2.9 Monitoring School Boards

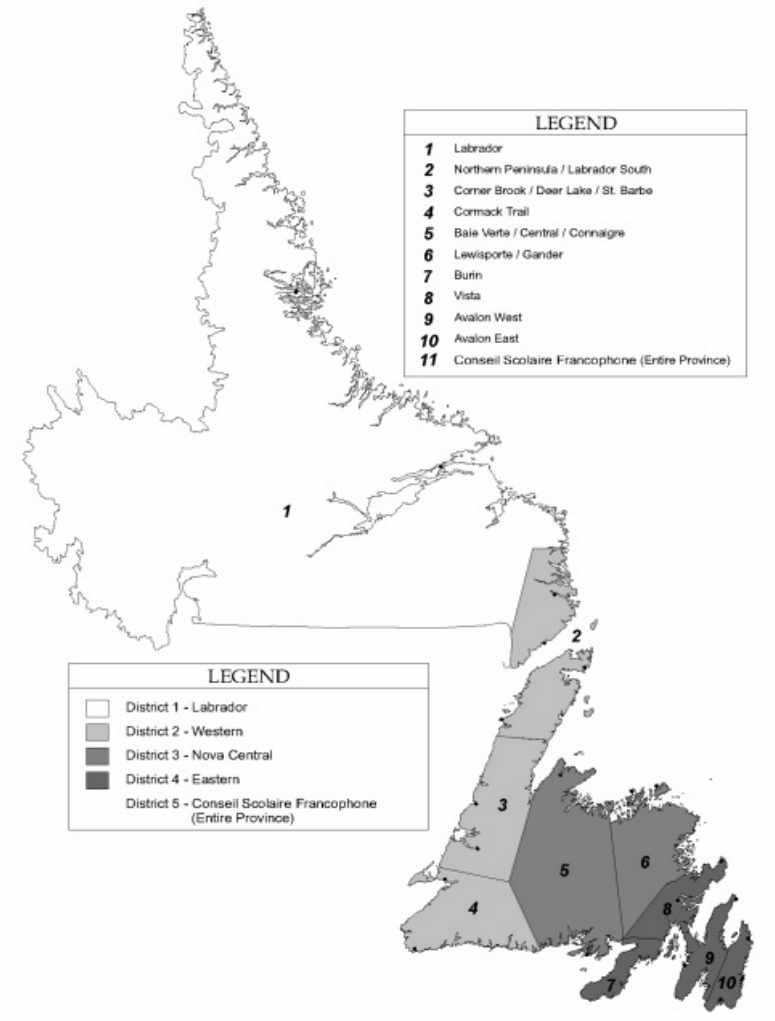
Introduction

In 1996 the school system in the Province was reorganized with the dissolution of 27 church run school boards and the creation of 10 new English language school boards and 1 French language school board. The 27 school boards continued to exist and administer the schools within their jurisdiction until their dissolution on 31 December 1996. As at 31 December 1996, there were approximately 445 schools in the Province with a total enrolment of 110,450 students.

Effective 1 September 2004, 9 of the 11 school boards were dissolved and 3 new boards were created resulting in 5 school boards. For the 2003-04 school year there were approximately 305 schools in the Province with a total enrolment of 81,460 students. Figure 1 shows the former 11 board boundaries and the newly established board boundaries.

Figure 1

Department of Education
School Board Boundaries



2.9 Monitoring School Boards

As part of our work we continue to monitor the financial position and annual operating results of the school boards.

Observations

As at 30 June 2003, the 11 school boards had accumulated deficits totalling of $134.9 million. This was comprised of $131.4 million in accrued severance pay and leave, and a net accumulated operating deficit of $3.5 million. These accumulated deficits will eventually have to be funded by Government.

For the year ended 30 June 2003, the Province provided $554.4 million in funding to the 11 school Boards, an increase of 5% over the previous year's funding of $528.2 million. Furthermore 10 of the 11 boards reported operating deficits ranging from $17,000 for District #9 to $2.8 million for District #10. The 10 boards reported a total operating deficit of $7.2 million for the year ended 30 June 2003. At 30 June 2003, 6 of the 11 boards were in contravention of the *Schools Act, 1997* in that they incurred operating deficits, other than related to the accrual of severance and leave, without the approval of the Minister.

Effective 1 September 2004, 9 of the 11 school boards were dissolved and 3 new boards were created resulting in 5 school boards. As a result of the reorganization, the boards were requested by the Department of Education to prepare audited financial statements for the 14 month period ending 31 August 2004 rather than the 12 month period ending 30 June 2004. Therefore, as at 1 December 2004 the required audited financial statements were available for only 1 of the 11 school boards. As a result we were unable to update our monitoring of the financial position and operating results of the school boards for the year ended 30 June 2004.

In our 2005 Annual Report, we will again provide information resulting from our monitoring of the Province's school boards.