

INFORMATION SHEET

Part 3 of the compulsory training for governing board members

FORMATION OF A GOVERNING BOARD

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Once the composition of the governing board has been determined, the next step is to appoint or elect those interested in occupying the positions to be filled. The *Education Act* sets out rules for the various categories of board members. The timing of the key steps involved must also be respected.

SCHOOLS

The board is formed by no later than September 30 of each year. The parents' general assembly must elect **at least four parent members** in order for the board to be constituted.

CENTRES

The board is made up of members who take office as they are appointed or elected; and it can still be formed even if there are not the requisite number of representatives for each group.

How are governing boards for elementary and secondary schools formed?

PARENTS' REPRESENTATIVES ON THE BOARD (TERM OF OFFICE: 2 YEARS)

The parent members must be elected at the parents' general assembly at the start of the school year. The number of positions available on the governing board and the respective terms of office are announced in an invitation sent to all parents at least four days before the general assembly takes place.

Generally speaking, two types of situations are possible:

- A parent who has never sat on a governing board applies to become a member¹
- A parent has completed their term of office and wants to apply again for one of the positions available

If the number of candidates is equal to the number of positions to be filled, the parents are said to be elected by acclamation.

¹ A parent may apply to become a board member or be nominated by another person, depending on the rules adopted by parents during the general assembly.

The assembly must also elect **at least two parent substitutes** to the board to stand in for parents who may not be able to attend a board meeting during the school year. The number of substitutes must not exceed the number of seats indicated for the initial composition of the board (e.g. if 4 seats are reserved for parents, there can be no more than 4 substitutes).

At the general assembly, one of the parents elected or appointed to the board is also named **a representative at the parents' committee**.

At the same time, another parent member may also be appointed as a substitute to sit on the committee and vote in place of the main representative.

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE GOVERNING BOARD (TERM OF OFFICE: 1 YEAR)

During the month of September, the school's teachers, non-teaching professionals and support staff meet in a general assembly to elect their representatives to the governing board in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in their respective collective agreements or, in the absence of such agreements, in accordance with the terms and conditions determined by the school administration following consultation with the concerned parties.

At least four school staff members, **two of whom must be teachers**, have to be elected.

If **daycare services** are offered in the school, the members concerned must also elect a representative.

At their respective general assemblies, school staff can also elect substitutes to replace those members who cannot take part in a board meeting.

MEMBERS REPRESENTING SECONDARY CYCLE TWO STUDENTS (TERM OF OFFICE: 1 YEAR)

In September of each year, the students' committee or, if applicable, the association that represents the students, appoints two representatives to the board. The substitute members can also be elected at this time.

MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE COMMUNITY (TERM OF OFFICE: 1 YEAR)

These two people are appointed by the other board members, generally as soon as possible after the election of the parent members and staff members (and student members, if applicable), to complete the formation of the board.

How are governing boards formed in adult education centres and vocational training centres?

The term of office of all members is two years.

MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE STUDENTS

It is often at the start of the school year that students attending the centre are elected by their peers to sit on the board. However, they can also be elected or appointed during the school year (e.g. a student leaves the board after completing their program and another student, whether starting or still pursuing their studies, wants to fill this vacant seat).

MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE CENTRE STAFF

The board members representing the centre's teaching staff, non-teaching professionals and support staff must be elected by their peers or in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in their respective collective agreements or, in the absence of such agreements, in accordance with the terms and conditions determined by the centre administration following consultation with the concerned parties.

At least four centre staff members, **two of whom must be teachers**, have to be elected.

MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE PARENTS

Parents of students attending a vocational training centre are elected by their peers in accordance with the terms and conditions established by the centre's director. In adult education centres, parents are not represented on the governing board.

MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE COMMUNITY

At least two people nominated by the school service centre are chosen after consultations with socioeconomic and community groups in the territory that the centre mainly serves.

At least two people representing local businesses are also nominated by the school service centre. In the case of vocational training centres, these members are chosen from businesses in sectors of economic activity that correspond to vocational programs taught at the centre.

What happens when a member leaves the board?

In the case of a school governing board, a vacancy resulting from the departure of a parents' representative is filled, for the time left in the person's term of office, by a parent appointed by the other parents on the board.

In the case of a school or centre, a vacancy resulting from the departure or reduced effectiveness of any other member is filled, for the time left in the person's term of office, following the procedure that was used to appoint the member to be replaced.

Note

This information sheet is distilled from legal texts and written in an easily accessible style. In no way does it replace the legal texts currently in effect, which take precedence. Readers should refer directly to the laws and regulations that fall under the responsibility of the Minister of Education, specifically the *Education Act*, to learn about all the provisions that apply to governing boards, many of which are not covered in this document.

MAIN SECTIONS OF THE LAW

- › Sections 47 to 55 of the *Education Act* (schools)
- › Sections 102 to 106 of the *Education Act* (adult education centres and vocational training centres)



ADVICE BEST PRACTICES

-  Draw up a list of the names and contact information of all board members and distribute it to them, with their prior authorization. This practice will facilitate any communication that may be required during the school year and make it possible to identify the positions held on the board, as well as the amount of time left in the respective terms of office.
-  Post the full name of each board member on the institution's website to let the parents, the staff members and the community know who the governing board members are.
-  Publish an announcement in the institution's newsletter with the names of the board members who have been appointed or elected and take advantage of the opportunity to congratulate them and thank them for their commitment.

