

Strengthening the School Program and Student Achievement

Module 7

Participate in this seminar to learn more about the role of the Board of Education in program decisions. Module 7 workshop and resource materials include these important topics:

- What students need to know, be like and be able to do;
- Purposes of schooling;
- Effective organization for educational purposes; and,
- How the board determines whether purposes are achieved.



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Introduction

This resource is a companion to the Module 7 board member workshop on *Strengthening the School Program and Student Achievement*. Participants in this module will strengthen board member understanding of the board's role in key decisions affecting school programs and student achievement. It offers board members and directors of education the opportunity:

- To define the role of the Board of Education in decisions affecting student achievement and the school program;
- To review Saskatchewan's prescribed Core Curriculum and opportunities for local options;
- To explore ideas regarding what school graduates need to know, be like and be able to do; and,
- To outline approaches for accountability and reporting procedures.

The Board of Education is responsible for ensuring an appropriate program for every child. While the broad goals of education and the curriculum may be provincially prescribed, school systems are responsible for making choices and organizing appropriate opportunities for learning.

Boards of education are responsible for establishing the plans, allocating the resources and implementing the policies that make it possible to improve student achievement. They are responsible for establishing the system policies and evaluation processes to ensure reliable information for informed decision-making.

They are expected to do their part to create and support the kind of learning system that will contribute to achieving goals of healthy development and high achievement for every child in Saskatchewan.

Boards need to understand that their work as board members is improving student learning. Board decisions can impact student learning by supporting constructive change.

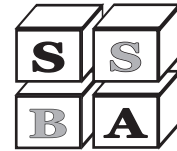
What should our graduating students know, be like and be able to do? Approving the program of studies should establish a conscious response to this question. What we expect of our graduates has implications for the grade 11 program, the grade 10 program and so on to early childhood education.

What do we mean by student achievement? A definition of student achievement focused on academic grades leaves out too much that we want for our children. Most school systems adopt a broader definition of student achievement that reflects the Saskatchewan goals of education.

How will achievement be reported? School systems are making significant strides to improve upon the traditional report card and teacher conference. School systems have an obligation to report student achievement. Parents want reliable information on how well their child is doing. The community wants reassurance that resources are being used efficiently to achieve desired results. Teachers and schools want student achievement information to help them improve teaching and learning.

School divisions cannot effectively raise student achievement without strong leadership and teamwork from the Board of Education. The board and the director must work effectively to mobilize their communities to get the job done.

Building Board Knowledge



- 1. Are the time allocation guidelines for courses of study being met?*

- 2. What program choices do students have?*

- 3. What types of support services are provided?*

- 4. Are services provided to address socio-economic factors?*

- 5. Are partnerships in place with other organizations and agencies?*

Board Program Mandate

Board's Role in Program Decisions

Boards of education are asking what they want their graduates to know, to be able to do and to be like so that they are prepared for the world that is their future. They are considering the knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes they want students to develop. They want to know what kind of educational program they can provide to have their graduates meet these aspirations and expectations.

Boards of education are not content to have the Ministry of Education develop curricula and then implementing them at the classroom level which was the traditional model of curriculum development and implementation. They want input into curriculum development and into the creation of the framework that describes what students are to learn and what curricula are implemented in classrooms. This demand for involvement into the process gave way to change.

The Education Act, 1995 gives boards of education considerable control over the school program. For example:

- 85 (1) ... a Board of Education shall:
subject to the regulations, authorize and approve the courses of instruction that constitute the instructional program for each school in the school division.
- 87 (1) ... a Board of Education may:
subject to the regulations, approve textbooks and other learning resource material and teacher reference.
- 176 (2) With the approval of the minister a Board of Education or a conseil scolaire may authorize the implementation of a course of study that has been developed within the school division or the francophone education area for use in any of the schools in the school division or the francophone education area, and that course may be recognized for credit purposes in accordance with the regulations.
- 179 A Board of Education or a conseil scolaire may authorize the organization of cultural and athletic activities, youth travel, outdoor education and similar activities as features of the educational program of the schools.

Saskatchewan boards of education often do not develop policies on the educational program. Although there are policies on a wide variety of topics ranging from bussing, to parent and community involvement, to crisis response, there are few which specifically address the school program - few which respond to questions about the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students should develop or to questions about the type of experiences that students would have during their schooling.

However, many boards of education are taking a second look at this traditional approach and are suggesting that the board's policy leadership role appropriately include developing and implementing policies about the school program. They are suggesting that the board's role extends to setting policy for the school program for two reasons:

- Boards of education wish to have authority as well as responsibility for the school program although the Ministry of Education develops curricula, boards of education are responsible for implementing the program of studies. Boards are responsible for providing teachers, facilities, books, computers and other resources needed to deliver the program. They are also responsible for the overall quality and effectiveness of the education that students receive. Addressing the school program through policy is one way that boards can have authority as well as responsibility for this very important item.
- Boards of education wish to exercise their local decision-making opportunities provided by Core Curriculum. The Core Curriculum provides a foundation of basic learnings for all students, but it also allows some decisions about the school program to be made locally.

Within this area of responsibility, boards of education have a mandate to make governance decisions and provide direction for the future of the school division.

Effective boards of education agenda are organized to ensure:

- The board has approved the school academic calendar for the year;
- The board has defined expectations for student achievement;
- The board has received relevant reports to monitor progress toward student achievement goals;
- The board has approved the program of studies for each school; and,
- The board has received relevant reports on the effectiveness of school programs.

This is a key example of where stated beliefs and a philosophy impacts on practice.

Goals of Education

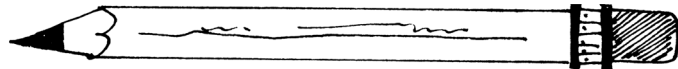
“The central purpose of education in all societies at all times is to produce the kind of people most valued in that society. Education...can be seen to serve six general purposes:

- ***Intellectual/academic*** – *Introduction to disciplines of knowledge and basic skills;*
- ***Cultural*** – *introducing young people to our heritage of literature, music, history, and general culture;*
- ***Social*** – *Developing skills, habits, and attitudes necessary for everyday life as a family member, worker, and citizen;*
- ***Expressive*** – *Developing the ability and will necessary for self-expression in a variety of media for a variety of purposes;*
- ***Vocational/economic*** – *Developing the abilities and skills necessary for active, productive, independent adulthood;*
- ***Moral/spiritual*** – *The cultivation of a sense of right and wrong and the development of goals beyond material advantage.”*

-Corporate-Higher Education Forum,
To Be Our Best: Learning for the Future, 1990

An important part of learning is articulating personal goals. Schools offer a variety of programs, courses and instructional approaches to encourage students to choose the experiences that enable them to best attain their individual goals. Student and career development programs are designed to assist students along this journey.

Notes



Saskatchewan’s Goals of Education (1984)

<p>BASIC SKILLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read, write, and compute; • Acquire information and meaning through observing, listening, reading and experiencing; • Process information through intellectual and technological means; • Solve problems by applying basic principles and processes of the sciences, arts, and humanities; and, • Communicate ideas through written and spoken language, mathematical symbols, and aesthetic expression. <p>LIFE-LONG LEARNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek and value learning experiences; • Act as self-reliant learners; and, • Base actions on the knowledge that it is necessary to learn throughout life. <p>UNDERSTANDING AND RELATING TO OTHERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act on the belief that each individual is worthwhile; • Base actions on the recognition that people differ in their values, behaviours, and life styles; • Interact and feel comfortable with others who are different in race, religion, status, or personal attributes; and, • Develop a sense of responsibility toward others. <p>SELF CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceive themselves in a positive way; • Appreciate their own abilities and limitations; • Set and work toward personal goals; • Assess praise and criticism realistically; and, • Present themselves with confidence. <p>SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek an understanding of the purpose and worth of human existence; • Develop a knowledge of God; and, • Respect family, religion and culture in a pluralistic society <p>POSITIVE LIFESTYLE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice appropriate personal hygiene, engage in sufficient physical activity, and maintain a nutritionally balanced diet; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid harmful use of alcohol and other drugs; • Cultivate interests that may be the basis for personal development and leisure pursuits; • Recognize the importance of productive activity; • Display initiative and pursue tasks diligently; • Maintain a safe and healthful community; • Respect and seek to enhance the environment; • Appreciate beauty in its many natural and constructed forms; and, • Express themselves creatively. <p>CAREER AND CONSUMER DECISIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an awareness of career opportunities; • Develop interests and abilities in relation to vocational expectations; • Adapt to shifts in employment patterns and technology; and, • Make informed consumer decisions. <p>MEMBERSHIP IN SOCIETY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assume responsibility for their own actions; • Work with others to achieve individual and group goals; • Participate in the democratic processes of government and perform the duties of citizenship; • Respect the rights and property of others; • Act with honesty, integrity, compassion, and fairness; • Develop a sense of national pride and acknowledge the need for international understanding; • Work toward greater social justice; • Assume responsibility for dependent persons in a manner consistent with their needs; • Respect law and authority; and, • Exercise the right of dissent responsibly. <p>GROWING WITH CHANGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work toward immediate and long-term goals; • Base actions on an understanding that change is a natural process in society; • Select workable alternatives in response to changing conditions; and • Develop confidence in making decisions that involve risk.
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In the Ministry of Education's (2009) *Plan for 2009-10* a number of key actions are outlined in order to improve Saskatchewan in the three areas of focus for the government as outlined in the *Government Direction for 2009-10: Economic Growth, Security and Promises*. The following are excerpts from the Ministry's *Plan for 2009-10*:

- “Continue to increase the number of funded licensed early learning a child care spaces” (p. 2);
- “Develop a K-12 curriculum framework of Treaty Education outcomes, along with learning resources to support the instruction of Treaty Education in all schools” (p. 2);
- “Work with boards of education towards the goal of ensuring that children and youth engage in 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily, while increasing healthy food options in schools” (p. 2);
- “Work with local school boards, the business community, and community-based organization to enhance business literacy, entrepreneurial, and career education in Saskatchewan schools” (p. 2);
- “Hold extensive consultations to review proposals that have been put forward by the Provincial Panel on Student Achievement” (p. 2);
- “Provide a further investment of \$1.76 million to support community-based organizations” (p. 2);
- “Upgrade and enhance education technology infrastructure including CommunityNet, the Live Interactive Video Education (LIVE) Satellite Network, and Blackboard Learning Content Management Systems. Training will be provided to school divisions to fully utilize the technology systems” (p.3);
- “Work with sector partners to develop a strategy to meet the needs of immigrant and refugee students” (p. 3).
- “Provide funding to community schools for lunch and anti-hunger programs” (p. 3).
- “Continue implementing the Career Development Action Plan which focuses on supporting children and youth to participate effectively in the social and economic future of our province” (p. 3).
- “Set province-wide tax rates (mill rates) for each of the three major property classes – residential, commercial and agricultural” (p. 3).
- “Consult with and support school divisions in the planning, monitoring, and reporting processes of the Continuous Improvement Framework” (p. 4).
- “Administer the capital process for projects that receive funding in 2009-10 as well as those projects already underway, including those related to the injection of funding of \$141.7 million in February 2009” (p. 4).

Necessary Skills for the 21st Century

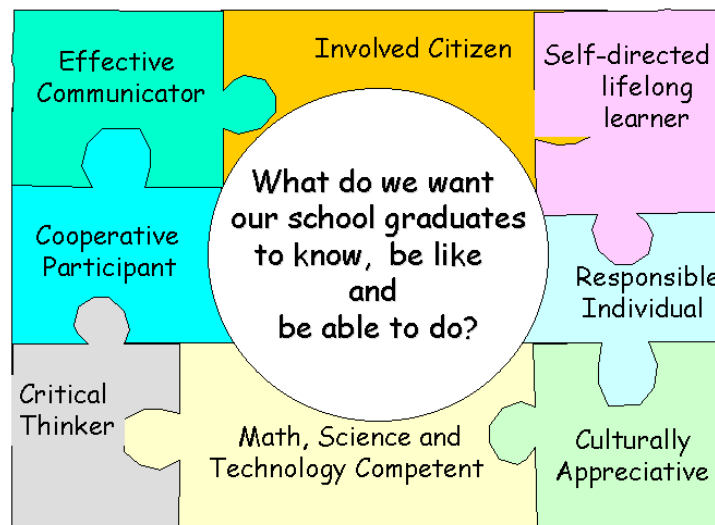
The world is changing dramatically. In the late 1970s, computers were in their infancy, there was no Internet, the economy was expanding rather than contracting, the Canadian dollar was equal to the U.S. dollar. We can anticipate that the world will change just as much in the years ahead.

Western Canada enjoys a high quality of life, but is it sustainable? We know that the success of society is closely tied to the quality of life of its citizens. We know that during the last two decades, Western Canada's economy has grown at a rate very close to its potential. We know that environmental concerns will have an impact on industries such as oil and gas, petrochemicals, utilities and forestry. Yet, recent research shows that when one looks at all the domains of success, Western Canada came out on top in only one category – health.

The key issues facing Western Canada are:

- **Innovation** – to duplicate innovation process success in the gas and oil industry in other sectors of the economy.
- **Aboriginal Involvement** – looming labour shortages may contribute to solution ... the 2001 Census shows that Aboriginal labour force participation rates in the Prairie provinces lie below the overall participation rate of Canada's Aboriginal population.
- **Deruralization** – drop in rural population. Rural areas lag behind urban areas in many domains that drive the quality of life. (e.g., relative lack of employment opportunities leads to less income, mobility, dependence on “traditional” manufacturing industries, primary industries, and lower wage service industries).

*-Insights into Western Canada –
Conference Board of Canada, Policy Research – August 2003*



It will be important for Saskatchewan to build alternative industries with higher value added employment opportunities. It will be important for people to upgrade skills for this.

Although no one knows for sure, the future will probably include:

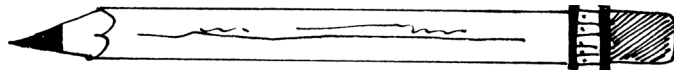
- Growing disparity between haves and have-nots;
- More jobs in service industries and technology and fewer in farming;
- Rapid changes in technology; and,
- Increasing global competition.

The goal of the education system must be to prepare students not for the world as it is today or the world as it was yesterday but for the unpredictable world of the future.

Identifying basic skills for the 21st century is an activity in which the whole community can become engaged. This interesting task is a good vehicle to promote positive community involvement in school activities. It is particularly important that students participate in this activity, because their vision of the future and of what they need for success in adult life may be very different from that of their parents.

Many different lists of basic skills for the 21st century have been developed. Those lists all emphasize the importance of reading skills, computer skills and the ability to work with others. Examples of this are given below in the 21st century required skills prediction suggested by the Conference Board of Canada, based on its research.

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Employability Skills in the 21st Century

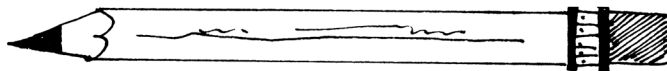
The skills you need to enter, stay in, and progress in the world of work—whether you work on your own or as part of a team. These skills can also be applied and used beyond the workplace in a range of daily activities.

<p><i>Fundamental Skills</i> The skills needed as a base for further development.</p>	<p><i>Personal Management Skills</i> The personal skills, attitudes and behaviours that drive one’s potential for growth.</p>	<p><i>Teamwork Skills</i> The skills and attributes needed to contribute productively.</p>
<p><i>Communicate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and understand information presented in a variety of forms (e.g., words, graphs, charts, diagrams); • Write and speak so others pay attention and understand • Listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others; • Share information and communications technologies (e.g., voice, e-mail, computers); and, • Use relevant scientific, technological and mathematical knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas. <p><i>Manage Information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate, gather and organize information using appropriate technology and information systems; and, • Access, analyze and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines (e.g., the arts, languages, science, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and the humanities). <p><i>Use Numbers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide what needs to be measured or calculated; • Observe and record data using appropriate methods, tools and technology; and, • Make estimates and verify calculations. <p><i>Think & Solve Problems</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess situations and identify problems; • Seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts; 	<p><i>Demonstrate Positive Attitudes & Behaviours</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel good about yourself and be confident; • Deal with people, problems and situations with honesty, integrity and personal ethics; • Recognize your own and other people’s good efforts; • Take care of your personal health; and, • Show interest, initiative and effort. <p><i>Be Responsible</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set goals and priorities balancing work and personal life; • Plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals • Assess, weigh and manage risk • Be accountable for your actions and the actions of your group; and, • Be socially responsible and contribute to your community. <p><i>Be Adaptable</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work independently or as a part of a team; • Carry out multiple tasks or projects; • Be innovative and resourceful: identify and suggest alternative ways to achieve goals and get the job done; • Be open and respond constructively to change • Learn from your mistakes and accept feedback; and, • Cope with uncertainty. <p><i>Learn Continually</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be willing to continuously learn and grow; • Assess strengths and weaknesses; 	<p><i>Work with Others</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and work within the dynamics of a group; • Ensure that a team’s purpose and objectives are clear; • Be flexible: respect, be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions and contributions of others in a group; • Recognize and respect people’s diversity, individual differences and perspectives; • Accept and provide feedback in a constructive and considerate manner; • Contribute to a team by sharing information and expertise; • Lead or support when appropriate, motivating a group for high performance; • Understand the role of conflict in a group to reach solutions; and, • Manage and resolve conflict when appropriate. <p><i>Participate in Projects & Tasks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, design or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well-defined objectives and outcomes; • Develop a plan, seek feedback, test, revise, and implement; • Work to agreed quality standards and specifications; • Select and use appropriate tools and technology for a task or project; • Adapt to changing requirements and information; and, • Continuously monitor the success of a project or task and identify ways to improve.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific and mathematical dimensions of a problem; • Identify the root cause of problem; • Be creative and innovative in exploring possible solutions; • Readily use science, technology and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems and make decisions; • Evaluate solutions to make recommendations or decisions; • Implement solutions; and, • Check to see if a solution works, and act on opportunities for improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set your own learning goals; • Identify and access learning sources and opportunities; and, • Plan for and achieve your learning goals. <p><i>Work Safely</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be aware of personal and group health and safety practices and procedures, and act in accordance with these.</i> 	
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-The Conference Board of Canada – www.conferenceboard.ca

Notes



Educational Program Outcomes

The curriculum guides and accompanying activity guides and bibliographies developed by the Ministry of Education typically provide many ideas for the way that Foundational Objectives can be achieved. There is often considerable room for individual teachers to select content and activities that reflect their own teaching styles as well as students' needs and interests.

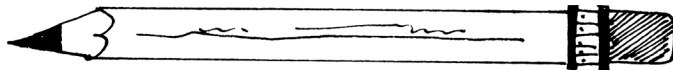
Three important elements of the educational program are:

- **Knowledge** - What do we want our students to know?
- **Skills** - What do we want our students to be able to do?
- **Attitudes and Behaviours** - What do we want our students to be like?

Making Decisions About the Educational Program

- How does this activity support system goals?
- What percentage of students are served by this activity (remember the majority of students do not go to university)?
- Did parents, students and school staff have a voice in selecting this activity?
- How will this activity enrich students' personal lives?
- How will this activity make students better community members?
- How will this activity help students get and keep a job?
- What long-term benefits does this activity have?
- How does this activity relate to the development of basic skills needed in the 21st century?

Notes



Student Learning

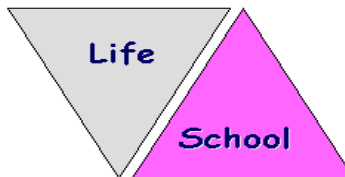
A policy on the school program might include a section on the knowledge that students are expected to acquire. When developing this section of the policy, some boards may choose to critically examine aspects of the existing program and to assess the extent to which the program reflects the requirements of everyday life and the workplace. The following example looks at the reading skills required by adults and school-aged children:

<i>Reading done by most adults:</i>	<i>Reading done in school:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical manuals; • Safety codes; • Tax forms and other government forms; • Newspapers and magazines; • Letters from government departments and businesses; • Maps; and, • Printed information in television, ads, online and in news programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poetry; • Short stories; • Non-fiction biographies; • Novels; and, • Various textbooks (i.e. biology)

What kind of communication skills do graduates need?

What communication skills are used in daily life?

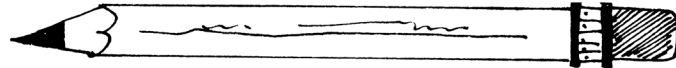
Listening - 43%
 Speaking - 27%
 Writing - 17%
 Reading - 13%



What communication skills are taught in school?

- Reading
 - Writing
 - Speaking
 - Listening

Notes



Required Knowledge Level for Students

Most people would agree that students need to be able to write adequately. But there might be great disagreement over the definition of “adequately”. Two teachers, when grading the same piece of student work, might give it very different marks, because they have different standards or different ideas of what constitutes “adequate”. For this reason, it may be appropriate to include precise descriptions of expectations in school board policy.

While boards of education are interested in building schools, employing staff, and transporting students, and arranging to finance these activities, the most crucial area of school board responsibility is the educational program.

And while boards of education are responsible for all aspects of the operation of schools, three key components should receive primary consideration: the school program, time for learning and evaluation.

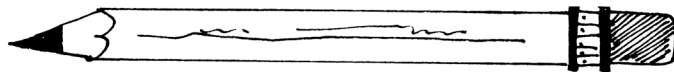
Board Policy Considerations

Boards of education may want to begin their policy on the school program with an outline of basic skills for the 21st century.

A school board policy on the educational program might include guidelines for student outcomes. It might respond to the question, “What do we want our students to know, be able to do, and be like?”

A board policy on desired outcomes of the educational program would provide direction for teachers so they can select content, learning activities and classroom management techniques that reflect the board’s priorities for the educational program.

Notes



Core Curriculum

Saskatchewan has adopted a definition of curriculum stating that curriculum is:

“A set of planned and purposeful learning experiences, based on intended learning outcomes and organized around the developmental levels of students. This definition recognizes that learning is a process which requires the active participation of the learner and that children learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.”

- Saskatchewan Education, *Core Curriculum Guides: Standardization of Contents And Formats*, 1991

Exemplary curriculum includes attention to:

- Knowledge of the content students are expected to learn;
- Know-how or the ability to demonstrate what has been learned; and
- Wisdom or the ability to apply what is known in appropriate circumstances.

The total school program or experience is curriculum. The school program for students consists of courses which are taught plus the many other school activities including recess, field trips, concerts, cultural observances and sports. Exemplary schools make all school experiences planned and purposeful. This perspective must be seen in historical context.

In the early 1980s, the Saskatchewan government responded to the general concern by Saskatchewan educators about whether the curriculum in use at the time and students' school experiences would adequately prepare young people for life in the 21st century. They saw a need to review the province's public education to make certain that it responded appropriately to the rapid changes in society. They recognized that these changes and the escalation of the rate of change would create a world unlike that experienced by their parents.

The review process called *Directions* involved numerous conferences and reports and led to major change and reforms in Saskatchewan's education system. Most significant among these reports was that of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Curriculum and Instruction (also called the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee) which met for three years and resulted in 16 recommendations, including a proposed set of goals for education in Saskatchewan and a recommendation that a K-12 Core Curriculum be developed for Saskatchewan schools.

The Minister's Advisory Committee on Curriculum and Instruction concluded that the future will require graduates to possess more than language and computational skills. They saw:

- The need for a new set of educational goals and a new provincial program policy;
- The need for an expanded definition of basic skills—in addition to the skills of acquiring, analyzing, applying and communicating information, the Committee saw the importance of all students learning how to solve problems in a variety of ways;
- These skills being achieved through studies in language arts, mathematics, aesthetic education, physical education and the natural and social sciences; and,
- These skills and abilities to be essential to a productive and satisfying life and appearing in the school program that flows from kindergarten to graduation;

This core curriculum was intended to move the school closer to ensuring that all students receive an education which is independent of specific occupational choices and which embraces a broad range of abilities including the life-long pursuit of learning.

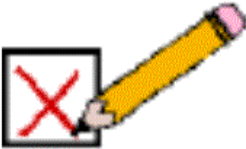
In addition to this framework, the Minister's Advisory Committee on Curriculum and Instruction also made recommendations about other factors that affect teaching and learning including resource centers, support services such as guidance and counselling, and in-service education for teachers.

The Minister's Advisory Committee on Curriculum and Instruction recommendations proffered a comprehensive package of educational reforms of which Core Curriculum was simply one component. Today many people talk about Directions and Core Curriculum as if they are one and the same.

The processing and development of the recommendations of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Curriculum and Instruction led to curriculum reform that recognized that the knowledge, skills and values that are essential for all students are included in the seven Required Areas of Study. In the elementary and middle years, the school program includes all seven of these areas, but at the high school level, there is considerable flexibility and students may not experience all seven of the Required Areas of Study – Arts Education, Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies, Sciences, Physical Education and Health Education.

Each Required Area of Study has Common Essential Learnings (CELs) intended to provide students with generic skills, processes, and values, which can be applied to a wide range of settings and situations integrated into it. The CELs are intended to equip students for life beyond school, no matter what the student chooses to do.

**What should be common
and essential
for all students to learn?**



Numeracy

Communication

Independent Learning

Technological Literacy

Critical and Creative Thinking

Personal and Social Values and Skills

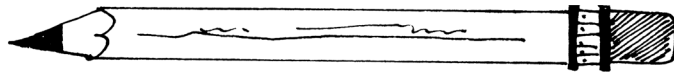
The curriculum includes an “adaptive dimension” which allows teachers to make adjustments in approved educational programs to accommodate diversity in student learning needs. It includes adjustments to curriculum, instruction and the learning environment to make the educational program relevant for all students. It enables teachers to provide for student deficiencies, program enrichment, cultural needs, curriculum relevance and various learning materials. In short, the adaptive dimension provides for the students’ potential for learning.

Core Curriculum recognizes that priorities vary from one community to the next and so provides for locally-determined options. Typically, these are courses such as religious education, Aboriginal studies or second language instruction that are relevant to the community, or locally-developed courses such as local history.

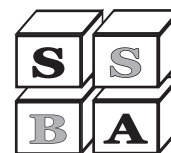
In the late 1980s and early 1990s, four more components of Core Curriculum were introduced. These were Indian and Métis perspectives, gender equity, resource-based learning, and multicultural education. Although these were not part of the original framework, they are today an integral part of Core Curriculum. These components permeate all the other components of Core Curriculum and are referred to as initiatives and perspectives.

- **Indian and Métis Perspectives** – Intended for all students to provide information about Indian and Métis history and culture; ensure that Indian and Métis viewpoints as well as European are represented; ensure that positive images of Indian and Métis people appear in curriculum and resource materials.
- **Gender Equity** – Intended to ensure that female and male students have equality of opportunity and of benefit through what is taught and the way that it is taught.
- **Resource-Based Learning** – Requires that instruction be based on a variety of print and non-print resources, not just a single textbook.
- **Multicultural Education** – Intended to foster understanding, acceptance, empathy and harmonious relations among people of various cultures.

Notes



Building Board Knowledge



- 1. What is Core Curriculum?*
- 2. What was Core Curriculum intended to be?*
- 3. Has the Core Curriculum caught up in terms of preparing students for the 21st century?*
- 4. To what extent has the Core Curriculum been implemented?*
- 5. What influence has the Core Curriculum had on teaching and learning in Saskatchewan?*

Development and Implementation of Core Curriculum

Since the mid-1980s, the “dime” model has been used to develop new curricula for the Core program. The phases in this model are:

- **Development** – Writing and piloting the curriculum;
- **Implementation** – Delivering the curriculum to students;
- **Maintenance** – Keeping the curriculum up to date; and,
- **Evaluation** – Determining whether the curriculum has met its goals and been implemented as intended.

Development

Development of core curriculum took place over the past two decades and is now relatively complete. It is typically written by teachers. Some of them are completely “made in Saskatchewan” products. Some curricula have been developed through The Western Canadian Protocol – an agreement among Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories to collaborate on a number of K-12 projects including the development of common curriculum frameworks with learning outcomes in subjects such as mathematics, language arts and international languages – and The Pan-Canadian Protocol – a similar agreement among all the provinces and territories. Piloting is part of the development of most curricula. Piloting means that the curriculum is “tried out” on students of the appropriate age and grade before it is finalized.

Implementation

Implementation of the curriculum is the responsibility of school divisions while the provincial government specifies the content that is to be taught. The Department of Education supports implementation by providing a limited amount of in-service training for teachers and by providing lists of resource materials to support the curriculum. However, school divisions are responsible for ensuring that the intended learning outcomes are achieved. Implementation of new curricula have significant financial implications for school divisions.

Maintenance

The maintenance stage of curriculum development, emphasizes keeping curricula and related documents current. This involves revising older curricula and lists of resource materials, updating administrative bulletins, etc. While most of the maintenance activity is accomplished through the Evergreen Curriculum – a website maintained by the Department of Education with more than 60 curriculum guides on-line along with bibliographies and other supplementary materials and with provision for discussion groups for various subject areas and links to other relevant websites.

The curricula and other materials on this website are “Evergreen” in that they can be updated without the complications and expense associated with printing and mailing.

Evaluation

Evaluation of new curricula is undertaken by Saskatchewan’s Provincial Curriculum Evaluation Program. Under this program, specific curricula are reviewed to determine whether the goals of the curriculum are being achieved and whether new curricula are being implemented as intended.

The Actualization of Core Curriculum, that is, full implementation and ongoing renewal, began in 1998 and includes activities at all levels of the education system that are aimed at making Core Curriculum a reality of everyday instruction and assessment in Saskatchewan classrooms. Actualization also includes all efforts to renew and improve curricula in order to achieve an Evergreen Core Curriculum.

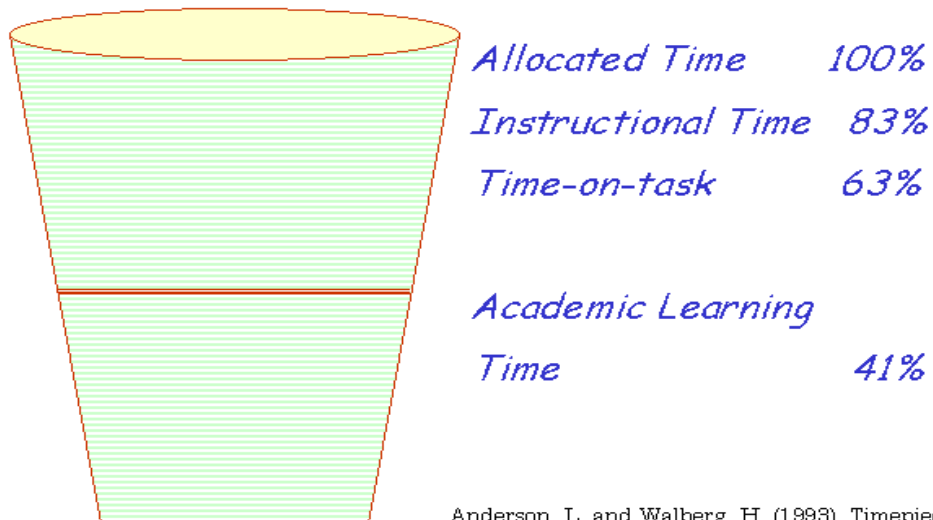
The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with other Saskatchewan educational organizations, has developed a policy framework for actualization of Core Curriculum. It is intended that, “the partners in education work from this framework to make their own plans, according to their mandates, in order that Saskatchewan’s school programs result in all students attaining the Goals of Education.” It is also intended that the framework for actualization be interpreted and brought to life within the context of individual schools and communities.

Time for Learning

The Education Act, 1995 states that there shall be 200 days in a school year but the Minister may by order determine a lesser number (Subsection 164(2)). An important measure of the quality of education has traditionally been the amount of time offered for student learning.

The number of student-teacher contact days, or instructional days, has been reduced significantly for most Saskatchewan students. Each year since 1981, the Minister has chosen to reduce the school year to 197 days. In addition, *The Education Act, 1995* does not distinguish between the school year and the student instructional year. In recent years, the number of student-teacher contact days for professional development, final examinations, parent-teacher interviews, student rallies, class parties, sporting events, class outings, weather cancellations and a growing list of days used for other activities. Some of these activities are more valuable than others in helping students achieve the desired learning outcomes. The result of shortening the school year and taking more time from the instructional focus has students graduating from our schools today with fewer classroom instruction hours than students of previous generations. School boards, in cooperation with their staff, have a responsibility to monitor the amount of time allocated to the instructional year, the actual time that is available for student learning, and the amount of time that students are on-task. Researchers suggest that in some instances, less than one-half of the time allocated for schooling is spent in instruction for students. Time is one that can play a significant role in ensuring equality of outcome for all students.

What happens to time in school?



Anderson, L. and Walberg, H. (1993) *Timepiece: Extending and Enhancing Learning Time*

Time-on-task or academic learning time is the amount of time that students are paying attention to and focused on trying to learn curriculum objectives. Exemplary schools minimize the amount of time wasted on class changes, announcements and non-curricular activities. Both administration and staff place a high value on the effective use of time. Students come to class prepared to work and instruction begins on time. Teachers use class time to work with students to individualize instruction. According to Nancy Karweit in *Time-on-Task Reconsidered* (1984), academic learning time “is determined by the length of the school year and day, by the orderliness of the school, by teacher managerial skills, and by the students’ attendance and attentiveness.”

Effective schools’ research concludes that when increased opportunities for academic learning are used effectively, student learning accelerates. There is a positive relationship between time and learning. Since time is necessary for learning, most people would agree that more time may result in more learning. There are other variables to consider, but safeguarding learning time for students is a worthwhile school board objective.

There is a growing trend towards challenging how schools are organized and use time. Should all students be required to learn the same information, with the same approach and in the same amount of time? The traditional age-grouped, standard delivery model of education is being criticized as rather inefficient and ineffective. Research suggests that children learn at different rates and in different ways with different subjects. In addition, recent computer applications are challenging the tradition that children must be educated in a specific place, for a certain number of hours, and a certain number of days during the week and year.

While inputs are an important component of determining the quality of education, educators are being challenged to gather better information regarding how well students are doing.

Board Policy Considerations

A school board policy on the educational program can appropriately include a description of the process that is used to select locally-determined options. It could describe the roles of students, parents, community members, educators and the board. It could also list the individuals or groups that have responsibility for making specific decisions.

A policy on the educational program could contain a description of the process that is used to choose the electives that are offered by individual schools. The policy might describe how student and parent interest in particular courses is assessed and the roles of teachers, school principal and the board in making decisions about electives to be offered.

A policy on the school program could appropriately contain a statement endorsing and supporting the adaptive dimension with changes to time, place and/or evaluation. Such a statement would give teachers and school administrators direction and encouragement to adapt instruction so that all students can succeed.

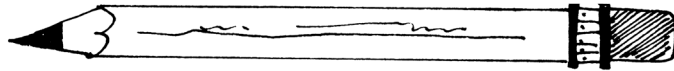
From time to time, boards of education may wish to review the school program to answer questions such as:

- What progress have we made during the past five years?
- How are we progressing with implementation of Core Curriculum?
- Where are we in terms of providing students with the skills they need for the 21st century?

It is important that a board policy on the school program gives the board a mandate to conduct regular reviews of the school program. Such a policy:

- Sends a signal to the school and community that school program;
- Review is an important matter; ensures that the school program is;
- Reviewed regularly at specified intervals, not on an ad hoc basis; and,
- Provides a time line for reviewing the program.

Notes



Program Decisions

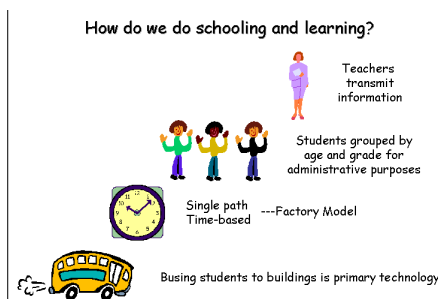
The Ministry of Education prescribes the basic required curriculum for the students in the province. However, there are many choices available beyond the required minimum curriculum – choices to be made by the Board of Education, the parents and the students. For the parents and students, the question is, “What options are available within the schools?” For the classroom teacher it is how will the expected learning outcomes will be achieved and evaluated. For the school division, the question is how will the school system make the decisions about program options – individuals, teacher groups or board coordinated task teams? This pertains not only to courses of study, but also to all the educational experiences that a student has while enrolled in the school, including extra-curricular activities.

Locally-Determined Options to gain time for local or community program priorities are provided for in the Core Curriculum.

Locally-Determined Options are usually courses specific to the community like a local history course or courses that reflect the nature of the community. They can be provided by selecting provincially-developed courses or by developing courses locally. Locally-developed courses must be approved by the Ministry of Education.

High School Elective Courses of Study are provided for by Core Curriculum in addition to prescribed core of compulsory courses that all high school students must take. These elective courses are chosen by the students themselves. Most high schools try to offer a range of electives, so students can choose courses that interest them or fit in with their career plans. These courses must be successfully completed in order for the student to meet the requirements of high school graduation. Most high schools offer a range of programs and optional activities that go far beyond what the Ministry of Education requires. These are available in curricular and extra-curricular activities and cover a wide range of interests and ability.

Similarly, the school board can also make decisions about how educational programs will be delivered. Unlike the traditional model of program delivery, new ways are possible, particularly with the access to technology now available to schools.



Board Policy Considerations

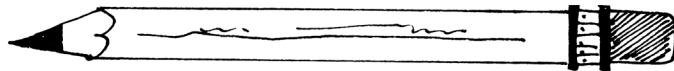
A policy on how the school system makes decisions about the program options offered, including all school-planned activities, will guide participation in program offering determination.

Board policy on flexible learning can respond to varying learning needs. Boards may wish to consider policy on pacing, staffing, school year alternatives, and distance education as potential program solutions to changing individual student, community and school division needs.

What are the possibilities for flexible learning?

- Individual pacing and continuous progress
- Moving teachers and learners among sites
- Modifying day, week, or year schedules
- Supplementing with distance delivery
- Creating full service virtual schools
- Supporting home-based learning
- Integrating external expertise and facilities
- Any combination of the above

Notes



School Program, Student Achievement & School^{PLUS}

The Ministry of Education's Goals of Education describe, in a general way, the outcomes we, as a society, want for our children. They outline what is desired in student achievement, namely, high levels of academic achievement plus the ability to understand and relate to others, to live a positive lifestyle, to display initiative, to work hard and respect law and authority. They guide the development of curricula.

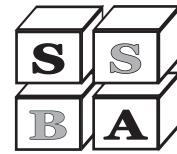
School^{PLUS} expands the definition of schooling to include not only academic success but also the well-being and success in life of all Saskatchewan children and young people and working with the community to achieve this. It strives for increasing achievement for all students regardless of their gender, cultural background or socio-economic status. It promotes measuring the success of school programs so that school divisions can make data-driven decisions with a view to improvement.

The Board of Education is accountable for monitoring student achievement and ensuring the effectiveness of school programs. School boards that adopt policy governance develop policy and strategies to address priorities to lead to improvement in student achievement, in program, in teaching, and in learning. They establish structures and strategies that better assure reaching established priorities and they provide resources for alternative approaches to make students successful.

As School^{PLUS} school divisions provide opportunities for learning they look at change and alternatives that will help meet the outcomes in respect to knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours. They include reaching out to the First Nations and Métis community, early school dropouts and students with exceptional needs within the context of the school and the local community and with the participation of partners and the community at large. They provide options within the regular curriculum and look at options and extensions of the curriculum with resource-based learning. They consider alternatives to time for learning and distance learning with technology. They establish a culture of innovation in which every student has a personalized program plan.

Effective School^{PLUS} school boards measure the success of programs. They collect, analyze, report and use data for measurable school improvement. This enables them to determine the effectiveness of their policies and to make changes that will lead to improvement in learning and programs and will show ratepayers accountability for allocating tax dollars effectively.

Building Board Knowledge



1. How will the programs be delivered in your school division?

2. How will student and program success be monitored?

Equity

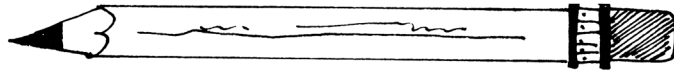
Traditional thinking was that all students should be treated equally or the same way. However, the application of this concept did not mean equal results because the needs of the students varied and equal treatment and opportunity may not have been fair to the student. Equity means fairness or recourse to the principles of justice. Equity is the desire to have Saskatchewan children do better so they must be treated how they need to be treated in order to succeed.

Diversity

Diversity is the variation and differences among people related to their cultural heritages, racial and ethnic identities, gender and class experiences and mental and physical abilities. It involves incorporation of difference into an institution such as an inclusive educational system, and acceptance and appreciation of the differences between groups and individuals

We know that students need to have a positive sense of self worth and of who they are. They need to have a sense of belonging as important members of the school community. To do this, the educational environment emulates an environment that sincerely values all students of all cultural heritages, racial and ethnic identities, gender and class experiences and mental and physical abilities.

Notes



Educational Challenges for First Nations and Métis Students

Saskatchewan's First Nations and Métis students have been at risk for some time as shown by the 90% Aboriginal student drop-out rate in the 1980s. Research and projections of information informs us that by 2006, about 30% of Saskatchewan students will be of Aboriginal ancestry. Current data tells us that we will have a labour shortage by 2013 and that one of the challenges in this province will be to engage Aboriginal students in the labour force. In order to do this, First Nations and Métis youth must have the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to obtain meaningful and rewarding work.

Demographic Changes

- The number of First Nations and Métis children is growing dramatically and will result in a significantly large school age population in the next few years. Many school divisions will have a large Aboriginal proportion of students in their schools;
- The high drop-out rate of First Nations and Métis youth continues – 17% have not advanced beyond grade 8; 78% have not completed high school;
- Workforce participation rates for non-Aboriginal youth is 70% and 28% for Aboriginal youth;
- Low education attainment results in low workforce participation and severely limits employment prospects and limits income of Aboriginal youth; and,
- Low schooling attainment severely reduces the income options of Aboriginal youth and forces high numbers to depend on social assistance for their survival.

Responding to the Needs of First Nations and Metis Students

As a response to the issues concerning First Nations and Métis youth, the Government of Saskatchewan established the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission in 1984 and passed Education Equity legislation in 1985. This legislation required school divisions with an Aboriginal population of 5% or more to develop an Educational Plan and to submit it to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission for approval. It enabled other school divisions to do the same on a voluntary basis.

The *Education Equity Plan* adopted in 1985 (and reaffirmed in February 2003) had five components:

- Hiring more teachers of Aboriginal ancestry;
- Increasing Aboriginal content in the curriculum;
- Increased parental involvement in school activities;
- Making sure school policies and practices did not have an adverse impact on students of Aboriginal ancestry; and,
- Providing cross-cultural training for teachers.

Two additional components were added:

- Hiring Aboriginal people into non-teaching positions
- Developing anti-racism policies and procedures

A policy and program response to the educational needs of Aboriginal students to assure their success is required and possible. This has been demonstrated by school divisions with equity plans who have hired Aboriginal teachers, support staff, elders, counsellors and home-school liaison workers; introduced Aboriginal content across the curriculum; developed websites with materials for use at the classroom level; developed anti-harassment and anti-racism policies; appointed Aboriginal administrators; and involved parents in school activities.

Visible Minorities

Visible minorities are familiar with the “glass ceiling” – an invisible plateau that limits their advancement. That ceiling needs to be shattered.

The number of visible minorities in Canada doubled between 1986 and 1996, but they continue to be underrepresented in key leadership positions in Canadian institutions.

While the importance of visible minorities for current and future success of our nation is often discussed, too few organizations have been successful in creating truly inclusive work environments.

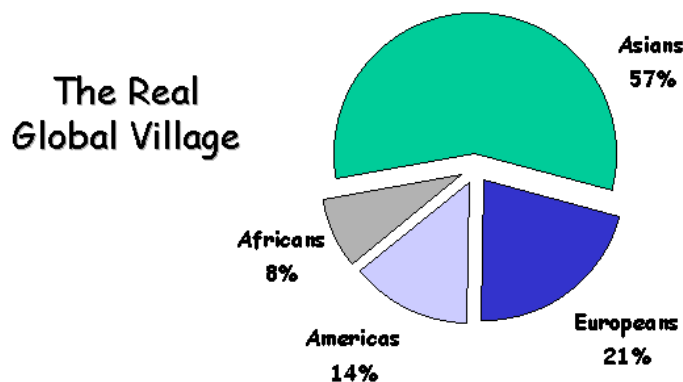
It is important that we work together to increase the number of visible minorities in leadership roles throughout society. Doing so not only increases diversity in decision-making positions, it also provides hope for all minorities that there are no barriers to reaching their potential.

Helping Immigrant Families and Children Adapt

The key findings of *A Report on the Saskatchewan and Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Needs and Retention Study* (2002), were:

- That better career opportunities is the most critical factor to improving settlement and retention;
- That opportunities to improve their language skills are critical to immigrants and refugees seeking to advance their employment and career prospects; and,
- That many immigrants needing education and retraining to improve their career prospects are not getting it.

Schools and school programs can make a difference to the children of immigrant parents by striving to respond to the cultural differences and special needs of these students and providing them with the requisite skills for employment in the careers to which they aspire.



Helping Students with Exceptional Needs

Students with exceptional needs include those with physical, mental or multiple disabilities that require special program response to meet their educational needs. Gone are the days when such students are excluded from attending public schools or being isolated in a special area or classroom within a school. There is increased inclusion of students with exceptional needs in the regular classroom. There is certainly cause for celebration of the successes of the response to these students but additional improvements can still be made, especially in their transition to adult life.

Responding to Gender Issues

Gender equity has received much attention in recent years because of the change of traditional perspectives of women, greater female participation in the workplace, equalization of male and female roles and relationships, and improved leadership roles within the workplace. However, there is still considerable residue that necessitates continuation and enhancement of gender equity initiatives. Parents need to be made aware of career opportunities for women beyond the traditional ones. Schools need to foster gender equitable environments.

School and school division gender initiatives may include:

- Awareness of female student confidence in their abilities, especially in science and mathematics;
- Science and mathematics career information increases female student knowledge of the related careers and the education prerequisites for them;
- Professional staff need to assist students to make flexible, long-range career plans; and,
- Parents – the prime influencers of career choice – need to be educated about career opportunities in traditional and non-traditional employment opportunities for boys and girls.

Schools are challenged to provide a gender-equitable environment so that the pressures for both female and male students to conform to limiting gender stereotypes is relieved. Schools are challenged to provide opportunities and programs that foster more positive interaction and growth between the two sexes.

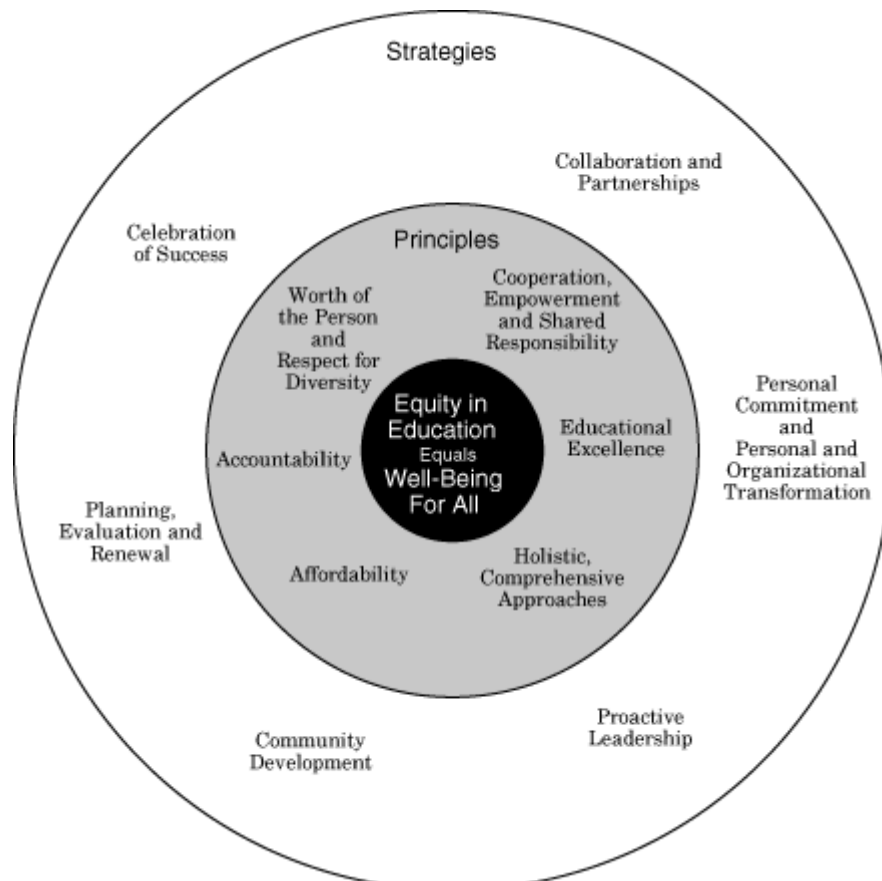
A gender-equitable environment is one that provides equality of opportunity and ensures equality of results for all students based on individual aptitudes, abilities and interests, regardless of gender.

Other Students Who Have Exceptional Needs

Other students who may be at risk and for whom education equity initiatives may be appropriate include:

- Students at risk of school failure because they experience barriers to their learning because of social and emotional problems, such as poverty, family breakdown, violence, neglect and teen pregnancy;
- Francophone students who wish to be educated in French within an English society;
- Students with minority faith who have a legal right to access an education consistent with their religious practices and values;
- Rural students who have the right to equal access to high quality education wherever they live in Saskatchewan; and,
- Northern students who live in distant and sparsely populated areas but who have a right to the full range of educational opportunities that other students enjoy.

Principles and Strategies of Equity



Building a Future for Saskatchewan's Youth

Change is the key concept of equity both as a process and as a goal. Change is always unsettling, but it presents an opportunity to take appropriate steps in continuing to respond to the challenge of diversity.

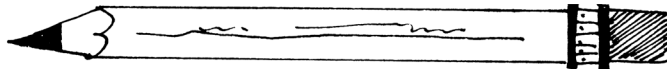
Board Policy Considerations

Board policy on education equity, diversity and inclusion would provide understanding and direction for participants in the school division. The policy could lead to the development of an Education Equity Plan for the school division.

Development of local principles of equity could result in policies that reflect and support these principles and their corresponding action plans.

Board policy on measuring equity initiative progress and outcome will assure the continuation and modification of the related programs as warranted.

Notes



Change: A Dynamic Force in Education

Change on a personal level and on an institutional level – what is it? Why are we concerned about it? Why are leadership skills in planning and implementing change a required competency for school system leaders?

The turbulent social and economic environment and new education standards are forcing schools to change. This requires:

- Immediate and effective action and adjustment;
- Schools designed to be inherently adaptive;
- More empowered people, with new leadership skills at every level;
- Ongoing innovation and change; and,
- A rich culture of creativity and initiative.

For decades school boards and school division leaders have been challenged to change education. Cynics say that “the more we change, the more we stay the same.” Optimists keep looking for the latest innovation as the answer. The reality is that there will be no real change until we focus on the individual. Change comes one person at a time.

No real change can occur unless individuals change! And how does that happen? By someone imposing different expectations? By individual people making determined efforts to change? Think about some behaviour you’ve tried to change recently! And no real institutional change can occur unless individuals within the institution change!

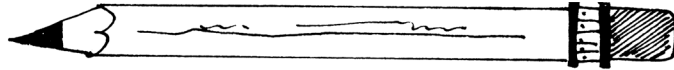
Systemic Change

The purpose of systemic change is to create a better educational system than what currently exists. We define systemic change as an approach to change that:

- Recognizes the interrelationships and interdependencies among the parts of the educational system, with the consequence that desired changes in one part of the system are accompanied by changes in other parts that are necessary to support those desired changes, and
- Recognizes the interrelationships and interdependencies between the educational system and its community, including parents, employers, social service agencies, religious organizations, and much more, with the consequence that all those stakeholders are given active ownership over the change effort.

*-Facilitating the Systemic Change Process in School Districts –
Patrick M. Jenlink, Charles M. Reigeluth, et al.*

Notes



The Process of Change

Change is inevitable. There is no preventing change from occurring; however, its direction and outcome may be influenced. Change is a process, not an event. No innovation has ever been successfully implemented overnight. People cannot be forced to adopt the change process. They always have a choice to resume previous behaviours.

It is important to understand that people can only be given the opportunity to change. Change naturally occurs when parts of a larger system begins to operate differently. These “parts” react differently and therefore play different roles in the change process. Some co-workers will help the process; others will hinder it. Developing an awareness and understanding the process of change can help school districts work through change, and increase the likelihood for successful implementation.

“Change is a double-edged sword, its relentless pace these days runs us off our feet. Yet when things are unsettled, we can find new ways to move ahead and to create breakthroughs not possible in stagnant societies. If you ask people to brainstorm words to describe change, they come up with a mixture of negative and positive terms. On the one side, fear, anxiety, loss, danger, panic; on the other, exhilaration, risk-taking, excitement, improvements, energizing. For better or for worse, change arouses emotions, and when emotions intensify, leadership is key.”

-Leading in a Culture of Change by Michael Fullan, 2001

“The problem is not that schools are unwilling to innovate and change. Schools innovate and change all the time. The problem is that their change initiatives are so often fragmented, so typically focused on the margins of practice rather than the core purpose of improved learning, and are so rarely sustained. Schools need more than a willingness to try something new; they need a guiding context that helps them discriminate among the many possible change initiatives they might pursue at any point in time. They also need the persistence to pursue that initiative until it becomes embedded in the culture and structure of the school.”

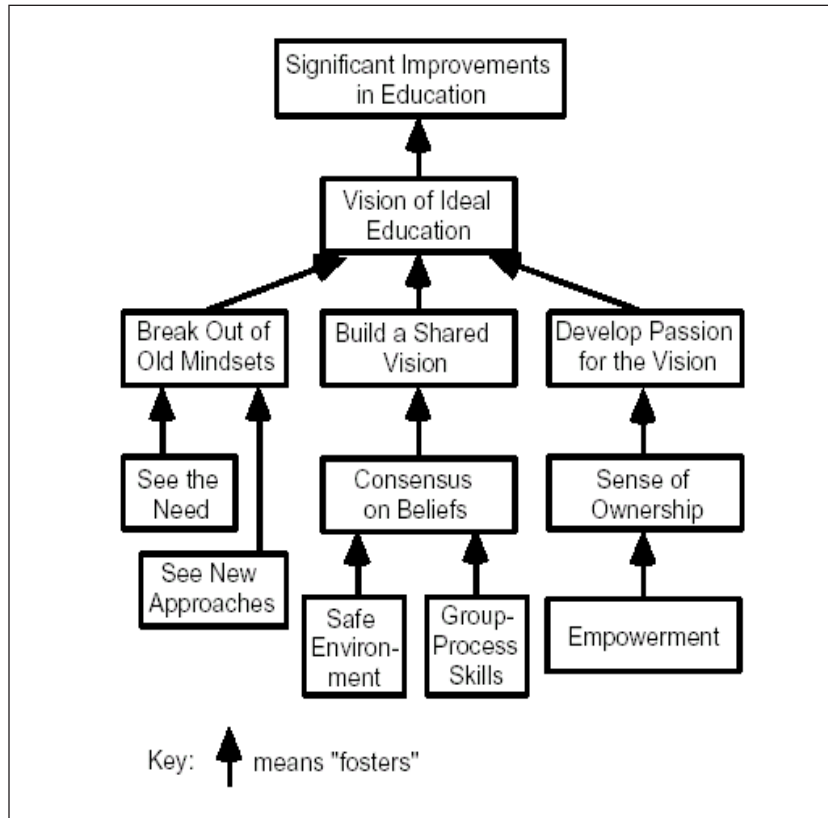
-Change that Counts by Rick DuFour, NSDC, JSD, 2000

Guiding Organizational Change

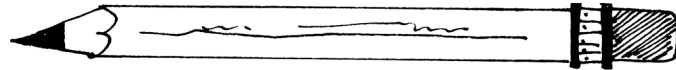
Principles and core practices for carrying out or contributing to effective organizational and system change are:

- Organizations aren't just people; they're also independent social structural systems. Effective organizational change therefore requires major attention to both the people and the structural features of the organization.
- People are strongly affected and their actions systematically influenced by these organizational structures. These structures may inhibit change.
- Implementation of any change is not a phase to be attended to. Every action taken is a part of implementation. Every action must therefore be designed and evaluated in connection with its potential to help or hinder implementation.
- People need to understand what is intended, how it is supposed to happen and why it makes sense for them and for the organization in order to understand the change. Understanding is a prerequisite for support.
- People do not automatically resist change. Life is change, and people not only need it, but welcome it. What people do resist is being controlled – being told that they must make the change that somebody else wants them to make, whether they like it or not and whether it's good for them or not.
- Extensive changes and system-wide change absolutely require ongoing and clear support from the organization's senior leaders.
- All change in organizations or social systems emerges from the continuing accumulation of many different and interacting actions, forces and events, and is being constantly readjusted and modified
- Real change takes real time. Organizational change requires a definite expenditure of people's available time and effort.
- What counts most is thinking.
- People need to know, pretty clearly, where the organization is trying to go – what its aspirations for the change are, and what tangible and measurable objectives are associated with them.

Logic of the Systemic Change Process



Notes



Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM)

The concerns-based approach offers a research-verified way for us to think about, plan for, monitor, and facilitate change. The research suggests that people differ in their approach and response to and movement through change, and that they may require differential support and assistance for success. The Stages of Concern approach and procedures can be used to help gauge and understand individuals and their needs as they experience implementation and its related concerns

The following are assumptions of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model:

- Understanding the point of view of the participants in the change;
- Process is critical;
- Change is a process, not an event;
- It is possible to anticipate much that will occur during a change process;
- Innovations come in all sizes and shapes;
- Innovation and implementation are two sides of the change process coin;
- To change something, someone has to change first; and,
- Everyone can be a change facilitator.

Essentially this model means that change is a process for and by people. It has its technical side and its human side. It starts and ends with individuals, who in combination make our schools effective.

-Change in Schools, Facilitating the Process by Gene E. Hall and Shirley M. Hord,
State University of New York Press, 1987

CBAM outlines seven “Stages of Concern” that offer a way to understand and then address educators’ common concerns about change:

- **Stage 1: Awareness** – Aware of innovation start but not really interested.
- **Stage 2: Informational** – Interested in some information about the change.
- **Stage 3: Personal** – Wants to know the personal impact of the change.
- **Stage 4: Management** – How will the change be managed in practice?
- **Stage 5: Consequence** – Interested in the impact on students or the school.
- **Stage 6: Collaboration** – Interested in cooperating to make the change effective.
- **Stage 7: Refocusing** – Refines the innovation to improve student learning results.

What can be done to address the inevitable resistance to change?

Resistance to change can be overcome. Some suggestions for this are:

- Communicate;
- Acknowledge change as a process;
- Empower the stakeholders—include them in the decision-making process;
- Set concrete goals—by consensus, creating a broad sense of ownership;
- Be sensitive through the change process as stakeholders redefine their roles;
or,
- Deal with emotions and feelings; perhaps, honour the past before moving on.

-Shhh, the Dragon Is Asleep and Its Name Is Resistance by Monica Janas,
Journal of Staff Development, Summer 1998 (Vol. 19, No. 3)

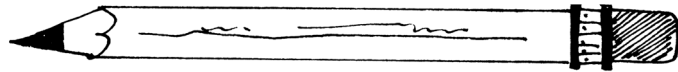
Board Policy Considerations

Board policy on change implementation processes and roles within them can assure consistency in planning and implementing change.

Providing change process orientation and in-service training can facilitate successful change implementation.

Adopting a model for change implementation can provide understanding of the change process and protocol for the participants in the school division.

Notes



Evaluation

Program evaluation is a formal process of gathering and analyzing information about some aspect of a school program in order to make a decision, or to communicate the merits of the aspect to other decision-makers or appropriate groups. Program evaluation is primarily a tool for managing organizational change.

Evaluations are usually done with the intention of improvement and follow-up and are usually formative or summative

Formative evaluation refers to the gathering and using of information during the operation of a program or activity. It is an ongoing process and provides feedback for decision-making and change along the way.

Summative evaluation refers to the gathering and using of information at the end of the operation of a program or activity. Summative evaluation provides a final assessment of the effects of a program, curriculum, material, etc. It leads to a decision to continue, modify or discontinue.

The role of program evaluation is not limited to situations demanding specific or immediate action. Program evaluation is equally important as a standing component in the everyday operation of a school system.

Program Evaluation Committee perspective on program evaluation includes accountability, improve programs, feedback on meeting client needs , and creating a culture of continuous improvement. It holds the promise of improved performance, making better decisions, adding new knowledge, and advocacy.

Therefore, there is a need to show the benefits of program evaluation to the users which should be done first “What are the benefits of program evaluation?”

The major purpose of any program evaluation is the improvement of the teaching and learning process; it should related to program improvement.

Purposes for Evaluation

	FORMATIVE (Improve)	SUMMATIVE (Certify)
Audience	Project Staff	Potential consumer
Major Characteristic	Timelines	Convincing
Measures	Often Informal	Valid/Reliable
Frequency of Data Collection	Frequent	Usually once or twice
Sample Size	Often Small	Large
Questions Asked	What is working? What needs to be improved?	What results occur? With whom? Under what condition(s)? With what training? At what cost?
Design Constraints	What information is needed? When?	

-Evaluation of Educational Programs by Blaine R. Worthen, 1988

Anything planned by a teacher, school or the school system is part of the educational program and can be evaluated. However, it usually pertains to:

- The delivery of a curriculum;
- The specific content of a curriculum area;
- A component of instruction;
- Organization of instruction or students;
- Curricular materials and/or their use; and,
- Objectives of a lesson or a curriculum.

Guiding Principles for Evaluation

Range

The range of evaluation criteria should match the range of outcomes which the program publicly intends and which it is demonstrably and realistically designed to achieve.

Specificity

Program outcomes and program components or activities should be stated with sufficient specificity, concreteness, and precision to lend guidance to the formulation of evaluation criteria, the array of observable variables, and the selection of methods and measures.

Rigor

The rigor and stringency reflected in the evaluation design should adequately reflect the rigor and power of the program. Then opportunities to pursue the strongest possible test of promising ideas will be deliberately cultivated.

Relevance

Evaluation will be more valued by all if it is designed to provide useful information on recurrent issues and problems, if it preserves high standards while rewarding curiosity, and if it is designed to include teachers and administrators as informed partners in design and conduct.

-Making Sure: Contributions and Requirements of Good Evaluation
by Judith Warren Little, Journal of Staff Development, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 45, 1982

Scope of Program Evaluation

The scope of program features are those aspects of prescribed curricula which, due to their presence or absence, contribute to the success or failure of the curriculum as a whole. They might include:

- Meeting student needs;
- Objectives;
- Scope and sequence of the curriculum;
- Instructional strategies;
- Staff development;
- Attitudes toward the program;
- Evidence of student learning; or,
- Resources.

Features of Program Evaluation

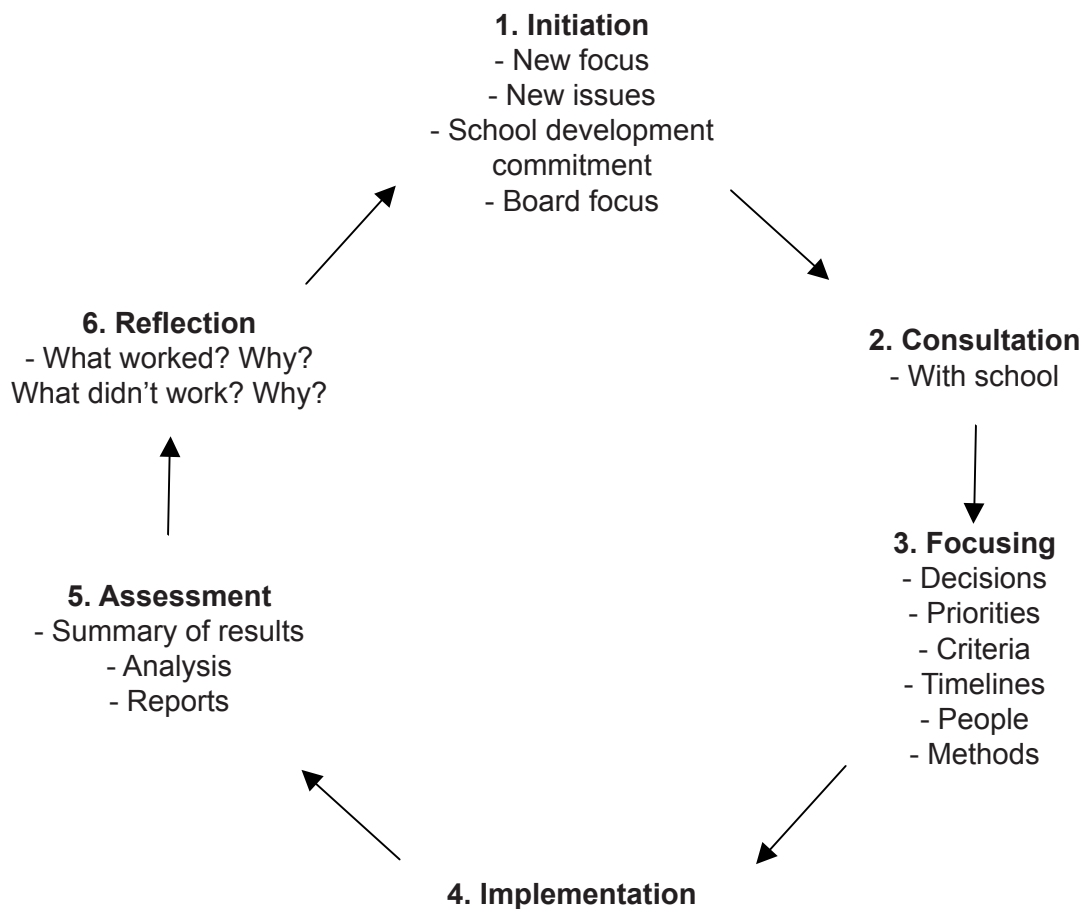
- A clearly stated description of what is to be evaluated – aspects of program?
- The purpose of the evaluation – why evaluate?
- Objectives of the evaluation – specific goals and/or effects?
- Organizing to evaluate – what needs to be readied?
- Data collection – what data and which instruments?
- Organizing and analyzing the data – what has been found out?
- Reporting and follow-up of the evaluation.

Organizing for Evaluation

- Clarify the purpose of the evaluation;
- Determine who needs the results of the evaluation;
- Decide if there are any important or sensitive issues for which special attention is needed;
- Determine what resource are needed or are available for the evaluation; and,
- Consider resource issues such as personnel, time, funds, data collection, in-service needs and available data.

Program evaluation follows a logical pattern beginning with the initiation of the aspect of the program that is to be examined and ending with reflection and decision. It is cyclical in that the process can begin again with another new aspect of the program emanating from the prior process.

Summative Evaluation Process



Project Approach to Problem Solving (E. J. Ingram, 1989)

The change process can be seen as a problem solving exercise in which the solution is identified as a problem and actions are taken to resolve the problem. The project is separated from the on-going work of the organization, yet it is essential to the development of the organization.

Translating vision into reality and sustaining or institutionalizing it requires knowledge and leadership skill in:

- Identifying key elements of the vision which require institutionalization;
- Collecting and analyzing the data necessary to inform the process;
- Identifying the issues influencing the decision making process;
- Generating alternative means of resolving issues and solving the problem; and,
- Making decisions related to the process of moving the intention to action – the problem-solving process.

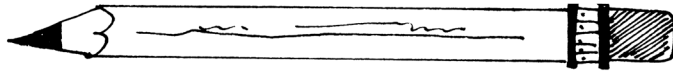
Characteristics of projects are:

- A clearly stated goal or set of goals;
- A set of performance standards;
- A time constraint;
- A unique set of activities;
- A supplemental activity;
- Specific budget constraints; and,
- Visible and specific outcomes.

There are 10 steps usually involved in project design and management:

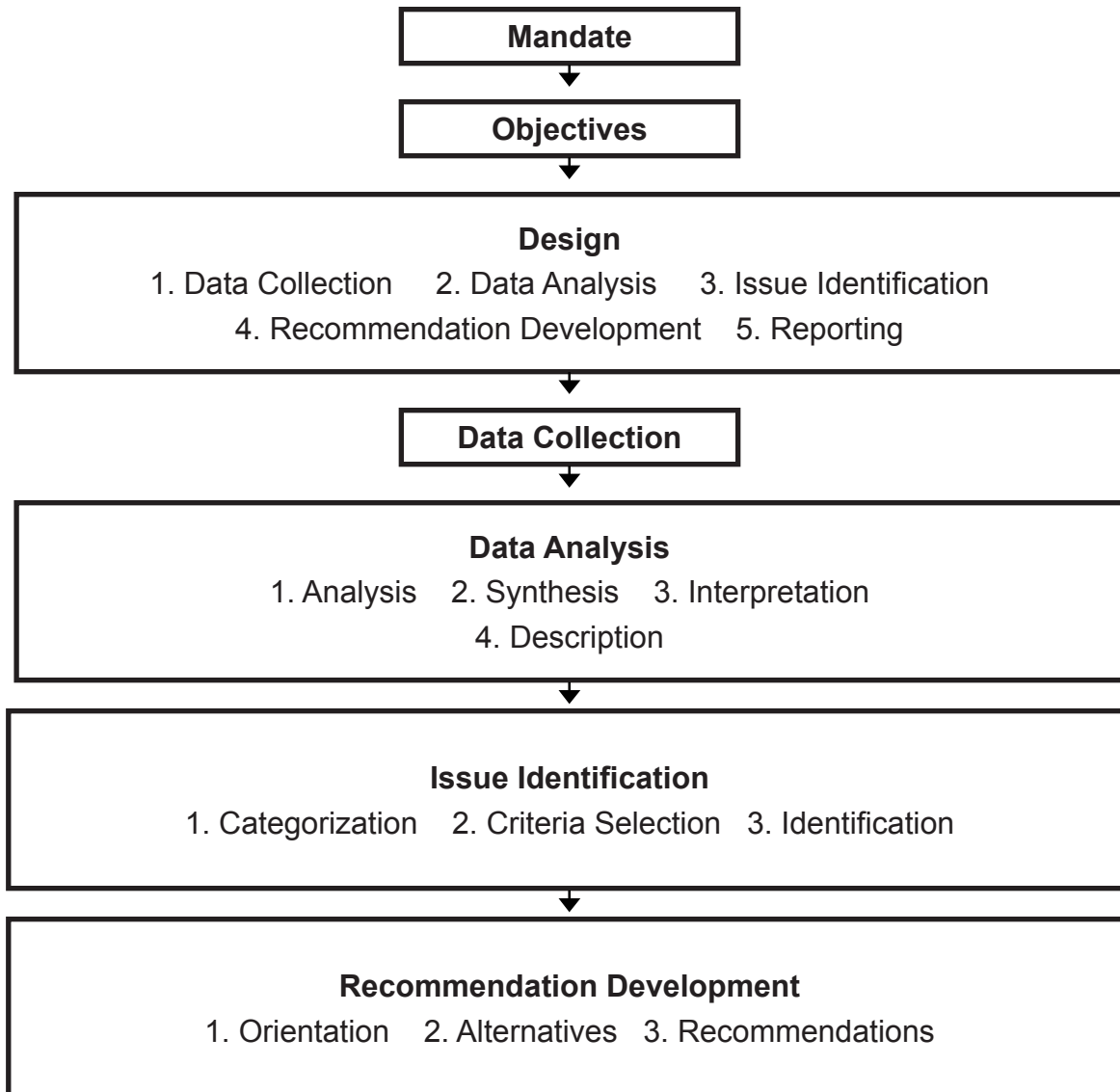
1. Identifying a problem or area of concern by an operating jurisdiction;
2. Deciding action regarding this area of concern through the project mode;
3. Deciding to carry out the project through the use of internal staff or through a contract with an external source;
4. Developing specifications for the project design and operation;
5. Assigning the project to internal staff or issuing a request for proposals to appropriate external sources;
6. Developing a proposal by the assigned staff or interested external sources;
7. Considering and accepting a proposal by the contracting agency;
8. Developing the detailed management and research designs for the project by those selected or contracted to conduct it;
9. Conducting the project; and,
10. Reporting its results.

Notes



One possible project problem-solving design model is illustrated below.

Project Problem-Solving Design Model



Considerations for Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is a complex and difficult task. It tends to be unpopular because it has had a “top down” reputation with little clarity of the purpose of the evaluation and little practitioner involvement. People tend to be defensive because evaluation focuses on what to improve. Administrators must consider:

- Begin with self-awareness;
- That program evaluation is a complex interplay of politics, stakeholders, competing claims, pressure groups, program acceptance;
- Creating a receptive culture is essential for people to choose change or improvement. How you get to where you are going makes all the difference. Be gentle – use kid gloves. Create a climate of trust. There may be no history or culture but one develops quickly;
- That acceptance of program evaluation is viewed positively when people affected by it believe that what is proposed is reasonable, workable and attainable;
- That the principal must have a personal mission statement – goals;
- That Change Theory moves through a cycle of an awareness, interest and adoption stage;
- Anything that is everyone’s business, is no one’s business;
- Program changes;
- Type of staff needed;
- Wishes of professional and student groups;
- Board preferences;
- Long range strategy position
- Cooperation of all parties on decisions, planning and implementation;
- Focus on teaching and learning;
- That schools do make a difference;
- People come first;
- A focus on academic achievement, high expectations, learning time, orderly climate, learning opportunities for teachers as well as students, regular evaluations and feedback;
- That the key is to search for excellence in people – personnel;
- Following through on improvements; and,
- Bringing closure for success – tidying up.

As the program evaluation progresses, it is well to remember that the expected progress of a project is not the same as the actual progress as shown below.

Board Policy Considerations

Board policy that makes provision for regular, cyclical program evaluation according to prescribed protocol in a climate of trust can provide leadership and direction within the school division and give assurance that program evaluation will be done.

Board policy on staff development opportunities for program evaluation leaders can provide assurance that the Board supports the program evaluation initiative.

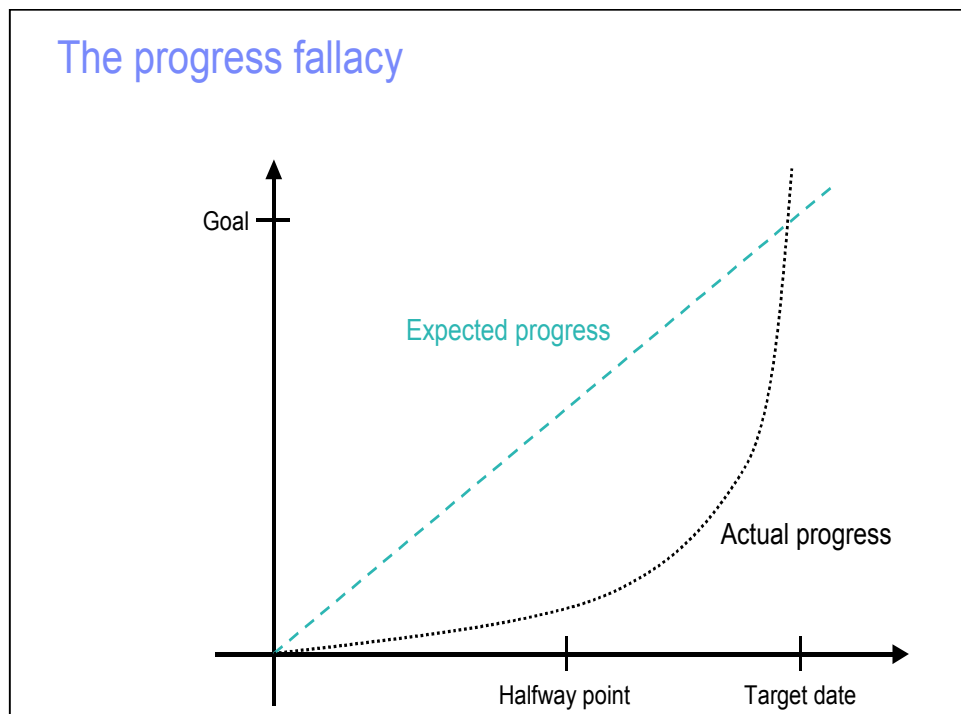
Boards of education may wish to consider developing a policy that would include annual program evaluation budget allocation.

“Rigorous and comprehensive program evaluation will take place in school districts only where the following conditions prevail:

- It can be mounted under ordinary circumstances, with ordinarily strained budgets, and ordinarily crowded schedules
- It is valued and rewarded by all those who influence and are influenced by its use.”

Judith Warren Little (1982)

“Making Sure: Contributions and Requirements of Good Evaluation,”
Journal of Staff Development Vol. 3, No. 1 p.30



Leading with Data

Boards of education and educators are working to improve schools as a central focus of their learning community. Effective leaders recognize that they must balance maintaining the status quo with exploring new directions. This approach assumes that improvements occur when participants reflect on current practice, explore new possibilities and engage in on-going assessment of their effectiveness.

Since 1984, major efforts have been made to renew the educational program in Saskatchewan schools. At this time it is appropriate to ask, “How are we doing?” A good deal of effort is being directed at collecting better information to better inform decision making in education.

Effective school boards lead with data. They use data to identify strengths and weaknesses in student performance, teacher quality, and school leadership in their district. They use it to show whether taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and how they might be better used for the greatest gain.

As board members strive for excellence and equity in schools, their policy making must be guided by well informed thoughtful analysis based on reliable and valid data. Information helps board members provide the leadership that results in high-quality school systems.

What information do you have?	What information do you need?

Data-Driven Decision-Making

Data-driven decision making is the process of collecting, analysing, reporting, and using data for school improvement. Data help measure the effectiveness of school board policy and help determine if the school division's purpose and mission are being met. Data help develop system goals and action plans for implementation so that there can be focus of action that will result in measurable improvements.

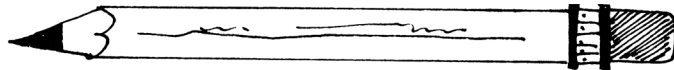
Effective boards work on eight key areas: vision, standards, assessment, accountability, alignment, climate, collaborative relationships, and continuous improvement. Without data, they cannot determine progress in each area and the system as a whole. Without data, policy making is based on hunches or anecdotes instead of accurate information.

Purposes of Data

Reliable and timely data helps focus board policies on student performance, deepen the community's understanding about its role in school improvement, identify new issues or challenges, diagnose problems, and anticipate future conditions. The data can be quantitative, indication through hard numbers, or qualitative, information gathered from focus groups, surveys and interviews.

Indicators of student performance are provided, in part, through tests. When looking at the test results, board members need to understand what specific tests are designed to do and not do. They need to know that norm-referenced tests, which compare individual performance with the performance of others in the same grade (usually nation-wide), and criterion-referenced tests, which measure a students performance against a set of standards for what the student should know and be able to do at different grade levels and in different subject areas (usually pass or fail scores). They also need to remember that the best evaluation is multiple source information.

Notes



Types of Assessment

Assessment of Opportunity to Learn

An important measure of the quality of education offered to students is the availability of programs, staff and other resources that are provided to support student learning.

Assessment of Program Expectations

Saskatchewan's Core Curriculum defines in general terms the expectations for student learning. As part of the implementation process, teachers are asking for clarification about what the essential learnings are and to what level students are expected to achieve. The Department of Education has conducted several curriculum evaluations to examine what is being taught and how it is being taught.

Assessment of Student Performance

New courses of study with new objectives and an emphasis on the Common Essential Learnings require new thinking about how students should be evaluated. A good deal of effort is required to develop policies and processes that clarify how well students are learning. There is growing pressure for public accountability. Saskatchewan has traditionally placed little emphasis on assessing student learning performance against criterion standards as a measure of the quality of education. When school board members have a more complete picture of how all student are performing, they are better equipped to implement polices that address the results of all students.

Data can serve as an important tool to help strengthen board-director relationships as well. The board's role in using data to drive school improvement focuses largely on setting goals with community stakeholders, setting priorities with the director and staff, and using data to evaluate progress and to review and revise student achievement goals.. The director's role emphasizes developing an action plan based on data and demonstrating reasonable progress toward the goals.

Board Policy Considerations

A Board policy on policy development which makes qualitative data a prerequisite to the development and adoption of Board policy will provide justifiable basis for the policy.

A Board policy on sharing information of school division successes and required improvements through an annual school division indicators report can create an open climate of trust and cooperation among the school division participants and taxpayers.

Reflection

Three key ideas from this module are:

-
-
-

My questions:

-
-
-

	Ideas I want to learn more about:	Ideas for my board to consider:
To be an effective trustee:		
To be an effective board:		

My Personal Plan of Action

In order to strengthen the governance of our Board of Education, I make a commitment to:

State the Area You Want to Improve	I Commit Myself to the Following	When Will I Do This?	How Will I Know I Have Been Successful



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