



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS UNIT

PARENTS' GUIDE

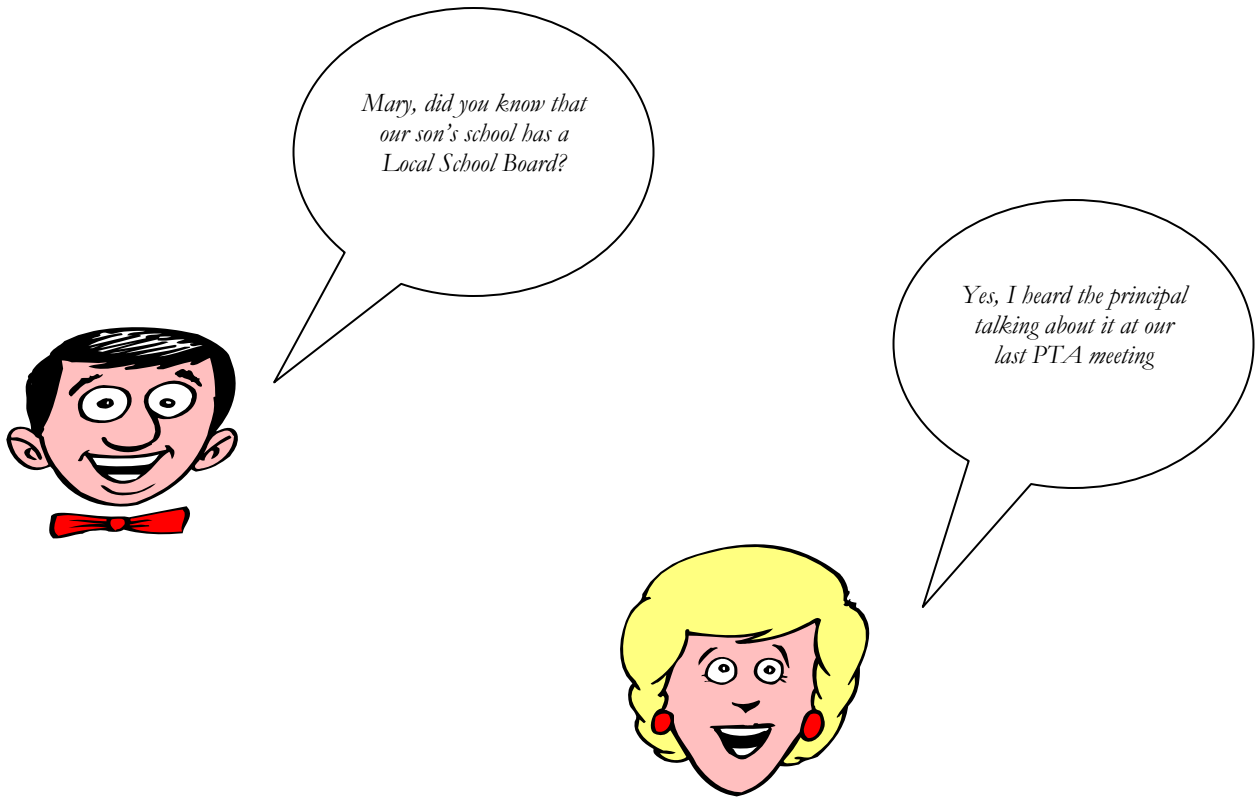
TO

LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS



Introduction

The Ministry of Education has embarked on a process of School Based Management with the aim of providing government schools with greater autonomy, authority and support. Local School Boards have been identified as a catalyst in this restructuring and decentralization process, and would facilitate improved levels of student learning/achievement and school enrichment through the support of the Principal.

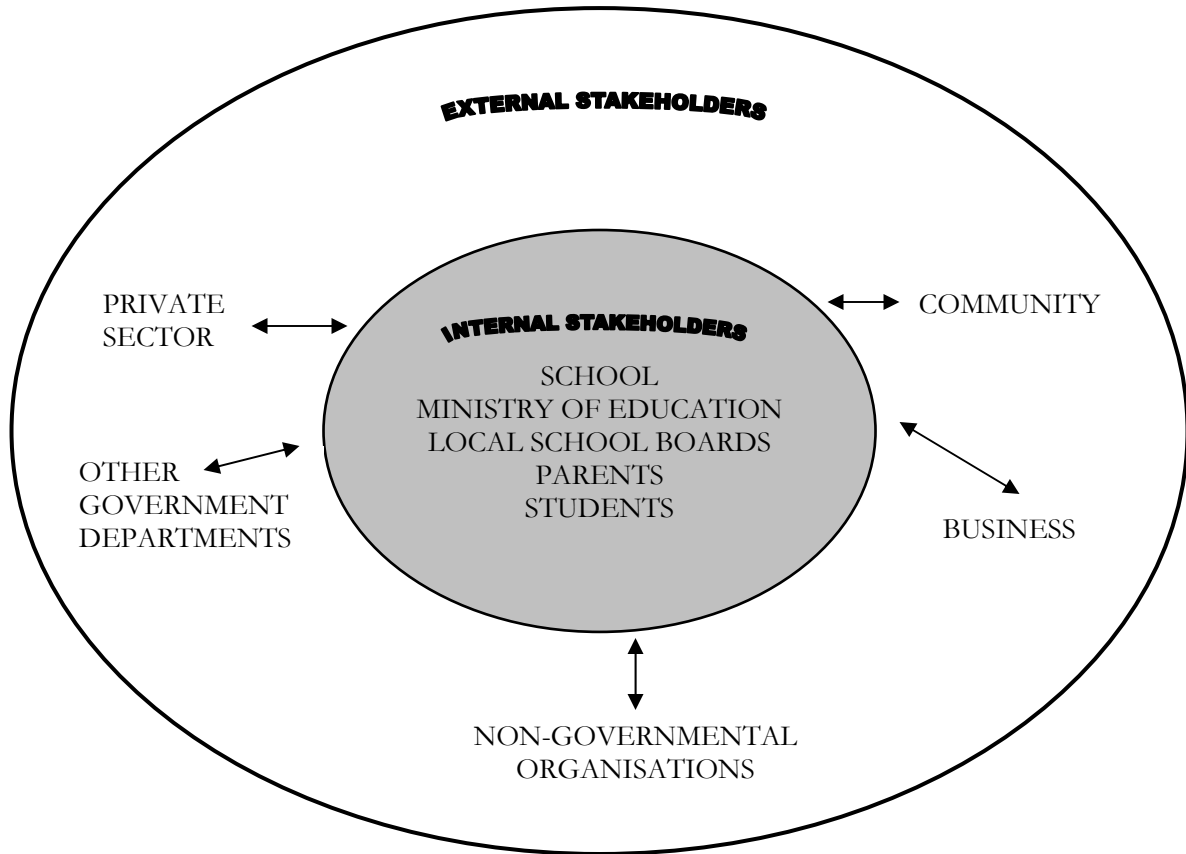


About Local School Boards

The piloting of Local School Boards began in May 2002 under the Secondary Education Modernisation Programme (SEMP). Ten schools were part of the Pilot Boards.

A Local School Boards Unit (LSBU) was established by the Ministry of Education in May 2004, to support the activities of Local School Boards.

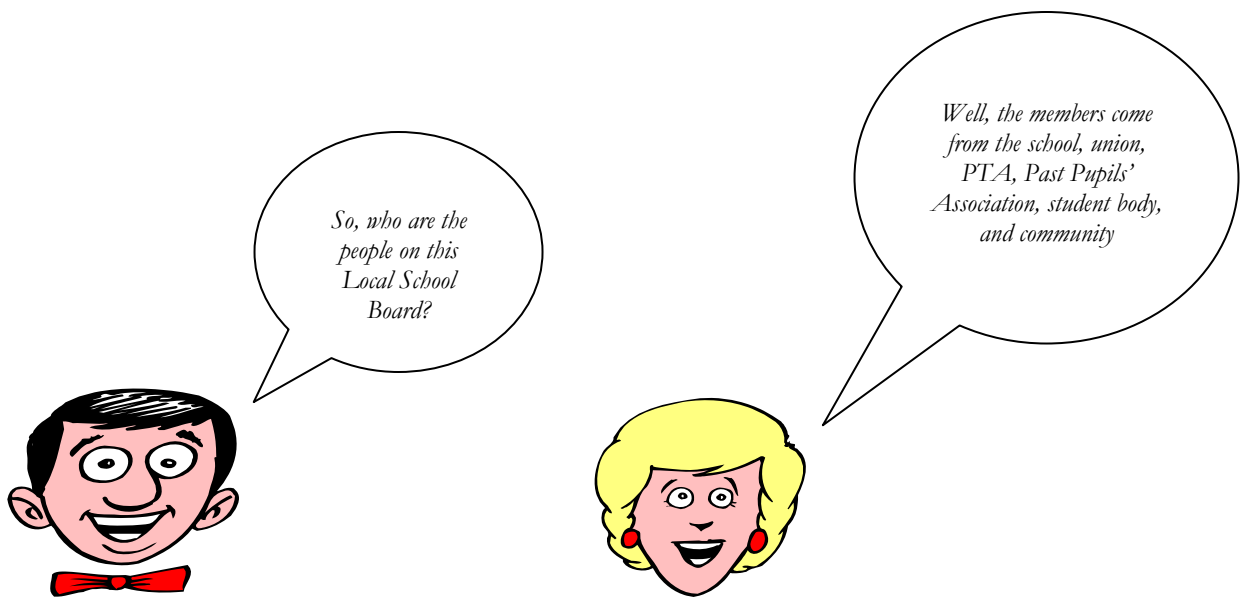
Each Government Secondary School now has a Board that would allow all stakeholders (*Figure 1*) to work together to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of schools.



(*Figure 1*)

Why Local School Boards?

Local School Boards would enable the school and the community to form stronger partnerships, which would facilitate the development of appropriate learning environments to enhance student learning and outcomes.



Local School Board Members

Each Local School Board has members from the following:

- the Principal of the respective school
- one member of the school's staff
- one member of the union
- two members of the Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) of the school
- one member of the Past Pupils' Association
- one member of the student body
- three persons nominated by the Minister of Education as he/she deems necessary after consultation with the relevant interest groups and stakeholders within the community in which the school is located.

Duties and Powers of the Board

The Board would assist the Principal with the following:

1. Development of a strategic plan for the school plant
2. Conduct of an operational and environmental audit of the activities of the school
3. Development and implementation of school improvement plans
4. Receiving information, complaints and expressions of concern and hope from the public concerning the school and its members, and to make recommendations as they see fit and relay them to the competent authority

5. Encourage, promote, sustain and foster mutual understanding, good fellowship and cooperation among the Minister, staff, parent, pupils and other persons associated with the school
6. Requesting the assistance of Local Government Bodies, and other agencies and departments to assist in the maintenance of the school
7. Liaising with all relevant agencies in order to ensure that the school is adequately served with necessary utilities
8. Liaising with members of the community
9. Mobilising community support for the school
10. Strengthening community relations with specific bodies and individuals in the community
11. Making recommendations for the better performance of the school in the assessment of school plant
12. Preparing short, medium and long term plans for capital improvement and the upgrading of plant and equipment
13. Development and implementation of a maintenance programme for the plant and equipment of the school
14. Development and implementation of plans to improve security of the school
15. Promoting fund raising activities on behalf of the school and controlling the expenditure of the funds raised by the Board
16. Making recommendations for the better performance of the school to the Minister through the Permanent Secretary
17. Liaising with a past pupil association of the school
18. Taking such action which may redound to the benefit of the school

Training for Local School Board Members

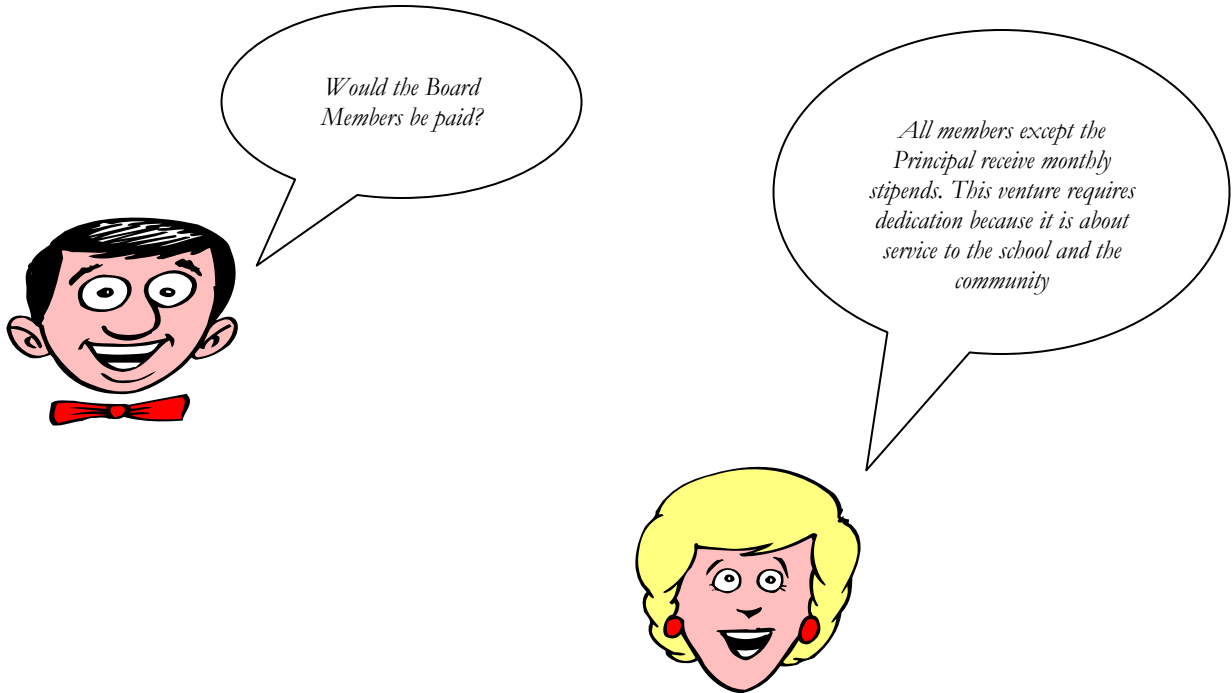
Training workshops are conducted for all members of Local School Boards in the areas of:

- School Based Management
- Local School Boards
- School Administration
- Financial Management
- Project Planning and Development
- Facilities Planning and Maintenance
- Strategic Planning for Local School Boards

These sessions are carried out to equip members with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to function effectively and efficiently on the School Boards. Other training will be provided periodically.

Stipends for Local School Board Members

All Local School Board members, with the exception of the Principal would receive a monthly stipend.



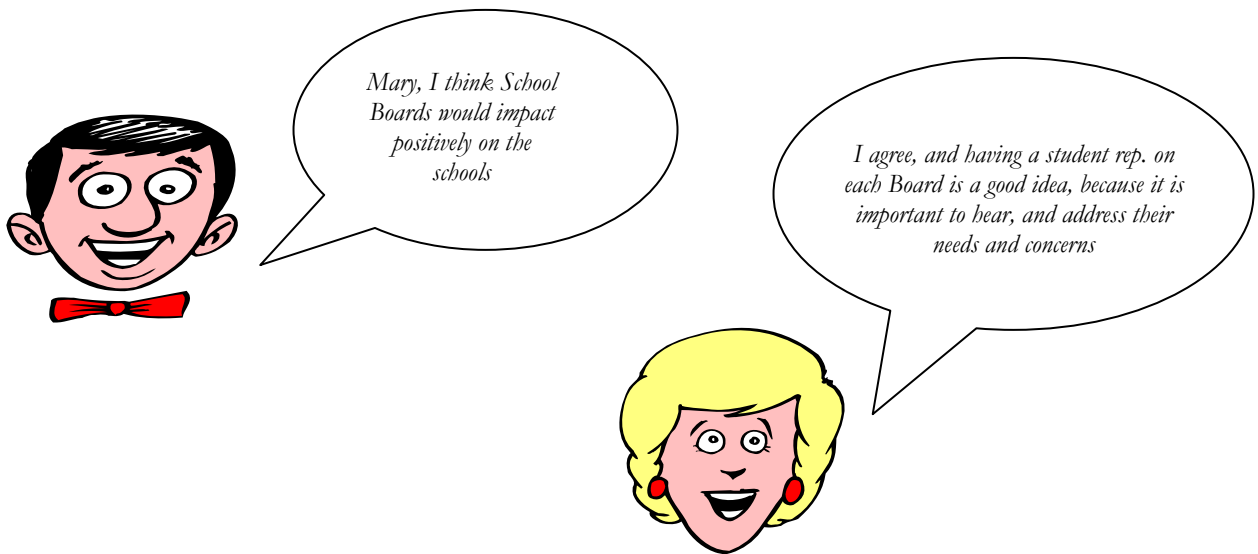
Monitoring and Evaluation of Local School Boards

A Local School Board Committee (comprising representatives of the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders) and School Supervision are appointed by Cabinet to monitor and evaluate the operations of all Local School Boards.

Importance of the Student Representative and Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) Representative

The student representative plays an integral role on the Local School Board as the link between the student body and the Board. He/she represents the “voice” of the students, communicating important concerns and ideas at the level of the Board.

The PTA Representative assists in the transformation process of the school by identifying concerns of the parent body, suggesting ideas that can be used to enhance the school and by getting the support of other parents in realising the goals and objectives of the school.



Benefits to be derived from Local School Boards

By Students:

Student Representatives have profited significantly from being on the Local School Board. Some claimed that even though they are in an examination class, it has not interrupted their studies in any way; in fact it has helped them to become more mature and confident.

Another student added that the Local School Board is a forum for him to voice his opinions and speak out on behalf of the other students, on issues affecting the school.

For other students it is an opportunity for them to build skills such as communication, team building, and creative thinking.

By Parents:

This thrust by the Ministry of Education can be beneficial to parents, as they can have an input in the decision-making process of the school by bringing the views of the parents to the forefront. However, the School Boards would welcome the support of all parents in the activities of the school.

By the School:

Local School Boards can enhance the overall structure, system and image of the school by lobbying and liaising with all relevant agencies to ensure that the school is adequately serviced.

By Society:

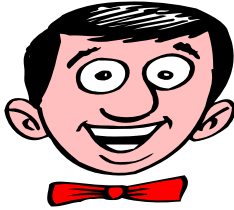
Local School Boards do not interfere with the management of the schools; this remains the domain of the Principals. The members work collaboratively with the schools to improve the holistic development of students, providing them with the necessary skills and abilities for the world of work and for life challenges.

How Parents can get involved on the Local School Board

PTA Representatives are chosen on each Board, they are nominated by the Parent Teachers' Association of the respective school. Parents can therefore communicate their concerns and issues to these persons who would then discuss it at the level of the Local School Board. Parents, it is important for you to become actively involved on the Parent Teachers' Association at your children's schools, because it is through this process you can become members of the Local School Board.

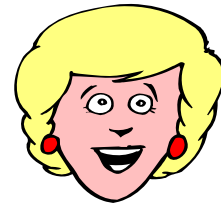
Word to Parents

Parents, you are valuable stakeholders in the schools. Your commitment and support to the school would reap significant rewards to "prepare the nation's children to pursue their hopes and dreams in life."



Do you think this School Board Project would work?

It would certainly work if we all get together and share our ideas to improve the school. After all, it is our children's future and they are tomorrow's leaders. **So let us get involved on the Local School Board.**



**You can contact us at the
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