

WHAT IS BILL 64?

Bill 64 - *The Education Modernization Act*, is the enabling legislation that will be used to achieve some of the government recommendations included in the K-12 Education Review. Once it receives royal assent, Bill 64 will replace *The Public Schools Act*, *The Education Administration Act* and *The Community Schools Act*, the pieces of legislation currently governing education in Manitoba.

WHAT IS PROPOSED IN BILL 64?

Bill 64 proposes the elimination of democratically elected school boards, the creation of a provincial education authority, school division amalgamations reducing the 37 divisions to 15 “regional catchment areas” plus DSFM, and limiting principals and vice-principals from being in the same bargaining unit as teachers.

WHEN WILL THIS HAPPEN?

Some parts of Bill 64 come into force when it receives royal assent. Others come into force on proclamation before *The Public Schools Act* is repealed and replaced by the new *Education Act*.

July 1, 2022 is the date set for the Provincial Education Authority to take over. Bill 64 must become law first. The provincial government is planning to appoint a transition team to implement the changes.

It is important to note that there are specific timelines and dates associated with the implementation of some of the items proposed in Bill 64, meaning that proclamation and royal assent will not result in an immediate change in the education system.

WHAT ABOUT PRINCIPALS AND VICE PRINCIPALS?

For 102 years, principals and vice principals have been integral members of The Manitoba Teachers’ Society, and they will continue to be members. We are committed to continuing to provide the services that they have come to expect.

There is nothing in Bill 64 that restricts membership in the Society, and we are working to ensure protections are in place for continuous membership of principal teachers and vice principal teachers.

Under the terms of Bill 64, principals and vice principals must be certified teachers but are excluded from the definition of a teacher. They will continue in their roles and will remain in TRAF.

WHAT ARE OUR KEY CONCERNS? (including but not limited to)

Bill 64:

- includes system-wide changes that lack evidence of their impact on improving educational outcomes—the stated intent of commissioning the education review. The status of principals and vice principals within the teacher bargaining unit is one such example. How does this improve student learning?
- eliminates principals and vice principals from the definition of teacher in the legislation. This removes them from the profession of teaching narrowing their role to management and away from instructional leadership. This deprofessionalizes the principalship and will have consequences that are wide-reaching. Students are best served from a unified and collaborative profession.
- introduces mechanisms for parent influence over decision-making in areas best suited for the expertise of trained teachers and principal teachers, including, but not limited to, staff hiring and performance evaluations, recommendations regarding priorities and policies on discipline management and analysis of student achievement.

- includes mechanisms to issue directives and requirements for system accountability that will increase standardized testing as well as publication and public comparison of test results. This will serve to widen existing systemic discrimination and inequities.
- authorizes the Provincial Education Authority Board, whose members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, to implement policies about potentially sensitive curricular content, opening the door for regressive curriculum.
- attacks local democracy through a public appointment structure that can be subject to politically partisan influence and loyalty, susceptible to appointment rescindments with or without cause, and indicates no structure to ensure diverse community representation.
- obstructs free and fair collective bargaining. Under Bill 64, the new teacher employer—the provincial government—requires arbitrators to take into account the ability of the employer—also the provincial government—to pay. Arbitration is the only dispute resolution mechanism for teacher bargaining, and it must remain robust, effective and fair.
- eliminates all school divisions and creates regional catchments that may not be equipped to respond to local needs, based on their size. This centralized structure could *increase* bureaucracy and high-level administration rather than reduce it.
- creates uncertainty at a time when the COVID pandemic makes public services more important than ever.

While not all aspects of the BEST report appear in the Bill, the government is not finished. Through the establishment of regulations, the education minister could implement change that does not require legislation. MTS will be vigilant and intentional in our communication, both with the government and with you, to ensure protections for our members remain in place.

WHAT ARE THE NEW REGIONS?

Fifteen new regions, plus DSFM, will replace 37 separate school divisions. Once the new governance model has been implemented, the new regions will be as follows:

1. Winnipeg, St. James-Assiniboia, Louis Riel, Pembina Trails, Seven Oaks and River East Transcona
2. Garden Valley, Western
3. Frontier, Kelsey, Flin Flon and Mystery Lake
4. Evergreen, Lakeshore
5. Beautiful Plains, Park West, Rolling River
6. Interlake, Lord Selkirk
7. Mountain View, Swan Valley, Turtle River
8. Hanover
9. Fort La Bosse, Southwest Horizon, Turtle Mountain
10. Sunrise, Whiteshell
11. Brandon
12. Seine River
13. Portage La Prairie, Pine Creek
14. Border Land, Red River Valley
15. Prairie Spirit, Prairie Rose

WHO IS MY EMPLOYER?

There is no immediate change to your employer. Once established, the Provincial Education Authority will become the employer for all public school employees except for employees in the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine (DSFM) and the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology.

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT?

Current collective agreements remain in effect and will be followed.

WHAT HAPPENS TO SCHOOL BOARDS?

Bill 64 proposes the abolishment of all English school boards. All English school boards will be dissolved and replaced by the Provincial Advisory Council on Education. It will be comprised of 15 parents elected from among the members of the executives of the School Community Councils in each regional catchment, and one representative trustee from Francophone school board. The Francophone school division and school board will remain as currently structured.

WHAT IS THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY?

The Provincial Education Authority will be responsible for collective bargaining, the delivery of K-12 education, remote learning and more.

The Provincial Education Authority must appoint a director of education for the schools in each regional catchment area. The director of education will effectively act like a superintendent does under the current system. The Provincial Education Authority is expected to be in place by July 1, 2022.

WHO RUNS THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY?

The new Provincial Education Authority is made up of government appointees, of which two must also be serving on the Provincial Advisory Council on Education.

The Provincial Education Authority Board will report to the Minister.

WHAT IS THE PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON EDUCATION?

The provincial advisory council on education will be comprised of 15 parents elected from among the members of the executives of the School Community Councils in each regional catchment, and one representative trustee from Francophone school board. This advisory council will provide the minister of education with direct parental advice on matters relating to the education system, including, but not limited to: staff hiring and performance evaluations, recommendations regarding priorities and policies on discipline management and analysis of student achievement.

WHAT IS A SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL?

Parents and guardians of each school community will elect an executive (the School Community Council) to work with the principal on matters impacting the school community. The councils' specific roles have not been finalized but could include assessing the effectiveness of programming at the school, analyzing student achievement and learning outcomes and proposing capital construction projects and budgets. These councils will replace traditional parent councils.

WILL THERE BE JOB CUTS?

Currently, there is no information about staffing changes.

WILL MY UNION CHANGE?

No. The Manitoba Teachers' Society will continue to be your union.

I DON'T SUPPORT THIS BILL. WHAT CAN I DO?

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