

Understanding the Policy Development Process

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE
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Overview

- ▶ Introduction to Legislation, Regulations and Policy Tools
- ▶ Provincial Education Policy Development Process
 - ▶ School Advisory Councils and their role in policy development
- ▶ Regional/Board Policy Development

Introduction to Legislation, Regulations and Policy Tools

Policy Tools or Options

Difficult to Change



Easier to Change

Legislation

Regulations

Policies

**Protocols, Procedures,
Guidelines**

Understanding Legislation and Regulations

Legislation

- This is law that is enacted by the House of Assembly. (Example: *Education Act*). Breaching of an Act creates liability enforceable by the courts.
- A bill is introduced in the House of Assembly and will pass through various stages before it is approved (otherwise known as “Royal Assent”).
- Legislation does not always come into force upon Royal Assent and may be proclaimed at a later date. (Example: *Conseil scolaire acadien provincial Act*)

Process

- Introduction of a bill (First Reading)
- Second Reading
- Law Amendments Committee
- Committee of the Whole House on Bills
- Third Reading
- Royal Assent
- Proclamation

Understanding Legislation and Regulations

Regulations

- Regulations are laws that are subordinate to an Act.
- The power to make regulations is contained within an Act. They aim to help a person to apply the principles of the Act.
- Making or amending regulations requires approval from the Governor in Council or the Minister.
- Examples:
 - *Governor in Council Education Act Regulations/ Governor in Council CSAP Act Regulations*
 - *Ministerial Education Act Regulations / Ministerial CSAP Act Regulations*

Types of Policy Instruments

- **Policy** – broad statements of principle(s) which outline government's position on key matters. It specifies responsibilities and accountability within.
 - Provincial education policy provides high level direction related to the delivery of public education and the operation of schools in Nova Scotia. Policies apply system-wide unless specified otherwise.
 - *Example: Inclusive Education Policy*
- **Protocol** – provides non-policy directives to follow. Protocols are more formal and regimented, providing step-by-step actions to be taken under specific circumstances.
 - Protocols are more explicit and specific in their detail than guidelines; in that they specify who does 'what', 'when' and 'how'.
 - *Example: Safety Protocols for Skilled Trades and Technology Education*

Types of Policy Instruments

- **Procedures** – provides detailed instructions to staff responsible for implementing the policies and are administrative in nature.
 - Procedure documents under a particular policy should, whenever possible, align with each other but can include variance when appropriate to local context.
 - *Example: Administrative Procedures for Managing Diabetes in Schools*
- **Guidelines** – outlines suggested processes based on best practice. Guidelines may be developed in absence of a Policy or as a supplemental document to a Policy.
 - They provide information, best practice, or guidance on the implementation of policies, procedures, or policy directives.
 - *Example: Guidelines for the Administration of Medication to Students*

Provincial Education Policy Development Process

Policy Direction and System Funding

Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Responsible for setting provincial policy direction, funding for public education in Nova Scotia, and monitoring the performance of the public education system.

Implementation of Policy Direction

Regional Centres for Education and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial

Responsible for supporting student learning and well-being within their regions and implementing policy directions set by the Minister.

Delivery of Curriculum and the *Public School Program*

Principals and vice-principals

Instructional leaders within their school and the public education system; supporting staff and the day-to-day operations within their school.

Teachers and school-based professionals

Responsible for educating and supporting the well-being of all students.

Policy Development Process



Overview - Policy on the Coordination of Public Education Policies

(“Policy on Policies”)

- The objectives of the Policy on Policies are:
 - ▶ to ensure that all provincial policies related to the public education system in Nova Scotia are coherent, connected, and developed collaboratively and applied consistently across all Regional Centres for Education (RCEs) and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP); and
 - ▶ to provide guidance to the RCEs and CSAP on the development and recission of regional and board policies.
- Provincial policy development is a shared responsibility between the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), RCEs and CSAP, including:
 - ▶ working together to develop consistent provincial policy directions, whenever possible, and
 - ▶ supporting the academic success and well-being of all students through the lenses of inclusion, equity, language, and cultural responsiveness.

Provincial Policy Development Process – Key Players

- **Public Education Policy Coordination Committee (PEPCC)**
- **Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD)**
 - EECD Staff
 - Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development
 - Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development
- **Regional Centres for Education and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (RCEs/CSAP)**
- **School Advisory Councils**

Public Education Policy Coordination Committee (PEPCC)

A committee with representatives from EECD, each RCE and the CSAP.

Includes those responsible for programs and student services, operations, finance, and human resources, along with African Canadian and Mi'kmaw regional representatives.

Overall Role of PEPCC:

- to ensure a cohesive policy environment for the public education system in Nova Scotia, including:
 - ▶ identifying potential policy needs, and opportunities for alignment across EECD, RCEs, and the CSAP;
 - ▶ reviewing policy proposals, and advising on the appropriate approach and instrument (i.e., policy, protocol, guideline, procedure);
 - ▶ suggesting appropriate partners to support policy development;
 - ▶ reviewing draft provincial policies to ensure they meet the policy need;
 - ▶ ensuring RCE/CSAP policies do not conflict with provincial policies.

EECD Staff

- identify potential policy needs and bring them forward for consideration
- support the development of policy proposals and proposals to rescind policies
- participate as members of the policy development team
- ensure policies are developed in alignment with the guiding principles of the Inclusive Education Policy and that all relevant partners are consulted, including School Advisory Councils, when appropriate
- support the implementation and evaluation of provincial public education policies

Deputy Minister

- provides final approval for provincial education policy proposals

Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

- provides final approval for all provincial policies related to public education
- provides final approval to rescind existing provincial public education policies

**Regional
Centres for
Education
and Conseil
scolaire
acadien
provincial
(RCEs/CSAP)**

- work collaboratively with EECD to develop provincial public education policies
- communicate provincial public education policies throughout the RCE/CSAP
- monitor the implementation of provincial public education policies, in collaboration with EECD;
- ensure adherence to provincial public education policies within the RCE/CSAP
- submit requests to develop, modify or rescind regional policies to EECD for consideration by PEPCC (RCEs only)

School Advisory Councils (SACs)

- SACs advise their school administrator(s) and RCE/CSAP on the implementation of public education policies in their school(s), as appropriate
- SACs will be included in the policy consultation process when appropriate.

Consultation – Provincial and Regional Policies

- If SACs have feedback on specific provincial or regional policies, they should submit the feedback, in writing, to the SAC Regional Representative at their RCE.
- RCEs/CSAP or EECD may ask for feedback on regional and provincial policies that impact student achievement and well-being.

School Advisory Councils (SACs)

Potential Consultation Methods

- online surveys (e.g. GNSPES platform)
- ThoughtExchange (digital focus group platform)
- requests for volunteers to participate in in-person or online consultation sessions
- participation in provincial or regional meetings

Consultation method is usually dependent on timelines and the topic.

Example of recent consultation (provincial): *Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy Review*

Consultation and Engagement

- Consultation with key partners is an important part of the provincial policy development process.
- Key partners will be identified based on the respective policy.
- Consultations will account for **local and first voice** and be as inclusive as possible, with consideration being made to reflect the interests and concerns of those who are historically marginalized and racialized, or who come from other groups that have been traditionally underrepresented and under-served.

Implementation and Evaluation

- Any new provincial policies or updates to existing provincial policies will be communicated to the system.
 - The Deputy Minister will communicate to RCEs and CSAP, and unions (if applicable)
 - RCEs/CSAP will communicate to staff and the school community.
 - New policies are posted publicly on the EECD website.
- EECD is responsible for supporting implementation (for example, developing professional development and resources for staff as required).
- EECD will monitor implementation, in collaboration with the RCEs/CSAP.

Rescinding Existing Provincial Policies

- To maintain a coordinated provincial policy environment, the Minister may rescind provincial public education policies that are no longer relevant, or have been replaced by other policies, regulations, or legislation.
- Rescinded provincial public education policies will be communicated to the system by the Deputy Minister.
 - Rescinded policies will be removed from the EECD website.

Regional/Board Policy Development

Regional and Board Policies

- **RCEs** may develop their own policies on region-specific issues that do not warrant a provincial public education policy.
 - ▶ Regional Policy Proposals are reviewed by the Public Education Policy Coordination Committee (PEPCC) and approved by EECD.
 - ▶ The final regional policy is approved by the RCE and does not have to be approved by EECD.
 - ▶ Regional policies may be rescinded upon request by the Regional Executive Director. Proposals to rescind are reviewed by PEPCC and approved by EECD.
 - ▶ **There are administrative procedures to support regional policy development (available in English only. These do not apply to CSAP.)**
- **CSAP** may develop its own board policies on specific issues that reflect the board's responsibilities, in accordance with its governing legislation.
 - ▶ CSAP policies that are no longer relevant may be rescinded under the authority of its elected board.

Questions?

Wela'lioq! / Thank You! / Merci!

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Visit EECD's Provincial Education Policy Landing Pages:

English: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/policies>

Français: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/politiques>