *So when you come back to class with your homework, do you take up homework together and discuss it?*

A: *No.*

Q: *What are you supposed to do with it when you get it back? Anything?*

A: *Yeah. Put it in your binder.*

Q: *Are you ever asked to go back and fix it?*

A: *No.*

Even when they were not very verbal, students were very conscious about how they were treated, and how they treated others. One student recounted this story about a teacher:

> *I had trouble with a teacher because I felt like she didn't like me. And I disrespected her too. She yelled and I yelled at her too. I didn't like how she was treating me. But then I told her how I feel - you respect me and I'll respect you. And then it changed and now she is always helping me with my work.*

Focus groups of former students provided an important perspective. Composed mainly of young adults, they were young enough to clearly remember their experience in school and old enough to articulate what it was like. In one group, for example, they told us that their experience in school was not very positive. When asked to identify one thing that would have made it better, one student replied: *Get teachers that can actually teach.*

When asked to be specific about what made their experience negative, they talked about teachers that put students down, telling them that were never going to pass. Students with low self-esteem need encouragement, not this kind of negative reinforcement. In some classes, low expectations were matched by low levels of actual teaching. Former students gave examples such as the following:

> *A teacher says, I'm just going to write everything on the board, right. And he'll keep on writing for a whole class. We're writing and he expects us to learn everything he writes right away. And he told us, I'm not going to use the textbooks because I think the textbooks are too complicated for you. That kind of put me down so I said, who gave you permission to judge what's complicated for me?*
>
> *I had this teacher, math teacher; I have no idea how she got this job. There was a simple equation on the board and I did it in my head while she was writing it. By the time she stepped back, I had already done it. Then the principal walks in and sits in the back, right next to me and he says - proceed. So she continues trying to do the simple equation and*

she couldn't do it. It was a 50-minutes class. She started at the beginning of the class and by the end of the class, she still couldn't do it.

One former student recounted a story when she asked the teacher. *How come you're not giving homework?* The answer suggested that it was not worth it for 90% of the students. So she asked: *What about the other ten percent that do the homework and earn their mark?* She did not get any answer and concluded that the teacher had simply given up on the students.

By contrast, former students also remembered good teachers that made a difference:

Of course, some classes are interesting. There was a teacher, she still teaches here and she was pretty good. She was known to do the actual work. There were other teachers, teachers that you really respect. We had a guy here; I remember the first time I saw him and the principal at the time introduced me. I was walking towards the school and I just totally ignored him. He was so unflustered in the weeks and months afterward that we really got to respect the guy. He was a really good teacher. He really tried his best to understand what kind of cultural differences we had.

The vast majority of teacher comments on questionnaires and in the focus groups dealt with issues that will be discussed in subsequent sections of this report. However, some did focus on what went on in classrooms. When they did, they tendede to zero in on classroom conditions. For example, several teachers stated that classrooms were inadequate - too small, no windows, that classes were too large and that there were too many students who needed individual attention. One teacher stepped back from the these detailed concerns to provide a wider perspective:

I believe we make attempts to provide a quality education but we do not succeed. I believe we need to work smarter not harder and with one voice. We attempt it but we don't achieve it. I believe our standards are too low. - Most of the students are below grade level. - We need to help the students to work to grade level and stop making excuses for them. The students are capable of much more than we expect from them collectively.... Before we can make or achieve change there must be acceptance of the reality. Kids do not put much effort into their schooling, consequently they do not do well. They are capable but they do not want to work on anything related to school while at home.

As a general rule, parents targeted language of instruction and teacher absenteeism as the key instructional issues, which we will discuss in sections 3.3 and 11.1 (Part 4). However, they were also concerned with classroom instruction and the teaching of Cree culture. The following extract encapsulates their concerns about the quality of teaching in the early grades:

Q: *People that run elementary schools and do a lot of research in elementary schools would tell you - that's where you put your very best teachers - kindergarten and grade 1. Because that's where kids learn to read, that's where they get their basics for school. Is that how it works in your school?*

A: *That's not what they were doing. The teachers are simply the ones who speak Cree. I mean, it's one thing obviously to be fluent in a language. It's another thing to be a teacher. Just because you speak English doesn't make you a teacher - that you can say - go teach English or French or whatever language. The same thing with Cree - yes, so-and-so speaks Cree - that's nice. Does that make him or her a teacher? I don't think so.*

Q: *So what's the quality of the teaching that's going on? Do the kids get the same education they would have had in English, only in Cree?*

A: *Not necessarily. I'm not saying they haven't - I don't know how much teaching is going on when you see kids in a class and all they're doing is colouring. Well, I don't care what language they're doing - if that's all they're doing they're not learning very much. They're not learning their ABCs whether it's in Cree or English.*

In another community, parents complained about the quantity and quality of the teaching of Cree culture:

So here in this community they only have Cree culture for maybe once a month and they take them out to the Cree culture camp. And all they do all day is play cops and robbers and watch videos. My oldest child says Cree culture is boring. -- The kids don't like it. They don't have a class here. They don't have a place in the school to teach all the traditional stuff that they're supposed to be learning.

School administrators are well aware of the state of teaching in their school, even if they do little actual teacher supervision, a key issue which will be discussed in section 6.4. The following extract from one interview represents the 'view from the office:'

Overall, I'd have to say the quality would have to, probably percentage wise, be about 75-80%. Some teachers are delivering very good programs. They're doing their best. You can see they're working very hard. They're into finding materials and trying hard to make sure. For others, it just seems that they don't want to do the work. I have one teacher who just opens the book, just writes on the board and says this is what I want you to read today and answer these questions and then sits there at his desk. Very, very, very little to no teaching at all. Other teachers are just hammering away, going at it, working very hard. That's where that 75-80% comes in.

Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether teaching in CSB schools meets the stated standard:

- Teaching meets the following criteria:
  - teaching reflects teacher mastery of subject area and planning of lessons;
  - teaching methods and organizational strategies match curricular objectives and needs of students; and
  - student work is assessed thoroughly, constructively and consistently.

According to our analysis the data reveal, even if with less precision than we would like, that teaching in classes of CSB varies widely and in many cases is problematic. There are some excellent teachers in CSB schools, teachers that any school would be proud to have on its faculty. On the other extreme are those who should not be teaching. In between are the vast majority, a mixture of teachers with below-average to above-average skills and engagement, achieving some level of success. We have indirect evidence of this from the comments from stakeholders and direct evidence from our observations. As stated earlier, our overall rating of

> The quality of student learning is directly related to the quality of teaching that students receive. No issue presented in this report deserves more attention than this one.

these observations was merely 'adequate,' and this from a sample that probably included fewer weak teachers than would have been found in a representative sample.

Quality teaching requires qualified and motivated teachers, issues which we will discuss in the section that follows. Among the other conclusions we draw from the findings presented in this section are the pressing need for support and supervision of teachers, both of which seem to be all but non existent. We will deal with supervision issues in sections 6.4 and 10.1.1 (Part 4), beginning on pages 136 and 214, respectively, and support issues in section 10.2.3 (Part 4), beginning on page 222. At this stage, we confine our recommendations to classroom teaching *per se*:

R17 **THAT** the Board undertake a more thorough and fine-grained analysis of classroom teaching by regular and substitute teachers in all classes of each of the nine schools, including observation in classes, feedback from students, parents, teachers and other staff, and the examination of relevant documents and records.

R18 **THAT** a report of the findings be communicated to stakeholders and used to draft a proposed set of standards for teaching in the CSB, including guidelines for implementation and application, that will then be used to consult stakeholders.

R19 **THAT**, taking into account the feedback from this consultation, the Board adopt a set of standards for teaching in the CSB, including those applicable to substitute teachers, that shall be communicated to teachers and other stakeholders.

R20 **THAT** the application of the teaching standards adopted by virtue of recommendation 19 be effected in conjunction with other recommendations of this report related to the hiring, support and supervision of teachers.

4.2 Instructional Resources

While the previous theme examined what happens in classrooms, this one considers the resources that are used in this process. Like any human activity, teaching and learning requires resources that in effect provide the capacity for this core aspect of school performance.

Performance Standard

- Instructional resources meet the following criteria:
  - ◊ teachers and other human resources have appropriate qualifications, experience and aptitudes;
  - ◊ classrooms and other instructional facilities are adequate in terms of size, furnishings and environment;
  - ◊ textbooks and other teaching materials as required for the curriculum are provided; and
  - ◊ other resources to enhance instruction are provided.

4.2.1 Teachers & Other Human Resources

The most important instructional resources in schools are human resources. In all schools, teachers are the primary human resources and in many schools, the only one.

Normally one would begin an inquiry about teachers by ascertaining their qualifications and experience. However, we discovered that in the CSB, an even more fundamental issue had to be addressed: the presence of qualified teachers in the classroom. In several communities, we

were told that teacher absenteeism was a major issue, especially as the substitutes were often unqualified. Time and time again **parents** complained about the deterioration in the quality of teaching and learning because of the high level of teacher absence.

> *Last year was pretty bad - many substitutes. Sometimes we can't even find any substitutes. Or you'd have a substitute for eight months, not qualified.*
>
> *You know what? My daughter was in Secondary 4 last year and half of the year, they didn't have a permanent teacher for math. And this teacher was telling my daughter, if you don't do the work, you're not going to pass. My daughter said she didn't say anything but in her head, she was saying to herself, How am I supposed to pass? We don't have a teacher most of the time….a regular teacher.*

It was obvious from input such as this that instructional quality was suffering because of high levels of substitution and poor quality substitutes. Moreover, in some cases, as suggested by the first comment cited above, classes are simply cancelled and students sent home because the school can find no one, qualified or unqualified, to take the class. However, it is important to acknowledge that <u>not all substitution is of poor quality</u>. We would not wish the concerns expressed above to tar all substitutes with the same brush, many of whom undoubtedly do a very credible job.

The genesis of the problem - teacher absenteeism - is of course cause for concern in itself, raising several questions:

- Is teacher absenteeism as high as many stakeholders suggest? If so why?
- What is the breakdown of short-term versus long-term absenteeism?
- Are teachers absent for short periods of time required to provide lesson plans for substitutes to follow? Does this happen in practice? If not why not?
- Does absenteeism vary significantly from school to school? One level to another? Over time? If so why?
- Is anyone paying attention to this issue and what, if anything, is being done about it?

Other questions focus on the effect substitution has on teaching and learning:

- What percentage of substitute teaching days are provided by teachers who are: qualified, unqualified but otherwise suitable, neither qualified nor suitable?
- What is the amount of instructional time seriously compromised because of the ineffective teaching of substitutes?
- What is the amount of instructional time actually lost (classes cancelled) because of the lack of substitutes?
- What solutions, if any, have been proposed, tested or implemented, to deal with poorly trained substitutes? What changes, if any, in policy and practice resulted?

Cancelled classes and ineffective substitute classes, combined with the high levels of student absenteeism, further erode the amount of instruction being provided to students. Moreover, it is not unreasonable to suppose that learning and engagement in learning are also affected, as students become disenchanted by these conditions. The message to students - accurate or not - is clear: School doesn't matter. Why should I care?

> In many schools, effective instruction and student engagement are being undermined by the widespread use of unqualified substitutes.

In order to determine the magnitude of the problem and the variation across schools over time, we sought to obtain data about this phenomenon from the Department of Human Resources. Unfortunately, no data of any kind were provided. Accordingly, the best we can do in this report is to flag teacher absenteeism as a serious issue requiring both further study and appropriate action, leaving the above questions as a starting point.

We did not attempt to evaluate the level of formal qualifications or experience of all CSB teachers. However, we are aware that the teaching staff of the CSB comprises a mixture of native and non-native teachers. From its inception, the CSB wished, understandably, to see its schools incrementally staffed by Cree teachers. Given the lack of qualified Cree teachers, it undertook to provide various programs to qualify new teachers. It does not appear as if these programs have been as successful as hoped, an issue we deal with later in this report.[a] We were, however, able to see a reflection of the quality of teachers in the classroom observations described in the previous section. There is no doubt in our minds that there are many highly competent and professional teachers employed by the CSB. There are others, however, who lack the qualifications, skills or attitudes required to be effective teachers. At this stage, we simply wish to raise the issue of teacher qualifications as one requiring further examination.

Teachers, no matter how well qualified and experienced, rely on other resources to provide classroom instruction. These may include other human resources. However, most of these (e.g., educators inside the classroom and counsellors outside the classroom) are involved in the provision of complementary services.[b] Accordingly we attempted to ascertain what other resources were available to support teachers, namely: classrooms and other instructional facilities;[c] textbooks and other teaching materials and resources.

4.2.2 Classrooms & Other Instructional Facilities

Classrooms are the most common venue for instruction in almost any school. For both students and their teacher, they define the immediate environment for teaching and learning. A classroom can be described in relation to several characteristics, some utilitarian, some aesthetic. It must be large enough to accommodate to the number of students to be taught, taking into account their age and other factors. For example, if students are to engage in project-oriented work in teams, the room must be large enough to provide space for additional tables.

Professionals experienced in interior design - not interior decorating - know the importance of making a workspace suitable for various types of endeavour, be it an office, a shop, a showroom, etc. Even companies that are focused solely on the 'bottom line' know that a poorly designed workspace detracts from production.

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[a] See discussion in section 10.2.3 in Part 4 (p. 236).

[b] These resources are discussed in chapter 5.

[c] Issues concerning the school's physical plant as a whole are dealt with in section 6.3, beginning on page 127.

Classrooms, like any workspace, need to be maintained, clean, well lighted and well ventilated. Moreover, remembering that this is the space where students will spend the vast majority of their school day for many years, classrooms need to be more than simply functional. They need to be conducive to learning - a pleasant environment that adds to student motivation rather than detracting from it.

During the collection of data in schools, we had occasion to visit many classrooms. Some were warm, inviting places that provided a supportive environment for teaching and learning, as illustrated by the following extracts from our field notes:

> *The classroom is a good size and well organized. There is a couch by the window.*
>
> *Nicely decorated classroom. The teacher has set it up to be a welcoming place.*
>
> *The classroom is very colourful with teacher and student work on display on the bulletin boards.*

Others were not.

> *The windows were all broken with most being covered by plywood and others with plexiglass.*
>
> *The classroom is quite small for the number of students but the teacher has done the best he can with what he has.*
>
> *The room for Cree culture was cluttered. All along the book shelves there were boxes that looked as though they had not been unpacked yet for the school year. The walls were almost completely bare and there was no visual display of Cree cultural artefacts to which students could relate. Not an appealing classroom for students.*

Apparently, ventilation is a problem in some schools where filters are not changed on a regular basis resulting in either foul-smelling air or even system shut-down. In some schools, we were told, the heat in the early fall and end of the school year is stifling so that teaching and learning is almost impossible. on the other extreme, heating is an issue in some places. Temperatures drop in classrooms to the point where learning and teaching again are not possible. These systems need be checked and maintained according to the manufacturer’s suggested schedule.

Classrooms are, of course, not the only facility used to provide instruction. Schools contain specialized rooms including libraries, computer rooms, science labs, gymnasiums and special education resource centres, to name the facilities most commonly found. We observed teaching in some of these facilities and visited others.

In general, the libraries seem adequate and appealing when you first see them, but we were told that there is a lack of appropriate reference material, especially for high school students. Some school libraries seem well organized and the atmosphere was welcoming. However, some are not functioning as intended because they are being used for teaching due to a lack of classrooms in the school.

Most schools we saw had adequate computer labs but we didn’t really get to look closely. Having properly functioning printers is apparently a problem in some schools, while others seem to lack media equipment such as LCD and overhead projectors, digital cameras, video cameras and scanners.

In general, we did not see many science labs in the schools that seemed to be set up for students to conduct experiments and engage in any real hands-on activities. They have the facilities in some places to teach science but do not actually do it. There is a need to take

inventory of what resources are available and use the labs as much as possible to enrich the science program and engage students.

In terms of facilities for special education, one school we visited had a learning centre that is used for students who have learning difficulties. It was an inviting room with a vast array of resources to use, such as posters, books of all types, games, pocket charts, and more.

We gained further insights into these facilities in focus groups and interviews. The discussions with students did not elicit many comments about this topic - probably not one that comes readily to student minds. However vandalism was mentioned in one group in relation to bullying (which is a major concern for many students). The paucity of student comments about facilities should not be interpreted to mean that this issue is not important to them. We simply had a limited time with students and tended to focus on classroom instruction and school culture. We know from other studies that students often have priorities about facilities that are different from those set by adults. The condition of student washrooms is a typical case in point. In our focus groups, we did have one example of such an insight when students said that what the school need was more lockers - lockers for everyone. This was a useful reminder that because something is not on our radar does not mean it is not important to students.

One **administrator** could well have been acting as a spokesperson for students when he described the classrooms in which they were “parked” (his words):

> *These kids, 180 days of the year, are in the bush, are outside with the birds, nature, they’re free until 3:00, 4:00 in the morning. They’re not in houses; they live outside. And then we park them in the middle section of this school - no windows, no air - and we park them there between 8:45 in the morning when it starts to be light outside and we let them go home 90 out of 180 days in darkness.*

In general, it appears that the adequacy (number and size) and appropriateness (windows, ventilation, amenities) of classroom facilities is an issue in many schools. In some schools, there aren’t any extra classrooms, which means that teachers must use other rooms in schools like the staff rooms and libraries. In some, not all elementary students are in the appropriate part of the building because of the lack of space and lack of consideration of the growing population entering our schools. For instance, many schools found an increase in the number of Pre-K students entering schools this year that had serious implications for bus transportation, classroom location, furniture, materials, etc. One school had to move one kindergarten class to the elementary school because the Pre-school was full. In another, the grade 5/6 students are in the high school. These types of situations are not ideal when you consider what is best of students at different ages in terms of school culture, facilities and social interactions.

In general, schools were not designed with the help of teachers or others who would know what would be best in terms of class size, washroom location and needs in terms of the number of facilities. There doesn’t seem to be a regular maintenance schedule for ventilation and heating systems in the schools so that the functioning of these units is kept up with. Instead, we find that issues are only addressed when there is a breakdown or fault that needs immediate attention. In terms of maintenance, there seems to be a delay in the response to submitted work orders to have things repaired.

4.2.3 Textbooks & Materials

1	2	3	4
17%	27%	33%	23%

Knowing that the one resource the CSB had in abundance was money we did not expect to find that the provision of instructional resources was much of an issue. In the questionnaire we asked teachers to what extent they agreed with the following statement: I have access to adequate resources for teaching.[a] As shown by the distribution of their responses displayed in the text box, 56% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. We had expected a higher level of agreement; the average response (2.62), although not very high, received the highest rating of all items on this part of the questionnaire about the school.[b]

In the open-ended part of the questionnaire, several **teachers** cited resources as one of the strengths of their school.

> School Strengths: *Good resources.... Lots of funding – money – for whatever resources you may need.... Money for didactic orders is generous....*

However, we discovered that not all teachers shared this view. Some mentioned that although resources were generally available, some, notably computers and "technological resources," were not. Others zeroed in on course materials. For example:

> School Weaknesses: *Proper teaching material (textbooks, exercise books).... Not enough material to expand teaching in Cree.... Not having the appropriate material at the beginning of the school year.*

A few of teachers made very interesting comments indicating that the problem was not the availability of money for resources but the capacity to spend it effectively (see text box). In particular, one teacher from the French sector noted the need to connect resources to programs to meet student needs.

> *An enormous quantity of human and material resources are made available to teachers but the secondary program is totally unadapted leading to student failure, drop-outs and attendant social problems.*

Teachers on Resources

LOTS of money to spend (and waste).

Money available but not spent!

Overall: Money spent poorly.

We have more than enough money. It's not a money issue.

The more we probed, the more we realized that adequate and appropriate resources for teaching was a major issue, as reflected from this feedback from a focus group of **secondary teachers**.

> Q: *What's the state of your instructional resources, your classrooms, textbooks, the things that you need?*
>
> A: *Most of it is useless. And really, I think it's a common problem throughout the Board. I think that most teachers create their own programs and find their own materials.... I think that the resources are very weak. They* [Educational Services Department] *are not keeping up-to-date. I don't know what they're doing up there. For example, I'm teaching Geography and the resources we have were written up in 1982.*

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[a] Each item on this part of the questionnaire was rated on a four-point likert scale, where **1**= Strongly Disagree; **2**=Disagree; **3**=Agree; **4**=Strongly Agree; **N**=number of respondents. For the actual number of responses for each of the four categories, see Exhibit C-23 in Appendix C.

[b] The other items on the questionnaire are dealt with in chapter 6 on school support for learning.

Feedback on resources often focused on language - materials written for a given level which students cannot understand - and materials written for first-language learners when students are in fact second-language learners. In our view, this problem is in fact a symptom of the underlying - and ultimately more serious - problem: students are two to three years below level. Finding appropriate materials to teach English or French as a second language ought to be possible. However, as discussed in the section that follows on curriculum, there seems to be ambiguity in schools as to whether teachers are supposed to be teaching first or second language courses. Finding appropriate materials to teach other subjects in English or French is much more problematic, especially at the secondary level.

It does not appear that anyone at the school or board level is seriously trying to address these problems. Rather, teachers are simply given money to buy text books and no one is scrutinizing these purchases to see if they are appropriate or not. Moreover, given the high turnover of teachers, it is not uncommon, apparently, for textbooks to be ordered, delivered to the school and there remain unpacked and unused. Meanwhile a new teacher bemoans the lack of resources but must wait until the end of the year when he or she orders new books. The new year begins and, if the books arrive in time (another problem often mentioned), the situation improves. (Unless of course this teacher has left ... and the cycle begins anew.)

> *We order the books we want and people, on the whole, stay a couple of years and leave and we're left with all this beautiful material that we've bought because we figure that we're going to teach this and we get into the classroom and this is Secondary 3 material but they're only reading at a Grade 6 level. So, the books go away and the next year, a new teacher comes in and nobody tells us that the kids are not at level. We're told we are in a second language setting but nobody ever mentions the word that they're not at level.*

In particular, we heard a great deal about the lack of appropriate resources for instruction in Cree. Here is the input from one **principal**.

Q: *So, are resources a big issue?*

A: *In Cree, yes. We don't have the resources, we don't have the resource people. We spend time making our material, and we have to photocopy. We are given money for materials but there's not much in Cree and when we get something we still have to photocopy.*

Q: *But why?*

A: *That's because Cree Programs send us the book and say here's your copy for the grade 2 class.*

Q: *Why only one copy of the book? If this is book that was made for the Cree School Board, why can't they just reproduce it?*

A: *I guess they don't have the money to do it. They expect us to photocopy it.*

If that story had not come from a credible first-hand source we might have been tempted to dismiss it. However, we heard similar input from others and then saw further evidence when we examined materials prepared by Educational Services Department (see below). Not only does this practice waste resources and energy, in the end, it provides students with an inferior product. There is little motivation to learning to be found in reams and reams of back-and-white photocopied sheets in lieu of an attractive bound book, illustrated in colour.

As if this situation was not bad enough, we also discovered that the same material is used in Cree classes year after, regardless of level:

The Cree language teacher - she does the same thing: photocopying. And I don't know to this day without checking on it if the secondary 1 or secondary 5 are still using the same workbook in the Cree language or if it has since been revised. I do know, the whole secondary has been using the same workbook.

As alluded to above, our Review included an attempt to ascertain the nature and quality of the materials produced by the Educational Services Department. Our analysis of these efforts are found in section 10.2 (Part 4). However, in brief, on the basis of the materials which we were given, we found that some materials were well designed and produced, many others were not.

Not all, but many of the sample documents provided to us have no introduction or statement of purpose. They have no table of contents or index to guide the teacher through the document. In many cases they are an eclectic collection of photocopies that would require a great deal of time an effort, on the part of an experienced and competent teacher, before they could be used effectively with students. They would be of little use to a teacher who is not well informed and confident with the content and methodology of their course of study.

One final example of problems regarding instructional resources was seen in the follow-up, or more accurately, the lack of follow-up, to a series of workshops given at the Educational Symposium on the new science and technology programs at the secondary level. From the feedback received, teachers not only enjoyed but benefited from these workshops which also included a box of valuable materials. At the conclusion of the workshops, one box of these materials was made up for each school and all boxes were supposed to be sent to the Board office for distribution to schools. To the best of our knowledge, none of these materials has been received by any of the science teachers for whom they were intended.

4.2.4 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether the provision of instructional resources meets the stated standards:

- Instructional resources meet the following criteria:
  - teachers and other human resources have appropriate qualifications, experience and aptitudes;
  - classrooms and other instructional facilities are adequate in terms of size, furnishings and environment;
  - textbooks and other teaching materials as required for the curriculum are provided; and
  - other resources to enhance instruction are provided.

Based on the foregoing analysis, we conclude that despite a plentiful supply of money, the timely provision of adequate and appropriate instructional resources is problematic at every level and in every language of instruction. It also appears that the higher the level, the worse the problems. The nature of these problems and the means to address them differ, depending on the types of resources: teachers, facilities or instructional materials. Appropriate solutions will also depend on actions that need to be taken, as presented in other sections of this report. One thing is clear, however, these problems will never be solved by throwing more money at them. As several teachers noted, money is not the problem, it is how that money is spent. Accordingly, we offer the following recommendations regarding instructional resources.

R21 **THAT** the Board undertake to review the legal and other qualifications of all teachers, including substitutes, and take appropriate action to ensure that instruction is being provided by appropriately qualified teachers, in accordance with recommendation 19 regarding the standards of teaching.

R22 **THAT** the Board, in collaboration with school administrators, teachers and others, undertake a thorough needs assessment of classrooms and other instructional facilities, notably libraries and media resource centres, laboratories and workshops for science and technology, and computer laboratories, with a view to developing a comprehensive improvement plan.

R23 **THAT** the Board, in collaboration with school administrators, teachers and others, complete a needs assessment of the instructional resources required to meet the needs of students in different programs at each level and language of instruction.

R24 **THAT** the means required to effect recommendations 21 to 23, including enhanced performance and capacity of schools and the Board offices, be developed in accordance with other recommendations of this report.

4.3 Curriculum

The curriculum is supposed to define what is being taught and learned in school. In reality, the term 'curriculum' carries many meanings, including:

- the intended (formal) curriculum - what is supposed to be taught;
- the hidden (informal) curriculum - the values, beliefs and norms it instils;
- the implemented curriculum - what is actually taught; and
- the learned curriculum - what students actually learn.

The formal curriculum may be expressed by various subjects or courses of study, including objectives or intended results, course content, or both. It may include required texts or specify methods of instruction. By contrast, it may be accompanied by non-binding guidelines. It may be highly prescriptive or open-ended. Implicitly or explicitly, curriculum includes the 'language of instruction.' Generally this refers to the language in which all subjects, except another language, are taught. However, in schools offering immersion or programs in a second language or bilingual programs, more than one language of instruction may be employed.

Performance Standard

- The curriculum being taught fulfills the requirements mandated for each level of instruction and is appropriate for students at that level.

4.3.1 The Ministry Regime & the QEP

Public schools in Québec determine their curricular offerings based on the requirements of the *Public Education Act* and the *Basic School Regulation* and the curriculum set forth by the Ministry in the Québec Education Program [QEP].[82]

The ministry regime, as it is commonly called after the French title of the regulation (*Régime pédagogique*), sets forth: (1) the nature and objectives for educational services at the preschool (kindergarten), elementary and secondary levels of instruction; and (2) the general organizational framework for the provision of these services.

The school year (for all levels) must comprise a maximum of 200 days, of which a minimum of 180 days must be devoted to educational services. The kindergarten week consists of a minimum of 23.5 hours of educational services, while at the elementary and secondary levels, this minimum is set at 25 hours per week.

At the elementary level, the regime provides for three cycles of instruction, each comprising two grade levels.[a] Curricular offerings in each cycle must include a variety of compulsory subjects (whose suggested times are specified), as well as elective subjects.[b] Provision is also made for local courses of study.

At the secondary level, instruction is divided into two cycles. The first consists of a single general stream for secondary I and II. The second cycle consists of two general streams for secondary III, IV and V: the general education path and the applied general education path.[c] In addition, the regime includes the work-oriented path which consists of pre-work training at the secondary I, II and III levels, as well as training leading to a semi skilled trade.[d] In each case, the number of credits assigned to compulsory and elective subjects and the suggested time for each are specified in the Regulation.[e]

At the present time, requirements for graduation (Secondary School Diploma) are 54 credits at the secondary IV or V level, of which at least 20 credits must be at the secondary V level. In addition, these credits must include:

- 6 credits in secondary V language of instruction;
- 4 credits in secondary V second language;
- 6 credits in secondary IV mathematics;
- 6 credits in secondary IV physical science; and
- 4 credits in secondary IV History of Québec and Canada.

As of May, 2010, the specific subjects required for graduation will change, as follows:

- 6 credits in secondary V language of instruction;
- 4 credits in secondary V second language;
- 4 credits in secondary IV mathematics;
- 4 credits in secondary IV science and technology or 6 credits in applied secondary IV science and technology;
- 4 credits in secondary IV history and citizenship education;
- 2 credits in secondary IV arts education; and
- 2 credits in secondary V ethics and religious culture or physical education and health.

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[a] **Cycle 1**= grades 1 & 2, **Cycle 2**= grades 3 & 4; **Cycle 3**= grades 5 & 6.

[b] The compulsory subject grids for each elementary cycle are provided in Exhibit C-25 in Appendix C.

[c] This organizational framework was introduced in 2005; prior to that date, there was only one general education path, cycle one consisting of secondary I, II and III, cycle two, secondary IV and V.

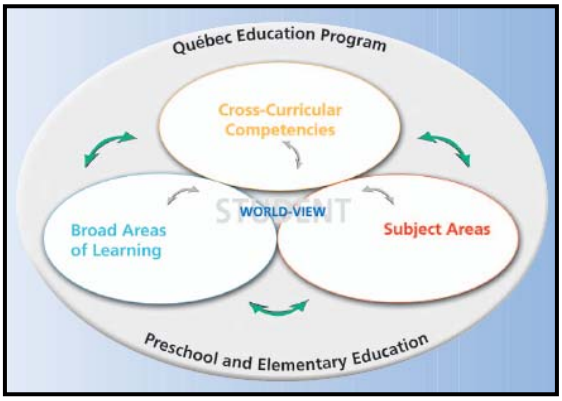
[d] Pre-work training is for students who have not achieved the objectives for language of instruction and mathematics for the elementary level; training leading to a semi-skilled trade is for students who have acquired these competencies but has not earned the credits at the first cycle secondary in these subjects.

[e] The compulsory subject grids for each of these paths are provided in Exhibits C-26 to C-30 in Appendix C.

Assuming five years in secondary school:

- present requirements affect the cohorts of students enrolled in secondary I in 2003-04 or 2004-05, that is, those who are presently in secondary IV and V;
- the new requirements affect the cohorts of students enrolled in secondary I as of 2005-06, that is, those who are presently in secondary I, II and III.

As mentioned above, ministerial programs are provided in the QEP, which is characterized by "its competency-based approach and its focus on the learning process" and by a conceptual framework that defines learning as "an active, ongoing process of construction of knowledge."[83] As illustrated in the graphic for preschool and elementary education, it consists of cross-curricular competencies,[a] broad themes for learning and programs of study grouped in five subject areas. This same overall approach is continued in the program for cycle I at the secondary level.



Its emphasis on cross-curricular competencies recognizes that learning cannot be bounded by subject areas, while the inclusion of broad areas of learning in the curriculum aims at enabling students to see the connections of different areas of learning both to each other and to their personal, social and cultural environment. Thus, the secondary cycle I program stresses the importance of the multidimensional role that schools play in the lives of young people, notably by providing them with the tools for life-long learning in the wide variety of contexts they are likely to face.[84]

4.3.2 Curricular Offerings in the CSB

Describing curricular offerings in the CSB must be done in two stages: first, the theory, then the practice.

As mentioned earlier, the *Public Education Act* and the *Basic School Regulation* - and by extension, the QEP - do not apply to the CSB and it has never indicated its formal acceptance of any sections of either the Act or the regulations.[b] Moreover, although the Board is obliged to adopt a yearly education plan specifying the number of hours taught for each subject in each grade, to our knowledge it has never done so.[c] However, the Ministry is still the only gateway to provincial certification of secondary studies. If the CSB wants its students to obtain a recognized Secondary School Diploma, it must comply with ministry regulations,[85] or obtain a derogation for any exceptions it wishes to enjoy.

In general, the CSB acts *as if* the QEP applied; however, until recently, it prepared its own exams,[d] rather than having its students write uniform exams prepared by the Ministry for all schools. The following has been given to explain this practice:

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a Cross-curricular competencies refer to the development of skills and attitudes that do not fall exclusively within an individual subject area, including: intellectual skills, methodological skills, attitudes and behaviours and language skills.

b See discussion in section 2.1.3 in Part 1.

c This obligation is found in the General By-Law, art 4.19; this article also requires that the education plan specify the method of evaluation and promotion of students.

d Several years ago, these local exams were vetted by the Ministry; however, this vetting process was subsequently abandoned, leaving no checks and balances regarding the suitability of CSB exams.

> The MEQ exams are prepared specifically for French or English mother tongue speakers. Since French and English are second languages for our students, we have always felt that the MEQ exams would place our students at a disadvantage.[a]

An alternative explanation is that in addition to second language deficiencies, students in the CSB do not possess the competencies that would be tested on uniform examinations. Locally prepared examinations have adapted the content as well as the language.[b] We have not been able to scrutinize any CSB exams. However, this alternative explanation is not pure conjecture but based on what we observed in schools. In any event, by 2004, the Ministry advised the CSB that it would no longer accept local examinations unless they were specifically authorized by the Minister. At that time, the only examination with such authorization was secondary IV History of Québec and Canada. It appears that the Board was granted a further delay of one year (June, 2005) but since that date, students in the CSB have been required to write the same uniform exams that students in all public and private schools must write to obtain certification of results. It seems reasonable to conclude that the Ministry did not accept the argument that CSB exams were testing the equivalent content using adapted language.

Providing students with lower standard exams may allow the students to 'pass' but it does not provide them with the knowledge and skills they are supposed to possess upon successful completion of the subject. CSB exams are thus another example of wishful thinking - if we allow them to pass, we can pretend they deserve to pass. Most students know when they are being given a 'free pass' and those that don't find out quickly enough when they discover that they do not have the prerequisite knowledge and skills to succeed in CEGEP. As one school committee member put it:

> *Now we're passing our kids through the system and we're lying about their future and about their potential. That's something that really disappoints me and it's not good for the future of our children. If we want the best for our children, we have to make sure they* ***earn*** *the right to pass and they* ***are*** *where they belong. Not because we think they're too old to be where they are or they're never going to succeed, That negativity, that doubt, that's there. Some of our teachers think it's too late to teach them. And I told them it's not. It's never too late for them, never.*

The following shows the subject offerings at the elementary and first cycle secondary, as stated by Educational Services. There documentation did not include any information regarding the courses that are supposed to be offered at the second cycle secondary.[c]

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[a] Memo from the Coordinator of Instructional Services to the Director Educational Services, February 7, 2004.

[b] It should be noted that second language deficiencies affect a large number of students in public schools; however, if they wish to graduate they must pass ministry exams.

[c] Apparently Educational Services felt there was no need to monitor this cycle because it is still operating under the pre-Reform regime (see Exhibit C-28 in Appendix C.

EXHIBIT 2-26: CSB SUBJECT OFFERINGS

Elementary Subjects	Cycle 1*		Cycle 2*		Cycle 3*	
	Lang	**Time**	**Lang**	**Time**	**Lang**	**Time**
Cree Language Arts / Cree Culture	Cree	15	Cree	9	Cree	9
Second language	SL	4	SL	9	SL	9
Mathematics	Cree	10	SL	7	SL	7
Arts	Cree	2	Cree	2	SL	2
MRE	Cree	1	Cree	1	Cree	1
Physical Education	Cree	2	SL	2	SL	2
Social Studies			Cree	2	SL	2
Science			Cree	2	SL	2
Unapportioned time		2		2	SL	2
Total		**36**		**36**		**36**

Secondary Subjects	Cycle 1*		
	Lang	**Hours**	**Credits**
Cree Language Arts / Cree Culture	Cree	300	12
Second language	SL	300	12
Mathematics	SL	300	12
Science and Technology	SL	200	8
Geography	SL	150	6
History and Citizenship	SL	150	6
Arts Education	SL	200	8
Physical Education	SL	100	4
Moral Education		100	4
Total		**1 800**	**72**

* **Elementary Cycle 1**= grades 1 & 2, **Cycle 2**= grades 3 & 4; **Cycle 3**= grades 5 & 6; **Secondary Cycle 1**= secondary I & II; **Lang**=language of instruction; SL=second language (English or French). The quantity of elementary instruction (**Time**) is given in periods; although not specified in the document, the periods are 50 minutes in length and the number of periods shown are for a six day cycle. Secondary hours and credits are for complete two-year cycle.

The total instructional time at the elementary level shown in Exhibit 2-26 is 30 hours over six days, which is the equivalent of 25 hours per week, as envisaged by the Ministry. The Ministry allocation of time for individual subjects is less specific at this level than that specified in Exhibit 2-26; however, subject to one major caveat, the allocation adopted by the CSB does not appear to be problematic. The caveat concerns the language of instruction, which will be dealt with separately in the sub-section that follows. The allocation of time at the secondary level (cycle one) follows the ministry norms (which are subject-specific) with the exception of first and second language instruction. The CSB provides for equal time and credits for first and second language (300 each), while the Ministry guidelines are 400 and 200 minutes, respectively.

If the CSB theoretical offering of subjects (at least to the end of the first cycle secondary) is generally fine, the same cannot be said about the application of these norms in practice. In January 2007, Instructional Services conducted a survey of subject-time allocations in each school of the Board.[86] The survey compared the time allocated to various subjects by each school and then identified variations from the board norms shown in Exhibit 2-26 that were acceptable and those that either had to be adjusted or approved.[a]

[a] The cover letter sent to each community stated: “If no adjustments are made to items highlighted in red you will need a resolution from the Council of Commissioners to leave this item the way it is.”

In brief, the survey highlighted a number of variations, most of which were to the times for Cree language and culture, especially in the second cycle of elementary.[a] The survey suggests that schools do not follow board norms for the allocation of subject times. On average, schools only complied with the norms in 62% of the subjects times surveyed. Compliance ranged from a low of 37% in Mistissini to a high of in 80% in Whapmagoostui. More importantly, it appears that schools do not feel obliged to follow board norms. We have no evidence of any follow-up to this report, any actions taken to ensure compliance with CSB norms or any consequences for schools that failed to do so.

On the basis of the data we have, we are forced to conclude that the theory of Board norms for subject-time allocations does not necessarily reflect what happens in practice in schools. It therefore appears that for this first key building block of student success - curriculum - no one is being held accountable for ensuring that the mandated curriculum is being offered as planned.

***People at the Board tell us we do well because we try as much as possible to meet all our deadlines. That's really important within the Board because they really emphasize that. If you can meet the deadlines, you're doing well but academically we're floundering just like everyone else* (Principal).**

However, that problem pales by comparison with what actually happens in classrooms. As one **principal** put it: *You can get a copy of the Régime pédagogique for the Cree School Board, except none of the nine communities are following it.* Another principal summed up the situation as a matter of priorities, namely that the Board is more concerned with administrative rules than pedagogical success (see text box).

In each school, we asked administrators, teachers and others about what was being taught at various grade levels. Setting aside issues relating to the language of instruction (dealt with below), we always received two answers:

Q: *What is the curriculum being taught?*

A: *The QEP.*

Q: *Yes, but what is actually being taught?*

A: *Whatever the teacher feels is appropriate.*

As will be discussed in the section that follows, this situation is largely attributed to CLIP and the lack of English or French competencies students possess when they begin core instruction in one of these two languages. The following input from **elementary teachers** reflects the situation, to a greater or lesser degree, in every school in the Board:

> *The kids can't relate to any of the things you're supposed to teach them. A lot of them are so far behind that you can't do what you're supposed to do at that level because of how behind they are. And it's just this big cycle of trying to catch up.*
>
> *Very few kids are at grade level Very few kids. They're behind in all the skill sets in math. The kids have problems recognizing large numbers, reading large numbers, multiplying …. You can't get very far in math if you don't know your times tables at Grade 6. You're stuck, you're literally stuck. It's a very slow process. Very slow process.*

[a] This is not too surprising as many schools are trying to report on one year of instruction in Cree (grade 3) and a the first year of majority instruction in a second language (Grade 4), whereas, the form provided a single column for cycle 2 (grades 3 and 4).

There is a single common thread running through the input from teachers and others from all grade levels: students are behind when they begin core instruction and every year they get farther and father behind. As one would expect, many students get so far behind they become totally discouraged. The situation can be illustrated by the following comments from two **secondary teachers**:

> *A large part of what I'm doing with Secondary 4 students is preparing them to be Secondary 2 students because my students don't have the language acquisition skills that's necessary.*
>
> *I teach Secondary 4 and 5 but I started off with material that I figured was probably Grade 7 and 8. They had such a hard time understanding it that eventually I decided to do a children's literature study and we did Robert Munch.*

The most striking finding that emerged from all the focus groups, interviews, etc., was the total lack of any transitional curriculum in the second cycle of elementary instruction. No curriculum has been created that meets the needs of children whose first two or three years of elementary school has been spent in Cree. Once again, wishful thinking seems to be the order of the day: that magically children will move seamlessly from grade 3 in Cree into grade 4 in English, without skipping a beat; that somehow, magically, children will follow the QEP program for grade 4 language arts without ever having had the three years of instruction that the grade 4 program presumes; that, by simply waving a magic wand, children will succeed in math, even though they lack the foundation they ought to have acquired in cycle 1. The same thing is true for children who begin grade 4 in French, except that it is much worse. As one French teacher expressed it: *It's worse in French. I am not saying they are very good in English but they are better than in French. French is a third language for them.*

> The lack of any transition from early Cree immersion to instruction in English or French makes a mockery of the claim that the QEP is being taught in the schools of the CSB.

As stated above, the problems stemming from this lack of transition are compounded each year. Moreover, there is an apparent lack of vertical curriculum integration across grade levels. In other words, there is no progression in a given subject area from one grade to the next. For most subjects, this vertical progression is assumed by the competencies, for example, in English language arts, at successive grade levels. However, since the QEP is not the curriculum actually being taught, this progression is lacking. This problem was also observed in relation to Cree language and culture, two subjects whose curriculum is totally in the hands of the CSB. We heard countless stories of the same material being taught in several different grade levels.[a]

Given the raison d'être of the CSB, we would have expected to discover considerable evidence showing how the mainstream curriculum from the Ministry had been adapted to suit the needs of Cree students, notably by incorporating elements of Cree culture into the curriculum. Instead, we found that the lack of such adaptation was an issue. Anecdotal evidence suggests that several teachers try and adapt their teaching to make it more culturally relevant. However, their overriding concern - understandably - is in trying to modify the curriculum so students can learn something. It does not appear that anyone is doing anything at a board level to transform the curriculum to better reflect Cree values and culture.

Given the high level of problems referred to above, it is not surprising that we received little input on the specific curricular offerings at the secondary cycle of secondary. In principle, this information should all be found in the local education plans. In some cases, these plans list

[a] See discussion of these issue in sections 4.1, teaching (p. 67), and 4.2 , instructional resources (p. 75).

specific courses (e.g. Math 514); in other cases, the plan simply lists 'math' as a subject. However, it does not appear that course offerings at this level include the range of courses that students would need to gain admittance to various college level programs, especially in pure and applied sciences. Providing a range of courses is always difficult in small schools, a problem that is exacerbated by the presence of two streams of instruction (English and French) in schools with barely enough students to support one stream.

We were also struck with the absence of any vocational programs in the schools. It seemed to us that vocational education was a 'natural fit' in communities where students were struggling in school. This view was echoed by one of the external stakeholders whom we interviewed (see text box). Vocational education was an important component of comprehensive secondary schools throughout Québec. This changed with the merger of vocational education from the youth and adult sectors into a single sector. The new regime described above now provides for an applied general education path, as well as work-oriented career path. However, these new paths are still in development, especially in the English sector, and do not yet appear to have impacted upon the CSB. In response to our questions, several school administrators acknowledged the potential value of vocational education, but it does not seem to be on anyone's radar. In theory, continuing education centres and the SRVTC should be helping to this meet this need. In practice, this does not appear to be happening, an issue which we will address in Part 3.

> ***If only 12% are going to finish high school academically, then what about the other 88%? What are they doing? I would have them all in Vocational Education*** **(External stakeholder)*.***

4.3.3 Language of Instruction

The preservation of Cree language and culture was a central driving force behind the negotiation of the JBNQA and the creation of the CSB (see text box).[87] However, preparing students for further study and employment both within and beyond the Cree Nation has also been an integral part of the Board's mission.[a] The tensions between the two haves of this dual mission has often been articulated in differing opinions about the language of instruction.

> "Being Cree is embedded in the language of Cree. Cree words are the cultural link between Cree people. 'Creeness' makes the Cree language - and the Cree language makes for 'Creeness'."

In the first decade of the CSB's existence, the language of instruction was English, or French, except in kindergarten and Cree language and culture courses. This direction was radically altered in December 1988, when a joint meeting of the CSB and the CRA adopted a resolution whereby Cree would become the language of instruction at the primary and later the upper elementary levels.[88] This decision was taken at a time when many people were concerned that the pace of rapid change posed a threat to the survival of the Cree language. As a result, the James Bay Cree Language Commission study was commissioned whose mandate included a survey of the nine Cree communities "in the areas of use, competence, responsibility and future of the Cree language.[89]

Although some respondents spoke of the role of the school, the vast majority stated that it was their individual responsibility to preserve the Cree language. The report, while noting the traditional way that children learn in Cree communities, made the following observation about formal and informal learning, only addresses oral language, not writing or reading:

[a] See section 2.2.2 in Part 1.

> Although there has been continued effort for improvement in school language programs, classrooms are not necessarily the best place for language learning. The soul of language meaning can be better understood through real experience, rather than from books.

While noting the importance of 'hands on' activities, appropriate material and the integration of Cree components in the courses of study, the report goes on to state:

> If language is to grow and develop, the responsibility cannot be left to the schools. The list of requirements is already a very long one. Time for different programming and the preparation of the appropriate materials is not a realistic expectation of the school role. In an already full schedule of student time, if something new is added, something existing must be reduced.[90]

Schools cannot be expected to do it all.

The importance of this statement cannot be overestimated in dealing with such an emotionally charged issue:

- first, it underscores the implications of assigning schools a primary role in the preservation of Cree;
- second, it reminds us that schools are not the only option in this regard; and
- third, it distinguishes means from ends, demonstrating that one can - and should - consider different options without calling into question the highly desirable goal of preserving Cree language and culture.

Despite the reservations of the Commission study and its own Coordinator of Cree Programs, the CSB moved ahead with its plan to make Cree the language of instruction. It began with pilot projects for the introduction of the Cree Language of Instruction Program [**CLIP**]. Although the percentage of instruction in Cree was to be gradually reduced during the second cycle of elementary (then grades 4-6), it appears that the ultimate intention was to permit students to graduate from secondary school, using Cree as the language of instruction.

This was arguably a ***bold move*** but one that required "a ***strong commitment*** to material development and teacher training" and the "careful and constant attention to the ongoing collection and use of data" to monitor and evaluate the program.[91] An examination of events as they unfolded over the next several years suggests that either this commitment was lacking or the 'bold move' was simply not realistic.

The implementation of CLIP either lacked sufficient commitment or had unrealistic expectations in order to be successful.

In 1991, two teachers were taken from the classroom to develop the program for grade one.[a] They were then asked to pilot this program in their home communities (Chisasibi and Waskaganish) which they did in the fall of 1993. The other communities implemented CLIP the following year. In 1993-94, two more teachers were taken out of the classroom to work on the grade two program which they then implemented in the fall of 1994 (also in Chisasibi and Waskaganish). In the same year, one teacher was hired to work on the grade three program.

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[a] One teacher represented the northern dialect spoken in Whapmagoostui, Chisasibi and Wemindji, and one represented the southern dialect spoken in other communities. In the fall of 1993, Cree Programs began working on standardizing the East Cree Writing System; to date the northern dialect is finished and the southern dialect is almost finished.

Due to the shortage of Cree teachers some communities did not fully implement CLIP, which was intended to extend to grade three. Some of the communities put their Cree language or Cree culture teachers in the CLIP classes. Some of these teachers did not have the skills to teach Cree. As one teacher remarked, just because you speak a language, does make you qualified to teach it. Some teachers did not even have a Secondary School Diploma; even if they were capable of teaching Cree language or culture, they were not qualified to assume responsibility for a regular classroom.[a]

An evaluation of CLIP was undertaken after each of the first two years, as well as in 2001,[92] each report relying on classroom observations and stakeholder input. The evaluation of any program in its first year is necessarily tentative, as many key issues can only be considered after a span of several years. The evaluation of year one was cautiously optimistic, stating:

> The quality of the teaching and materials was very good, and the children were clearly learning what they should for their age, not only in terms of spoken Cree, but also reading and writing Cree, Cree culture, and all the regular subjects such as mathematics, social studies and so on.[93]

However, it raised many questions and made almost forty recommendations regarding information/training, planning and budgeting, and curriculum/materials development, considered to be *critical* to the success of the program. The report of year two consists mainly of a summary of the data collected, with little analysis, plus various recommendations.[b] Once again, issues of coordination and support loom large; in particular:

> There appears to be a lack of co-ordination between the various branches of the Department of Education Services. If a Management Team [were] created, better communication would take place, and there would be more unity in the actions of the three branches that directly affect the Cree as the Language of Instruction Program.[94]

The 1995 report raised the issue of transition from CLIP to instruction in English or French. The principals of both pilot schools saw this as an important priority. In the words of the principal from Waskaganish:

> This is the main area of concern for this school. There are no objectives set out for it. An evaluation process for second language acquisition needs to be put in place. A vocabulary bank needs to be developed. Benchmarks need to be established for second language acquisition. Objectives need to be introduced in terms of specific knowledge of alphabet and written language. Teachers need to be inserviced for ESL/FSL methods..... The transition process is so important. Specialists are needed in second language acquisition to properly provide for transition.[95]

No provision was ever made for the transition from Cree to English or French as a language of instruction.

Unfortunately, this insightful comment seems to fallen on deaf ears, as did the recommendations for capacity building and ongoing evaluation. We did not discover any evidence that any systematic evaluation of CLIP took place between 1995 and 2001, when the last such effort was made, motivated apparently by the concerns of some stakeholders on the impact of CLIP on student success in the upper elementary grades.[96] The report does not address this concern and relies more on the author's theoretical beliefs than on data. It therefore cannot be relied upon to provide an accurate picture of the state of CLIP seven years after its implementation. However, it too signalled the importance of transition planning and programming: " It is possible that students will have to make the transition ... without having received the quality of second language instruction that [they] rightly deserve and need."[97]

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[a] Since most of the Cree Teachers did not know how to read and write Cree, the Cree Literacy program was started by Professional Development; see section 10.2.3, Part 4, page 236.

[b] The recommendations from these two reports are included in Appendix D.

Although we do not have any data on stakeholder views from this period, we can surmise that the views of both educators and parents were divided on the issue of language of instruction. Some saw CLIP as an essential tool in the promotion of Cree; others did not, reflecting an earlier survey by Tanner in 1981. As reported in 2001 by Burnaby and MacKenzie, in the eyes of many parents, "formal education success and English achievement were strongly linked... Cree was not seen as a contributor and perhaps even a hindrance."[98] They also note that the question of language was further complicated by the rising profile of French, which some parents felt was *the* language that students must master.[a]

In 2004, Cree Programs conducted surveys to gather opinions about CLIP, the results of which were written up by a consultant from Instructional Services.[99] As a measure of the effectiveness of CLIP, grade 6 students who had passed through CLIP were asked to quantify how much of elders' spoken Cree they understood. Fewer than half (45%) reported that they usually understood everything; 33% reported that they understood most of what was said and 22% only some of what was said. While 50% of parents were satisfied with CLIP and another 23% were very satisfied, this did not mean that they thought CLIP was beneficial: 44% had strong belief in the benefits but 41% believed only somewhat in the benefits and 15% saw very little benefit in the program.

It is extremely unfortunate, given the central importance of the place of Cree as a language of instruction and a subject in the curriculum, that no means, other than opinions, have been used to measure the actual level of language acquisition in Cree, the actual - as opposed to perceived - or benefits of CLIP or its impact on student learning in other subjects in either English or French.

Conflicting views over language of instruction can be seen in the pilot project to replace CLIP that has been taking place at the Voyageur Memorial School in Mistissini, since 2003, in the French sector and in the English sector since 2005. A report of the school principal in 2007 claims that the results of the evaluation of the pilot project "speak for themselves" and recommends that they become mainstream programs. The results to which she refers are a comparison of students from: (a) the original pilot group; (b) those who joined the pilot project in 2006 ; and (c) students in the French sector who were never in the project. The results reported were: 91% for group (a), 83% for group (b) and 69% for group (c). However, it should be noted that the number of students in each case was very small. Positive results were reported for the English pilot groups but they have not progressed far enough for any meaningful comparison to be made.[100]

Although the data from this pilot project are insufficient to enable any firm conclusions to be drawn, they support what many people would see as obvious: children will do better in upper elementary if they have instruction in English or French starting in kindergarten[b].

***You could just forget about all the other questions and we could just talk about CLIP* (Principal).**

During the collection of data for the Educational Review, a great many stakeholders raised issues concerning the language of instruction and several suggested that there were significant intergenerational differences among parents with regard to this issue. The comment of one principal quoted in the text box sums up the focus of these concerns - CLIP.

[a] There is a general analogy here with the tensions within the English language school communities throughout Québec over the maintenance of an English language school system, while ensuring that students are functionally literature in French, hence the high demand for French immersion programs. An even more specific analogy can be seen in the programming of Jewish day schools, where English, French and Hebrew are taught, resulting in a much longer school day than the public school system.

[b] One interesting finding reported by the teacher of the English pilot group in kindergarten is the importance of attendance and attitude to success for these children; see text associated with endnote 140.

Although the majority of complaints about CLIP concerned its impact on student learning in English and French, we heard several stakeholders bemoan the failure of CLIP to teach Cree:

> *One of my daughters, she's in secondary 5 now, she started that program when it began and now she doesn't even know how to write or read Cree* (Parent).

It is clear to us in conducting the Educational Review, that CLIP is a ***lightning rod*** for any opinions regarding any type of Cree instruction within the schools. It is also very clear that everyone has a strong opinion about CLIP, whether it is positive or negative. In our view, polarizing the debate around CLIP is a mistake. The real question regarding language of instruction is not: Should we maintain CLIP? Keeping CLIP will not ensure success but neither will getting rid of it. Consider the response of one **principal** when asked about CLIP:

***CLIP is delaying instruction at every level and mortgaging the future of our youth* (Teacher).**

Q: *We've heard some people say that students are behind because they started out in Cree and by the time they get to Grade 6, the gap has widened. What do you think?*

A: *It's widened. Because you're fighting with different factors here. You're fighting with social issues. You're fighting with behaviour issues....*

In other words, language of instruction must be considered, not in isolation, but together with all other relevant issues. Therefore, the Board needs to ask:

- What policies and programs offer the greatest potential for children to master both Cree and either English or French?

- What conditions, resources and other capacities are required to support the successful realization of such policies and programs?

It is beyond the scope of this Review to provide complete answers to these questions, an exercise that requires both a consideration of the research on language acquisition in both Aboriginal and second languages, as well as further analysis of the situation prevailing in the CSB.

- One cannot, for example, take a research finding that initial instruction in students' mother tongue facilitates subsequent instruction in a second language to defend CLIP.

One needs to understand all relevant details of the study and the milieu to which it is to be applied to determine the degree of 'fit.'

- For example, were students in the study exposed to their own language orally and in print during their early years? Was it the only language spoken at home? Do the conditions in the implementing milieu match those found in the study milieu?

The Board fails its students if it does not teach them to read. With few exceptions, students who cannot read by the end of grade 3, fall further and further behind until they are too discouraged to even try.

However, we feel we must offer some comments on the research base for language acquisition, as it provides the foundation for any sound policy and practice on the language of instruction.

Comparative analysis of biliteracy in Puerto

Rico and Cambodian communities in Philadelphia illustrated the range of factors that can impact student's biliterate development. According to this research, in order for students to become biliterate, they have to be supported along three continua:

- the macro-micro continuum (political and economic factors that support or detract from the development and acceptance of biliteracy);
- the monolingual and bilingual continuum (the use of both languages in school and societal contexts); and
- the oral-literate continuum (the use and support of oral and written language by the school and community).[101]

What is also absolutely clear from the research on reading is the crucial importance of the early years of schooling - kindergarten to grade 3 - for mastering a language. According to established research, there are six stages in learning to read, extending from pre-reading to expert reading. The crucial break comes at the end of grade 3 when reading develops from a level that represents the language and knowledge that readers have already acquired through listening and direct experience (e.g., TV).

> Academic success, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing someone's reading skill at the end of grade 3. A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by the end of third grade is quite unlikely to graduate from high school.[102]

As of grade 4, the reading material extends beyond what is already known:

> Thus, grade 4 reading level can be seen as the beginning of a long progression in the reading of texts that are ever more complicated, literary, abstract, and technical; and that require more world knowledge and ever more sophisticated language and cognitive abilities to engage in the interpretations and critical reactions expected for such materials.[103]

In the schools in which CLIP is fully in place, children reach this critical stage (grade 4) without any solid basis in reading in any language.[104] Instruction in English or French is minimal and this lack is not, for most students, compensated by reading activities at home. As a general rule, their literacy skills in Cree are quite low. Furthermore, because of the totally different language system that is used in English and French, the Cree language system does not provide a viable basis for language development in English and French.[a]

As discussed in other sections of this report,[b] there are serious shortcomings in almost every aspect of service delivery of instruction in Cree, beginning with the level of understanding of: bilingual models of education, language development and acquisition in general, effective literacy approaches, and curriculum development that would allow the Board to develop programs and books that could be used effectively within the school board.

From the material which we were given to examine, CLIP does not even appear to constitute a real program. We have not seen any documentation that reflects a clearly defined set of competencies progressing from one grade to another, let alone content and methodologies that teachers can use.

As already alluded to previously, many teachers lack the qualifications to deliver effective instruction. They were not given sufficient preparation in their teacher training program, nor do they receive adequate support or professional development. They are essentially left on their

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[a] This does not mean that a child cannot apply learning in one language to learning another language. Such a possibility is the basis of language transfer. However, this kind of transfer occurs when the phonological skills developed in one language can be used to learn the other language.

[b] See sections 4.1 on teaching (p. 67), 4.2 on instructional resources (p. 75) and 10.2 on Educational Services (Part 4, p 217).

own to do the best they can. Unfortunately, their best is often not good enough and no one is holding them accountable for these results.

When students arrive in grade 4 (or whatever grade they switch to English or French), the least one would expect is a program to provide a transition to enable them to succeed in their new language of instruction. Not only is no such transition provided, it does not appear that the need it was ever on anyone's radar. It seems as if this is another example of wishful thinking.

Given the attachment that many people have to CLIP, we asked ourselves: Is there a way to transform it into a viable language of instruction program enabling students to acquire the basis for learning language, math and other subjects? After much reflection we did not find a positive answer to this question. On a purely pragmatic basis, if after more than fifteen years no viable program has been developed, it seems unlikely that a dramatic change can be effected any time soon. Furthermore, given the general lack of reading activity for young children at home, the role of the school is even more critical. **If the school does not teach children to read, no one else will. If they do not learn to read, they will not succeed in school.**

An entire generation of children has now passed through the CSB system with CLIP as its basis for literacy and numeracy. As we know from the student results presented previously, students do not possess basic skills in reading, language and math; they cannot cope with demands of the courses of study provided for in the QEP; fewer than 10% of students graduate from secondary school and the vast majority of these students do not have the knowledge and skills required to successfully undertake collegial level studies.

The Board should not give up on these students and needs to find ways to support them through intensive remediation for those still in elementary or secondary school, tutoring for those enrolled in post-secondary studies or through continuing education for those who have left school.

> The results for a generation of students who began school with CLIP are well known. The next generation deserves better.

If the Board seriously thinks it can make CLIP a viable basis for the literacy and numeracy of its students, then it should undertake a long range development program to do so. Any revised program that comes from this process should only be implemented when there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that it will provide students with the education they deserve. In the meantime, the next generation deserves better than that which is being offered at present. It not, then another generation will lose the opportunities that education is meant to provide.

These findings should not be interpreted as diminishing the importance of preserving and promoting the Cree language. This was the message of the Cree Language and Culture Conference held in Ouje-Bougoumou in 1997:

> **Let us never forget the relationship among our culture and language and the land. If we lose any one of these we lose much of what we are as a people.**[105]

Although we have no current data on the relative state of the Cree language, we are acutely aware that many people are concerned about losing their language.[a] No member of the evaluation team questions the goal of preserving and promoting the Cree language. What we do question is the means to achieve this goal. Recalling our earlier discussion of 'means' and 'ends,' the question for us is not *if* but *how*.

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[a] See the main recommendations arising from the Cree Language and Culture Conference, held in November, 1997, in Ouje-Bougoumou, included in Appendix D.

4.3.4 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether curriculum meets the stated standard:

- The curriculum being taught fulfills the requirements mandated for each level of instruction and is appropriate for students at that level.

This is obviously a key issue in seeking ways of promoting student success. We began our inquiry by looking at the provincial framework for instruction (the Ministry regime) and curriculum (the QEP). We then asked: What curriculum was offered to students in the CSB? We found that the answer to this seemingly simple question was revealed in layers.

First layer: there was one regime applied at the kindergarten and early elementary level, where Cree is the language of instruction - CLIP. Second layer: from the point at which CLIP leaves off, the regime is the same as followed in any school in the province, with the exception of the provision for Cree language and culture and a modified History of Québec and Canada course in secondary IV. Third layer: the application of CLIP varies from school to school and so, by consequence, the grade level at which the provincial regime is applied. Fourth layer: although English or French is the language of instruction after CLIP, expectations for language proficiency are, at best, at a second-language level. Fifth layer: what is *actually* taught in classrooms often bears little resemblance to the provincial curriculum because the students do not have the competencies to handle the subject matter.

Language of instruction is at the centre of the debate over curriculum. For many stakeholders, it is the only issue that matters. They believe that if this issue were resolved, then students will succeed. As much as we agree that this is a crucial issue, we do not agree with this view. Student success depends on many other factors, not just language of instruction. If they are not properly addressed, then students will not succeed, no matter how the language of instruction issue is resolved.

In considering this issue, we were very much aware of two other related matters. First, that this was a highly charged issue, with very strong feelings held by stakeholders on both sides of a polarized divide: for and against CLIP. Second, the supporters of CLIP appear to have been successful at associating CLIP with the preservation of Cree language and culture. In other words, if you are against one you are against the other. We regard this as a very unfortunate state of affairs and look to the leadership of the CSB to convince everyone to take a step back from this stance, which is not only inaccurate, it is harmful to finding the road ahead. CLIP is one means to preserve Cree language and culture and, by our analysis, it is not the best way.

The purpose of CLIP was to offer a program, not just to teach Cree as a language, but to provide a language of instruction for curricular learning. We have concluded that it does not merit being called a program, has done a poor job in teaching Cree as a language, and has completely failed to provide a language of instruction for curricular learning. An entire generation of students has passed through the current regime and they are failing in record numbers. Among the many reasons for this terrible state of affairs, and we would argue the main reason, is that the schools have failed to teach them to read. Something drastic needs to be done; the present curricular model is not working and no amount of tinkering is going to make it work.

The Board does not have, nor will it be able to develop in the short term, the capacity to provide a complete curriculum in Cree. The sequential curricular model generally used in CSB schools - instruction in Cree from kindergarten to grade 2/3, followed by instruction in English or French, as presently structured and resourced, does not serve either aspect of the Board's dual mission: (1) promoting Cree language and culture, or (2) preparing students for further education,

employment and life-long learning. As we have said before, both these goals should be pursued, but a new means is required to do so.

Our analysis of the data lead us to conclude that both aspects of this mission would be better served by a single curricular model from kindergarten through secondary school. Although, we cannot provide the detailed specifications of such a model, we can provide some guiding principles, which are stated in the recommendations that follow.

R25 **THAT** the Board adopt the guiding principles outlined in recommendations 26 to 32 for the purpose of consulting stakeholders on the adoption of new curricular model for elementary and secondary education to be applied in all schools of the CSB.

R26 **THAT**, following consultation (recommendation 25), the Board draft a framework for the design and implementation of this new curricular model, including a realistic timeline and predetermined indicators of success, and communicate it to stakeholders, including the Ministry.

R27 **THAT**, in keeping with recommendation 11, the new curricular model provide for the teaching of Cree from kindergarten to secondary V, including the development of a comprehensive curriculum that provides for progressive learning outcomes at each grade, the summation of which meet the expectations of stakeholders for the mastery of speaking, reading and writing Cree.

R28 **THAT**, in keeping with recommendation 11 and taking into account extra-curricular means to promote Cree culture, the new curricular model provide for the teaching of Cree culture from kindergarten to secondary V, by an appropriate combination of specific courses and cross-curricular learning embedded in other course subjects.

R29 **THAT**, in keeping with recommendation 12, the new curricular model provide for the teaching of all compulsory and elective subjects at the elementary and secondary levels based on the *Basic School Regulation*, the QEP and the certification requirements of the Ministry.

R30 **THAT**, where appropriate, the curricular offerings envisaged by recommendation 29 include local programs of study, provided they meet ministry standards.

R31 **THAT** the new curricular model provide for diversified paths to learning at the secondary level, including vocational education, to be developed with the collaboration of the youth and adult education sectors of the Board.

R32 **THAT**, except for the teaching of Cree and Cree culture as a separate subject, the new curricular model provide for English or French as the language of instruction at a given level of instruction, in accordance with the wishes of each community as expressed by a resolution of the general assembly of parents, it being understood that a school may only offer instruction in both languages if numbers so warrant.

R33 **THAT** the new curricular model provide for progressive implementation beginning at kindergarten and moving forward one year at a time and a transitional regime for students currently enrolled in schools of the Board.

R34 **THAT** the means required to effect recommendations 25 to 33, including enhanced performance and capacity of schools and the Board offices, be developed in accordance with other recommendations of this report.

5.0 COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES

In this report, we use the term 'complementary services' to refer to the range of services provided to students, other than classroom instruction by a teacher.[a] In this performance theme, we posed the following question about these other services:

- How successful is the school in providing quality complementary services to its students?

This theme comprises two evaluative objects:

- complementary services for all students; and
- complementary services for students with special needs.

The standards used to evaluate each object are provided in each of the sub-sections that follow; the recommendations regarding all complementary services are provided in section 5.3.

5.1 Services for All Students

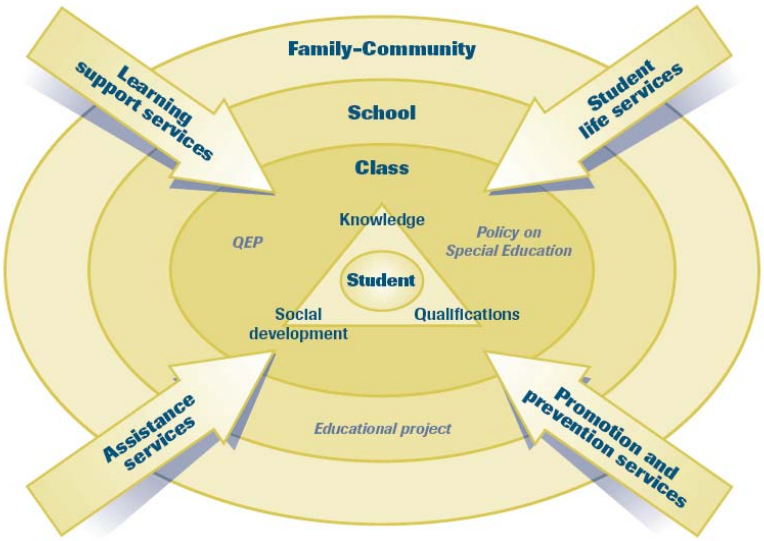
As alluded to above, complementary services are intended to supplement the instructional services provided by teachers.

Performance Standards

- Complementary services help to provide students with conditions that support their learning and personal development.
- Counselling services help students with their academic and career choices, and with any difficulties relating to schooling that they encounter.
- Extra-curricular activities that foster student engagement in learning and school life are provided on a regular basis.

[a] In the jargon of Québec education, 'educational services' comprise instructional services and complementary services, which had traditionally been called 'student services' in English schools. We decided to use the expression 'complementary services' to refer to this broad range of services because of the use in the CSB of the expression 'student services' to refer to particular types of activities organized by the Educational Services Department.

In Québec public schools, they are framed in terms of four 'programs' each with its own purpose formulated in relation to student needs:



- **support services** - to provide students with conditions that are conducive to learning;
- **student life services** - to foster students' autonomy and sense of responsibility, their moral and spiritual dimensions, their interpersonal and community relationships, as well as their feeling of belonging to the school;
- **counselling services** - to help students throughout their studies, with their academic and career choices, and with any difficulties they encounter; and
- **promotion and prevention services** - to provide students with an environment conducive to the development of a healthy lifestyle and of skills that are beneficial to their health and well-being.[a]

Although student services are not a new idea, they have been given much greater prominence in the context of the Québec reform of education referred to previously.[b] Rather than being viewed as a separate set of services that might be useful to some students, they are now seen as an integral part of a range of integrated services:

> Integrated services are services that are part of a coherent, coordinated, harmonious system with shared objectives that everyone works collaboratively to attain. Such services should be comprehensive, flexible and adaptable. They should be planned in collaboration with the students and their parents from the outset, by teachers and other education personnel.[106]

Whether this vision has been adopted in practice in Québec schools is a matter for debate. However, the approach suggested by the ministry policy is forward-looking, reflecting what we have learned from research on school improvement, namely a holistic approach to achieving success by means of an integrated approach to planning and service delivery.

In the CSB, last year's annual report makes this statement about complementary services now available in schools:

> Every school now has a trained Crisis Intervention Team which consists of administrators, teachers, Student Affairs Technicians, Counsellors, parents and support personnel. Their training will allow them to assist and work with the student clientele in trauma-related incidents that may affect the students in the school. I wish to thank all those who accepted to be part of this team as it is a much needed program in our all schools. An assessment of the program will take place in the coming school year to ensure that the teams are active within their respective schools.[107]

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[a] These services are provided for in the *Basic School Regulation*, which does not apply to the CSB. According to this Regulation, the four programs must include the following: services to promote participation in school life; services to educate students about their rights and responsibilities; sports, cultural and social activities; support services for the use of the school library; academic and career counselling and information; psychological services; psycho-educational services; special education services; remedial education services; speech therapy services; health and social services; and services in spiritual care and guidance and community involvement..

[b] See discussion on curriculum in section 4.1 (p. 67).

No one in any school made any reference to such a crisis intervention team and we have no evidence of any assessment having been carried out. When stakeholders were asked about complementary services offered in schools, the only one that they talked about was **guidance**. Tutoring was mentioned but only to note the lack of this service. Several students in focus groups did mention, when asked about getting extra help, that they just asked their teacher. Some mentioned peer-tutoring but it was unclear whether this was helpful to them. Students also talked about **extra-curricular activities**, where they existed.

Other complementary services are provided under the auspices of the Student Services unit of the Educational Services Department, including the boarding home program mentioned above and the Adolescent Sexuality Prevention Program. We will return to these programs in section 10.2.3 (Part 4), when reviewing service delivery by Educational Services. The following provides a summary of what we learned about guidance services and extra-curricular activities.

Guidance Services

In the CSB, guidance services are provided in part by professional guidance counsellors, though not every school has one in place. Schools do not have job descriptions for their duties, either produced in-house of by the Board.[a] Given the severity of student problems in school and the high level of social problems in the community, guidance counsellors have an important role to play in CSB schools.

> *We really need job descriptions for counsellors and SATs because I do not know what their job is supposed to be* (Vice-principal).

Guidance services are also provided by student affairs technicians [SATs]; again no job description exists. Their duties appear to vary widely from school to school, often having little to do with guidance. In one school we were told that their all but exclusive responsibility was to monitor attendance: *Basically, they're there to call up the parents in the morning when the kids aren't here*. In another school, that the SAT mostly takes care of boarding homes.

We asked school administrators about guidance services. Unfortunately, in many cases, the position was vacant or just recently filled. One **vice-principal** talked about the focus of some counsellors on secondary IV and V students to the exclusion of all others. As she said:

> *A secondary V student decides he wants to do something and discovers that not only is a high school diploma required but a CEGEP diploma as well. Perhaps if he had realized this in secondary III he would have made more of an effort.*

Even if the focus of guidance is on post-secondary opportunities for students, there seems to be little, if any, contact between school guidance counsellors, SATs and people working in either continuing education centres, the Continuing Education Department or Post-Secondary Education offices. **This apparent lack of collaboration provides an example of the need for greater vertical and horizontal integration of services within the CSB.**

The scope and focus of guidance services raises another related issue:

- Who is responsible for determining the nature of their duties and the important points of emphasis? Who is accountable for these services?

We have been told that SATs used to come under Educational Services, as did guidance counsellors, but several years ago their positions were decentralized to the schools. It is

[a] We asked the Human Resources Department for job descriptions of all categories of employees but they could not provide any, other than the generic ones that are found in provincial classification plans.

possible that certain school administrations have never internalized this change, partially, perhaps, because of the diffusion of responsibility within the school.

For example, the Student Services unit of the Educational Services Department is responsible for the boarding home program. The SATs are often the point person for making this program work. They report to the principal and the CEA is responsible for the budget of the program in his or her community.

From the anecdotal evidence collected, it appears that guidance services are sometimes very helpful, and less so in other cases, as shown by an exchange with students, then by comments from teachers, and one vice-principal:

> Q: *If something's wrong, if you're feeling bad about something or something is bothering you and you need to talk to someone - is there someone you can go and see in the school?*
>
> A: *No.*
>
> Q: *So what do you do when that happens?*
>
> A: *....*
>
> Q: *You don't talk to anyone in the school?*
>
> A: *No.*
>
> *We have a guidance counsellor but our guidance counsellor isn't a guidance counsellor really. well, it's someone from the community who's done a lot of work around the school but who is not a qualified guidance counsellor. In fact, our guidance counsellors have done very little guidance counselling for all the time they've been here. They really do a little pedagogical advising and also work for the community as a whole, organizing the graduation and student road trips and things like that* (teachers)*.*
>
> *The guidance counsellor is pretty good. He deals a lot with organizing things. He organizes, for example, our orientation trips. He does a lot of scheduling, helping us out. He works a lot with the students. He'll pull students right out of classrooms. He's doing a wonderful job. We don't have any complaints with him. He's right on the ball. He finds things. He's very good. We enjoy him* (vice-principal)*.*

Extra-Curricular Activities

To many adults, extra-curricular activities are just that - something extra that is not all that important. To students, on the other hand, they may be the primary reason that keeps them in school, especially if they are experiencing little success in the classroom. As one Canadian study found:

> In every school, students were engaged, not only in formal learning activities primarily designed by classroom or subject teachers, but also in a wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Students looked forward to participation in sporting activities or in clubs of many kinds and reported that these were excellent vehicles for making friends and for getting to know teachers on a more personal basis outside of class. Students spoke of how being involved in extra-curricular activities helped them to feel as though they belonged to the school and were not just visiting it. In fact, it was through such activities that many students became aware of the humanity and dedication of their teachers.[108]

However, there can be a 'down-side' to extra-curricular activities: "The time demands and performance pressures associated with some extracurricular activities may leave participants

too preoccupied or too fatigued to concentrate on their schoolwork."[109] Thus, although extra-curricular activities can be a positive force within a school, they need to be managed to minimize such side-effects. Student leadership activities such as student council can have a double-benefit in this regard, providing both a positive activity for students and a way of shaping the general operation of activities within the school.

During our school visits, we asked stakeholders about extra-curricular activities, beginning with the students. In various focus groups with former students, one participant bemoaned the lack of school activities; others gave examples of how activities helped enliven the school:

> *I went to elementary down south and they had shows or plays or whatever once or twice a month. Here, last year there was a play only once and that was it. Sometimes they'd tell you in advance and I'd look forward to going to school that day, waiting for that show or whatever to happen.*
>
> *This Friday was a day when we had the whole afternoon….we just went to the gym and played volleyball. The whole high school and we played volleyball with the teachers…against the teachers and that was fun. The first time I've seen that.*
>
> *There was this one class which I found really interesting - digital photography. They gave us a digital camera and we took pictures and it was really fun. They had this other after-school activity - it was drama. It was really fun, but there weren't that many people participating in the activity. I don't know why.*

A good deal of the discussion with current students consisted of long questions, with short answers for example:

Q: *Are there any after school activities? How about an after school program? I'm talking about activities for you guys - things for you to do after school. Are there any clubs?*

A: *No.*

However, some students did identify many types of activities they would enjoy, including: gymnastics, computers, swimming, math club, digital photography, drama club for girls, floor hockey, and, for good measure, field trips outside the community. Other students were not able to identify what they might enjoy because they had no frame of reference with which to answer the question. In other words, they had so little experience with extra-curricular activities that they didn't know what they might be like.

One of the major issues that came up when talking to various stakeholders was hockey, especially regional hockey tournaments. Students miss many days of school because of hockey, which seems to be more important to some parents, than school. So we asked the obvious question to one principal:

Q: *Has anybody ever thought about saying - if you miss class you can't go to hockey?*

A: *When I was teaching grade 5 and 6 English I remember meeting with the recreational department. I said, look why can't we work together, we make an incentive for them. If they attend school, do their work, then they get to go on your tournament, they get to go on your hockey trips. 'Oh, that's a good idea.' They gave me a sheet, like a calendar, and I had to put a red mark if they attended, did well. And if they had three green, then they didn't get to go. That worked for a while. Then, 'Oh, we really need this one because he's the only goalie. He's our best goalie. We need him.'*

Q: *How long did it last before that happened?*

A: *Maybe two months.*

Q: *Two months in one year?*

A: *Yes. And that was it.*

This exchange also illustrates another key issue to which we will return in chapter 7, community linkages. Input from school administrators about after-school activities was often vague. When we asked about records indicating what activities were taking place and how many students were involved, we might be told: *Maybe the teachers who are doing these after-school activities would know.*

Some administrators suggested that student interest was very low and difficult to sustain. One gave an example of students who expressed an interest in having a student radio station.

Given the presence of the community radio station, this might have been possible. When it came to start the activity - right away, not after a long delay - there were three students. By the next week, none. The only exceptions to this pattern, according to some, are sports.

Some parents expressed the opinion that teachers were unwilling to participate in after-school activities. One **vice-principal** expressed the situation this way:

> *We push teachers to do things but once their day is done, they're gone and you don't see them until the next morning. We try to encourage them to do little things with their students, you know. It doesn't matter what it is. We tell them it doesn't matter, you know, take them out in the bush for a little walk or something. It doesn't happen. I don't know if there's a complete lack of interest in the students or it's just them or what it is.*

Another vice-principal suggested teachers count the minutes in their workload and so does the Board. Some members of the evaluation team have seen what happens in schools when everyone is counting minutes. And it is not good. It is possible that the lack of student activities is not only a symptom of low student engagement but low staff engagement as well.

We also discovered that other types of extra-curricular activities were organized under the auspices of the Student Services unit of the Educational Services Department. Some take place in schools, others take place outside the community, for example:

- Regional Science Fair;
- Annie Whiskeychan Day/Cree Day (includes Cree Spelling Bee & Cree Culture Exhibit);
- Public Speaking Contest;
- Art Fair;
- Geordie Productions (play each year);
- 'Elephant Thoughts' (science activities).

Other events that take place are community ones that often happen at the last minute, such as motivation speakers who are paid for by public health or some other department. They are not always appropriate for all levels and don't have a message that is given ahead of time for schools to see and approve of. Also, there are walks of different types such as for violence or child's day that come up. These days or events contribute to the loss of instructional time and can occur 3-5 times a year, if not more.

We will return to a discussion of these activities in section 10.2.3 (Part 4) in our review of the Educational Services Department. At this point, we would like to mention that sometimes these activities are appreciated, other times they are not. The positive feedback relates to the activities themselves while the negative feedback concerns the fact that they are planned from

outside the school, with no school involvement. We are told that one day people show up for an activity that disrupts the school without notice. It is unclear whether anyone in the school was informed in advance or whether someone was informed who failed to tell the others. In any event, it is another example of the lack of communication that plagues so much of the CSB operations.

5.2 Services for Students with Special Needs

Special education - services for students with 'special needs' - have changed in the past several years, as has our understanding of their needs.

Special education has evolved from a time when 'educable' students were placed in regular schools but in special classes; 'trainable' students were placed in special schools, while students with more severe disabilities were excluded from the school system altogether.[110] Gradually, the policy of 'integration,' 'mainstreaming' or 'inclusion' of students with special needs in regular classrooms became the norm,[a] in both public school systems and First Nations communities (see text box).[111]

> Historically, First Nation children with challenging needs would not attend school.... Over time we have moved from that point of view through the segregated school movement to the present trend of integration and total mainstreaming. The main impetus behind this movement has been the parents of many handicapped students, who feel their children should be educated with their non-handicapped peers.[112]

However, the use of special classes or facilities has not disappeared, nor has the debate about the best way to meet the needs of these students, while still providing appropriate services to other students in regular classes.[113]

"'Special education' can provide hope for all our First Nations children who have learning needs which require our utmost attention.... The future of our First Nations rests in our determination to assist those most in need. This is our way; this is the traditional First Nations way."

We do not wish to engage in this debate. Rather we wish to emphasize that special education services, however and wherever they are delivered, are meant to equalize educational opportunities for students with special needs by providing them with appropriate support to succeed in school.

Generally, special education services begin with identification and assessment. In the case of severe disabilities, this process may begin early in a child's life, but it is often initiated by a parent or a classroom teacher who realizes that the student is experiencing difficulty in learning. Assessment refers to all types of special information gathering about the student that goes beyond regular assessment (i.e. the type carried out for all students) for, among other purposes, the identification of a student in a special needs category (such as those listed in Exhibit 2-27).

[a] According to some authors, each of these three terms means something quite different; for our purposes, we use them interchangeably.

Performance Standard
▪ Special education services meet the following criteria: ◊ students with special needs are identified and assessed in a timely and appropriate manner; ◊ regular classroom instruction is adapted to meet students' special needs; and ◊ a range of additional services, in accordance with students' special needs, are provided.

Over time, **students with special needs** have been defined and ***coded*** in terms of various ***categories*** ranging from mild learning difficulties to severe developmental disorders. A recent document published by MELS now refers to three major groups: (A) students 'at-risk;' (B) students with 'social maladjustments or learning difficulties;' and (C) students with a 'severe behavioural disorder or handicap.'[114] These categories are listed below, including the ministry code for each category in parentheses.

EXHIBIT 2-27: CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

A: At-Risk Students
B: Students with Social Maladjustments or Learning Disabilities
C: Students with Severe Behavioural Disorder or Handicaps
• severe behavioural disorder (14); • profound intellectual impairments (23); • moderate to severe intellectual impairments (24); • mild motor impairments (33); • organic impairments (33); • language disorders (34); • severe motor impairments (36); • visual impairments (42); • hearing impairments (44); • pervasive developmental disorders (50); • psychopathological disorders (53); • other (99).

The MELS document does not define at-risk students or students with social maladjustments or learning difficulties. Definitions of these students can be found in provincial teacher agreements,[115] but not in the one applicable to the CSB.[a]

[a] At-risk students are defined as "students who display characteristics likely to affect their learning or behaviour that will place them in a vulnerable situation, particularly, with respect to academic failure or their socialization, without immediate intervention".

A student "is deemed to have behavioural difficulties [social maladjustments] when a psychosocial assessment, carried out by qualified personnel in conjunction with other concerned individuals relying on observation and systematic analysis techniques, shows that he or she has a marked inability to adapt manifested by significant difficulties in interacting with one or more elements that make up his or her social, family or school environment.

A student "is deemed to have learning disabilities [difficulties] when an analysis of his or her situation shows that the remedial measures, carried out by the teacher or by others involved in intervention efforts over a significant period of time, have not enabled the student to make sufficient progress in his or her learning to meet the minimum requirements for successful completion of the cycle with respect to the language of instruction or mathematics as provided for in the Québec Education Program."

We endeavoured to obtain data on the number of students with special needs in CSB schools. The data shown below in Exhibit 2-28 were provide by the Educational Services Department (Special Education). No breakdown by level is shown because the Board does not have this information. We have no information regarding the assessment or identification procedures use to produce these data, which should only be regarded as an approximation of the number of students with special needs in the Board.

EXHIBIT 2-28: STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE CSB, 2007-08

Description	Code*	S01	S02	S03	S04	S05	S06	S07	S08	S09	Total
At Risk	A	12	113	13	20	25	126	309	28	285	931
Speech and Language Disabilities	B	5	16	2	9	6	8			2	48
Learning Disability	B		14	3	9	2	3	5			36
Severe Behavioral Problems	C-14	7	5	3	8	4	19	32		87	165
Global Developmental Delay	C-24	3	15	2	1			21		3	45
Down Syndrome	C-24		1					2			3
Spina Bifida	C-36			1	1						2
Paraplegia / quadraplegia	C-36		2								2
Visually Impaired	C-42				1			2			3
Hearing Impaired	C-44	1	2	2		1				1	7
Autism	C-50		1	5	1	1		2			10
Schizophrenia	C-53		1								1
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder	C-99	1	2				2				5
Total		**29**	**172**	**31**	**50**	**39**	**158**	**373**	**28**	**378**	**1258**

* The codes, based on those shown in Exhibit 2-27, were added by the evaluators to enable the reader to relate the data to ministry categories.

As stated in the ministry policy on special education, the overarching purpose of these services is to help students with special needs "succeed in terms of knowledge, social development and qualifications, by accepting that educational success has different meanings depending on the abilities and needs of different students, and by adopting methods that favour their success and provide recognition for it.... Success means obtaining observable, measurable, recognized results concerning the student's development...."[116] The thrust of this statement reflects overall ministry policy on student success, indicating that this general policy means success for *all*.[a]

In Québec, the assessment of a student with special needs should lead to the development of an individual education plan [IEP] to set forth, for example, the type of program, services or setting which is most likely to support the child's optimal development, given his or her strengths and weaknesses.[b]

The services that should be provided vary widely, depending on the nature of the student's needs, and the resources available. Generally, the range of such services include the adaptation or augmentation of regular instructional services for students with special needs provided inside the classroom (e.g. integration aide) or outside the classroom (e.g. resource room); instruction in a setting that is different from those used by regular students, for all or part of the instructional timetable, either inside the school (special class) or in an outside setting (e.g. hospital). Examples of other services include behavioural counselling, speech and language

[a] It should be noted, however, that this policy statement and others that followed (see endnote 116), are framed by the provisions of the *Public Education Act* whose provisions are quite different from those that apply to the CSB; see discussion of special education policy in section 10.2.3 (Part 4, p. 229).

[b] The development of an IEP for an identified special need student is a legal requirement in pubic schools in Québec but not in schools of the CSB.

services, physical or occupational therapy.[a] In the Québec public school system, specialized services are also provided through agreements between the ministries of Education, and Health and Social Services.[117]

As noted above,[b] the first issue for students with special needs is access to schooling, as opposed to institutional or home care. Once inside the school house door, the issue is the level of services provided. **Teachers** in one focus group described this transition in the CSB:

> *When I was first in this community, you never used to see students with special needs in the schools because people would keep them home. Now, they're in the schools so the services have made a major leap forward there. Literally, people used to be hidden away in basements. Major ….there's a big step that's been made but if you look at what the needs are as opposed to resources that are there, it's a drop in the bucket. Often, people don't even want to recognize that there's a problem because that's the other part of magical thinking, that all the students are brilliant and none of the students have needs. We took years to get the School Board to accept that they had needs.*

In any school board, schools have the primary responsibility for providing 'front-line' services to students with special needs, with varying levels of support provided from the school board. This is true in the CSB, with the additional support being provided by Special Education Services unit of the Educational Services Department. We will be looking at the work of this unit in section 10.2 in Part 4. At this stage, the following statement about current services taken from a document prepared by that unit, provides a helpful starting point for what is happening in schools:

> Over the past number of years, the Cree School Board has employed outside services to the schools to assess referred students for academic and speech and communication difficulties as well as social and emotional problems.
>
> This model has been successful to a certain point. Assessments were done for students who were experiencing difficulties and reports were provided, outlining recommendations and strategies for teachers to incorporate in their classrooms. Unfortunately, this model is not ... effective in providing the support that teachers, educators and most importantly, the students, should receive.
>
> While our outside consultants attempt to meet with the teachers while they are in the community, it is often a quick visit, due to the number of students referred, and doesn't often provide enough time to explore these strategies in more depth.
>
> Many of our classrooms are now inclusive classes, and teachers are struggling to meet all the needs of their students. As mentioned earlier, there is insufficient support given directly to the teachers and classroom.[118]

Many of the services to which this statement refers are provided by the Learning Associates of Montreal,[c] and the Montreal Fluency Centre.[d] Although the statement from Special Education

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[a] In many cases, ***indirect services*** are also required to meet student needs. As the name implies, these services are not provided to students themselves, but are important because they *indirectly* benefit students. For example, they may support the development of various resources and services that are provided to students; see discussion of special education policy in section 10.2.3 (p. 229).

[b] See text associated with endnote 110.

[c] They provide a variety of consulting and other professional services (http://www.lammtl.org/).

[d] According to its website (http://www.montrealfluency.com/), "the Montreal Fluency Centre (MFC) is a private non-profit clinic providing service in Speech and Language Pathology to a pediatric population. It is also noted for its development of novel programs and training workshops in language, motor speech, and phonological awareness."

Services suggests that the current model is not working, this is not a reflection on the actual services provided, but on the model itself.[a]

> *Outside consultants arrive and say: 'This is what this child needs and good luck.' Again, that's where our magical thinking comes in; the steps are not there to achieve what we need* (Vice-principal).

From what we have been told and observed, the consultant arrives facing a long list of referrals, short space of time and often a lack of facilities in which to work.[b] There is such a press to assess students that there is little if any time to do follow-up from a previous visit, which may have occurred some months ago. Reports are sent by fax or email, which then must be interpreted and acted upon without the benefit of the consultant (except where telephone consultation is possible). Although our Review did not enable us to look into specific cases, we doubt whether individual schools have the capacity to follow through on the consultant's report.

The Board has made provision for each school to have a special education 'department head,' a term that is a bit of a misnomer, as this person does not lead a department. This position used to be called a 'master teacher' but the term was dropped. The position, as outlined by Special Education Services, has both teaching and professional duties, which are described below.

Teaching Activities:

- co-teaching with classroom teachers to help them meet the needs of students with special needs;
- assessing and evaluating students with special needs;
- assisting classroom teachers (in the classroom) with differentiated planning and assessment for students with special needs in the regular classroom;
- any other teaching assignment.

Professional Activities:

- training the educator care workers to work with the student to whom they have been assigned;
- with the principal of the school, ensuring the implementation of the Special Education Policy;
- planning IEPs for students with special needs integrated into regular classrooms;
- ensuring that all paperwork and forms are completed for visits from Learning Associates or other specialists;
- with the principal of the school, ensuring the smooth operation of the Local Problem Solving Committee;
- coordinating special education activities and teachers in the school;
- ensuring a communication link with the Special Education Services at the Cree School Board;
- any other teaching related tasks.

However, it appears that the actual duties vary considerably from school to school, depending on the capacity of the individual. For example, one vice-principal commented that the special education department head should be helping teachers to set up required programs but did not have the skills to do this. This position is another example of responsibility without sufficient

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[a] In fact, we had occasion to talk briefly with one of the Learning Associates staff during one of our community visits. She is a well-known and experienced professional whose assessments have a well-deserved reputation for being helpful to teachers, when there is sufficient time to discuss them and assist in follow-up.

[b] In Whapmagoostui, we were told that the timing of the visits was problematic: *The students that need the evaluations are always in the bush at that time because our people here, they leave in September and they don't come back till December.* It seems to us that the real problem here is not the timing of the visit, but student attendance.

capacity or direction, resulting in an under-utilized resource: not a commensurate level of 'value-added' for the investment made.

Moreover, even the intention of some of the duties of this position may be misguided. Rather than assigning the responsibility for developing the IEP to the Department Head, this duty should be regarded as the responsibility of the classroom teacher. The appropriate role of the Department Head should be to support the teacher.

The Local Problem Solving Committee mentioned above refers to a committee provided for in the teachers' collective agreement:[a]

> When a teacher detects in his or her class a student who, in his or her opinion, demonstrates particular social maladjustments or learning disabilities or shows signs of a mild motor impairment, an organic impairment or a language disorder, a moderate to severe intellectual handicap or severe developmental disorders or a severe physical handicap, he or she shall report it to the school principal so that the case may be studied by the local committee.
>
> Within 15 workdays of receiving the teacher's report, the school principal shall set up a local committee in order to ensure that the case is studied and that the progress of a student with a handicap, social maladjustment or learning disability is monitored. The committee shall be composed of a representative of the school administration, the teacher or teachers concerned and, at the committee's request, a professional. The committee shall invite parents to take part in the work of the committee; however, their absence cannot prevent the committee from carrying out its work.
>
> Once the principal has studied the needs, he or she shall prepare an individualized education plan defining the nature of the services and the resources necessary to meet the needs of the student.
>
> Barring uncontrollable circumstances, the individualized education plan drawn up by the school principal must be implemented no later than 30 days after the teacher prepared his or her report.
>
> If no decision is made concerning the implementation of an individualized education plan or if the support measures or services necessary to meet the needs of the student have not been provided, the teacher's workload shall be reduced.
>
> The school principal shall ensure the implementation and evaluation of the education plan. The local committee shall ensure the application of the education plan and follow-up of the integration, if need be.

Although we were not able to collect detailed data on the application of these provisions, we suspect that they represent theory more than practice. For example, we doubt that principals have either the time or the capacity to ensure that IEPs are developed. In fact, we do not see how this level of individualized planning could be taking place at all, other than in the realm of 'magical thinking.'

This is how **teachers** in one focus group described the process for identifying student needs and then meeting them:

> *The majority of students will only get the service if they're lucky and get identified. They'll get the follow-up for their entire academic time. But, the other poor student next door whose problems are just slightly smaller, well, since he's not the top-ranking one in that class, there's nothing or very little for him.*

When asked to elaborate, teachers provided the following response:

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[a] These extracts are taken from clauses 8-11.03 and 8-11.04 of section 8-11.00, Provisions Concerning Students With Handicaps and Students with Social .Maladjustments or Leaning Disabilities.

Well let me give you a scenario. In school, let's say you have 50 students whom the teachers believe need to be assessed because they have problems. They're put on the list. The first year, they see the first ten. The next year, you have a new batch, another 10 kids come in. So the next year, they can only assess 5, because they have to do the follow-up on the first 10. Then the next year, they can only assess 3. So after a while, they tell you, we've got a problem. We can't assess any new cases so the backlog keeps building up. The need is there but they don't have the people.

S01	S02	S03	S04	S05	S06	S07	S08	S09	All
3.50	11.00	5.00	0.00	2.00	10.00	8.00	0.00	4.00	43.50

We asked the Human Resources Department for data on the number of different types of personnel assigned to each school but did not receive the data requested. Schools did include staff numbers on their profile. Some listed department heads separately. The numbers shown above represent the number of **educators** reported by each school. However, these data should only considered as indicative of the staffing levels of each school.

We do know that in some cases, schools lack adequate office space for additional staff when they are hired. We inquired about support to teachers inside regular classrooms which appears to be confined to the presence of educators in some classes. The adaptation of regular instruction for students with special needs is not on anyone's radar. As one vice-principal put it, there is no regular instruction. In other words, all instruction needs to be adapted. We asked about support from outside agencies but this too seemed to be problematic.

There were some cases where schools received help from Social Services or Youth Protection but these seem to be exceptions to the rule, not standard practice. We also asked about the support received from Special Education Services. We will present data on all Educational Services units in section 10.2 in Part 4 but it should be noted that Special Education is one of only two units in this Department that schools generally found to be helpful.

5.3 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standards stated at the beginning of this chapter, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether complementary services meet the stated standards:

- Complementary services help to provide students with conditions that support their learning and personal development.

- Counselling services help students with their academic and career choices, and with any difficulties relating to schooling that they encounter.

- Extra-curricular activities that foster student engagement in learning and school life are provided on a regular basis.

- Special education services meet the following criteria:

  - students ensure that students with special needs are identified and assessed in a timely and appropriate manner.

  - regular classroom instruction is adapted to meet students' special needs; and

  - a range of additional services, in accordance with students' special needs, are provided.

Our brief time in schools did not permit a thorough analysis of complementary services or enable us to provide specific actions that would improve service delivery. It is apparent that in some cases, helpful guidance services are being provided, in others, services may not be up to the mark, and in still others, no services at all are offered because of vacant positions. We have few data about extra-curricular activities and in general they seem to be lacking.

Special education services rely heavily on outside consultants and in-school department heads, whose capacity to provide needed assistance appears to vary widely. Classroom assistants, called educators, are used but we do know the extent to which their services are effective. There is a need for a more in-depth probe of these services, specifically to determine:

- the number of students with special needs by category at each grade level;
- the full-time equivalent [FTE][a] number of staff in each category of personnel assigned to provide special education services, and the qualifications of these personnel; and
- the quality of the services provided.

Accordingly, we were not able to adequately assess service delivery in this area but from the anecdotal evidence collected, it appears that schools have **too few resources and with too little capacity, struggling as best they can to provide services to too many students with special needs**.

Based on our limited understanding of the situation, we recommend:

R35 **THAT** the Board, in collaboration with school administrators, teachers and others, undertake a thorough assessment of the needs of students for complementary services, determine what must be done beyond the current level of service delivery to meet these needs and implement an action plan to do so.

R36 **THAT** the Board, in collaboration with school administrators, teachers and others, undertake a thorough assessment of the present offering of extra-curricular offerings in schools with a view to enhancing this important support for student engagement.

R37 **THAT** the Board, in collaboration with school administrators, special education staff, teachers and others, draw up an accurate portrait of students with special needs enrolled in its schools and any school-age children or youth with special needs in its communities who are not currently in school.

R38 **THAT** the Board, in collaboration with school administrators, special education staff, teachers and others, undertake a thorough assessment of the needs of these students and other children and youth referred to in recommendation 35, determine what must be done beyond the current level of service delivery to meet these needs and implement an action plan to do so.

[a] An FTE count means that part-time staff are counted as a decimal portion of a full-time employee; e.g. a half time employee = 0.5, a quarter time employee = 0.25.

6.0 SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

School support for learning is an eclectic theme that encompasses everything that the school has to offer to promote and sustain direct services to students. In addressing this performance theme, we posed the following question:

- How successful is the school in providing other means to support learning?

This theme comprises four evaluative objects:

- school culture & organization;
- school leadership & strategic planning;
- allocation & management of resources; and
- monitoring & evaluation.

The standards used to evaluate each object are provided in each of the sub-sections that follow.

6.1 School Culture & Organization

Several expressions are used in education to capture the intangible but important quality of a school, most notably, climate, ethos and culture. School 'climate,' like the prevailing weather conditions from which this metaphor is taken, describes the atmosphere of the school, the feeling you get when you walk through the halls, talk to students and staff. The 'ethos' of a school usually refers to its underlying values and beliefs. School 'culture' refers to the collective norms that govern the behaviour of the members of the school community. It reflects the way they see the world, the 'way things are done here.'

These terms are defined very differently by various authors but what matters for purposes of this report is that the culture of a school - or whatever you wish to call it - is the basis on which it operates: "Culture describes how things are and acts as a screen or lens through which the world is viewed. It defines reality for those within a social organization, gives them support and identity...."[119] Culture is also an essential ingredient in determining the extent to which the school is open to change. "In other words, changes in beliefs and understanding (first principles) are the foundation of achieving lasting reform."[120]

The term 'school organization' refers to various policies and practices relating to how teaching and learning are structured and organized in the school. Examples of school organization include:

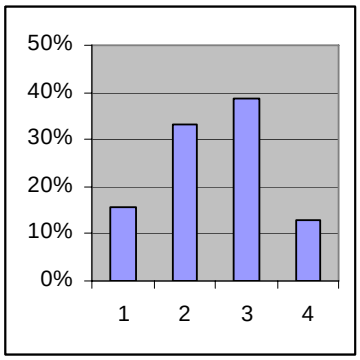
- division of learning into grades and cycles;
- semestering of courses;
- timetabling of instruction in six-day cycles;
- distribution of instructional days in a school calendar;
- scheduling time for staff meetings during school hours.

Performance Standards

- The school culture is welcoming to all members of the school community and supportive of learning and school life.
- School organization enhances the breadth and depth of opportunities to learn and supports a collaborative environment for teaching and learning.

The questionnaire completed by teachers and other school staff each included five items that rated the culture and organization of the school. In contrast to the responses presented earlier on student engagement and learning, respondents were asked to express the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement. The summary of their responses is shown below.[a]

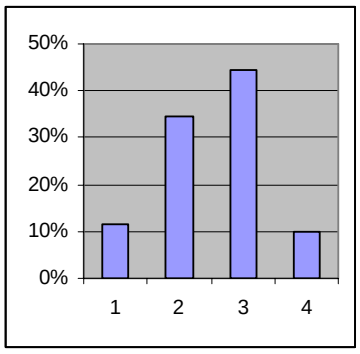
EXHIBIT 2-29: TEACHER RATING OF SCHOOL CULTURE & ORGANIZATION



Items	N	Rating*			
		1	2	3	4
11. Most teachers in this school share a similar set of values, beliefs and attitudes in relation to teaching and learning.	198	12%	30%	44%	13%
12. There is a strong sense of collegiality among teachers of the school.	201	13%	30%	43%	13%
13. There is a constructive working relationship between teachers and the school administration.	201	13%	31%	40%	16%
14. This school challenges students to do their best.	206	16%	36%	39%	9%
15. School rules for students are fairly and consistently enforced.	208	24%	38%	26%	13%

* Each item was rated on a four-point likert scale, where **1**= Strongly Disagree; **2**=Disagree; **3**=Agree; **4**=Strongly Agree; **N**=number of respondents.

EXHIBIT 2-30: OTHER SCHOOL STAFF RATING OF SCHOOL CULTURE & ORGANIZATION



Items	N	Rating*			
		1	2	3	4
1. Most staff members in this school share a similar set of values, beliefs and attitudes in relation to teaching and learning.	38	3%	29%	58%	11%
2. There is a strong sense of collegiality among staff members of the school.	39	15%	49%	33%	3%
3. There is a constructive working relationship between staff members and the school administration.	38	8%	18%	58%	16%
4. This school challenges students to do their best.	39	10%	28%	51%	10%
5. School rules for students are fairly and consistently enforced.	38	21%	47%	21%	11%

* Each item was rayed on a four-point likert scale, where **1**= Strongly Disagree; **2**=Disagree; **3**=Agree; **4**=Strongly Agree; **N**=number of respondents.

As shown in the two graphs, the overall ratings by teachers and other school staff are very similar. When responses expressing agreement (3 & 4) are combined, 51% of teachers and 54% of other staff agree with the statements, the balance expressing disagreement (49 & 46%).

The average rating for all items was 2.49 for teachers and 2.53 for other staff, which may be considered as a somewhat ambivalent rating of their school in terms of culture and organization. When individual items are considered, teachers give a very similar ratings to the first three items and lower ratings to the last two. Other staff gave higher ratings to items 1, 3 and 4, with lower ratings to items 2 and 5. The biggest difference was on the second item, collegiality, where the average teacher rating was 2.57, while the average for other staff was 2.23. Their respective

[a] For the actual number of responses for each of the four categories and mean response for each item, see Exhibits C-23 (teachers) and C-24 (Other Staff) in Appendix C.

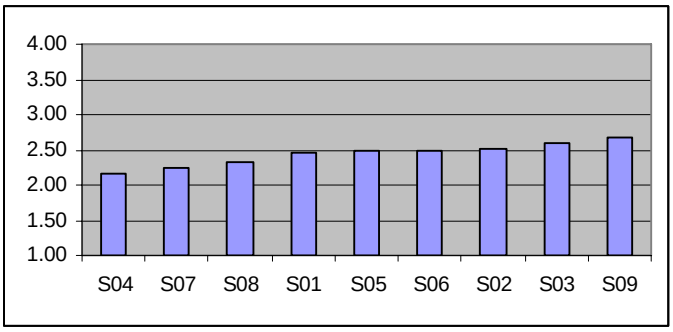
responses were closest with respect to the last item, enforcement of school rules. All staff gave this a low rating of 2.28 (teachers) and 2.21 (other staff), the lowest rating on all items.

Teachers were asked to indicate their language and level of instruction.

- In relation to language, the average score was highest among Cree teachers (2.78) and lowest among English (2.41).
- In relation to level, the average score was highest among teachers who taught at more than one level of instruction (2.65) and lowest among secondary teachers (2.42).[a]

We then constructed a combined data set of responses for teachers and other staff to enable us to see the difference across schools. The average rating for all items for each school is shown in Exhibit 2-31. Eastmain (S04) and Mistissini (S07) received the lowest ratings (2.17 & 2.25), while Waswanipi (S09) and Wemindji (S03) received the highest ratings (2.68 & 2.60). However, none of these ratings are particularly high and, given the small number of respondents, especially in some schools, the differences across schools cannot be considered statistically significant.[b]

EXHIBIT 2-31: COMBINED STAFF RATING OF SCHOOL CULTURE & ORGANIZATION



We spoke to a wide variety of stakeholders about school atmosphere, whether it provided a warm and welcoming environment. Ideally, one would hope to find a positive atmosphere from the perspective of students, staff and parents.

***Steps should be taken to ensure that an enabling environment is created for learning to be effective* (Teacher).**

Students tend to respond to questions about atmosphere in relation to their peer group, relations with teachers and their general level of contentment with school. They were less expressive when the atmosphere was fine but opened up more to speak about problems. Negative comments about their peer group were about bullying, while those about staff reflected negativity in classes, including being made to feel like a 'loser' and sarcastic 'put-downs.' However, most students were not aware of their own behaviour and how it affected the atmosphere in class. Students craved respect but some did not understand that respect is a two-way interaction: you can't expect to get what you don't give. Positive comments reflected good classroom experiences, where they liked the teacher and found learning to be fun.

[a] The average for French teachers and teachers who taught in more than one language of instruction were 2.46 and 2.51 respectively; for kindergarten to grade 3 teachers, 2.52, and elementary teachers (grades 4-6), 2.48.

[b] One would not expect the addition of other staff to change the teacher rating by much, given the relatively large number of teachers and small number of other staff. However, it should be noted that there was a relatively high number of other staff responses in Wemindji (10) and Waswanipi (12) which did raise the average in each case. Although the number of other staff responses in Eastmain was not particularly high (4), their very low rating lowered the rating for that school.

Staff attitude is a major factor is determining the climate of the school. Negativity can poison relations in a school and create a barrier to improvement. We saw further evidence of the negativity reported by one principal (see text box) from a small number of teachers on the questionnaire whose response to the questions: What are the major strengths of your school? responded: *None*.

***One time we had a meeting. We wanted to do something so that students would not have as many detentions. That meeting was all negative. First I listened and then after I said - does anybody have anything positive to say. Nobody said anything. Not a word* (Principal).**

We will look more closely at parental involvement in chapter 7. At this point, we wish to mention that in many cases parents do not have a positive attitude toward the school. As expressed by one parent:

> Q: *How good a job do you think the school is doing at trying to provide a climate that's supportive to learning, that welcomes people into the school, that makes people feel that this is a place they want to be in?*
>
> A: *I'm not happy with it. It's not warm. It's not welcoming. It's messy. I never felt welcome. Because I'm on the Parents' Committee, that's my goal for me, is to get more parents to come in and make it a happy place and to contribute in making this place a good place so that's my goal.*

We had other input that suggested that the school culture is welcoming and open. To the same question, one vice-principal responded:

> *I think so because I always see people in and out all the time in this school. And I see people freely coming into the office anytime and just talking with our secretaries about information they need and I do see some parents walking by to their classrooms. So, I think it's good.*

We were not able to gather sufficient data on the extent to which school organization contributes to teaching and learning to provide an equivalent level of analysis of this aspect of the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, However, there were some issues that could be discerned and warrant some comment, namely: the Grouping of Elementary and Secondary Students in One School Building, the provision of dual track instructional streams and the grouping of students in multi-level classes, all issues raised in the Mianscum report.[a]

All three of these modes of school organization relate to the size and isolation of community schools. Thus, although conventional wisdom would separate elementary and secondary schools, it is common practice throughout Québec to group elementary and secondary students in the same building in isolated rural communities with a small student population. However, this practice is not appropriate in communities with a large student population, such as the James Bay Eeyou School in Chisasibi. We realize that plans have been proposed to construct a separate school for the elementary students and the Board does not need to be convinced of the wisdom of this proposal, merely provided with the means to realize it. We simply wish, therefore, to state, in the strongest terms possible, that from an educational perspective, the provision of this separate facility should be considered a top priority in the revitalization of educational services in this community.

The issue of dual-track schools is far more widespread, one that we raised earlier in the context of instructional services. We repeat it here to underscore its importance as a key building block

[a] See Perceived problems in Cree Schools, contained in Appendix D of this report.

of school organization. Running a two-track school is not more costly than a one-track school, provided that the student body is large enough to support it. Otherwise, it becomes quite costly. In several of the small schools we visited, the provision of two linguistic tracks, from grade 2/3 upward, fragmented an already small number of students, placing a heavy strain on resources. That is why our recommendation on this issue suggested one-track schools, except where numbers warrant.[a] We are conscious of the dilemma this poses to these schools, where one group of parents insists on instruction in English, the other for instruction in French. However, continuing present practice where numbers to do warrant two track detracts from the educational services provided to students in both tracks.

Eliminating a second track in some schools might help to alleviate the other problem raised above, multi-level classes. With a single track, there is a greater likelihood of being able to form uni-level classes but multi-level classes will not be eliminated by this change. There is no doubt that having more than one level of students in a class creates an additional load for the teacher. Advocates of peer-to-peer support see these classes as a potential advantage for students helping students. However, the reality of classes in the CSB is the disparity between where students are at and where they need to be to master the subject at hand. Confronting this reality requires considerable individualized learning, regardless as to the nominal grade level of the students in the class. In our view, the approach to school organization must be as open-ended as possible to permit innovative solutions to support student success. The issue of multi-level classes should not, therefore, be dealt with in isolation but in context of the search for these solutions.[b]

One further organizational issue concerns the number of years provided for students to complete elementary and secondary school. The current régime for public schools in Québec is six years for elementary instruction, with the possibility of accelerated promotion for some students after five years. The possibility of extending elementary school by one year for students requiring extra time has been severely restricted.[c] However, this measure may not only be worthy of more consideration in the CSB but actually merit being considered as the norm, with exceptional students promoted after six years if they are ready. Similarly, the normal amount of time provided for secondary schools - five years - should be reconsidered if in fact the majority of students, at least for the foreseeable future, are not able to graduate within this time limit.

One vice-principal summed up the issue of school culture when she said: *I think that the climate of the school varies with the relationships between the administration and the staff and between the staff and the students.* Some administrators, such as this one, pay a lot of attention to these relations; for others it does not seem to be a priority. However, as one principal pointed out, the problem may not be a lack of interest in relationships, but a lack of time. In some cases, this was attributed to insufficient administrative staff, in others to excessive paperwork.

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[a] See recommendation 32, p. 98.

[b] For example, a focus on reading may require the formation of reading groups of students from different classes, as is done in the *Success for All* program. This requires a mode of school organization to accommodate this type of programming.

[c] The *Basic School Regulation* (s. 13.1) still allows a student, in exceptional circumstances, to repeat an elementary grade but this does not change the promotion to secondary after six years. This is tantamount to saying that if a student repeats one year he or she must skip another. This provision is made “subject to the power of the principal, at the end of that period, to admit the student to an additional year of elementary school studies in accordance with the law.” This statement refers to section 96.18 of the *Public Education Act*: “Exceptionally, in the interest of a student who has not achieved the objectives or mastered the compulsory notional contents of elementary school education at the end of the period fixed by the basic school regulation for mandatory promotion to secondary school and following a request, with reasons, made by the student's parents, the principal may admit the student, as prescribed by regulation of the Minister, to elementary school education for an additional school year, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that such a measure is necessary to foster the student's academic progress.”

Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether school culture and organization meet the stated standards:

- The school culture is welcoming to all members of the school community and supportive of learning and school life.

- School organization enhances the breadth and depth of opportunities to learn and supports a collaborative environment for teaching and learning.

We did not receive sufficient input on the extent to which school organization contributes to teaching and learning to provide any analysis of this aspect of this performance standard. Based on the analysis of the data we did receive, we recommend:

R39 **THAT** school administrators receive appropriate support to enhance their capacity to improve the culture of their school and enhance the breadth and depth of opportunities to learn through innovative models of school organization, within the framework of school organization approved by the Board in accordance with recommendation 2.

6.2 School Leadership & Planning

Leadership is widely regarded as a key component of a successful organization. However, not everyone has the same image of a leader or what leadership entails. A traditional image of organizational leadership is a hierarchy, with a 'big boss' at the top, followers at the bottom, with intermediate bosses in between. However, leadership in a learning organization reflects an entirely different image of 'shared leadership' (see text box),[121] a *network of leaders* with a common commitment to the mission of the organization and the values of its members.

"Leadership is beyond the heroic undertakings of one individual...." Successful school systems depend on a *network of leaders*.

There is no single leadership mould to cast successful leaders, especially in an environment where the only constants are diversity and change. What works in one community may not work in another. What works today may not work tomorrow. Successful leaders are invariably those who can exercise different roles in different circumstances, who instinctively know what needs doing and how to get it done. This multiple skill-set recognizes the importance of relationships in organizations in general and schools in particular. Research on school improvement demonstrates that real change only occurs through the collaborative actions of all members of the school community working together toward a common purpose.[122] Just as schools should pay equal attention to the *emotional literacy* of its students,[123] educational leaders need to demonstrate high levels of *emotional intelligence*[124] in their relations with all members of the school community - colleagues, students, parents and others.[a]

[a] The authors cited above (endnote 124) define emotional intelligence as: "the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others."

Planning is an integral feature of a results-based approach to management in both the private and public sectors.[a] A guidebook for head teachers in the U.K. describes school action planning in terms of three interactive strands: a futures perspective, strategic analysis and operational target setting.[125] While it is important to frame the exercise by looking at the 'big picture,' long term perspectives, especially in turbulent times, cannot be addressed by detailed planning. Strategic analysis is required to determine when the organization must be content with knowing where it wants to go, without knowing how to get there.

In the short term, planning becomes more operational and *fine-grained*, without, however, becoming mired in detail. The operational dimension of the plan is more concerned with ways and means to accomplish short term results

> The action plan includes responsibilities of staff members for specific activities; timelines or target dates by which they should be completed; and staff development and resource needs, with requests for help from people both within and outside the school. The action plan also crucially includes success criteria, because the question is asked for each priority: 'how will we know this has made a difference?'[126]

Performance Standards

- School leadership provides vision and motivation, encourages high expectations for students and staff through individual and group support.
- The school fosters teaching and learning through operational and strategic planning (Local Education Plan).

School leadership begins - but does not end - with the school administration. Like schools everywhere, each CSB school has a principal and one or more vice-principals.[b] All members of the school community look to the principal to set the tone for the school and, by precept and example, to help everyone contribute to school success. That leadership begins by being present and *visible* in the school. As one **parent** remarked:

> *I know some of these things could be changed if the principal would be more out here and see what actually is going on in her school. I know they have meetings, meetings, meetings or she's gone off to other bigger important meetings, you know. It's school first, students first - okay, well, the more days pass by and the more I see the reality, I don't believe in that phrase 'students first' any more.*

6.2.1 The Principal & the CEA

Unlike schools in other jurisdictions, each school of the CSB also has a CEA.[c] The principal is responsible for the administration, management and evaluation of the educational programs, activities and resources of the school. The CEA has the equivalent responsibility for the non-educational programs, activities and resources of the school.

Among others, principals have the responsibility for the following:

- the local preparation, implementation and evaluation of the education plan adopted by the Council;

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[a] In Québec, the framework for public administration is anchored in the notion of strategic planning. Every government ministry must have a strategic plan that must include, among other elements: strategic directions, targeted results and performance indicators to measure them. Similar guidelines are provided for school board strategic plans, while schools must engage in 'success planning.'

[b] Six schools have one vice-principal (including one whose position is vacant); two schools have two and one school has three.

[c] See General By-Law, arts. 17.12, 17.13.

- the delivery of the education programs in the school; and
- the preparation of local school calendar, in consultation with School Committee, submission to the Director of Education and the Supervisor of Schools for submission to and approval by the Council.

The respective duties of the principal and CEA for the management and allocation of human, financial and other resources is dealt with in section 6.3.[a]

The potential problems of this duality are exacerbated by the fact that the principal reports to the Supervisor of Schools while the CEA reports to the Director General (in the absence of a Deputy Director General). We will deal with specific concerns over resource management in that section;[b] however, the issue of this dual administrative structure is larger and more important than these specific concerns.

To the outside members of the evaluation team, this arrangement seemed inherently counterproductive, leading to the obvious question: Why are schools administered in this fashion and how did it come about? As the inside members knew, at the time the Board was formed, school principals were all recruited from outside the community. The creation of the CEA position was meant to counterbalance the authority of this outsider with someone from the community: a local person who would work with the teachers and the principals to facilitate the ordering of instructional materials and "act as a local advocate".[127] We will refrain from commenting on the wisdom of this decision at that time. However, thirty years later, this rationale no longer applies, begging the question: Does the arrangement help or hinder the administration of schools in the CSB?

When school stakeholders were asked about this dual structural arrangement, opinions varied, as did our observations of how this arrangement worked in practice. It would appear that in some schools, regardless of the wisdom of this arrangement in theory, local administrators make the best of it and get along reasonably well. In others, it appears to be a major impediment to the smooth functioning of the school. One teacher described a problem of a classroom that was too small for the number of students. There was a possible solution but nothing happened because the principal and the CEA held opposing views. As a result, the CEA simply blocked the solution that could have been implemented. Another **teacher** provided insights into the ***power game*** that goes in some schools:

> *The CEA is one of the reasons why we've gone through all these administrators. In our school, the roles were clearly defined: the CEA is the boss. The Principal is there to keep the teachers in line and I've literally heard that line used. And, if the Principal becomes too popular with the Cree staff, then that starts having an influence on the power of the CEA. So, at that stage, you tend to count the days left in the principal's career. That's one of the reasons we've seen so many of them. It's also the reason they hire weak principals. If you have a strong principal, then the CEA's power is diminished. In our schools, the CEAs not only control the budget for everything, they control how we live and where we live.*

From what we observed, in some schools, the principal clearly deferred to the CEA who was the *de facto* authority of the school. In others, the conflict between the principal and the CEA was quite evident, even palpable. In one school in particular, when asked for general comments, school administrators (except the CEA), teachers and parents independently all named the CEA as the number one problem in the school. Although this might be the most serious case, it reflects a malaise that is due to the splitting of school authority between the principal and the CEA. We also saw, as suggested in the reflection of the teacher quoted above, that many CEAs were preoccupied with their own power within the school.

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[a] In addition, the principal replaces the CEA when he or she is absent from the community or unable to carry out the duties of the position for more than five (5) working days.

[b] See section 6.3 (p. 127).

In analyzing this issue we asked ourselves:

- Is this dual administrative arrangement appropriate?
- If not, what alternative(s) is(are) preferable and what are the implications for school administration?

We answered the first question in the negative. Splitting the administrative authority of the school in this manner undermines the role of the principal as the leader of the school and detracts from having a single point of accountability for everything that happens in the school. For this to happen, the Board could modify the responsibilities of the CEA, having him or her report to the principal, replace the current position by a completely new one or eliminate the CEA position completely. Some people within the CSB may have the impression that the position of CEA is cast in stone because of the JBNQA. In our view, this is not the case. The Agreement allows the Board to hire such a person, it does not require it to do so.[a]

This does not mean, however, that all duties performed by CEAs should simply be assigned to the principal. Many principals already feel overwhelmed by their duties. Getting rid of the CEA and dumping all his or her duties on the principal would do little to improve school administration; in fact, it would likely cause it to deteriorate even further.

Rather, what is needed is a thorough analysis of the various aspects of school administration and the crafting of a proposal for restructuring that makes sense in terms of what we know about school administration and the capacity of principals of the CSB.[b] As we will discuss later in this section, the school administration in most of the schools of the CSB lacks the capacity to manage schools effectively. Any restructuring plan must first address these underlying deficits or be doomed to failure. In addition, the willingness of the CEA to play a constructive role in this new structure is an important element in ensuring its success. Some CEAs may be willing to play a different, even subordinate, role in order to help the school improve. Others may not. Dealing with such situations will require leadership at the Board level, an issue to which we will turn in Part 4.

6.2.2 Providing Vision & Leadership

The questionnaire completed by teachers and other school staff asked respondents to state their level of agreement with the following statement: “The school administration provides vision and leadership to staff and students.” The following provides their response across all schools.

EXHIBIT 2-32: TEACHER/SCHOOL STAFF INPUT ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Items	N	Rating*			
		1	2	3	4
Teachers	200	20%	34%	33%	15%
Other Staff	37	8%	27%	51%	14%

* Each item was rated on a four-point likert scale, where **1**= Strongly Disagree; **2**=Disagree; **3**=Agree; **4**=Strongly Agree; **N**=number of respondents.

As shown here, less than half the teachers agreed with this statement, while almost two-thirds of other staff agreed. The average response from each group was 2.42 and 2.70 respectively. Neither group provides a ringing endorsement of school leadership but the teacher rating is markedly lower.

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[a] Section 16.0.20 of the JBNQA states: “The Cree School Board shall have the right to hire a community education administrator for a community pursuant to a recommendation from the elementary school or high school committee in such community.”

[b] We assume that such an analysis will be provided by the Organizational Review.

These responses provide a crude indicator of school leadership, from a staff perspective. Anecdotal comments from teachers and other staff reflect the above ratings but often add little detail. Several cited poor communication between administration and staff; some simply stated leadership as a major weakness. Some **teachers** elaborated on this theme:

> *There is a very poor work ethic shown by administration and many Cree teachers as well as some non-native teachers. There is very little accountability - this is a HUGE issue.*
>
> *Both the school administration and the Board administration are disconnected from the reality of the classroom.*
>
> *Principal hardly ever comes around.*
>
> *More direction on rules and consequences.*
>
> *Administration unable to follow through with the implementation of certain objectives. We move from one plan to another without really seeing if everyone is on board or if we have met our goals.*
>
> *We need to have a common vision. Right now we give lip service to the idea but when push comes to shove, we are not on the same page at all. Teachers need to be observed by qualified & helpful administrators who know how to groom the staffs. We need LEADERSHIP.*

The themes running through these and other comments are reflected in the title of this report: communication, accountability and follow-up, qualities that are problematic throughout the CSB. As noted by one teacher cited above, in schools, as elsewhere in the Board, administrators are disconnected from the core enterprise of schools: teaching and learning. As one **commissioner** stated:

> *I feel the principal is doing a lot of paperwork rather than to look at the pedagogical issues. It's an issue in all schools.*

Many principals would agree with this statement even if they did not feel that they were disconnected from teaching and learning. It is not uncommon - in any school - for administrators to feel that they have too little time to devote to pedagogical leadership. This problem has tended to increase in recent years with the accentuation of school-based management and the devolution of many responsibilities to schools. It is also worse in schools boards that emphasize administrative duties. In such boards, principals learn that neglected classroom visits are not even noticed but neglected paperwork draws the immediate attention of head office. We know that such experiences would resonate with school administrators in the CSB.

In part, this problem is a question of priorities: deciding what are the most important responsibilities for principals and vice-principals and putting that emphasis into practice. In part it is a matter of the coordination of work and assignment of duties.[a] In other words, assign an administrative technician the responsibility for various administrative duties, freeing up the principal to spend time in classrooms; assign a student affairs technician greater responsibility for various disciplinary duties, freeing up the vice-principal to spend time with cycle teams. However, it is important to stress that any such arrangements do not relieve the school administrators from being accountable everything that happens in the school: delegation of authority does not mean abdication of responsibility.

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[a] We assume that such an analysis will be provided by the Organizational Review.

Regardless of the details of how school administrations might be restructured, the root of the problem lies in the **capacity** of the individuals to meet the expectations of their assigned roles. It should also be remembered that principals, vice-principals and CEAs are not the only members of the school administration. There are administrative technicians, secretaries, office agents and others whose roles are essential to the smooth running of the school. They need to know that they are valued members of the administrative team and their needs for capacity development must be accorded all due attention. As stated at the end of section 2.1, any statement of results without improved capacity and performance amounts to nothing more than ***wishful thinking***.

Administrative technicians, secretaries, office agents and others, are also members of the school administration, whose contributions are vital to the smooth running of the school.

We did not have the opportunity to review the formal qualifications of the principals and vice-principals. However, our visits to each school lead us to speculate that in many cases they fall below what would normally be expected of a school administrator. This situation will be discussed in section 10.3.1 (Part 4) on human resources management.

6.2.3 Planning

The second aspect of this performance theme concerns operational and strategic planning at the school level. The main instrument for such plan is the Local Education Plan [LEP]. It appears as if the origin of the LEP can be traced to the 'Cree School Board Reform,'[128] which was intended to initiate a variety of improvements. In theory, the LEP is part of a 'CSB Planning Package' that in turn is part of the Board's overall planning process. As we will see in section 12.2.2 (Part 4), the board-level part of this planning process does not appear to be operational but the school-level part is still in force. The original guidelines for schools assigned the responsibility for the development and approval of the LEP to the School Committee but this appears to have changed, as the LEP is now the responsibility of the principal.[a]

The original guidelines stated that the LEP should "identify and describe the *pedagogical priorities* for the school, and the rationale for each priority." It also required the school to rank each priority in relation to community goals. This is the kind of approach one would expect - a local plan grounded in local priorities and goals. However, this is not how the LEP is now structured. It has become a set of 'plans within a plan.'

According to the instructions governing the current plan, it must contain, among other elements, three "action plans:" an action plan on a language issue; an action plan on attendance; and an action plan on an issue chosen by the school (but in line with the four strategies of the Board).[b] It thus appears as if local priorities have been co-opted by the Board to reflect its priorities. The LEP is also supposed to contain two other plans: a plan on the school life in general (projects, local and regional activities, etc.); and a plan on the use of pedagogical days in relation with the action plans. Finally, the LEP must contain a breakdown of the money the school receives for LEP planning and the course offerings for the coming year.[c]

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[a] See memo from Supervisor of Schools to principals and vice-principals, dated January 18, 2007. The General By-Law of the Board assigns the school committee an advisory role with respect to the LEP (art. 8.21(i)).

[b] These strategies were referred to in section 2.1.2 in Part 1 and are dealt with in section 12.2.2 on the Board's Three-Year Plan (p. 279).

[c] The school's Personnel Plan and Budget are not part of the LEP but they circumscribe the resources which can be used for the LEP.

We examined the LEP of every school and sought input from various stakeholders about both the content of the LEPs and the process used to complete them.

It seems likely that the LEP was originally intended to mimic the 'success plan' that other schools in Québec are required to complete each year. However, success plans are linked to each school's 'educational project' which sets forth the specific aims and objectives of the school and the objectives for improving student success.[a] The success plan of a school consists of the measures to be taken based on the goals and objectives of the educational project, in particular, those relating to the supervision of students; and the methods for evaluating the implementation of the success plan. Together, the project and the plan are thus intended to provide a framework for the school to set intended results, the means to achieve them and the means to evaluate success. Although the school planning process fits loosely within the overall framework for school board and Ministry planning, each school is responsible for its own planning process.

The LEP is not grounded in any statement of intended results, though the school is expected to include its mission statement, if it has one, and the Board's mission (if it can find it). However, the memo outlining the instructions to follow insist that the action plans must be based on data. In theory, schools could call on the Educational Services Department or the Office of the Supervisor of Schools for assistance. In practice, each school did what is could on its own. They were then required to submit their plan by a specified date, after which the principal and the CEA are called to a meeting in Montréal or elsewhere to answer questions about the plan, its personnel plan and budget, posed by a group of Board administrators assembled for this purpose.

We did not attempt to undertake a comprehensive analysis of each LEP. We found that schools tried to comply with Board instructions but that, generally, the action plans consisted of loosely coupled statement of goals and actions, sometimes accompanied by vague statement about the evaluation of results. Generally, the quality of the LEPs is not very high. In our view this reflects:

- a local planning framework that is not very helpful;
- a lack of capacity in schools to engage in results-based planning;
- a lack of any meaningful support to help them do so; and
- a feeling in schools that this is more a bureaucratic exercise than one that will help them achieve any meaningful locally set goals and results. As expressed by stakeholders:

> *I think the LEPs are seen, and rightfully so, as a document you produce once a year. You put it there. And then you come back to it the next April meeting* (principal*).*
>
> *Our LEP was going to focus on oral language and they asked us to come up with ideas, activities for the students that the whole school could do, and not one of them have been done. Not one. Just to think about the number of hours that we sat around talking about it and coming with these things and then, it's not done* (teacher)*.*

Some principals claimed the LEP was helpful but no one could offer any tangible evidence as to how the plan was truly implemented, monitored and evaluated. In our view, the original intent of the LEP has been lost and the means to make it an effective process were never put in place.

[a] It may also include actions to promote these aims and objectives and integrate them into the life of the school.

We have been informed that the LEP is being changed for next year and have seen the new instructions.[a] This represents yet another top-down exercise with a more complex expectations and template, with talk of 'targets' and 'benchmarks.' There has not been any particular effort to support schools in adopting this new approach and so there is no reason to suppose that it will produce better results. We have not seen any of the plans schools were required to produce for next year.

6.2.4 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether school leadership and planning meet the stated standards:

- School leadership provides vision and motivation, encourages high expectations for students and staff through individual and group support.

- The school fosters teaching and learning through operational and strategic planning (Local Education Plan).

We began our inquiry into school leadership and planning with a longstanding but still controversial issue - the respective roles of the principal and the CEA. To the outside members of our tem, the current arrangement whereby the school had two heads made no sense. The inside members understood the history behind this arrangement and why it had seemed sensible when it was introduced. We all agreed that this arrangement must now come to an end and that the principal should be the sole head of the school. However, this change cannot be made with the stroke of a pen. Details regarding this change also depend on the results of the analysis provided by the Organizational Review and will require considerable capacity building to make it work.

We have seen serious deficiencies in the capacity of the administration of most schools to provide the leadership required to manage them effectively. Likewise, we see the current school planning process as badly flawed and in need of a major overhaul. The problems observed reside as much at the board level as they do at the school level. However, the 'bottom line' of our analysis is that the current approach is essentially a paper exercise that is not helpful to schools.

[a] See memo from Supervisor of Schools to principals and vice-principals, dated January 23, 2008.

Based on the foregoing analysis, we recommend:

R40 **THAT** the ambiguity regarding the leadership and administration of the school be resolved by making the principal the single point of accountability for the school, in accordance with recommendations 41, 42 and 43.

R41 **THAT** the position of CEA, as presently provided for, be eliminated and a new position created or these functions redistributed in accordance with recommendation 42.

R42 **THAT**, taking into account the analysis provided by the Organizational Review, as well as recommendation 40 of this report, the Board develop a proposal for restructuring the administration of schools for implementation for 2009-10.

R43 **THAT** the implementation of recommendation 42 be subject to the development of the capacity of principals, vice-principals and other members of the school administration to assume the roles assigned to them.

R44 **THAT** the Board halt the LEPs currently being implemented for 2008-09 and beyond and replaced them with a short-term plan for the school's involvement in the implementation of the recommendations of this Review and subsequently by a new local planning process, to be developed in accordance with recommendation 108 (strategic planning) of this report

R45 **THAT** the implementation of recommendation 44 be supported by appropriate forms of capacity development in accordance with other recommendations of this report.

6.3 Allocation & Management of Resources

Like any organization, before a school can deliver services, it must have appropriate and sufficient resources at its disposal and the ability to manage these resources effectively and efficiently. In any school except an independent (private) school, the responsibility is shared with the school board, its own part being determined by the nature and degree of decentralized authority exercised by the school.

The most important resource in any school are its people - staff, students and others who contribute to the furtherance of its mission. Human resource management flows from the school planning discussed in the previous section which determines - or ought to determine - both the type and number of various staff required. Human resources are complemented by a range of material resources, from the buildings and grounds of the school to disposable school supplies. (In this section we will be dealing with all material resources, other than the instructional resources dealt with in section 4.2.) All of these resources cost money, which provides the bedrock resource that allows the school to function.

Performance Standards

- The school assigns appropriate human resources for teaching, other educational services, administrative and support services.
- The school meets expected performance standards for the hiring, development, supervision, retention and evaluation of staff.
- The school possesses adequate funds, facilities and other material resources to accomplish its programmatic responsibilities.
- The allocation of funds within the school is timely and efficient.
- The school meets expected performance standards for planning, managing and accounting for the use of financial, material, and other resources.

As indicated in section 6.2.1, the responsibility for the management of human, financial and other resources is shared by the principal and CEA, whose respective roles are outlined below:

CEA (Principal Col)*	• preparation of annual school budget, in consultation with School Committee, for transmission to Director of Finance for review and submission to the Council;
Principal (CEA Col)***	• subject to the budget approved by the Council, approval of the purchase of pedagogical materials for the school;
CEA	• subject to the budget approved by the Council, authorization of expenses and approve contracts related to the Board's activities in the community up to $25,000;
CEA	• subject to Board policy, approval of travel expenses, advances and warrants for all school staff
CEA	• authorization of all salary modification slips, salary modification forms (MS forms), absence forms and other administrative documents for all local staff;
CEA	• the allocation and management of the housing units of the Board available in the community for school personnel;
CEA	• subject to the budget approved by the Council, approval of the purchase of moveable property up to $25,000;
CEA	• subject to the budget approved by the Council, approval of the rental of required housing units for up to ten months up to $25,000;
CEA (Principal Par)**	• subject to the budget approved by the Council, approval of the acquisition of supplies for the school (with the approval of the School Principal for pedagogical

	materials) and related matters, and approval of all authorized food transportation claims, contracts relating thereto and expenses relating to storage and transportation of personal effects of eligible local personnel;
CEA	• regulation and supervision of local student transportation;
CEA	• administration of moveable and immoveable property belonging to the Board in the community;
CEA	• approval of regulations respecting health and safety in the schools subject to policies of local government and the Council;
CEA (Principal Col)*	• in consultation with School Committee, preparation of the proposed annual personnel plan (Principal supervises plan relating to all pedagogical staff) and transmission to Director of Personnel for review and submission to Council;
Principal	• subject to the budget approved by the Council, hiring of short term non contractual substitute teachers following a system submitted to the consultation of the School Committee;
Principal	• supervision and evaluation of the pedagogical staff of the school;
Principal	• subject to the personnel plan and the budget approved by the Council and in consultation with the School Committee, approval of the appointment and engagement of all pedagogical school support staff;
Principal	• administration of the school the collective agreement for teachers and the non-teaching professionals and pedagogical support staff;
CEA	• subject to the personnel plan and the budget approved by the Council and in consultation with the School Committee, approval of the appointment and engagement of all non- pedagogical school support staff;
CEA	• administration of the school the collective agreement for non- pedagogical support staff.

* Responsibility exercised in collaboration with Principal.

** Responsibility exercised with partial role of the principal.

*** Responsibility exercised in collaboration with CEA.

As noted in the discussion in the previous section on this administrative duality, the theory of splitting administrative authority from pedagogical authority may or may not make sense in theory, but, in general, it does not work well in practice. In many cases, the CEA wields his or her budgetary authority as a weapon in a power game where the welfare of the schools, its teachers and students are often neglected. In fairness, this situation does not prevail in every school and there are cases where the CEA is seen in a more positive light.

We will deal with general issues regarding and management of resources and their allocation to schools and centres in chapter 11 (Part 4). Accordingly, our focus here is strictly with the management and allocation of resources at the school level. It should also be noted that due to the limited amount of time available for the collection of data in each school, we were not able to probe resource management issues in any detail.[a]

6.3.1 Financial Resources

The financial resources at the disposal of the school are contained in the approved budget of the school. For any school, the two fundamental issues regarding finance are: the level of funds at its disposal; and the degree of discretion it has in spending those funds.

[a] We presume that this topic will be treated by the Organizational Review.

The level of funding is in turn dependent on the level of funds the Board has at its disposal and the principles, policies, guidelines, etc., that is uses to allocate these funds to schools. We will deal with this issue in section 11.2 (Part 4); however, from a school perspective, the key questions are:

- Does the allocation allow the school to fulfil its educational mandate? and
- Given available funds, is the allocation made fairly?

The adequacy of school funding is obviously an elastic concept - what really constitutes *enough* funding, *not enough*, *more than enough*? The major activity in any school is classroom instruction and the major cost-driver of that instruction is teacher salaries. The adequacy question then begins with the determination of the number of teachers required to provide the instruction. That number is then multiplied by the average cost of a teacher's salary, benefits and employer costs to arrive at the amount required. Teacher remuneration is governed by the collective agreement, as is their workload, a key factor in determining the number of teachers required. However, the other key factor, class size, is not provided for in the agreement.[a]

For the school administrator, building the school budget ought to start with the instructional needs of the school. In simple terms, the principal considers the distribution of students by grade, program and subject, looks at all relevant factors (e.g. special needs of students), and creates an instructional timetable for the school based on a grid of X classes, each with Y students. (Smaller classes mean more classes requiring more resources.) The total number of classes multiplied by the hours of instruction provided by each divided by the average teacher workload equal the number of teachers required. As stated above, this number multiplied by the average cost per teacher equals the resources required.

Any principal we know would like, at this point, to turn to the school board and say: there, that's the number we need. In the CSB, as in many other boards, the exercise begins, not with school needs, but with the number of teachers allocated to the school, based on student enrolment and whatever other factors the Board takes into account in allocating its resources. The principal must then see what kind of timetable he or she can construct given this number. We were not able to collect data on how well this process worked in each school. However, we suspect that this is an area where capacity development would be helpful.

As will be discussed in section 11.2 (Part 4), the Finance Department was unable or unwilling to provide us with any information on the allocation of resources to schools. However, we know from the input of various administrators, that the equity of this allocation is an issue. It appears that the Board tends to decide on some allocations on a per school basis. Thus, for example, it might decide that each school should have a certain type of human resource and allocates one (1.00 FTE) to each school. This obviously benefits small schools and disadvantages large schools.

Deciding when funds should be based on student enrolment and when a block allocation should be given to each school is not readily obvious. There are times when either approach makes sense. In the absence of data on staffing from the Human Resources Department and the data from the Finance Department on the allocation rules, we could not do any real analysis of this issue. However, it is one that should be reviewed by the Board as soon as possible

In most schools in Québec (or elsewhere), the remainder of the operational budget is used for other personnel costs, material and supplies. Other personnel includes educational, administrative and maintenance staff. Other costs include instructional materials, office supplies,

[a] This constitutes a major difference between the agreement that applies in the CSB and those that apply in other jurisdictions which contain extensive class size provisions.

maintenance supplies, heating etc. In schools of the CSB, the budget also includes repairs and minor renovations of Board housing.

Under the current system, the school's budget and personnel plan are approved in the same process described earlier for the LEP. The School Committee approves all submissions. However, its does not appear to have a significant role in this process. In fact, the process is very much controlled and managed from the top down. Once the budget is approved, the CEA has control of all spending, even though, in theory, the principal is responsible for all education-related expenditures. Actual spending occurs through a variety of procedures managed by the CEA at the school level and the departments of Finance, Human and Material Resources at the Board. However, spending on human resources (i.e. beyond paying those already assigned to the school) is almost non-existent as the number of human resources is fixed by the school's personnel plan.

We asked stakeholders, notably administrators, to provide input on both the adequacy of funding they received and the process by which budgets were allocated and spent. It appears that some of the rules the schools must follow are quite rigid and interpreted in an inflexible manner. For example, there many be money in the school budget but if the school wishes to purchase X and the money is under a the budget code for Y, then the purchase is blocked, until approval is requested and granted to transfer money from one code to another. We did not have the opportunity to examine these procedures in detail but it appears that they are quite bureaucratic. Other issues raised dealt specifically with human and material resources, which are presented below.

6.3.2 Human Resources

Once a school has a budget for, among others, its human resources, the first issue is the hiring of any staff not already in place. Again, this process is controlled by the Board but there are aspects that can be dealt with in this school-level analysis. For a school, the hiring process begins with applications which it receives from the Human Resources Department. It does not appear as if the references on these applications are checked by head office nor do they provide any other assistance to schools.

> *We are the ones that have to call them, make arrangements and we have to phone the people up for references and do it over the phone.*
>
> Q: *Human Resources doesn't do that for you?*
>
> A: *All they do is send you the CVs.*
>
> Q: *That doesn't sound very helpful?*
>
> A: *No, it's not.*

Schools are thus left to contact applicants and arrange interviews, which, for administrators (e.g. vice-principal), teachers and other professionals, involve the principal, the CEA and members of the School Committee. In order for an offer of engagement to be processed, there must be a recommendation from the School Committee.

Getting this recommendation is often problematic - not because the Committee does not approve of the teacher or other person being proposed - but because the Committee cannot obtain a quorum. Feedback from principals suggests that this is a serious impediment to the timely hiring of teachers. As one principal expressed it:

> *Sometimes you don't have quorum, meetings are starting an hour late Then they have to run around the community to get a fourth signature to get the recommendation. You miss the deadline with the executive because people are late. You've missed out on a good teacher.*

In recognition of this problem, the Council of Commissioners has just passed the following resolution:

> THAT in the absence of a quorum or when no official School Committee is expected to be validly established within a reasonable period, the consultation of the School Committee regarding the selection of the teachers is deemed to have been conducted upon the recommendation of the concerned school principal supported by the Chairperson or at least one school committee member.[a]

This resolution is only applicable until June 30, 2008 unless extended by another resolution; however, at least it is a start to finding a solution to this problem.

The role of the School Committee stems from the JBNQA, which stipulates that the Committee must be consulted on the selection of teachers and principals. The Agreement does not state that they have a veto over hiring such personnel, but this seems to be how this section of the Agreement is interpreted.[b] The delays caused at this level are then compounded by delays at the Board level (see discussion in section 11.2, Part 4). The net result: *You've missed out on a good teacher*.

Once people are hired, the focus shifts to personnel management issues. In a school, the most important of these issues concerns the supervision of teachers. We asked principals and vice-principals about the amount of time that they devoted to this task. The overwhelming response was: not very much. The most common reason given is lack of time, which means that teacher supervision is not really considered as a priority. One **principal** put it this way:

> Q: *How much time do you spend in terms of supervising teachers, observing teachers in the classrooms, things of that nature?*
>
> *A: Principals have a very heavy workload of tasks. But the percentage I would say is very low.... I would like to spend more time doing supervision but I just don't have the time. Because there are so many things you're expected to do as a principal.... Supervising, instruction, class visitation and so forth - these are things I cannot do because of my heavy workload. It's not just me, it's the same for other principals. There are so many ... administrative tasks that take us away from the most important parts of our role as pedagogical leaders.*

The principal went to explain that what little supervision was done was directed at teachers on probation:

> *And now we have the mentoring program that the new teachers go into. So we have to supervise their time in the classroom as first-year teachers. So that happens - a first-year teacher goes into a two-year program, so the first year you supervise them, you observe, and even the second year we have to do supervision.*

Some administrators expressed the view that there was not much they could do about poor teachers because of the collective agreement:

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[a] Resolution CC 2008-029, adopted April 8, 2008.

[b] See discussion of the school committee in section 7.1.2 (p. 142).

Well, you talk to them but that's about all you can do. I did write one letter. it wasn't really a letter of reprimand. I wrote a letter and I told the teacher what I had observed and what I expected from the teacher. I don't know if it's going to give any results because, you know, we have a very strong Union. So, that's about all we can do but if it were within my power, I would certainly let some teachers go.

From the time we were able to spend in schools we conclude that little time is devoted to teacher supervision. Most, if not all, administrators realize that this is not as it should be but this task has never achieved priority status. We attribute this to the expectations of administrators as communicated to them by the Board, albeit by inference. In other words, they know what people at the Board view as important - meeting deadlines for the submission of forms - and what is not important - classroom supervision.

Until this priority changes, little improvement in classroom practice is likely to occur. Insofar as the collective agreement is concerned, there is no doubt that instituting disciplinary procedures, especially dismissal, is far more difficult with unionized employees. However, that does not mean it cannot be done. From our conversations with principals, vice-principals and CEAs, we got the impression that very few of them, if any, were familiar with the provisions of the collective agreements, whether we are talking about discipline, vacation time or some other subject. Once again, school administrators have little capacity in a key area of responsibility and little or no support from the Department of Human Resources.[a]

The questionnaire completed by teachers and other school staff asked respondents to state their level of agreement with one key aspect of human resource management: professional development. The following provides their response across all schools.[b]

EXHIBIT 2-33: TEACHER/SCHOOL STAFF INPUT ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Items		N	Rating*			
			1	2	3	4
Professional development offered by the school or the school board meets my needs.	Teachers	190	18%	37%	34%	10%
	Other Staff	37	16%	35%	49%	0%

* Each item was rated on a four-point likert scale, where **1**= Strongly Disagree; **2**=Disagree; **3**=Agree; **4**=Strongly Agree; **N**=number of respondents.

Other school staff have a low opinion about professional development. Not one member of other staff who responded to the questionnaire strongly agreed with this statement and only 49% agreed. The average rating of other school staff was 2.32. Some staff members provided additional comments on this topic:

It would be great for the whole school to have training on team work and respect, as well as upgrading courses.

I suggest that Professional Development find ways to educate teachers / staff about parental involvement.

To encourage local staff to upgrade their skills in order to qualify for the upper positions. Perhaps, negotiate with McGill to offer a Education Counselling Program to fill guidance counsellor positions.

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[a] Many stakeholders view the collective agreements as a major impediment to school success, a theme we will take up in section 11.1 (Part 4).

[b] The question posed to teachers focused solely on instructional resources and was therefore dealt with in section 4.2. For the actual number of responses for each of the four categories and mean response for each item, see Exhibits C-23 (teachers) and C-24 (Other Staff) in Appendix C.

Teacher ratings were similar (average = 2.36), with a lower percentage of positive responses (44%) but which included 10% who strongly agreed with the statement made about meeting their professional development needs.

Although these ratings are not high we would not have been surprised if they been even lower. As we will see later in this report, professional development does not seem to be taken too seriously in the CSB.

6.3.3 Material Resources

1	2	3	4
16%	24%	53%	8%

The questionnaire completed by other school staff asked respondents to state their level of agreement with the following statement: I have access to adequate resources for my job in the school.[a] As shown in the text box, a total of 61% of other school staff either agree or strongly agree with this statement, the average response being 2.53.

Both teachers and other school staff offered various comments on school facilities and resources in general. The comments quoted in the two text boxes reflect the range of input we received, as well as the state of school facilities and other resources.

> ***A very nice school. We have all the equipment we need to work*** **(School staff member)*.***

Some comments were very specific, for example: the lack of a playground, a cafeteria or a fence around the school grounds. Others were more general, for example, overall cleanliness of the school, unhygienic washrooms, poor maintenance or "rundown facilities." From our own observations, some schools are clean and well maintained, offering a pleasant environment. There are colourful and attractive displays in the hallways which reflect pride in the culture and traditions the school is trying to foster. In others, the impression on visitors - and we must assume on members of the school community - is drab and uninviting, not a place where one would want to be, five days of the week, for forty weeks in the year.

> ***The building is in a mess (dirty, vandalism, broken windows) which is depressing for staff and students*** **(Teacher)*.***

We also spoke to administrators, parents and others about material resources. Three issues were raised by many stakeholders: purchasing, school facilities and equipment and residences.

Problems regarding purchasing relate to the discussion about financial procedures discussed in section 6.3.1. Many complaints were heard from teachers about textbooks and other supplies not being available at the start of the school year. Administrators complained about the bureaucratic purchasing process, orders not being filled, forms sitting on people's desks at head office, etc. Not surprisingly, people at head office had a different view: We must have controls in place to ensure that monies are spent properly. School administrators do not follow procedures. (It was also obvious that this issue was due in part to the conflict between principals and CEAs.) We will return to purchasing procedures in section 11.3 (Part 4). Suffice it to say at this point that this issue needs to be resolved. As **teachers** have noted:

> *I couldn't find a curriculum guide. I didn't know what I was supposed to teach but I had the previous teacher's year plans, thank goodness. I have a really old geography book, I was told to photocopy extra copies so every now and then I've got to photocopy 10 or 12*

[a] The question posed to teachers focused solely on instructional resources and was therefore dealt with in section 4.2.2. For the actual number of responses for each of the four categories and mean response for each item, see Exhibits C-23 (teachers) and C-24 (Other Staff) in Appendix C.

copies to make enough and that's not in colour which you need when you're doing Geography with maps and stuff like that.

I have nothing for the computer. I'm scrounging. I'm surfing the net. I'm spending my own money because to order through the CEA just doesn't work. I would like to have curriculum guides and I would like to have, with keyboarding courses like Excel 2003, there's got to be some really good material but there's not a book in the room and if you put a program on the computer, it disappears.

Purchasing procedures also need to address the issue raised earlier with respect to instructional materials, namely the respective responsibilities of teachers and school administration.

In terms of school facilities and equipment, the first concern was with building maintenance and cleanliness. This appears to be largely a staff supervision issue and belongs, therefore under human resources. Accordingly to input received: maintenance workers don't do their job. The maintenance foreman does nothing about them. The CEA does nothing about any of it. In addition to the same problem of managing the collective agreements raised above, there may be another underlying issue here: the employment of community members who view their salary as a benefit payment rather than an employment wage. The second concern was over the facilities and equipment of the school themselves. Many examples relate to problems of vandalism, notably broken windows and playground equipment. Just repairing broken windows can consume the entire repair budget for the year. Other problems relate to the age of the physical plant of some schools. One **CEA** made this comment:`

Buildings get older and older so it costs more and more to maintain them and we don't increase much in the budget as far as maintenance is concerned or human resources is concerned in that department.

Residences, like schools, are aging and need more and more maintenance. They do suffer from vandalism. In many cases, the police appear reluctant to pursue the suspects, especially if they are well connected in the community. As one **teacher** expressed it:

Teachers get their houses broken into and stuff smashed and thrown around and the school says it's not their responsibility because it's outside of the school, even though the teacher works for the school. Then the police don't follow-up because they say it's the school's problem. The police drive around but they don't see anything. They know all the kids; they've done it before and will do it again because they're somebody's relatives.

Q: *Are there no consequences?*

A: *It just depends on their last name.*

It also appears that in some cases repairs are not done in a timely fashion. Moreover, little seems to be accomplished during the summer, when teachers are absent and houses are empty. This results in schools being closed in the fall for problems that should have been rectified in the summer. In our interviews at head office we asked why this was happening.

They have to do their jobs and they don't do it, including the maintenance. The CEA is really not functioning appropriately, the maintenance people aren't functioning appropriately.

6.3.4 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether the schools' management of resources meets the stated standards:

- The school assigns appropriate human resources for teaching, other educational services, administrative and support services.
- The school meets expected performance standards for the hiring, development, supervision, retention and evaluation of staff.
- The school possesses adequate funds, facilities and other material resources to accomplish its programmatic responsibilities.
- The allocation of funds within the school is timely and efficient.
- The school meets expected performance standards for planning, managing and accounting for the use of financial, material, and other resources.

At present, the management of resources is a shared responsibility of the principal and the CEA. Therefore, the treatment of resource management issues is partially dependent on how problems arising from this relationship are resolved. In any event, school administrators need serious capacity development to be able to manage their budgets effectively and efficiently.

A high level of problems with human resources have been noted, beginning with the hiring process. Little time is devoted to teacher supervision, which ought to be among the top priorities of the school administration. Professional development is weak or non-existent in most schools. Naturally, schools look to the Human Resources Department for help. Unfortunately, when they call, no one is home; in fact, it must seem at times that no one is ever home. You do not need an advanced degree in school administration to realize that human resources are the life blood of a school. In a previous section we described serious problems in some classrooms, problems that may be cause by inappropriate hiring, supervision, professional development or a combination thereof. Teaching and learning will not improve in CSB schools until these issues have been properly addressed.

The final issue we examined in this section was material resources, other than instructional materials (dealt with earlier). These resources include school and residential facilities. In addition to the problems associated with purchasing which we discussed in relation to instructional materials, the main concerns seem to be building maintenance and cleanliness and the upkeep of school and residential facilities. These are all responsibilities of the CEA. In many cases, it appears as if work is not done or done in a slipshod manner, and no one is being held accountable for these poor results.

Based on our analysis of these issues, we recommend:

R46 **THAT**, subject to available resources, the school budget be based on the organization of instruction in the school and the school's operational and strategic plan.

R47 **THAT**, subject to recommendations 40-42 (restructuring of school administration) and Board guidelines on financial management, appropriate roles be assigned to various members of the school administration for the effective and efficient management of the school's financial resources.

R48 **THAT**, subject to recommendation 100 (Board guidelines re hiring) and following consultation of parents, streamlined procedures for the hiring of teachers and other school staff be developed and implemented.

R49 **THAT** the supervision of teaching be treated as a priority responsibility of school administrators, to be exercised in accordance with Board guidelines on teacher supervision.

R50 **THAT**, in accordance with Board guidelines on personnel management, school administrators be provided with appropriate direction and support to lead and manage all school staff in accordance with applicable collective agreements and regulations.

R51 **THAT**, in accordance with Board guidelines on professional improvement, the school administration, in collaboration with school staff, develop and implement a comprehensive professional improvement plan for all school staff in accordance with applicable collective agreements and regulations.

R52 **THAT**, in accordance with recommendation 104 (Board guidelines on purchasing), streamlined procedures for the purchasing of materials and equipment, that recognize the appropriate roles for teachers and the school administration in this regard, be developed and implemented.

R53 **THAT**, subject to available resources and Board guidelines on maintenance and material resources, the necessary steps be taken to maintain, repair, renovate and improve school facilities and equipment, as well as the residences of school staff.

6.4 Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation comprise the other crucial component of a results-based approach to management. Whereas planning, looks ahead to see what results the organization is trying to realize and how to achieve them, evaluation looks back to see if they were achieved, and why. In between, monitoring keeps track of progress, allowing the organization to make adjustments to its operations or, if necessary, its anticipated results.

Traditionally the evaluation of schools has been the prerogative of the Minister of Education and local education authorities such as school boards. The focus of such evaluation has tended to be one of *accountability* – where a school is expected to 'give an account' to its school board which must likewise give an account for all its schools to the Minister. The 'school inspector' exemplifies this image, the external auditor making judgments about what is *good* and *bad* about a school.

One alternative approach that has been increasingly used in recent years is school self-evaluation, where the school is the primary agent for evaluating its own performance. MacBeath, a recognized world leader in this movement, summarizes the importance of self-evaluation to school improvement as follows:

> It is an index of a nation's educational health when its school communities have a high level of intelligence and know how to use the tools of school self-evaluation and self-improvement. In healthy systems there is a sharing and networking of good practice within and among schools on a collegial basis. It is an unhealthy system which relies on the constant routine attentions of an external body to police its schools.[129]

Performance Standards

- The school meets expected performance standards for monitoring its resources, activities and progress toward results.
- The school meets expected performance standards for self-evaluation of its performance.

The recent education reform in Québec has focused on a shift of authority from the school board to the school, including the creation of the school governing board. Among other duties, the governing board must now:

- oversee the evaluation of the school's 'educational project' (its specific aims and objectives) and its 'success plan' (to implement the educational project);
- prepare an annual activity report and transmit a copy of the report to the school board; and
- inform its community of the services provided by the school and report on the level of quality of such services.[130]

Although these provisions do not apply to the schools of the CSB, they provide a model that is worth considering and adapting to assist schools as they embark on long-term improvement.[a]

We realized at the outset of the Educational Review that the schools of the CSB do not engage in any form of self-evaluation. There was, therefore, no school-level policy or practice that we could evaluate. Instead, we offer a brief discussion of the importance of self-evaluation for schools.[b]

School self-evaluation first promises to make evaluation a more school-centred process. This does not mean that the school can ignore the system in which it operates but it does mean that the *voice* of the school will no longer be ignored. If the thrust of school-centred reform is to have any meaning, then the school must play the leading role in evaluating its own performance.

In Québec, experimentation in school self-evaluation has included ***Schools Speaking to Stakeholders***, a joint venture of a variety of partners in the Anglophone school network that produced "performance profiles" on each project school and other information that could be used by any school to measure its performance.[131]

The question of values is at the heart of any debate on schooling, and by extension, the evaluation of schooling, but values should not be driven by evaluation; rather, evaluation should be driven by values. In other words (as cited earlier): "We must learn to measure what we value rather than valuing what we can easily measure." The ministry of education has a legitimate, indeed compelling, role to play in articulating the values of public education, as do school boards. School self-evaluation helps to ensure that the values that matter to the core constituents of public schooling, students, teachers and parents, are also used to guide the design and conduct of the evaluation.

School leadership remains a key ingredient in achieving and maintaining school quality. Once assumed to be confined to formal leaders, such as the school principal, leadership is now seen as a shared responsibility, that is dispersed among formal and informal leaders in the school

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[a] In 1999, the annual report of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation du Québec (see endnote 130) recognized the potential of school self-evaluation as a key means of empowering local school communities. However, it was mindful of the conditions necessary for it to become a successful part of ongoing institutional policy and practice. Among these conditions, it emphasized the importance of providing ongoing support including training, research and resources, as well as: "the political commitment of decision makers in the education system and the professional commitment of heads of institutions."

[b] The material for this discussion is taken from Smith (2004) and is used with the permission of the author.

and its community. School self-evaluation can support dispersed leadership by, among other means, building school vision and creating a productive school culture.

School self-evaluation is inherently participatory in nature. Generally, participants include representatives of the major stakeholder groups in the school: school governors (where applicable), school administrators, teachers, other staff, parents and students - the most important and most neglected participant in the evaluation process. To be meaningful, participation must be *real*, not merely symbolic, dealing with critical evaluation issues, beginning with the core function of schools, teaching and learning.

School self-evaluation is consistent with the *commitment strategy* that seeks to develop innovative working arrangements as a mode of school improvement. As expressed by the General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers in the U.K:

> Self-evaluation is important in the restoration of teacher's respect for assessment of school performance.... It has opened up possibilities for teachers finding out about pupils' attitudes to learning and to each other.[132]

School self-evaluation supports the professionalization of teaching as a critical ingredient of school success.

Current thinking on the assessment of student learning emphasizes the use of portfolios, a process in which students play a critical role evaluating their own success in school. ***Students deserve no less consideration in the evaluation of their own school***.

It follows from the above discussion that school self-evaluation is a critical strategy of a *learning organization* - "an organization with the collective dispositions and structural characteristics enabling it to learn, through its own and others' experiences, how to continuously 'get better,' to behave more 'intelligently'."[133] Self-evaluation is a necessary strategy in school improvement, which involves all conditions that will, either directly or indirectly, enable improved teaching and learning, and over which the school has control.

In recent years, a good deal of attention has been focussed on developing approaches to student assessment that are *authentic* – measuring what matters in a real-world context. School self-evaluation provides an opportunity to develop school evaluation techniques that do not rely on simplistic forms, such as standardized test results, to represent the complex world of the school, and are coherent with student assessment policy. As an example, the current student assessment policy in Québec contains ten general orientations, many of which could be applied to school evaluation.

If schools feel that they are being attacked by government performance management systems, then data - in particular, numerical data - provide the weapons. There is a widespread belief that test scores, for example, provide a simple and accurate portrait of schools. Unfortunately, the complex realities of schools cannot be captured in a simple statistic. School self-evaluation provides an opportunity to redress this situation, by choosing appropriately contextualized data - and not just numerical data - that paint a true picture of the school.

The reporting of the results to stakeholders, including the school board and the ministry, serves to address one aspect of accountability, informing the school's constituents how well the school is doing. Because the process is controlled by individual schools, it becomes possible to customize the style of the reports for intended audiences to ensure that they are both relevant and accessible. The challenge for schools is to pay attention to the content, as well as the style of the report.

In the final analysis, school self-evaluation is important because every school is different. David Green, one of the *critical friends* who assisted in a review of Schools Speaking to Stakeholders, spoke of his experience with schools in Chicago, and the enthusiasm schools emoted when given the opportunity to tell their own story, rather than simply being portrayed as a one-line entry on a government ranking of schools. As MacBeath says:

> The 'story' is powerful because it is crucial to recognize that schools have a history, a unique cast of characters and a narrative that unfolds over time in unanticipated directions. That is how evaluation works – a continuing and continually revealing process. This is where school improvement takes root.[134]

Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether the monitoring and evaluation conducted by schools meets the stated standards:

- The school meets expected performance standards for monitoring its resources, activities and progress toward results.

- The school meets expected performance standards for self-evaluation of its performance.

Our analysis of these performance issues was short, if not sweet. Schools do not fulfill these functions in any systematic fashion. Based on this state of affairs, we recommend:

R54 **THAT**, in keeping with recommendation 111 (Board-wide evaluation), all schools, with appropriate support from the Board, fully participate in a process to develop and implement a framework for self-evaluation of school performance.

7.0 HOME & COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

In this performance theme, we posed the following question:

- How successful is the school in promoting home and community support for learning?

This theme comprises two evaluative objects:

- parental & community involvement; and
- school linkages to outside bodies.

The standards used to evaluate each object are provided in each of the sub-sections that follow.

7.1 Parental & Community Involvement

Among the many lessons learned from the research on successful schools is the importance of the support of families and community for a school, and the support of the school for them. A recent paper published by the Learning Partnership states:

> Strong links between schools, [school] boards and communities enable schools to be more responsive to the values and needs of the community. They enable the wide range of community resources, social services, businesses and parents to provide valuable support to the school and they involve the community in school improvement planning.[135]

> "Schools can have an impact on their students' lives, but that effect is made even stronger through the involvement of family and community, creating a web of support that sustains children both inside and outside of school hours."

Thus, for example, the world renown ***Success for All*** program rests on three inter-related tenets: (1) all children can read; (2) schools can make a difference; and (3) family and community involvement is key (see text box).[a]

Linkages between schools, centres, and the wider community give rise to what the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation[136] calls an ***educational community***.[b] They are seen to be particularly important in the case of students "whose past or present characteristics or conditions are associated with a higher probability of failing to attain desired life outcomes."[137]

Performance Standards

- The school fosters parental involvement in the education of their children.
- The school fosters the involvement of parents, and other community members and groups in the life of the school.

[a] The quotation in the text box is taken from the SFA Foundation website: http://successforall.com/; for other research about schools and community, see Harvard Family Research Project: http://www.gse.harvard.edu/.

[b] A school is an 'educational community' when it "involves all its stakeholders, including those in the surrounding community, and relies on the sharing of responsibility and the quality of the relationships it builds to fulfill its educational mission...." This quotation is taken from the English summary available of a Conseil report (see endnote 136) available on its web site: http://www.cse.gouv.qc.ca/.

7.1.1 The Power of Three: Parents- Students-Teachers

'The Power of Three' is an expression coined by Canadian researcher Peter Coleman to reflect the importance of what many people would call 'home and school' collaboration.[138] when parents, students and teachers are 'on the same page' the child's chances for success increase dramatically. Conversely, when there is a 'power failure' in this relationship, the child quickly becomes 'at risk' of disengaging in learning, failing in course work and ultimately dropping out of school.

Although our focus is on the school's role in fostering parental involvement,[a] it is essential to begin our inquiry, not in the school, but in the home, and not just with the parents, but with their parents. The family dynamics affected children currently enrolled in schools of the CSB are rooted in the educational experiences of their parents, their grand parents and their great grand parents. For some, that experience was a residential school. Several **elders** talked about the lasting impact of this experience:

> *I went to Residential School and I was not allowed to speak my language.*
>
> *I went to Residential School. I was never shown any love while I was in school.*
>
> *A lot of parents don't know how to talk to their children. They don't know how to show them love. Sometimes this comes from their parents who were in Residential School.*

For some parents, that experience was a community school prior to the creation of the CSB. In the words of former Grand Chief Ted Moses, these schools had little to recommend them:

> At the time of the 1975 Agreement, the schools were foreign territory to the parents. Most communities had day schools, but these were foreign implants in the communities. Some teachers tried to bring elements of Cree culture into the classroom, but there was no formal institutional support for such efforts. An assimilationist strategy was alive and well in those schools.... The teachers lived, for the most part, in ... an enclave of townhouses where their social life went on oblivious to the surrounding community. Of course, there were exceptions to this, but the majority of the teachers had problems dealing with Cree culture and the lack of facilities and services. The stress of doing this both in and outside the classroom the classroom was daunting to them.
>
> In most communities, there were no parent committees to guide the operation of the schools. Cree was not accepted as the language of instruction, so the children went from homes where they spoke nothing but Cree, to schoolrooms where English (and in some schools French) was the only language used. Moreover, because the communities were isolated and almost all parents lived from hunting, it was not particularly evident to the children what relevance much of what they were being taught would have in their lives.[139]

[a] When we began the Educational Review, some administrators questioned the inclusion of this theme stating that parental involvement, as important as it may be, was beyond their control. This concern was addressed in the wording of the above performance standard. The school was to be evaluated on the extent to which it fostered parental involvement.

Many of the children of the children described by Dr. Moses became students in schools operated by the CSB. Today they are they are the parents or grand parents of student currently in school. Their experience was not necessarily positive and to many, school is still an alien place. We were not able to probe these dynamics in any detail. However, it is obvious to us, as it was to Henry Mainscum (see text box), that these inter-generational attitudes have a profound effect on home and school relationships.

> "The fact that some parents do not attend meetings with the school administration or school committees, or do not even set foot in the school all year does not go unnoticed by their children. This indifferent attitude towards their education is transmitted to the children and becomes evident in their behaviour in the classroom and schools" (Mianscum report).

Parental support of schooling begins with values and attitudes: that education matters, that succeeding in school is important. It is difficult to expect students to care when their parents attach little value to education. in homes where such values and attitudes exist, there is little hope of parental behaviours that will support their child in school: providing a place where homework can be done, helping children with their homework or getting that help from someone else, ensuring that their children go to bed on time, getting them up, providing them with breakfast and ensuring they go to school.

The report of the English pilot group in kindergarten provides insight into the importance of attendance and attitude to success for children:

> Children who *excelled* the most were, almost without exception, those whose attendance was highest.... Also, on the whole, those who progressed the most were those whose parents took an 'active' interest in their children's school work: providing any extra materials required, checking their pockets or packsacks for teacher letters; providing feedback to their children and the teacher, getting them to school on time, making books available at home, and spending time reading together, counting, and talking ... with their children about what they were learning.[140]

We talked to a wide variety of stakeholders about this theme. Here is how one parent responded to a question about attendance:

> *Q: How do you improve attendance?*
>
> *A: Well it doesn't start at 9 o'clock in the morning when the kid comes to school. It starts at 9 o'clock at night when the kid goes to bed. Or it doesn't. (Parent)*

School administrators talked a great deal about the lack of parental interactions with the school. One **CEA** described the situation in these words:

> *We try - the school tries. Many times the school will call the parents to see if they would come in and talk about their child - they don't come in. Parents are not involved too much with the education of their children. You get comments like: You work in the school, it's your job. You're supposed to educate my child. We need to do a better job in drawing the parents to get involved. They don't see themselves as supporting or helping the school because they don't speak either English or French. They can't help their child with their homework either. In fact both school and parents have given up on homework because the kids don't do it.*

Another outside stakeholder reinforced this view by stating that parents have the same attitude toward community recreation programs.:

When the minor hockey program commences, maybe you'll be lucky to see 2 or 3 parents staying behind to help out.

Some school administrators were conscious of the fact that parental experiences with school were almost entirely negative. Not only was their own experience negative but the only contact with the school about their own children was when there was a problem - skipping, poor behaviour or failing grades. Some schools are making efforts to change this dynamic by making a point of communicating 'good news' to parents:

One school tried an 'open house' approach and having a 'parent-of-the-term' up until a few years ago. They dropped this due to interference with community events like Bingo. The school also had cultural events and celebrations to bring the parents together with the school. Another school mentioned trying to have a Cultural Club and social events/nights with parents and teachers so they would become more comfortable with one another.

In some cases, schools were quite discouraged having tried and failed to get parents more involved. Some schools may be just going through the motions but others are looking for innovative ways to increase involvement, as evidenced by the material in some LEPs. Sometimes those efforts falter but this is especially unfortunate when the blockage is conflict between the principal and the CEA. In one community the principal thought that perhaps the parents did not like coming to the school and wanted to host an event in a venue outside the school. The CEA vetoed the idea, stating that it was school money and the event had to be held at school. In the end there was no event and the opportunity was lost.

It is also obvious that the lack of parental involvement is also linked to the level of social problems in the communities. One **principal** described what it is like in her community:

Another factor too is family breakdown. We see that more than we did maybe 20 years ago Young families, some families are headed by single mothers, some kids have both the father and mother that live together, but the situation at home is so out of control that probably the only place that the kids have where they feel safe is the school. Or they feel that they're wanted or you know there is somebody there who is going to look out for them even though when they are young they can't express that, it's very apparent. Those are some of the factors why the families break down and there's a lot of drinking and a lot of drugs.

The questionnaire completed by teachers and other school staff asked respondents to state their level of agreement with two statements about parental involvement. The following provides their responses across all schools.

EXHIBIT 2-34: TEACHER/SCHOOL STAFF INPUT ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Items		N	Rating*			
			1	2	3	4
The parents of students in this school participate in the learning of their children.	Teachers	200	34%	53%	10%	4%
	Other Staff	37	16%	70%	8%	5%
Parents and other community members participate in the life of the school.	Teachers	199	34%	51%	13%	3%
	Other Staff	37	8%	68%	22%	3%

* Each item was rated on a four-point likert scale, where **1**= Strongly Disagree; **2**=Disagree; **3**=Agree; **4**=Strongly Agree; **N**=number of respondents.

Only a small percentage of each group responded positively to either of these statements. In fact, the average responses were the lowest of all such statements posed to teachers and other school staff. Teacher responses were, on average, lower than those of other staff: 1.84 and 1.83 for the two items, but the two averages for other staff were not that much higher: 2.03 and

2.19.[a] Similarly, teacher comments on the questionnaires listed lack of parental involvement, poor communication with parents and insufficient contact with parents as major weaknesses of the school. Few suggestions were made as to how to improve the situation. One teacher said: *Get tougher with parents and students who don't attend or care about education.* Other teachers had somewhat more positive suggestions: workshops with both teachers & parents attending, social events to foster teacher-parent interactions and professional development to link school and community. Other school staff also had suggestions to offer, including:

> *I suggest that Professional Development find ways to educate teachers / staff about parental involvement.*
>
> *Try to go for a real community school. Get together by setting CLEAR expectation for our students in their future role in the community.*

The input from these stakeholders not only provides concrete suggestions but serve to point out that parental involvement is not a one-way street. Parents need to be involved but they need to feel that their involvement is both wanted and valued. This is not going to happen if teachers and other staff project a negative attitude toward students, their parents or both. The education representative of the Band Council in one community neatly summed up the need to work together (see text box). We suspect that virtually everyone would agree with that goal. The question then becomes: Is there a will and if so what are the most promising ways to move forward?

> *For me there are three things that really need to come together to make things work: the parents, the school and the community as a whole* (Band Council education representative).

From our analysis of the data we believe that a necessary precondition is for everyone to abstain from playing the 'blame game.' From our experience, teachers are used to being blamed for poor student results. Teachers respond negatively to many accountability systems because they see them as just another means to point the finger of blame for student failure at them. It should be equally obvious that parents do not respond well to being blamed for their children's failure in school.

> The school's impact on students is strengthened by the support of family and community, while they are strengthened by the support of the school.

Everyone needs to take a step back and recognize that low levels of student achievement are caused by many inter-related factors, for which various groups of stakeholders must take partial responsibility. Undertaking the common cause suggested by the Band Council representative above means embarking on a journey together that will require considerable patience and understanding. This in turn will require better communication than has often occurred and a greater willingness to listen to different points of view. The School Committee may provide the means to create and foster such dialogue and, ultimately, lead to the creation a ***community school*** as envisaged by the suggestion made above. (See discussion of community schools in section 7.2.2, p. 152).

[a] For the actual number of responses for each of the four categories, see Exhibits C-23 (teachers) and C-24 (Other Staff) in Appendix C

7.1.2 The School Committee

English schools in Québec have had a long history of parental committees, originally known as 'home and school associations. In the early 1970s the provincial government introduced legislation creating consultative 'school committees in every school and 'parent committees' in every school board. This was the legislation in force when the JBNQA was concluded. According to the Agreement, the CSB was required to form consultative committees for elementary and secondary schools and determine the functions that would be delegated to them. However, the Agreement specified three issues on which these committees must be consulted:

- selection of teacher(s) and principal(s);
- school calendar and year; and
- changes in curriculum.

The Agreement contained various other provisions regarding the establishment of these committees,[a] which were subsequently elaborated upon in the General By-Law of the Board. For purposes of this discussion, we are not concerned with the functions of the Committee, its composition or rules of operating procedures. However, before turning to these duties there is one issue that warrants our attention: the restriction of its membership to parents of students in the school.

During our discussions with community members and other stakeholders, we saw first-hand evidence of the importance of family members, other than parents, in the raising of children and interactions with the school. In particular, grandparents often have a significant role in this regard and are sometimes the sole persons responsible for the upbringing of the child. Participant grandparents told us of their desire to be a part of the School Committee but were barred from membership. They clearly constitute a valuable resource and support to the school whose participation should be welcome. We also came to realize through the collection of other data that many students live in boarding homes, foster homes, etc.. In our view, both the school and these persons filling the role of parent or legal guardian would benefit from their inclusion in the School Committee.

As noted earlier in this report, school committees in other jurisdictions in Québec have evolved into school governing boards, composed of parents, staff members, community members and, for a secondary school, students. In theory, as the new name implies, these bodies exercise a role analogous to the Council of Commissioners which governs the CSB. In practice, school governing boards have yet to realize this potential.[141] For reasons discussed below with respect to the functions of the School Committee, we do not feel that transforming it into a governing board is advisable at this time.

According to the by-law of the Board, a School Committee has the following functions:[b]

a) to promote participation by parents and the community in the planning and improvement of education services in the schools;

b) to study measures to promote Cree culture and language in the schools;

c) to review the education needs of the community and to make recommendations thereon to the Board;

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[a] See JBNQA, art. 16.0.17, reproduced in Appendix D of this report.

[b] General By-Law, art. 8.21.

d) to recommend to the Board, after consultation with the local school principal and Community Education Administrator, any measure likely to improve the administration and management of schools, student accommodations and staff residences;

e) to act as a liaison between the school and the community;

f) to study complaints against a student or a local employee and, in consultation with the local Community Education Administrator and School Principal, to make appropriate recommendations on such complaints to the Board;

g) to provide advise to the Community Education Administrator in the preparation of the proposed annual budget and personnel plan of the school for review and submission to the Council;

h) to provide advise to the School Principal in implementing the yearly education plan in the school; and

i) such other functions as may be delegated to it from time to time by the Council.

In addition, the by-law stipulates the following consultative obligations on the Board's part:

> The Board must consult the School Committee with respect to the selection, hiring, leave of absence and termination of employment of regular teachers, the Principal, the Vice-Principal, the Community Education Administrator and all other professional and support staff members working in the school except casual and temporary employees. The Board must also consult the School Committee with respect to the school calendar and year, changes in curriculum and the rate of introduction of Cree, French and English as teaching languages. Such consultation shall be carried out in accordance with the procedures and policies established by the Board from time to time.

There is a need for clarity regarding the purpose of the School Committee, which should be focused on its school and community.

The first four duties appear to be framed to elicit input to the Board. It seems to us that the focus of School Committee input should be its own school and community. This focus should be clearly stated in the by-law. Ideally this role should be complemented by a regional consultative body.[a] In the absence of such a body, such input could be a secondary role of the School Committee to be exercised, for example, in an annual forum attended by senior representatives of the CSB.

We feel that the sixth function (f) is not appropriate for this body and should be eliminated. Bodies whose primary aim is to help bring school and community together should not be cast in any such adjudicative role. This function is potentially very divisive and counter-productive. It might well involve it in confidential matters where the individual rights of students and staff must be protected.

As we have already dealt with the issue of consultation in relation to personnel,[b] we would simply suggest that the maters on which the Committee be consulted be reviewed, again bearing in mind its primary purpose of supporting its school and community. Although some stakeholders might favour transforming the School Committee into a governing board, we beg to differ. As alluded to above, this transformation in southern schools has not produced the kind of change that its supporters had in mind. In our view this is largely due to a lack of preparation and capacity building. It seems to us that schools and communities of the CSB would be much

[a] In southern school boards this function is fulfilled by the Parents Committee, which is composed of a representative from each school.

[b] See section 4.4.3, starting on page 130.

better served by a revitalized School Committee with a clear mandate to support is school and community. This too will be require **capacity building**, more than enough to tackle in the immediate future.

We did not see much evidence of any attempt to build the capacity of School Committees, other than providing them with written information that is supplied to parents. One school provided us with a copy of its *Parent's Handbook*. It is certainly packed with information about subjects that parents (and School Committees) might want to know about. However, it is utterly inaccessible, even to an educated audience.[a] The one attempt to reach out to School Committees appears to have been the **Education Assembly, 2007**, held at the beginning of 2007.[b]

The stated purpose of the Assembly was to provide for a dialogue with stakeholders, especially parents, "with the expectancy of addressing the effectiveness and productivity of community schools supported by much stronger and visible parental involvement."[142] The composition of the Assembly consisted of the CSB Chairperson and the other nine commissioners of the Board; directors, coordinators and staff from the various departments of the CSB, CEAs, school committee members and members of local continuing education committees.[c] Conspicuous by their absence are school principals and vice-principals, and of course, students.

Much of the Assembly was taken up with speeches and presentations, something that was noted in the participant feedback, as was the time devoted to administrative as opposed to educational issues. The remainder of the time was spent in nine discussion groups each of which addressed the following questions:

- How can parental involvement in education be encouraged?
- How can parents help improve student success?
- How can Cree Culture and Cree Language be promoted and maintained?
- How do you see your role as a school committee member?
- What do you see as current and future educational needs for the Cree Nation?

According to the report, the groups generated 475 recommendations. Delegates were informed that the Board had already dealt with 31 of them.[d] The Assembly adopted twelve resolutions to be submitted to the Council for consideration and action.[e]

We recognize that this was the first such assembly held by the CSB. Without wishing to exaggerate the cost-benefit of this event, we believe it provides a vignette on current policy and practice in the CSB:

- the event was motivated by a pressing concern - the needs of parents to become more effective in their role on the school committee; however
- there was no clear set of results determined so that the planners of the event would know where they were going and how the Assembly would help take them there;

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[a] Instructional Services produced a *Parent Handbook: 2000-01* which is well written. We have no information about how widely it was distributed, what feedback, if any was received, nor what follow-up occurred. However, it does not appear to have been updated since that time.

[b] It should be noted that we did not attend this Assembly nor was it included in our work plan as we only discovered its existence during the course of the Review. All data for this discussion are taken from the report presented to Council in September, 2007 (see endnote 142).

[c] We will make no further reference in this discussion to this last group which will be dealt with in chapter 8 (Part 3) on adult education.

[d] The 31 recommendations are listed in the report but it is difficult how the Board could declare immediately that they had all been dealt with, given the vagueness of many of the recommendations (e.g., #5, increase classroom space; #21, more advanced subjects at secondary level).

[e] These resolutions are included in Appendix C of this report.

- it consumed considerable resources for yet another out-of-territory meeting, resources that could have financed the salary of a full-time professional plus travel expenses for two years work in the communities;
- key stakeholders from the school-community scene - principals, teachers and students - were excluded, while participants were top-heavy with board administrators;
- the event itself, while well-managed logistically, was not well-managed programmatically, so that activities would contribute to desired results - which is not surprising as these results were not defined;
- the sole 'output' of the Assembly - the report - was yet another glossy publication that did little to contribute to the capacity development of school committee members; finally
- there were no other outcomes and, as far as we could determine, no follow-up.

7.1.3 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether schools' promotion of involvement meets the stated standards:

- The school fosters parental involvement in the education of their children.

- The school fosters the involvement of parents, and other community members and groups in the life of the school.

We have described parental involvement as the 'power of three' to refer to the strength that comes from the close collaboration of students, teachers and parents. As a general rule, in schools of the CSB, the power of three is a state to be aspired to but not currently achieved. Parents are not very involved in their child's education, nor do they interact with school staff or participate in school activities. Many of the problems with low student engagement discussed earlier find their root cause here. When parents value education students tend to take it more seriously. When parents don't care, neither do they. Many schools have worked hard to involve parents but with few results. A new fresh approach is desperately needed.

We then focus on the operation of the school committee, the body that ought to be the main conduit between the school and the parents. In our view, the mandate of this body is flawed, expecting it to provide input to the Board when its focus should be on the local school. Although we did not deal with its internal operation, we did comment on its composition. Specifically, we feel that it is too narrowly defined, thereby excluding valuable resources from the community, especially grandparents and others with custodial care of students.

We looked briefly at the one attempt the Board made to provide support to school committees: Education Assembly, 2007. We believe that while the intent of this gathering was admirable the execution was not.

Based on our analysis of parental involvement, we recommend:

R55 **THAT** the Board, subject to recommendation 61 (building community links) and in collaboration with the principal and chairperson of each school committee, develop framework for the consultation of stakeholders in each community on parental participation in student learning and school life.

R56 **THAT** the principal and chairperson of each school committee, in collaboration with school staff and the School Committee, adapt the framework referred to in recommendation 55 and implement a process to consult stakeholders on parental participation in student learning and school life.

R57 **THAT**, subject to recommendation 61 (building community links), the results of this consultation (recommendation 56) be used to formulate and implement a community action plan in support of enhanced parental participation.

R58 **THAT** the Board, review the criteria for membership in the School Committee with a view to including grandparents and others with custodial responsibility for students enrolled in CSB schools and, following consultation of stakeholders, amend its General By-Law accordingly.

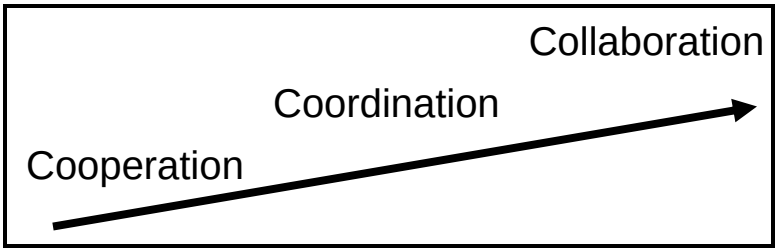
R59 **THAT** the Board, in collaboration with the principal and chairperson of each school committee, review the duties and responsibilities of the School Committee with a view to eliminating the mandate to study individual complaints (Art. 8.21(f)) and sharpening the focus of the Committee purpose and role to support the school and its community and, following consultation of stakeholders, amend its General By-Law accordingly.

R60 **THAT** the Board, in collaboration with the principal and chairperson of each school committee, develop a framework for building the capacity of School Committees to improve their performance, including enhanced communication and collaboration among the nine Committees and the Board.

7.2 School Linkages to Outside Bodies

7.2.1 Seeking Community Partners

School linkages to outside bodies is an extension of the involvement of parents and community discussed in the previous section. School community relations can take a variety of forms, which range along a continuum from cooperation to collaboration:



- **cooperation**, informal *ad hoc* arrangements for some limited purpose between organizations that maintain their own autonomy; through
- **coordination**, a more formal agreement to work together for a limited period of time; to
- **collaboration**, a formal partnership intended to be sustained over time.

On the lower end of this continuum, schools work with various community groups or agencies on specific projects for s short period of time or on an ongoing basis for specific purposes. On the higher end, schools become transformed into a 'community school,' whose potential will be discussed below (p. 154).

Regardless of the form or the intensity of these linkages, they all proceed from the assumption that every organization, be it a school, some other public agency or a private group or organization, is better off working with others to accomplish its goals than trying to accomplish them alone. This maxim is nothing more than the application of the principles of cooperative learning that teachers use in classrooms every day. Partnerships, working groups, networks, etc., are different means by which the members of different groups and organizations work together to create '***social capital***' for a common end:[a]

> Family, friends, and acquaintances frequently constitute an important asset essential to the well-being of Canadians. When one is seeking support to make it through hard times, searching for a new job opportunity, or simply living a full and active life, it pays to know people. This is the simple idea behind the concept of social capital.[143]

Performance Standard

- The school actively pursues and maintains appropriate linkages with external service agencies and other bodies to support the school and the community.

The time we had available to explore this theme was extremely limited. We did not have the opportunity to interview any representatives of community organizations, other than the education representative of the Band Council (and this only occurred in three communities). However, we did gain some insights into some key issues concerning the linkages between school and community.

Once again, we found that these issues had existed for a long time, as signalled in the Mianscum report (see text box).

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[a] **Social capital**: networks of social relations that provide assets or access to assets, including human, financial or other resources; it differs from **human capital**, which refers to the competencies, capacities and other attributes possessed by individuals.

Every community has several organizations and groups that are important in the life of the community and that are potential partners of the school. Many are units run by or attached to the Band Council; others are linked to regional organizations. Without attempting to name all of them, they include the following:

- Band Council (governing body);
- Recreation Department;
- Police;
- Youth Protection;
- Youth Healing;
- Youth Department.

We asked various stakeholders about initiatives to work with other groups and organizations in the community. One **school committee member** related a case where the community radio refused to change its bingo program to support attendance at parent night, which was scheduled from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. When asked to move the program the response was: *Well, I'm sorry. The Bingo starts at 8:00.*

"Appropriate programs or personnel do not exist in the Cree schools to address [social and family] problems. However, utilizing a system of partnership in education where community resources such as Social Services, Health Services and the Band Council cooperate in their efforts will help deal with the student's problems. Also, the development of a support program geared towards imparting on parents the skills necessary will help their children and themselves. The focus should always be on the best interests of the child and not on who is to blame or responsible for the child's development" **(Maianscum report).**

Here is how several **commissioners** describe efforts in their communities:

> *Right now, we have a crisis of bullying in the community and here in the school. We have met so far with the Cree Health Board to see how we could combat that issue of bullying. We're having police, as well, get involved. We're starting to really find ways to work together on certain things. Not only bullying but vandalism as well in the community. So, even the Band Council as well is finding ways to do it but they have to be more involved because it has resources as well that they could contribute to solving the problem.*

> *There isn't much networking, as you call it, between Social Services or the police, or I can say the community, the band administration. I think that it's more or less operating only on an 'as-needed' basis - crisis intervention. It could be a specific situation or a program that needs to be implemented. Then we try to bring the resources together on a project-basis or for a crisis situation. That's what is has been like and it's still like that for now.*

> *The school decided to make attendance a priority. If the students failed, and on numerous times don't attend school all the time, then the Recreation Department will be informed that so-and-so is not attending school and the coaches couldn't put them in the lineup. Then one time one of the younger ones - 12 year olds - was suspended and there was a tournament and the kid was a superstar. Guess what happened? There was an exception. The cooperation fell apart. I know the Recreation Department wanted to do their best - they've done that - but we're dealing with a minor hockey association, it's a totally different body from the Recreation Department.*

Often when we heard about interactions with other agencies it was restricted to dealing with an individual case or an *ad hoc* workshop, and did not extend to a general working relationship:

> *We make so many referrals to the social services because the kid's having problems in the school or not going to school, not respecting the Youth Protection Act. It's to do with the kid having problems, not to have a working relationship.*

> *I think in the majority, there are outside agencies that ask the schools if they could come and give workshops. Like the police or the social worker. Each year they come and do different kinds of workshops for students.*

Some administrators were enthusiastic about community cooperation: *I think the energy is fantastic. We support each other, they support the school very well.* Others were more pessimistic: *There are linkages but they're not effective, not efficient. The police and the Cree Health Board, there's no response.* We heard several stories about the lack of response from the police to deal with either violence or vandalism to the school or the residences. In some cases, it appears that the police are unwilling to act because of the family connections of the students being accused.

We had one example of cooperation between the school and the private sector in the form of work placements. The **CEA** was quite enthusiastic about the potential of this activity:

> *Work placements are part of what the school is doing, trying to find jobs in different areas, having kids go and work with somebody in the community. The teachers are very motivated. They really want kids to learn about the jobs that they have in the community and some organizations are responding well to the school when the school takes an interest in that organization and they want kids to learn what they're doing.*

We did hear talk of the formation of a task force within some communities:

> *There's a lot of bullying going on in the school and bullying is a community issue. It's not just in the school. It's not only us that can talk about the bullying. It has to come from the parents too. It's a very complex issue because some parents are bullies too. We need support from the whole community. So we formed a task force with the community members, the Youth Protection and from different entities.*

> *They created a task force a few weeks ago because they want to top bullying and they want to stop war between families. It includes people from all entities here – from the police department, the church, social services, the schools and others.*

> *We do have a Task Force on bullying which involves various community entities such as Youth department, Wellness etc. The Band Council passed a resolution forming the task force and recognizing that bullying is not only a school related problem but a community one as well. This task force can work very well and we have done some good things but I would say that the big drawback is any activities, meetings etc. have to be generated by the school. I guess everyone gets too busy, other things take precedence and it becomes dormant after a while.*

Although this type of initiative does not seem to very widespread, it offers a model for other communities and could provide the basis for serious attempts at inter-community collaboration, something about which we saw no evidence.

We did see a little evidence of linkages beyond the community but these were sporadic, for example: *There are people that come from the south to talk to the kids, do workshops with the kids.* One commissioner even mentioned the use connecting electronically to outside resources: *One time, we had a video conference with people in the Gaspé and they were able to ask questions and work back and forth.* We saw another example fir-hand in one community where a police officer from Ottawa had been invited at the initiative of the Chief of Police to speak to students, teachers and parents about drugs.

We also saw one other piece of evidence that deserves special mention: a letter addressed to the Grand Chief by all nine principals:

> We, the Principals of the Cree School Board, want to bring to your attention the significant increase in alcohol, drugs and substance abuse among the youth of all nine communities in Eeyou Etchee.
>
> On a daily basis, we have to deal with these problems including: suspending students involved, meeting with parents, reporting the incidents to the Police, Social Service and Youth Protection and; if the need arises, arranging counseling for the students involved from these service providers. We are often not aware of what interventions the Police, Social Service and Youth Protection have taken when the students return to school after a suspension as little feedback is provided to the schools from these services.
>
> We are extremely concerned about the increase in substance abuse by the students/youth. The types of substance abuse include: hard drugs including Crystal Meth, alcohol, gas/propane, liquid paper, etc. It is a fact that more and more young children are getting caught in these addictions, some as young as 8 years old.
>
> As school managers, we feel that we are running a social services center rather than a learning and educational center. This is having a detrimental effect on the quality of the leaning process and gives it a slow down effect: how can we concentrate on pedagogy when most of our time is involved in dealing with social problems?
>
> We know Social Services, Youth Protection and the Police are overwhelmed with cases and we are not putting blame here on the quantity and the quality of their work. We have tried many approaches in collaboration with these entities and we always end up with the same results: difficulty in organizing meetings with people and parents (people are busy with their own agendas), lack of participation at strategic planning sessions, lack of parental involvements, people not following the plans that were set forth at these sessions and, most of all, there are little feedbacks from the service providers therefore the students or children continue to repeat the offenses.
>
> We are asking the Grand Council of the Crees to intervene and examine more closely this problem along with every community leaderships and to take steps to find solutions for this rapidly increasing problem. In order to save this generation of young people from being wasted by substance abuse, we believe that we all have to work together to fight this fast increasing problem.
>
> We the Principals of the Cree School Board, would like to suggest the following approaches and we are willing to collaborate in implementing any program the local entities decide to put in place and enforce and,; we encourage everyone to “Walk the Talk” and become pro-active.
>
> - Community Curfew;
> - Awareness and Prevention Program;
> - Regional Kid's Help Line(in Cree and English);
> - Regional Parents' Help Line;
> - In-Community Treatment Programs;
> - Multidisciplinary Intervention Group (Police, Parents, Social Worker and child involved) or Local Task Force Group;
> - Involvement of Elders’ Group and Native Women’s Group;
> - Regular Keynote Speakers for the whole community;
> - More recreation for the youth;
> - Active involvement of Youth Councils.

To our knowledge, this is the first time that principals have taken such a bold move together.

The principals received a response and were informed that at the time the Grand Council had received their letter other entities such as the Cree Regional Youth Council were reporting on youth incidents within the communities. As a result, the Grand Council decided to devote a day of the ***Cree Nation Think Tank*** session to focus on social issues.[a] The CSB Chairperson and Director General attended and spoke throughout the Think Tank sessions. Furthermore, principals, school committee members and parents were encouraged to attend to speak to social issues in the community and school environments.

The Grand Chief, Deputy Grand Chief and Political Attaché attended the next principals' meeting to discuss the issues raised in the letter, and any other issues they wished to discuss with the leadership at the time. The Director General of the Cree School Board joined the Grand Chief for this meeting with the principals.

As a follow-up to the letter and the Cree Nation Think Tank session, social issues were put on the agenda of the next meeting of the ***Cree Leadership Forum***.[b] Afterward, an analysis was done in order to develop the strategic plan of action on social issues impacting the communities. The plan of action requires collaborative work on the part of each organization, community members, local leadership and regional leadership. In addition, the Grand Council is thinking about holding a second Cree Nation Think Tank session which will include a day devoted to education. The Grand Council is also looking into the Challenge Day program which claims to have had good success in the United States on bringing together students in sometimes hostile or troubled school environments.[c]

The Grand Council is also promoting a number of cultural and social development programs/events this year in the communities. The Cree-Quebec Justice Advisory Committee (CQJAC) is talking about a timeline for setting up in-community treatment programs. The Grand Chief and the CQJAC have also promoted the idea of setting up local task forces on social issues with representatives from the CSB, Social Services, Youth Protection, Police, Justice Committee and elders.

We were also struck by the apparent lack of contact among the nine school communities. Although outside meetings of school principals and CEAs might help in this regard, we get the impressions that these meetings are choc-a-bloc with reports and presentations and allow little time for networking among administrators. School Committee chairpersons are not, as far as we can tell, afforded any opportunity to meet or even network electronically. Peer-to-peer support is one of the most effective means to support schools and communities. Invariably, what is troubling one community has been successfully addressed by another. There are valuable resources within the wider CSB community that are not being tapped.

> Peer support - communities helping communities - is a neglected source of strength in the CSB.

On the basis of the data we were able to collect it appears that linkages within and beyond the community need to be more fully developed. The video-conferencing technology possessed by many schools is a valuable resource in this regard, one that to date is little used. None of the schools we visited has the resources to accomplish its mission alone. We suspect that this is equally true of the communities. They both need support from the outside but first they need support from each other. That is the nature and purpose of a 'community school.'

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[a] The Think Tank had originally been convened to discuss issues of importance related to the New Agreement with Canada

[b] The Cree Leadership Forum was initiated in 2007 to bring together leaders of the various Cree organizations, Councils and entities.

[c] Information on this program can be found on the Challenge Day website: http://www.challengeday.org/.

7.2.2 The Promise of Community Schools

A community school is a collaborative venture between the school and one or more community partners, such as a social service agency or a community advocacy group. Community Schools focus on community development as well as school development, typically offering programs for students, parents and community members, both during and after school.

An increasing number of community schools are being created in the United States.[144] In Canada, Saskatchewan has a long tradition of building community schools'[145] and developing a community school culture, which they call a *caring and respectful school environment* [CRSE].[a]

- ◊ The Community School concept has its roots in community development ideas. These schools collaborate with community members to strengthen both the school and the community in which the school is located. Close ties to the community ensure that school programs reflect the cultural and socioeconomic life experiences of the children and youth who attend, and also are directed at meeting their unique needs.
- ◊ Community Schools are characterized by the provision of at least some of the following integrated school-linked services to children and youth, and their families: education, health, social services, justice and recreation. The school is the most convenient site for the delivery of these community-based services.
- ◊ Community Schools value community involvement to enable all students to succeed. Parents especially are encouraged to share responsibility for the education of their children. Community School Councils are made up of representatives from the school, including students, and the community. This structure guides the development of the relationship between school and community, and creates the opportunity for community/school collaboration and participation in important decision making.
- ◊ Community Schools focus on community development as well as school development. As well as programs for students, school facilities are used for community events, meetings and programs. Adult education activities and day cares are well suited to Community Schools and serve as examples of how community functions can be integrated into the school. An "open door" policy is evident in these schools.
- ◊ Teachers' roles are different in Community Schools. Teachers are compelled to interact much more closely with the community and various service providers. They are more integrally involved with the non-academic needs of children and youth. Teachers require in-service to prepare them to work collaboratively with non-educators.
- ◊ Administrators play an important leadership role in Community Schools ensuring that decision making is collaborative and that power is shared with teachers, the Council and other service providers.
- ◊ Many adults are present in Community Schools on a daily basis, playing a variety of roles from providing services to acting as volunteers. Students have access to a network of adults who support their learning and development. These include a coordinator, teacher associates, nutrition workers, counselors and elders-in-residence.[146]

In Québec, the Ministry, with funding provided by the Québec-Canada Entente for Minority Language Education, has sponsored an initiative entitled the Community Learning Centre [CLC].[147] The CLC Framework for Action is based on an ***ecological*** view of school and community as an organic whole, rather than seeing them as totally separate entities, and offers a ***holistic*** approach to planning and managing educational and community change.[b]

The Framework defines a CLC as an equal partnership of schools/centres, public or private agencies and community groups, working in collaboration to develop, implement and evaluate activities to answer school and community needs that will enhance student success and the vitality of the English speaking community of Québec. The Framework incorporates two

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[a] See the CSRE web site and other materials from Saskatchewan Learning.

[b] For more information about CLCs, see the CLC page (http://learnquebec.ca/clc) on the website maintained by LEARN, the Leading English Education And Resource Network.

complementary images of a CLC as a 'learning community' and as a 'hub' of community service.

We introduced the idea of a learning community on the first page of this report, a concept already proposed to schools by Instructional Services as a direction to follow. A learning community thrives on individual and organizational learning by all members of the school community, continually reflecting not only about *how* things are done but *why*.

The CLC as a ***hub*** places it at the centre of a network of services. The school/centre might provide the major locus of its activities or they might be delivered in various locations. In any case, the aim is to reduce, even eliminate, barriers between the school/centre and the community.

Although the CLC framework is both robust and adaptable to multiple contexts, it requires considerable commitment from the partners to make it work Moreover, it is not suitable for a short-term or 'one-off' venture of cooperation. It is meant to support a long-term relationship among partners who are willing to work together for the mutual benefit of both the school and the community.

7.2.3 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

Returning to the performance standard stated at the beginning of this section, we must now ask to what extent the data that we have collected and analyzed permit us to determine whether schools meet the stated standard:

- The school actively pursues and maintains appropriate linkages with external service agencies and other bodies to support the school and the community.

We did not manage to collect a significant amount of data on this theme. There are some schools with active collaborative links with local agencies that we wish we have been able to examine more thoroughly. In other schools not much seems to be happening in this regard. However, this does not mean that schools are unaware or uninterested in forging these links. In fact, during the course of this Review the principals of all nine schools took the unprecedented step of addressing a letter to the Grand Chief of the Council of the Crees. In it, they expressed their deep concern over the level of social problems in the communities and sought the support of the Grand Chief and the Council to join with them in a search for remedies. At the time of writing this process is underway and we hope that it signals the beginning of greater school community collaboration.

Finally, in this section, we offered some insights into the current initiative underway in many Québec communities, the development of school-community partnerships under the banner of the Community Learning Centre or CLC, as it is known.

Based on our analysis of school-community linkages, we recommend:

R61 **THAT** the Board, in collaboration with the principal and chairperson of each school committee, as well as appropriate regional entities, develop a framework for the building of linkages between school and community for their mutual benefit.

R62 **THAT** the principal and chairperson of each school committee, in collaboration with school staff and the School Committee, adapt the framework referred to in recommendation 61 and implement a process to consult stakeholders on school-community collaboration.

R63 **THAT** the results of this consultation (recommendation 62) be used to formulate and implement a community action plan in support of enhanced school-community collaboration.

NOTES TO PART 2

[63] Smith et al., 1998, pp. 140 (text box), 141.
[64] Coleman, 1993, p. 333.
[65] Mianscum, 1999, p. 16.
[66] See e.g. Poulin, 2007.
[67] Mianscum, 1999, p. 17.
[68] Stoll & Fink, 1996, pp. 166-167.
[69] Report to U.S. Congress, cited in MacBeath et al., 1996, p. 11.
[70] Taylor & Tubianoso, 2001.
[71] Canadian Teachers' Federation, 2003.
[72] Canadian Association of Principals, 2003, p. 10.
[73] See e.g. McNeil, 2000.
[74] See e.g. MELS, 2007.
[75] See Froese-Germain, 2004.
[76] Taylor & Tubianosa, 2001, p. 4.
[77] Adapted from Ysseldyke, Thurlow & Gilman, 1993, pp. 10, 14.
[78] See Gardner, 1993; Goleman, 1997.
[79] Fullan, 2001b, p. 115.
[80] MacBeath et al., 1996, p. 54.
[81] Hargreaves, 2003, p. 15.
[82] The QEP, which followed a policy paper on curriculum (MEQ, 1997b), now applies at the preschool, elementary and secondary cycle I levels (MEQ, 2003b, 2004c).
[83] MEQ, 2003b, p. 4.
[84] MEQ, 2004c, pp. 5-6.
[85] MEQ, 1996.
[86] CSB, Instructional Services, 2007.
[87] Bobbish-Salt, 1990, p. 3.
[88] McAlpine & Herodier, 1994, p. 130.
[89] Bobbish-Salt, 1990, p. 2.
[90] Bobbish-Salt, 1990, pp. 11, 12.
[91] McAlpine & Herodier, 1994, pp. 134, 139, emphasis added.
[92] Burnaby, Faries, Côté, & McAlpine, 1994; Côté & Fietz, 1995; Lavoie, 2001; see also McAlpine & Herodier, 1994 ; Burnaby & MacKenzie, 2001.
[93] Burnaby, Faries, Côté, & McAlpine, 1994, p. iii.
[94] Côté & Fietz, 1995, p. 7.
[95] Cited in Côté & Fietz, 1995, p. 28.
[96] Lavoie, 2001.
[97] Lavoie, 2001, p. 5.
[98] Burnaby & MacKenzie, 2001, p. 204.
[99] MacNeil, 2004.
[100] Lapointe, 2005a, 2005b, 2007; Collier, 2006; Quinn, & Forward, 2007; Roy, 2007.
[101] Garcia, 200; see also Hornberger, 1992.
[102] Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998, p. 21.
[103] Chall, 1987, pp. 68, 69.
[104] See, e.g., Bialystok, Luk & Kwan, 2005a, 2005b; Bruck & Genesee, 1995; Geva, Wade-Wooley & Shany, 1999; Geva & Siegel, 2000; Kenner, Kress, Al-Khatib, Kam & Tsai, 2004; Quinn, 2006; Slavin et al., 1994; Slavin & Cheung, 2005.
[105] *Summary report of the Cree Language and Culture Conference*, 1998, p. 2.
[106] MEQ, 2002c, p. 23.
[107] CSB, 2007, p. 16.
[108] Smith et al., 1998, p. 112.
[109] Lamborn et al., 1992, p. 168.
[110] Smith & Lusthaus, 1994.
[111] Whiteduck (Preface), in Corrigan, 2000, p. vii.
[112] First Nations Education Council [FNEC], 1992, p. 1.
[113] Conseil supérieur de l'éducation du Québec, 1996, 2001.
[114] MELS, 2006a.
[115] See, e.g., CPNCA-QPAT Entente, App. XXVI.
[116] MEQ, 1999, p. 15; see also MELS, 2004a, 2004b, 2006a.
[117] Ministère de la Santé et des Service sociaux et Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, 2003.
[118] Nebelsky, 2007, p. 2.
[119] Stoll & Fink, 1996, p. 82.
[120] Fullan, 2001b, p. 45.
[121] Riley and Louis, 2000, p. 215.

[122] See, e.g., Fullan, 2001b; Smith, et al., 1998; Wagner, et al., 2006.
[123] Goleman, 1997.
[124] Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, cited in Cherniss, 2001,p. 3.
[125] Department for Education and Employment, 2000, pp. 43-45, based on model developed by Davies and Ellison, 1999.
[126] Stoll & Fink, 1996, p. 65.
[127] Gnarowsky, 2002, p. 120.
[128] CSB, n.d.
[129] MacBeath, 1999, p. 1.
[130] *Public Education Act*, ss. 37.1, 74, 83, 96.13(1), 96.13(2); see also, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation du Québec, 1999.
[131] Sturge Sparkes, 1999.
[132] Bangs, 2000, p. 158.
[133] Leithwood, Aitken & Jantzi, 2006, p. 7.
[134] MacBeath (1999, p. 2.
[135] The Learning Partnership, 2004, pp. 8-9.
[136] Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 1998.
[137] Levin, 2004, p. 6.
[138] Coleman, 1998.
[139] Cited in Garnowsky, 2002, p. 119.
[140] Collier, 2006, p. 1.
[141] Smith, Champagne & Deniger, 2002.
[142] CSB, n.d., p. 2.
[143] Policy Research Initiative, 2005, p. 1.
[144] See, e.g., Melaville, Berg & Blank, 2006.
[145] Saskatchewan Learning, 2002, 2002, 2004a, 2004b.
[146] Task Force on the Role of the School, 2001, p. 142.
[147] Smith, 2007a.