**Cree School Board
Educational Review: 2007-08**

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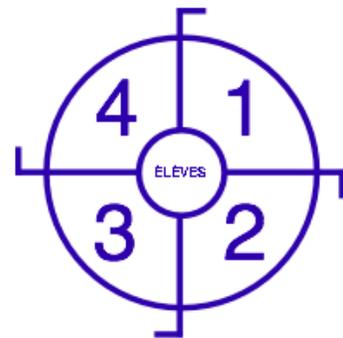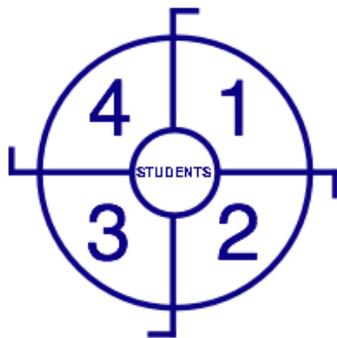
**Étude sur l'éducation : 2007-2008
Commission scolaire Crie**

C **Communication**

A **Accountability &**

F **Follow-Up for**

S **School**

I **Improvement**

Communication,

reddition de comptes

et suivi pour

l'amélioration scolaire

Services professionnels
Talleyrand
Professional Services

BCW **Brentwood Consultants**

Communication, Accountability & Follow-Up for School Improvement (CAFSI) provides the final report of the Educational Review: 2007-08, prepared by members of the evaluation team:

William J. Smith;
Mary Bear;
William E. Corrigan; and
Kimberly Quinn.

June 25, 2008.

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The complete series of report documents consists of the following:

- The CAFSI Report:
  - Part 1, Overview, Context & Mission;
  - Part 2, Educating Youth in the Cree School Board;
  - Part 3, Educating Adults in the Cree School Board;
  - Part 4, School Board Support for Learning;
  - Part 5, From Findings to Action;

- Appendices of the CAFSI Report;

- Highlights of the CAFSI Report;* and

- Executive Summary of the CAFSI Report.*

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* **Disponible en français**.

French translation by Kathleen Arsenault, Ottawa.

http://www.cscree.qc.ca/Edreview/ed_review.htm
http://www.cscree.qc.ca/Edreview/Fr/Etude_Ed.htm

The report and all related materials can be found on the CSB Educational Review website:

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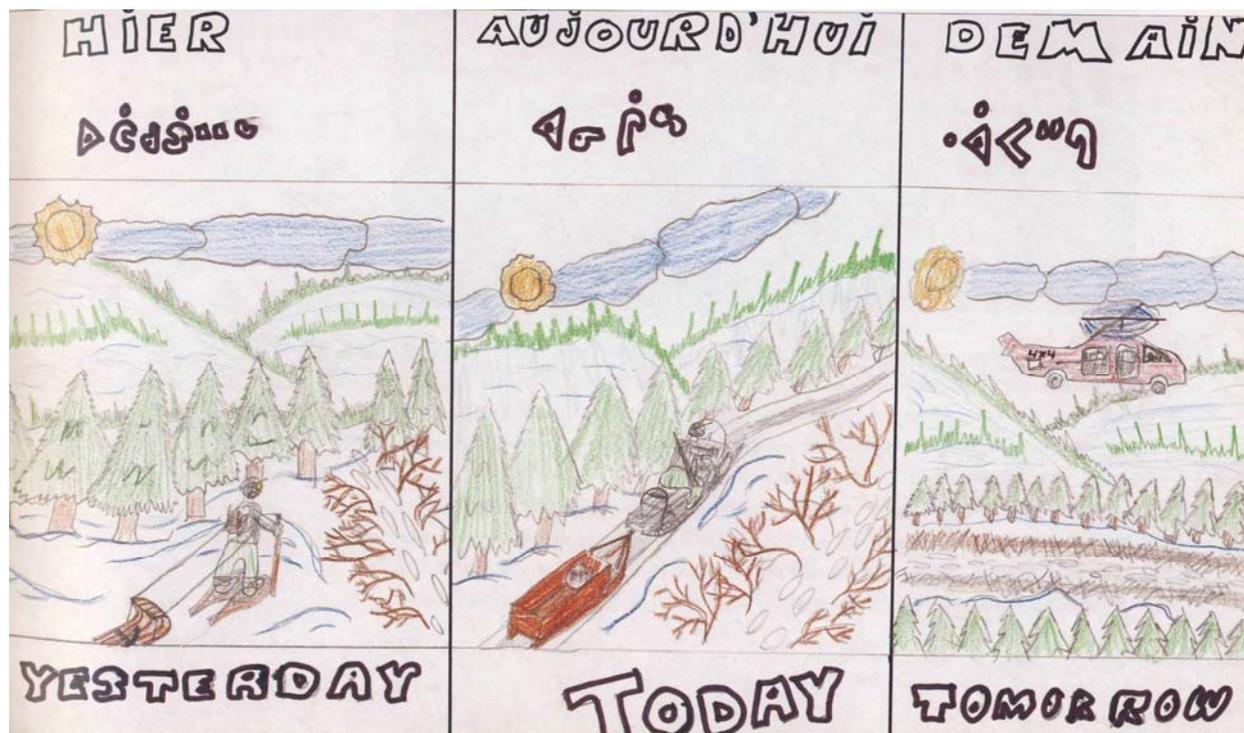courriel/e-mail: wj_smith@sympatico.ca

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PREFACE

To the Stakeholders of the Cree School Board

HIER   AUJOURD'HUI   DEMAIN

YESTERDAY   TODAY   TOMORROW

This report of the Educational Review, 2007-08 is about many aspects of the Cree School Board but they all centre around its students. We therefore thought it appropriate to preface this report with an image created by a student to express what it is all about. As suggested by this drawing, done by Darren Moar, then a twelve-year old student at Wiinibekuu School in Waskaganish, education links the past, the present and the future.

Looking back, education can help preserve what is important in our **past**, celebrate our values and traditions, but it can also help us to overcome any past conditions that would hinder our development. Looking ahead, education provides the means to secure the **future**:

> The greatest challenge facing the Cree School Board today is to improve the quality of the academic education received by the students and to maintain and improve the Cree content of the curriculum. In part, this effort will depend on the economic opportunities open to Cree students once they graduate. Students coming through the education system must have experience and knowledge of the many careers from which they can choose."[1]

Education has the potential to provide students with these options but as this quotation suggests, options cannot come from the school or the school board working in isolation. Partnerships, networking and other forms of collaboration at multiple levels - community, the James Bay region and beyond - are required to ensure that students can be successful on whatever path they choose to pursue, be it in a Cree community or elsewhere.

In taking this long-term perspective, we sometimes forget that the **present** lies between the past and the future and education is equally important in the present. For students, a very large portion of their present life is spent in school or engaged in school-related activities. This 'present' state stretches from early childhood to young adulthood and beyond, especially if we

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[1] The text and the drawing are from Michael Gnarowski, Ed., *I Dream of Yesterday and Tomorrow: A Celebration of the James Bay Crees* (Kemptville ON: Golden Dog Press, 2002), pp. 122-123.

embrace the notion of life-long learning. The quality of education therefore includes the quality of the experience that students have throughout their school life, as well as the opportunities that it affords for the future. We owe it to them to make that experience as meaningful and enjoyable as possible.

Some of you, as you read this report, may be reminded of Henry Mianscum's report in 1999 to which we will refer throughout this Review. He captured the essence of the issues facing the CSB and its schools. In fact, if his recommendations had been followed, our report would be unnecessary. You will find that we too are very critical of the current delivery of educational services and that we argue, as he did, that *profound change* is required if students are to benefit from the education to which they are entitled.

> *We want the school to be the best there is; however, the steps to make it the best are not taken* **(Stakeholder)***.*

Several people with whom we spoke talked about the fallacy of *wishful thinking* ("pensée magique") - that believing something will happen will make it happen. They realized, as we do, that such magic only works in fairy tales. Simply telling schools that student results must improve does not make it happen, nor will it help schools to make it happen.

This report does not offer any 'magic bullets' or 'quick-fix' solutions because the route to improvement will be neither easy nor quick. Improvement will require serious attention by the leadership of the Board to build the *capacity* of its schools, centres and board offices. Most of all, it must build the capacity of its personnel to deliver quality education services. We do hope however, that this report will provide a solid basis for this long-term process.

Although we wrote this report and are solely responsible for its content, we could not have completed our work without the help of the students, parents, staff and other members of the Cree School Board community who participated in the Review. We thank you for your input to this work and regret that we did not have the opportunity to present this report in person in each community. We hope that you will hear your voices in our words, especially in Part 5 where we summarize 'what stakeholders want to see happen.' We are very conscious of your expectations from this Review: a marked improvement in educational service delivery for youth, adult and post-secondary students of the Cree School Board. *Stakeholders want to see action, not words*.

> *Let us put what we are talking about as a priority. Let us really try to help these children. Let us not hide or sweep under the rug the things that we talked about today* **(Elder).**

This report marks the end of our work but it also marks the beginning of the next crucial step - *action planning* for improvement. It is now up to the leadership of the Cree School Board to ensure that this report is used to help transform the Board into a learning community where students come first, not just on a poster, but in reality.

William J. Smith,
Mary Bear,
William E. Corrigan and
Kimberly Quinn

June, 2008

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PART 1: OVERVIEW, CONTEXT & MISSION

Part 1 provides an overview of the CAFSI report, followed by our analysis of the context and mission of the Cree School Board [CSB].

1.0   INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

1.1   Introduction

In 1990, UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, held a world conference on education in Jomtien Thailand. The theme of the conference, "education for all," reflects the fundamental importance of education, both for individuals and for society as a whole.[1]

In Canada, education has always been accorded primary importance and control over education was a key element in the so-called "Confederation compromise" that led to the creation of

> "The destiny of a people is intricately bound to the way its children are educated....It shapes the language and pathways of thinking, the contours of character and values, the social skills and creative potential of the individual."

the Dominion of Canada in 1867.[2] However, the debate over education was limited to the federal and provincial governments. It did not extend to the First Nations of Canada, for whom education has always been a high priority for cultural and economic renewal (see text box).[3] As stated by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples:

> Aboriginal people ... want education to prepare them to participate fully in the economic life of their communities and in Canadian society. But this is only part of their vision.... education must develop children and youth as Aboriginal citizens, linguistically and culturally competent to assume the responsibilities of their nations. Yoth that emerge from school must be grounded in a strong, positive Aboriginal identity. Consistent with Aboriginal traditions, education must develop the whole child, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically.[4]

The creation of the Cree School Board [CSB] by the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement [JBNQA] responded to these aspirations for the Cree Nation by placing the onus on them "to put together and establish an education system that is unique, dynamic and comparable to any other education system in Quebec or Canada."[5] The CSB has jurisdiction for elementary, secondary and adult education for members of the Cree Nation of Eastern James Bay and other persons resident in one of its nine communities (⬛) shown in the map on the left.

The head office of the CSB is located in Mistissini. Its structure is similar to those of other school boards in Québec but it has powers that are different from other boards. It has an elected Council of Commissioners, an Executive Committee and a board administration headed by a director general. At the present time, the head office comprises two departments to manage educational services for youth and adults

`and five other administrative departments; the CSB also comprises a department for youth educational services located in Chisasibi and offices for post-secondary education in Montréal and Gatineau.[a]

Each community has a school that spans the elementary and secondary levels of instruction. Each school has either a single school committee or one committee for each level of instruction, comprising parent representatives. Each school has a principal, one or more vice-principals and a community education administrator [CEA], as well as teaching and non-teaching staff.[b]

Each of the nine communities has a continuing education centre that provides various upgrading and vocational courses to adults in the community. In addition, the Sabtuan Regional Vocational Training Centre [SRVTC] is located in Waswanipi. Full and part time courses are provided in each centre by full and part time staff. Three consultants are each responsible for coordinating courses for two centres, while three others are each responsible for a single centre. The SRVTC is managed by a director and other administrative staff.

1.2   Purpose & Results

Building an education system is a complex endeavour involving the construction of facilities, the establishment of structures for governance and administration and the hiring of personnel. However, the core of an education system is the classroom, where teaching and learning actually take place. It was with this focus in mind that the newly appointed director general prefaced his vision for the CSB in the years ahead:

> It is my goal to keep focused in serving our student clientele, both the youth and adult, and to ensure we take every means possible to foster and shape success as they pursue their education. I realize and recognize the huge responsibility and accountability [the] Cree School Board has within its hands to make a difference in the lives of our student clientele and the need and importance to do it right; keeping in mind we are here to serve them.[6]

Over the past year, the CSB has undertaken several initiatives to achieve this goal. In the spring of 2007, the CSB undertook a **Strategic Planning Exercise** in the spring of 2007 conducted by Jo Nelson of ICA Associates.[7] During this same period, Mervin and Carol Anne Cheechoo conducted a series of **parenting** workshops in each community and Dr. Paul Magnus conducted workshops for commissioners on school board **governance**.

While these initiatives were proceeding, the Board decide to commission an **Organizational Review**. Led by Ian Smith of the Oliver Wyman Group, its purpose was "to conduct a comprehensive review of the existing organization and to develop and evaluate organization options for the [CSB]."[8] Then the Board decided to commission the present **Educational Review**, which was designed to serve two complementary purposes:

- *accountability*, to permit the Board to *answer* to its stakeholders for the trust they have placed in it for the education of their children, youth and adults; and

- *improvement*, to support the development of programs and service delivery in order to make its schools and centres more effective places for teaching and learning.

Given this statement of overall purpose, our first task was to determine both the perspective and focus of the Review.

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[a]   See Organization Chart on CSB web site (http://www.cscree.qc.ca/Organization/organigram.pdf).

[b]   Data on each school are included under Schools in Appendix D.

Perspectives & Focus

Traditionally, evaluation has been viewed as a task best performed by '**outsiders**' - external consultants hired by the organization or agents of an outside body, such as a department of education. There are some advantages to the perspective provided by outsiders; they bring 'fresh eyes' to the scene and may see things that people from the organization do not; they may be better able to 'stand back' and take a more 'detached' view of the organization. However, outsiders who cast themselves as 'experts' with all the answers are usually little help to an organization. That is why the external consultants engaged to conduct the Review offered their services, not as experts, but as *critical friends*.

A 'critical friend,' as the term implies, is first a *friend* – someone who cares about the organization and its people, not merely someone who provides services for a fee. The *critical* aspect of this relationship reflects the fact that he or she is not expected to tell the organization what it wants to hear, but to provide constructive criticism.

However, there is a limit to what one can expect from outsiders, even when acting as critical friends. That is why the two consultants insisted on including two '**insiders**' on the evaluation team. Insiders are often better able to grasp the meaning of the object being evaluated because they see it *in context.* They can understand the significance of findings in ways that no outsider could ever hope to do.

The other equally important reason for involving insiders on the team was to begin to build the capacity of the Board to use the knowledge gained from the Review to improve the Board's performance. Any outsiders engaged for an evaluation may play some role in its follow-up but if there are no insiders prepared to guide the change process, then nothing useful will come of the evaluation and the effort will have been wasted.

If these two perspectives shed more light on the evaluation, that light must be focussed. An evaluation cannot look at everything and if it tries to, it will end up seeing nothing. The **focus** concentrates our attention on what really matters to stakeholders. Sometimes, choosing a focus is difficult or controversial. However, in the case of the Educational Review, this choice was obvious - **students**. The only reason the Board exists is to help students learn. High performing educational organizations are those that have an unrelenting focus on students. If we were to help the Board to be accountable to its stakeholders and improve its performance, then students had to be our one and only focus.

In light of the above, we defined our mandate as the evaluation of the *performance* and *capacity* of the CSB, its schools, centres and other organizational units (e.g. Human Resources Department), to provide services to its students.

- The evaluation of *performance* is concerned first with results – what the Board *succeeds* in accomplishing – and second, with operations – what the Board *does* in order to promote success.

- The evaluation of *capacity* deals with the Board's structures, systems, resources, and any other related elements, which enable it to perform, as well as any conditions that help or hinder performance.

The Educational Review was designed to contribute to the short, medium and long term results summarized in Exhibit 1-1.

EXHIBIT 1-1: ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW

Output ↓	Evaluation report, providing a comprehensive evaluation of educational service delivery in the Cree School Board, including: ❖ the mission of the board and key features of its context; ❖ the findings of the evaluation in relation to the areas of focus for each object of the evaluation; ❖ identification of any issues requiring further study; and ❖ recommendations for short term and longer term action.
Outcomes ↓	As a result of this evaluation, the Cree School Board should be better able to: ❖ make use of performance data to guide organizational change; ❖ improve its performance in relation to both the desired results and its operations; and ❖ develop enhanced capacity to sustain high levels of performance over time.
Impact	Ultimately, these outcomes should lead to: ❖ higher levels of student success across a broad band of fields of study, as well as skills and attitudes necessary for life-long learning; ❖ student success being achieved by a broad spectrum of students, including those with special learning needs; and ❖ enhanced student success in post-secondary education and employment.

As the immediate output of the Educational Review, this report attempts to provide a gateway to the other results listed in Exhibit 1-1. However, **it was never intended to provide**:

- a 'quick fix' solution or a detailed 'blueprint' to be followed;
- an evaluation of individual students or staff members; or
- an attribution of blame to any member of the CSB community.

Furthermore, given the short time at our disposal, this report cannot provide a detailed evaluation of individual schools or centres. Nor does it provide an evaluation of the Board's overall governance and administration.[a] Instead, our more modest aim is to offer the insights we have gained about the strengths and weakness of the performance and capacity of the CSB and provide **recommendations** (see p. 12) for improving quality education to its students.

1.3   Evaluation Design

Understanding the evaluation design and methodology is important for two reasons:

- first, the manner in which the evaluation is framed determines what we look at and the perspective we take; and

- second, a description of the methodology makes the process transparent, enabling the reader to assess the trustworthiness of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

This section provides a brief overview of the design of this Review; details about this design and a complete description of the methodology used are provided in Appendix B.

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[a]   This limitation is due to the revision of the mandate of the Educational Review (see p. 8).

Basic Principles

The purpose of the evaluation is accountability and improvement, with a focus on students. This perspective is reflected in our logo, which is an adaptation of the medicine wheel.[a] We use the medicine wheel to depict the four steps of the Educational Review and the continuity of results that flow from it.

EXHIBIT 1-2: THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW, A STUDENT-CENTRED ENDEAVOUR
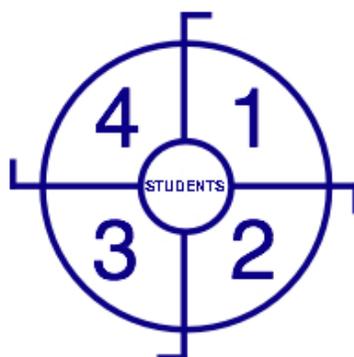
4 The ultimate result is higher levels of **student success**.	**1** The **evaluation** provides understanding of current challenges.
3 This leads to improved **performance** in the delivery of educational services.	**2** This understanding supports the building of the **capacity** of the school board.

The design of the Review was also guided by the following principles:

- The Review will be grounded in the *values*, *mission* and *context* of the CSB, its schools and centres.

- The Review will consist of the four major steps leading to the production of this report, as shown in Exhibit 1-3.

EXHIBIT 1-3: THE MAJOR STEPS OF THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW

	1 **Planning & Preparation** (Aug 1 - Sep 30, 2007)	**2** **Data Collection** (Oct 1 - Feb 29, 2008)	**3** **Data Analysis** (Mar 1 - Apr 30, 2008)	**4** **Report Writing** (May 1-31, 2008)

- The Review process will be *participatory*; in other words stakeholders will be invited and encouraged to take part in the planning of the evaluation, the collection of data and, most importantly, in the follow-up to the final report.

- The Review will be guided by a set of *ethical principles* that will apply not only to the evaluation team but to all officials and employees of the CSB.[b]

- The Council of Commissioners and the Management Group of the CSB shall ensure that the Educational Review will be followed immediately by a final step (**Step 5**) to create and implement an *action plan*.[c]

Another basic consideration in designing the Review was the need to locate it in relation to other planning, evaluation and improvement initiatives, both past and present. At the beginning of the Review, the evaluation team made a commitment, supported by the Management Group and the Council of Commissioners, to ensure that the Review would:

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[a]   See Appendix B for a description of our use of the medicine wheel; to see how it was used in the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, visit their website: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/index_e.html.

[b]   The ethical guidelines are provided in Appendix A.

[c]   See *Part 5, From Findings to Action*.

- build on what has been learned from past initiatives;
- make use of the data from current initiatives; and
- construct a synthesis of these other initiatives to provide a ***holistic portrait*** of educational service delivery in the Board.

This synthesis was intended to encompass the Strategic Planning Exercise, the Organizational Review, as well as workshops on parenting and school board governance mentioned at the start of section 1.2. During the final phase of the Review, the Director General withdrew this mandate; as a result, this report contains no analysis of these initiatives. Moreover, this change in mandate compromised the potential results anticipated from the Educational Review.[a]

Performance Themes

The CSB comprises the following major organizational sub-units:

- schools;
- continuing education centres, including the SRVTC;
- post-secondary education offices;
- the Office of the Supervisor of Schools, Educational Services and Continuing Education;
- Administrative Services (human, financial, material and information technology services);
- General Administration (Offices of the Director General and the Secretary General); and
- Council of Commissioners, including the Executive Committee.

Schools and centres function in individual communities and contain their own sub-units, notably classrooms. Bearing in mind that our mandate was to evaluate organizational performance and capacity, we reviewed the literature on organizational evaluation and the management and evaluation of educational services in First Nations community schools in particular,[b] in order to identify appropriate ***performance themes*** - the major aspects of performance and capacity that matter to ***stakeholders*** of the organization in a given context.[c]

The ***Performance themes*** (❖) shown below in Exhibit 1-4 express the results and aspects of performance and capacity that matter, given the CSB's context and mission <u>and our revised mandate</u>.[d]

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[a]   The original intent of producing a synthesis is shown in Exhibit 2 in the Evaluation Work Plan; the impact of this change in mandate is discussed in Appendix B under Constraints & Limitations.

[b]   See summary of the 'knowledge base' of the evaluation presented in Appendix B.

[c]   See section 2.2 (p. 13).

[d]   The original conception of performance themes can be found in Exhibit 4 in the Evaluation Work Plan which depicts school board support for learning as a separate layer running underneath the three nodes of service delivery for youth and adults (continuing education and post-secondary studies). This expressed the original intent of providing a holistic evaluation of Board performance. The revised conception (Exhibit 4 above) reflects a more restricted evaluation of school board support for learning, that is limited to those aspects that are directly linked to one of the three nodes of service delivery for youth and adults. The more general aspects of school board performance are intended to be dealt with by the Organizational Review and the subsequent synthesis by the Board of all current evaluation initiatives.

EXHIBIT 1-4: THE MAJOR PERFORMANCE THEMES GUIDING THE REVIEW

❖ Context & Mission of the Cree School Board		
Youth	**Adults**	
❖ Student Results ❖ Classroom Instruction ❖ Student Services ❖ School Support for Learning ❖ Home & Community Support ❖ School Board Support	**Continuing Education** ❖ Student Results ❖ Training & Other Services ❖ Centre Support for Learning ❖ School Board Support	**Post-Secondary Education Studies** ❖ Student Results ❖ Student Services ❖ School Board Support
❖ Context & Mission of the Cree School Board		

The performance themes for schools, centres and post-secondary offices begin with student results. Every other theme focuses on successive levels of support for learning. Performance is therefore determined by the extent to which the 'unit' being analyzed – from the classroom to Board offices – contributes to student learning. This perspective inverts the traditional hierarchical 'control from the top' image of a school system. In the revised image, students are at the top of this 'performance pyramid' (illustrated here for youth education) and the school board is at the bottom, providing the foundation for the support of teaching and learning.

In addition to specific questions for each theme, we posed the following general questions:

- Which organizational unit or position is accountable for the performance theme being evaluated and how, realistically, can improvement be achieved in the short, medium and long term?

- What evidence would be required to satisfy stakeholders that necessary and sufficient action is being taken to effect this improvement?[a]

Each performance theme is sub-divided into several 'evaluation objects' that define what we are evaluating. In order to determine *how well* the organization is performing in relation to these objects, we have developed appropriate 'performance standards,' often using various criteria for this purpose.[b]

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[a]   We present the answers to our specific evaluation questions, as well as the first general question posed above, in Parts 2, 3 and 4; the answer to the second general question will be presented in section 14.3 in Part 5.

[b]   The use of performance standards is presented in Appendix B, under the heading, Defining Performance.

'Evidence' of Performance

In an evaluation, data are sought as 'evidence' - 'bits' of information gathered from records, documents, stakeholders and observations that serve to measure, or at least demonstrate, the level of performance being evaluated. During the Educational Review, we visited all nine communities. School visits included:

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Input from Stakeholders       │
│                  ↓                   │
│              EVIDENCE                │
│              ↗     ↖                 │
│   Observations   Documents & Records │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
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- observation of classes;
- focus groups with students, parents, elders;
- interviews of administrators, commissioners;
- questionnaires for teachers and other staff.
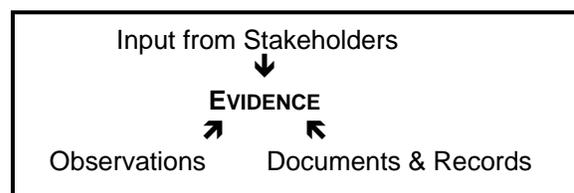
Centre visits included an interview with the consultant, and questionnaires for students and staff. Data collection also included visits to the Post-Secondary Education offices in Montréal and Gatineau and the Board office in Mistissini. A focus group was held with post-secondary students, and interviews were conducted with the Chairperson of the Board, the Director General, the Secretary General, as well as all Directors and Coordinators. In total, we carried out over 200 separate acts of data collection, involving approximately 900 stakeholders.

The extent of the data gathering process is summarized below in Exhibit 1-5.

EXHIBIT 1-5: SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION

	Input from Stakeholders
Students	▪ 31 focus groups with 254 students and former students; questionnaires from 95 adult students; 1 focus group with 2 post-secondary students
School/Centre Staff	▪ questionnaires from 212 teachers and 41 other staff in schools and 23 teachers and other staff in centres; 6 focus groups with 51 teachers
School/Centre Admin	▪ interviews with 8 principals, 11 vice-principals and 8 CEAs
Community	▪ 3 open forums on community radio; 6 open meetings of school committees; 6 focus groups with 46 elders; 3 interviews with the educational representative on the Band Council
School Board	▪ interviews with the chairperson of the Board, 5 commissioners, the director general, the secretary general, 5 directors (including the Supervisor of Schools), 11 coordinators (including the Assistant Supervisor of Schools); questionnaires from 4 education consultants; questionnaires from 17 other Board staff
Other	▪ interviews with Grand Chief of the Crees, 3 representatives of the Cree Regional Authority [CRA], the former Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, the ministry representative on the Management Negotiating Committee for the Cree School Board [CPNCSC], the President of the Northern Quebec Teaching Association; and the Board's legal counsel
	Observations
	▪ observations of 50 classrooms at all levels of instruction in Cree, English and French
	Documents & Records
	▪ All records and documents collected from schools, centres and Board offices and other sources are listed in Appendix C under Documentary Evidence.

Just as evidence in a legal context is weighed to determine the outcome of a case, evaluative evidence must be judged to see if it supports the findings, conclusions and recommendations

set forth. An evaluation rarely produces *absolute proof* of its assertions but the evidence must be *credible* and *sufficient* if the results of the evaluation are to be deemed trustworthy.

All evidence must be credible to be of any use; however, a given piece of evidence may be sufficient to support one finding but not another or to justify one recommendation but not another. Accordingly, this Review was designed to produce a credible and sufficient 'chain of evidence' linking data to the findings, conclusions and recommendations presented in Parts 1 to 4 of this report. In addition to drawing your own conclusions about the material presented, you

| Data | → | Findings | → | Conclusions | → | Recommendations |
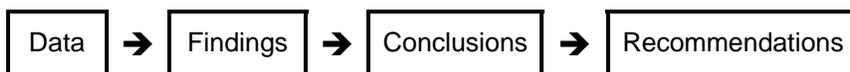
may examine Appendix B for a description of the data and the methods used, including the constraints and limitations of this Review. Judge for yourself whether the evidence is both credible and sufficient for the purpose for which it was used.

1.4   Organization of this Report

The name of our report, *Communication, Accountability & Follow-Up for School Improvement* (**CAFSI** for short), reflects the need for a *sea change* - a major transformation - in the way the CSB operates. In the course of this report, we will argue that for such change to occur, the CSB needs to become a **learning community**: "a group of people who take an active, reflective, collaborative, learning-oriented, and growth-promoting approach toward the mysteries, problems, and perplexities of teaching and learning."[9]

The report itself is presented in five parts, plus appendices. It also includes highlights and an executive summary of our findings, conclusions and recommendations, as outlined below in Exhibit 1-6.

EXHIBIT 1-6: THE DOCUMENTS COMPRISED BY THE CAFSI REPORT

T h e R e p o r t	**Part 1, Overview, Context & Mission**	Provides an introduction to the Review and the analysis pertaining to the context and mission of the Board.
	Part 2, Educating Youth in the CSB	Provides the analysis pertaining to the education of youth in the nine schools of the Board, including school and community support for learning.
	Part 3, Educating Adults in the CSB	Provides the analysis pertaining to the education of adults enrolled in continuing education centres or post-secondary institutions.
	Part 4, School Board Support for Learning	Provides the analysis pertaining to school board support for learning, including educational and administrative services, and governance.
	Part 5, From Findings to Action	Provides a summary of all findings, the conclusions reached by the analysis of these findings and the recommendations for future action.
Appendices of the CAFSI Report		**A**: Evaluation Ethics; **B**: Evaluation Design & Methodology; **C**: Supplementary Data; **D**: Extracts from key Documents; **E**: Instruments used to collect data
Highlights of the CAFSI Report		Provides key findings, including input from stakeholders, and a summary of the conclusions and recommendations regarding the education of youth and adults in the CSB.
Executive Summary of the CAFSI Report		Provides a short summary of our findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Each part of the report is divided into chapters and sections corresponding to the various performance themes described previously (see Exhibit 1-4, p. 9). Each section starts with the specific evaluation question that we posed, and then lists the evaluation objects that are considered under this theme. Each of these objects is dealt with in the sub-sections that follow, including:

- a brief introduction to the subject matter;[a]
- the performance standards that apply to the object being evaluated;
- a presentation of our findings, analysis and conclusions; and
- our **recommendations** for action.

> *   **Recommendations** are provided at the end of various sections or chapters (and consolidated in Part 5), for action to be taken by the **CSB**, at the **Board**, level, the **school**/**centre** level of by a particular **unit**. In many cases, we have specified 'Board' rather than designate a unit which might appear to be the obvious body to undertake the recommendation. This has been done so as not to prejudge how the Board intends to restructure its operations or proceed with the implementation of this report. Our input into this process is provided in Part 5.

In writing this report, we attempted to reconcile two competing goals:

- provide readers with a concise and readable account of the Review - what we did, what we found and what we recommend; and

- provide sufficient details to make both the process and content of the Review transparent and open to scrutiny.

Our target audience are the educational leaders of the CSB - those who will be charged with the responsibility for guiding the change process. We recognize that this report is longer and more detailed than most stakeholders will want. That is why, as listed in Exhibit 1-6, we prepared the *Highlights* of the report, in both French and English, and a short *Executive Summary* of these highlights, all of which are available on the CSB Educational Review website:[b]
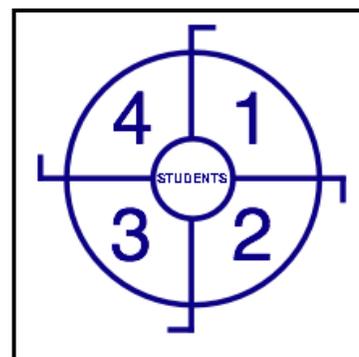
While being comprehensive, we have tried to separate supplementary information in **EXHIBITS** (**bold** centred heading in 'SMALL CAPS'),[c] **text boxes** containing text or graphics (as shown here), and **footnotes** at the bottom of the page.[d] We use **hyperlinks** to enable the reader to go directly to other sections of the report or to relevant websites.[e] Bibliographic references are provided in numbered **endnotes**, found at the end of each of the five Parts, and a complete **Reference List** of the sources cited at the end of the report (p. 333). As shown in Exhibit 1-6 (p. 11), supplementary materials are included in separately published **Appendices**.

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[a]   The introductory material is designed to help the reader to situate the analysis in a broader context and contribute to the capacity building of the CSB.

[b]   The website has both an English, **http://www.cscree.qc.ca/Edreview/ed_review.htm**, and a French version: **http://www.cscree.qc.ca/Edreview/Fr/Etude_Ed.htm**.

[c]   Exhibits are numbered consecutively in each part of the report; thus, in Part 1, they are numbered 1-1, 1-2, etc.

[d]   The logo of the Educational Review shown in the text box, an adaptation of the medicine wheel, is described in Appendix B.

[e]   This only works if you are using the **PDF** version ( ) of the report available on the Publications page of the CSB Educational Review website (http://www.cscree.qc.ca/Edreview/Pubs.htm) on your computer.

2.0   CONTEXT & MISSION

The core of any organization is found in its mission - the fundamental expression of its values and purpose. In the first draft of this report, we began this section with a discussion on mission, intending to move out from this core to explore the context of the CSB. However, upon further reflection, we realized that the mission flowed from this context and therefore decided to inverse these two sections as presented below.

2.1   The CSB-in-Context

The context of the CSB is multi-layered. Each school or centre exists in a community which has its own **context** and **stakeholders**. Like any school community these include students, staff and parents, as well as community members, groups and organizations. However, in the context of a First Nations community, other individuals and group stakeholders need to be considered, for example, the elders of the community and the Band Council. Taken together, these communities provide the immediate context of the CSB. However, the Board context is wider than its own territory and includes, among other features, various stakeholders, such as the CRA, and the education system to which it relates.

In our examination of context, we posed the following question:

- What is the importance of the external environment to the Board's ability to serve its students?

It would be inappropriate for us to evaluate the context in which the CSB operates because it does not, by-and-large, control its environment. However, context does matter when evaluating an organization. First, context helps us to understand organizational performance, for example, the home environment of students. Second, efforts to improve the organization based on the results of the evaluation are unlikely to succeed without understanding the context in which they are to be implemented: "the better you understand it, the better you can adapt to it and develop appropriate strategies."[10] (See text box.[11])

> ## The 25/75 Rule
>
> "Twenty-five percent of the solution is having good directional ideas; 75% is figuring out how to get there in one local context after another."

Accordingly, in place of performance standards, 'guiding questions' are used to consider each of the following four objects, as specified in each of the sub-sections that follow:

- regional and local contexts;
- historical context;
- administrative & legal framework; and
- the wider context.

2.1.1 Regional & Local Contexts

The regional and local contexts of an organization situate it in its immediate environment. Defined first by geography, these environs are understood in terms of various contextual features (e.g. social, economic, political) and by the individuals and groups that have a 'stake' in the organization. These stakeholders include those who benefit from the services provided by the organization, those who pay for these services or who have some other interest in it.

Guiding Questions

- What are the principal characteristics of both the regional and local contexts in which the CSB, its schools and centres operate?

- Who are the principal stakeholders of the CSB and what are the characteristics of the relationship between them and the CSB?

The immediate context of the CSB is the region in which it is located and the Cree nation that it serves (see text box).[a] As shown in the map displayed previously (p. 3), its territory extends from Waswanipi in the south and Mistissini in the east to Whapmagoostui in the northwest on Hudson Bay. This vast territory, rich in water, forest, minerals and other natural resources, comprises most of the Québec's Baie-James region,[b] whose non-native municipalities come under the jurisdiction of the Commission scolaire de la Baie-James. Whapmagoostui is part of the Nunavik region served by the Kativik School Board which, like the CSB, was created in 1978 to provide education to students in Nunavik, with the exception of those served by the CSB in Whapmagoostui.[c]

> The Crees, who have lived in this territory for thousands of years, have historically been hunters, fishers, and trappers. In Cree life, the importance of what is often called "the bush" (traditional lands outside of the villages) cannot be overstated. Apart from its purely economic significance, bush life and bush skills are at the heart of Cree culture and identity.

The Grand Council of the Crees is the political body that represents the Crees of eastern James Bay and southern Hudson Bay in northern Quebec. The Grand Council has twenty members: a Grand Chief and Deputy-Grand Chief elected at large by the Eeyouch, the chiefs elected by each of the nine Cree communities, and one other representative from each community. The Council's head office is in the Cree community of Nemaska, although it also has offices in Montreal and Ottawa.

The CRA is the administrative arm of the Cree government. It has responsibilities in respect to environmental protection, the hunting, fishing and trapping regime, economic and community development, the Board of Compensation, and other matters as decided by the board of directors. The Board of Directors is made up of the Chairman of the CRA, who is also the Grand Chief, and the Vice-Chairman, as well as the Chiefs of each of the nine Cree Communities, and one other person from each community delegated by the community. The Headquarters of the CRA is located in Nemaska. In addition, there is also an office in Montréal. The CRA has departments of traditional pursuits, community services, human resources development and administrative services.[d]

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[a]   Cree Cultural Institute ("Our People" and "Traditional Ways"): http://www.creeculture.ca/e.

[b]   Administered by the James Bay municipality (see http://www.municipalite.baie-james.qc.ca/), this region also includes Matagami, Level-sur-Quevillon, Chapai and Chibougamau, which fall outside the territory of the CSB.

[c]   More information about the Kativik School Board can be found on their website: http://www.kativik.qc.ca/.

[d]   For more information about the Grand Council and CRA, see their website: http://www.gcc.ca/.

EXHIBIT 1-7: COMMUNITY POPULATION
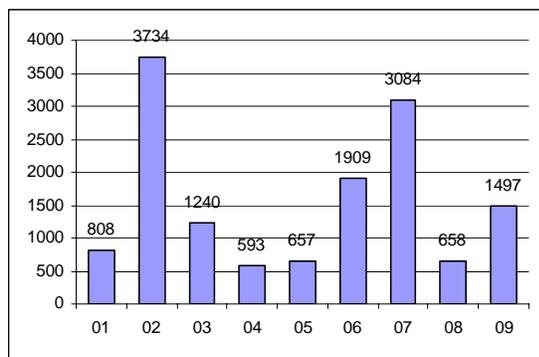
If the region provides the context for the CSB, the community provides the context for each of its schools. The population of each community is shown in Exhibit 1-7.[a] These communities are often described as 'coastal:' Whapmagoostui (01), on Hudson Bay, Chisasibi (02), Wemindji (03), Eastmain (04) and Wakaganish (06) on James Bay, and 'inland' communities Nemaska (05), Mistissini (07), Ouje-Bougoumou (08) and Waswanipi (09). Each one varies by and has its own local context.[b] These local contexts are defined in part by geography and tradition.

In each community the band council is the equivalent of a municipal government. It provides a variety of services; however, unlike other municipalities in Québec (or elsewhere), residents do not pay taxes to support these services. This creates a situation where people are used to receiving benefits for nothing. This situation was described by one stakeholder in relation to housing and other band services. This input can be summarized as follows:[c]

> *Many houses in this community are in serious need of repair because the occupants do not feel that they have any responsibility for their upkeep. A large percentage do not pay their rent or their hydro bills and there are no consequences for this. They even apply for and receive grants from the Band Council to start their own business while they owe the Council money for rent etc.*

Such attitudes drain a community of a will to invest in its own future, a future that depends on its children and youth. As one stakeholder expressed it:

> *To a lot of people, education is not necessary because somebody will give them a job, or they'll get welfare or somebody will take care of them.*

This school-age population has been growing steadily over the past number of years. According to 2003 survey data, approximately 21% of the population in the CSB territory are age 9 and younger, with a further 21% between the ages of 10 and 19.[12]

In many cases, attitudes such as those described above and other conditions in which students are being raised are not conducive to success in school (see text box for the views expressed by one principal interviewed). According to the Head Start study conducted in 1999: "Although families ... provide a loving environment, many parents do not read to children, insist on healthy habits such as brushing teeth, or control children's activities (e.g., staying out at night, playing in dangerous areas)."[13]

> *When I see kids, 9, 10, 11 years old, in the park next to this school until one or two o'clock in the morning, I wonder what they'll do in the school the following morning* (Principal).

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[a]   Cree population statistics (2006 data) published by the CRA: http://www.gcc.ca/. For convenience in presenting exhibits, each community is identified by the number assigned to it: 01 Whapmagoostui; 02 Chisasibi; 03 Wemdinji; 04 Eastmain; 05 Nemaska; 06 Waskaganish; 07 Mistissini; 08 Ouje-Bougoumou; 09 Waswanipi.

[b]   A brief description of each community can be found on the website of the Grand Council of the Crees: http://www.gcc.ca/communities/comnav.php.

[c]   Throughout this report, input from stakeholders will be presented in italicized script. These extracts use the words expressed by stakeholders. However, in some cases, their words may be summarized or modified to fit the syntax but in no case have we altered the meaning intended.

The statistics suggest that the biggest health problems for children ... are dental decay, injuries, and a combination of poor nutrition, lack of exercise, and obesity. Chronic conditions such as ear infections, allergies, and asthma are also quite common, especially in younger children.... The [same] concerns ... are also present for youth. However, by the teenage years, other health risks and problems increase in importance. These new issues include injuries, sexual health and pregnancy, and addictions of various types.[14]

As we will see in later sections of this report, local context also affects everyone who works in the school, especially teachers from outside the community who must understand this context, often with little or no assistance from the CSB, the school or the community.

2.1.2 Historical Context

The historical context of an organization and its people provides a foundation for understanding how the past has affected the present and how it will affect the future.[a] As stated by the Treaty Commissioner for Saskatchewan: "To acknowledge and to understand the errors of the past is the first step toward joint undertakings and collective responsibility for the change and healing that is needed to restore the treaty relationship."[15] For the James Bay Cree, elders have always had a special responsibility for maintaining linkages with the past:

> In the traditional society the elders were the ones who taught the traditions and insisted on their observance. They held the responsibility for keeping alive the memory, history and knowledge of the Eeyou ancestors. Their sharing of life experiences and stories helped the people make decisions. The elders were the voices of moderation, experience and guidance.[16]

Guiding Question
- What features of its historical context are important to understanding the CSB?

Traditional, Federal & Provincial Visions of Education

In the case of the CSB, its historical context can be understood as the confluence of three major streams: traditional education of children of the James Bay Cree, federal policy and practice with respect to the education of First Nations peoples, and the Québec education system. The first stream is often ignored, as if education did not exist before being introduced by settlers to New France. Nothing could be father from the truth:

> Eeyou education and its control and determination by Eeyouch/Eenouch existed prior to the arrival of the 'European' peoples. It may not have been applied in a formal or 'academic' way, but the Eeyouch/Eenouch perceive education in a different way. This traditional Eeyou/Eenou education under Eeyou control focuses on the teaching and learning of specific skills, attitudes and knowledge such as values and customs needed to function in Eeyou family life and Eeyou society, which is distinctly based upon value system consistent with humanity and relations with the Creator, other Eeyou and peoples, and a unique relationship with Eeyou Istchee, wildlife resources and all other creation.[17]

It is this lifelong, holistic vision of education that forms the basis of the framework put forth by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: "Lifelong learning and learning aimed to balance all dimensions of the person are intermeshed. At each stage of life, learning should develop the

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[a]   See The Crees of Northern Québec, A Photographic Essay, by Norman Chance and Paul Conklin (http://arcticcircle.uconn.edu/HistoryCulture/Cree/creeexhibit.html)

whole human being. Intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical learning depends upon the success of development at previous stages."[18]

In marked contrast to this vision of education, federal policy began in the late nineteenth century as a mixture of paternalism and assimilation. Sissons describes the policy in these words:

> Since the beginning of the twentieth century, education has been regarded as the tool that would transport First Nations people into the Euro-Canadian world. If only it had been used gently and intelligently, underpinned by the philosophy that native culture was as successful in its environment as the white society was in its, the great tragedy might have been avoided. Instead, the classroom was used to force assimilation, and, in the process, became a dismissal prison.[19]

In practice, federal policy resulted in the establishment of village day schools and residential schools, usually managed and operated by religious authorities, until 1969, when the operation of all schools was assumed by the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (now Indian and Northern Affairs Canada [INAC]). By 1970, Cree students were attending public schools under the authority of the Québec Minister of Education outside their communities and local community schools. The last residential schools for Cree children in La Tuque and Fort George closed in the 1970s.[20]

Since education essentially falls under provincial jurisdiction,[a] federal policy focused on fiscal controls and relied on provincial standards for the quality and content of curriculum.[21] According to Paquette, federal policy assumed that Aboriginal education existed to supplant native language and culture and that "the best way to accomplish such a replacement was by doing whatever was done in most public schools."[22] Accordingly, English, and in some cases, French, was the language of instruction beyond kindergarten largely provided by non-Aboriginal teachers from outside the Cree communities.[23]

During this period (late 1960s to early 1970s), language and culture was the subject of considerable policy debate in Canada generally and in Québec in particular. The federal government appointed the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which led eventually to the federal policy of "multiculturalism within a bilingual framework."[24] The Québec government adopted two successive laws on the language of instruction in schools that would later be replaced by the *Charter of the French Language* in 1976.[25] At the same time, First Nations organizations became active participants on the federal and provincial scenes, notably with the creation of the National Indian Brotherhood, later to become the Assembly of First Nations [AFN].

Based on two principles: parental responsibility and local control of education, the National Indian Brotherhood called for "radical change" in education, notably with respect to governance, programs, teachers and facilities. Emphasizing the holistic view of education described above, the Brotherhood stated: "We do not regard the educational process as an 'either-or' operation. We must have the freedom to choose among many options and alternatives."[26]

It was in this context that the James Bay Cree went to court to stop the James Bay Hydroelectric Development Project. According to then Grand Chief Billy Diamond, this mega project would: "destroy our culture, society, and way of life. We fought against it and were able to force the governments to negotiate an agreement [JBNQA] with us regarding many aspects of our life and the development of our villages and the territory."[27] As will be presented in the section that follows, it was this agreement in 1975 that led to the formation of the CSB in 1978.

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[a]   See section 2.1.2 (p. 20).

The Creation of the CSB

Needless to say, the historical context to this Review did not end with the creation of the CSB but includes all relevant developments that have occurred in the past thirty years. One of the most important of the *outside* developments was the new constitutional regime enacted in 1982.[a] In terms of *inside* developments, one needs to consider the stages of development of the CSB over time.

In the early years attention was focused on the transfer of authority from existing structures to the CSB. This period is described as follows on the Board's website:

> The Board first focussed on establishing an administration and structure, providing housing, and training staff and management. Because technical support, orientation and training were nonexistent, the Board had to assume its responsibilities without properly preparing its people for administrative and teaching positions. The Board also faced serious housing and school facility shortages. At the same time, it was expected to serve a population, which was growing faster than anticipated.[b]

This brief statement provides insight into the critical issue of **capacity**, especially in relation to human resources, an issue to which we will devote much attention in this report. In the 1980s, according to the Board website, "the Board turned its attention to developing a uniquely Cree education." In essence, this 'balancing act' consisted of finding a way "to develop both curricula and a school calendar that would meet provincial standards yet conform to the different cultural activities of each community." Of particular importance in this regard, is the decision to introduce the Cree Language of Instruction Program [CLIP].[c]

Planning, Evaluative & Improvement Initiatives

Other important elements in the Board's historical context are found in the various planning, evaluative and improvement initiatives undertaken over the years. In 1999, during negotiations with the Ministry of Education over funding,[d] the CSB was confronted with a number of serious issues, namely: "the high dropout rates of student clientele, the high student and teacher absenteeism, the inadequate preparation of secondary five student[s] graduating from the Cree schools, and the low number of secondary and post secondary graduates."[28]

The Mianscum Report

As a result, the Board commissioned a task force "to identify specific and major problems attributing to the state of the Cree schools and post-secondary education."[e][29] The task force was composed of the Chairmperson, the Director General, the Board's legal counsel and an outside consultant, Henry Mianscum. The methodology employed was to hold separate consultation sessions with the following groups of stakeholders in each community: secondary students, teachers, school administration, school personnel, school committee and parents, as well as sessions with and post secondary students, CSB officers and departments. The data obtained from these sessions were supplemented with various written records and documents.

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[a]   These constitutional developments will be dealt with in section 2.1.1 that follows.

[b]   See http://www.cscree.qc.ca/GIHistory.htm.

[c]   This important issue is dealt with in the section on curriculum in Part 2.

[d]   For convenience, the Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec [MEQ], now the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport du Québec [MELS], will be referred to as the Ministry of Education.

[e]   No explanation is given in the report as to why its mandate did not include adult education.

While noting that there are numerous success stories related to the CSB, the report, in keeping with its mandate, deals exclusively with perceived problems in schools, in post secondary education and at the Board level.[a] The report concludes with a plea for action:

> The Council of Commissioners should form a task force to address the problems and develop a strategic plan to correct the deficiencies within its structure in the short, medium and long term. This effort should be in conjunction with all persons associated in the delivery of educational services to the student clientele of the Cree School Board. Participation in this undertaking should include the community and schools.[30]

From our perspective, the most striking feature of the Mianscum report is the congruence between its findings in 1999 and ours in 2008. Unfortunately, the conclusion we must draw from this congruence is that his plea for *appropriate* and *sufficient* remedial action was not followed. However, the Board did undertake various planning and improvement initiatives.

> *This is the first time that we as elders were asked about education. There were some meetings before about the problems but we did not see any changes.* **(Elder)**

Negotiations, Plans & Projects

Follow-up to the Mianscum report began with the formation of various working groups and the engagement of an outside facilitator, Willy Fournier. The momentum of this process came to an abrupt end with the termination of the facilitator's contract.[b] However, this process did give rise to several initiatives:

- PIT (Pedagogical Issues Team);
- FAST (Finance Administration Service Team);
- a Mission Statement, including Values & Guiding Principles; and
- Educational Regional Project.

PIT and FAST have continued to the present, and the mission statement adopted is the one currently in use.[c] The Declaration of Values & Guiding Principles and the Regional Educational Project offered a promising framework for the CSB and the initiation of local education plans. Unfortunately, they never progressed beyond the draft version prepared in 2004.

In December, 2003, the Educational Services Department presented a document to Council entitled: *Negotiations, 2003-09*. The purpose of the document is not made clear in the text. It appears to compile a list of items for the negotiation of a new funding arrangements with the Ministry for 2004-09; however, it also appears to contain a strategic plan for this period, consisting of four so-called strategies. These same strategies reappear in the *CSB Three-Year Plan*, adopted in October, 2004, following the conclusion of the new funding arrangements in June 2004.[d]

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[a]   We will refer Mianscum's specific findings throughout this report; a complete copy of his report is included in Appendix D.

[b]   We have not identified any official explanation for this move but it appears that it occurred as a result of conflict between him and the Director General.

[c]   The mission statement is discussed in section 2.2.2 (p. 30); we deal with PIT and FAST in the sections on educational and administrative services in Part 4.

[d]   Our analysis of the Three-Year Plan is contained in the section on strategic planning in Part 4.

2.1.3 Legal & Administrative Framework

The legal and administrative framework governing any public body is an essential aspect of its context as it determines what a public body is required to do (duties) and what it is allowed to do (powers). The framework of a public body also constrains it inasmuch as it provides for the rights of various stakeholders, for example, students, parents and staff. These rights are provided for in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* [*Canadian Charter*], the Québec *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* [Québec *Charter*] and various statutes such as the *Education Act*.

Guiding Question
- What are the principal aspects of the administrative and legal framework in which the CSB operates and how do they affect it?

For First Nations in Canada, the *Royal Proclamation of 1763* recognized the rights which Aboriginal peoples have because of their occupation of North America before the arrival of the Europeans. On the basis of this understanding, the Crown subsequently concluded treaties with various First Nations throughout Canada, thereby recognizing their status as 'peoples' in the meaning of international law.[31]

When Canada was created, the federal government was assigned jurisdiction over First Nations, in the constitutional division of powers, which, as mentioned in the Introduction, did not include the participation or consent of First Nations.[a] Post-Confederation legislation was consolidated in the *Indian Act* in 1876, a statute that, in revised form, remains in force today. It was under this legislation that the federal government has operated or made agreements to operate schools both inside and outside First Nations communities and, in more recent years, agreed to the devolution of authority for education to First Nations communities.[b]

The most significant change to this overall framework occurred in 1982 with the repatriation of the Constitution in 1982 and the entrenchment of the *Canadian Charter*. For the first time, the Constitution of Canada recognized Aboriginal rights, even making the application of the *Charter* subject to these rights.[c]

For the vast majority of First Nations communities in Canada, the foregoing provides the essence of the legal framework governing their affairs. However, the JBNQA changes this situation dramatically for the James Bay Cree of Québec.

The JBNQA

As mentioned in the previous section, the JBNQA is a multi-party agreement signed on November 11, 1975.[d] It is the first modern treaty or lands claim agreement. Described as an "intricate and complex document,"[32] it deals with a range of issues from land, hunting, fishing and trapping, to education, health and social services. In a marked departure from past treaties, the JBNQA provides for a form of regional government through the establishment of the CRA.

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[a]   Section 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867* grants Parliament exclusive legislative authority over "Indians, and Lands reserved for Indians."

[b]   Such devolution merely constitutes an administrative delegation of power, and not a transfer of jurisdiction.

[c]   Section 25 of the *Charter* states: "The guarantee in this Charter of certain rights and freedoms shall not be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from any aboriginal, treaty or other rights or freedoms that pertain to the aboriginal peoples of Canada ...." This provision must be read in conjunction with s. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, especially s. 35(1) which states: "The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed."

[d]   The signatories of the JBNQA are: Grand Council of the Crees (of Québec), the Northern Québec Inuit Association, the Government of Canada, the Government of Québec, the James Bay Energy Corporation, the James Bay Development Corporation and the Québec Hydro-Electric Commission (Hydro- Québec).

The governance provisions of the Agreement were subsequently given legislative approval in enactments by the federal and provincial governments.[33]

It is beyond the scope of this review to describe, let alone analyze, the provisions of the JBNQA.[a] Suffice it to say, that it is a landmark agreement in the struggle of First Nations in Canada for self-determination.[34] The Agreement, together with the enabling legislation subsequently adopted,[b] provide for the repudiation of the *Indian Act* and the inauguration of local self-government controlled by the Crees, with significant authority over the federally reserved lands that include the powers to regulate health and hygiene, public order and safety, and the protection of the environment.

> Within their sphere of powers and authorities, Cree local governments act autonomously. Most of their decisions are not subject to the control or supervision of the Minster of Indian Affairs or of any federal official, though their decisions may be challenged before a court of law.... In the area of financial management, the local governments of the Quebec Cree are largely autonomous ... and their funding arrangements with Canada are based on 'block' or grant funding.[35]

Education Provisions

Section 16 of the JBNQA sets forth the provisions governing Cree education which take precedence over other applicable provincial laws of general application, such as the *Education Act* (see below). Of particular interest for purposes of this Review, are the following provisions:[c]

- **Hiring & training of teachers**: The CSB may provide residential facilities for teachers, develop training programs for Native and non-Native teachers; provision is also made for the hiring of non-qualified Native teachers and the determination (with the Ministry) of the number of teachers required for its schools.

- **Curriculum & language of instruction**: The CSB has the right to "select courses, textbooks and teaching materials appropriate for the Native people and to arrange for their experimental use, evaluation and eventual approval" and "develop courses, textbooks and materials designed to preserve and transmit the language and culture of the Native people." Cree is established as a language of instruction and the CSB is given the right, following consultation of the parents' committee (see below) to determine the extent to which English and French are used as languages of instruction.[d]

- **Parental School Committees**: The Board is required to create elementary and secondary school committees composed solely of parents. These committees are strictly consultative and their functions are determined by the Board; however it must consult them on three matters: the selection of teachers and principals; the school calendar and year; and changes in curriculum.

- **Administration and funding**: The CSB is allowed, but not required, to hire a CEA for a community, "pursuant to a recommendation from the [school committee];" provision is made for ongoing operating and capital funding by Canada and Québec of educational

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[a]   A summary of the JBNQA is provided on the INAC website (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/info/info14_e.html) ; an e-version of the agreement is also available (http://www.gcc.ca/pdf/LEG000000006.pdf). The entire Agreement (450 pp.) and a series of complementary agreements can be purchased as a bound volume from Publications Québec (http://www.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/).

[b]   See endnote 33.

[c]   Taken from s. 16.0.9; section 16 is reproduced in its entirety in Appendix D.

[d]   The CSB is also enjoined to "pursue as an objective the use of French as a language of instruction" so that students may continue their studies in French elsewhere in Québec, if they so desire.

services, taking into account "the unique characteristics of the Cree School Board's geographical location and of its student population."[a]

Federal & Provincial Agreements

On February 7, 2002, the Grand Council of the Crees and the Government of Québec signed the *Agreement Respecting a New Relationship (Paix des braves) between Le Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec*. This agreement implemented certain obligations of Québec for community and economic development under section 28 of the JBNQA.[b]

More recently, the Grand Council of the Crees and the Government of Canada signed the *Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Canada and the Cree of Eeyou Istchee*.[c] Among other issues, the agreement aims at resolving disputes related to the implementation of the JBNQA, including a financial package of $1.4 billion over several years. In addition to clarifying and facilitating the implementation of Canada's obligations under the JBNQA, it provides for a process to negotiate an agreement and related legislation concerning a Cree National Government.

The Education Act

When the CSB came into existence, the *Education Act* in force at the time applied, subject to the provisions of the JBNQA. However, four years later, Canada adopted a new Constitution which, as alluded to previously, guaranteed the existing rights of First Nations peoples. Consequently, when Québec adopted a new Act in 1988,[d] it decided that:

- the existing Act, as in force in 1978, would continue to apply to the CSB;
- the CSB would be governed by the regulations made under the existing Act "to the extent that they are expressly applicable;"
- the new Act would not apply except as requested by the CSB.[e]

This decision has the following implications for this Review.

- First, the education legislation applicable to the CSB remains 'frozen in time' unless the Board decides to 'opt in' to provisions of the new Act, something it has never done. This means that all innovations, including all those associated with the Québec 'education reform' (see Wider context, p. 24), have no legal application in the CSB.

- Second, the exclusion of existing regulations that did not expressly mention the CSB, may well have eliminated the application of the previous version of the Basic School Regulations, leaving education in the CSB without any meaningful framework.

It is difficult to imagine a conversation with officials in a southern school board that did not include reference to the *Education Act*. Not once, during the collection of data, did any person

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[a]   The Agreement specifies the contribution of funds at 75% by Canada and 25% by Québec, but this division is subject to revision depending on the ratio of Native to non-Native students.

[b]   The significance of this agreement is described as follows by the Grand Council of the Crees: "This historic Agreement implements with respect to Quebec recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and provides for the sharing of revenues derived from mining, hydroelectric development and forestry carried out on the traditional lands of the Cree People...." (http://www.gcc.ca/gcc/querelations.php#articles).

[c]   Posted February 27, 2008: http://www.gcc.ca/newsarticle.php?id=129http://www.gcc.ca/newsarticle.php?id=129.

[d]   All statutes are designated by letters and numbers representing a particular 'chapter' of the law. The existing Act is thus designated c. I-14, while the new Act is designated c. I-13.3. To avoid confusion, we will henceforth refer to the Act that applies to the CSB as the *Education Act*, and the act that applies to other school boards as the *Public Education Act*.

[e]   See c. I-13.3, s. 722. The continuance of the existing Act included any amendments made since 1978 that were specifically applicable to the CSB. Any application of the new Act would be done by regulation.

make reference to the Act which still applies to the CSB. By contrast, there were constant references to the reform and the new courses of study, all of which are based on the *Public Education Act* which does not apply to the Board.

In 1989, the Council of Commissioners initiated a process to review the new *Education Act*, with a view to determining which provisions should be applied to the CSB. A process ensued that led, in 1997, to consultation of stakeholders on a new *Cree Education Act*. No report of this consultation was ever produced and to date no further action has been taken. We concur with the Board's legal counsel that the CSB would be well advised "to modernize its legislative environment,"[a]

Major Administrative Parameters for the Management of Resources

The collective agreements governing the CSB and its employees, as well as the regulations governing the working conditions of its managerial personnel, constitute an important part of the Board's legal and administrative framework. Legislation determines the process by which these agreements and regulations are arrived at, including the role of the CSB in this regard. These agreements and regulations not only determine the rights and obligations of managers, teachers and other personnel, but also affect the delivery of educational services.

Collective bargaining in the Québec education sector is highly centralized.[36] Most issues are negotiated at a provincial level between a central union body and a management negotiating committee, comprising representatives from the Ministry and the school boards (with separate committees for the French and English sectors). There is a separate bargaining committee for the CSB - the Management Negotiating Committee for the Cree School Board [CPNCSC].[b] Whereas other school boards play a subordinate role in relation to setting employer mandates for bargaining, with the exception of salaries, the CSB has, in law, the dominant voice in the CPNCSC.[c]

The collective agreements are very long and complex, dealing with a range of subjects including many that affect service delivery.[37] For example, the teachers' agreement includes provisions dealing with assignment of teachers, distribution of duties and responsibilities and special education. However, it should be noted that the provisions that apply to most school boards in the Québec education system[38] are much more extensive than those that apply to the CSB[d]

The other major document governing the management of resources in the CSB is the Ministry Funding Rules.[39] These Rules specify the parameters for the allocation of government grants for youth, adult and post-secondary education, as well as capital investment.[e]

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[a]   Memorandum to the Director General, dated February 28, 2005.

[b]   The acronym reflects its official French name (Comité patronal de négociation pour la commission scolaire Crie.

[c]   This enhanced authority is specified in the *Public Sector Bargaining Act*, s. 35, but arises from the JBNQA and the *Education Act*, s. 597: "The school board shall, in consultation with the Minister, negotiate the conditions of employment of its employees, except basic salary, basic marginal benefits and basic work loads which are negotiated at the provincial level."

[d]   We address these constraints in our analysis of the management of human resources in schools and the school board as a whole in Part 2.

[e]   We provide a brief analysis of these grants in Part 2.

2.1.4 The Wider Context

As this heading suggests, the wider context broadens the context from the local and regional levels. In some cases, this wider context may extend to the province, the country or beyond. In many organizations, their ultimate context is global.

Guiding Question

▪ How does the broader educational system impact on CSB?

Although the CSB's special duties and powers set it apart from most boards in the system, as described in the earlier section on the *Education Act* (p. 22), it is part of the Québec education system. Like many other jurisdictions, Québec education has been undergoing a process of 'reform' over the past decade following the 'Estates General on Education.[40] The Reform shifted the emphasis from *access to* education to *success from* education. Linguistic school boards replaced denominational boards and greater authority was devolved to schools, notably through the creation of school governing boards. A new framework for school organization and curriculum was developed, including new courses of study which, to date, have been implemented at the elementary and first cycle of secondary levels.[41] Adult and vocational education was revitalized, including a new policy on 'life-long learning.'[42]

The reform of education must also be understood against a backdrop of public sector reform, which in turn reflects global trends in the reshaping of public administration, commonly called *new public management*: the expectation of more responsive structures and better results from governments, which are now expected to *steer the ship of state, rather than row it.*[43] Education is seen as the key policy lever in building the 'knowledge society'[44] which is viewed as the basis of both individual and national prosperity, and competition in the global market place.[45]

> Schools ... are acutely aware that they are being held to account for achieving greater results with fewer resources, and being judged on the basis of standardized measures of performance, such as large-scale achievement tests.[46]

In Québec, government policy on public sector reform was introduced in legislation in 2000, and further developed in policy and legislation in a series of policy statements under the banner, *Shine Among the Best.*[47] Every government department, including the Ministry of Education, must adopt a multi-year strategic plan and prepare an annual management report that includes a presentation of the results obtained, measured against the objectives fixed in its strategic plan. Various *indicators* are used for this purposes, as well as to measure the 'efficiency' of government programs and services.[48] At the present time, this drive for better results and greater efficiency is linked to government policy on regionalization - decentralized decision-making at the local and regional levels.

At a federal level, the same preoccupation with results and efficiency can be observed. Thus, the federal government management framework recognizes that government exists to serve its citizenry; emphasizes the importance of sound public service values; focuses on the achievement of results; and promotes 'value for money' in the use of public funds.[49] The corollary of this drive for results is accountability,[50] which in turn has led to an increasing reliance on data to demonstrate levels of performance achieved.[51]

The counterpoint to this public performance and accountability framework is the paramountcy of human rights and freedoms. International human rights law sets forth the *normative standards* that the international community believes should guide the actions of nation states, while individual nations enact legislation to provide rights to their citizens and others. As mentioned previously (p. 20), in Canada the foundation of such rights is provided for in the *Canadian Charter*, complemented by provincial human rights codes such as the Québec *Charter*.

One of the most recent statements of such rights is the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, adopted in September, 2007.[a] The following statement regarding education rights is included in article 14 of the Declaration:

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.

3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

Although declarations, as opposed to treaties and covenants, are not enforceable in a court of law, they do provide an expression of what the international community expects. In this case, the resolution adopting this Declaration was supported by 143 votes, with 11 abstentions and 4 countries voting against, including Canada. Both this statement of rights and Canada's opposition provide part of the context in which the CSB operates and strives to implement its mission, as described in the section that follows.

2.1.5 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

We recognized that it was not appropriate to evaluate the context of the CSB because the Board does not, by and large, control its context. Therefore we posed the following questions to guide our discussion:

- What are the principal characteristics of both the regional and local contexts in which the CSB, its schools and centres operate?
- Who are the principal stakeholders of the CSB and what are the characteristics of the relationship between them and the CSB?
- What features of its historical context are important to understanding the CSB?
- What are the principal aspects of the administrative and legal framework in which the CSB operates and how do they affect it?
- How does the broader educational system impact on CSB?

Situating the CSB in its regional context is particularly important because it is this context - the territory of the Cree nation - that caused the Board to be created. Each school has its own particular local context but the nine communities share many characteristics.

We then moved on to look at the historical context and the three 'streams' of education that flowed in to the formation of the CSB: traditional Cree education, federal First Nations education policy and the Québec education system. We note some highlights in the Board's own history, notably the Mianscum report of 1999, which provides the direct antecedent to this Review.

We provided a brief overview of the major elements of the administrative and legal framework, notably the JBNQA and the *Education Act* that applies, and the *Public Education Act* that does not apply, to the CSB. This Act that applies to the Cree, Kativik and Naskapi school boards has never been updated and its unclear which regulations apply to the CSB, especially for the organization of educational services and curriculum.

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[a]   For a complete text of the Declaration, see the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html.

Finally, we briefly discussed the wider context in which the CSB operates, especially the Québec education system.

Based on our analysis of context, we recommend:

> **R1** **THAT**, pending the adoption of a new *Cree Education Act* (recommendation 2), the Board decide on the extent to which current public education legislation should apply to the CSB and request the government of Québec to enact this decision.
>
> **R2** **THAT** the Board take appropriate measures to follow through on its earlier resolutions with a view to drafting a new *Cree Education Act* and regulations.

2.2   The Mission of the CSB

In relation to mission, we posed the following question:

- To what extent is the Board guided by a clear and commonly understood mission with respect to its principal beneficiaries: youth students; continuing education students; and post-secondary students?

This theme comprises three objects:

- values and guiding principles;
- vision; and
- purpose and results.

As with context, guiding questions are used to consider each object, as specified in each of the sub-sections that follow.

A Canadian study of successful organizations led the authors to conclude that ***aim***, ***character*** and ***execution*** are the "three pillars of public management." In brief, successful organizations :

- know clearly the direction they are headed in (**Aim**);

- have a strong sense of who they are and what is important (**Character**); and

- get things done, achieving their aim and demonstrating their character through the use of a broad array of management tools (**Execution**).[52]

While the third pillar is instrumental in nature, the first two reflect the mission of the organization, a statement that should reflect its values and principles, vision, purpose and results. The mission statement should serve to *situate* the organization in its context and to inspire and motivate stakeholders. However, it is not how well the mission statement *says* what it says but how well the organization *does* what it says that will inspire. All our recommendations with respect to mission appear at the end of section 2.2.3.

2.2.1 Cree Values & Guiding Principles

Values are abstract notions and therefore difficult to describe in concrete terms. For our purposes, we will define values as that which the organization and its stakeholders believe to be important, what they stand for or hold to be of worth or, as one source puts it: "conceptions of the desirable."[53] When values are expressed as general precepts to govern behaviour, they become *guiding principles*.[a]

Guiding Question

- What are the values and guiding principles of the CSB that underpin its mission?
- To what extent are these values and principles understood and shared by members of different organizational units and other stakeholders?

Values provide the setting of the organization's *moral compass*, keeping it 'on course,' especially when faced with difficult decisions. Thus, public policy in Canada is guided by the values expressed in the *Canadian Charter*. Charter values, such as equality, are often given more specific expression, such as *equal educational opportunity* [EEO]. As stated in the Jomtien declaration, *Education for All*:

> Every person - child, youth and adult - shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs.... required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning.[54]
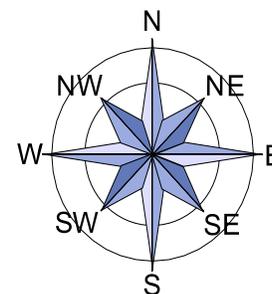
In addition to these overarching values, an organization such as the CSB is also guided by the values of Cree society (see text box).[b] As expressed by then Grand Chief Ted Moses:

"The fundamentals of respect, courage, stewardship and patience are reflected in our way of life. Our values include respect for the land; respect for family; respect for the Creator; and respect for the Cree language and culture."

> If I had to put a name to those principles and those values which define the Cree character and which are at the core of our worldview I would say they are as follows: 1) the importance of truthfulness, 2) respect, 3) caring and 4) sharing....
>
> Principles are those fundamental things that we believe that shape how we see the world, how we respond to events, how we react in situations, and how we relate to people we encounter in life. Principles are those beliefs we go to when we need to figure out which way to go and what to do. Principles are fundamentally an expression of who we basically are as individuals.[c]

Although Cree values are grounded in Cree traditions, they transcend these traditions, providing a 'guidance system' for a changing world. As Grand Chief Moses went on to say:

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[a]   For example, transparency - openness - is a common value in public administration which could give rise to the following guiding principle: The development of board policy should be open to public scrutiny. Since guiding principles are almost always stated in general terms, they are sometimes complemented by guidelines, to specify application in a given situation. In the above example, guidelines could specify the procedures to be followed in developing policy and how the public should be kept informed. See the CRA website (www.gcc.ca/gcc/) for a statement of the Eeyou/Estchee Declaration of Principles.

[b]   Cree Cultural Institute ("Our People"): http://www.creeculture.ca/e.

[c]   Address by Grand Chief Dr. Ted Moses to the Saah Winn Hen Gathering ("Understanding the meaning of life"), Chisasibi, July 12, 2005. Retrieved from: www.gcc.ca/gcc/.

It is the challenge of youth to learn to apply our Cree values to everyday life.... it is alright for us to apply Cree principles and Cree values to contemporary economic and administrative realities. The worth of Cree values and principles is not limited only to the pursuit of a traditional way of life. Being a genuine Cree is not just being a hunter and trapper. You can be a proud and genuine Cree and also be a teacher, a doctor or a judge.

In March, 2004, the CSB adopted a statement of Organizational Values and Guiding Principles. The 'short version' of this statement lists the fifteen items shown below in Exhibit 1-8; the 'long version' elaborates on each of these.[a]

EXHIBIT 1-8: CSB VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1	Mission driven, meaning that "the best possible benefit of our students will always come first"
2	Eeyou/Eenou based
3	Supportive of life-long learning
4	Results-oriented, forward looking, supportive of continuous improvement
5	Dedicated, constructive and positive
6	Caring, compassionate, human, attentive, understanding, attentive, responsive
7	Excellent, in quality and standards, and in leadership
8	Effective and efficient
9	Fair, just, equitable and respectful
10	Open, transparent, honest
11	Responsible, accountable, disciplined
12	Respectful
13	Reliable, trustworthy, sincere and credible
14	Available, accessible, approachable
15	Teamwork

With the exception of the first (and in part, the seventh) item, this lists consists of a series of descriptors of the organization and its personnel. None of them, as stated here, qualify as a guiding principle. As can be seen from the long version, the elaboration is a mixture of more detailed statements and related thoughts that lacks a coherent framework or mode of presentation. It reads like the result of a 'brainstorming' exercise - a hodgepodge of good ideas that needs to be shaped into the statement of values and guiding principles it is meant to be.

Although the discussion of values will inevitably focus on Cree values, it is important not to forget the value of education. As one teacher expressed it:

For students and parents to value education, the school needs to emphasize its value.

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[a]   A copy of the long version is included in Appendix D.

Several stakeholders told us that many parents regard the school as an alien institution that has no connection to the community, a theme that we will explore later in this report.[a] Many students appear to undervalue education, partly because of attitudes they experience at home - education has no intrinsic value to them - but also because of their confidence that the 'system' will look after them - education has no utilitarian value to them.

> *Traditionally, the child learned from the parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters. They were taught how to live cooperatively with each other and nature. In the schools, we teach the children to compete with each other. We are teaching them to just look after themselves and not to think about other people.* **(Elder)**

Regional Educational Project

As mentioned earlier, the Regional Educational Project offered a promising framework for the CSB but it never progressed beyond the draft version dated February, 2004.[b] In brief, it outlined key strategic directions in light of the Board's context and mission. In summary, it describes:

> the general educational framework in which our School Board carries out its activities, relates this framework to the fundamental values of the Cree Nation's identity and to its main development principles, and states the main orientations governing its action in the field of education.[55]

In its section entitled Values and Beliefs, the Project makes reference to the statement of Values and Guiding Principles discussed above.[c] The version contained in the Project is much more coherent, beginning with this statement: "Our School Board's action is founded on a concept involving the whole person, a philosophy of learning and education, as well as a set of values and beliefs consistent with a lyiyuu/linuu approach to education." This is followed by two fundamental concepts of the human being and learning and a brief description of the six pedagogical principles listed below.

EXHIBIT 1-9: PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES

1	Students are the main agents of their own learning.
2	Learning is a life-long process involving the whole person.
3	Learning takes place through harmonious and meaningful interactions.
4	Learning must contribute to creating a personal and social identity for students.
5	Learning must allow students to become active and productive members of the community.
6	Learning must allow students to build their life project and develop work skills and life skills.

We concur with the following characterization of the Project: "It provides a clear summarized perspective of our overall Cree Educational reform process. It outlines and clarifies the basis, guiding principles and parameters initiated by [the CSB] in our expectations of an effective Cree education system."[d] It is unclear why this document was never adopted, though the memorandum from which this quotation was taken suggests that the management group found

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[a]   See chapter 7 in Part 2.

[b]   The draft was prepared by Jaques Henry and Joycelyne Cormier of DISCAS, a Montréal consulting firm; DISCAS is longer active but an archive of other interesting material they produced can be found on the website of the commission scolaire de la Rivière-du-Nord (Saint-Jérôme): http://www.csrdn.qc.ca/discas/index.html.

[c]   There must be an error in the dating of these documents, as the draft Project (February, 2004) predates the adoption of the statement of Values and Guiding Principles (March, 2004) to which it refers.

[d]   Quotation taken from a memorandum from the Director General to the Chairperson of the CSB, May 16, 2005.

it too academic. This may be an example of where potentially valuable *content* is derailed because of a faulty *process*, one that did not provide for the development of ownership of the content by relevant stakeholders.[a] It may also reflect a fundamental problem in the educational level of the administrative leadership of the Board and the resultant lack of capacity one would normally expect from senior administrators in a school board.

More recently, at a meeting of the Council of Commissioners held in Montréal in December 2007, participants were asked to list six Cree values and then discuss their choices in small groups and produce a list of six shared values. The results of these small group discussions were then discussed in a plenary session where the ten Cree values listed in Exhibit 1-10 were identified.

EXHIBIT 1-10: CREE VALUES

1	Honesty, integrity, accountability and respect
2	Maintaining and strengthening Cree identity through language, culture & tradition
3	Caring and compassion
4	Patience
5	Sharing with everyone
6	A force behind our accomplishments (JBNQA), common foundation and principles
7	Acknowledgement to the Creator (spirituality) and religion
8	Collectiveness - working together as a group
9	Family ties
10	Sense of humour and story-telling

Schools have a special role to play in the transmission of values, which is why control of education has always been a key demand in First Nations' quest for self-determination. Shared values, such as those listed above, enable leaders and other stakeholders to create a vision of a school system that is responsive to their needs and aspirations. It is hoped that the above provides the starting point for a renewed dialogue among all stakeholders about the values and principles that should guide the CSB in the future.

2.2.2 Vision, Purpose & Results

The mission statement of an organization builds on its values to create an expression of its vision for the future, its purpose and, ideally, the results it hopes to achieve.

Guiding Questions

▪ What is the vision that is projected by the mission of the CSB?

▪ Is the mission of the CSB characterized by clarity of purpose and intended results with respect to its major beneficiaries: youth students, adult students and post-secondary students?

▪ To what extent are these purposes and results understood and shared by members of different organizational units and other stakeholders?

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[a] We will return to this important document later in section 2.2.2 and chapter 12 of Part 4, which deal respectively with mission purpose and strategic direction. A copy of the complete Project is included in Appendix D.

Expressing an Organizational Mission

A vision is first and foremost an image of what we are striving to be, as exemplified by Martin Luther King's famous "I have a dream" speech, that, forty years later, still inspires people. An example closer to home was stated by Robert Quill, a student from the Coldwater Band School in Merritt British Columbia.

> Our vision is to be happy. We want to relax and have dreams and laugh. We want to love and talk. We want more Indian counsellors. We want nobody to hurt us and make fun of us. We want to feel safe. We want our own police. We want a justice system that works. We want to know our Native culture. We want to respect each other. We want to have a better future.[56]

In the same vein, the National Indian Brotherhood's dream was entitled: ***Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future***.[57] The image of this policy paper is expressed as follows by then National Chief Ovide Mercredi:

> It is incumbent upon us as members of First Nations, to produce an education system that will ensure that all Indian students in the future, know who they are, know what their people stand for, so that we do not have to be confronted, as we are now, with young people with no hope for the future, with young people who have dropped out from the educational system, with young people that have given up on life and committed suicide."[58]

The vision of an organization describes the impact that it wishes to make, how the world will be different because of what it does, as illustrated by the following statement by a First Nations task force:

> Our vision is a holistic, quality First Nations education system that begins in early childhood and includes adult education and training and post-secondary education, where the weight of education decision-making rests with First Nations in an appropriately funded infrastructure where parents, elders, professionals and leaders at the community, regional and national level come together to plan their learners' education.
>
> We also envisage a First Nations education system where parents, elders, education leaders and other members of First Nations communities are responsible for identifying the goals and objectives of the learners' education to help create culturally and linguistically competent learners.[59]

At a school level, visioning creates an image that stakeholders share, that bind them together in ways that no formal rules or regulations could ever hope to do. The Peguis Central School in Manitoba states their vision as follows: "Together, we must ensure that all our students are attaining high levels of academic, cultural and individual success, empowered with the tools of knowledge, skill and experience to compete on any level, anywhere, as we move into the 21st century."[60] The study on First Nations schools from which this quotation was taken demonstrated the close association between vision and improvement: "People in these schools are clear about their mission and priorities. Ideas on improving performance are welcomed, and teachers feel that they can change things that don't seem to be working."[61]

Creating a vision for an individual school or a whole school system does not simply happen; it requires leadership. In fact, Leithwood and his colleagues at the University of Toronto include visioning as the first of eight dimensions defining their model of transformational leadership: "building school vision; establishing school goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualized support; modelling best practices and important organizational values; demonstrating high performance expectations; creating a productive school culture; and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions."[62]

A statement of purpose answers the question: Why? It explains the organization's *raison d'être*, why it exists. Purpose is shaped by values and vision. Thus, the mission of public schools in

Québec is based on the values of EEO and a vision of every student realizing his or her potential.[a]

Recognizing that an organization cannot be all things to all people, the statement of purpose may serve to delimit its intended *reach* by identifying what is included in and what is excluded from the scope of its activities.

Even when the purpose of the organization is clearly expressed, such as statement does not usually provide sufficient clarity of direction to an organization. It is for this reason, that successful organizations specify the ***results*** they intend to achieve.
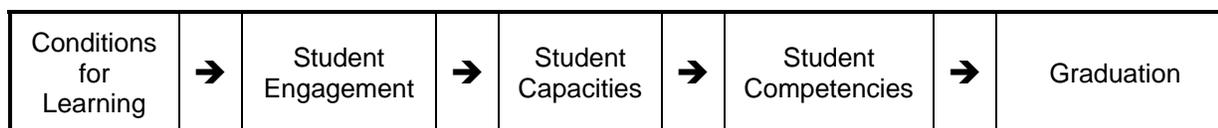
- **Result**: a describable or measurable change that occurs because of some action supported by various resources.

As suggested by this definition, a focus on results shifts the traditional focus of an organization from what it does to the changes it is trying to effect. Thus, for example, rather than stating that its objective is to promote child development, the organization states the results it intends to achieve, such as: Students adopt a healthy lifestyle. However this does not mean that what the organization does is not important. That is the other aspect of this definition worth noting: the linkage between resources, actions and results.

In other words, once it has decided what results it wishes to achieve, the organization then determines what actions are likely to produce both short and longer term results and what resources are required for this purpose. This 'sequence of change' is

Activities	➜	Results				
		Outputs	➜	**Outcomes**	➜	**Impact**

usually called a ***results chain***, where activities produce 'outputs' (short term results) that lead to desired 'outcomes' (medium term results) that lead to desired 'impact' (long term results).
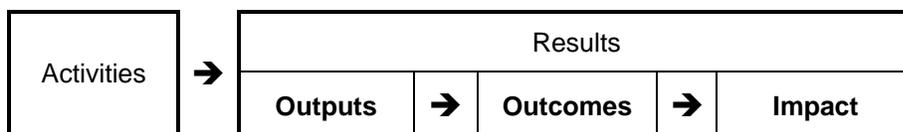
As shown in this chain, achieving results can be a long term endeavour, with many small intermediate steps (and results) along the way before the ultimate results are realized. Take for example, a school board that sees graduation as a major 'outcome' that will lead to long-term 'impact' on students and society: post-secondary education, employment, prosperity, etc. The short-term 'outputs' need to achieve the desire outcome (graduation) can be depicted as shown below:

Conditions for Learning	➜	Student Engagement	➜	Student Capacities	➜	Student Competencies	➜	Graduation

As illustrated here, working backward from the desired result leads to:

- the curricular and cross-curricular ***competencies*** that we expect students to master; then back to

- the ***capacities*** that students must have or acquire in order to achieve these competencies; which require

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- student **engagement** - presence and active participation in school; and finally

- a host of school-related *conditions* that prevent dropping out and support student engagement and the acquisition of various capacities and competencies.

However, the activities needed to realize this results chain begin, not in secondary V, but in kindergarten and continue over 12-13 years of schooling.

The CSB Mission

The CSB Mission appears to be considered as a statement of purpose:

To provide a high Eeyou/Eenou based, holistic education founded on our language and culture and consistent with our values and traditions as Eeyou-Eenou. This education will help prepare each person to make his or her journey as a valued contributor to our Eeyou-Eenou communities and Nation, and to society at large, now and in the future.

The version shown here is taken from the presentation slide included in the set of Management Tools provided by the Director General to the Management Group. The Board website contains a page entitled Mission, but it only contains a statement of the Board's mandate under the JBNQA, including the individual sections of the Agreement. In the statement of Values and Guiding Principles referred to earlier, the mission statement only contains the first sentence quoted above. By contrast, the statement appearing in the Regional Educational Project contains both sentences. Moreover, the Project goes on to elaborate upon this general statement by identifying four "special missions:"

- To contribute, through education, to protecting and developing the Cree identity.
- To define and guide the mission of its educational institutions.
- To ensure the quality of educational services offered in its institutions. and
- To manage resources responsibly.

In its description of each of these special missions,[a] the text specifies that the mission of its schools must be undertaken "in the best interest of the child" and include the mandate to educate, nurture, heal and inspire students. As stated previously about the statement of values contained in the Regional Educational Project, it is unfortunate that this more fully developed statement of purpose has been allowed to fall by the wayside. Even without delving into the details found in the complete text, the four special missions cited above provide much needed specificity to the Board's mission, relating to its wider responsibility to:

- the preservation of Cree identify,
- its supervisory role regarding schools,
- its core mission - educational services, and
- its fiduciary responsibility to manage the resources with which it is entrusted.

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[a]   For the complete text, see the copy of the Regional Educational Project in Appendix D.

In another section of the Project, entitled Issues and Observations, it makes the statement quoted in the text box. As will be discussed below in relation to stakeholder input on the mission, this statement captures the essence of the challenge facing the CSB, preserving the values of Cree identity, culture and language, while looking to the future. As stated by Matthew Coon Come, former Grand Chief:

> "The future of the Cree Nation depends on its ability to establish a harmonious and dynamic balance between two seemingly paradoxical needs: that of preserving and developing its traditional heritage expressed basically through language and culture, and that of developing as a society in a modern context open to the world."

> We must realize that in the future not all Crees will live from the bush. Everyone knows this and there are many in our communities right now who spend little or no time in the bush. These people will however also need to be able to find employment. It is up to us to ensure that these people are able to find and access jobs and economic opportunities in the territory in the future.[a]

In theory, the CSB mission statement applies to all levels of education or support that it provides for youth, adult and post-secondary students. In fact, the mission is really directed at youth education and does not appear to consider adult or post-secondary education.

As stated at the beginning of this section on mission (p. 25), a mission statement is meant to be inspirational. That inspiration depends as much on the process used to create the mission statement as the content of the statement itself. While mission statements tend to be short, the process to produce one may be quite long. However, this time is well spent if it helps clarify the values, vision and purpose of the organization, resolve differences among stakeholders and enhance commitment to the mission. Stakeholders are unlikely to feel any commitment toward, let alone any ownership of, the mission, if they were not involved in creating it or, in subsequent years, in reviewing and reaffirming it.

Given the importance of mission, we posed variations of the following question to a wide range of stakeholders:

1. The mission of the Cree School Board is based on the values of Cree culture and tradition whose purpose is to prepare students for full participation in both that culture and in the wider society.

    a) Do you think the education of students your school should be guided by these values and purpose?

    b) Do you think that these values and purpose are shared by all members of your school community?

We heard very different views expressed about the Board's dual mission. However, there was practically no comment about mission with regard to adult or post-secondary education. Everyone seem to tacitly assume that the mission only involved youth education. On the one extreme, we met some stakeholders who felt that the dual-mission should be called 'Mission Impossible,' perhaps theoretically desirable but in practice, totally unrealistic. On the other extreme, we met many stakeholders who felt that the dual-mission was just fine. Although the diversity of views is a matter of concern, it should be noted that they did not reflect native versus non-native views. Here is how one non-native stakeholder expressed her support of the mission:

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[a]   Statement made at the Information Meeting on the New Canada-Cree Agreement in Ottawa, September 2007. Retrieved from: http://www.gcc.ca/

I think it's totally appropriate. They have to be able to live within their own world. They have to maintain their cultures and their traditions. I think that's extremely important. But also, they have to live within the larger structure because some people will leave the communities. Some people will go elsewhere to work and even if they stay in their community, they have to relate to the outside world.....

The contrary view saw the mission's support of Cree language and culture as detrimental to providing students with a 'good education,' i.e.: *instruction at the same level as all other schools*. As a general rule, those who supported the mission simply saw it as an expression of the what the mission had to be. Those who opposed it saw the mission more in terms of a zero-sum game: anything that served to support Cree language and culture detracted from the provision of the so-called academic curriculum.

The answer regarding mission may first lie in distinguishing 'means' from 'ends.' In other words, as some stakeholders pointed out, the problem is not in the mission itself but in the delivery of the mission. The problem is not in the purpose of the Board's educational mission but in how that purpose is realized. The second issue that emerged from stakeholder input is the question of choice: not everyone wants the same kind of education. Third, formulating the mission is inextricably linked to questions of curriculum and the language of instruction. As we deal with these issues in a later section of this report,[a] we will limit this discussion to the broader questions of educational purpose.

To question the dual purpose of the CSB is to question its raison d'être and we see no legitimate reason for doing so. However, this does not mean that the implications of this dual mission should not be examined, any more than the means to achieve this purpose should escape scrutiny. In our view, the main implication of this mission is that it creates greater expectations for students than those generally observed in single-language public schools (i.e. schools that have French or English as the language of instruction, while offering English- or French-second language).

> Preserving Cree values, language and culture is a shared responsibility. The Board and its schools/centres must do their part, but so must other local and regional organizations, as well as parents and community members.

The mission of the CSB is similar to that expected in various private schools in Québec which promote another culture and language, while offering French and English programs as well. As a general rule, these schools operate for longer hours per day than regular public schools in order to cover their extended curriculum. Another option, is to cover at least some of the instruction of culture and language outside the instructional timetable, for example, after school, on Saturdays or during the summer break. In some cases, parents opt for this extra-curricular approach, while enrolling their children in a regular public school. Regardless of the approach taken, the aim is the same: to provide the same curricular offerings as a public school while ensuring that culture and language are preserved.

The issue of choice is most difficult in smaller schools, which we will discuss in the section on curriculum in relation to the provision of multi-track schools. At this stage, we simply observe that the problems of choice in terms of parental preference for Cree culture and language are likely to greatly diminish if so-called academic instruction is not seen to suffer because of it. We do not agree with the minority view expressed by some stakeholders that this is 'mission impossible.' Difficult, yes; demanding, yes; impossible, no. However, this issue provides an

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[a]   See chapter 4 in Part 2.

important example of a key requirement for improvement that will occur throughout this report - *capacity*.

If schools lack the capacity to provide instruction in an appropriate manner, then the dilemma over mission will not only remain, it will likely worsen. We have visited communities where parents have 'voted with their feet' (to borrow a phrase from adult education) by withdrawing their children from the local community school and enrolling them elsewhere. We were not able to obtain data on the number of students enrolled in CSB schools versus the number of school age children from each community but we know from anecdotal evidence that many parents have lost faith in the local school. Some are in a community where there is a private school; some send their children to a school outside the community and others move so their children can go to school elsewhere.

We also inquired into the support of community members for the mission. In addition to the differences of opinion reflected in the above discussion, we found that many people felt that the mission of the Board was not understood. A lack of ownership in or commitment to the mission was explained in part on this lack of understanding and in part on the way in which some people claimed the mission was crafted. According to some reports, the mission statement was drafted during a meeting of commissioners and administrators at the beginning of 2000, following the tabling of the

> Without communication and participation, stakeholders will have little commitment to the mission statement and even less interest in finding ways to support it.

Mianscum report. No consultation of stakeholders took place and we uncovered no evidence of any serious attempt to communicate it to stakeholders. If this is true, it is not surprising that people do not feel any ownership of this mission. As noted earlier, the mission statement does not even appear on the Board website - what message does that send to stakeholders?

At the present time, the CSB does not specify the intended results that flow from its statement of purpose, nor, as will be discussed later,[a] does it use results-based planning at either the board or school/centre levels. Making the leap to results-based planning represents a significant change in organizational policy and practice. However, it is an investment that is more than worth the effort. An appropriate place for that investment to begin is with the mission statement by asking: What are the major results that we want from our educational system? and then including the answers as an integral part of the mission statement.

2.2.3 Key Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

This section on mission was also framed by a set of guiding questions:

- What are the values and guiding principles of the CSB that underpin its mission?
- To what extent are these values and principles understood and shared by members of different organizational units and other stakeholders?
- What is the vision that is projected by the mission of the CSB?
- Is the mission of the CSB characterized by clarity of purpose and intended results with respect to its major beneficiaries: youth students, adult students and post-secondary students?
- To what extent are these purposes and results understood and shared by members of different organizational units and other stakeholders?

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[a]   This will be discussed in chapter 12 in Part 4.

In this section we have examined the major aspects of the mission of the CSB: values, guiding principles, vision, purpose and results. Like and school board, the CSB's reason for being is based on the value of education but unlike other boards, it is also grounded in Cree values. We briefly examined the Board's Regional Educational Project which anchored the CSB in relation to these values but which unfortunately has been allowed to fall by the wayside.

The mission of an organization should provide a clear statement of its vision, purpose and intended results in keeping with its values. The mission of the CSB is limited to statement of purpose: the preservation and promotion of Cree values, language and culture; and the provision of a range of quality educational opportunities to its students.

We discovered that many stakeholders are unaware of the mission; some describe it as 'mission impossible,' while others think the mission is fine as is. We see no valid reason to question the Board's dual mission. Without Cree values, language and culture, the Board cannot claim to be a Cree institution but without the provision of quality educational opportunities to its students, it cannot claim to be an educational institution. It must therefore maintain both halves in order to be a viable Cree educational institution. As the analysis presented in Parts 2 and 3 of this report will reveal, the problem is not with the Board's mission, but with its service delivery. It is not the ends but the means that need to be changed.

In consideration of the analysis of the Board's mission, we recommend:

R3	**THAT** the Board reaffirm its commitment to provide its students with a quality education grounded in Cree values, language and culture that will prepare them for further study or employment in both the Cree nation and the wider society.
R4	**THAT** the Board determine an appropriate process to engage stakeholders in a review and revitalization of its mission, explicitly including adult and post-secondary, as well as youth education.
R5	**THAT** this process be closely linked to other improvement planning so that stakeholders can see how these other initiatives regarding service delivery will support the mission.
R6	**THAT** the revised mission include a statement of values, guiding principles and purpose, as well as the intended results for each major sector of activities.

NOTES TO PART 1

1   UNESCO, 1994.
2   *Constitution Act, 1867*, s. 93.
3   Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, Vol. 3, p. 433.
4   Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, Vol. 3, pp. 433-434.
5   Message from the Director General, *CSB Annual Report, 2006-07*, p. 6.
6   Message from the Director General, *CSB Annual Report, 2006-07*, p. 7.
7   Nelson, 2007, p. 3.
8   Wyman, 2007, p. 3.
9   Mitchell & Sackney, 2000, p. 9.
10   Lusthaus, et al., 1999, p. 52.
11   Fullan, 2001, p. 268.
12   Bobet, 2007, p. 3.
13   Cited in Bobet, 2007, p. 9.
14   Bobet, 2007, pp. 10, 19.
15   Arnot, 1998, p. 74
16   Gnarowski, 2002, p. 12.
17   Awasish, n.d., p. 11.
18   Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, Vol. 3, p. 445.
19   Sissons, 2005, 138-139.
20   Awasish, n.d., p. 15.
21   Awasish, n.d., p. 20; this bureaucratic, as opposed to a pedagogical focus, continues to this day; see Krasaukas, 2004.
22   Paquette, 1986, p. 37. Despite this continuity of perspective, federal policy was being subjected to considerable reflection and review; see Barman, Hébert & McCaskill, 1986.
23   Burnaby & MacKenzie, 2001, 195.
24   Smith, Foster & Donahue, 2001, p. 219.
25   See Smith & Donahue, 2002, pp. 30-31, 52-53; Smith, Foster & Donahue, 2001, chap. 13.
26   National Indian Brotherhood, 1984, p. 133.
27   Diamond, 1987, p. 87.
28   Mianscum, 1999, p. 1.
29   Mianscum, 1999, p. 1.
30   Mianscum, 1999, p.25.
31   See Crane, Mainville & Watson, 2006, , p. 30.
32   See Crane, Mainville & Watson, 2006, , p. 71.
33   Cree-Neskapi (of Québec) Act; *Act Respecting the Cree Regional Authority*.
34   See e.g., Assembly of First Nations, 2005a, 2005, 2005c.
35   Crane, Mainville & Watson, 2006, pp. 72-73.
36   *Act Respecting the Process of Negotiation of Collective Agreements in the Public and Parapublic Sectors* [*Public Sector Bargaining Act*]
37   *Provisions Binding the Management Negotiating Committee for the Cree School Board (CPNCSC) and the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) on behalf of the Association de l'enseignement du Nouveau-Québec (AENQ): 2005-2010* [Teachers' Agreement].
38   See, e.g., *Provisions Binding the Employer Bargaining Committee for English-language School Boards (CPNCA) and the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers (QPAT)* [CPNCA-QPAT Agreement].
39   Ministère de l'Éducation, Direction Générale du Financement et de l'équipement [DGFE], 2004.
40   Commission for the Estates General on Education 1996a, 1996b; see also Foster, Smith & Donahue, 2000.
41   MEQ, 2003b, 2004c; see also, MEQ 2003a, 2006b.
42   MEQ, 2002a, 2002b.
43   See e.g. Osborne & Gaebler, 1992.
44   Hargreaves, 2003, p. 1.
45   See, e.g. Government of Canada, 2002.
46   Smith, 2005, p. 15; see also Smith, 2004.
47   Gouvernement du Québec, 2004a, 2004b.
48   See Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor. 2002a, 2002b, 2003.
49   Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2000.
50   Auditor General of Canada, 2002.
51   Smith, 2007b.
52   Ingstrup & Crookall, 1998, p. 8.
53   Willower & Licata, 1997, p. 1.
54   UNESCO, 1994, art. 1.
55   Henry & Cormier, 2004, p. 2.
56   Cited in Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, p. 147
57   National Indian Brotherhood, Assembly of First Nations, 1988.

58   National Indian Brotherhood, Assembly of First Nations, 1991, p. 1.
59   Minister's National Working Group on Education, 2002, p. 9.
60   Cited in Bell, 2004, p. 203.
61   Bell, 2004, p. 298; see also, Fulford, 2007.
62   Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999, p. 9.