The New Educational Project for Schools and Centres

The New Educational Project for Schools and Centres

The adoption of Bill 105 in 2017 mandated changes to the strategic planning process of school boards and their institutions. School boards completed their new commitment-to-success plans (CTSP)prior to July 1, 2018. Schools and centres have until July 1, 2019 to develop their new Educational Project. The Educational Project has been in existence for many years, but school success plans and management and educational success agreements as well as centre policies and objectives have now been eliminated. This means that many of the elements in each of those have now been incorporated into the Educational Project. This document will summarize some of the key considerations for teachers in the development of the new project.

KEY ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER

An Examination and Analysis of the School/Centre Reality

The Educational Project must be based on a given school or centre's actual situation as each institution is different. Questions regarding the needs of students, matters related to their educational success, and the characteristics and expectations of the community should be considered. The governing board conducts the analysis by involving people from all parts of the school community and by looking at relevant information and data. Some of the tools that could be used are surveys, focus groups and consultation of groups and organizations connected to the school community.

Development of the Educational Project

The Educational Project is intended to be the reflection of the school or centre's ambitions for its students' learning. It is the guiding document for what the institution wants to achieve. It must also be coherent with the school board's CTSP. The governing board is ultimately responsible for adopting the project, with the principal responsible for coordinating the development on a day-to-day basis. The project must also be evaluated periodically within a period of time established by the governing board that is consistent with the CTSP.

The project must also include certain elements, notably:

- The school/centre context;
- The school/centre's orientations and objectives to improve success;
- Orientations and objectives for implementation of the project that respect the legal framework (Education Act, Basic School Regulation, Annual Directives, etc.);
- Its coherence with the board's commitment-to-success plan including the timeframe;
- Targets and the indicators used to measure the targets.

Once the analysis of the school/centre's reality is complete, it is used as the basis for developing all the above elements. In addition to being consistent with the board's CTSP, the analysis of the situation can lead an institution to develop other elements that are important to its community with respect to student learning. Once the project is developed, it is presented to the Governing Board for adoption; this means that the Governing Board still has the power to modify the elements of the project if it so wishes.

Implications for Teachers

Teachers should be actively participating in the analysis and development phases of the project through a variety of consultation processes.

Teachers may participate in surveys, be members of focus groups and be part of working committees that analyze the institution's situation or that develop the elements to be included, among other mechanisms.

Drafts of the project should be presented at staff meetings and staff council for discussion and recommendations. Teacher members of the Governing Board have a key role to play since they have to vote on the proposed project; they will need to have a thorough understanding of the consensus view among teachers so that they can vote accordingly.

Indicators and targets

Teachers also should pay close attention to the kinds of indicators and targets that are developed for the Educational Project. **The development of targets that are qualitative rather than quantitative with appropriate indicators is important;** this is to make sure that the focus is on student learning rather than on simplistic targets, such as exam results, which turn the focus toward generating a specific grade or toward unrealistic expectations. Simplistic, grade-based targets can distort the pedagogical and learning process.

Determining the Means of Implementation – A Proposal Developed by Teachers

One element that is very important for teachers to bear in mind is that the Educational Project **must not** include the specific means that will be used to implement it; the means are developed by the staff and proposed to the principal for him/her to approve. This is clearly laid out in the changes to the Education Act and was included to ensure that the professional role of teachers (and other staff) in determining how they perform their jobs would not be determined by a vote at the Governing Board, where the majority of votes are held by people who are not teachers.

Teachers shall develop proposals for the means to be used to implement the project to present to the principal.* These proposals can be developed through a combination of staff meetings, cycle or departmental working groups, at staff council meetings, or using any other method that ensures that all teachers have the opportunity to participate in a meaningful way.

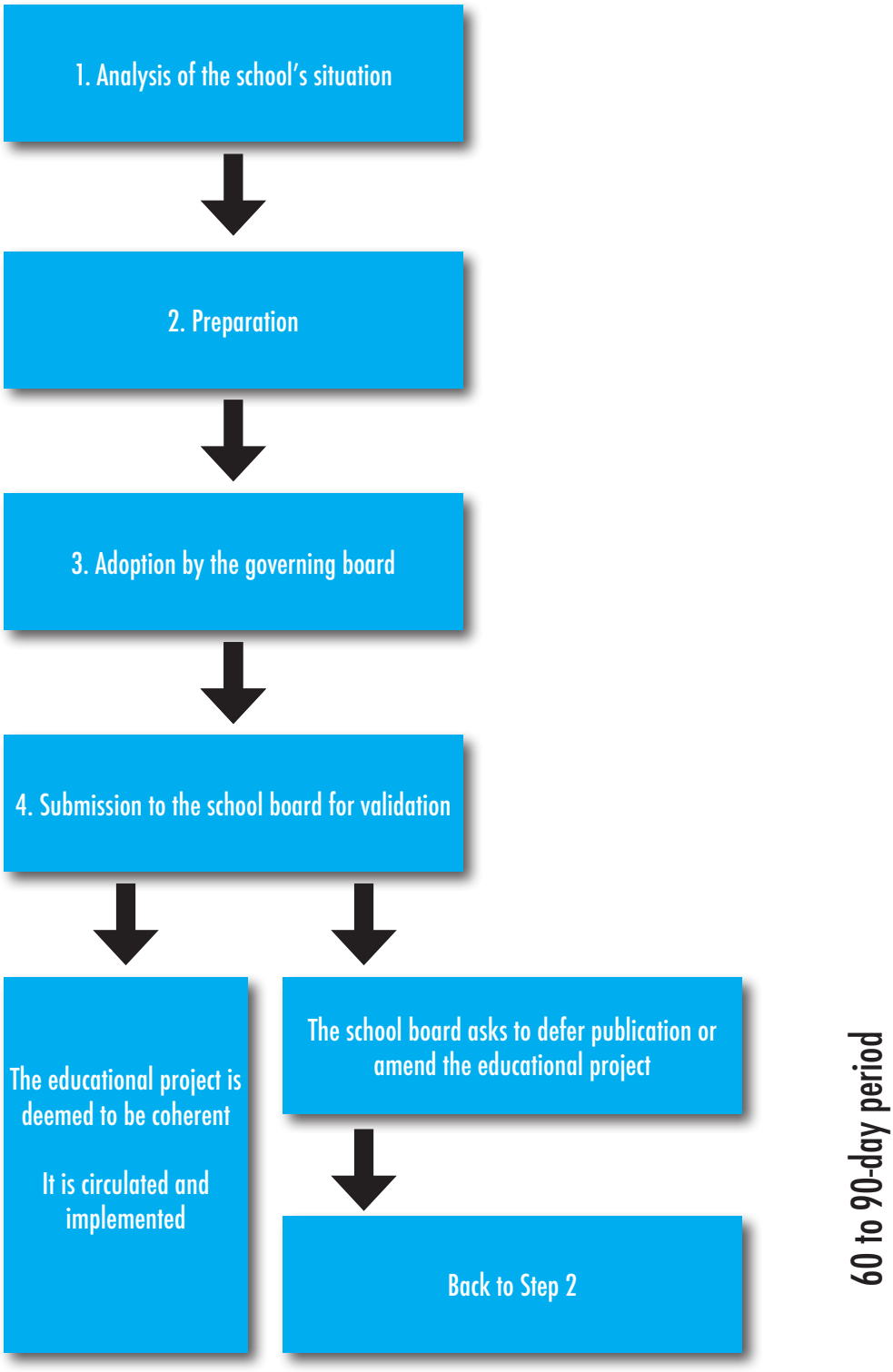
Teacher involvement in developing the means is important because once they are approved by the principal teachers will be expected to help put them into place.

CONCLUSION

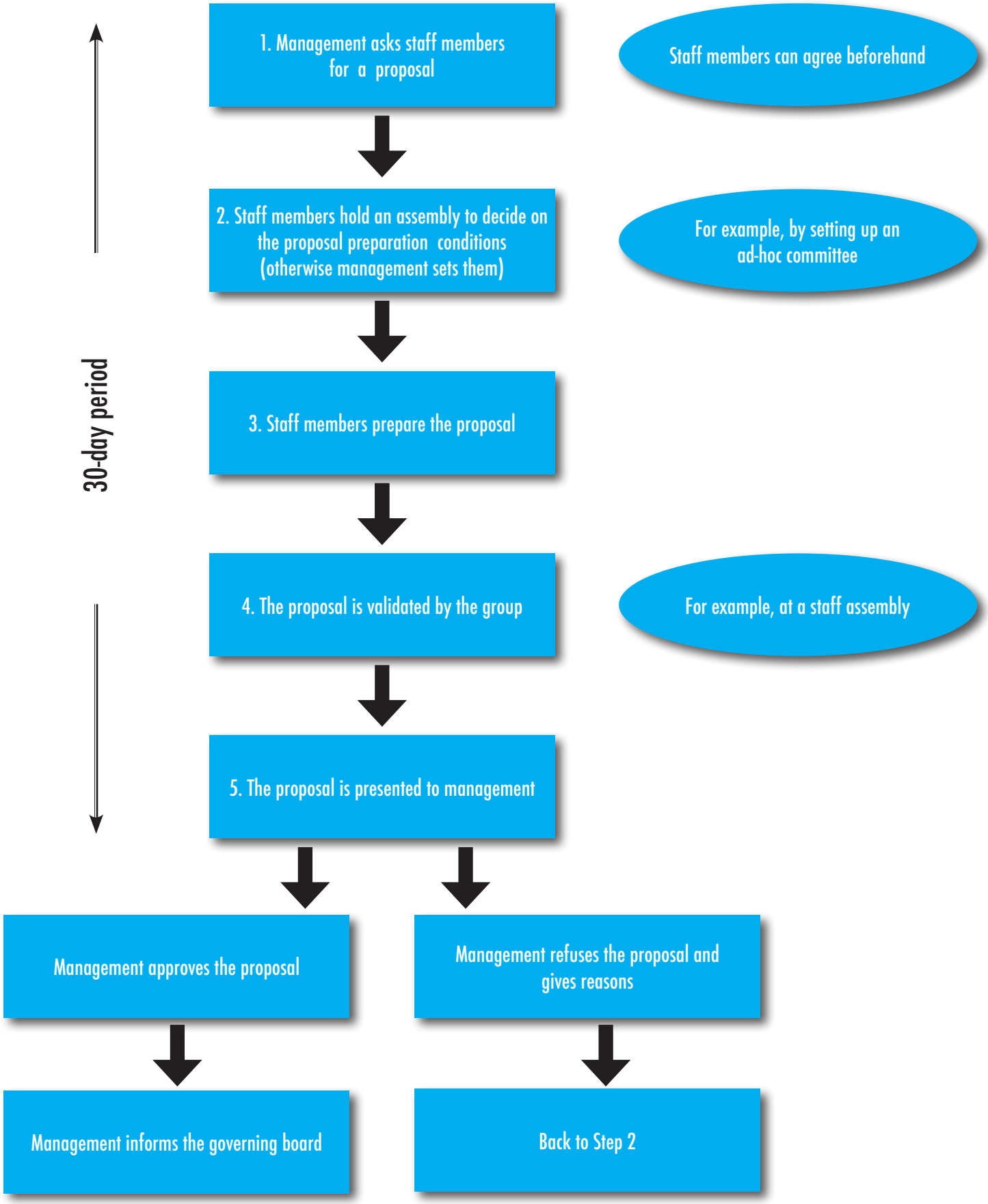
The new version of the Educational Project will include elements that previously existed in school success plans, centre policies and orientations and management and educational success agreements. This new project, which must be adopted prior to July 1, 2019, will be voted upon by the Governing Board; which has the ability to modify the proposed version. Given that the school/centre's staff will be bound to respect its orientations, objectives and targets, the teachers' participation in its development and adoption is essential. They should be active participants in the analysis of the school/centre's situation and the development of the Educational Project; they are integral parts of the institution's community and need to express their vision for what the institution should be doing. They are also responsible, independently of the Educational Project itself, for the development of the means by which the project will be implemented, which is an essential role for them to undertake to assert their professional judgement. Whether or not the process has begun in their school/centre, teachers should act to make sure that they are meaningful contributors to the process because the content of the Educational Project will shape the school/centre's orientations and actions.

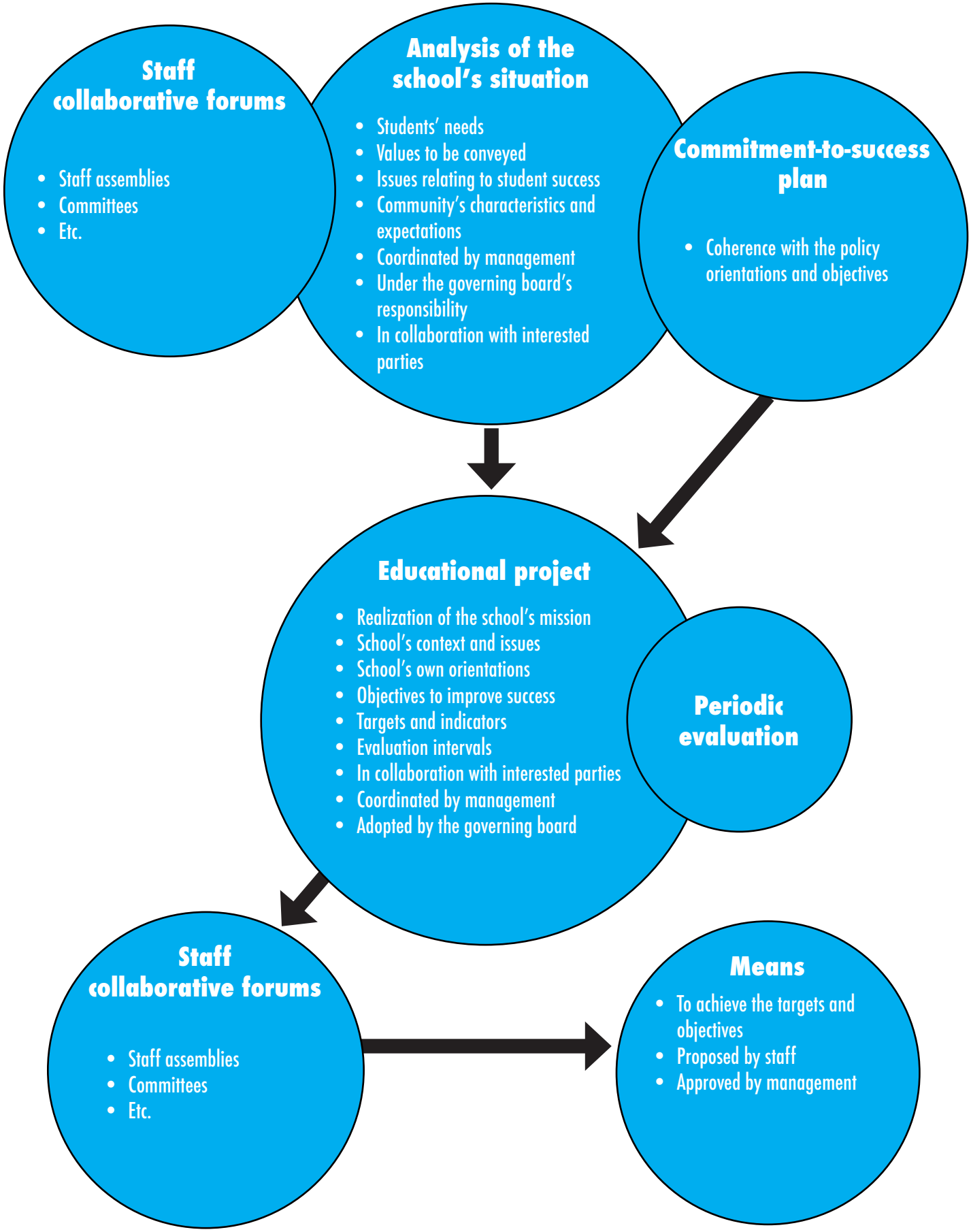
*As per Article 96.15 of the Education Act

Process for Preparing the Educational Project



Process for Preparing a Means Proposal




Staff collaborative forums
Staff assemblies
Committees
Etc.
Analysis of the school's situation
Students' needs
Values to be conveyed
Issues relating to student success
Community's characteristics and expectations
Coordinated by management
Under the governing board's responsibility
In collaboration with interested parties
Commitment-to-success plan
Coherence with the policy orientations and objectives
Educational project
Realization of the school's mission
School's context and issues
School's own orientations
Objectives to improve success
Targets and indicators
Evaluation intervals
In collaboration with interested parties
Coordinated by management
Adopted by the governing board
Periodic evaluation
Staff collaborative forums
Staff assemblies
Committees
Etc.
Means
To achieve the targets and objectives
Proposed by staff
Approved by management

Educational project and implementation means: Examples of elements of content

Note: The proposed examples are for information purposes only

Issues and orientations	Objectives	Non-numerically quantified targets	Indicators	Means proposed by staff
Issue: Reading skills and appreciation of books **Orientation:** Support the learning and appreciation of reading	Develop the students' desire to read Promote the development of the students' reading competencies	Increase the amount of reading time Enhance the students' enjoyment of reading Increase the success rate in reading, language of instruction, in the 6th year of elementary school	Average number of books borrowed from the library every month Remarks by students Success rate in reading	Frequent reading periods Purchase of books on different topics Regular trips to the library Analysis of reading strategies used by students at risk or in difficulty Remedial service for students with reading difficulties Mentoring of Grade 1 students by Grade 6 students
Issue: School as a safe learning environment **Orientation:** Create an open, healthy, safe learning environment for students	Develop respect of diversity among students Promote the adoption of positive behavior	Improve the climate at school Reduce the number of incidents of violence and bullying	Perception of the school climate among students and staff Number of reported incidents of violence and bullying	Track situations and types of violence and bullying Diversity awareness activities led by the spiritual and community life facilitator (e.g. monthly student assemblies) Mediation for students with conflicts

Issues and orientations	Objectives	Non-numerically quantified targets	Indicators	Means proposed by staff
Issue: Student engagement **Orientation:** Promote students' involvement in their own academic progress	Help students to consider their future career possibilities Establish the value of student presence in school and in class Provide a range of extra-curricular activities to address the students' various interests	Increase the number of students involved in an academic and career guidance process Reduce classroom absences Increase students' participation in school activities	Number of students taking part in academic and career guidance process Attendance rate Sense of belonging among students Number of students involved in extra-curricular activities	Academic and career guidance workshops led by a guidance counsellor Presentation of different examples of academic and career paths Individual meetings between the student and the special education technician or social work technician following unexplained absences Review opportunities for extra-curricular activities