

### **III. ELSEWHERE IN CANADA**

The education system in Canada has developed and evolved throughout history. Just as historical changes have affected education in the classroom, change has also affected the delivery or administrative system for education and the boundaries of these administrative units. During the period from 1981 to the present all provinces and territories have conducted reviews of their division/district boundaries. Since 1990 ten provinces and territories have been reviewing or have reviewed and are now in the process of implementing changes to their division / district boundaries. While researching the Canadian situation, it was discovered that the ongoing review processes are generating a continuously changing scene. The following is a synopsis of the present status of the Canadian situation as of October, 1994. It is inevitable that, due to ongoing review activity in several provinces, the information will be slightly out of date by the time publication of this final report occurs. Some comparative statistics on each province/territory are detailed in Figure 4 at the end of this section.

#### **1. PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL SYNOPSES**

##### **NEWFOUNDLAND**

Newfoundland has delivered education services via a publicly funded denominational system since 1843. Currently, the Province operates four education systems divided into 27 school districts administered by the recognized religions. Their present boundaries were established by each denominational group dividing its area into a manageable size considering the number of schools, population and geography. Two denominations each have one district serving the entire province.

A Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Delivery of Programs and Services in Primary, Elementary, Secondary Education was established in 1990. Included in its review were the denominational delivery systems and the boundaries under which they operate. The Commission's 1992 report contained 212 recommendations covering both structural and substantive reform. A reduction in the number of school districts from the present 27 to 8 - 10 and the adoption of fully publicly elected school boards was recommended. The continued presence of the churches in education was recommended but in a much reduced capacity, focussing primarily in the areas of religious education, pastoral care, and family life programs. The Commission also heard the desire of citizens, parents, teachers and the community to be

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involved in schooling and local school decisions. As a consequence, School Councils were recommended to be established by legislation. Although present legislation allows for reimbursement of certain expenses, elected trustees do not receive a stipend.

The Newfoundland Government has proceeded with implementation planning for a majority of the substantive education reforms. Dialogue between the government and the recognized denominations has continued regarding the proposed structural changes. However, as of October, 1994 the Government announced that legislation to reorganize the system will not proceed immediately. This decision was due to the declared intent expressed by two religious groups to initiate a constitutional challenge.

#### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Prince Edward Island previously had 5 educational units (or divisions), 4 anglophone and 1 francophone. The Department of Education and Human Resources has recently reviewed the number of jurisdictions in the province. Legislation was passed in May, 1994 reducing the number of units to 2 anglophone boards and 1 francophone board. The anglophone boards virtually divide the province in half producing an eastern unit with a population of 7,783 students and a western unit with a population of 15,832 students. The francophone unit is a province-wide jurisdiction with 627 students governed by 9 elected trustees, while the anglophone boards each have 15 trustees.

#### NOVA SCOTIA

Nova Scotia conducted a review of its education financing system in 1981. The review recommended that school divisions reduce their numbers from 77 to a suggested 21. Those that amalgamated were funded to the maximum unified provincial funding level. Those that elected to remain independent were funded at 90% of the eligible level. The number of school boards was reduced to 21 anglophone boards and 1 francophone board. A second separate francophone board funded primarily by the Federal Government has since been established. District boundary lines were established roughly along county lines. Trustee representation was adjusted upon amalgamation as determined by the Minister of Education and the local municipality.

The Provincial Government established the Select Review Committee on Education in 1991 to consult the public on matters relating to the education system which included taxation authority, school board members and their responsibilities, school trustees (local school councils which are elected every three years), payment of administration and teaching staff, classroom related matters and public involvement in education. School board members receive an annual stipend

and reimbursement for specific related expenses. Trustees in Nova Scotia are equivalent to members of local school councils in other jurisdictions. They are optional in every school district, but where they exist, trustees receive an annual stipend and reimbursement for specific expenses as legislated.

The newly elected Nova Scotia Government is in the process of reviewing its education system with the probability of further restructuring education including reductions in the number of school boards. During the summer of 1994 school boards were surveyed and provided feedback. A white paper is expected to be presented to school boards in January, 1995.

#### NEW BRUNSWICK

New Brunswick previously had 42 school districts in operation. The government recently decided to reduce the number of school districts by amalgamation. As a result, in 1992 the number of school districts was reduced from 42 to 18. The Province established boundaries for the 12 anglophone school boards and different boundaries for the 6 francophone school boards. Each set of boundaries covers virtually the entire province.

All school boards have 11 elected trustees. In addition, the province has 6 community boards which are minority boards. A minority board is responsible for all aspects of school operation and is responsible to a school district board. Community boards have either 7 or 9 elected trustees with two members from the community board serving on the school district board. An example of this is the francophone school in Fredericton which is operated by a community board and is responsible to the Moncton Francophone School District Board. Elected trustees do not receive remuneration. Amalgamation of school districts required reassignment of employees to other offices in other areas of the province including the return of some supervisory employees to teaching positions.

#### QUEBEC

The Province of Quebec previously had over 200 school districts in operation. The Department of Education reviewed the number of districts in 1992 and reduced the number to 165 by integrating elementary and secondary panels to form one school board and subsequently to 158 by integrating its regional boards. The province has 101 francophone boards, 49 bilingual boards and 8 anglophone Boards. School boards are presently drawn along denominational lines. Montreal is divided into a number of school districts. The student population varies in each district.

The number of trustees elected to the school board is based on the student population. A district with a student population of 2,000 elects 9 trustees, while one with a student population of 25,000 or more elects 21 trustees.

The Department is again reviewing the boundaries with a view to restructuring along linguistic lines, with the exception of Montreal and Quebec City areas. Implementation is targeted for July 1996.

### ONTARIO

The Province of Ontario has 169 school boards, consisting of public, Catholic, county, district, francophone, school area and treatment centre boards. In densely populated areas boundary lines follow county lines. In Northern Ontario and remote areas where the population is spread out, boundaries approximate groupings of county lines. Students must attend school within the county to which their parents pay taxes.

Metropolitan Toronto includes the boroughs of East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, Toronto and York each with its own school board. The Metropolitan Separate School Board, a Roman Catholic board, is responsible for English and French education delivery to the largest student population for the entire metropolitan Toronto area. Conseil des ecoles francaises de la communaute urbaine de Toronto also has jurisdiction over the metropolitan area serving 1,519 francophone students. There is also a Hospital and Treatment Centre Board serving 101 students in various medical centres throughout the metropolitan area.

The Toronto school boards vary in student size. The following non-inclusive list indicates these size variations.

East York Board of Education	14,557	North York Board of Education	62,946
Etobicoke Board of Education	35,647	Scarborough Board of Education	78,790
Metropolitan Separate School Board	104,068	Toronto Board of Education	77,800

The Metropolitan Toronto School Board, as primarily a funding agency, is responsible for all taxation within the metropolitan area and the education of all special needs students. That board dispurses revenue to the funded public school boards within the metropolitan Toronto area.

There are presently nearly 2,000 trustees in Ontario. The Ministry in 1988 passed legislation amending the Education Act, effecting a formula for calculating the number of trustees in each school board. A divisional board, which is a public or Roman Catholic board, serving a voting population of 5,000 would have 8 trustees, while one serving 483,000 voters and over qualifies

for 21 trustees. The number of members of a board that is not a divisional board is calculated at 8 trustees for less than 140,000 electors and up to 19 trustees for 425,000 electors or more. The boards that are not divisional boards include separate school boards, school districts, counties, school areas or isolated boards. The Minister of Education and Training has received requests from over 50 divisions to reduce their trustee numbers to fewer than required by the formula.

The Ontario Ministry of Education and Training established a Royal Commission on Learning in May, 1993. One area of its mandate is a review of the governance system. The report is to be completed by December, 1994.

### SASKATCHEWAN

The Saskatchewan public school system consists of 92 Protestant divisions and 22 Roman Catholic divisions. There are 8 comprehensive school boards comprised of elected members from participating school boards which operate jointly funded Comprehensive Schools. A number of school boards do not have school facilities. They administer their funding and pay neighbouring school divisions to educate their children. The Minister of Education has legislative authority to change any division boundary, but if the change affects the boundary of a Roman Catholic school division that board must approve the change.

The Saskatchewan and Manitoba Governments have had agreements to educate students living close to a major border centre in the neighbouring province. The sending province must pay a non-resident fee. A good example exists at Creighton, Saskatchewan/Flin Flon, Manitoba. Residents of Whitebeech, Saskatchewan, an area west of Swan River would like to send their children to schools in Swan River, their closest "home town" for other purposes. This arrangement could be accomplished by inter-provincial agreement. At the present time, however, this has not been negotiated.

The Department of Education, Training and Employment conducted a School Finance and Governance Review in 1990. The review included examination of boundaries as they impact on both finance and governance. A further review of local government and education by the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association and educational partners recommended a reduction of 92 public divisions to 35 with a suggested Boundaries Commission to determine specifics. School Division sizing attempts were made with a base suggested at 2,500 - 5,000 students subject to several modifying factors. The Minister made funds available for 3 to 5 amalgamation pilot projects and school divisions were invited to apply for these incentive grants. The applications are being reviewed.

The number of trustees on each school board is legislated at a minimum of 5, with a maximum of 10. In addition to elected school boards, legislation allows for the appointment of advisory councils in urban centres and the election of local district boards of trustees in rural areas.

ALBERTA

Following round table discussions, the Alberta Government passed legislation in August, 1993 to reduce 181 school divisions and districts to 142 effective February, 1994 by amalgamation of non-operating public school districts. The districts were those which had few or no resident students and did not operate schools. Their students attended schools in neighbouring jurisdictions. The amalgamation saw 8 public districts disappear and 27 public districts joined with the jurisdiction in which their students attended school. Five remote districts remained unaffected due to their isolated nature.

The Government announced in January, 1994 a further reorganization and review of its school jurisdictions would take place. Boards were given until August, 1994 to voluntarily restructure. In October, 1994 the government announced the amalgamation of school boards to 57 divisions, districts and regional divisions.

The public school system includes Protestant and Roman Catholic or separate school boards. Major cities in Alberta had two school divisions/districts - one Protestant and one Roman Catholic. The following non-inclusive list shows the varying sizes of student populations the school boards administer.

Calgary School District	95,161	Grande Prairie School District	4,547
Edmonton Roman Catholic Separate S.D.	29,717	Lethbridge School District	8,081
Edmonton School District	72,721	Medicine Hat School District	6,106

Several major cities still have a Roman Catholic Separate School Board. However, the recent reorganization amalgamated most of these separate school boards with nearby rural Roman Catholic boards. An example is the Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School Division which is now comprised of 30,678 students: 29,986 from the City of Calgary and 692 from two rural Roman Catholic Separate School Divisions.

Along with amalgamation of school jurisdictions, trustee representation has been reviewed resulting in a reduction from over 1,000 to 435 elected trustees. Larger trustee representation, of 10, 16 or 25 occurs in jurisdictions responsible for large geographic areas, some with sparse population. School Advisory Councils are legislated in the The School Act. The legislation

specifies the eligible council members as well as the duties and responsibilities of the advisory council.

The provincial government will collect and redistribute all property taxes to fund education commencing in September, 1994 and will phase in uniform mill rates for all properties by 1997.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Province of British Columbia operates 75 school districts. The number of school districts in major cities varies from one in each suburb of Vancouver to one district responsible for a city such as Kelowna and the surrounding area. The greater Vancouver area includes the suburbs of Burnaby, Delta, Langley, Maple-Ridge, New Westminister, North Vancouver, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Richmond, Surrey, Vancouver, West Vancouver and White Rock. They are each governed by a school district which varies in student population. The following non-inclusive list provides a sample of sizes including the largest and smallest divisions in the Vancouver area.

Coquitlam	27,865	North Vancouver	16,800	Vancouver	54,800
New Westminister	4,098	Surrey	48,235	West Vancouver	6,162

Legislation permits a school board size of 3, 5, 7 or 9 trustees, depending on division size. They may be elected at large or by electoral area as determined by the Minister. The School Act permits the establishment of Parents' Advisory Councils by application to the board or to the Minister. The Ministry of Education is discussing the need for a review of its school district boundaries as part of a larger examination of governance and administration of the public education system.

YUKON

The education system in the Yukon is administered by the Department of Education. A division or district governance system has not been established. The Department of Education employs 3 area superintendents, each responsible for an educational area. These areas may be adjusted at the discretion of the Minister. A director of French education is responsible for 5 schools where French is taught as a first language. The Yukon Government has developed a new Education Act which became law in 1990. Its implementation will allow gradual transfer of responsibilities to school boards.

The Education Act provides for establishment of school boards and school councils. Legislation allows for the establishment of a school board upon application to the Minister. It sets the number of school trustees at a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 9 members. School councils

have a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 7 members. The act also guarantees representation from Yukon First Nations on school boards and councils. Elections of school trustees are for a three year term and are held simultaneously with general elections for municipal councillors.

Funding of education is managed and disbursed by the Department of Education to ensure equitable access regardless of tax base.

#### NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

The Northwest Territorial Government previously operated 11 school boards. The boundaries are drawn along linguistic lines. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment reviewed the school board boundaries in 1994 and effective July, 1994 they reduced the number of boards to 10. Several jurisdictions cover large geographic areas which include extremely remote sparsely populated island communities. The number of trustees varies based on the number of communities included in the education jurisdiction. Each school has a Community Education Council which has one representative on the Division Board of Education.



CROSS-CANADA INFORMATION  
1993

Province or Territory	Provincial population 1991 Census	Student population public system 1993	Number of school divisions or districts	Students per Division / District			Divisions in major cities	School Board Members			School Advisory Councils Legislated
				min.	max.	avg.		min.	max.	avg.	
Newfoundland	568,474	114,558	27	263	18,275	4,243	1-3	13	19	16	No
Prince Edward Island	129,765	24,242	3	627	15,832	8,081	*1 -	9	15	13	No
Nova Scotia	899,942	165,890	22	655	31,551	7,541	1	5	14	9	Yes
New Brunswick	723,900	138,686	18	2,912	15,530	7,705	*1 -	9	11	10	No
Quebec	6,895,963	574,361	158	2,000	25,000	3,635	1-6	9	21	15	Yes
Ontario	10,084,885	2,015,468	169	50	104,068	11,908	5-7	8	*326	12	Pilot
Manitoba	1,091,942	196,195	57	21	34,764	3,442	1-10	5	12	9	2 divisions
Saskatchewan	988,928	195,967	*5 114	13	24,342	1,719	1-2	5	10	7	Yes
Alberta	2,545,553	479,000	*4 57	66	98,399	8,404	2	6	17	8	Yes
British Columbia	3,282,061	568,668	75	387	54,800	7,582	*1 2-13	7	11	9	Yes
Yukon	27,797	5,761	None	781	2,318	1,587	*2 -	1 per school		-	Yes
Northwest Territories	57,649	15,107	11	554	3,478	1,510	1	5	15	11	No

Figure 4

1. All school divisions and districts in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick include major cities and surrounding areas. Some jurisdictions in other provinces and territories have both administrative combinations of major cities and cities /rural areas.
2. Yukon does not have school districts/divisions but is divided into educational areas administered by the Department of Education. Student population is given by area. Elected officers are school based. Gradual transfer of responsibilities to boards of trustees is proceeding.
3. Trustee numbers in Ontario exceed legislated maximum until the end of this elected term of office.
4. Alberta figures reflect the January, 1995 structure announced in October, 1994.
5. Saskatchewan has 114 districts consisting of 92 public and 22 Roman Catholic school districts.