

# RTU Newsletter

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- ◇ Protection and advancement of the professional, social, and economic welfare of its members.
- ◇ Promotion of research and innovation in the field of education.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

At the last committee meeting, the maximum individual amount was raised to \$1,200.00 from \$1,100.00

## KINDERGARTEN: NEW REPORT CARDS

The School Board is proposing a new computer-generated report card for its schools' kindergartens. The decision to implement it or not will be left to the teachers, in accordance with the terms set out in the **Education Act** (96.15); in other words, if the current format suits your needs, you are under no obligation to change it. If you prefer, you can use the existing report card this year and then switch to the new format next year. The School Board could legally impose the use of the new report card in the event that any current format does not meet the requirements set out in the **Basic school regulation** (sections 29 and 30).

## REPORTING DATES

It appears that some schools wish to modify the reporting dates, for pedagogical reasons. Although the end-of-term dates already appear on the school calendar, the **Education Act** does not stipulate specific dates for issuing report cards. Under section 96.15 (4):

*The principal is responsible for approving, on the proposal of the teachers the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement, in particular, how parents are to be informed of the academic progress of their children.*

The **Riverside School Board Evaluation of Learning Policy** states that *students do not learn in order to be evaluated: they are evaluated so that they can learn more effectively.*

## WHAT IS "PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY"?

The Québec Education Act defines teacher professional autonomy in these terms (art. 19):

*The teacher is entitled, in particular,*

- **to select methods of instruction** corresponding to the requirements and objectives fixed for each group or for each student entrusted to his care;
- **to select the means of evaluating** the progress of students so as to examine and assess continually and periodically the needs and achievement of objectives of every student entrusted to his care.

## GRADUATION RATE

A few months ago, the issue of graduation rates was in the news, further to comments made by a former premier. The table below presents the outcome of the June 2007 exams, taken from a MELS document. Note that Riverside students (and, by extension, their teachers!) did quite well.

GRADUATION RATES FOLLOWING 2007 END-OF-YEAR EXAMS (%) (2002 COHORT)			
	Total	Boys	Girls
Quebec, overall	58.8	52.1	65.7
Public system	53.0	46.0	60.3
Private system	83.4	78.6	88.2
French	57.9	50.9	65.0
English	69.3	64.5	74.4
Riverside S. B.	69.7	62.2	77.9
New Frontiers S. B.	62.7	57.0	68.8
Marie-Victorin S. B.	48.1	41.4	55.1

## SPECIAL LEAVE DAYS

Teachers have a bank of **8 Special Leave days**; they are to be used when a teacher needs time to take care of specific situations. Some schools are telling their teachers to **use up their bank of sick days** before taking Special Leave days:

the **Union strongly recommends insisting that, in accordance with the collective agreement**, sick days be reserved for illness, and special holidays for matters, as stated above. The table below summarizes the various special leaves:

EVENTS	NUMBER OF DAYS OFF	
<b>Death</b> (immediate family member)	5 business days	
<b>Death</b> (spouse's family, grandchildren)	The day of the funeral service	
<b>Baptism</b> of the teacher's child	The day of the event	
<b>RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS</b>	3 business days	
The teacher's <b>marriage</b>	3 consecutive business days	
<b>Urgent business (emergencies)</b>	Maximum of 3 business days	
<b>Marriage</b> (immediate family)	The day of the event	
<b>Force majeure</b>	—	<i><b>A MAXIMUM OF 5 BUSINESS DAYS PER YEAR IS ALLOTTED FOR THESE EVENTS</b></i>
<b>Inclimate</b> weather preventing the teacher from getting to work	—	
<b>Moving day</b> for the teacher	The day of the event	
<b>Ordination</b>	The day of the event	
<b>Medical or dental appointment</b> (that cannot be made outside of work hours)	—	
<b>Serious illness</b> of an immediate family member	—	
<i>In the event that the teacher's child is ill but does not require hospitalization, this provision applies once the teacher has exhausted his/her annual sick day bank.</i>	Parental responsibility	

**Michel Gagnon - President**