

MESSAGE FOR PRINCIPALS AND VICE-PRINCIPALS

Better Education Starts Today highlights the central role of school leaders in Manitoba's new Kindergarten to Grade 12 governance model. The intent is to strengthen the role principals and vice-principals already play in building a learning community—that is, supporting teacher professional learning, development, and performance; focusing on student engagement and achievement; and receiving input from parents and caregivers.

The experience of the pandemic demonstrated the importance of schools in the lives of Manitoba families and the critical role principals and vice-principals play in supporting the entire school community and ensuring that learning continues. The consultations during the Commission reinforced this central role and called for action to strengthen school leader effectiveness and support. The K to 12 Commission spoke to “principal work intensification,” highlighting the complexity of the role as instructional leaders with managerial tasks. As leaders of their school community, principals need to operate clearly within the management domains and have professional learning for their ongoing educational leadership development.

How will the changes affect you?

Hiring

- ✓ Principals and vice-principals will continue to be required to be certified teachers.
- ✓ Existing principals and vice-principals will continue in their roles.
- ✓ For principals and vice-principals in the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine (DSFM), your employer remains the DSFM.
- ✓ For principals and vice-principals in the Provincial Education Authority, Directors of Education and leaders within regions will hire vacant principal and vice-principal positions, and they will support school leaders in their roles.
- ✓ Principals and vice-principals continue to be eligible to participate in the Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund pension.
- ✓ Existing competitive processes for hiring future principals and vice-principals are unchanged.

Teacher Bargaining Unit

- ✓ For employees of school divisions other than the DSFM, once the Provincial Education Authority becomes your employer, the Authority will be responsible for administering the existing collective agreements in place.
- ✓ Principals and vice-principals will no longer be in the teacher bargaining unit (Bill 64, Schedule C). This will bring our education system in line with most other employer/employee relationships where managers form their own bargaining unit separate from their staff or are non-unionized. This approach
 - removes real or perceived conflicts of interest that currently exist with management and employees in the same bargaining unit
 - empowers principals and vice-principals to lead and support their teacher teams
 - supports principals' and vice-principals' ability to drive change to improve student outcomes
 - enhances principals' and vice-principals' ability to provide better and more effective performance appraisals
- ✓ Principals and vice-principals will have the opportunity to maintain membership in the teacher bargaining units if they choose to return as classroom teachers, maintaining their current pension, benefits, and other entitlements. Years of service as a principal are treated as if they were a teacher. Once Schedule C is in force, principals and vice-principals will have until the following April 30 to declare their intentions of either remaining in their positions or choosing to return as a classroom teacher. (For example, if the Schedule comes into force in November of 2021, principals and vice-principals would have to declare prior to April 30, 2022. If it comes into force July 1, 2022, they would have until April 30, 2023, to declare).
- ✓ If there are disagreements regarding the composition of the teacher bargaining unit (i.e., for individuals who hold both a teacher position and a principal position), the process in *The Labour Relations Act* may be used to provide clarity.

All changes will be implemented in accordance with employment and labour relations legislation and existing collective agreements.

While the Provincial Education Authority may be established before November 2021, changes to the school division configuration and governance structure will occur by July 1, 2022. [Better Education Starts Today](#) outlines the priority actions to be underway or completed by September 30, 2023.

Priority Strategies to Support School Leaders

There are many priority actions under the *Better Education Starts Today* strategy that are designed to support school leaders over the next 18 months:

- ✓ Develop teaching and leadership standards for professional practice and conduct that will guide teacher education, practice, evaluation, and ongoing development.
- ✓ Undertake a review of regulatory frameworks to strengthen the teaching profession and promote high standards of teaching and leadership.
- ✓ Build upon enhanced mental health programming introduced during the pandemic, with a focus on students and school staff.
- ✓ Develop a new provincial school leadership framework to strengthen the role of school principals and vice-principals as instructional and school leaders who are well equipped to support diverse school community needs, engage parents, and drive improvement at their schools.
- ✓ Work with principals and vice-principals to facilitate their ongoing professional learning needs.
- ✓ Explore the supports principals need to be successful in their role as education leaders, including a review of business functions at the school level such as principals' maintenance, operations, accounting, and financial roles, to enable them to focus on school leadership, teaching, learning, parent and community engagement, school management, and school effectiveness.
- ✓ Review and bring forward recommendations for the annual school plan.

How can you get involved?

- ✓ Teachers, school staff, and leaders will play a critical role in informing the path forward. Details on consultations, timelines, and opportunities will be shared following spring break.
- ✓ Connect with your employer. While answers may not be known immediately, it is important to bring your questions forward to inform communication and decision making. To reach out to the Education Transformation Team, please email edutransformation@gov.mb.ca.
- ✓ Please visit www.bettereducationmb.ca for more information.

Thank you for all of your contributions to the consultations and for working to improve the education system in Manitoba—both during these challenging times in COVID-19 and into the future as we chart our path forward.