

Tripartite Committee of the Action Plan - Section 23

Purpose

This document establishes the purpose, makeup and mode of operation of the Committee of the Action Plan - Section 23 established on March 29, 2006.

Background

In June 2005, in Ottawa, the Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones (FNCSF) [national federation of francophone school boards] convened the *Sommet des intervenants et des intervenantes en éducation dans la mise en oeuvre de l'article 23 en milieu francophone minoritaire* [summit of education stakeholders for the implementation of Section 23 in francophone minority communities] in order to complete the development of the French-language school system in Canada. At the conclusion of the summit, an Action Plan and a memorandum of understanding were adopted, committing nine national francophone organizations to ensuring its implementation, in cooperation with the provincial and territorial ministries of education and the federal government. A Tripartite Committee was struck in order to ensure progress on this initiative and to foster the climate of cooperation and trust that has thus been established.

Mandate and role

The mandate of the Tripartite Committee is to guide the implementation of the Action Plan in order to fully develop French-language education in Canada. More specifically, its role is to:

- Develop a global vision of the issues dealt with in the Action Plan;
- Facilitate information sharing between the parties represented on the Tripartite Committee;
- Share expertise and develop strategies to support the implementation of the Action Plan;
- Support concerted efforts between the parties at the community, provincial/territorial and federal levels regarding the issues at stake in the full implementation of Section 23;
- Encourage and facilitate partnerships to ensure the success of the Action Plan;
- Establish working groups as needed, set out their mandates and the lines of communication with the Tripartite Committee, and coordinate follow-up mechanisms;
- Monitor the ongoing progress of issues piloted by the working groups;
- Inform the communities and interested parties about progress achieved thus far, subsequent steps and proposed solutions, through status reports published at regular intervals;
- Review the Action Plan upon submission of the reports of the working groups on each of the components.

Mode of operation

Three principles shall guide the operation of the Tripartite Committee:

- Respect for the roles and areas of jurisdiction of each of the members;
- Respect for the limits and constraints of each member;
- A climate of confidentiality, cooperation and respect within the Committee.

The Tripartite Committee shall operate by consensus. Its members shall be called upon to identify policy directions and make strategic decisions. Each party is committed to respecting the confidentiality of all discussions.

The Committee shall meet at least twice annually in order to take stock of progress achieved and to orchestrate priority actions. The Committee may strike sub-committees to gain greater insight into certain issues and to propose solutions between meetings of the plenary Committee.

Accountability

The Tripartite Committee shall report on progress and ongoing challenges at the 2010 summit, as requested by participants in the June 2005 summit. In the meantime, it may publish status reports for summit participants.

Each member of the Tripartite Committee is nevertheless primarily accountable to the organization he or she represents.

Committee makeup

The Tripartite Committee is made up of representatives of the three parties that are education stakeholders in French-language minority communities: the community (including school boards), provincial and territorial governments and the federal government.

- **Communities** (6 representatives). These shall be represented by school boards and community groups. The school boards shall be represented by four representatives: the chair, the vice-chair and the executive director of the FNCSF and the chair of the Regroupement national des directions générales de l'éducation (RNDGÉ) [national group of senior officials in education]. The community groups shall be represented by senior officials of the Commission nationale des parents francophones (CNPF) [national commission of Francophone parents] and of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA) [federation of Francophone and Acadian communities of Canada].
- **Provincial and territorial governments** (14 representatives). The governments of the provinces and territories shall be represented by the twelve representatives of their ministries of education (most senior official in the area of French-language education). A representative of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, and

the national coordinators of the Ministerial Conference of the Canadian Francophonie shall be invited as observers.

- **Federal departments** (6 representatives). The federal government is represented by three representatives from Heritage Canada, two representatives from Human Resources and Social Development Canada and one representative from Industry Canada. When required, these may be joined by representatives of other departments such as Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Infrastructure Canada.

Mechanisms

Chair. The Committee shall be chaired by a neutral person who has a good understanding of the files and issues at stake in the national plan, but who does not represent an organization that is a member of the Tripartite Committee or of the Table nationale en éducation [national round table on education].

Secretariat. The secretariat shall be assumed and supervised by the FNCSF. Its role is to:

- Support the chair of the Committee;
- Call Committee meetings;
- Propose agendas for Committee meetings;
- Draft the minutes of Committee meetings;
- Coordinate the work of the Committee;
- Develop and implement communications strategies approved by the Committee;
- Monitor and coordinate the tasks of the working groups;
- Supervise the research mechanism and the financial analysis group;
- Assist the FNCSF in obtaining the necessary funding to ensure the operation of the Committee and of its working groups.

Working groups. While respecting the roles, areas of jurisdiction, limits and constraints of all parties, the working groups shall be called upon to work on the development of each of the six components of the Action Plan, namely:

- 1) The promotion of Francophone and Acadian schools
- 2) Infrastructure
- 3) Human resources
- 4) Pedagogy
- 5) Culture and identity
- 6) Early childhood.

The Tripartite Committee may create other working groups as required. The three parties participating in the Tripartite Committee shall appoint representatives to each working group, in accordance with their interests.

The role of the working groups is to:

- Plan and manage the implementation process for each component of the Action Plan;

- Coordinate the contributions of the partners;
- Report to the Tripartite Committee twice a year, in accordance with the parameters set out by the latter;
- Review and update the action plans for each component on an annual basis and report to the Tripartite Committee, which will dispose of the recommendations.

Liaison with the community sector. The FNCSF, with the support of the CNPF and of the FCFA of Canada, shall relay the views of the communities to the Tripartite Committee and, conversely, shall inform the communities of progress achieved and problems to be resolved in the implementation of the Action Plan..

Research mechanism. The Tripartite Committee secretariat shall establish a research mechanism to coordinate all studies, inventories and evaluations required for the implementation of the Action Plan.

Financial analysis group. According to needs and required knowledge, the Tripartite Committee shall rely on a financial analysis group made up of experts to evaluate the costs involved in implementing detailed plans for each of the components. The financial analysis group shall also provide support to the Secretariat for the preparation of files, and may also address specific requests from the Tripartite Committee.

“It is now up to us to build a central part of the Canada of the future.”
Edgar Gallant

**Document approved by the Tripartite Committee for the Section 23 Action Plan,
December 4, 2006.**