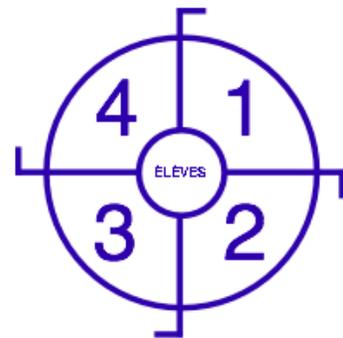
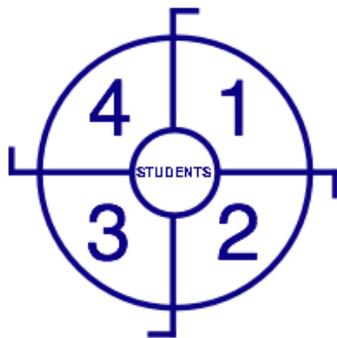


**Cree School Board
Educational Review: 2007-08**



**Étude sur l'éducation : 2007-2008
Commission scolaire Crie**

C Communication
A Accountability &
F Follow-Up for
S School
I Improvement

Communication,
reddition de
comptes
et suivi pour
l'amélioration
scolaire

A Spotlight on Youth Education

Services professionnels
Talleyrand
Professional Services



Brentwood Consultants

Communication, Accountability & Follow-Up for School Improvement (CAFSI): A Spotlight on Youth Education, is one of a series of documents that make up the final report of the Educational Review: 2007-2008, prepared by members of the evaluation team:

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Mary Bear;
William E. Corrigan; and
Kimberly Quinn.

October 27, 2008

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The complete series of report documents consists of the following:

- The CAFSI Report:
 - Part 1, Overview, Context & Mission;
 - Part 2, Educating Youth in the Cree School Board;
 - Part 3, Educating Adults in the Cree School Board;
 - Part 4, School Board Support for Learning;
 - Part 5, From Findings to Action;
- Appendices of the CAFSI Report;
- Highlights of the CAFSI Report;*
- Executive Summary of the CAFSI Report;* and
- A Spotlight on Youth Education.*♦

* **Disponible en français.**

♦ **Available in Cree.**

French translation by Kathleen Arsenault, Ottawa; Cree translation by Brian Webb.

The report and all related materials can be found on the CSB Educational Review website.

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<p>Mary Bear has been with the Cree School Board since it started, first as an elementary teacher, then as a Vice-Principal (both in Waskaganish), and for the last 10 years as a consultant for professional development, Educational Services Department.</p>	<p>William E. Corrigan is the head of Brentwood Consultants, a private consulting firm specializing in educational consultation to organizations involved in the education of students from Kindergarten to the end of secondary school.</p>

http://www.cscee.qc.ca/Edreview/ed_review.htm

http://www.cscee.qc.ca/Edreview/Fr/Etude_Ed.htm

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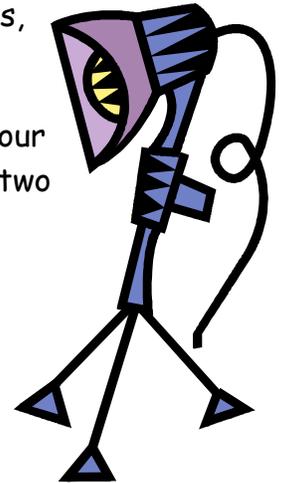
INTRODUCTION

In 2007-08, we visited every community, school and centre of the Cree School Board (CSB), as well as the Board offices in Mistissini and Chisasibi, and the post-secondary offices in Montréal and Gatineau. In addition to gathering documents, we collected data from almost 900 students, teachers, administrators, parents, elders and community members.

For more information, see **Highlights of the CAFSI Report** on the Board web site, listed on the inside cover.

The purpose of this document is to shine a spotlight on all aspects of our final report which deal with youth education. We will try and answer two questions that stakeholders have been asking:

What did we find? What happens next?

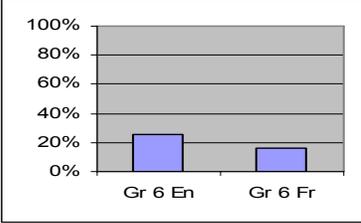


WHAT DID WE FIND?

Context & Mission

<p>The CSB-in-Context</p>	<p>Every organization must be understood in its context. We found that the context of the CSB is a unique blend of elements that include its history before and after the James Bay Agreement, and the wider education system of which it is a part.</p>	<p>Cree values: "respect for the land; respect for family; respect for the Creator; and respect for the Cree language and culture" (former Grand Chief, Ted Moses)</p>
<p>Cree Values</p>	<p>Like other school boards, the CSB's reason for being is based on the value of education but unlike other boards, it is also grounded in Cree values.</p>	
<p>Purpose & Mission</p>	<p>The CSB has a 'dual mission' to provide students with a quality education that is grounded in these values <u>and</u> provides students with opportunities to pursue further education and employment in either the Cree nation or beyond.</p> <p>Some stakeholders called this 'mission impossible' but we found no valid reason to question the Board's dual mission: its students are entitled to both the benefits of Cree values <u>and</u> the opportunities that education is meant to provide. The Board <u>must</u> provide both.</p>	

Youth Student Results

<p>From Kindergarten to Graduation</p>	<p>The level of student learning is very low and has been getting worse each year. As shown in this graph, only a small percentage of students can read at grade level. Results are similar for scores in math.</p>  <p>When students begin English or French instruction in grade 3 or 4, they are so far behind that the majority never catch up. Many feel that they are not expected to succeed and they live down to these expectations in alarming numbers by 'tuning out' and eventually dropping out of school altogether. By June 2006, the graduation rate was only 8.6%.</p>
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Services Provided to Students

<p>Curriculum & Language of Instruction</p>	<p>In the CSB, CLIP (Cree Language of Instruction Program) is offered in kindergarten and the early grades. In theory, this is followed by the courses that make up the Québec Education Program (QEP). In practice, teachers teach whatever students are able to handle at a 'second language' level, which cannot measure up to the 'first language' expectations of the QEP.</p> <p>A new curricular model is needed, one that ensures that all students learn to read at grade level beginning in kindergarten, <u>as well as learning Cree language and culture.</u></p>
<p>Classroom Instruction</p>	<p>Service delivery is often compromised by inadequately trained teachers, especially substitutes who account for a high percentage of teachers. The timely provision of adequate and appropriate instructional resources is problematic but money is not the problem, it is how that money is spent.</p>
<p>Complementary Services</p>	<p>Provision of 'complementary services' - guidance, tutoring, extra-curricular activities and special education - varies widely from school to school and in many cases is inadequate.</p>

School Support for Learning

<p>Leading and Managing Schools</p>	<p>Teacher supervision is almost non-existent, as principals have learned that meeting administrative deadlines is more important to the Board than what goes on in classrooms.</p> <p>Splitting authority between the principal and the CEA makes a bad situation worse and we recommend making the principal the sole point of accountability for the school.</p>	<p><i>Steps should be taken to ensure that an enabling environment is created for learning to be effective (Teacher).</i></p>
<p>Building Capacity for Improvement</p>	<p>The key to improvement lies in building the <i>capacity</i> of schools to help teachers to teach and students to learn. This includes changes to management systems and facilities, but most of all it means providing sustained professional development for all school staff.</p>	

Community Support for Learning

<p>Home, School & Community</p>	<p>Student engagement begins at home; parents are an essential partner in learning. We found that this support is generally weak. Schools need to do more to reach out to parents.</p> <p>Schools are not considered as a community institution but regarded as the body of an outside agency. However, we did see some examples of school-community collaboration that show what can be done.</p>	<p><i>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).</i></p>
<p>Working Together to Support Your School</p>	<p>The <i>Community Learning Centre (CLC)</i> is a model being developed in other school boards to promote school-community partnerships to support student learning and community development. In a CLC, everyone is focused, not on the past and existing problems, but on the future and being part of the solution.</p>	

School Board Support for Learning

Service Delivery	<p>The 1999 Mianscum report found that Educational Services provided little assistance to schools. The situation has not changed and the Office for the Supervision of Schools does not have the capacity to make up for this lack of support.</p>
Administrative Support	<p>The Board is unresponsive to schools' needs for administrative support and seems to operate for itself without adequate communication, accountability or follow-up.</p>
The Base of a Pyramid of Support	<p>We recommend a major change in the way the Board operates - shifting from a bureaucratic hierarchy with students at the bottom, to</p>  <p>a pyramid of support for schools with students at the top.</p>

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Reflections & Lessons Learned	<p>At present (October, 2008), the Board is still considering the CAFSI report and the 'lessons learned' to decide on the best way to improve educational service delivery and student results.</p>	<p><i>How will you know when change is really happening?</i></p> <p><i>When magical thinking has been eliminated (Teacher).</i></p>
The Road Ahead	<p>The 'road ahead' to improved service delivery and results begins with a School Board Action Plan that will spell out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results - where the Board is going; • Means - how it intends to achieve these results; • Resources - what is required to support this process; • Planning - mapping the route and the timeline for improvement; and • Evaluation - determining how we will judge success. 	