

Manitoba School Boards Association
Manual of Policies and Beliefs

Updated May 2011



Note to Users

This Manual of Policies and Beliefs is divided into four parts: Foundation Statements, Policy and Belief Statements, Constituent Resolutions, and Appendices. The Foundation Statements are the association's Vision, Mission, Mandate, Beliefs, Values, and Brand. The Policy and Belief Statements are based on the Constituent Resolutions, but these statements may combine related resolutions, offer alternate wording, and speak to underlying principles. Original resolutions, as passed by the membership of the Manitoba School Boards Association at an annual convention, can be found in the Constituent Resolution section. For ease of reference, both sections are similarly organized, with the same headings and subheadings. The Appendices section contains those documents which are referenced in resolution as being supported or endorsed by the association.

This manual is updated on an annual basis, following the association's Annual General Meeting. Newly adopted resolutions are added at that time, and archived resolutions deleted.

Table of Contents

Part 1: Foundation Statements	3
Part 2: Policy and Belief Statements	
1. Philosophy of Public Education	4
2. School Boards.....	5
Elections and Organization.....	5
Operations	5
Trustee Authority	5
Amalgamation.....	6
3. Finance	7
Principles	7
Taxation Issues.....	7
Funding Formula—General	8
Funding Formula—Specifics	8
Curriculum	8
Facilities.....	9
Procedures	9
Grant Structure	9
Transportation	10
Special Education.....	10
Technology	10
Equity.....	10
Miscellaneous.....	10
Interorganizational and Inter-Departmental Financial Responsibilities	11
Private Schools.....	11
Reporting	11
Miscellaneous.....	12
4. Students and Instruction	13
Curriculum	13
School Year	13
Student Assessment.....	13
Philosophy of Assessment	13
Provincial Assessment Program.....	13
Special Education Students and Programming.....	14
Early Childhood Development.....	14
Religious Exercises and Instruction.....	14
Cultural Awareness	14
Student Health and Welfare	14
Student Records.....	15
Student Discipline	15
Residency Issues.....	16
5. Employee Relations	17
Collective Bargaining and Arbitration	17
Teacher and Clinician Supply.....	17
Staff Professional Development	18
Employees—Miscellaneous	18
6. Transportation.....	19
7. Facilities and Materials	20
8. External Organizations.....	21
Educational Partners	21
Post-Secondary Education	21
Non-Educational Organizations.....	21

Part 3: Constituent Resolutions

1.	Philosophy of Public Education	22
2.	School Boards.....	23
	Elections and Organization.....	23
	Operations	23
	Trustee Authority	24
	Amalgamation.....	24
3.	Finance	25
	Principles	25
	Taxation Issues.....	26
	Funding Formula—General	27
	Funding Formula—Specifics	28
	Curriculum	28
	Facilities.....	28
	Procedures	28
	Grant Structure	29
	Transportation	30
	Special Education	31
	Technology	32
	Equity.....	32
	Miscellaneous.....	33
	Interorganizational and Inter-Departmental Financial Responsibilities	34
	Private Schools.....	34
	Reporting	34
	Miscellaneous	35
4.	Students and Instruction	36
	Curriculum	36
	School Year	36
	Student Assessment.....	37
	Philosophy of Assessment	37
	Provincial Assessment Program.....	37
	Special Education Students and Programming.....	38
	Early Childhood Development	38
	Religious Exercises and Instruction.....	39
	Cultural Awareness	39
	Student Health and Welfare	39
	Student Records.....	40
	Student Discipline.....	41
	Residency Issues.....	41
5.	Employee Relations.....	42
	Collective Bargaining and Arbitration	42
	Teacher and Clinician Supply.....	43
	Staff Professional Development	43
	Employees—Miscellaneous	44
6.	Transportation.....	45
7.	Facilities and Materials	46
8.	External Organizations.....	47
	Educational Partners	47
	Post-Secondary Education	47
	Non-Educational Organizations.....	47

Part 4: Appendices

Principles of Fair Student Assessment

Part 1: Foundation Statements

Vision

A respected and influential voice for public education in Manitoba
A valued and effective advocate for local education governance

Mission

The mission of the Manitoba School Boards Association is to enhance the work of locally elected school boards through leadership, advocacy and service, and to champion the cause of public education for all students in Manitoba.

Mandate

1. To promote and support the work of elected public school boards within the parameters of Manitoba laws and statutes.
2. To promote and advance the cause of public education in the province through research, study and public discourse.
3. To work collaboratively with education partners, stakeholders, and community agencies in addressing the learning and developmental needs of school-aged children and youth.

Beliefs

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes.....

THAT the public school system is a cornerstone of a free and democratic society and the collective responsibility of all citizens;

THAT community voice and local control are essential features of a quality public education system;

THAT the public school system in Manitoba should provide equity of opportunity for all students irrespective of geographic location or community wealth; and

THAT elected school boards must have the legal authority, the financial flexibility and the local autonomy to reflect the education needs and priorities of their respective communities.

Values

The Manitoba School Boards Association is committed to excellence in programs and services for member school boards;

The Manitoba School Boards Association respects the authority and autonomy of locally elected school boards;

The Manitoba School Boards Association values openness and transparency in its relationship with association members, education partners, stakeholder organizations and the general public; and

The Manitoba School Boards Association values collaboration, partnership and teamwork in the pursuit of organizational goals.

Brand

Leadership, advocacy and service for Manitoba's public school boards

Adopted March 2006
Reaffirmed March 2011

Part 2: Policy and Belief Statements

1. Philosophy or Vision of Public Education

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ education is the most important service that a society can provide to its people.
- ◆ the public school system must provide all students with a quality education and offer equality of opportunity, with the following specific goals:
 - to foster a continued love of learning in our children;
 - to teach basic skills and prepare students for further academic and vocational courses;
 - to examine and transmit societal values and concepts;
 - to develop independence in students within the framework of their social responsibilities; and
 - to provide training and courses to achieve the above aims within the supporting community's ability to pay.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that successful school improvement and education reform initiatives should reflect:

- ◆ student learning as the primary focus;
- ◆ consensus building around shared values and goals;
- ◆ broad participation and the development of local leadership capacity;
- ◆ enhanced linkages between the school and its communities/publics; and
- ◆ on-going evaluation to inform planning and action.

2. School Boards

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ Manitoba's system of locally elected school boards is essential to ensuring community voice in public education.
- ◆ the autonomy of locally elected school boards is necessary to the expression of community voice in decision-making and local education policy.

Elections and Organization

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that a school board should have the authority to determine whether a school division utilizes a single or dual system of administration.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that income tax and/or other legislation should provide for a deduction from income for school trustees' election campaign costs.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that no individual, once convicted of a crime against a child, should be allowed to serve as a school trustee.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school divisions and municipalities should work collaboratively to simplify the voting process for electors.

Operations

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that conflict of interest provisions of *The Public Schools Act* should provide school boards with clear direction regarding the various forms of conflict of interest that may arise at the board table.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school boards should retain the authority to determine the number and kind of schools operating within its jurisdiction, and that any School Closing Guidelines should be structured to enable school boards to meet the challenges posed by shifting populations and changing demographics.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government, rather than school boards, should be legally liable in the event of student injury or other incidents related to out-of-school components of the grades 9 to 12 physical education credits.

Trustee Authority

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that an individual elected as a trustee becomes a member of a corporate body and has no authority to act on any school board matter except as directed by board motion.

Amalgamation

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the government of Manitoba, prior to deciding upon any future school division amalgamations, should conduct broad public consultations, and provide clear criteria upon which such school division amalgamations will be made.

3. Finance

Principles

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that a quality public education system which supports student learning and high levels of achievement for all students requires on-going investment through a funding model that is equitable, flexible and sustainable. The association therefore endorses the following principles regarding a renewed funding structure for Manitoba public schools.

- ◆ The provincial general revenue contribution to public K-12 education approximate 80% of total annual school operating costs excluding Government expenditures for teacher pension plan contributions, major capital construction costs and education property tax credit programs;
- ◆ The balance of required financial support be raised by elected school boards through the education property tax levy in local communities;
- ◆ Provincial funding for schools come primarily in the form of block or per pupil grants rather than categorical grants, to provide school divisions with the maximum flexibility in allocating resources;
- ◆ The provincial government provide the necessary resources to ensure successful implementation and sustainability of new or expanded provincial requirements for the delivery of school-based services or programs;
- ◆ Relevant provincial departments (i.e. health, child and family services, immigration and labour, justice) provide financial support for the delivery of non-educational services to children when that delivery takes place within a school setting; and
- ◆ The purchase of supplies and services required within the public school system be exempt from consumption taxes levied by federal, provincial, or municipal levels of government.
- ◆ The education funding formula should contain sufficient equalization measures to ensure equity of opportunity for students and fairness for taxpayers in divisions with low assessment bases.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that all requirements, limitations, restrictions or conditions to which school budgets will be subjected should be clearly communicated no later than the time of the annual Provincial funding announcement.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that annual increases in education funding should more closely reflect actual operating cost increases.

Taxation Issues

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ no change should be made regarding the inclusion of commercial assessment in the local tax base without the provincial government first thoroughly reviewing the matter and determining the effect on individual school divisions of sharing commercial assessment.

- ◆ the City of Winnipeg should close the assessment roll at the latest date permissible by law (December 31 of the previous calendar year) for purposes of calculating the annual Special Levy Mill Rate.
- ◆ province-wide assessment of trailers/modular homes in mobile home parks should be examined by the provincial government in order to ensure greater equity in the taxation of residential properties.
- ◆ properties in un-assessed territories should be subject to education property taxation.
- ◆ divisions should be exempt from paying property taxes on any and all property which is registered in the name of the school division.
- ◆ school divisions should be exempt from collecting payroll taxes.

Funding Formula—General

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should begin distributing operational support to school divisions at the start of each new fiscal year.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that students under the age of 21 who have met the requirements for high school graduation should be eligible for funding from the province for an additional one year of study, with no additional cost to the home division in the way of residual or transfer fees.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the number of categorical grants that require written proposals in support of new initiatives should be limited, and that the reporting process for categorical grant expenditures should be streamlined.

Funding Formula—Specifics

Curriculum

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the province should fund fully costs associated with the introduction of new provincial curricula and learning initiatives, including the costs of materials, equipment and facilities, and professional development for teachers and school administrators.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that increased funding should be provided for the development of distance education technologies and programs, with such programs to be available for delivery to students in both official languages.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should strongly support literacy programs at all levels.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that increased support is required for technical-vocational education, and that students across the province should have equal access to high level technical-vocational programming and facilities.

Facilities

Procedures

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ Public Schools Finance Board funding should be based on a formula that reflects the current construction costs as determined by the tendering process, and which ensures a timely and proactive approach to school renewal.
- ◆ government commitment for funding capital projects should be received by January 15 each year, thus allowing the Public Schools Finance Board to approve projects by March 1.
- ◆ The Public Schools Finance Board approval process should take into consideration the need to undertake work at times when students and staff are not in the building, so as to minimize health and safety risks to the occupants.
- ◆ The Public Schools Finance Boards should be required to keep school boards informed, year over year, of the status of divisional funding requests.

Grant Structure

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ the capital support formula for major renovations of existing facilities should include provisions for program areas such as computer labs and technology centres, multi-purpose, band and art rooms, lunch rooms, and clinician offices, and that such provisions be included when calculating school capacities.
- ◆ full support should be provided to all Manitoba school divisions to renovate buildings in order to permit access to all schools for physically disabled persons.
- ◆ the costs of upgrading temporary classrooms should be the responsibility of the Public Schools Finance Board, and that specific funds should be allocated for that purpose.
- ◆ adequate funding should be provided to support school divisions' full compliance with employers' obligations under provincial legislation governing workplace safety and health.
- ◆ the Public Schools Finance Board should provide capital support for the construction of, and/or major renovation to, facilities to be used for servicing and storing school buses.
- ◆ the Public Schools Finance Board should provide school divisions with reimbursement of interest costs for all capital support debentured projects.
- ◆ the Public Schools Finance Board should support costs associated with linking portable classrooms to school buildings.

Transportation

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ funding should allow for the replacement of school buses every twelve years, and provide for the full cost of the school bus in the year in which the replacement does occur.
- ◆ all transportation costs should be provided when a school division must make provision for a student to attend school in another division.

Special Education

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government has a responsibility to provide the necessary funding and create appropriate mechanisms for the distribution of that funding to ensure that special needs students have full access to the education to which they are entitled.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should provide funding to enable development of enriched programs for gifted students.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should provide appropriate funding to enable schools to meet the special needs of immigrant and refugee students.

Technology

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that

- ◆ the provincial government should take a leadership role in ensuring that the infrastructure is in place, and that school divisions have the necessary resources, to enable schools to access and utilize current and relevant technologies (including broadband Internet access) to support and enhance student learning.
- ◆ the provincial government should assist school divisions in the disposal electronic waste.

Equity

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the education funding formula should include appropriate mechanisms to ensure equity of opportunity for all students, reflecting the increased costs often associated with program and service delivery in rural and northern regions of the province.

Miscellaneous

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that funding should be provided for adult crossing guards at hazardous intersections.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Community School Initiative should be supported sufficiently so as to remove financial barriers that may prevent some school divisions from designating some schools community schools.

Interorganizational and Inter-Departmental Financial Responsibilities

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that adequate new funding should be provided to support the staffing and other related costs of proposed new initiatives related to increased community use of schools.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that provincial and federal authorities should clarify jurisdictional responsibilities and financial obligations for the education of First Nations students residing both on and off-reserve.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education and Child and Family Services Ministries should develop joint tracking and funding mechanisms to address more adequately the social and learning needs of children in care Manitoba public schools.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that community police services should be available to schools, to help ensure safe environments in schools and communities.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school boards require assistance from the provincial government and community agencies to address the needs of immigrant and refugee students and their families.

Private Schools

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the requirements which apply to Manitoba public schools for reporting of financial and educational operations should apply equally to funded independent schools.

Reporting

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school board financial statements should be modified to distinguish between unallocated reserve funds and allocated or dedicated reserves for specific purposes.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that, for reporting purposes, Divisional Administration should be defined as only Function 500 (board of trustees, superintendents and secretary-treasurers departments).

Miscellaneous

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the federal government should institute a mechanism to reimburse employers for their share of Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan over-contributions.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Northern Remoteness Allowance should be adjusted yearly to reflect the corresponding increase in the provincial budget.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school divisions in Manitoba should pay a reduced rate for hydro consumption.

4. Students and Instruction

Curriculum

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ peace education should be incorporated into history and social studies courses.
- ◆ mathematics options that meet the needs of a range of student interests and abilities should be available at all high school levels.
- ◆ vocational education at the secondary school level should be strengthened, and partnerships that support vocational education accommodated and encouraged.
- ◆ citizenship education should include a focus on community participation and social responsibility.
- ◆ all students should receive instruction on early childhood development and parenting.

School Year

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes the length of the school year should be based on curricular requirements and student learning needs.

Student Assessment

Philosophy of Assessment

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that student assessment initiatives should protect student interests by respecting the principles contained in the document *Principles of Fair Student Assessment* (Appendix 2) and that identified educational standards and standards tests should respect the broad range of student learning potentials and the diversity of courses of study offered in Manitoba public schools.

Provincial Assessment Program

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that a provincial student monitoring program should serve three purposes:

- to provide information about levels of student achievement in Manitoba;
- to provide data to assist in curriculum and program improvement locally and provincially; and
- to assist school divisions in both student and system evaluation.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should assess the quality of programs being used for home-schooling to maintain a standard comparable to programs used in the public school system, and that students who are home-schooled should be required to write all provincial standards examinations.

Special Education Students and Programming

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Level 2 and Level 3 guidelines should be adjusted to eliminate the school division's responsibility for non-transported students beyond the 5.5 hour school day and lunch hour.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should work with other provincial departments and community agencies to clarify roles and responsibilities so that necessary services and supports are more readily available to special needs students up to and beyond high school completion.

Early Childhood Development

The Manitoba School Boards Association recognizes the critical importance of the early years for healthy development and learning in children and supports inter-agency cooperation and collaboration to meet the needs of parents and young families.

Religious Exercises and Instruction

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ provision of religious exercises should remain at the discretion of the local school board in response to local community wishes and concerns.
- ◆ exemption from participation in religious exercises should be permitted without cause upon written notice from a student of the age of majority or the parent or guardian of a student below that age.

Cultural Awareness

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba's public school system should reflect and respect the cultural diversity of Manitoba's citizens and communities in its philosophy and in its programming.

Student Health and Welfare

The Manitoba School Boards Association endorses:

- ◆ the safe grad program and allows its name to be used on safe grad material.
- ◆ the Best Practices Program Standards for child nutrition programs in schools and communities.

The Manitoba School Boards Association endorses an inter-agency approach to public health (including mental health) in school divisions, and favours a stronger role for the provincial Health Ministry in addressing health issues which directly impact students in schools.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that parents and guardians bear primary responsibility for the physical health and well-being of their children, and that schools and communities can support families in this endeavour.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should develop and implement a long-range health and wellness initiative as part of the Minister's educational agenda for school divisions, staff, and students.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that additional provincial resources should be directed to expanding substance abuse prevention education to vulnerable student populations of all ages and in all regions of the province.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that federal and provincial governments should implement social policy to address the stated goals of the National Children's Agenda and to eliminate child poverty in Canada.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that educational opportunities, designed to provide for the maximum development of their potential, should be available for all children regardless of socio-economic status or location.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that community police services should be available to schools, to help ensure safe environments in schools and communities.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the reduction of poverty and social exclusion impacting children should be a priority for the government of Manitoba, and that this priority status should be reflected in budgetary allocations and service availability.

Student Records

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ discussions should be initiated with ministers of other provinces to facilitate the efficient inter-provincial exchange of pupil information for the appropriate placement of students arriving in Manitoba from outside the province.
- ◆ inter-agency agreements should be initiated to improve and expedite the transfer of information and funding of special needs native students between federally and provincially funded schools.

Student Discipline

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Regulation E10/468, Section 40.8(1) should be revised so as to require that school boards be notified of a student's suspension at the next duly constituted board meeting, rather than within 24 hours, as is now the case.

Residency Issues

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ the provincial government should implement policy to address the legal and financial issues with regard to students attending Manitoba public schools and not residing with a legal guardian.
- ◆ *The Public Schools Act* should be amended to accommodate custom adoption by First Nation and Métis families.

5. Employee Relations

Collective Bargaining and Arbitration

The Manitoba School Boards Association supports collective bargaining at the local level between individual school boards and their respective teacher associations.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the collective bargaining process between school boards and teacher associations should utilize the following dispute resolution steps: conciliation, compulsory mediation, and strike/lockout.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that legislation should be enacted to provide that all teachers and school boards have the opportunity to vote on the other group's final offer prior to application for an interest arbitration.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ an arbitrator should be required to consider school board and community economic constraints when awarding a settlement.
- ◆ where management responsibilities are not excluded from arbitration, strike/lockout should be the dispute resolution mechanism in collective bargaining between school boards and teacher associations.
- ◆ the provincial Education Ministry should cover costs directly attributed to an arbitration board decision which includes class size/composition, or legislative/regulatory changes that mandate class size/composition.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that provincial judges should be allowed to serve as chairpersons of arbitration boards.

Teacher and Clinician Supply

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ a comprehensive strategy should be developed to support the identification, recruitment and certification of teachers for French Immersion and Français Programs, and other identified high-need subject areas, and to identify those subject areas where teacher shortages may be pending.
- ◆ appropriate training programs should be established in Manitoba to ensure adequate numbers of clinicians to meet the developmental and learning needs of Manitoba's children.
- ◆ provincial certification requirements should not preclude the hiring of school clinicians in Manitoba from other Canadian jurisdictions.

Staff Professional Development

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that, prior to re-entering the classroom, teachers who have been out of the teaching profession for five or more years should be required to complete a minimum of 60 approved contact hours of professional development on topics related to classroom instruction.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should provide the human resources necessary to ensure adequate professional development or training for classroom teachers and/or educational assistants in areas such as changing curricula and the delivery of specialized health-care services required by individual students.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the scheduling of professional development days must be sensitive to divisional and school operational requirements.

Employees—Miscellaneous

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the notice period for terminating individual teacher contracts by either party should be no later than October 31st (for December 31st terminations) or April 30th (for June 30th terminations).

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that should a professional organization be created for teachers in Manitoba, it should be functionally and structurally separate from the union which represents teachers in collective bargaining and contract matters.

The Manitoba School Boards Association opposes the inclusion of the names of any person(s) not convicted of any criminal child abuse offense in the Child Abuse Registry.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school boards should assess regularly the performance of their superintendents in accordance with a defined set of agreed-to principles and criteria.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school division staff who work with children should be eligible to receive influenza inoculations at no cost.

6. Transportation

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ seat belts should not be required in school buses in excess of 10,000 pounds gross weight.
- ◆ the sworn affidavit of a bus driver attesting to the license number of a vehicle committing a violation under *The Highway Traffic Act* affecting a school bus should be sufficient grounds for laying charges against the registered owner of the vehicle.
- ◆ drivers found guilty of passing a stopped school bus should be given the maximum penalty, and that photo enforcement of school bus stop violations should be enabled via legislation.
- ◆ reduced speeds should be mandated in school zones, and that relevant organizations should work cooperatively to arrive at innovative, effective public education, signage and enforcement initiatives with regard to speed limits in school zones.

7. Facilities and Materials

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that there should be a standard of access to education technology that will fulfill curriculum requirements for all students in Manitoba.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should reduce or eliminate restrictions on the purchase of educational materials by school boards from sources other than the Manitoba Textbook Bureau.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ school boards should be involved in the planning of new residential developments to help ensure appropriate accommodations are made for public schools in such developments.
- ◆ municipalities, school boards and communities should collaborate on the planning and construction of new capital facilities.
- ◆ land required for new school sites must be made available at a reasonable cost.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial School Closing Guidelines should be structured to enable school boards to meet the challenges posed by shifting populations and changing demographics.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should develop and implement a staged plan for retrofitting schools to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

8. External Organizations

Educational Partners

The Manitoba School Boards Association supports school-level advisory committees or parent councils, and encourages their greater participation and collaboration in educational issues.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Manitoba High Schools Athletic Association should ensure that its rules do not unduly restrict the participation in organized sports of students from smaller schools or communities.

Post-Secondary Education

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that members of Manitoba's faculties of education should be knowledgeable of and experienced with regard to emergent issues and trends in education and the current realities of schools and classrooms.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

- ◆ Manitoba's faculties of education should work collaboratively to establish a common set of education practicum evaluation criteria and a shared list of education practicum evaluators, in order to facilitate the offering of rural practicum opportunities for pre-service teacher education programs.
- ◆ programs should be developed to increase student teachers' school-based experiences.

Non-Educational Organizations

The Manitoba School Boards Association endorses the concept of school-business-industry employee exchanges for the purposes of enhancing teachers' understanding of business and industry and the community understanding of schools, and believes that partnerships between school divisions and other organizations in the area of vocational education should be facilitated.

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that government departments and community agencies share with schools the responsibility for providing the supports needed by students and their families who are newcomers to Manitoba.

Part 3: Constituent Resolutions

1. Philosophy or Vision of Public Education

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that:

1. education is the most important service that a society can provide to its people;
2. to be effective, to be of assistance to our young people, and to be responsible to the public which supports it, a public school system must have the following aims:
 - to foster a continued love of learning in our children and a desire to pursue further education - not merely in the academic sense but in the broadest sense of a continual learning process;
 - to teach basic skills and prepare students for further academic and vocational courses;
 - to examine and transmit the values and concepts of the society which supports the educational system;
 - to develop independence in students within the framework and concept of their social responsibilities, preparing and assisting them to learn, to work, to live, and to play as a productive, happy, contributing member of the community;
 - to provide training and courses to achieve the above aims within the supporting community's ability to pay. SB-02-11(R)79

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the public school system in Manitoba must be one of strength and quality which provides equality of opportunity for all students in the province. EF-12-09(R)88

PRINCIPLES FOR EDUCATIONAL CHANGE: The Manitoba School Boards Association endorses the principles of effective school improvement that have been identified through the work of the Manitoba School Improvement Program in the secondary schools in this province and encourages the incorporation of these principles in any education reform initiatives:

- student learning as the primary focus of school improvement efforts
- consensus building around shared values and goals
- increased involvement and the development of leadership among the participants in the improvement process
- greater connectivity to the world outside the school
- on-going evaluation of the school improvement process. SI-04-07(R)96

2. School Boards

LOCALLY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the current system of school board governance should be retained to ensure that voters have the right to elect trustees whose responsibility is to govern education. SB-06-07(R)94

LOCAL AUTONOMY: The Manitoba School Boards Association shall vigorously pursue and encourage the local autonomy of school boards. SB-02-07(R)83

Elections and Organization

TRUSTEE ELECTION CAMPAIGN COSTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Minister of National Revenue should amend the Income Tax Act so that a deduction is provided from income tax for school trustees' election campaign costs. TSB-04-02(R)90

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION PLAN: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the decision to have a single or dual system of administration should be left with each individual school division or district. SB-03-07(R)84

QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL TRUSTEE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Section 39.6(1)(b) of *The Public Schools Act* (disqualification for Violations or Convictions) should be amended to include among the grounds for disqualification, any crime against children, with such disqualification being for life. SB-01-07(R)05

VOTING PROCESS: The Manitoba School Boards Association should initiate discussions with The Association of Manitoba Municipalities to accommodate "one stop" voting under *The Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Act*. SB-03-11

Operations

REVIEW OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST PROVISIONS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should initiate an inter-organizational review of conflict of interest provisions as they apply to elected school trustees, to determine whether existing provisions are appropriate and adequate. ER-02-07

SCHOOL CLOSURE GUIDELINES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school closure guidelines should be reviewed to ensure they are adequate to address the challenges faced by school boards relative to population shifts and declining enrolments. SB-01-07 (*See also Facilities and Materials*)

SCHOOL CLOSURE GUIDELINES/REGULATIONS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should expedite the review of the School Closure Guidelines to which it has already committed. SB-02-08

DUTIES OF SCHOOL BOARDS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the government of Manitoba should take the necessary steps to enable school boards to fulfill their duty as outlined in section 41(1)(p) of *The Public Schools Act*, namely that "Every school board shall determine the number, kind, grade and description of schools to be established and maintained." SB-01-10

MORATORIUM ON SCHOOL CLOSURES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should remove the moratorium on school closures. SB-02-10

SCHOOL CLOSURE GUIDELINES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should provide reasonable, manageable and accountable school closure guidelines.

EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that *The Public Schools Act* should be amended so as to exempt school divisions from legal liability related to out-of-school/out-of-timetable components of grades 9 through 12 physical education credits, with any such liability being assumed by the provincial government. SB-01-08

Trustee Authority

BOARD MEMBER AUTHORITY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that an individual elected as a trustee becomes a member of a corporate body and has no authority to act on any school board matter except as directed by board motion. SB-01-11(R)76

Amalgamation

SCHOOL DIVISION/DISTRICT AMALGAMATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Government of Manitoba should conduct public consultations prior to deciding upon any future school division amalgamations, and requests that the Government clearly explain the criteria upon which any future school division amalgamations will be made. SB-05-07(R)02

3. Finance

Principles

EDUCATION FUNDING AND SCHOOL FINANCE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that a quality public education system which supports student learning and high levels of achievement for all students requires on-going investment through a funding model that is equitable, flexible and sustainable. The Manitoba School Boards Association therefore endorses the following principles regarding a renewed funding structure for Manitoba public schools.

- ◆ The provincial general revenue contribution to public K-12 education approximate 80% of total annual school operating costs excluding Government expenditures for teacher pension plan contributions, major capital construction costs and education property tax credit programs;
- ◆ The balance of required financial support be raised by elected school boards through the education property tax levy in local communities;
- ◆ Provincial funding for schools come primarily in the form of block or per pupil grants rather than categorical grants, to provide school divisions with the maximum flexibility in allocating resources;
- ◆ The provincial government provide the necessary resources to ensure successful implementation and sustainability of new or expanded provincial requirements for the delivery of school-based services or programs;
- ◆ Relevant provincial departments (i.e. health, child and family services, immigration and labour, justice) provide financial support for the delivery of non-educational services to children when that delivery takes place within a school setting; and
- ◆ The purchase of supplies and services required within the public school system be exempt from consumption taxes levied by federal, provincial, or municipal levels of government.
- ◆ The education funding formula should contain sufficient equalization measures to ensure equity of opportunity for students and fairness for taxpayers in divisions with low assessment bases. EF-01-08; amended by EF-06-11

FUNDING SUPPORT CRITERIA: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should communicate clearly all requirements, limitations, restrictions or conditions that school boards will be subject to in their annual budget process no later than the time of the annual Provincial funding announcement. SB-03-08

EDUCATION FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that education support from provincial general revenues should be increased to 80% of school division operational costs, thereby limiting reliance on property taxation levied by school boards to fund not more than 20% of total divisional operating expenditures. EF-01-03

PROVINCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO DIVISIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Government should implement a funding mechanism for school divisions which provides for annual increases that more closely reflect actual operating costs as part of a longer term strategy to reduce the reliance on local property taxation. EF-05-11(R)06

UNFUNDED MANDATES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should provide full funding to support implementation of legislative mandates and provincial policy directives for school boards. EF-01-10(R)03

Taxation Issues

SPECIAL LEVY PROPERTY TAXATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the special levy on property should be retained as a revenue source for school boards in order to ensure local accountability for educational service delivery. EF-09-10(R)91

SHARING OF COMMERCIAL ASSESSMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should thoroughly review and consult with divisions regarding the effects on individual school divisions and their property taxpayers from the sharing of commercial assessment before implementing or proceeding with any changes in this regard. EF-06-07(R)02

PROVINCIAL SALES TAX RECOVERY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should provide a grant to cover the cost of the Provincial Sales Tax paid by school divisions or alternatively, Manitoba Finance exempt school divisions from payment of Provincial Sales Tax. EF-03-07

REMOVAL OF SALES TAX ON COMPUTER HARDWARE/SOFTWARE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial sales tax should be removed from school division purchases and leasing of computer hardware and software and licensing of software. EF-01-10(R)99

GOODS & SERVICES TAX EXEMPTION FOR MUSH SECTOR: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that full exemption from Goods and Services Tax should be extended to include public schools. EF-10-10(R)04

CLOSING DATE, RE ASSESSMENT ROLL: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the City of Winnipeg should adopt the practice of closing the assessment roll at the latest legal date permissible by law (December 31 of the previous calendar year) for purposes of calculating the annual Special Levy Mill Rate. EF-11-07(R)02

TAXATION OF TRAILER/MODULAR HOMES IN MOBILE HOME PARKS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade Department should examine province-wide assessment of trailers/modular homes in mobile home parks to ensure greater equity in the taxation of residential properties. EF-04-04

TAXPAYER EQUITY, re: PROPERTY TAXATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that all residential and commercial properties throughout the province, including those in un-assessed territories, should be subject to the education property taxation component of Manitoba's education finance structure. EF-04-11(R)06

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION ON SCHOOL PROPERTY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that *The Municipal Assessment Act* Section 22(1)(d) should be amended by deleting “to a maximum exemption of 4.047 hectares”, such that all real property used for a public school within the meaning of *The Public Schools Act* is exempt from property taxation other than local improvements. EF-11-07

PROPERTY TAXES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that *The Municipal Act* should be amended to provide that school divisions be exempt from the payment of property taxes on any and all property which is registered in the name of the school division. EF-10-09(R)88

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should undertake the necessary action to exempt all school division owned property from local property taxation. EF-05-11

COLLECTION OF PAYROLL TAXES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should exempt all school divisions from collecting payroll taxes. TB-01-10(R)99

Funding Formula—General

FUNDING OF ADDITIONAL SECONDARY CREDITS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that full funding should be restored for all students who are under 21 years of age for one year beyond attainment of high school graduation requirements at no additional cost to the home division in the way of residual or transfer fees. EF-07-07(R)00

FULL-TIME KINDERGARTEN: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Minister of Education should examine the feasibility of funding and supporting full-time kindergarten. EF-04-08

EARLY YEARS PROGRAMMING SUPPORTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Province of Manitoba should establish additional funding support for optional, divisionally sponsored early childhood education programs including nursery and full-time kindergarten programs in public schools. SI-01-11

NEED FOR FISCAL FLEXIBILITY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that annual funding support to school divisions should be provided primarily in the form of basic or block rather than categorical funding, thus ensuring as much flexibility as possible for school boards in the management of available funds to meet local needs. EF-01-07

CATEGORICAL FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the government should limit the number of categorical grants that require Divisions to write proposals to access funding in support of new initiatives and thereby increase base support. EF-05-08(R)03

CATEGORICAL GRANT REPORTING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should devise and implement a streamlined process for school division reporting on the expenditure of categorical grant allocations. EF-09-07

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Government of Manitoba should provide appropriate funding to cover administrative costs related to new initiatives requested or required of school divisions by the province. EF-03-11(R)06

Funding Formula—Specifics

Curriculum

FUNDING OF NEW CURRICULA IMPLEMENTATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial grant structure should be amended to fund adequately the introduction of new curricula including: professional development, technology equipment and services, curricula materials, textbooks and early intervention programs. EF-11-10(R)99

DISTANCE EDUCATION SUPPORT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that increased funding should be provided for the development of distance education technologies and programs, with such programs to be available for delivery to students in both official languages. EF-13-09(R)04

LATER LITERACY PROGRAMS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should provide financial, professional development and other supports for Later Literacy programs designed for students in grade 2 to S4. SI-11-07(R)03

PROVINCIAL SUPPORT FOR LITERACY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should provide additional literacy support for continuation of programs showing success for students and meeting Manitoba Education goals/priorities. EF-10-07

TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should provide increased support to Technical Vocational education in the province and ensure equity of opportunity for student access to Technical Vocational programming and facilities across the province. EF-12-07

SENIOR YEARS APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should provide new funding to support school divisions' staffing needs for the implementation of the Senior Years Apprenticeship option. EF-06-09

RESPECT IN SCHOOL PROGRAM FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should explore implementation and funding of the Respect in School Program for all Manitoba schools. EF-07-11 (*See also Students and Instruction—Student Health and Welfare*)

Facilities

Procedures

NEW SCHOOL SPACE CONSTRUCTION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should take the steps necessary to lessen the time between when the need for new school space is agreed upon and when actual construction begins. EF-05-08

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION COSTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Public Schools Finance Board should make adaptations in its funding formula so that we maximize the viability of school construction based on a formula that reflects the current construction costs as determined by the tendering process. EF-06-10(R)99

CAPITAL SUPPORT PROGRAM: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Government of Manitoba should strengthen the Capital Support Program for public schools through the provision of additional resources to reflect actual construction costs for projects and to ensure a timely and proactive approach to school facilities renewal. EF-01-07(R)06

CAPITAL FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that government commitment for funding of capital projects for school divisions should be received by the 15th of January each year thus allowing the Public Schools Finance Board to approve projects by the 1st of March so that divisions can complete those projects in the same year. EF-11-09(R)90

TIMING OF CAPITAL SUPPORT PROJECTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Public Schools Finance Board should take into consideration in its approval process for projects under Sections B & C of the Capital Support Program, the need to undertake the work at times when students and staff are not in the building so as to minimize health and safety risks to the occupants. EF-09-11(R)95

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should direct infrastructure resources allocated for the purpose of economic stimulus to support improvements to energy efficiency, program modernization and equalization of educational opportunity in our schools. EF-03-09

PSFB – FIVE YEAR PLAN: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Public Schools Finance Board (PSFB) should provide information regarding the outstanding requests of Manitoba School Divisions as submitted in the Five-Year Plan Request, to provide a projected timeline for fulfilling these requests, the amount of Provincial Government funding required to meet the Five-Year Plan requests, and to provide a listing by school division of PSFB project support for the past five years. EF-04-11

SCHOOL SITE LAND ACQUISITION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Government of Manitoba should effect the necessary measure to require the City of Winnipeg to amend the parameters of the Development Agreements to provide that developers must provide options to school divisions for the purchase of land for school sites and re-establish the City of Winnipeg standard price which the developers will charge school divisions for school sites (the standard price in 2006 was \$25,000 per acre). EF-08-11 (*See also Facilities and Materials*)

Grant Structure

CAPITAL SUPPORT FOR MAJOR SCHOOL RENOVATIONS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the capital support formula for major renovations of existing facilities should be reviewed by the Public Schools Finance Board and when considering renovations to school facilities, provisions be made to accommodate such program areas as computer labs and technology centres, multi-purpose, band and art rooms, lunch room facilities, and clinician offices, and that such provisions be included when calculating school capacities. EF-06-08(R)97

ACCESS FOR PHYSICALLY DISABLED PERSONS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that full support should be provided to all Manitoba school divisions to renovate buildings in order to permit access to all schools for physically disabled persons (students, parents and public). EF-08-10(R)93

BUILDING CODE UPGRADES-TEMPORARY UNITS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the costs of upgrading temporary classrooms at any time should be the responsibility of the Public Schools Finance Board, and that specific funds be allocated for said purpose. EF—03-07(R)96

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that adequate funding should be provided to support school divisions' full compliance with employers' obligations under provincial legislation governing workplace safety and health for divisional employees. EF-03-08(R)03

FUNDING FOR ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT REQUIREMENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Minister of Education should provide ongoing funding to school divisions in support of expenditures incurred with respect to Building Safety Standards, Workplace Safety and Health requirements and Fire Code provisions including the cost of inspections and compliance upgrades. EF-08-10

TRANSPORTATION-CAPITAL FACILITIES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Public Schools Finance Board should provide capital support for the construction of, and/or major renovation to, facilities to be used for the servicing and storage of school buses. EF-07-08(R)86

REIMBURSEMENT OF INTEREST COSTS, re: CAPITAL SUPPORT PROJECTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Public Schools Finance Board should provide school divisions with reimbursement of interest costs for all capital support debentured projects. EF—09-07(R)00

CAPITAL SUPPORT FOR PORTABLE CLASSROOM SPACE: BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Public Schools' Finance Board support linking of all portable classroom space that is added to school buildings. EF-03-10(R)05

NEW SCHOOL SPACE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should take the steps necessary to alleviate the need for “unlinked portables” and ensure that new school space be developed to represent the actual needs of growing communities. EF-04-09

SITE COORDINATOR – PSFB: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should provide additional support for a Site Coordinator to supervise day to day operations of PSFB approved building projects. SB-01-09

SCHOOL GROUNDS ENHANCEMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should provide additional funding to school divisions for improvements to school grounds specifically targeted to support the mandates of healthy living and physical education/health curriculum. EF-07-10

Transportation

SCHOOL BUS REPLACEMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that a level of funding should be established for school bus replacement that allows school divisions to replace school buses over a twelve year period. EF-10-07(R)00

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the transportation vehicle support grant should be re-established to ensure that major operating costs, including retrofits and upgrades, are supported under the school bus replacement funding.

TRANSPORTATION COSTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that 100% of all transportation costs that are incurred when a school division must make provision for a student to attend school in another division or district should be provided. T-01-09(R)90

PURCHASE OF SCHOOL BUSES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the funding formula should provide for the full cost of school bus replacements in the year in which the replacements occur. T-01-10(R)05

Special Education

FUNDING FOR APPROPRIATE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Minister of Education should provide sufficient additional funding to school divisions to enable them to meet their responsibilities as specified in *The Appropriate Educational Programming Act* and accompanying regulations. EF-02-11(R)05

EXTENT OF FUNDING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should provide special needs funding for school divisions at a level consistent with current programming costs. EF-08-11(R)88

SPECIAL NEEDS FUNDING - LEVEL 1: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should increase Level I special needs funding in support of costs divisions incur to meet students' needs for appropriate education programs. EF-02-08

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that transportation grants for special education pupils should be based on 100% of the costs of transporting pupils to special education programs. EF-07-10(R)98

CATEGORICAL GRANTS FOR L2 AND L3: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that funding for L2 and L3 level special needs students should remain as a categorical grant. SI-07-08(R)97

TRANSFER OF L2 OR L3 STUDENT FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that students who have been assessed as Level 2 or 3 should be allowed to carry their funding to other divisions should they transfer within the province, and further that the receiving school division and the province accept the documentation from the sending school so that reassessment and reapplication be eliminated. SI-06-08(R)97

FUNDING SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME/EFFECTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should review the special education funding and programming criteria to provide more comprehensive, ongoing support for students with diagnosed Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Fetal Alcohol Effects and Fetal Drug Effects. EF—08-07(R)00

PROGRAMMING SUPPORT FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the process for providing funding for emotionally and behaviourally disturbed children should be reviewed to ensure that support for programming is more readily available to meet the needs of these children. SI-09-07(R)98

ACCESSIBILITY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should devise a planned, staged process for retrofitting schools to provide grooming rooms and access for persons with disabilities. EF-15-07 (*See also Facilities and Materials*)

PROGRAM FUNDING FOR ENRICHED OR GIFTED STUDENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that provision should be made in the Government Support for Education funding formula for a separate grant to enable development of programs for enriched or gifted students within the divisions. SI-05-08(R)97

PROVINCIAL SUPPORT FOR HIGH ABILITY LEARNERS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should provide financial support for High Ability Learners programming. EF-09-10

OCCUPATIONAL & PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should provide full funding to support school divisions in their need to provide occupational and physiotherapy services for students. EF-02-10(R)05

SPECIAL NEEDS FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should increase special needs funding in support of costs divisions incur to meet special and exceptional students' needs for appropriate education programs. EF-02-09

STUDENTS AT RISK: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Minister of Education should create an efficient system to identify those students who are at risk of “falling through the cracks;” ensure the provision of the necessary funding to meet the educational needs of these students (e.g. funding to reduce class size and composition); and facilitate the necessary supports and structures to meet the educational needs of these students (e.g. provision of professional learning opportunities on use of effective strategies, methods and techniques with at-risk learners). SI-05-11

NEWCOMER SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOLS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the government should provide additional new funding for school divisions to support the extensive needs of immigrant students and families in Manitoba. EF-02-11

Technology

TECHNOLOGY FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school divisions should be provided with increased technology funding in order to reflect the actual expenditures being incurred by school divisions to meet instructional and administrative needs. EF-05-10(R)00

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FOR INTERNET ACCESS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the government should act on the various existing studies, proposals and initiatives to encourage industry, (particularly those industries subject to public utility boards and reviews) to provide infrastructure assistance so that all schools have broadband internet access at an affordable cost. EF-05-07(R)06

DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS COMPUTER HARDWARE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should initiate and fund a program for the disposal of electronic waste for Manitoba school divisions. EF-04-07

VIDEO CONFERENCING TECHNOLOGY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should provide and support the necessary connectivity to enable video conferencing in rural divisions. EF-05-09

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM DELIVERY IN RURAL AND NORTHERN REGIONS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should provide the connectivity required for educational program delivery in rural and Northern regions of the province. SI-01-10 (*See also Facilities and Materials*)

Equity

DIFFERENTIAL FUNDING (RURAL/NORTHERN MANITOBA): The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should redress regional disparities that exist in rural and northern Manitoba by instituting a system of differential funding in order to ensure quality of opportunity for all special education students in the province. SI-05-09(R)98

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENT TRAVEL: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should provide the necessary financial resources required to address the high cost of travel for students attending extracurricular activities, such as zone and provincial playoffs, to ensure all students have equal opportunity to participate. EF-02-10(R)09

FUNDING SUPPORT FOR SECONDARY COURSES FOR HUTTERIAN STUDENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should devise and implement an enhanced system of funding support for the provision of secondary courses to Hutterian students. EF-10-10

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Province of Manitoba should provide vocational opportunities for all students from rural areas (including all the necessary student supports such as transportation and/or accommodation). SI-08-11

Miscellaneous

ADULT CROSSING GUARDS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that funding should be provided to school divisions to establish adult crossing guards at intersections which, based on criteria established by Manitoba Education and the local traffic authority, have been determined to be potentially hazardous to the safety of young children traveling to and from school. EF-08-08(R)86

FUNDING SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PSAB: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should provide funding support for implementation of the new Public Sector Accounting Board regulations. EF-06-07

FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should provide school divisions with increased funding support in order to address the additional costs incurred to ensure congruence with Public Sector Accounting requirements. EF-03-08

COMMUNITY SCHOOL INITIATIVE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should provide increased support for the Community School Initiative to ensure any school has the opportunity to become a community school should the division so choose. EF-07-07

FUNDING FOR PANDEMIC PREPARATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should provide funding in support of the costs divisions incur arising from increased services and materials needed to respond to Pandemic issues. EF-02-10

Interorganizational and Inter-Departmental Responsibilities

FUNDING SUPPORT FOR INCREASED COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that adequate new funding should be provided to support the staffing and other related costs of proposed new initiatives related to increased community use of schools. EF-08-09(R)04

FIRST NATIONS STUDENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that provincial and federal authorities should clarify and confirm jurisdictional responsibilities and financial obligations for the education of First Nations students residing both on and off reserves. EF-14-09(R)04

FOSTER STUDENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education and Child and Family Services should develop joint tracking and funding mechanisms to address more adequately the social and learning needs of foster placements and children in care who attend Manitoba public schools. EF-09-09(R)04

SUPPORTS FOR IMMIGRANT STUDENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should provide the necessary financial resources required to address more adequately, the immigrant and settlement challenges in Manitoba school communities. EF-02-07

ACCESS TO COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICERS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that adequate support from community police officers is necessary to help ensure safe environments in both our schools and our communities in all schools in Manitoba, and that federal, provincial and municipal authorities should help facilitate that support. SB-03-07 (*See also Students and Instruction—Student Health and Welfare*)

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION, RE: NEWCOMER NEEDS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Province of Manitoba should create a mechanism for enhanced interdepartmental collaboration in working with community agencies and school divisions to address the challenges for schools and school divisions as a result of immigration to our province. EF-01-11 (*See also External Organizations—Non-Educational Organizations*)

Private Schools

PRIVATE SCHOOL FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that all independent (private) schools in Manitoba should be required to make annual public reports regarding their financial and educational operations as required of Manitoba's public schools; and

THAT the Department of Education be required to include Independent Schools in Manitoba's FRAME report. EF-12-07(R)97

Reporting

SCHOOL BOARD REVENUES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the presentation of school board financial statements should be modified to distinguish between unallocated reserve funds and allocated or dedicated reserves for specific purposes. EF-07-09(R)04

DEFINITION OF DIVISIONAL ADMINISTRATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the definition of Divisional Administration as only Function 500 (board of trustees, superintendents and secretary-treasurers departments) be retained as described in the FRAME Report 2001-2002 budget. EF-04-07(R)02

ADMINISTRATION CAP FOR SMALL SCHOOL DIVISIONS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should increase the administration cap for smaller divisions. EF-03-11

Miscellaneous

EI & CPP OVERPAYMENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Federal Government should institute a mechanism to reimburse employers for their share of EI & CPP over contributions. EF-02-08(R)03

NORTHERN REMOTENESS ALLOWANCE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Northern Remoteness Allowance should be adjusted yearly to reflect the corresponding increase in the provincial budget. EF-07-11(R)01

HYDRO RATE REDUCTION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that there should be a reduced rate for hydro consumption for school divisions in Manitoba. EF-08-07

4. Students and Instruction

Curriculum

TEACHING ABOUT PEACE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that peace education should be included in the school curriculum after consultation and review with local Boards of Trustees and MAST and that such inclusion should be an unbiased curriculum to explore all reputable points of view as to the maintenance of peace, such as peace through strength, multi-lateral disarmament; and further that such curriculum should be incorporated into history and social studies courses and that it shall be an optional course. SI-01-08(R)86

MATHEMATICS OPTIONS AT SENIOR 1 LEVEL: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should implement mathematics courses at Grade 9 which meet the needs of a range of student interests and abilities. SI-03-09

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Provincial Government should continue and expand its initiatives to strengthen vocational education at the secondary school level. SI-14-09(R)04

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that citizenship education should encompass concepts of community participation and social responsibility in addition to involvement in formal political structures and processes. SI-04-10(R)05

COURSE/UNIT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & PARENTING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that all students should receive instruction on early childhood development and parenting through a provincially approved course on “Early Childhood Development and Parenting” or a unit within an already existing course. SI-01-10(R)05

APPROVAL FOR SCHOOL INITIATED COURSES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should expedite the approval for School Initiated Courses. SI-03-08

School Year

SCHOOL CALENDAR YEAR: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes the length of the school year should be based on curricular requirements and student learning needs, and that any change to the length of the school year should be implemented only if such a change will not negatively impact schools’ ability to meet these requirements and needs. SI-01-09

Student Assessment

Philosophy of Assessment

FAIR STUDENT ASSESSMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that any student assessment initiatives should protect student interests by respecting the principles contained in the document *Principles of Fair Student Assessment* (Appendix 2). SI-02-07(R)96

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS: The Manitoba School Boards Association supports the development of educational standards and standards tests which respect the broad range of student learning potentials and the diversity of courses of study. SI-03-07(R)96

Provincial Assessment Program

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that a provincial student monitoring program should operate in such a manner so as to serve three purposes:

1. to provide benchmark indicators that will give information about levels of student achievement in Manitoba;
2. to obtain data regarding achievement that will assist in curriculum and program improvement both at the provincial and local level;
3. to assist school divisions in both student and system evaluation.

The results of the student monitoring program or testing should be made available to school divisions and districts on a division (or district) and provincial basis. SI-03-11(R)80

STUDENT TESTING: The Manitoba School Boards Association supports the provincial student testing program with the following conditions:

1. that school boards continue to have the option to test 100% of their students;
2. that division results be made available to school boards on request;
3. that each individual student's overall score be reported as a percentile. INSTR-18-03(R)85

EMPHASIS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE SKILLS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that more emphasis should be put on the development of a student's language (written, reading, aural and oral) and on making language an important component of the assessment of all disciplines when revising curricula. SI-06-09

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH STANDARDS TESTS AND ASSESSMENTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school divisions/districts should be reimbursed for all costs incurred in the development, implementation and marking of all provincial standards tests and assessments. EF-10-11(R)01

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that a five-year plan and schedule for provincial curriculum assessment programs should be developed and published. SI-03-08(R)86

PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION SCHEDULE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial examination schedule should be adjusted annually to ensure that Provincial Standards Assessments occur within the final two weeks of the semester and/or school year. SI-12-09(R)04

ASSESSMENT & REPORTING SOFTWARE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Minister of Education should fund a provincial software package to support its new assessment and reporting policies. SI-06-11

STANDARD REPORT CARDS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should consult with school divisions before implementing a standard provincial report card. SI-10-11

Special Education Students and Programming

DEFINITION OF LII AND LIII GUIDELINES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the definition of LII and LIII guidelines should be adjusted to eliminate the school division's responsibility outside the 5.5 hour school day and lunch hour unless students are bused. SI-06-07(R)02

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS FOR SEVERE EMOTIONAL DISORDERS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should work with other provincial departments to provide the community mental health services and the regional assessment and treatment programs needed for students with severe emotional disorders and their families. SI-02-10(R)97

FAMILY SERVICES FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that greater flexibility should be provided for special needs students to access Family Services funding immediately following graduation from the public school system. EF-06-11(R)01

Early Childhood Development

PRE-NATAL CARE & PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that standards and care/education accessibility of pre-natal care and pre-school education should be enhanced and that provisions should be made to ensure they are achieved across Manitoba. SI-09-09(R)98

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EARLY YEARS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should continue to provide support for on-going professional development for programs such as Reading Recovery. INSTR-04-05(R)00

CHILD CARE SPACE ALLOCATION IN SCHOOLS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should revise current practice so that existing school space dedicated to early learning and child care programs such as day cares, before and after school programs, and nursery programs not be factored into the calculation of official school capacity. FM-01-06

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association should work through the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet to identify concrete and specific ways the Manitoba School Boards Association to build on existing community based initiatives in early learning and care. SI-02-09

Religious Exercises and Instruction

RELIGIOUS EXERCISES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that

- provision of religious exercises in the public schools should remain at the discretion of the local school board in response to local community wishes and concerns; and
- exemption from participation in religious exercises should be permitted without cause upon written notice from a student who has reached the age of majority or the parent or guardian of a student below that age. SI-04-09(R)90

Cultural Awareness

MULTI-CULTURALISM: The Manitoba School Boards Association supports a general policy on multi-culturalism within the public school system encompassing the following:

- encouragement of multi-cultural enrichment programs;
- assisting immigrant children to acquire either one or both of Canada's official languages;
- emphasizing that the students' cultural identity is not jeopardized;
- mainstreaming liaison with the ethnic communities in Manitoba;
- endeavouring to obtain grants for the teaching of English as a second language and for cultural preservation programs. SB-04-11(R)79

Student Health and Welfare

SAFE GRAD PROGRAM: The Manitoba School Boards Association endorses the safe grad program and allows its name to be used on safe grad material. MISC-01-07(R)83

BEST PRACTICES - PROGRAM STANDARDS: The Manitoba School Boards Association endorses the Best Practices Program Standards for child nutrition programs in schools and communities. MISC—04-07(R)02

INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the inter-agency approach to public health in school divisions should be continued. SI-10-07(R)00

CHILD POVERTY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Federal and Manitoba governments must continue to undertake efforts to eliminate child poverty. MISC-03-09(R)98

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that educational opportunities, designed to provide for the maximum development of their potential, should be available for all children regardless of socio-economic status or location. SI-02-11(R)76

STUDENT HEALTH RESPONSIBILITY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that parents and guardians bear primary responsibility for the physical health and well-being of their children, and that schools and communities have a significant role to play in helping families meet that responsibility. SI-03-10(R)05

HEALTH AND WELLNESS INITIATIVE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial Education Ministry should develop and implement a long-range health and wellness initiative as part of the Minister's educational agenda for school divisions, staff, and students. MISC-02-05

ACCESS TO COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICERS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that adequate support from community police officers is necessary to help ensure safe environments in both our schools and our communities in all schools in Manitoba, and that federal, provincial and municipal authorities should help facilitate that support. SB-03-07 (*See also Finance—Interorganizational and Inter-Departmental Responsibilities*)

ADDICTIONS PROGRAMS & SERVICES IN SCHOOLS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Government of Manitoba should provide the relevant provincial ministries and other agencies with the resources necessary to enable them to fully support the provision of in-school addictions counselling and related services in all schools and at all grade levels in all regions of Manitoba. SI-02-08

FUNDING FOR IN-SCHOOL ADDICTION PROGRAMS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Government of Manitoba should provide full funding through the Department of Healthy Living for AFM addictions programs and counselling services for students in Manitoba schools. EF-03-10

PROVINCIAL STRATEGY ON POVERTY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Province of Manitoba should adopt a comprehensive strategy including income security, housing, labour market development and child care initiatives, with specific targets, timelines and reporting requirements and supporting budgetary measures to reduce poverty and social exclusion impacting children and families in this Province. SI-04-08

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the province of Manitoba should collaborate with school divisions, universities and regional health authorities to address the shortage of mental health services for school-aged children and youth in our province. SI-02-11

RESPECT IN SCHOOL PROGRAM FUNDING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should explore implementation and funding of the Respect in School Program for all Manitoba schools. EF-07-11 (*See also Finance—Funding Formula—Specifics—Curriculum*)

Student Records

INTER-PROVINCIAL EXCHANGE OF PUPIL INFORMATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba's Minister of Education should initiate a dialogue at the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) table to facilitate the efficient inter-provincial exchange of pupil information (i.e. cumulative files, special education information) for the appropriate placement of students arriving in any jurisdiction from out of province. SI-01-11(R)06

TRANSFER OF INFORMATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that inter-agency agreements should be initiated to improve and expedite the transfer of information and funding of special needs native students between federally funded schools and provincially funded schools. SI-05-07(R)02

Student Discipline

STUDENT SUSPENSION: Regulation E10/468, Section 40.8(1) should be revised by deleting the words “within twenty-four hours”, and inserting in their place the words “at the next duly constituted board meeting.” SI-08-09(R)88

Residency Issues

LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that steps should be taken to address the legal and financial issues with regard to students attending Manitoba public schools and not residing with a legal guardian. MISC-02-09(R)04

RESIDENCY DEFINITION: PUBLIC SCHOOLS/INDIAN ACT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that *The Public Schools Act* should be amended to accommodate custom adoption by First Nation and Métis families. MISC-03-07(R)02

SCHOOLS OF CHOICE DEADLINE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Schools of Choice deadline should be moved from May 15 to April 15. SI-07-11

5. Employee Relations

Collective Bargaining and Arbitration

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: The Manitoba School Boards Association supports collective bargaining at the local level between individual school boards and their respective teacher associations. ER-02-10(R)04

VOTE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that legislation should be enacted to provide that all of the teachers within a school division or district would have the opportunity to vote upon whether to accept or reject a school board's offer prior to the application for an interest arbitration. ER-05-07(R)84

BARGAINING PROCESS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that legislation should be enacted to provide that the school board vote upon whether to accept or reject the teachers' proposal prior to the application for an interest arbitration. ER-04-07(R)84

ARBITRATION-BOARD'S ABILITY TO PAY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the single arbitrator (arbitration board) should be charged with a statutory obligation to consider prevailing financial and/or economic constraints applicable to school divisions, taxpayers and businesses when awarding settlement. ER-03-07(R)96

GOVERNMENT TO COVER CLASS SIZE/COMPOSITION COSTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should cover any and all costs directly attributed to limitations on class size and/or composition that result from either the decision of an arbitration board or changes to provincial legislation/regulation. ER-03-07

DISPUTE RESOLUTION/TEACHER BARGAINING: Where legislative changes are not enacted to exclude management responsibilities from the arbitration process, strike/lockout be use as the dispute resolution mechanism in collective bargaining between school boards and teacher associations. ER-01-07(R)02

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING STRUCTURE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that changes should be made to the collective bargaining process between school boards and teacher associations to provide for compulsory, non-binding mediation and removal of the arbitration process under *The Public Schools Act*. ER-01-10(R)05

ARBITRATION CHAIRPERSON: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that provincial judges should be allowed to serve as chairpersons of arbitration boards. ER-02-07(R)82

TWO-TIERED PROVINCE-WIDE BARGAINING : The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that it should work collaboratively with the provincial government to review the current collective bargaining dispute resolution mechanism [binding arbitration]. ER-01-11

Teacher and Clinician Supply

RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS FOR FRENCH IMMERSION AND FRANCAIS PROGRAMS:

The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that a comprehensive strategy should be developed to support the identification, recruitment and certification of teachers for the French Immersion and Français Programs. SI-11-09(R)04

CLINICIAN TRAINING & SUPPLY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that appropriate training programs should be established in Manitoba to ensure adequate number of clinicians to meet the developmental and learning needs of Manitoba's children. SI-13-09(R)04

TEACHER SHORTAGE/RECRUITMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Association should work with the provincial teachers' and superintendents' organizations, the faculties of education, and the provincial Education Ministry to develop and implement processes to monitor the adequacy of teacher supply across the province and in key curriculum areas, and to identify mechanisms to address any existing or pending shortages. ER-01-07

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education and Health Ministries should work to address the issue of the lack of child psychologists and psychiatrists available for consultation on mental health issues and treatment within the education system for school aged Manitobans, as well as the cost associated with obtaining the services of such mental health care providers. SI-01-07

Staff Professional Development

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS RE-ENTERING THE PROFESSION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the regulations in *The Education Administration Act* should be amended so that before re-entry into the profession, teachers who have been out of the teaching profession for five (5) or more years, be required to complete a minimum of 60 approved contact hours of professional development on topics related to classroom instruction at the cost of the teacher. SI-01-07(R)94

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Minister of Education should expand upon existing curriculum leadership personnel at the regional level in order to ensure adequate professional development for classroom teachers in the area of changing curricula. SI-08-07(R)00

TRAINING FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should provide the necessary funding support to allow school divisions to carry out appropriate training for educational assistants necessary to meet the specialized/health services required by individual students. SI-06-08

COMMON NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should monitor the impacts of its new policy direction regarding common non-instructional days in school divisions in the 2011-2012 school year with a view to revisions of the policy if difficulties and challenges are identified by school divisions. SB-01-11

Employees—Miscellaneous

TERMINATION NOTICE: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that *The Public Schools Act* should be amended so that the notice period for terminating individual teacher contracts by either party be no later than October 31st (for December 31st terminations) or April 30th (for June 30th terminations). ER-02-09(R)04

RESIGNATION NOTIFICATION DATE: The Manitoba School Boards Association encourages the Minister of Education to establish the statutory notification date for all teachers and administrators hired on a Form 2 contract, to be no later than April 30 in any school year for resignation on June 30. ER-01-09

FREE FLU SHOTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school division staff who work with children should be eligible for free flu shots. ER-05-07

TEACHING PROFESSION ACT: The Manitoba School Boards Association supports the following principles with respect to a Teaching Profession Act:

1. that the Act cover all professional educators who are certified to teach in Manitoba;
2. that the professional organization be a functionally and structurally separate entity from the Manitoba Teachers' Society;
3. that the governing body of the professional organization be elected from the membership at large;
4. that a general meeting for the professional organization be held annually;
5. that the principle of accountability to the local authority and ultimate accountability to the Minister of Education be retained. ER-01-08(R)86

CHILD ABUSE: The Manitoba School Boards Association opposes the inclusion of the names of any person(s) not convicted of any criminal child abuse offense in the Child Abuse Registry. SI-04-08(R)87

6. Transportation

SEAT BELTS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that seat belts should not be required in school buses in excess of 10,000 pounds gross weight. T-01-11(R)79

LAYING OF CHARGES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that charges should be laid when a violation under the Highway Traffic Act affecting school buses is reported by a bus driver under a sworn affidavit attesting to the license number of the offending vehicle and such information should be sufficient basis for charging the registered owner of the vehicle. T-01-08(R)87

TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS, re: PASSING OF SCHOOL BUSES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that traffic offenders passing school buses when lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended should be given the maximum penalty. T-01-07

SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Association, Municipal and Provincial Governments, and the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation should work cooperatively to arrive at innovative, effective public education, signage and enforcement initiatives with regard to speed limits in school zones. T-02-10(R)05

LOADING ZONES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Section 236(2) of *The Highway Traffic Act* should be extended to cover all areas which are designated by school boards as bus loading zones. T-02-11(R)80

BUS RIDERSHIP PROGRAM: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Pupil Transportation Branch of Manitoba Education should provide updated bus ridership program material for student instruction in Manitoba public schools. T-02-10

REDUCED SPEED IN SCHOOL ZONES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that government should implement the necessary legislation to provide for a provincial-wide reduced speed in school zones with such zones and the concurrent reduced speed to be marked by appropriate signage. T-01-11

SCHOOL BUS STOP SIGN VIOLATIONS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Manitoba government should enact legislation enabling photo enforcement of school bus stop sign violations. T-02-11

7. Facilities and Materials

ACCESS TO EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that there should be a standard of access to education technology that will fulfill curriculum requirements for all students in Manitoba. SI-07-09(R)98

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM DELIVERY IN RURAL AND NORTHERN REGIONS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the provincial government should provide the connectivity required for educational program delivery in rural and Northern regions of the province. SI-01-10 (*See also Finance—Funding Formula—Specifics—Technology*)

TEXTBOOK PURCHASING: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education should remove the current requirement for school division/districts to purchase educational materials through the Manitoba Textbook Bureau. MISC-02-07(R)99

SCHOOL BOARD INVOLVEMENT IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that there should be a legal requirement for school boards to be included in planning for residential development so as to ensure that new residential developments will properly plan for the construction of new schools to meet population needs. SB-03-11(R)06

SCHOOL CLOSURE GUIDELINES: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that school closure guidelines should be reviewed to ensure they are adequate to address the challenges faced by school boards relative to population shifts and declining enrolments. SB-01-07 (*See also School Boards—Operations*)

CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION COLLABORATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry and other relevant government ministries and agencies should develop a mechanism which would ensure municipal, community and school division collaboration with regard to the planning and construction of new capital facilities. EF-13-07

ACCESSIBILITY: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Education Ministry should devise a planned, staged process for retrofitting schools to provide grooming rooms and access for persons with disabilities. EF-15-07
(*See also Finance—Funding Formula—Specifics—Special Education*)

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that *The Planning Act*: Subsection 135(6) should be amended to require applicants dedicate at least 10% of the land being subdivided for school purposes, and that Section 136(1) should be applied only with the concurrence of the affected school board. SB-04-10

SCHOOL SITE LAND ACQUISITION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Government of Manitoba should effect the necessary measure to require the City of Winnipeg to amend the parameters of the Development Agreements to provide that developers must provide options to school divisions for the purchase of land for school sites and re-establish the City of Winnipeg standard price which the developers will charge school divisions for school sites (the standard price in 2006 was \$25,000 per acre). EF-08-11 (*See also Finance—Funding Formula—Specifics—Facilities—Procedures*)

8. External Organizations

Educational Partners

SCHOOL-LEVEL ADVISORY COMMITTEES: The Manitoba School Boards Association supports the establishment of school-level advisory committees or parent councils, and encourages greater participation and collaboration in educational issues. SB-04-07(R)94

MANITOBA HIGH SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Manitoba High Schools Athletic Association should expand its policy beyond the three school limit to allow for multi-school or divisional teams to participate in all MHSAA team sports, in special circumstances. MISC-01-08

Post-Secondary Education

PROFESSIONAL FACULTY SUPPORT: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Province's Faculties of Education should be establish and support mechanisms designed to ensure that their professional faculty are knowledgeable of and experienced with regard to emergent issues and trends in education and the current realities of schools and classrooms. SI-10-09(R)04

TEACHER EDUCATION - RURAL PRACTICUM: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg, College Universitaire de Saint-Boniface, the University of Brandon and the University College of the North should establish a common set of Education Practicum evaluation criteria and a shared list of Education Practicum evaluators; and that the importance of rural practicum opportunities be discussed with all education faculties. SI-05-11(R)01

STUDENT TEACHER INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that Manitoba Education, the Faculties of Education in the Province of Manitoba, and the Association should work together to increase school-based internship programs for student teacher candidates. SI-04-11(R)06

Non-Educational Organizations

SCHOOL-BUSINESS-INDUSTRY EXCHANGES: The Manitoba School Boards Association endorses the concept of school-business-industry employee exchanges for the purposes of enhancing teachers' understanding of business and industry and the community's understanding of schools. SI-02-08(R)97

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION, RE: NEWCOMER NEEDS: The Manitoba School Boards Association believes that the Province of Manitoba should create a mechanism for enhanced interdepartmental collaboration in working with community agencies and school divisions to address the challenges for schools and school divisions as a result of immigration to our province. EF-01-11 (*see also Education Finance—Interorganizational and Inter-Departmental Responsibilities*)

Principles for Fair
Student Assessment Practices
for Education in Canada

The *Principles of Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* was developed by a Working Group guided by a Joint Advisory Committee. The Joint Advisory Committee included two representatives appointed by each of the following professional organizations: Canadian Education Association, Canadian School Boards Association, Canadian Association for School Administrators, Canadian Teachers' Federation, Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association, Canadian Association of School Psychologists, Canadian Council for Exceptional Children, Canadian Psychological Association, and Canadian Society for the Study of Education. In addition, the Joint Advisory Committee included a representative of the Provincial and Territorial Ministries and Departments of Education.

Financial support for the development and dissemination of the *Principles* was provided principally by the Walter and Duncan Gordon Charitable Foundation, with additional support provided by various Faculties, Institutes, and Colleges of Education and Provincial and Territorial Ministries and Departments of Education in Canada. This support is gratefully acknowledged.

The following professional organizations have endorsed the *Principles*: Canadian School Boards Association, Canadian Association for School Administrators, Canadian Teachers' Federation, Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association, Canadian Association of School Psychologists, Canadian Council for Exceptional Children, Canadian Psychological Association, and Canadian Society for the Study of Education.

The Joint Advisory Committee invites users to share their experiences in working with the *Principles* and to submit any suggestions that could be used to revise and improve the *Principles*. Comments and suggestions should be sent to the Joint Advisory Committee at the address shown below.

The *Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* is not copyrighted. Reproduction and dissemination are encouraged. Please cite the *Principles* as follows:

Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada. (1993). Edmonton, Alberta: Joint Advisory Committee. (Mailing Address: Joint Advisory Committee, Centre for Research in Applied Measurement and Evaluation, 3-104 Education Building North, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2G5).

Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada

The *Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* contains a set of principles and related guidelines generally accepted by professional organizations as indicative of fair assessment practice within the Canadian educational context. Assessments depend on professional judgment; the principles and related guidelines presented in this document identify the issues to consider in exercising this professional judgment and in striving for the fair and equitable assessment of all students.

Assessment is broadly defined in the *Principles* as the process of collecting and interpreting information that can be used (i) to inform students, and their parents/guardians where applicable, about the progress they are making toward attaining the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors to be learned or acquired, and (ii) to inform the various personnel who make educational decisions (instructional, diagnostic, placement, promotion, graduation, curriculum planning, program development, policy) about students. Principles and related guidelines are set out for both developers and users of assessments. Developers include people who construct assessment methods and people who set policies for particular assessment programs. Users include people who select and administer assessment methods, commission assessment development services, or make decisions on the basis of assessment results and findings. The roles may overlap, as when a teacher or instructor develops and administers an assessment instrument and then scores and interprets the students' responses, or when a ministry or department of education or local school system commissions the development and implementation of an assessment program and scoring services and makes decisions on the basis of the assessment results.

The *Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* is the product of a comprehensive effort to reach consensus on what constitutes sound principles to guide the fair assessment of students. The principles and their related guidelines should be considered neither exhaustive nor mandatory; however, organizations, institutions, and individual professionals who endorse them are committing themselves to **endeavor to follow their intent and spirit** so as to achieve fair and equitable assessments of students.

Organization and Use of the Principles

The principles and their related guidelines are organized in two parts. Part A is directed at assessments carried out by teachers at the elementary and secondary school levels. Part A is also applicable at the post-secondary level with some modifications, particularly with respect to whom assessment results are reported. Part B is directed at standardized assessments developed external to the classroom by commercial test publishers, provincial and territorial ministries and departments of education, and local school jurisdictions (boards, boroughs, counties, and school districts).

Five general principles of fair assessment practices are provided in each Part. Each principle is followed by a series of guidelines for practice. In the case of Part A where no prior sets of standards for fair practice exist, a brief comment accompanies each guideline to help clarify and illuminate the guideline and its application.

The Joint Advisory Committee recognizes that in the field of assessment some terms are defined or used differently by different groups of people. To maintain as much consistency in terminology as possible, an attempt has been made to employ generic terms in the *Principles*.

A CLASSROOM ASSESSMENTS

Part A is directed toward the development and selection of assessment methods and their use in the classroom by teachers. Based on the conceptual framework provided in the *Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students* (1990), it is organized around five interrelated themes:

- I. Developing and Choosing Methods for Assessment
- II. Collecting Assessment Information
- III. Judging and Scoring Student Performance
- IV. Summarizing and Interpreting Results
- V. Reporting Assessment Findings

The Joint Advisory Committee acknowledges that not all of the guidelines are equally applicable in all circumstances. However, consideration of the full set of principles and guidelines within Part A should help to achieve fairness and equity for the students to be assessed.

I. Developing and Choosing Methods for Assessment

Assessment methods should be appropriate for and compatible with the purpose and context of the assessment.

Assessment method is used here to refer to the various strategies and techniques that teachers might use to acquire assessment information. These strategies and techniques include, but are not limited to, observations, text- and curriculum-embedded questions and tests, paper-and-pencil tests, oral questioning, benchmarks or reference sets, interviews, peer-and self-assessments, standardized criterion- referenced and norm-referenced tests, performance assessments, writing samples, exhibitions, portfolio assessment, and project and product assessments. Several labels have been used to describe subsets of these alternatives, with the most common being “direct assessment,” “authentic assessment,” “performance assessment,” and “alternative assessment.” However, for the purpose of the *Principles*, the term assessment method has been used to encompass all the strategies and techniques that might be used to collect information from students about their progress toward attaining the knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviors to be learned.

- 1. Assessment methods should be developed or chosen so that inferences drawn about the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors possessed by each student are valid and not open to misinterpretation.

Validity refers to the degree to which inferences drawn from assessments results are meaningful. Therefore, development or selection of assessment methods for collecting information should be clearly linked to the purposes for which inferences and decisions are to be made. For example, to monitor the progress of students as proofreaders and editors of their own work, it is better to assign an actual writing task, to allow time and resources for editing (dictionaries, handbooks, etc.), and to observe students for evidence of proofreading and editing skill as they work than to use a test containing discrete items on usage and grammar that are relatively devoid of context.

- ▶ 2. Assessment methods should be clearly related to the goals and objectives of instruction, and be compatible with the instructional approaches used.

To enhance validity, assessment methods should be in harmony with the instructional objectives to which they are referenced. Planning an assessment design at the same time as planning instruction will help integrate the two in meaningful ways. Such joint planning provides an overall perspective on the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors to be learned and assessed, and the contexts in which they will be learned and assessed.

- ▶ 3. When developing or choosing assessment methods, consideration should be given to the consequences of the decisions to be made in light of the obtained information.

The outcomes of some assessments may be more critical than others. For example, misinterpretation of the level of performance on an end-of-unit test may result in incorrectly holding a student from proceeding to the next instructional unit in a continuous progress situation. In such “high-stake” situations, every effort should be made to ensure the assessment method will yield consistent and valid results. “Low stake” situations, such as determining if a student has correctly completed an in-class assignment, can be less stringent. Low stake assessments are often repeated during the course of a reporting period using a variety of methods. If the results are aggregated to form a summary comment or grade, the summary will have greater consistency and validity than its component elements.

- ▶ 4. More than one assessment method should be used to ensure comprehensive and consistent indications of student performance.

To obtain a more complete picture or profile of a student’s knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviors, and to discern consistent patterns and trends, more than one assessment method should be used. Student knowledge might be assessed using completion items; process or reasoning skills might be assessed by observing performance on a relevant task; evaluation skills might be assessed by reflecting upon the discussion with a student about what materials to include in a portfolio. Self-assessment may help to clarify and add meaning to the assessment of a written communication, science project, piece of art work, or an attitude. Use of more than one method will also help minimize inconsistency brought about by different sources of measurement error (for example, poor performance because of an “off-day”; lack of agreement among items included in a test, rating scale, or questionnaire; lack of agreement among observers; instability across time).

- ▶ 5. Assessment methods should be suited to the backgrounds and prior experiences of students.

Assessment methods should be free from bias brought about by student factors extraneous to the purpose of the assessment. Possible factors to consider include culture, developmental stage, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic background, language, special interests, and special needs. Students’ success in answering questions on a test or in an oral quiz, for example, should not be dependent upon prior cultural knowledge, such as understanding an allusion to a cultural tradition or value, unless such knowledge falls within the content domain being assessed. All students should be given the same opportunity to display their strengths.

- ▶ 6. Content and language that would generally be viewed as sensitive, sexist, or offensive should be avoided.

The vocabulary and problem situation in each test item or performance task should not favour or discriminate against any group of students. Steps should be taken to ensure that stereotyping is not condoned. Language that might be offensive to particular groups of students should be avoided. A judicious use of different roles for males and females and for minorities and the careful use of language should contribute to more effective and, therefore, fairer assessments.

- ▶ 7. Assessment instruments translated into a second language or transferred from another context or location should be accompanied by evidence that inferences based on these instruments are valid for the intended purpose.

Translation of an assessment instrument from one language to another is a complex and demanding task. Similarly, the adoption or modification of an instrument developed in another country is often not simple and straightforward. Care must be taken to ensure that the results from translated and imported instruments are not misinterpreted or misleading.

II. Collecting Assessment Information

Students should be provided with a sufficient opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviors being assessed.

Assessment information can be collected in a variety of ways (observations, oral questioning, interviews, oral and written reports, paper-and-pencil tests). The guidelines which follow are not all equally applicable to each of these procedures.

- ▶ 1. Students should be told why assessment information is being collected and how this information will be used.

Students who know the purpose of an assessment are in a position to respond in a manner that will provide information relevant to that purpose. For example, if students know that their participation in a group activity is to be used to assess cooperative skills, they can be encouraged to contribute to the activity. If students know that the purpose of an assessment is to diagnose strengths and weaknesses rather than to assign a grade, they can be encouraged to reveal weaknesses as well as strengths. If the students know that the purpose is to assign a grade, they are well advised to respond in a way that will maximize strength. This is especially true for assessment methods that allow students to make choices, such as with optional writing assignments or research projects.

- ▶ 2. An assessment procedure should be used under conditions suitable to its purpose and form.

Optimum conditions should be provided for obtaining data from and information about students so as to maximize the validity and consistency of the data and information collected. Common conditions include such things as proper light and ventilation, comfortable room temperature, and freedom from distraction (e.g., movement in and out of the room, noise). Adequate work-space, sufficient materials, and adequate time limits appropriate to the purpose and form of the assessment are also necessary. For example, if the intent is to assess student participation in a small group, adequate work space should be provided for each student group, with sufficient space between subgroups so that the groups do not interfere with or otherwise influence one another and so that the teacher has the same opportunity to observe and assess each student within each group.

- ▶ 3. In assessments involving observations, checklists, or rating scales, the number of characteristics to be assessed at one time should be small enough and concretely described so that the observations can be made accurately.

Student behaviors often change so rapidly that it may not be possible simultaneously to observe and record all the behavior components. In such instances, the number of components to be observed should be reduced and the components should be described as concretely as possible. One way to manage an observation is to

divide the behavior into a series of components and assess each component in sequence. By limiting the number of components assessed at one time, the data and information become more focused, and time is not spent observing later behavior until prerequisite behaviors are achieved.

- ▶ 4. The directions provided to students should be clear, complete, and appropriate for the ability, age, and grade level of the students.

Lack of understanding of the assessment task may prevent maximum performance or display of the behavior called for. In the case of timed assessments, for example, teachers should describe the time limits, explain how students might distribute their time among parts for those assessment instruments with parts, and describe how students should record their responses. For a portfolio assessment, teachers should describe the criteria to be used to select the materials to be included in a portfolio, who will select these materials, and, if more than one person will be involved in the selection process, how the judgments from the different people will be combined. Where appropriate, sample material and practice should be provided to further increase the likelihood that instructions will be understood.

- ▶ 5. In assessments involving selection items (e.g., true-false, multiple-choice), the directions should encourage students to answer all items without threat of penalty.

A correction formula is sometimes used to discourage “guessing” on selection items. The formula is intended to encourage students to omit items for which they do not know the answer rather than to “guess” the answer. Because research evidence indicates that the benefits expected from the correction are not realized, the use of the formula is discouraged. Students should be encouraged to use whatever partial knowledge they have when choosing their answers, and to answer all items.

- ▶ 6. When collecting assessment information, interactions with students should be appropriate and consistent.

Care must be taken when collecting assessment information to treat all students fairly. For example, when oral presentations by students are assessed, questioning and probes should be distributed among the students so that all students have the same opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge. While writing a paper-and-pencil test, a student may ask to have an ambiguous item clarified, and, if warranted, the item should be explained to the entire class.

- ▶ 7. Unanticipated circumstances that interfere with the collection of assessment information should be noted and recorded.

Events such as a fire drill, an unscheduled assembly, or insufficient materials may interfere in the way in which assessment information is collected. Such events should be recorded and subsequently considered when interpreting the information obtained.

- ▶ 8. A written policy should guide decisions about the use of alternate procedures for collecting assessment information from students with special needs and students whose proficiency in the language of instruction is inadequate for them to respond in the anticipated manner.

It may be necessary to develop alternative assessment procedures to ensure a consistent and valid assessment of those students who, because of special needs or inadequate language, are not able to respond to an assessment method (for example, oral instead of written format, individual instead of group administered, translation into first language, providing additional time). The use of alternate procedures should be guided by a written policy developed by teachers, administrators, and other jurisdictional personnel.

III. Judging and Scoring Student Performance

Procedures for judging or scoring student performance should be appropriate for the assessment method used and be consistently applied and monitored.

Judging and scoring refers to the process of determining the quality of a student's performance, the appropriateness of an attitude or behavior, or the correctness of an answer. Results derived from judging and scoring may be expressed as written or oral comments, ratings, categorizations, letters, numbers, or as some combination of these forms.

- ▶ 1. Before an assessment method is used, a procedure for scoring should be prepared to guide the process of judging the quality of a performance or product, the appropriateness of an attitude or behavior, or the correctness of an answer.

To increase consistency and validity, properly developed scoring procedures should be used. Different assessment methods require different forms of scoring. Scoring selection items (true-false, multiple-choice, matching) requires the identification of the correct or, in some instances, best answer. Guides for scoring essays might include factors such as the major points to be included in the "best answer" or models or exemplars corresponding to different levels of performance at different age levels and against which comparisons can be made. Procedures for judging other performances or products might include specification of the characteristics to be rated in performance terms and, to the extent possible, clear descriptions of the different levels of performance or quality of a product.

- ▶ 2. Before an assessment method is used, students should be told how their responses or the information they provide will be judged or scored.

Informing students prior to the use of an assessment method about the scoring procedures to be followed should help ensure that similar expectations are held by both students and their teachers.

- ▶ 3. Care should be taken to ensure that results are not influenced by factors that are not relevant to the purpose of the assessment.

Various types of errors occur in scoring, particularly when a degree of subjectivity is involved (e.g., marking essays, rating a performance, judging a debate). For example, if the intent of a written communication is to assess content alone, the scoring should not be influenced by stylistic factors such as vocabulary and sentence structure. Personal bias errors are indicated by a general tendency to rate all students in approximately the same way (e.g., too generously or too severely). Halo effects can occur when a rater's general impression of a student influences the rating of individual characteristics or when a previous rating influences a subsequent rating. Pooled results from two or more independent raters (teachers, other students) will generally produce a more consistent description of student performance than a result obtained from a single rater. In combining results, the personal biases of individual raters tend to cancel one another.

- ▶ 4. Comments formed as part of scoring should be based on the responses made by the students and presented in a way that students can understand and use them.

Comments, in oral and written form, are provided to encourage learning and to point out correctable errors or inconsistencies in performance. In addition, comments can be used to clarify a result. Such feedback should be based on evidence pertinent to the learning outcomes being assessed.

► 5. Any changes made during scoring should be based upon a demonstrated problem with the initial scoring procedure. The modified procedure should then be used to rescore all previously scored responses.

Anticipating the full range of student responses is a difficult task for several forms of assessment. There is always the danger that unanticipated responses or incidents that are relevant to the purposes of the assessment may be overlooked. Consequently, scoring should be continuously monitored for unanticipated responses and these responses should be taken into proper account.

► 6. An appeal process should be described to students at the beginning of each school year or course of instruction that they may use to appeal a result.

Situations may arise where a student believes a result incorrectly reflects his/her level of performance. A procedure by which students can appeal such a situation should be developed and made known to them. This procedure might include, for example, checking for addition or other recording errors or, perhaps, judging or scoring by a second qualified person.

IV. Summarizing and Interpreting Results

Procedures for summarizing and interpreting assessment results should yield accurate and informative representations of a student's performance in relation to the goals and objectives of instruction for the reporting period.

Summarizing and interpreting results refers to the procedures used to combine assessment results in the form of summary comments and grades which indicate both a student's level of performance and the valuing of that performance.

► 1. Procedures for summarizing and interpreting results for a reporting period should be guided by a written policy.

Summary comments and grades, when interpreted, serve a variety of functions. They inform students of their progress. Parents, teachers, counsellors, and administrators use them to guide learning, determine promotion, identify students for special attention (e.g., honours, remediation), and to help students develop future plans. Comments and grades also provide a basis for reporting to other schools in the case of school transfer and, in the case of senior high school students, post-secondary institutions and prospective employers. They are more likely to serve their many functions and those functions are less likely to be confused if they are guided by a written rationale or policy sensitive to these different needs. This policy should be developed by teachers, school administrators, and other jurisdictional personnel in consultation with representatives of the audiences entitled to receive a report of summary comments and grades.

► 2. The way in which summary comments and grades are formulated and interpreted should be explained to students and their parents/guardians.

Students and their parents/guardians have the "right-to-know" how student performance is summarized and interpreted. With this information, they can make constructive use of the findings and fully review the assessment procedures followed.

It should be noted that some aspects of summarizing and interpreting are based upon a teacher's best judgment of what is good or appropriate. This judgment is derived from training and experience and may be difficult to describe specifically in advance. In such circumstances, examples might be used to show how summary comments and grades were formulated and interpreted.

- ▶ 3. The individual results used and the process followed in deriving summary comments and grades should be described in sufficient detail so that the meaning of a summary comment or grade is clear.

Summary comments and grades are best interpreted in the light of an adequate description of the results upon which they are based, the relative emphasis given to each result, and the process followed to combine the results. Many assessments conducted during a reporting period are of a formative nature. The intent of these assessments (e.g., informal observations, quizzes, text-and-curriculum embedded questions, oral questioning) is to inform decisions regarding daily learning, and to inform or otherwise refine the instructional sequence. Other assessments are of a summative nature. It is the summative assessments that should be considered when formulating and interpreting summary comments and grades for the reporting period.

- ▶ 4. Combining disparate kinds of results into a single summary should be done cautiously. To the extent possible, achievement, effort, participation, and other behaviors should be graded separately.

A single comment or grade cannot adequately serve all functions. For example, letter grades used to summarize achievement are most meaningful when they represent only achievement. When they include other aspects of student performance such as effort, amount (as opposed to quality) of work completed, neatness, class participation, personal conduct, or punctuality, not only do they lose their meaningfulness as a measure of achievement, but they also suppress information concerning other important aspects of learning and invite inequities. Thus, to more adequately and fairly summarize the different aspects of student performance, letter grades for achievement might be complemented with alternate summary forms (e.g., checklists, written comments) suitable for summarizing results related to these other behaviors.

- ▶ 5. Summary comments and grades should be based on more than one assessment result so as to ensure adequate sampling of broadly defined learning outcomes.

More than one or two assessments are needed to adequately assess performance in multi-facet areas such as Reading. Under-representation of such broadly defined constructs can be avoided by ensuring that the comments and grades used to summarize performance are based on multiple assessments, each referenced to a particular facet of the construct.

- ▶ 6. The results used to produce summary comments and grades should be combined in a way that ensures that each result receives its intended emphasis or weight.

When the results of a series of assessments are combined into a summary comment, care should be taken to ensure that the actual emphasis placed on the various results matches the intended emphasis for each student.

When numerical results are combined, attention should be paid to differences in the variability, or spread, of the different sets of results and appropriate account taken where such differences exist. If, for example, a grade is to be formed from a series of paper-and-pencil tests, and if each test is to count equally in the grade, then the variability of each set of scores must be the same.

- ▶ 7. The basis for interpretation should be carefully described and justified.

Interpretation of the information gathered for a reporting period for a student is a complex and, at times, controversial issue. Such information, whether written or numerical, will be of little interest or use if it is not interpreted against some pertinent and defensible idea of what is good and what is poor. The frame of reference used for interpretation should be in accord with the type of decision to be made. Typical frames of reference are performance in relation to pre-specified standards, performance in relation to peers, performance in relation to aptitude or expected growth, and performance in terms of the amount of improvement or amount learned. If, for example, decisions are to be made as to whether or not a student is ready to move to the next unit in an instructional sequence, interpretations based on pre-specified standards would be most relevant.

- ▶ 8. Interpretations of assessment results should take account of the backgrounds and learning experiences of the students.

Assessment results should be interpreted in relation to a student's personal and social context. Among the factors to consider are age, ability, gender, language, motivation, opportunity to learn, self-esteem, socio-economic background, special interests, special needs, and "test-taking" skills. Motivation to do school tasks, language capability, or home environment can influence learning of the concepts assessed, for example. Poor reading ability, poorly developed psycho-motor or manipulative skills, lack of test-taking skills, anxiety, and low self-esteem can lead to lower scores. Poor performance in an assessment may be attributable to a lack of opportunity to learn because required learning materials and supplies were not available, learning activities were not provided, or inadequate time was allowed for learning. When a student performs poorly, the possibility that one or more factors such as these might have interfered with a student's response or performance should be considered.

- ▶ 9. Assessment results that will be combined into summary comments and grades should be stored in a way that ensures their accuracy at the time they are summarized and interpreted.

Comments and grades and their interpretations, formulated from a series of related assessments, can be no better than the data and information upon which they are based. Systematic data control minimizes errors which would otherwise be introduced into a student's record or information base, and provides protection of confidentiality.

- ▶ 10. Interpretations of assessment results should be made with due regard for limitations in the assessment methods used, problems encountered in collecting the information and judging or scoring it, and limitations in the basis used for interpretation.

To be valid, interpretations must be based on results determined from assessment methods that are relevant and representative of the performance assessed. Administrative constraints, the presence of measurement error, and the limitations of the frames of reference used for interpretation also need to be accounted for.

V. Reporting Assessment Findings

Assessment reports should be clear, accurate, and of practical value to the audiences for whom they are intended.

- ▶ 1. The reporting system for a school or jurisdiction should be guided by a written policy. Elements to consider include such aspects as audiences, medium, format, content, level of detail, frequency, timing, and confidentiality.

The policy to guide the preparation of school reports (e.g., reports of separate assessments; reports for a reporting period) should be developed by teachers, school administrators, and other jurisdictional personnel in consultation with representatives of the audiences entitled to receive a report. Cooperative participation not only leads to more adequate and helpful reporting, but also increases the likelihood that the reports will be understood and used by those for whom they are intended.

- ▶ 2. Written and oral reports should contain a description of the goals and objectives of instruction to which the assessments are referenced.

The goals and objectives that guided instruction should serve as the basis for reporting. A report will be limited by a number of practical considerations, but the central focus should be on the instructional objectives and the types of performance that represent achievement of these objectives.

- ▶ 3. Reports should be complete in their descriptions of strengths and weaknesses of students, so that strengths can be built upon and problem areas addressed.

Reports can be incorrectly slanted towards “faults” in a student or toward giving unqualified praise. Both biases reduce the validity and utility of assessment. Accuracy in reporting strengths and weaknesses helps to reduce systematic error and is essential for stimulating and reinforcing improved performance. Reports should contain the information that will assist and guide students, their parents/guardians, and teachers to take relevant follow-up actions.

- ▶ 4. The reporting system should provide for conferences between teachers and parents/guardians. Whenever it is appropriate, students should participate in these conferences.

Conferences scheduled at regular intervals and, if necessary, upon request provide parents/guardians and, when appropriate, students with an opportunity to discuss assessment procedures, clarify and elaborate their understanding of the assessment results, summary comments and grades, and reports, and, where warranted, to work with teachers to develop relevant follow-up activities or action plans.

- ▶ 5. An appeal process should be described to students and their parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year or course of instruction that they may use to appeal a report.

Situations may arise where a student and his/her parents/guardian believe the summary comments and grades inaccurately reflect the level of performance of the student. A procedure by which they can appeal such a situation should be developed and made known to them (for example, in a school handbook or newsletter provided to students and their parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year).

- ▶ 6. Access to assessment information should be governed by a written policy that is consistent with applicable laws and with basic principles of fairness and human rights.

A written policy, developed by teachers, administrators, and other jurisdictional personnel, should be used to guide decisions regarding the release of student assessment information. Assessment information should be available to those people to whom it applies – students and their parents/guardians, and to teachers and other educational personnel obligated by profession to use the information constructively on behalf of students. In addition, assessment information might be made available to others who justify their need for the information (e.g., post-secondary institutions, potential employers, researchers). Issues of informed consent should also be addressed in this policy.

- ▶ 7. Transfer of assessment information from one school to another should be guided by a written policy with stringent provisions to ensure the maintenance of confidentiality.

To make a student’s transition from one school to another as smooth as possible, a clear policy should be prepared indicating the type of information to go with the student and the form in which it will be reported. Such a policy, developed by jurisdictional and ministry personnel, should ensure that the information transferred will be sent by and received by the appropriate person within the “sending” and “receiving” schools respectively.

B ASSESSMENTS PRODUCED EXTERNAL TO THE CLASSROOM

Part B applies to the development and use of standardized assessment methods used in student admissions, placement, certification, and educational diagnosis, and in curriculum and program evaluation. These methods are primarily developed by commercial test publishers, ministries and departments of education, and local school systems.

The principles and accompanying guidelines are organized in terms of four areas:

- I. Developing and Selecting Methods for Assessment
- II. Collecting and Interpreting Assessment Information
- III. Informing Students Being Assessed
- IV. Implementing Mandated Assessment Programs

The first three areas of Part B are adapted from the *Code of Fair Testing Practices for Education* (1988) developed in the United States. The principles and guidelines as modified in these three sections are intended to be consistent with the *Guidelines for Educational and Psychological Testing* (1986) developed in Canada. The fourth area has been added to contain guidelines particularly pertinent for mandated educational assessment and testing programs developed and conducted at the national, provincial, and local levels.

I. Developing and Selecting Methods for Assessment

Developers of assessment methods should strive to make them as fair as possible for use with students who have different backgrounds or special needs. Developers should provide the information users need to select methods appropriate to their assessment needs.

Developers should:

- ▶ 1. Define what the assessment method is intended to measure and how it is to be used. Describe the characteristics of the students with which the method may be used.
- ▶ 2. Warn users against common misuses of the assessment method.

Users should select assessment methods that have been developed to be as fair as possible for students who have different backgrounds or special needs. Users should select methods that are appropriate for the intended purposes and suitable for the students to be assessed.

Users should:

- ▶ 1. Determine the purpose(s) for assessment and the characteristics of the students to be assessed. Then select an assessment method suited to that purpose and type of student.
- ▶ 2. Avoid using assessment methods for purposes not specifically recommended by the developer unless evidence is obtained to support the intended use.

- ▶ 3. Describe the process by which the method was developed. Include a description of the theoretical basis, rationale for selection of content and procedures, and derivation of scores.
- ▶ 4. Provide evidence that the assessment method yields results that satisfy its intended purpose(s).
- ▶ 5. Investigate the performance of students with special needs and students from different backgrounds. Report evidence of the consistency and validity of the results produced by the assessment method for these groups.
- ▶ 6. Provide potential users with representative samples or complete copies of questions or tasks, directions, answer sheets, score reports, guidelines for interpretation, and manuals.
- ▶ 7. Review printed assessment methods and related materials for content or language generally perceived to be sensitive, offensive, or misleading.
- ▶ 8. Describe the specialized skills and training needed to administer an assessment method correctly, and the specialized knowledge to make valid interpretations of scores.
- ▶ 9. Limit sales of restricted assessment materials to persons who possess the necessary qualifications.
- ▶ 10. Provide for periodic review and revision of content and norms, and, if applicable, passing or cut-off scores, and inform users.
- ▶ 3. Review available assessment methods for relevance of content and appropriateness of scores with reference to the intended purpose(s) and characteristics of the students to be assessed.
- ▶ 4. Read independent evaluations of the methods being considered. Look for evidence supporting the claims of developers with reference to the intended application of each method.
- ▶ 5. Ascertain whether the content of the assessment method and the norm group(s) or comparison group(s) are appropriate for the students to be assessed. For assessment methods developed in other regions or countries, look for evidence that the characteristics of the norm group(s) or comparison group(s) are comparable to the characteristics of the students to be assessed.
- ▶ 6. Examine specimen sets, samples or complete copies of assessment instruments, directions, answer sheets, score reports, guidelines for interpretation, and manuals and judge their appropriateness for the intended application.
- ▶ 7. Review printed assessment methods and related materials for content or language that would offend or mislead the students to be assessed.
- ▶ 8. Ensure that all individuals who administer the assessment method, score the responses, and interpret the results have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform these tasks (e.g., learning assistance teachers, speech and language pathologists, counsellors, school psychologists, psychologists).
- ▶ 9. Ensure access to restricted assessment materials is limited to persons with the necessary qualifications.
- ▶ 10. Obtain information about the appropriateness of content, the recency of norms, and, if applicable, the appropriateness of the cut-off scores for use with the students to be assessed.

▶ 11. Provide evidence of the comparability of different forms of an instrument where the forms are intended to be interchangeable, such as parallel forms or the adaptation of an instrument for computer administration.

▶ 12. Provide evidence that an assessment method translated into a second language is valid for use with the second language. This information should be provided in the second language.

▶ 13. Advertise an assessment method in a way that states it can be used only for the purposes for which it was intended.

▶ 11. Obtain information about the comparability of interchangeable forms, including computer adaptations.

▶ 12. Obtain evidence about the validity of the use of an assessment method translated into a second language.

▶ 13. Verify advertising claims made for an assessment method.

II. Collecting and Interpreting Assessment Information

Developers should provide information to help users administer an assessment method correctly and interpret assessment results accurately.

Developers should:

▶ 1. Provide clear instructions for administering the assessment method and identify the qualifications that should be held by the people who should administer the method.

▶ 2. When feasible, make available appropriately modified forms of assessment methods for students with special needs or whose proficiency in the original language of administration is inadequate to respond in the anticipated manner.

▶ 3. Provide answer keys and describe procedures for scoring when scoring is to be done by the user.

Users should follow directions for proper administration of an assessment method and interpretation of assessment results.

Users should:

▶ 1. Ensure that the assessment method is administered by qualified personnel or under the supervision of qualified personnel.

▶ 2. When necessary and feasible, use appropriately modified forms of assessment methods with students who have special needs or whose proficiency in the original language of administration is inadequate to respond in the anticipated manner.

Ensure that instruments translated from one language to another are administered by persons who are proficient in the translated language.

▶ 3. Follow procedures for scoring as set out for the assessment method.

► 4. Provide score reports or procedures for generating score reports that describe assessment results clearly and accurately. Identify and explain possible misinterpretations of the scores yielded by the scoring system (grade equivalents, percentile ranks, standard scores) used.

► 5. Provide evidence of the effects on assessment results of such factors as speed, test-taking strategies, and attempts by students to present themselves favourably in their responses.

► 6. Warn against using published norms with students who are not part of the population from which the norm or comparison sample was selected or when the prescribed assessment method has been modified in any way.

► 7. Describe how passing and cut-off scores, where used, were set and provide evidence regarding rates of misclassification.

► 8. Provide evidence to support the use of any computer scoring or computer generated interpretations. The documentation should include the rationale for such scoring and interpretations and their comparability with the results of scoring and interpretations made by qualified judges.

► 4. Interpret scores taking into account the limitations of the scoring system used. Avoid misinterpreting scores on the basis of unjustified assumptions about the scoring system (grade-equivalents, percentile ranks, standard scores) used.

► 5. Interpret scores taking into account the effects of such factors as speed, test-taking strategies, and attempts by students to present themselves favourably in their responses.

► 6. Interpret scores taking account of major differences between the norm group(s) or comparison group(s) and the students being assessed. Also take account of discrepancies between recommended and actual procedures and differences in familiarity with the assessment method between the norm group(s) and the students being assessed.

Examine the need for local norms, and, if called for, develop these norms.

► 7. Explain how passing or cut-off scores were set and discuss the appropriateness of these scores in terms of rates of misclassification.

Examine the need for local passing or cut-off scores and, if called for, reset these scores.

► 8. Ensure that any computer administration and computer interpretations of assessment results are accurate and appropriate for the intended use. If necessary, ensure that relevant information not included in computer reports is also considered.

► 9. Observe jurisdictional policies regarding storage of and subsequent access to the results. Ensure that computer files are not accessible to unauthorized users.

► 10. Ensure that all copyright and user agreements are observed.

III. Informing Students Being Assessed

Direct communication with those being assessed may come from either the developer or the user of the assessment method. In either case, the students being assessed and, where applicable, their parents/guardians should be provided with complete information presented in an understandable way.

Developers or Users should:

- ▶ 1. Develop materials and procedures for informing the students being assessed about the content of the assessment, types of question formats used, and appropriate strategies, if any, for responding.
 - ▶ 2. Obtain informed consent from students or, where applicable, their parents/guardians in the case of individual assessments to be used for identification or placement purposes.
 - ▶ 3. Provide students or, where applicable, their parents/guardians with information to help them decide whether to participate in the assessment when participation is optional.
 - ▶ 4. Provide information to students or, where applicable, their parents/guardians of alternate assessment methods where available and applicable.
-

Control of results may rest with either the developer or user of the assessment method. In either case, the following steps should be followed.

Developers or Users should:

- ▶ 1. Provide students or, where applicable, their parents/guardians with information as to their rights to copies of instruments and completed answer forms, to reassessment, to rescoring, or to cancellation of scores and other records.
- ▶ 2. Inform students or, where applicable, their parents/guardians of the length of time assessment results will be kept on file and of the circumstances under which the assessment results will be released and to whom.
- ▶ 3. Describe the procedures that students or, where applicable, their parents/guardians may follow to register concerns about the assessment and endeavor to have problems resolved.

IV. Implementing Mandated Assessment Programs¹

Under some circumstances, the administration of an assessment method is required by law. In such cases, the following guidelines should be added to the applicable guidelines outlined in Sections I, II, and III of Part B.

Developers and Users should:

- ▶ 1. Inform all persons with a stake in the assessment (administrators, teachers, students, parents/guardians) of the purpose(s) of the assessment, the uses to be made of the results, and who has access to the results.
- ▶ 2. Design and describe procedures for developing or choosing the methods of assessment, selecting students where sampling is used, administering the assessment materials, and scoring and summarizing student responses.
- ▶ 3. Interpret results in light of factors that might influence them. Important factors to consider include characteristics of the students, opportunity to learn, and comprehensiveness and representativeness of the assessment method in terms of the learning outcomes to be reported on.
- ▶ 4. Specify procedures for reporting, storing, controlling access to, and destroying results.
- ▶ 5. Ensure reports and explanations of results are consistent with the purpose(s) of the assessment, the intended uses of the results, and the planned access to the results.
- ▶ 6. Provide reports and explanations of results that can be readily understood by the intended audience(s). If necessary, employ multiple reports designed for different audiences.

¹ The Joint Advisory Committee wishes to point out it has not taken a position on the value of mandated assessment and testing programs. Rather, given the presence of these programs, the intent of the guidelines presented in Section IV, when combined with applicable guidelines in the first three sections of Part B, is to help ensure fairness and equity for the students being assessed.

References

- Code of Fair Testing Practices for Education.* (1988). Washington, D.C.: Joint Committee on Testing Practices.
- Guidelines for Educational and Psychological Testing.* (1986). Ottawa, Ont.: Canadian Psychological Association.
- Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students.* (1990). Washington: D.C.: American Federation of Teachers, National Council on Measurement in Education, and National Educational Association.

The membership of the Working Group (WG) that developed the *Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* and of the Joint Advisory Committee that oversaw the development was as follows:

Allan Bacon	Michael Jackson	Jean Pettifor
Marvin Betts	Michel Laurier (WG)	Sharon Robertson
Gary Broker	Tom Maguire (WG)	Don Saklofske
Clement Dassa (WG)	Romulo Magsino	Marvin Simner
Dick Dodds	Linda McAlpine	Marielle Simon (WG)
Tom Dunn (WG)	Stirling McDowell	Ross Traub (WG)
Bob Gilchrist	Allan McDonald	Sue Wagner
Nicholas Head	Craig Melvin	Kim Wolff
Douglas Hodgkinson	Kathy Oberle (WG)	Todd Rogers
Barbara Holmes (WG)	Frank Oliva	(Chair, Working Group and Joint Advisory Committee)