

administration of the department is the responsibility of the deputy minister, an appointed public servant who advises the minister on policy.

Some provinces have created separate departments for post-secondary education, usually headed by their own minister. Related activities such as manpower, technology and continuing education may also be under the jurisdiction of the post-secondary minister.

Departments of education have responsibility for supervision and inspection of elementary and secondary schools, provision of curricular and school organization guidelines, certification of teachers, and research and support services.

Other provincial departments may also have a role in education, for example, in agriculture schools, schools for retarded children, reform and prison schools, apprenticeship programs and manpower retraining.

### *Local administration*

In varying degrees, each province has delegated responsibility for the provision of elementary and secondary education to local (usually municipal) school boards. Over the years, small local boards have been consolidated into larger units of administration, sometimes on a county or regional basis.

The local school boards, composed of elected or appointed trustees, are responsible for school management; their powers are determined and delegated by the provincial legislatures or departments of education. Generally, they handle the business aspects of education: establishment and maintenance of schools; hiring of teachers and negotiating their salary scales; purchase of supplies and equipment; provision of school transportation facilities; and preparation of budgets. In varying degrees, they have considerable latitude in shaping school curriculum within provincial guidelines. In most provinces local boards are authorized to levy taxes (or to requisition tax support from municipal governments) and to manage grants from provincial departments of education.

### *Organization*

School attendance is compulsory for about ten years in every province. The compulsory starting age may be six or seven, and the minimum school-leaving age 15 or 16.

Elementary-secondary education usually extends over 12 years.