

**GOVERNMENT RENEWAL:  
DISCUSSION PAPER**

**Education and Early Childhood Development  
September 2011**

## Message from the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development



We are living in an important time in our province. Our demographic make-up is changing, and along with it, community needs are evolving. Our resources are stretched amongst competing priorities across the full range of public service, affecting ALL New Brunswickers.

In Education and Early Childhood Development, the School Districts and the Department have risen to the challenge and made difficult choices in view of the major fiscal challenges facing this province. While we have made great progress in containing spending, we must continue to prioritize our resources where we can make the greatest impact on children and students.

We need to think differently about how we provide services to children and students. We have an opportunity - and a responsibility to build something better, together. By participating in the Stakeholders' Summit, you will have an opportunity to partner with other stakeholders, share your views and hear theirs, engage in healthy and constructive discussions on the education system we now have, and be part of the process to help us make the best decisions possible for children and students.

I look forward to seeing you there.

## Section 1: Introduction

### Context

The province of New Brunswick is facing a significant fiscal challenge. Without corrective action, the province will face a deficit in the order of \$1 billion. This is primarily due to increased spending pressures across a number of government departments. The province's net debt will grow to the \$15 billion range by 2015 unless decisive measures are taken.

*The government is spending considerably more on public services than it can afford and this is not sustainable.*

Budget Speech 2011-2012.

In response, Premier David Alward launched an initiative focussed on government renewal to ensure the Government of New Brunswick is able to provide appropriate and affordable services to citizens on a sustainable basis. As part of this initiative, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is expected to provide comprehensive options to government as to how, through system-wide efficiencies and solutions, it can improve education and early childhood services within the province's fiscal realities. (Note: All government departments are expected to propose similar efficiencies in their respective areas.) To this end, the Department has established three areas of focus:

1. Core functions and shared services;
2. Accountability, governance and organization; and
3. School utilization and infrastructure planning.

*We cannot afford to do business the same way. Together we need to work smarter, reduce spending, and invest wisely while improving outcomes for our children and youth.*

These areas were selected based on preliminary input from stakeholders and staff and during open space sessions hosted by Minister Jody Carr and some school districts earlier this year. The purpose of the sessions was to seek suggestions on ways government can cut costs while minimizing the impact on the classroom and on early childhood development.

Districts have found savings for 2011-2012 and these were redirected to priority spending such as wages, supplies, and maintaining the same number of classroom teachers. The Department of Education and Early Childhood development constrained the growth of education spending at district and administrative levels while still receiving an overall increase of 1.1 per cent.

In light of the fiscal situation facing our province, we need to go further, and continue to look at how to better spend the \$1 billion education and early childhood development budget. To this end, the Department is hosting a Stakeholder Summit to seek input and advice from its partners on ways to find efficiencies and improve effectiveness in the three key areas. In addition to the Summit, working groups of staff at all levels will be fleshing out options which will be shaped by this and previous input. All of this will assist the Department in finalising its Education Plan and setting long-term objectives.

## Purpose of the Discussion Paper

This discussion paper will serve as a starting point for the engagement process. It is meant to:

1. Ensure participants come to the Summit with a common understanding of how New Brunswick's education and early childhood development systems operate in terms of:
  - i. Core functions and shared services
  - ii. Accountability, governance and organization
  - iii. School utilization and infrastructure planning
2. Help decision-makers and leaders focus on core supports and services to improve student learning and early childhood development.
3. Inspire discussions on ways to find efficiencies and improve effectiveness.

This discussion paper is divided into four sections:

1. Introduction
2. Core functions and shared services
3. Accountability, governance and organization
4. School utilization and infrastructure planning

The following sections provide an overview of the current context followed by a series of questions for discussion.

We invite you to read the discussion paper in advance of the Summit and come prepared to work collaboratively to identify ways we can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the public education system and early childhood services.

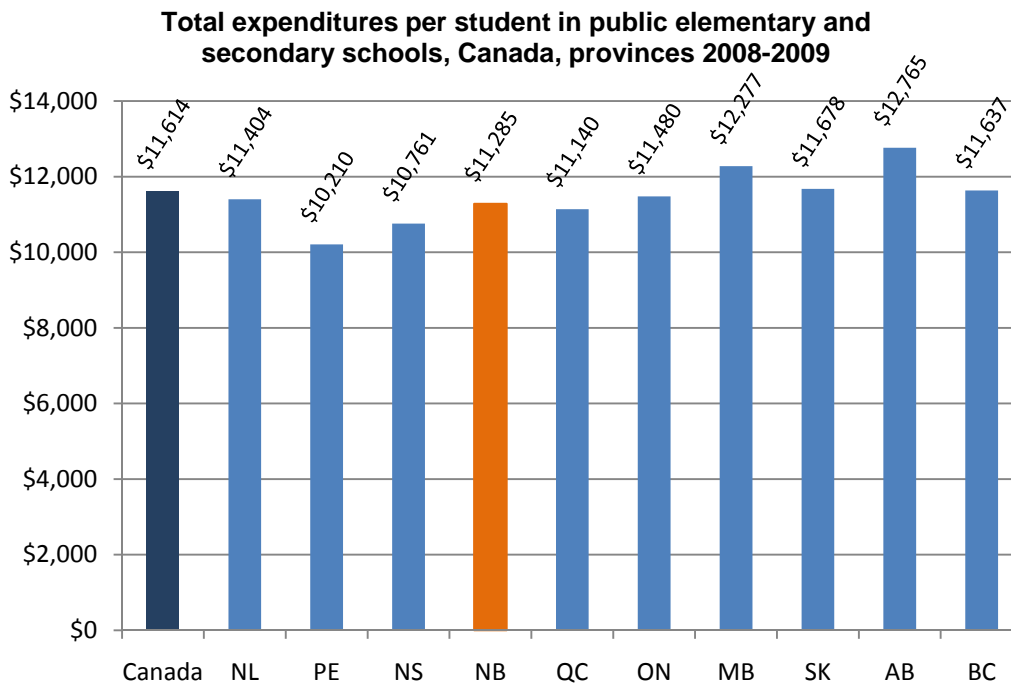
We look forward to working with you to ensure that the public education system and early childhood services are successful and sustainable for children and students now and in the future.

**Section 2: Core Functions and Shared Services**

**Financial Overview**

**Public Education System (K-12)**

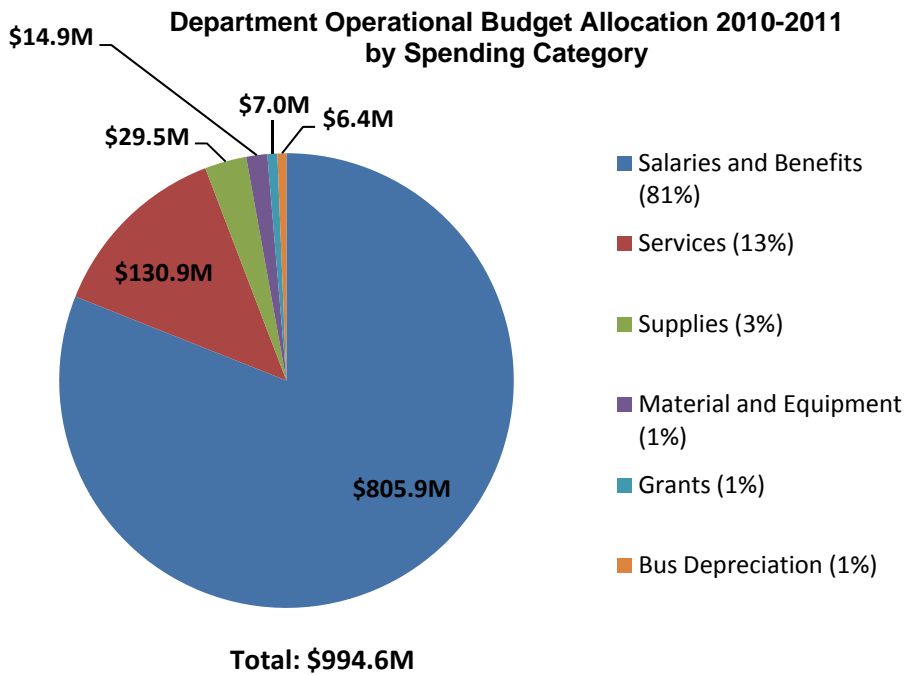
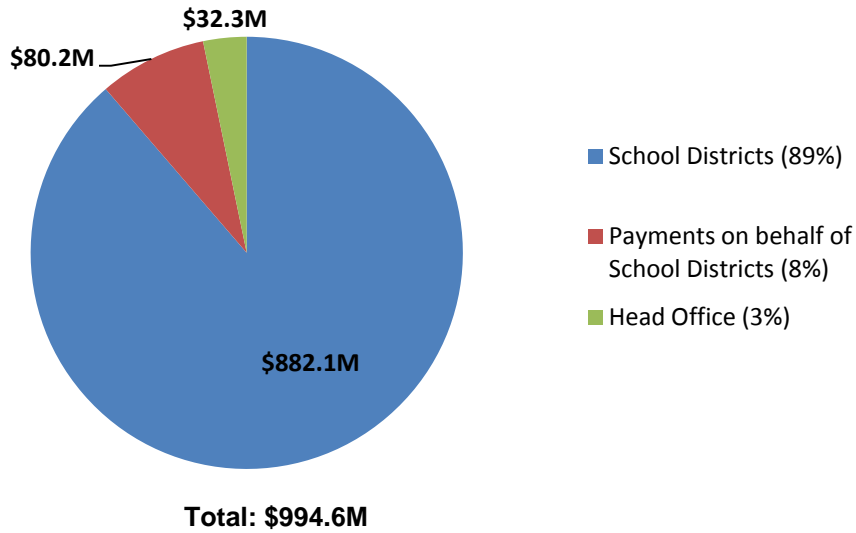
As highlighted in the chart below, in 2008-2009, New Brunswick spent \$11,285 per student in elementary and secondary schools. This closely compares to the national average of \$11,614. Note: 2008-2009 is the most recent year for which provincial comparisons are available from Statistics Canada.



Source: Statistics Canada

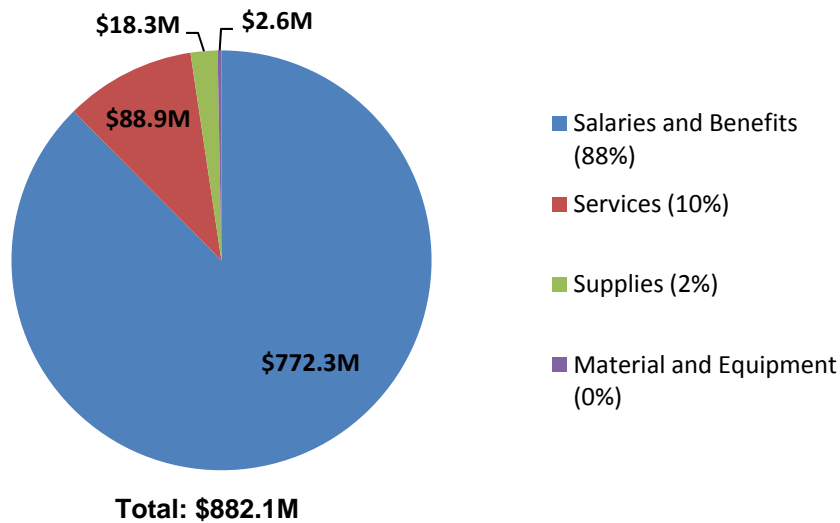
The following charts depict in two ways the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development budget for K-12 is allocated. The first chart shows the distribution of funds between head office (i.e. Department) and school districts as well as payments made by the Department on behalf of school districts for items such as supports for the visually and hearing impaired, group insurance, WorkSafe New Brunswick, bus depreciation, bus insurance, Public Private Partnership (P3) operations, etc). The second chart shows how the funding is distributed by key areas including salaries and benefits, services, supplies, material and equipment, grants and bus depreciation. Most of the budget is dedicated to salaries at all levels of the system.

**Department Operational Budget Allocation 2010-2011  
by Spending Authority**



The chart below shows how funding is allocated to the school districts (both Francophone and Anglophone).

**School District Budget Allocation 2010-2011  
Francophone and Anglophone Districts**



The following table shows the main cost drivers in public education.

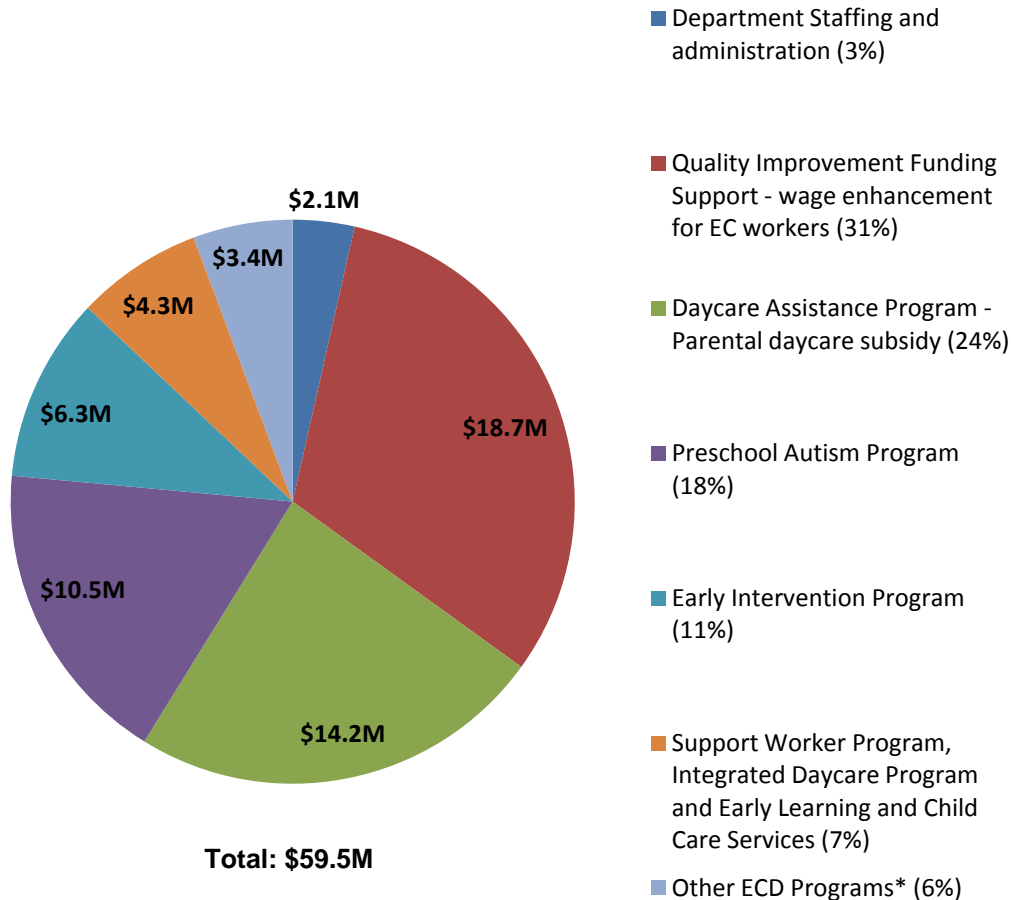
	2001-2002	2010-2011	% change
<b>Teacher’s salaries</b>	\$346.6M	\$533.1M	+54%
<b>School buildings</b>	\$78.7M	\$108.2M	+37%
<b>Bus operations</b>	\$45.8	\$69.7M	+52%

**Early Childhood Development (ECD)**

In April 2011, the New Brunswick government formally integrated Early Childhood Development with the Department of Education in order to provide a more seamless and holistic approach to child development from birth to graduation (up to 21 years of age).

The following chart shows how funding is allocated in Early Childhood Development.

**Early Childhood Development Budget Allocations 2011/2012**



\*Other ECD Programs include: Early Language Program, Born to Read, Communities Raising Children and Prenatal Benefits.

Most services in Early Childhood Development are community-based and delivered through non-government organizations. These organizations receive government funding to deliver services on behalf of government.

As of March 31, 2011, there were 622 early learning and child care facilities; all are privately owned with 71 percent or 440 that are for profit and 29 percent or 182 that are not-for-profit. Between 2000 and 2011, the number of early learning and child care spaces increased by 98.6 percent, from 10,230 spaces to 20,319. The current amount spent per space by government is \$1,885.

Since 2009, two independent curricula, one Anglophone and one Francophone, have been implemented in all regulated early learning and child care facilities. The curricula are mandatory for facilities that offer services to preschool aged children.

The following table shows the main ECD cost drivers over the past 10 years:

	2001-2002	2011-2012	% change
<b>Quality Improvement Funding Support (wage enhancement for early learning and child care educators)</b>	\$2.3M	\$18.7M	+713%
<b>Daycare Assistance Program (parent subsidy for early learning and child care costs)</b>	\$6.4M	\$14.2M	+122%
<b>Preschool Autism (started in 2004-2005)</b>	\$2.8M (2004-05)	\$10.5M	+275%

## Core Functions

A core function is considered to be a program or activity that directly contributes to the legitimate role of government and is in the public interest. A program or activity that could be eliminated, commercialized or privatized is sometimes referred to as a non-core function. Some programs or activities may not fit neatly into either of these categories.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's vision is to make a difference in diverse classrooms and early learning environments by focussing on strategic services to support the learning and development of all children and students. Its role is to:

- Provide public education (Kindergarten through Grade 12); and
- Ensure the public interest in the safety, security and healthy development of children up to age 12 who receive regulated early learning and child care services.

The integration of early childhood development with education represents a new beginning and an important opportunity to create a seamless system for children from age 0 to graduation.

### Public Education (K-12)

Currently, government funds the following programs and activities within the K-12 public education system:

- **Instructional programs and services** including: teacher salaries, textbooks and instructional material, supplies and equipment, professional development and training, travel, curriculum development and e-learning.
- **Instructional support** including: salaries for administrative support, library assistants, materials and professional development and training.
- **Student support services** including: Educational Assistant salaries, Resources and Methods teacher salaries, tutor support, learning disabled support, enrichment, remediation enhancement, Healthy Minds, French second language cultural activities (Anglophone sector only), positive learning and working environment, Youth Futures, and École plus accueillante et à l'écoute (Francophone sector only).
- **Information technology** including: IT tech support salaries and IT equipment and travel.
- **Community schools** including: district and school coordinator salaries.
- **Plant operations and maintenance** including: custodial and maintenance staff salaries, heat, water, sewer, garbage removal, snow removal, facility rentals, vehicle maintenance, repairs, security, supplies and travel.
- **Pupil transportation** including: bus driver salaries, medical exams and driver exam fees, buses, contracted conveyances, maintenance, fuel and co-curricular and extra-curricular transportation.
- **District office operations** including: district office staff salaries, meeting and travel, parent school support committee meetings and travel, cleaning, electricity, facility rentals, and DEC operations.

### Early Childhood Development

Currently, government funds the following programs and activities within early childhood development:

- **Early learning and child care services** including: licensing, monitoring and investigation of regulated early learning and child care services and investigation of unregulated early learning and child care facilities, implementation and sustainability of two curricula; Daycare Assistance Program, Support Worker Program and Integrated Daycare Program; and enhancing the wages of early learning and child care educators through the Quality Improvement Funding Support program.
- **Early childhood development supports and services** including: services for preschoolers with Autism Spectrum Disorder, pre and post-natal benefits and Early Language Program (delivered by Regional Health Authorities). Funds also support various programming (Communities Raising Children, Early Childhood Development Centres, Parenting Programs through the Family Resource Centres and Born to Read).

1. What should be the top three priorities for K-12 and the top three for early childhood development?
2. Is EECD currently involved in programs or activities that no longer continue to serve a public interest?
3. Are there any EECD programs or activities where government does not have a legitimate and necessary role?
4. Is the role of EECD appropriate or are certain programs or activities candidates for realignment with another level of government (federal or municipal) or another department?
5. Are there any EECD programs or activities that should or could be transferred in whole or in part to the private or voluntary sector?
6. Are there any EECD programs or activities that could be improved in terms of efficiency or effectiveness? If so, how?
7. Are there services in other departments that could be aligned with EECD?

## Shared Services

Shared services have been promoted as a way to achieve cost savings and redirect savings to the classroom by eliminating duplication of functions and using resources more efficiently. It is an approach that has been growing in popularity in both the private and public sectors across Canada and internationally in response to tough budget decisions and diminishing revenues. Shared services in Education and Early Childhood Development are in their infancy. Some examples include training for Autism and sharing IT servers. One promising shared service model that is being piloted is the Integrated Service Delivery model which has the departments of Education and Early Childhood Development, Health, Social Development and Public Safety working together to improve services and programs to children and youth who are deemed at-risk for or who have complex social, emotional, physical and/or mental health needs. Two demonstration sites will be offering services under the new integrated service delivery framework starting in the Fall of 2011.

*Shared services have the potential to release savings from increased efficiency and effectiveness of corporate services but achieving these savings requires efficient and effective implementation.*

Shared services in the Department for Transport and its Agencies, National Audit Office, United Kingdom, May 2008.

It is not clear how much can be saved through shared services. Some quote savings in the range of 25 to 50 percent, others suggest that the actual average savings tend to be around 9 percent, while others still say that savings are indirect in the form of cost avoidance. In addition, some of these savings are more long-term in nature.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Learning and sharing best practices through collaboration.</li> <li>✓ Pooling and sharing of resources and investment in new systems which may not otherwise be affordable by an individual unit.</li> <li>✓ Achieving economies of scale and reducing redundancy thus decreasing the cost of services (fewer locations, systems and equipment) and redirecting savings to frontline services.</li> <li>✓ Standardising processes and practices across units.</li> <li>✓ Improving the quality of services by redesigning and reorganising delivery methods.</li> <li>✓ Sharing training and development costs.</li> <li>✓ Increasing public sector capability and flexibility to respond to fluctuations in demand for services.</li> <li>✓ Concentrating specialised staff can allow greater specialisation by staff, improve learning and training, create career paths, improve retention, attract more highly qualified staff and encourage innovation.</li> <li>✓ Sharing administrative functions can allow a unit to focus on its mission critical activities (such as learning in the classroom).</li> <li>✓ Improving accountability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ May incur high transition costs when moving to a shared service centre, especially if the processes and IT systems are incompatible across units.</li> <li>✗ Loss of autonomy for units (i.e. they may have less flexibility than they would with in-house staff). To balance this loss of autonomy, there is a danger that units will develop 'shadow staffing' to meet managers demands for immediate responses to their needs.</li> <li>✗ Differences in management and cultural fit are more substantial than envisaged and cause delays.</li> <li>✗ The required level of business process re-engineering is under-estimated causing technical problems and additional costs.</li> <li>✗ May require upfront capital investments.</li> <li>✗ Disputes arise as a result of competition between units on the location of facilities and staff.</li> <li>✗ Agreement on IT/software and operating systems cannot be reached because of previous investment and commitments.</li> <li>✗ Need to ensure balance among regions in terms of equity of services.</li> </ul>

1. What services or functions (e.g. IT, finance and payroll, transportation, HR, food services, facilities, administration, purchasing, professional development, instructional) are best candidates for shared services? Why?
2. What services or functions are not good candidates for shared services? Why?
3. How can we share services where it makes sense and at the same time respect local involvement?

**Section 3: Accountability, Governance and Organization**

**Overview - Public Education (K-12)**

Management of the education system is **shared** between the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and District Education Councils. The province is divided into 14 school districts (nine English and five French), each governed by a District Education Council (DEC). The following table provides an overview of staffing, enrolment and number of schools in the 14 school districts. With the exception of District 1, enrolments are expected to decline over the next ten years.

*The DECs and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development have a common objective: providing the best public education system.*

Take action now! Become a District Education Councillor!  
(Pamphlet)

Profile of School Districts – 2010-2011				
Anglophone Districts	Number of Schools	Student Enrolment	Educator FTE	Professional and Support Staff FTE
02	38	15,680	1,152.7	711.7
06	24	10,042	699.3	530.7
08	34	11,571	842.6	592.7
10	16	3,788	299.6	218.2
14	27	7,491	575.9	404.8
15	13	3,371	277.0	234.4
16	21	5,606	452.5	337.5
17	18	4,889	366.7	253.8
18	33	12,141	875.5	527.7
Francophone Districts				
01	15	7,854	546.7	444.2
03	20	5,803	463.9	397.0
05	20	4,892	390.9	350.6
09	22	6,159	481.0	419.3
11	20	5,134	445.0	357.0
<b>Anglophone</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>74,579</b>	<b>5,541.8</b>	<b>3,811.5</b>
<b>Francophone</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>29,842</b>	<b>2,327.5</b>	<b>1,968.1</b>
<b>Province</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>104,421</b>	<b>7,869.3</b>	<b>5,779.6</b>

The following table presents the number of Anglophone and Francophone school districts/district education councils as well as the population by province.

	2010 Population	Number of Anglophone School Districts	Number of Francophone School Districts	Total
Prince Edward Island	140,985 *	2	1	3
Newfoundland & Labrador	509,200	4	1	5
New Brunswick	751,755	9	5	14
Nova Scotia	942,506	7	1	8
Saskatchewan	1,045,622	27	2	29
Manitoba	1,235,412	36	1	37
Alberta**	3,700,000	71	5	76
Quebec	7,907,375	9	61	70
Ontario	13,210,667	60	12	72
<b>*2009 Population</b>				
<b>**Private school boards were excluded from the count.</b>				

1. Are there too many districts considering the number of students and schools and the size of the province? Should districts be amalgamated?
2. How would district amalgamation impact the system as a whole?
3. Are there structural changes that could be made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the system?

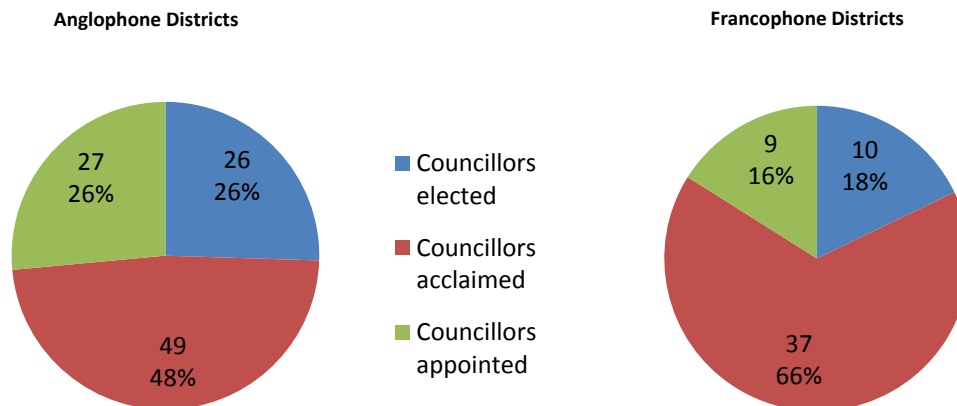
## District Education Councils

New Brunswick has a unique education governance that relies heavily on a cooperative and coordinated effort between locally elected decision-makers and the provincial government. District Education Councils are made up of publicly and locally elected councillors. Councillors are volunteers and as such serve without pay, although travel for meetings and incidental expenses are covered. Each DEC has between 11 to 13 members, including representation from First Nations, where applicable, and students.

*Governance refers to the structures and processes by which an organization is directed, controlled and held to account.*

Public Sector Governance - A Guide to the Principles of Good Practice, Auditor General of British Columbia, 2008.

The following pie charts show the results of the last DEC election held in 2008.



The high percentage of councillors who were acclaimed or appointed suggests that there is a lack of interest in DEC membership.

**1. What can be done to increase interest and local involvement in education including DEC membership?**

## Roles and Responsibilities

The DEC operates independently of the Minister and his staff and is accountable to the Minister through the *Education Act*, regulations and provincial policy. The DEC hires and directs the superintendent, who, on behalf of the DEC, hires and supervises all school district staff. DEC's do not participate in the day-to-day operations of the school district; this is the responsibility of the superintendent.

The Minister has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate standards are in place across New Brunswick and is the official spokesperson for the New Brunswick education system. The DEC's have flexibility to make decisions and set local policy on a wide range of issues within the framework established by the Minister. These standards define the level of service that New Brunswickers can expect from their education system, and ensure that fundamental curriculum, program, service, and health and safety requirements are met. The DEC councillors and the Minister meet at provincial forums (at least twice per year) to officially share information, viewpoints and concerns. At the school level, Parent School Support Committees (PSSC) operate in an advisory capacity to the principal and focus on school improvement planning.

The following table provides an overview of the key roles and responsibilities of the Minister, a DEC and a superintendent as outlined in the *Education Act*.

<b>The Minister:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Must provide free school privileges to residents between the age of 5 and graduation (up to 21 years of age)</li> <li>✓ Can request any information, and in any format, as deemed necessary</li> <li>✓ Must approve the establishment and closure of a school</li> <li>✓ Must establish the educational goals and standards and service goals and standards</li> <li>✓ Must provide a provincial education plan</li> <li>✓ May conduct tests and examinations in any grade or level</li> <li>✓ May establish policy in areas of provincial interest</li> <li>✓ Must approve locally developed courses</li> <li>✓ Must provide a system of teacher education and certification</li> <li>✓ May revoke or suspend a teacher's certification</li> <li>✓ Must convene at least two provincial forums for each education sector to facilitate information sharing and consultation</li> <li>✓ May require that information systems and data standards be used in schools and school districts</li> <li>✓ May appoint a person to investigate a DEC, a school district, or school to ensure compliance with the <i>Education Act</i> and regulations</li> <li>✓ May request that a DEC take corrective action</li> <li>✓ May apply to the Court of Queen's Bench to dissolve a DEC if it is unable to function due to organizational difficulties or fails to comply with the <i>Education Act</i> and regulations</li> <li>✓ May establish advisory boards, committees or other bodies</li> <li>✓ Must provide an annual budget to each DEC for operations, on an equitable basis between sectors</li> <li>✓ Owns all school property</li> <li>✓ Must determine the sites of schools, district offices and other school buildings</li> <li>✓ Must determine the physical plant standards for a safe and healthy school facility</li> <li>✓ May purchase, lease or accept as gifts lands or buildings for school and district office purposes</li> <li>✓ May construct and furnish schools, district offices, and other school buildings</li> <li>✓ May lease, sell or dispose of any lands or buildings</li> <li>✓ Must determine, and approve any changes to, the plan of establishment of district office staffing, and fund districts accordingly</li> <li>✓ May approve the initial appointment of a superintendent</li> <li>✓ May enter into agreements</li> <li>✓ May revise the budget</li> <li>✓ May establish guidelines respecting the expenditure of the budget</li> <li>✓ May examine financial records and accounts</li> <li>✓ May establish, through regulation, the criteria by which superintendents are evaluated</li> </ul>

## A District Education Council:

- ✓ May initiate the establishment of a school through the capital construction projects submission to the Minister
- ✓ May initiate a school closure through a school sustainability study
- ✓ Must provide francization services for ayants droits
- ✓ May provide for the development of locally developed courses
- ✓ Must establish, implement and monitor a district education plan and update the Minister annually
- ✓ Must establish, implement and monitor a district expenditure plan and submit it annually to the Minister
- ✓ Must develop school district policies and procedures, not inconsistent with provincial policies and procedures
- ✓ Must ensure that provincial policies and procedures are being followed by the superintendent
- ✓ Must review school improvement plans and district and school performance reports
- ✓ Must maintain linkages with and provide training to Parent School Support Committees (PSSC)
- ✓ Must review and oversee expenditure of trust funds
- ✓ Must identify construction priorities
- ✓ May provide for the settlement of disputes on school matters between any parent or pupil and any member of the school personnel
- ✓ May make rules governing the DEC's internal procedures and meetings
- ✓ Must prepare and submit an annual report to the Minister
- ✓ Must at all-time have management, care and control of all school property
- ✓ Must make, to the extent practicable, school property available for use by community groups or other persons or organizations
- ✓ Must hire, direct and evaluate the superintendent
- ✓ May cooperate with another DEC to share school personnel and educational or administrative programs and services

## A superintendent:

- ✓ Must determine the placement of all pupils
- ✓ Must provide leadership in the district in promoting quality education, enhanced community involvement and the efficient delivery of services
- ✓ Must coordinate and administer the educational programs and services prescribed by the Minister
- ✓ Must ensure the implementation of best practice in teaching and evaluation methodology
- ✓ Must ensure that provincial and district policies are followed by school personnel
- ✓ Must prepare and implement the district education plan and the district expenditure plan
- ✓ Must prepare an annual district performance report
- ✓ Must hire, direct and evaluate school personnel
- ✓ Must consult with PSSCs when evaluating a principal or vice-principal
- ✓ Must attend and participate in DEC meetings
- ✓ Must manage the financial resources as per the district expenditure plan
- ✓ Must ensure communication links and procedures are in place with parents, staff, DEC members, Department, Minister and partners.
- ✓ May enter into agreements on behalf of the DEC

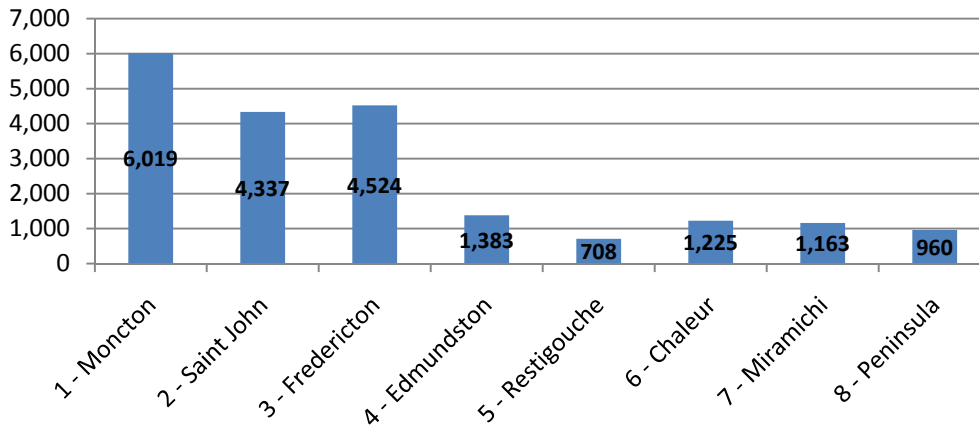
✓ Must make arrangements for the conveyance of pupils as deemed necessary

- 1. What are the strengths of the current governance structure? What are the challenges?**
- 2. Are the current roles and responsibilities of the Minister/DEC/superintendent clear? Are they clearly understood? Are they appropriate? Can they be improved? If so, how?**
- 3. Do DEC members have the appropriate training to carry-out their duties? If not, what additional supports are needed?**
- 4. What is working and what is not working in terms of the relationship between the Minister and DECs, the DECs and superintendents, the Minister and superintendents?**
- 5. How can we work better together while respecting each other's roles and responsibilities?**

## Overview – Early Childhood Development

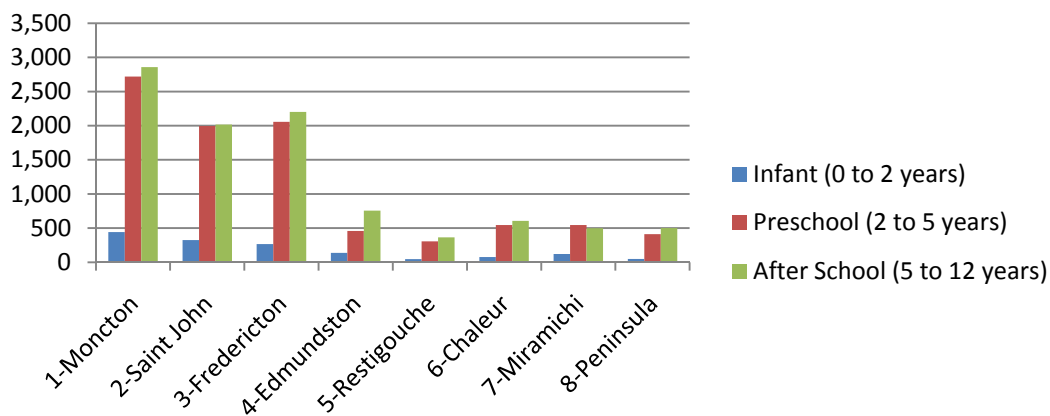
The total number of early learning and child care spaces was 20,319 on March 31, 2011. The following chart illustrates the distribution of spaces by region.

**Early Learning and Child Care Spaces by Region 2010-2011**



There are currently 1,462 spaces for infants, 9,065 spaces for preschool-aged children and 9,792 spaces for school-aged children. According to the 2006 Census data, 75 percent of children 0 to 5 years of age live in the Moncton, Saint John and Fredericton areas.

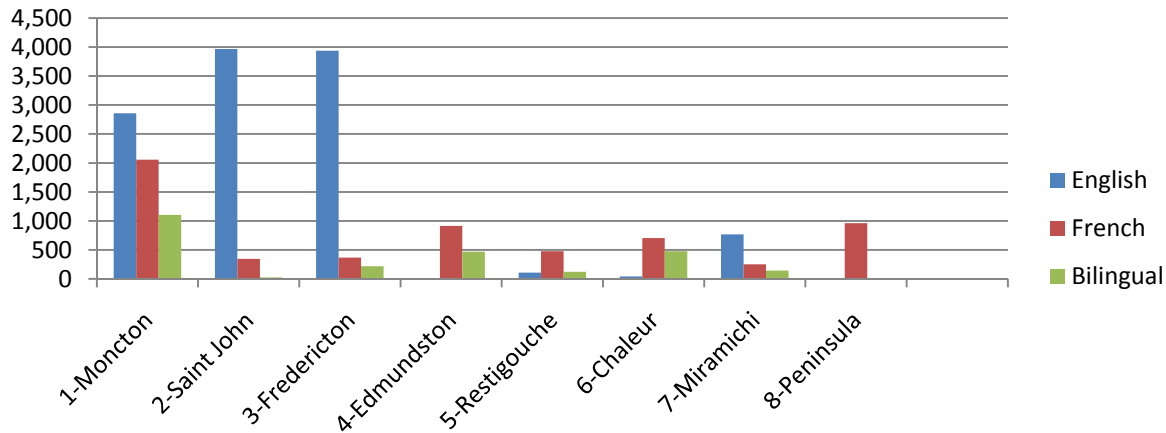
**Early Learning and Child Care Spaces by Age Category and Region 2010-2011**



### Language of Service

Approximately 57 percent of early learning and child care facilities provide services in English (11,675 spaces) while 30 percent provide services in French (6,079 spaces). The remaining 13 percent provide bilingual services or services in another language (2,565 spaces).

**Early Learning and Child Care Spaces by Language of Service and Region  
2010-2011**



### Daycare Assistance Program

The Daycare Assistance Program (DAP) offers parents financial assistance to help them access a regulated early learning and child care facility. DAP is calculated on a sliding scale up to \$41,000 annual net family income. The difference between the subsidy and the daily cost of the early learning and child care facility is covered by the parents.

#### Maximum Daily Amounts Provided to Parents through DAP

Infants	Preschool	School Age
<b>\$24.50 / day</b>	<b>\$22.50 / day</b>	<b>\$12.00 / day</b>

In 2010-2011, 5,863 children in regulated early learning and child care facilities benefited from the Daycare Assistance Program, which represents 31 percent of regulated early learning and child care spaces.

As highlighted in the chart below, early learning and child care facilities charge users different fees across the province. The daily fees are set by each individual early learning and child care facility. The fees below represent a regional average.

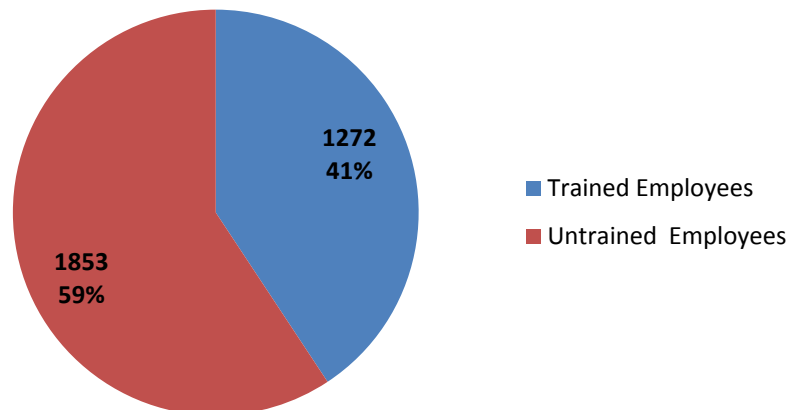
**Early Learning and Child Care Fees By Region 2011**

Region	Infant 0-24 months	Preschool	Just After school
Moncton	\$31.47	\$27.64	\$17.03
Saint John	\$32.66	\$26.27	\$14.97
Fredericton	\$29.69	\$25.74	\$14.28
Edmundston	\$26.56	\$22.56	\$11.52
Restigouche	\$28.50	\$24.80	\$13.24
Chaleur	\$30.00	\$26.03	\$11.27
Miramichi	\$28.22	\$24.58	\$13.33
Peninsula	\$27.50	\$23.93	\$11.66

### Training Profile of Early Learning and Child Care Educators

Presently, the training requirements in early learning and child care facilities are that one staff out of four educators or the Director has recognized training.

As highlighted in the chart below, of the estimated 3,125 educators employed at regulated early learning and child care facilities, approximately 41 percent or 1,272 educators have an Early Childhood Education (ECE) certificate or university degree.



## Quality Improvement Funding Support (QIFS)

The QIFS program makes funding available to enhance the wages of early learning and child care educators. Ninety-five percent of approved facilities received QIFS funding in the 2010-2011 program year.

The rate for wage enhancements is set at \$4.50 per hour for eligible employees who have a recognized ECE Certificate or equivalent and at \$2.75 per hour for eligible employees who do not have a recognized ECE Certificate. To increase the training profile of staff in early learning and child care facilities, all new early learning and child care facilities opening after March 31, 2010 are only eligible to receive the higher trained wage enhancement of \$4.50 per hour. This wage enhancement is over and above the minimum wage.

As of March 31, 2011, there were an estimated 3,125 educators employed at regulated early learning and child care facilities, an increase of 6 percent over one year. The wages for early learning and child care educators are set by each individual early learning and child care facility.

### Trained Staff

Average Hourly Wage	March 31, 2010	March 31, 2011	Percent Increase
All eligible staff	\$14.78	\$15.59	5.5%
Administrators	\$18.32	\$18.77	2.5%
Administrators/Primary Staff	\$16.69	\$17.16	2.8%
Primary Staff	\$14.03	\$14.67	4.6%

*\*The provincial minimum wage in March 2010 was \$8.25/hr and in March 2011 was \$9.00/hr.*

### Untrained Staff

Average Hourly Wage	March 31, 2010	March 31, 2011	Percent Increase
All eligible staff	\$11.79	\$12.59	6.8%
Administrators	\$16.07	\$16.34	1.7%
Administrators/Primary Staff	\$14.51	\$14.43	-0.55%
Primary Staff	\$11.58	\$12.46	7.6%

*The provincial minimum wage in March 2010 was \$8.25/hr and in March 2011 was \$9.00/hr.*

## Other Early Childhood Development Services

By March 31, 2011, the Prenatal Benefit Program provided funding to 1,422 mothers to help offset the cost of food during pregnancy. Sixty-eight percent of those new mothers were receiving social assistance benefits.

The Preschool Autism Intervention Program is delivered by six government approved non-profit agencies. These agencies provided services to 533 preschool children with autism on behalf of government in 2010-2011. Approximately 145 were discharged when they entered kindergarten in September 2010.

Under the Early Childhood Initiative, there are 17 Early Intervention Agencies that work with young children who are at-risk of developmental delays. Their aim is to improve childhood outcomes, enhance the child's readiness for school and enhance family self-reliance by providing regular family visits and serving as community liaison. In 2010-2011, approximately 1,800 children and their families received services from the Early Intervention Agencies. In addition, Infant-Parent Attachment interventions were offered to 66 infants and their families. The Infant-Parent Attachment Program provides screening and intervention for parents at-risk of developing unhealthy infant-parent attachments within the first year of the child's life.

- 1. What are the strengths of the current structure in early childhood services? What are the challenges?**
- 2. What do you see as a need for early learning and child care spaces in New Brunswick?**
- 3. What level of training should be required for early learning and child care educators?**
- 4. What needs to happen for a successful integration of early childhood services with educational services?**
- 5. How can the public education system and early childhood development work better together to provide services to New Brunswick's children and students?**

## Section 4: School Utilization and Infrastructure Planning

### School Utilization

Overall student enrolment is declining, the population is shifting from rural to urban areas, our schools are aging, and resources are finite. Many of our 321 schools are filled to less than 60 percent of their capacity. District 1 enrolments have been increasing over the past ten years.

Between 2001 and 2010, the number of students dropped by 15 percent (18,371 students). During that same time period, the cost to operate schools increased by 37 percent (\$29.5 million) and the number of schools decreased by 8 percent (28 schools).

By 2015, the number of students is expected to drop by another 5 percent (5,773 students) and the cost to operate schools to increase by another 14 percent (\$15.4 million).

	2001	2010	2015
<b># of schools</b>	349	321	-----
<b># of students</b>	122,792	104,421	98,648 <i>(estimate only)</i>
<b>Cost to operate schools</b>	\$78.7M	\$108.2M	\$123.6M <i>(estimate only)</i>

The provincial school infrastructure is aging. The average age of schools is over 40 years old, with 229 schools built before 1980. As of 2010, the cost of deferred maintenance stood at \$246.5 million.

The Office of the Comptroller, in collaboration with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, is examining the current and future requirements for school infrastructure in terms of demographics and projected enrolments, resourcing, capacity and utilization, and operating and maintenance costs. The results of which will help to guide decisions related to school infrastructure.

### School Infrastructure Planning

Provincial **Policy 409 - Multi-year School Infrastructure Planning** defines the process for multi-year school infrastructure planning to ensure a strategic and long-term approach to major capital projects, capital improvement projects, the study of a school's sustainability and proposed grade reconfigurations.

#### School sustainability study

The process for reviewing a school's sustainability is framed within the context of procedural fairness. Procedural fairness requires that consultations occur in an open

and transparent manner. Policy 409 sets out a process to ensure this happens, including:

- ✓ The DEC must have a minimum of three public meetings on the possible closure – one meeting to inform the school community of the DEC’s intention and the steps to be followed, a second meeting to provide the opportunity to make a presentation (in writing or orally) and a final meeting to provide the public with the results of the consultation and resulting recommendation being submitted to the Minister.
- ✓ The DEC may arrange for as many meetings as necessary to appropriately consult on the study of a school’s sustainability.
- ✓ Parents must be: informed of the process, given relevant information, given time to consider relevant information, provided with opportunities to make a presentation or written submission, and heard in an unbiased manner.

Policy 409 also includes assessment criteria that DEC’s must consider when reviewing a school’s sustainability including:

- ✓ **Low/declining enrolments:** the impact of declining or low enrolments on the learning environment, as well as enrolment trends and projections must be considered.
- ✓ **Health and safety:** the structural integrity of buildings, indoor air quality and water quality must be taken into account. As well, circumstances that present a significant health or safety threat are to be considered, as are fire safety systems and the safety and security of school grounds and play areas.
- ✓ **Quality of education programs and services:** the appropriateness of facilities for curriculum delivery and student services must be considered. This includes reviewing the range of educational programs available, and determining whether students would have increased educational opportunities at another school. It also involves reviewing enrolment per grade or multi-level class and pupil-teacher ratio at affected schools, as well as the ability to meet the needs of all students, including those with exceptionalities.
- ✓ **Transportation:** time spent in transit and cost of travel must be considered.
- ✓ **Finances:** the operating costs must be taken into account. This includes staffing and utilities, the physical condition of buildings, short and long-term capital costs and modifications required to accommodate transferred students.
- ✓ **Impact on the local community:** parental involvement and feasibility of continued parental involvement (particularly for elementary pupils) must be looked at. As well, the school’s relationship with the community needs to be considered, as do the effects on culture and language and consideration of whether the school is the sole school in the community, especially at the elementary level.
- ✓ **Impact on other schools:** the impact on feeder schools and receiving schools has to be taken into account.
- ✓ **Economic development:** consideration must be given to any planned and future economic development projects in the community or surrounding area.

### **Multi-year infrastructure planning**

Each school district is required to prepare a 5-year school infrastructure plan for submission to the Minister. The plan must be updated annually and include:

- ✓ A Facility Status Review report for each school including a list of schools where sustainability may be an issue and a brief description of reasons why the school may be vulnerable (declining enrolment, health and safety, etc.).
- ✓ The major capital project priority list.
- ✓ The capital improvement project priority list.
- ✓ An estimated timeframe for projects included in the multi-year school infrastructure plan.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development uses the school district multi-year school infrastructure plans to create a provincial overview of infrastructure needs across the province and for capital budget planning and preparation.

1. How can the current process to review a school's sustainability be improved to better manage expectations and to ensure a fair and open process?
2. How can the process of setting infrastructure priorities be improved to better ensure funds are directed to the greatest need?
3. What do you value more, a small community school with fewer programs and services or a larger school with access to a greater range of programs and services? Does the age of students make a difference? Why?
4. What factors should be considered when closing a school?
5. What opportunities exist to making a school a multi-use building? Are there barriers?
6. Is it the responsibility of a DEC to ensure the viability of a local school in a community where the population is decreasing? Whose responsibility is it?
7. Should school districts be responsible for maintaining and operating a school whose excess space is being used by other agencies? Or should this cost be shared among users?
8. What barriers, if any, exist for locating early learning and child care facilities and services in public schools? And how can we overcome them?
9. If a school is truly a community school, how can it be a community responsibility?
10. Are you willing to give up programs or services to keep schools open?