

A provincial department of education is divided into several branches whose chiefs are responsible for various aspects of the work. There is usually a chief inspector or superintendent responsible for administration of the schools. There may be one for secondary schools and another for elementary schools. A Registrar is in charge of examinations and certificates and the chief accountant of financial records, including grants to schools. Most provinces also have a director of teacher-training.

In each province there is a large number of local inspectors or superintendents appointed by the provincial Department, each inspector having charge of an area with 70 to 100 schools and acting as liaison officer between the teachers and school boards and the Department. Originally their task was mainly to ensure uniformity and efficiency of instruction and the maintenance of standards in accommodations and equipment. Currently their work is becoming more and more consultative and advisory in nature. As specialists in educational science they are less concerned with inspection and more concerned in giving leadership, promoting departmental policy, and giving advice on administration, and methods and techniques of teaching. Usually there is a group of inspectors for secondary schools distinct from those for elementary schools.

During recent years there has been an increase in specialization and directors have been appointed in charge of special features such as curricula, kindergartens, auxiliary classes, agriculture, art, music, health, vocational guidance, audio-visual aids, rural education and home economics. These directors develop and supervise these features in all schools under their jurisdiction.

Until recent years local administration of education was in the hands of boards of trustees with jurisdiction over a school section or district so limited in area that, in rural sections, no child would have farther than two or three miles to go to school. Towns and cities were natural units. For some years now there has been a movement towards the consolidation of these small districts into larger units. The idea is not a new one to Canada, having been proposed by at least one leading Canadian educator a hundred years ago, and some units in the form of consolidated schools have existed for over 30 years. In some provinces the section board is dissolved on entering a larger unit; in others, it is retained with such minor powers as will maintain an active local interest in the schools. In all provinces west of the Maritimes, the scattered settlements of the northern areas operate as isolated districts.

Prince Edward Island with 462 local school boards is the only province where no large units exist although legislation has been passed authorizing the establishment of large high-school districts.

In Nova Scotia, beginning in 1942, municipal school finance units have been organized on a county basis, each containing about 100 rural schools. Cities and towns remain outside these units. This has reduced the number of financial units from over 1,700 to 24 rural and 45 urban. The local boards were retained with greatly reduced powers.

New Brunswick has followed the same pattern. Fourteen of the 15 counties are organized so that for financial purposes there are now 14 rural and 22 urban boards in place of 1,350.