

Changes to GB elections with the implementation of Law 105

Substitutes for GB members may be elected (except Community Representatives). Substitutes are elected to replace a permanent representative who is unable to take part in a governing board meeting. For example, at the Parents' AGA, parents will decide whether to elect substitutes for as many GB parents sitting on the Governing Board. A similar process will be available for each of the other GB members from their respective groups.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Governing Board Substitutes **(Revised Admin 2017)**

Why should we have substitutes?

Substitutes are useful to ensure that quorum is met at every meeting.

Are substitutes required for a GB to exist?

As per the Education Act, elections for substitute positions may be held. This should be done after the elections of GB members at the AGA. You are not required to have all substitute positions filled.

Does each GB member have their own specific substitute?

No. The law does not require that each member has a specific substitute, only that the GB has the same number of substitutes as members. Any parent substitute can fill in for any parent member; any teacher substitute can replace any teacher member, etc.

Are substitutes considered members of the GB?

They are not members of the GB, *per se*, but can vote in the absence of a GB member. They are welcome and encouraged to attend GB meetings, to be available should their voting services be required. If not required, they sit as members of the public. If not replacing a member during a meeting, they have no voting privileges.

Do substitutes get added to the GB email distribution list?

The law does not require it, but substitutes would be most effective if they received all relevant material on an ongoing basis.

How does the GB decide which substitutes get used if there are absences?

Each GB may decide how it organizes the replacement in its internal rules: by rotation, random draw, designated replacement, based on availability. **It is recommended that the GB defines a procedure in its Internal Rules soon in the new school year.**

Can substitutes be recruited any time?

No. Substitutes **must** be elected at the AGA.

How long is the term of a substitute?

Section 51.1 EA indicates that substitutes must be elected at the AGA, therefore the term of a substitute is 1 year. Substitutes are eligible to run for GB the following year, should they desire to do so.

Question: **Can a substitute act as chair for a meeting?**

Yes.

Question: **Can a substitute be elected as PC Parent Rep or Alternate?**

No. By law, substitutes (or alternates) are not members of committees, they can only attend a meeting and vote if the member cannot be present. In the case of a GB, since it is a public meeting, everyone is welcome to attend, however only the members have the right to vote. If a substitute replaces a member who cannot attend, they get the right to vote at that specific meeting.

Question: Does the 'IEP Rep' designate member require a substitute who is a parent of a special needs child?

No. If you have a GB parent member serving as an 'IEP Rep' designate, any parent substitute can sub in for them, same as any other GB parent member.

Roles and Responsibilities of Elected GB Parents **(Revised Admin 2017)**

Parent Representatives to Governing Board (GB)

Parents are elected to represent their parent body at GB to make decisions on the mandate defined by the Education Act, in the best interest of the students. Even if parents have specific issues, they are asked to set them aside and vote according to the best interests of all children. Voting is a privilege and abstentions should be avoided unless there is a conflict of interest.

Parent Representative to LBPSB Parents' Committee (PC)

The Parent Rep to the PC is elected by the entire parent body at the AGA from amongst GB parent reps. The PC parent rep represents all the parents of his/her school and attends regular monthly meetings at the School Board (usually the first Thursday of each month). Parents Reps are automatically members of the Parents' Committee, and they may further be elected to various LBPSB committees (Education, Facilities, Transportation, Intercultural, etc.), to EPCA (the English Parents' Committee Association), or to represent parents at Council as a Commissioner Representing Parents. Parent Reps are expected to report back to the parents of their schools.

Alternate Parent Representative to LBPSB Parents' Committee (PC)

This parent also represents all parents of their school and is a member of the LBPSB Parents' Committee. Voting is relegated to the alternate at PC meetings only in the absence of the Parent Rep. Alternates may also be elected as EPCA directors and participate in the subcommittees of the PC. Alternate parents can always attend Parent Committee meetings.

Parent Representatives to Governing Board: IEP representative (GB)

While any parent elected to the GB or PC is tasked with representing the best interests of all the students of their school, there is a committee at the board level - the Special Needs Advisory Committee, or SNAC - that advocates and advises specifically on behalf of the LBPSB's special needs students. SNAC encourages each school to have an IEP Rep on their Governing Board (must be an elected parent representative who has a child on an IEP) in order to serve as a contact person for parents of students with special needs at the school, as well as to act as an email liaison to bring feedback,

suggestions, and ideas from the school to SNAC, and to bring SNAC information back to the school. The IEP Rep position is an **optional** position on a Governing Board and must be approved by the parents attending the AGA.

More information about SNAC can be found on their website <http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PARENTS (Revised Admin 2017)

Who prepares and runs the Annual General Assembly of Parents (AGA), which is held prior to September 30th in each school?

The outgoing chair of the Governing Board calls the AGA by written/email notice. If the chair is not available to run the meeting, the outgoing Parent Representative or other knowledgeable parent fills in. The chair may call upon help from the Parent Rep, Governing Board parent members, PPO chair, etc., to help organize this important event. In the absence of a parent, the Principal calls, prepares, and runs the AGA.

Who runs the elections?

The parents in attendance must approve the Election Official(s) who will run the election and count the ballots during the election. Ideally, the latter would not be a parent or staff member of the school, but rather a School Board Commissioner or Community Representative.

Does the Representative to the Parents' Committee have to be elected at the AGA or can we defer that to our first Governing Board meeting?

The Parents' Committee Representative **must** be elected at the AGA, as per the Quebec Education Act. Every parent of a child in the school who attends the Annual General Assembly is entitled to cast votes for the Parent Representative and the Alternate. The Parent Rep and Alternate speak on behalf of all the parents in the school. As such, the Governing Board is not mandated to elect these representatives.

If there aren't any parents on the Governing Board who are willing to take on the role of the Parent Representative to the Parents' Committee, can we elect a parent at large or have two Governing Board parents share the job?

By law, the Parent Representative and Alternate must both be members of the Governing Board.

One parent is elected to the position of Parent Representative, and one parent is elected to the position of Alternate. Both positions have a 1-year term. Those two parents can, however, share the duties and the meetings, and the Alternate is entitled to vote at the Parents' Committee meetings when the Parent Rep is absent.

Our current Parent Representative to the Parents' Committee just completed the first year of their term as a Commissioner Representing Parents. Do they need to be reelected to GB or as Parent Rep?

The term of Commissioner Representing Parents is two years. If they have

completed their term on GB, they are automatically renewed for another year on GB and are automatically the Parent Representative for the next year. Consequently, one fewer position is up for election on GB.

Is it OK if we are unable to fill all the seats available for parents on our Governing Board? Can we leave them vacant or should we ask the school board to reduce the numbers?

No. It is incumbent upon the parents to fill all parent positions that are up for election on Governing Board by September 30th. **If they don't, the Governing Board cannot operate and all of its functions and powers are given to the Principal.** If a Governing Board would like to change its composition (either by increasing or decreasing the numbers of parents/staff to the minimum allowed by law), a resolution requesting this must be sent to the School Board in the spring, in response to the GB Composition Consultation. Communication with parents (as outlined in this document), and encouragement by current GB members, will help ensure success in recruiting interested parents for Governing Board.

A parent left the school and has vacated his position on GB. How do we fill that position?

Any vacated position, be it a day or a year after the election, does not have to be filled at the AGA.

The parents on GB determine amongst themselves how to replace that parent until the end of the 2-year mandate. GB internal rules may outline how and when this should be done.

Can a “graduating” parent be elected to GB, knowing that the position will be vacated after only one year?

A parent representative whose child no longer attends the school (either because the child graduated or has moved) remains a member of the GB until the next AGA. Therefore, in the case of a parent whose child will graduate at the end of the school year, he or she can be elected on the GB, but this position will be up for election at the next AGA.

We have always wanted to establish a Parent Participation Organization (PPO) but some parents at our school say it's not necessary because we have a Home and School.

Whose decision is it to form a PPO?

Schools can have both a PPO and a Home and School Association. The decision to form a PPO rests solely with the parents who attend the AGA in the fall. A motion is put forth to establish a PPO, a vote takes place, and if approved, members are elected and a name is given to the PPO.

What is the difference between a PPO and a Home and School?

As per the Quebec Education Act, a PPO, composed of parent members, may be formed within your school by all parents of children currently attending the school, present at the AGA. The PPO's role is to promote the collaboration of parents in developing, implementing and evaluating the school's educational project. They may advise the parent members of the Governing Board, or can be consulted by them on any matters of concern.

A Home and School Association is an independent, incorporated, not-for-profit, volunteer organization also dedicated to enhancing the school experience, usually by fundraising. The membership is open to anyone in the community, regardless of whether they are a parent. More information on Home and School can be found at <http://www.qfhsa.org>

Special Needs (SN) Parent on GB

Why do we need a SN parent on GB?

It is optional and not required by law. The LBPSB Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC) has requested that each GB assign one parent member to act as a link between special needs parents in their schools and the SNAC.

What is the role of SN parent on Governing Board?

The role of the special needs parent is exactly the same as that of other parents on GB, to make decisions in the best interest of ALL students in the school. In addition, that person will serve as a "go to" person for other school parents of special needs students. This parent is encouraged to communicate parent needs with SNAC as well as bring SNAC information back to the school.

Who is eligible as the SN parent on Governing Board?

Any parent at your school who has a child on an IEP can be the SN parent.

How will the special needs parent on Governing Board be elected?

It is up to the parents at each school to decide how to elect this person, if the AGA approves its implementation. It could be an existing GB member or a new one. In either case, this is decided at the school AGA.

What happens if the special needs parent is not approved at the AGM?

The regular election process for parent members to GB would continue as usual, with the full number of parent members being elected.

What happens if the AGA decides to appoint a SN parent, but there are no nominations for it?

The regular election process for parent members to GB would continue as usual, with the full number of parent members being elected.

Is this the only way that parents of students with special needs can join GB?

No. This position is only for parents who wish to take on the specific responsibility of special needs link-person at your school. Any parent can declare their candidacy for the parent positions on Governing Board, without the need to declare that they are the parent of a child with an IEP.

Can a parent who is already a member of GB be named special needs parent?

Yes, as long as that parent has a child with an IEP.

Does the special needs parent on GB deal only with special needs issues?

No. All members of GB deal with all school issues.