Mandates of Participatory Bodies Representing Teachers and the Role of the Local Union and Teachers in the English Sector:

The School Board Parity and School Level Special Needs Committees

2022-2023

The Provincial Collective Agreement provides for the establishment of *two* committees in connection with students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties (students with special needs), namely the *parity committee* (clause 8-9.04) at the school board level and the *school-level committee* (clause 8-9.05).

The purpose of the two committees is:

- To involve the local union and teachers in the organization and allocation of services for at-risk students and students with special needs.
- To make services available as quickly as possible to students so early interventions can be carried out and problems can be prevented.

The Local Union and the School Board Parity Committee

As per clause 8-9.04 of the Provincial Collective Agreement, the school board level committee is comprised of equal school board and local union representatives (parity), which may include classroom teachers. The local union works jointly with the school board where service and support allocations for students with special needs are concerned. The local union, along with the school board, can:

- Advise on special education policy
- Verify resources/funds available to schools
- Determine the criteria for allocating resources
- Receive and analyze School Level Special Needs Reports
- Analyze additional support requests from schools
- Make recommendations on:
  - Services provided
  - Models for organizing services in schools for forming (special) classes
  - Allocation of resources
  - Funds reserved to provide additional services for new cases
- Call upon representatives of other school board employment categories to participate in committee discussions

Internal rules of order for the School Board Parity Committee

The Provincial Collective Agreement does not provide for specific rules of order, such as frequency of meetings, time of meetings, or location, as these are local decisions (clause 8-9.13). For more detailed information on the functioning of this committee at the local or regional level, please consult your local union, the local collective agreement between your school board and local union, or your school board's *Special Education Policy*.

Teachers and the School Level Special Needs Committee

As per clause 8-9.05 of the Provincial Agreement, composition of this committee must consist of teachers and the school principal. The number of teachers on the school level committee is a local union and school board decision (clause 8-9.13). In some schools, for example, the committee is composed of not more than three teachers (one teacher from each cycle in elementary) and of the school principal. In some schools with 1,000 students or more, for example, school level committees may have up to five teacher representatives and the school principal. The teacher representatives must be appointed from the teaching staff.

Most discussions at this committee focus on attendant/integration aide and special education technician services available for students with special needs in regular classes, who may require physical and/or social/emotional support. Since support for learning is not the focus of this committee, there is no obligation for resource teachers (elementary remedial or high school supporting teachers) to be a part of the school-level committee. The teachers sitting on this committee can be from regular classes.

The school principal is a member of the committee but may be represented by the vice principal. The principal cannot be represented by a member of the professional, teaching or support staff.

At the request of the teachers or principal, a member of the professional or support staff who normally works with at-risk students and students with special needs may be invited to attend a committee meeting.

Based on the needs identified by schools and on the recommendations made by the school board parity committee for at-risk students and students with special needs, the school board allocates its resources to schools.

Once resources have been allocated to schools, the school-level committee then:

- Considers the number of support personnel services (attendants/integration aides and special education technicians) made available by the school board.
- Makes decisions on the overall organization and distribution of support personnel services (attendants/integration aides and special education technicians) for the school based on student and teacher support needs.
- Periodically assesses the effectiveness of the conditions in place facilitating access to support services.
- Produces a yearly report[1] on the support services allocated by the school board.

Method for accessing support services at the school level

For students and teachers to benefit from support from an attendant/integration aide or a special education technician, the committee must establish a support service access procedure. In doing this, the members must consider:

- The form to be used when support service is requested
- The conditions for use of the form and tracking requests
- The principal's role in the procedure
- The availability of support services

Criteria for distribution of support services at the school level

When deciding criteria for the distribution of support services provided by attendants/integration aides or special education technicians, the following elements should be considered:

- The number of students with special needs, their needs and abilities, and the level of integration (partial or full)
- The number of students who have (Ministry) codes
- Established individualized education plans
- The size of the groups
- The presence of special classes in the school or the need to create new special classes

The committee seeks agreement from all its members, including the principal or the vice-principal. The agreement of the person representing the school's professional, or support staff is not required.

A school principal cannot bring a fully developed project or decision to the committee and simply ask the teachers to agree to it. No type of service structure can be imposed.

If a problem arises with the committee's operations, the teachers may submit the problem to the School Board Parity Committee or may use the dispute resolution mechanism established by the local union and the school board (clause 8-9.12).

Internal rules of order for the School Level Special Needs Committee

The Provincial Collective Agreement does not provide for specific rules of order, such as frequency of meetings, time of meetings, or location, as these are local decisions (clause 8-9.13)[2]. For more detailed information on the functioning of this committee at the local or regional level, please consult your local union, the local collective agreement between your school board and local union, or your school board's *Special Education Policy*.

Conclusion

With increasing student needs, additional budgetary measures to consider, and measures being transferred directly to schools, the role of the local union and teachers in the school board and school level special needs committees is an important one. The involvement of the local union and teachers is essential to the organization of services for students with special needs.

1 See Appendix 4 on page 9 for an example of a school level special needs committee report.
2 See appendix 3 on page 8 for suggested timeline for meetings at the school level.

Appendices

Appendix 1
Excerpt from the Provincial Collective Agreement[3] - School Board Parity Committee

8-9.04

The board and the union shall set up a parity committee. The committee's mandate shall be:

a) to give its view on the policy on the organization of educational services for students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties and to make recommendations concerning the implementation of the policy and the methods for integrating students into regular groups as well as the support services required for the students' integration;

b) to recommend models for organizing services that could be implemented in schools to provide support for the formation of classes including, among other things, setting up groups of students as a result of a priori weighting, the creation of a resource or transition class or the addition of services;

c) to give its view on the services to be offered at the board level;

d) to verify all the resources available under clause 8-9.03;

e) to determine the criteria for the allocation of resources to schools according to the policy in effect at the board;

f) to analyze requests from schools in relation to the allocation criteria established;

g) based on the total available resources allocated under clause 8-9.03, to recommend to the board:

   i. the allocation of resources among the schools;
   ii. the portion of resources allocated as compensation as a result of the weighting of certain students with special needs to be paid or, where applicable, to be included in the school's budget;
   iii. the reserve to be maintained for additional services that will be determined during the following year under clause 8-9.07;

h) to receive and study the reports prepared under subclause e) of clause 8-9.05 and to make the recommendations it deems appropriate.

The committee may call upon representatives of other categories of employment to take part in the discussions.

3 Entente concluded between the CPNCA and QPAT here.

Appendix 2
Excerpt from the Provincial Collective Agreement[4] - School Level Special Needs Committee

8-9.05

A committee composed of teachers and of the school administration shall be set up in each school. The committee's mandate shall be:

a) taking into account the criteria defined by the parity committee set up under clause 8-9.04, to identify the specialized and financial resources that it deems necessary for the following school year intended for students with special needs and as support for teachers;

b) for the following school year, to inform the parity committee, no later than April 1 or at another date that the board determines, of the resources prescribed in the preceding subclause;

c) to distribute the resources allocated to the school under clause 8-9.04 as well as the additional services to be determined during the year and to define the conditions of access to services including, where applicable, the possibility of setting up provisional support services before a decision is made under subclause a) of clause 8-9.07;

d) to periodically assess the effectiveness of the conditions facilitating access to the services in place;

e) to report to the parity committee on the allocation of resources agreed to under the preceding subclause c).

In carrying out its mandate, the committee shall take into account the recommendations formulated by the other categories of personnel in the school. Also, in the context of the application of subclauses a) and c), it shall take into account, where applicable, the school organization plan established under article 8-10.00. The committee may call upon a member of the professional or support staff working regularly with at-risk students or students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties to take part in the discussions.

4 Entente concluded between the CPNCA and QPAT here.

Appendix 3
School Level Special Needs Committee – Timeline[5]

SCHOOL LEVEL SPECIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE
COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT E5 - CLAUSE 8-9.05

Clause 8-9.05 of the Collective Agreement E5 QPAT-CPNCA requires the creation of a School Level Special Needs Committee in each school. This committee includes teachers and the school principal. The mandate of this committee is described in the clause.

In order to promote the efficiency of this committee as well as the actualization of its mandate, this document is a reference tool available to all schools. Use of this timeline is optional as it can be adapted to better respond to the needs and practices specific to each environment.

Furthermore, as a recommendation, the school level committee can develop its own set of internal rules such as:

- Calendar of meetings
- Agendas
- Meeting checklist
- Distribution of documents
- Feedback on consultations
- Items discussed
- Invitation to support and professional employees
- Etc.

Clause 8-9.05	Suggested Timeline
A committee composed of teachers and of the school administration shall be set up in each school. This committee has the following mandate:	
a) taking into account the criteria defined by the parity committee set up under clause 8-9.04, to identify the specialized and financial resources that it deems necessary for the following school year intended for students with special needs and as support for teachers;	September: updates and revisions for the current school year. February and March: for the following school year
b) for the following school year, to inform the parity committee, no later than April 1 or at another date that the board determines, of the resources prescribed in the preceding subclause;	At the latest April 1st (or another date determined by the school board)
c) to distribute the resources allocated to the school under clause 8-9.04 as well as the additional services to be determined during the year and to define the conditions of access to services including, where applicable, the possibility of setting up provisional support services before a decision is made under subclause a) of clause 8-9.07;	May-June September (updates and revisions) If needed at any other pertinent times during the school year
d) to periodically assess the effectiveness of the conditions facilitating access to the services in place;	November-March
e) to report to the parity committee on the allocation of resources agreed to under the preceding subclause c).	In relation with deadlines established within the school board practices

5 Suggested timeline as agreed upon by CPNCA and QPAT – 2022-2023.

Appendix 4
School Level Special Needs Committee Report - Example

Example of a School Level Special Needs Committee Report

Organization and Distribution of Support Services

Elementary Schools

School: _____ **Date:**_____

Type of Support	Total Amount of Support
Remedial Teacher allocation[1]	_____ Full-time _____ Part-time
Special Education Technician	_____hours/week
Attendant	_____hours/week
Professional _____	_____hours/week
Other _____	_____hours/week

Grade:		Teacher:				Number of students in class:
Attendant hours used per week:		Spec. Ed. Tech hours used per week:				Remedial hours used per week:
Student initials	Code	Support				Resource model used (In-class, Pull-out, 50-50):
		Remedial teacher	Spec. Ed. Tech	Professional	Attendant /Other	Description of Need

Grade:		Teacher:				Number of students in class:
Attendant hours used per week:		Spec. Ed. Tech hours used per week:				Remedial hours used per week:
Student initials	Code	Support				Resource model used (In-class, Pull-out, 50-50):
		Remedial teacher	Spec. Ed. Tech	Professional	Attendant /Other	Description of Need

Grade:		Teacher:				Number of students in class:
Attendant hours used per week:		Spec. Ed. Tech hours used per week:				Remedial hours used per week:
Student initials	Code	Support				Resource model used (In-class, Pull-out, 50-50):
		Remedial teacher	Spec. Ed. Tech	Professional	Attendant /Other	Description of Need

Grade:		Teacher:				Number of students in class:
Attendant hours used per week:		Spec. Ed. Tech hours used per week:				Remedial hours used per week:
Student initials	Code	Support				Resource model used (In-class, Pull-out, 50-50):
		Remedial teacher	Spec. Ed. Tech	Professional	Attendant /Other	Description of Need

*repeat table for each grade level

Have additional support requests been made to the School Board Parity Committee? ☐YES ☐NO

Were all school based funds (Ministry measures) used before additional requests to the School Board Parity Committee were made? ☐YES ☐NO

Additional information for the School Board Parity Committee:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Teacher Representatives School Principal

_____ _____

Date Date

[1] The total amount of Remedial Teacher support, that is allocated to schools, is predetermined by the school board and pertains to teaching schedules and teacher workload parameters. The orientation of Remedial Teacher support is a topic of discussion at Teacher Council.