

Nova Central
school district

Board Strategic Plan

2006 – 2008

Message from the Chair

January 8, 2007

Honourable Joan Burke
Minister of Education

Dear Minister Burke:

In accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, I hereby submit a two year transitional Strategic Plan for the Nova Central School District for the period July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2008.

This plan was developed through a significant consultation process with external and internal stakeholders. In the external environmental scan, all school council chairpersons were given the opportunity to attend one of nine meetings that were held throughout the district. The internal scan was conducted in all 69 schools and at all district worksites, in order to enable all employees to have input into the planning process.

With the assistance of a facilitator, the board developed a plan that prioritizes the following issues which will be addressed through a specific action plan within the next eighteen months:

1. The development of an external communications plan;
2. The revision of the board's constitution, by-laws, and governance policies;
3. A review of the restructuring plan for schools in the district; and
4. Student academic achievement, specifically, the need to increase the number of students graduating with an academic/honours standing.

As well, as per Section 5 of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, the Nova Central School District has identified the assigned areas for the completion of the relevant Strategic Directions of Government, as identified in your correspondence of December 8, 2005.

My signature below is on behalf of the board, a Category One Government Entity, and indicates our accountability for the preparation of this plan and the achievement of the goals and objectives of each of the four strategic issues.

Yours truly,



THOMAS KENDELL
Chairperson

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Plan at a Glance

VISION

The vision of the Nova Central School Board is of a community of learners achieving their highest potential in a safe and caring environment.

MISSION

By 2011, the Nova Central School Board has increased the number of students graduating with academic/honours certificates by five per cent in order to improve students' access to potential post-secondary opportunities requiring a high-school academic certificate.

GOALS

Issue One: Communications

Goal One: By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has implemented a communications plan.

Objectives:

1. By June 30, 2007, the Nova Central School Board has a communications plan.
2. By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has implemented the communications plan.

Issue Two: Constitution, Bylaws and Policies

Goal Two: By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has approved the revised constitution, bylaws, and governance policies to better serve all stakeholders.

Objectives:

1. By June 30, 2007, the Nova Central School Board has a draft revised constitution, bylaws, and governance policies.
2. By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has an approved revised constitution, bylaws, and policies.

Issue Three: Restructuring

Goal Three: By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has approved a revised restructuring plan.

Objectives:

1. By June 30, 2007, the Nova Central School Board has revised its restructuring plan based on actions taken in 2006.
2. By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has a revised infrastructure plan for 2008- 2013.

Issue Four: Student Academic Achievement

Goal Four: By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has increased the number of students graduating with academic/honours certificates by two per cent over the June 2006 percentage.

Objectives:

1. By June 30, 2007, the Nova Central School Board has a plan implemented to improve high-school student achievement at the academic/honours level.
2. By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has achieved a two per cent increase in the number of students graduating with academic/honours certificates as compared with the 2006 percentages.

District Overview

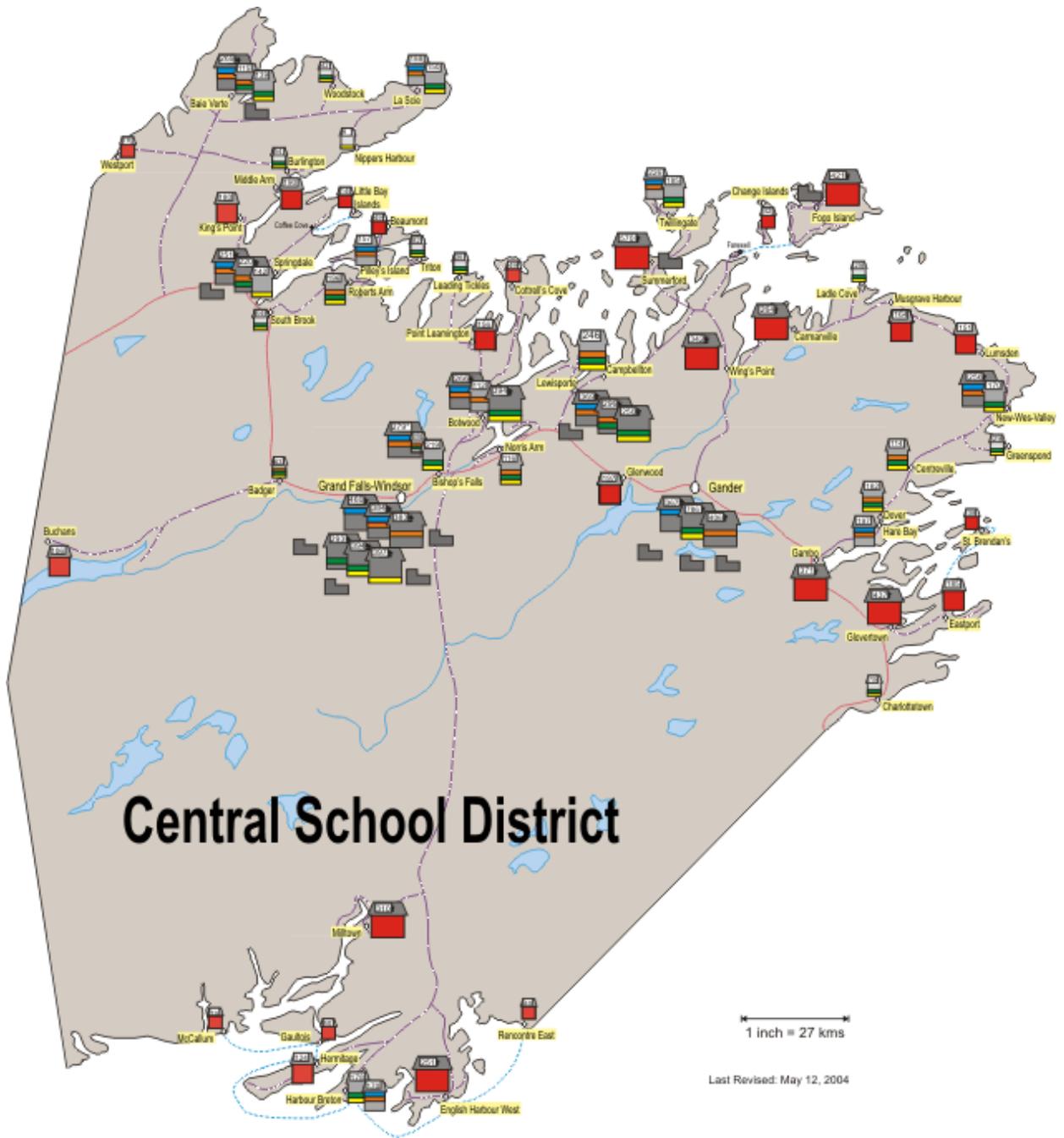
The Nova Central School District has a student enrolment of approximately 14,000 students (6,886 male and 6,587 female). These students, who are from 170 communities, attend one of 69 schools located in 54 different communities. This district covers a 300 kilometer stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway from Charlottetown, located in Terra Nova National Park, to Baie Verte Junction, located about 30 kilometers west of South Brook.

The district operates all schools extending from the Baie Verte Peninsula in the north to the Connaigre Peninsula in the south to the Eastport Peninsula in the East, and to Notre Dame Bay in the northeast. Those schools located at the extreme points of the district are separated by distances in excess of 400 kilometers by road. The central district office is located in Gander and a regional office is located in Grand Falls-Windsor.

The district has eight schools which are only accessible by ferry. These ferry trips range from 5 minutes to 90 minutes one way.

Schools range in size from 4 students at Woodstock, to more than 800 students at Gander Academy, which is a kindergarten to grade-six school. The demographics of the district include urban concentrations in towns like Grand Falls-Windsor and Gander to many small or isolated communities such as Rencontre East, Little Bay Islands, and St. Brendan's Island.

The budget of the district is \$100.1 million and there are approximately 2,200 employees, 922 males and 1,337 female. A map of the district follows:



Mandate

The mandate of the Nova Central School Board is to provide prescribed pre-kindergarten programs and kindergarten to Grade 12 school programs to students within its jurisdiction. Please refer to Appendix Two for a complete list of the board's duties and responsibilities under the *Schools Act, 1997*.

Lines of Business

The Nova Central School Board has two lines of business.

1. **Programs and Services (Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12)**

One year prior to school entry, children are offered an opportunity to become oriented to the kindergarten environment via the KinderStart Program. The itinerant teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing and the itinerant teacher for the blind and visually impaired provide pre-school intervention to qualified children.

Department of Education prescribed programs are offered based on the core requirements within the Pathways framework. The board offers other Department of Education approved programs based on management criteria and the resource capacity of the district. Pathway Four courses are approved by the school administrator.

Personal and career guidance and counselling are available in all schools.

Extra and/or co-curricular programs and activities are available to varying degrees in all schools.

2. **Transportation**

The Nova Central School Board is responsible for transporting students to and from schools in compliance with Department of Education regulations.

Values

The core values explain the character of the organization promoted in the Nova Central School District. The strategic values were designed after the completion of an environmental scan. To ensure the core values are visible throughout the organization, and recognizing that the definitions will change in the next strategic plan, it was decided that the actions which needed to be enhanced during the subsequent two years could be described as follows:

Core Values

- Accountability:** Each person fulfills commitments in accordance with defined criteria.
- Caring:** Each person is concerned for the well being of others.
- Courage:** Each person takes risks by initiating and accepting change.
- Fairness:** Each person provides equitable opportunities for all.
- Honesty:** Each person's actions match his/her words.
- Openness:** Each person is free to voice his/her opinions in the appropriate forum.
- Perseverance:** Each person pursues options until goals are achieved.
- Respect:** Each person acknowledges and considers the opinions of others.

Primary Clients

The Nova Central School Board's primary clients are students, parents, and employees. The board also has relationships with other external clients that include provincial bodies such as the Department of Education and other government departments. The board also works with public agencies, professional associations, and unions. While positive relationships with external clients are important, the main focus of the Nova Central School Board, through its district administration, is to focus on and respond to the needs of its primary clients.

Vision

The vision of the Nova Central School Board is of a community of learners achieving their highest potential in a safe and caring environment.

Mission

The board participated in an external environmental scan with school council chairs. The Director of Education facilitated an internal environmental scan with school administrators and senior executive personnel. Based on the evidence, it was obvious that there was a disproportionate number of students enrolling in courses which would not lead to the attainment of an academic or honours certificate at the end of grade 12, as compared with those of other districts in the province. Therefore, given the fact that the board is responsible for establishing outcomes for the education of students in the region, it was determined that it is essential for the mission to focus on the opportunities available to students graduating high school.

By 2011, the Nova Central School Board has increased the number of students graduating with academic/honours certificates by five per cent in order to improve students' access to potential post-secondary opportunities requiring a high-school academic certificate.

Measure 1: Increased percentage of certificates

Indicator: Comparison of the percentage of June 2006 academic/honours graduates to the June 2011 percentage of academic/honours graduates.

Strategic Issues

The four governance issues prioritized for inclusion in this plan are: communications; constitution, bylaws and policies; school restructuring; and student academic achievement.

Issue One: Communications

One of the issues which stakeholders consistently mentioned was the need to improve communications between the board and all stakeholders. The board recognized that its role is to communicate with external stakeholders and acknowledged that it did not have a comprehensive communications plan or process in place. To ensure the board fulfilled its role effectively, it determined that high priority would be given to this issue.

Goal One: By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has implemented a communications plan.

Measure: Communications Plan

Indicators:

- Compared the number of regularly scheduled annual meetings with school council chairs, local trustees and Director of Education to the number outlined in the plan
- Compared the number of community meetings scheduled to gather input and share information on restructuring to the number outlined in the plan
- Communicated trustee roles
- Used the process outlined in the plan to introduce trustees to the public

Objectives:

1. By June 30, 2007, the Nova Central School Board has a communications plan.

Measure: Written plan

Indicators:

- Prepared the document (definition; audience; mechanisms; and evaluation process)
- Approved, by motion of the board, the document

2. By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has implemented the communications plan.

Issue Two: Constitution, Bylaws and Policies

During the internal and external environmental scan, it became evident that the board needs to review its constitution and bylaws. It was also clear that the board could not continue to operate using the two sets of policies which had been constructed prior to amalgamation in 2004.

Therefore, based on the evidence and the board's belief that it is essential to give clear directions to the Director of Education to establish board processes, to establish outcomes for its lines of business and to set the direction for the organization, it was determined that this board would revisit the current constitution, bylaws, and policies.

Goal Two: By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has approved the revised constitution, bylaws, and governance policies to better serve all stakeholders.

Measure: Approved constitution, bylaws, and governance policies

Indicators:

- Wrote policies
- Wrote constitution
- Wrote bylaws
- Approved, by motion of the board, the constitution
- Approved, by motion of the board, the bylaws
- Approved, by motion of the board, the governance policies

Objectives:

1. By June 30, 2007, the Nova Central School Board has a draft revised constitution, bylaws, and governance policies

Measure: Draft constitution, bylaws, and governance policies

Indicators:

- Drafted revised constitution
- Drafted revised bylaws
- Drafted revised governance policies

2. By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has approved revised constitution, bylaws, and policies.

Issue Three: Restructuring

Restructuring is an issue for the board and all stakeholders. Therefore, in order to continue to improve the education of the students in the central region it was determined, based on the outcomes of the external and internal environmental scans, that it is necessary to review the current plan. This is necessary for three reasons: to assess the outcomes for students based on past restructuring; to review future enrolment projections and the academic and safety needs of students; and to align priorities in harmony with the Department of Education and district stakeholders.

Goal Three By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has approved a revised restructuring plan.

Measure: Revised restructuring plan

Indicators:

- Completed the revised plan
- Approved, by motion of the board, the plan

Objectives:

1. By June 30, 2007, the Nova Central School Board has revised its restructuring plan based on actions taken in 2006.

Measure: Revised, based on past action, the restructuring plan

Indicators:

- Analyzed actions taken
- Analyzed input regarding the needs across the district
- Submitted a capital application to the Department of Education

2. By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has a revised infrastructure plan for 2008-2013.

Issue Four: Student Academic Achievement

Based on an analysis of district statistics, it was noted that the Nova Central School District has a disproportionate number of students enrolling in courses which do not enable them to graduate with an academic or honours high school certificate. Therefore, based on the belief that students in Central Newfoundland are as capable as students elsewhere in the province, it was determined that it is necessary to focus on increasing the percentage of students who finish school with an academic or honours certificate.

Goal Four: By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has increased the number students graduating with academic/honours certificates by two per cent over the June 2006 percentage.

Measure: Percentage of students graduating with academic/honours certificates

Indicators:

- Examined results from public exams
- Compared the percentages, in 2006 and 2008, of academic/honours graduates

Objectives:

1. By June 30, 2007, the Nova Central School Board has a plan implemented to improve high-school student achievement at the academic/honours level.

Measure: Plan to improve achievement

Indicators:

- Implemented the plan (containing professional development targeted to teachers and principals at junior and senior high; identifying schools graduating students from general programs; and, identifying needs arising from school plans)
- Analyzed statistics regarding actions taken in year one of plan

2. By June 30, 2008, the Nova Central School Board has achieved a two per cent increase in the number of students graduating with academic/honours certificates as compared with the 2006 percentages.

Conclusion

The Board of the Nova Central School District intends to complete the consolidation of its former school districts so that the new board, elected in September of 2005, will have an effective model of governance and a well organized and effective school system for Central Newfoundland which will realize improved student academic achievement. An operational plan, which supports the initiatives to improve student academic achievement, outlines the actions which will occur within identified timelines in order for the board to achieve its goals.

By measuring its determined objectives, in accordance with appropriate indicators, the board will submit to the Minister of Education an Annual Report which will communicate the degree of the board's success in achieving its identified objectives and goals.

Achievement of the Strategic Plan and the supporting Operational Plan will bring consistency to the governance and operations of the school district, enhance internal and external communications, improve school leadership and morale, support the Department of Education's Strategic Plan 2006-2008, and meet the board's obligations as required by legislation.

A successful completion of the Nova Central School District's Strategic Plan 2006-2008 will ensure that the board is fulfilling its vision of a community of learners achieving their highest potential in a safe and caring environment.

Appendix One

Title: Quality and Accessibility of Educational Programs

Strategic Direction: Quality educational programs and opportunities are available to citizens throughout the province so they may participate in lifelong learning.

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is/was				
	Being implemented by other entities reporting to the Minister	Addressed only in specific sub-areas (rationale included in the plan)	Addressed in the:		
			strategic plan	operational plan	branch/divisional work-plans
Continue to implement new curriculum, as required, focusing on language arts, math, science and social studies;					√
Implement a technology plan that addresses technological literacy and promotes implementation of technology-based curriculum;					√
Promote implementation of programs and strategies which address healthy living and physical education;					√
Implement applied programs, wherever feasible, to enhance opportunities for students choosing to pursue applied options at the post-secondary level;					√
Implement the fine arts strategy;					√
Implement mandatory career education which includes a community contribution component;					√
Facilitate enhanced e-learning opportunities through video conferencing capacity and other multi-media resources; and					√
Ensure individual school-based enhancements to the prescribed curriculum, paid for through school fees, are affordable and available to all within the school.					√ (school)

Title: Innovative and high-performing educational delivery systems

Strategic Direction: The K-12 system has acceptable levels of educational performance, student achievement and attainment, student safety and well being.

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is/was				
	Being implemented by other entities reporting to the Minister	Addressed only in specific sub-areas (rationale included in the plan)	Addressed in the:		
			strategic plan	operational plan	branch/divisional work-plans
Implement measures which focus on improved student achievement;			√	√	√
Implement the school development model;					√
Develop a plan to enable more students to meet provincial standards in language arts and math by age 12;					√
Ensure comprehensive programs across all departments and agencies are accessed to meet the learning needs of all children;			√ (policy)	√	√
Ensure all schools are safe and caring learning environments which promote respect for diversity, a sense of belonging and student well being;				√	√
Ensure the school bus fleet is safe;					√
Support the recruitment and retention of qualified teaching professionals; and			√(policy)	√ (policy)	√
Provide strategic professional development for teachers.					√

Title: Women's Equity

Strategic Direction: Women sharing equitably in social and economic benefits.

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is/was				
	Being implemented by other entities reporting to the Minister	Addressed only in specific sub-areas (rationale included in the plan)	Addressed in the:		
			strategic plan	operational plan	branch/divisional work-plans
Public policy;			√(policy)		
Leadership;					√
Gender-based analysis by government entities;			√(policy)	√(policy)	√ (students)
Quality of life of Aboriginal women; and	√				
Employment opportunities.					√

Title: Violence

Strategic Direction: Reduction of violence.

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is/was				
	Being implemented by other entities reporting to the Minister	Addressed only in specific sub-areas (rationale included in the plan)	Addressed in the:		
			strategic plan	operational plan	branch/divisional work-plans
Early prevention and education;					√
Aboriginal women and children;					√
Public awareness and attitudes; and					√
Legislation, policy and services.			√(policy)		

Title: Financial Support for Learning

Strategic Direction: Funding levels and budgeting priorities are consistent with Government's fiscal policy.

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is/was				
	Being implemented by other entities reporting to the Minister	Addressed only in specific sub-areas (rationale included in the plan)	Addressed in the:		
			strategic plan	operational plan	branch/divisional work-plans
Prepare a long-term facilities plan;					√
Ensure teaching resources are utilized to facilitate optimal class size in prescribed areas; and					√
Enhance collection processes related to Newfoundland and Labrador Student Loans.	√				

Title: Information Resources

Strategic Direction: Improved local information resources are available and used by the province's schools and the public.

Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is/was				
	Being implemented by other entities reporting to the Minister	Addressed only in specific sub-areas (rationale included in the plan)	Addressed in the:		
			strategic plan	operational plan	branch/divisional work-plans
Acquire works by local authors, artists and performers, and foster links between the artistic and cultural communities;					√
Promote IT skills and expand the use of computer technology to help improve education, training and information sharing in rural communities; and					√
Improve access to information and resources by creating synergies between public libraries and other entities.					√

Appendix Two

Taken from the *Schools Act, 1997*

Duties of boards

75.

(1) A board shall

- (a) organize and administer primary, elementary and secondary education within the district;
- (b) provide for the instruction of students either by the establishment of a program in its schools or by making an arrangement with another board or with another educational body in Canada;
- (c) determine policy for the effective operation of primary, elementary and secondary schools in the district;
- (d) ensure that policies and guidelines issued by the minister relating to special education for students are followed in schools under its jurisdiction;
- (e) ensure adequate supervision of all students enrolled in its schools during the period for which the board is responsible for those students;
- (f) develop a policy on employment equity and a plan for implementing the policy;
- (g) appoint and dismiss employees;
- (h) appoint and assign duties of teachers;
- (i) adopt personnel policies which shall follow the personnel administration procedures of the government of the province, with the necessary changes, unless other policies are approved, in writing, by the minister;
- (j) formulate policies for evaluating employees;
- (k) arrange for the bonding of the assistant director of finance and administration and other persons employed by the board whose duties include the collecting, receiving or depositing of money belonging to the board;
- (l) purchase or otherwise acquire, subject to the prior written approval of the minister, real property that it requires;
- (m) ensure that those programs or courses of study, including courses in religious education, and the materials prescribed or approved by the minister are followed in the schools under its control;
- (n) ensure that each school within its district maintains adequate program and performance standards;
- (o) establish policies for student evaluation and student promotion;
- (p) establish priorities for school construction, maintenance and repair and make recommendations to the minister;
- (q) make known to the public and enlist the support of the public for board policies and programs;
- (r) transmit to the minister all records and returns required by this Act and other reports and returns that the minister may require;

- (s) where the board considers it necessary, arrange for a system of transportation of students to and from schools;
 - (t) where arrangements are made by it for the transportation of students, ensure that all vehicles engaged in carrying students to and from school are
 - (i) in good mechanical condition,
 - (ii) have adequate liability insurance, and
 - (iii) that an appropriate bus safety program is offered to students who are transported by bus;
 - (u) insure and keep insured all its buildings and equipment and obtain insurance indemnifying it against liability in respect of a claim for damages or personal injury;
 - (v) admit, at all reasonable times and subject to the terms of an agreement between it and the Memorial University of Newfoundland, a student enrolled in the Faculty of Education or School of Physical Education and Athletics at that University to a school under its control for the purpose of observation and the practice of teaching;
 - (w) admit, at all reasonable times and subject to the terms of an agreement between it and a college or institute, a student enrolled in a training program for student assistants, to a school under its control for the purpose of observation and activities associated with a work term;
 - (x) organize and administer a school in an institution, where directed to do so by the minister;
 - (y) comply with a policy directive of the minister; and
 - (z) immediately inform the minister in writing of a vacancy in the position of director or assistant director.
- (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(g), an emergency supply shall not be employed or appointed to teach without the permission of the minister.
- (3) A board shall be responsible to the minister for the expenditure of public funds, the conduct of programs of instruction, and evaluation required by the minister and for the maintenance of adequate program and performance standards in schools in the district.

Powers of boards

76.

(1) A board may

- (a) employ persons that the board considers necessary for its operations and to carry out its objects;
- (b) enter into agreements for the purpose of carrying out its functions under this Act;
- (c) permit a school building under its control to be used outside of school hours, where this does not interfere with the regular conduct of the school;
- (d) assess a person or group a fee for use of a school under paragraph (c);
- (e) require a student, believed by a teacher to be suffering from a communicable disease or a physical or mental condition which might endanger an employee of the board or other students, to be examined by a

- medical practitioner or other professional person appointed or approved by the board and, upon the recommendation of the medical practitioner or that other professional person, exclude that student from school until a certificate acceptable to the board is obtained from a medical practitioner or that other professional person permitting that student to return to school, but an exclusion or extension of an exclusion shall be reviewed by the board within 25 school days;
- (f) by notice, in writing, require an employee or other person to undergo a physical examination by a medical practitioner appointed or approved by the board or a psychological examination by 2 medical practitioners or 2 psychologists registered under the *Psychologists Act* and to submit a certificate acceptable to the board signed by the medical practitioners or psychologists setting out the conclusions regarding the physical or mental health of that employee or person;
 - (g) summarily dismiss an employee or other person who within 14 days from the date of receiving a notice under paragraph (f) has not made a reasonable attempt to obtain the examination;
 - (h) where a certificate submitted to a board under paragraph (f) shows that an employee or other person's physical or mental health would be injurious to an employee of the board or the students, direct the employee or other person to take sick leave or other earned leave or, where he or she has no sick leave or other earned leave or the sick leave or other earned leave is exhausted, require the employee or other person to take unpaid leave;
 - (i) suspend from work, with or without pay, an employee or other person who is charged with an offence that in the opinion of the board would make that employee or other person unsuitable to perform his or her duties;
 - (j) provide, subject to the written permission of the parent of the student concerned and in conjunction with the appropriate officials responsible for traffic control in the area, a system of school patrols in which a student may assist in the control of motor vehicle traffic on highways or elsewhere so far as the traffic may affect a student going to or from the school;
 - (k) raise money, subject to the prior written approval of the minister, upon its corporate credit and for the purpose of the board;
 - (l) sell or lease property for the purpose of the board, subject to the prior written approval of the minister;
 - (m) levy a fee for the transportation of students; and
 - (n) become a member of a provincial association of school boards and pay a required membership fee.
- (2) Notwithstanding section 75 or subsection (1) of this section, a board may close a school only after the parents of students affected have been given an opportunity to make representations to the board.