

# EETC Preparation Documents

(Updated October 5, 2015)

## English Exam for Teacher Certification (EETC)

The EETC is a 2-hour exam with two parts, each designed to collect information on different types of language skills. There are no choices—you must do every task in both parts of the exam. You must pass each of these two parts to pass the exam. Although this exam is part of your certification requirements for the MEESR, you are being tested on your language skills and not teaching skills or educational knowledge.

### **PART ONE: The Objective Language Tasks (30 minutes)**

There are two tasks in this part:

**1-An editing task**

**2-A multiple choice grammatical judgment task**

### **PART TWO: The Professional Writing Tasks (90 minutes)**

There are two tasks in this part:

**1-Writing a letter**

**2-Writing an email**

### *PART ONE: THE OBJECTIVE LANGUAGE TASKS*

#### *CONTENT AND EXAMPLES*

The objective language tasks consist of two types of questions: editing questions and multiple choice grammatical judgment questions.

#### **The types of errors you will see in PART ONE include:**

commonly misspelled, misused, or confused words;

common structural errors such as subject-verb agreement, and other verb form errors;

punctuation errors (including semicolons/colons, comma splices, run-on sentences, use of apostrophes and quotations, and capitalization);

for French speakers, common errors made by francophones (“faux amis” or “Gallicisms”).

*Examples:*

- 1) *Its* difficult to summarize this problem in a few words, so it may be confusing. **Answer: It's**
- 2) I was so hungry I ate four sandwichs for lunch. **sandwiches**
- 3) I won't have another glass of juice because I've already drank too much. **drunk**
- 4) All of the student's will be a few minutes late tomorrow morning. **students**
- 5) I wasn't listenning when you gave me the directions to the party. **listening**
- 6) You did four mistakes on your homework assignment. **made**
- 7) The math class is held every thursday except for holidays. **Thursday**

**Editing questions:** There is a problem with one word in each sentence. You correct the error by writing the ONE WORD ONLY that will replace the problem word and correct the error. For this task, there is always one error per sentence and it can always be corrected with one word (not a punctuation mark or a word deleted, etc.)

*Examples:*

- 1) He musts complete his letter of intent before he can submit his application.  
*If you answer "needs to", this is not correct, as you have used two words.*
- 2) He need to get his driver's licence before he can consider applying for delivery jobs.  
*If you answer, "must", this is not correct, as you are replacing two words "needs to" with one word "must".*

**Multiple choice grammatical judgment questions:** In each question, there will be four choices. Three of these choices will be correct grammatically, and one will contain an error. The error can be in grammar or mechanics (spelling, punctuation). Circle the letter of the incorrect choice.

*Examples:*

### **Question 1**

- a) I am not vegetarian, but I don't eat meat every day.
- b) I am not vegetarian but, I don't eat meat every day.
- c) I don't eat meat every day, but I am not vegetarian.
- d) While I don't eat meat every day, I am not a vegetarian.

*Answer: Choice b) is incorrect.*

### **Question 2**

- a) I'm buying a new car if I get that promotion.
- b) If I will get that promotion, I'm buying a new car.
- c) I will buy a new car if I get that promotion.
- d) If I get that promotion, I'm buying a new car.

*Answer: Choice b) is incorrect.*

### Question 3

- a) It rained heavily during the afternoon. We managed to have our picnic anyway.
- b) It rained heavily during the afternoon; we managed to have our picnic anyway.
- c) It rained heavily during the afternoon, but we managed to have our picnic anyway.
- d) It rained heavily during the afternoon, we managed to have our picnic anyway.

*Answer: Choice d) is incorrect.*

### Question 4

- a) Some club members were late for the meeting. For example, Tanya came in at 9:30.
- b) Some club members were late for the meeting. Tanya came in at 9:30, for example.
- c) Some club members were late for the meeting, for example, Tanya came in at 9:30.
- d) Some club members were late for the meeting; for example, Tanya came in at 9:30.

*Answer: Choice c) is incorrect.*

### Explanations of Correct Answers:

Editing 1: This sentence uses the contraction "it's" not the possessive "its."

Editing 2: The word "sandwiches" is spelled wrong.

Editing 3: With the present perfect, the participle "drunk" should be used, not the simple past form "drank."

Editing 4: Apostrophes are not used for plural forms.

Editing 5: "listening" only has 1 "n."

Editing 6: This is a common Gallicism (error made by French speakers).

Editing 7: Days of the week are capitalized.

Multiple Choice 1: You cannot have a comma after a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence (2 independent clauses together).

Multiple Choice 2: This is a common second-language error (a translation from French).

Multiple Choice 3: This is a comma splice. Two independent clauses need a period, a semicolon, or a coordinating conjunction to connect them. Just a comma isn't enough.

Multiple Choice 4: This is also a comma splice (also called a type of run-on sentence).

**NOTE:** these explanations are for your study purposes only. You do not need to provide explanations of your answers on the EETC.

### Resources to Help You Prepare:

<http://www.learnenglish.de/mistakes/CommonMistakes.htm> Commonly confused words.

<http://theoatmeal.com/comics/misspelling> Commonly misspelled words.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/exercises/3/> Punctuation exercises from Purdue University's Online Writing Lab.

<http://www.common-mistakes.net/> Interactive quiz

<http://theoatmeal.com/comics/semicolon> Master the semicolon!

[http://www.orbilat.com/Languages/French/Vocabulary/French-English-False\\_friends.html](http://www.orbilat.com/Languages/French/Vocabulary/French-English-False_friends.html)

Words commonly confused between French and English

<http://www.tolearnenglish.com/exercises/exercise-english-2/exercise-english-64144.php>

Commonly confused words

<http://www.learn-english-today.com/> Variety of grammar exercises, including faux amis

<http://www.angelfire.com/wi3/englishcorner/vocabulary/vocabulary.html> Vocabulary development activities.

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/> Guide to Grammar and Writing (includes interactive quizzes):

<http://www.wordpower.ws/grammar/gramind.html> Word Power (alphabetical grammar index)

[http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/quiz\\_list.htm](http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/quiz_list.htm) Grammar Quizzes

#### **Books:**

Beason, L and Lester, M. (2009). *A Commonsense Guide to Grammar and Usage*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Ruvinsky, M. (2009). *Practical Grammar: A Canadian Writer's Reference*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford.

## **PART TWO: THE PROFESSIONAL WRITING TASKS**

### **CONTENT AND EXAMPLES**

**In Part Two, there are two tasks:** a letter to parents and an email to a committee. You have 90 minutes to complete the two writing tasks, and you must pass both tasks.

First, you will be provided with an information document outlining an educational initiative, and you will be making use of this document in writing your letter to parents. You will also be told the **goal** of your letter. You are expected to choose and summarize information in the document, referring to information that would be appropriate to accomplish your goal.

Second, you will be provided with a table of numbers in writing your email to colleagues. You will also be told the goal of your email. You are expected to make use of this table in writing your email.

To write the letter and the email, you are not expected to have any additional background knowledge; you do not need any more information to write your letter/email than what is provided to you. **You may assume that the school in which you are teaching is either an elementary school or a secondary school.** You are allowed to have a paper dictionary (monolingual or bilingual) for this part of the exam. These reference books may not be shared with other exam takers, and they must be free from notes, highlighting, or other marks.

### **Your writing will be evaluated for:**

1. Content and integration of source material: Quality of synthesis/summary of your information document (without plagiarism); coherence and organization of ideas, (including paragraphing)
2. Language and clarity: Accuracy of grammar, format and mechanics;
3. Tone and register: Choice of language appropriate for the audience and situation.

The lack of success on the writing tasks is due to one or more of the following reasons, each linked to the criteria for evaluation identified above:

1. Plagiarism: Plagiarism; including patchwork plagiarism, which is taking parts of sentences from the text and stringing them together
2. Misrepresentation: Significant misrepresentation of source material; evidence of miscomprehension of the source material or task; misleading or misinforming the audience about the information in the document
3. Integration: Failure to integrate source material sufficiently; lack of detail from the text; failure to synthesize or summarize source material
4. Lack of Original Text: Insufficient original text to evaluate writing ability; overuse of quotations; incomplete submission
5. Structure: Structural weaknesses; poor organization; lack of coherence; illogical flow of ideas; lack of transition between ideas
6. Audience: Writing to the wrong audience or using a tone with the audience that is flagrantly unprofessional or inappropriate
7. Language: Language errors; not a few small typos, but systemic errors in language
8. Instructions: Not following instructions; demands of the task are either not addressed or not at all achieved; purpose is not evident to the reader

**PLEASE NOTE that it is extremely important that you follow the instructions. You are not just being evaluated on the accuracy of your language, but also on your ability to communicate information appropriately for your audience in the manner of an educational professional. To succeed, you must write your texts to the correct audience, use the correct level of professional language for the audience, and accomplish your goal without misleading or giving inaccurate information to your audience.**

For example, you may be asked to write a letter to parents to request a meeting about their child, and also be asked to share information that you have about a school policy at the same time. To be successful, you cannot write the letter to the child, or to another teacher. You cannot write in a flagrantly unprofessional way to the parents (insulting their child, for example). If the main goal of the letter is to request a meeting and you fail to request a meeting, this is not a successful communication. Also, if you present incorrect or seriously misleading information about the school policy to the parent, this is not a successful communication. For these reasons, both the goals of the task and grammatical accuracy must be kept in mind.

*Resources to Help you Prepare:*

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>

Advice on academic writing, plus links to other help.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

An OWL is an Online Writing Lab. This is one of the best and most comprehensive ones--advice on proofreading for common errors and many other resources.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/681/01/>

This page, also from the OWL at Perdue, includes advice and strategies for writing effective professional documents, like the ones you are expected to write on the exam.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/608/01/>

This page explains the importance of appropriate language for a professional context.

*Further Resources on Writing from Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism:*

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

<http://cdev.concordia.ca/CnD/studentlearn/Help/handouts/WritingHO/AvoidingPlagiarism.html>

Gordon Harvey, G. (1998). *Writing with sources: A guide for students*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.

The Rowman & Littlefield guide to writing with sources (2007, 3rd Ed.). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Spatt, B. (2006). *Writing from sources* (7th Ed.). New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.

# EXAMPLE #1

## TASK 1: LETTER TO PARENTS

### SCENARIO:

You are a teacher at New Directions School, which has recently adopted the Ministry of Education's Policy on Healthy and Active Living. You are a member of the school's newly formed **Active Living Organizing Committee**. This committee of school staff and students carries out steps to increase the school's actions to promote healthy and active living.

The **Active Living Organizing Committee's** first plan is to increase extracurricular activities. The committee plans to encourage the involvement of family and community volunteers, as the Ministry suggests. You have been chosen to write to the parents in early September to explain the general characteristics of the Ministry initiative and to encourage parental involvement in the diverse program the school wishes to offer. The committee is hoping that parent volunteers will be willing to plan or supervise extracurricular activities, or demonstrate a specific skill or ability related to active living.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read the information document, *Extracurricular Physical Activities in Elementary and Secondary Schools*, found in **APPENDIX I**.
2. Write a letter of approximately 300-500 words to new and returning parents to the school. In the letter:

- Invite parents to volunteer for the extracurricular program in the coming year.
- Emphasize what an important contribution parental involvement represents for your school.
- Include key ideas from the information document that will give parents a general idea of the Ministry initiative and the diverse program that New Directions hopes to offer. Use information that would be helpful to them in making their decision. You do not need to give parents every detail.
- Invite them to speak with you or email you to discuss the possibility of participation, through involvement in the planning or supervision of activities.
- Indicate your interest in knowing about specific skills or abilities they might be able to demonstrate.

### **Your writing will be evaluated for:**

1. Content and integration of source material: Quality of synthesis/summary of your information document (without plagiarism); coherence and organization of ideas, (including paragraphing)
2. Language and clarity: Accuracy of grammar, format and mechanics;
3. Tone and register: Choice of language appropriate for the audience and situation.

## **TASK 2: EMAIL TO THE ACTIVE LIVING ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**

### **SCENARIO:**

Two weeks have passed since you wrote your letter [above] to the parents seeking their involvement. During this time, you have received written responses from about 30 parents and have talked in person with about 20 more; there are 500 students at the school. [The responses are summarized in **APPENDIX II**, which follows.] A meeting of the Active Living Organizing Committee will take place next week at which time you will report fully on the parents' response. In the meantime, you have been asked to keep the committee members informed.

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

Based on this information in the table that follows, send an email of about 150-300 words to the members of the Active Living Organizing Committee. In this email, you must:

- Summarize the responses of the parents in a few brief lines.
- Comment on what you see.
- Give your opinion as to whether there is enough interest on the part of parents to develop a series of activities.
- Explain that you will give more detailed information to the committee at the next meeting.

### **Your writing will be evaluated for:**

1. Content and integration of source material: Quality of synthesis/summary of your information document (without plagiarism); coherence and organization of ideas, (including paragraphing)
2. Language and clarity: Accuracy of grammar, format and mechanics;
3. Tone and register: Choice of language appropriate for the audience and situation.



## APPENDIX I

### INFORMATION DOCUMENT for TASK 1: LETTER

#### EXTRACURRICULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

To encourage young people to be physically active on a regular basis, schools need to plan and offer physical and sports activities that correspond not only to students' interests and preferences, but also to their developmental stage. At the elementary level, extracurricular activities should refrain from early specialization and focus on providing a variety of games and opportunities for self-expression, cooperation and healthy competition. At the secondary level, extracurricular activities at lunchtime or after school should include more than just competitive interscholastic and traditional sports programs. This pamphlet is intended for elementary and secondary schools who would like to offer a diverse selection of extra-curricular physical activities or improve the existing selection. The program offering should target not only students who are already very active, but also those who are less active.

##### *A. STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN ACTIVITY SELECTION*

Allowing students of different age groups and from both sexes (with different interests and tastes) to participate in the selection of activities is a better way of helping to meet their needs, particularly those who are less active. Below are some suggestions on how to involve students in the decision-making process:

- Conduct a survey among students on activities they would like to do.
- Form an organizing committee composed of adults and students.
- Analyze existing activities to highlight those that could be improved.
- Promote activities through positive peer influence and use committed young leaders as spokespersons.
- Allow students to assume responsibility by promoting and leading activities, refereeing, lending equipment, etc.
- Train older students to lead activities with younger students, etc. In order to train students to organize and lead activities, the *Acti-midi* program provides lunchtime training sessions and various other tools for adults who work with elementary school students. The program can also offer useful suggestions to secondary school staff.  
[www.sportetudiant.com/fre/isoActif/](http://www.sportetudiant.com/fre/isoActif/)

##### *B. ACTIVITIES THAT EMPHASIZE ENJOYMENT*

Laughter, sharing good times together, having fun, socializing, meeting a personal challenge—these are all essential factors in getting less active students hooked on regular physical activity. On the other hand, giving less playing time to players who don't excel at sports or placing too much emphasis on winning makes sports less enjoyable and often leads students to give up playing altogether. When planning activities, schools should include cooperative games that emphasize enjoyment and good sportsmanship. For example, kinball is a sport that requires the participation of all players.

### *C. ACTIVITIES SPECIFICALLY GEARED TO GIRLS*

While 52% of boys engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day (the recommended minimum), only 32% of girls do so. Schools must pay particular attention to girls so that the physical activities offered correspond to their interests as well. The report *Les filles c'est pas pareil : rapport sur la problématique des jeunes filles et la pratique de l'activité physique* contains data on the level of physical activity among girls, their attitudes towards physical activity, the sociological factors that lead them to persist in or drop out of an activity, and suggestions and recommendations on how to improve it: [www.kino-quebec.qc.ca/scolaire.asp](http://www.kino-quebec.qc.ca/scolaire.asp) The association *Égale action* also provides resources and suggestions on how to increase physical activity levels among girls: [www.egaleaction.com](http://www.egaleaction.com)

### *D. CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES THAT GET STUDENTS MOVING!*

Extra creativity is required to spark the interest of students who don't normally engage in physical activity and sports, and to help them develop new interests that will get them moving. Incorporating physical activity into more comprehensive projects is one way to reach less active students. For example:

- Organize a physical fitness program when preparing a trip or an expedition.
- Introduce students to circus arts by combining physical training, theatre and makeup arts.
- Organize social and educational activities, such as discovering other cultures, by introducing aspects of physical activity that are specific to each culture. For example, introduce students to African dance by combining the discovery of African cuisine with that of African culture.

### *E. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES THAT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT STUDENTS' DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE*

The Physical Education and Health program, as well as the Preschool Education program contain information on ways of developing extracurricular activities. The competencies developed in the Physical Education and Health program—Performs, Interacts, and Adopts a Healthy, Active Lifestyle—represent principles that should be taken into account when selecting lunchtime and after-school activities. The Preschool Education program contains suggestions for activities to improve motor skills. These suggestions can be used by daycare workers. Whatever the educational level—be it preschool, elementary school or secondary school—the objectives and types of activities must correspond to the chronological and biological age of the students as well as to their levels of physical and motor development.

### *F. ACTIVITIES FOR LIFE*

There is no need to go over the immediate or future benefits of active living once again. As the *Comité scientifique de Kino-Québec* stated in a brief entitled *L'activité physique, déterminant de la santé des jeunes*, "teenagers who maintain a physically active lifestyle throughout adolescence will be in better physical shape as adults and thus better able to complete in little time the volume of physical activity required to benefit their health." This brief by the *Comité scientifique de Kino- Québec*, published in 2000, describes the effects of physical activity on the health of young people, particularly their level of physical fitness, growth, lipid profile and mental health. The activities suggested should help young people develop competencies and

skills from the perspective of acquiring healthy habits that are likely to continue for the rest of their lives. [www.kino-quebec.qc.ca/scolaire.asp](http://www.kino-quebec.qc.ca/scolaire.asp).

*This document is taken from [www.mels.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca)*

## APPENDIX II

### INFORMATION DOCUMENT for TASK 2: EMAIL

<b>Interest in Participating</b>	
Definitely interested in planning activities or events	9 parents
Would need more information before making a decision	12
Might be interested in participating as a supervisor, but not in a leadership role	18
Not interested in participating	11
<b>Awareness of the Ministry Policy on Healthy Eating and Active Living</b>	
Familiar with the policy and other school initiatives (for example: cafeteria menu: priority to food of nutritional value)	8
Had heard of the policy, but didn't really know how it was being implemented in the school	26
Had never heard of the policy before this	16
<b>Of those who are interested or who might possibly be interested:</b>	
Those who have volunteered in an educational setting before as coaches: soccer, basketball	2
Those who have volunteered in an educational setting before as supervisors	8
Those who have some experience in demonstrating activities: wall climbing, archery, dance (2), circus activities (juggling, balancing, and so on), judo (2), skating	8
Those who have active living experience: walking, fitness, judo, badminton, basketball, floor hockey, volleyball, dance, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, skating, cycling	10

## *EXAMPLE RESPONSES: PROFESSIONAL WRITING TASKS*

### **PASSING LETTER**

*September 4th, 2008*

*Dear Parent(s):*

*Another school year has already begun! New Directions High School would like to extend a warm welcome to our new and returning parents. We are excited to inform you that this year marks our first year participating in a new government initiative to promote healthy, active lifestyles amongst our student body. The mandate of our newly-founded Active Living Organizing Committee is to plan and promote a wide variety of lunch-time and after-school activities to encourage our teens—both boys and girls—to adopt healthy lifestyle choices and to remain active throughout the school year. This new initiative is meant to encourage all students to remain active and healthy and to make activity fun. As it says in the MEESR information document for this initiative, “Laughter, sharing good times together, having fun, socializing, meeting a personal challenge—these are all essential factors in getting less active students hooked on regular physical activity.” New Directions and the Active Living Organizing Committee is particularly devoted to targeting students who are not usually active in sports or activity programs.*

*Our committee is asking for your help in getting our students excited about healthy living! We are currently looking for parent or community volunteers interested in organizing and/or supervising lunch-time or after-school activities. We are looking for exciting new activities that might introduce our students to creative ways of staying active and healthy, such as social games, dance, circuit training or healthy cooking classes. If you have a passion or hobby, share it with our students. Our high school prides itself on making all students and their families feel welcome in the school, and we strongly believe that parental involvement in school life is the key to fostering positive attitudes about education, learning and healthy living. If you are interested in participating or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me via phone or e-mail. All suggestions are welcome! With your help and participation, we will work as a team to make this year even more positive than the last.*

*Best Regards, Mr. Lim, Active Living Organizing Committee  
(345 wds)*

#### *Comments:*

While not perfect, this is an example of a letter that meets all the requirements. The writer answered the demands of the task, inviting parents to participate, emphasizing the importance of their involvement and soliciting further contact with them. He summarized the key information from the source document in a helpful way for the parents without plagiarizing it. He used a quotation when he wanted to use the original language from the brochure, but he didn't over-use quotations—it's still primarily his work. His tone is professional.

## FAILING LETTER

May 5, 2010

Dear Parents,

*This year the school has decided to try something new regarding your child's extracurricular physical activities. We are planning to have a number of activities for both parents and students to enjoy. The school will be sending home with the students a survey the will indicate the most popular physical activities the students enjoy. For example soccer, basketball or tag. After we receive all the surveys we will be conducting an after school program for students. This program will allow students to not only get some extra physical activity time but it will also give them an oppurtunity to meet some other students their age, younger and older. The activities will be geared to both genders but also mainly towards girls because while 52% of boys engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day (the recommended minimum), only 32% of girls do so. Our hopes for this program is to encourage your children to want to participate in physical activity in and outside of school. We want your children to leave this program realizing that physical activity is fun and enjoyable!*

*Sincerely,  
Mr. Smith  
(190 wds)*

This letter would fail for the following reasons:

- #1. **Plagiarism** (Plagiarism; including patchwork plagiarism, which is taking parts of sentences from the text and stringing them together.)
- #2. **Misrepresentation** (Significant misrepresentation of source material; evidence of miscomprehension of the source material or task; misleading or misinforming the audience about the information in the document.)
- #8. **Instructions** (Not following instructions; demands of the task are either not addressed or not at all achieved; purpose is not evident to the reader.)

*Comments:*

There are a few language errors, but this would not be enough to fail this letter, and there are no problems with tone. However, this student would fail because he did not follow the instructions and he misled his audience. He was supposed to invite parents to participate in this program, and to volunteer their skills. Therefore, the demands of the task are not fulfilled. In addition, this student did make use of the source document, but just barely—there is only one statistic from the document mentioned. This is not enough information for the parents to have a good idea about the initiative. There is another problem with the information taken from the source document: it is directly copied word-for-word from the source text. This is plagiarism. The writer should have taken some notes about the key ideas in the source document, then not looked at the original when re-writing the same ideas in his own words. If it was necessary or effective to use the exact same wording as the original, then it should have been placed within quotation marks.

## TASK 2 EMAIL

### PASSING EMAIL

TO: NDGB

SUBJECT: Parent involvement in the Active Living Organizing Committee

*Good morning to all my fellow committee members! Two weeks ago we sent a letter home describing the Ministry's new physical activity policy and asking for parental involvement in our active living initiatives. Since then, I have gotten responses from about 50 parents. From what I can gather, many parents had never heard of this policy before and did not know that our school would be adopting it. In spite of this, most parents seem to want to get involved. Our students' parents bring with them quite diverse skills and abilities which I am sure we can benefit from. For example, among our parents we have jugglers, skaters, dancers, and rock climbers. Based on this, I believe that we will be able to move forward with this initiative. I am confident that we will have enough parental involvement to hold regular activities or theme-based events. I will be providing more information at our next meeting (on November 1st). See you then.*

*John Doe*

(180 words)

#### *Comments:*

This email meets the demands of the task, by updating the other committee members on the contact with the parents and briefly outlining the parents' responses. Language is clear and accurate, and tone is appropriate.

## **FAILING EMAIL**

*Dear Committee members:*

*I decided to send a message to parents regarding an extracurricular physical activity program. We sent out the letter two weeks ago and we have had some feed back from the parents regarding whether or not they will be involving their children in the program. The feed back that we have recieved from parents has led us to believe that our program can be successful. The majority of the parents stated they will be interested once they have a clear understanding of the program. The parents seem to be mostly eager in participating as well by acting as a supervisor or even conducting one of the activities. We can't get all parents behind us, though. We must admit from seeing some of the parents picking up their children that they clearly don't have healthy habits themselves, so they can't be counted on to instill them in their own children. At the next meeting I will be giving a more detailed response about what the parents have agreed to and what they think will be most effective.*

*Sincerely,  
Ms. Jones  
(180 wds)*

***This letter would fail for the following reason:***

**#6. Audience** (Writing to the wrong audience or using a tone with the audience that is flagrantly unprofessional or inappropriate.)

*Comments:*

Language again is mostly fine and clear, and this writer makes use of the source text somewhat to respond to the demands of the task. However, the initial comment is not appropriate—she did not decide to send a message on her own, but on behalf of the group, and the group would be aware that she had done this. This problem in addressing her audience would not be enough to fail her if it had not been followed by a flagrantly unprofessional comment about the appearance of the parents.

## EXAMPLE #2

### TASK 1: Letter to Parents

#### SCENARIO:

You are a teacher and a teacher representative on the governing board of your school, New Directions School. At your most recent meeting in August, you discussed the issue of parental involvement. There have been fewer and fewer parents getting involved on the **New Directions Governing Board** over the years, and, this year, you barely got the minimum four parents required.

For the upcoming school year, you all have decided that the governing board must encourage more parents to join the school governing board. You have been chosen to write to the parents in early September to encourage their involvement on the **New Directions Governing Board (NDGB)**.

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Read the information document that gives details about governing boards, found in **APPENDIX 1**.
- 2) Write a letter of approximately 300-500 words to new and returning parents to the school. In the letter:



Invite parents to volunteer in the coming year, emphasizing what an important contribution parental involvement represents for your school.



Briefly summarize some of the details of the information you have read on governing boards which would be helpful to them in making their decision. You do not need to give parents every detail. Give them a few details that will give them an idea of what the bodies are and what they do.



Invite them to speak with you or email you to discuss the possibility of participation.



Invite them to attend an information session at which more information will be available.

#### Your writing will be evaluated for:

1. Content and integration of source material: Quality of synthesis/summary of your information document (without plagiarism); coherence and organization of ideas, (including paragraphing)
2. Language and clarity: Accuracy of grammar, format and mechanics;
3. Tone and register: Choice of language appropriate for the audience and situation.



## TASK 2: Email to your Governing Board

Two weeks have passed since you wrote your letter [above] to the parents seeking their involvement. During this time, you have received written responses from about 30 parents and have talked in person with about 20 more (There are 500 students at the school). The responses are summarized in Appendix II]. A meeting of the New Directions Governing Board will take place next week at which time you will report fully on the parents' response. In the meantime, you have been asked to keep the board members informed.

Based on the information in the table that follows, send an **email** of about 150-300 words to the members of the Governing Board. In this email, you must:

- Summarize the responses of the parents in a few brief lines, commenting on what you see.
- Give your opinion on whether or not you believe that more parents will volunteer to be part of the NDGB.
- Explain that you will give more detailed information about what you have discovered at the next meeting.

### Your writing will be evaluated for:

1. Content and integration of source material: Quality of synthesis/summary of your information document (without plagiarism); coherence and organization of ideas, (including paragraphing)
2. Language and clarity: Accuracy of grammar, format and mechanics;
3. Tone and register: Choice of language appropriate for the audience and situation.

# **APPENDIX I**

## **INFORMATION DOCUMENT for TASK 1: LETTER**

### **WHAT IS A GOVERNING BOARD?**

A governing board is a body established in each school according to the Education Act. It is composed of the principal, parents, teachers, representatives of both the non-teaching professionals and support staff, day care (elementary), students (cycle II high school), and community representatives who work in partnership to ensure that all students receive the best possible learning opportunities.

### **WHAT ARE THE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD?**

The powers and functions of the governing board are related to four areas: general, educational services, community services, and physical and financial resources. The following outlines the responsibilities in each area.

#### **GENERAL FUNCTIONS AND POWERS**

- analyses the school's situation and, based on the analysis and the school board's strategic plan, adopts the educational project and oversees its implementation and periodic evaluation
- approves the school's success plan, rules of conduct and safety measures
- establishes the principles for determining the cost of documents in which students write, draw or cut out and approves a list of materials such as pencils, paper, etc.
- advises the school board on certain matters
- may pool goods and services or activities with other schools
- prepares and adopts an annual activity report and transmits a copy to the school board
- informs the community of the services provided by the school, makes public the educational project and the success plan of the school, and distributes to parents and staff a document explaining the educational project and reporting on the evaluation of the implementation of the success plan

#### **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

- approves the approach for implementing the basic school regulation
- approves the approach for enriching and adapting Ministry programs and the development of local programs
- approves the time allocation for each subject and ensures that the compulsory objectives of the programs of studies will be achieved and that the rules governed by the certification of studies are complied with
- approves the schedule of educational activities that change the students' regular schedule
- approves the approach to implementing student and special education services
- is consulted on the textbooks and instructional materials required for teaching programs

#### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

- may organize educational services (outside teaching periods), social, cultural or sports activities

- may, in the name of the school board, contract with persons or organizations for goods and services
- may require a financial contribution from users of these goods and services

### **PHYSICAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

- approves the use of school premises and enters into agreements regarding their use
- may, in the name of the school board, solicit and receive voluntary contributions from persons or organizations to support school activities
- adopts the school's annual budget and submits it to the school board for approval
- is consulted by the principal regarding the school's needs for goods, services and repair/improvement of the premises

### **CONSULTATION BY THE SCHOOL BOARD**

In addition to the functions and powers outlined on the previous pages, the school board must consult the governing board on two items, namely:

- the amendment or revocation of the deed of establishment of the school, i.e., school closure, change of program, change of building, etc. (The deed of establishment, prepared by the School Board, includes the name and address of the school and the level(s) of instruction.)
- the selection criteria for the appointment of the principal (The governing board members are not involved in the appointment but must have the opportunity to submit a description of the characteristics, qualities and experience that they judge to be essential in an administrator for their school.)
- The governing board also advises the school board on certain matters, namely:
- any matter the school board is required to submit to it
- any matter that may facilitate the operation of the school
- any matter that may improve the organization of services provided by the school board

### **THE COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

The governing board is composed as follows:

- Parents: at least 4 who are not members of the school staff
- School staff: at least 4 including at least 2 teachers and if the groups concerned so decide, at least one non-teaching professional and at least one support staff member, elected by their peers
- Day Care: 1 member of the day care staff
- Students: 2, cycle II secondary<sup>2</sup>
- Two community representatives who are not members of the school staff appointed by the governing board (No vote)
- The maximum number is 20. The total number of seats available for staff representatives (school staff and day care staff) must be equal to the number of seats for parents. The school board determines the number of parent and staff representatives after consulting each group.
- When there are fewer than 60 students enrolled in a school, the school board may vary the composition after consultation with the parents and school staff. The rule of equality in the number of seats for parents and staff must still be respected.
- A commissioner cannot be a member but may take part in meetings, if authorized to do so by the governing board. (No vote)

- The principal takes part in the meetings. (No vote)

**TERM OF OFFICE**

Parents: two years except for the first year a governing board is established when half the parents elected serve one year. Other members: one year

The members of the governing board remain in office until they are reelected, re-appointed or replaced.

<b>APPENDIX II INFORMATION DOCUMENT for TASK 2: EMAIL</b>	
<b>Interest in Participating</b>	
Definitely interested in participating	5 parents
Would need more information before making a decision	12
Might be interested in participating but not in a leadership role	15
Not interested in participating	18
<b>Previous knowledge of Governing Boards</b>	
Were familiar with them and their role in the school	4
Had heard of them before, but didn't really know how they worked	20
Had never heard of them before this	10
Unknown	16
<b>Of those who are interested or who might possibly be interested:</b>	
Those who have volunteered in an educational setting before	2
Those who have been part of a board of directors of a non-profit organization	8
Those who are in the field of education (teachers, daycare workers, university professors, etc.)	8
Those who have administrative experience	10
Those who have management experience	6
Those who might have a problem attending evening meetings	5
<b>Planning on attending an information meeting?</b>	
YES	15
NO	35

## *EXAMPLE RESPONSES: PROFESSIONAL WRITING TASKS*

### **PASSING LETTER**

*Dear Parents,*

*I am a teacher at New Directions School and would like to welcome all new and returning parents to another school year. As the new year begins, we have many exciting projects and I would like to inform you of one component of our school community which you may not be aware of. Each school in Quebec has a governing board which is made up of staff, including teachers and other non-professionals, community members, as well as at a minimum of four parents of students at the school. I am a staff representative on the board and although we have all our staff and community members in place, we do not have enough parent representatives. The board has asked me to write you to encourage you to become involved in this important aspect of school life.*

*The governing board of a school analyses and approves school plans for schedules, student services, rules of conduct and advises on any matters referred to it either by the principal or by the school board. These may include everything from the choice of textbooks to the qualities desired in the hiring of a new principal. The board may also work with the community and with other schools to consider use by our students of facilities or organizations outside the actual school building or of the use of the school building by outsiders.*

*We are planning an information session in October to give parents details of the board's responsibilities, to answer your questions and to encourage you to join our team. We have always found parents' input to be very valuable to the workings of the school and hope that you will be able to attend our meeting and find out more. Please contact me by phone or email with any questions or concerns you might have. I can be reached by 555-1234 or by email at [teacher@newdirections.org](mailto:teacher@newdirections.org).*

*I look forward to discussing these important matters with many of you over the new few weeks.*

*Sincerely,*

*Joe Teacher*

#### *Comments:*

This letter is not perfect as there are some errors in spelling and capitalization. However, the letter gives the parents sufficient information on the role of the board for them to get a general idea of what is involved. It invites them both to the information meeting and to contact the writer with any questions or concerns. The tone is professional.

## **FAILING LETTER**

*Dear parents,*

*We come back to another year at New Directions School. We are all looking forward to another year working with your children. I am the history teacher here at the school and I am writing you to ask you to join the governing board of our school. The board is composed of a number of people who work in partnership to make sure all students are given great learning opportunities.*

*The board analyses the school's situation and advises the principal and board on a number of matters. They approve educational services, such as the schedule for educational activities and the time allocation for each subject. They may also work with members of the community to organize educational services, social, cultural or sports activities. They must be consulted by the board in the event of the amendment or revocation of the deed of establishment of the school or the selection criteria for the hiring of a principal.*

*The board is composed of school staff, students (for secondary level schools such as ours), community representatives and at least four parents who are not members of the school staff. The term of office for parents is two years but members can serve for longer.*

*The governing board is anxious to have the input of parents on all these matters as we recognize the important contribution parental involvement represents and we hope that you will give us your ideas on how the school should be run. We value your opinions and your involvement. As I am a member of the board this year, I am your contact person on anything related to the board. Please feel free to contact me by phone at 555-1234 or by email at [teacher@newdirections.org](mailto:teacher@newdirections.org) with your questions, concerns and opinions or for more information.*

*Sincerely,*

*Joe Teacher*

### ***This letter would fail for the following reason:***

**#1 Plagiarism:** (Plagiarism; including patchwork plagiarism, which is taking parts of sentences from the text and stringing them together)

#### ***Comments:***

Although the writer has given the parents a general idea of the role of the governing board, he has copied direct quotations from the source document. This poses two problems. First of all, any direct quotations must be properly attributed. Secondly, if there are too many direct quotations, even if they are properly attributed, it is difficult to judge the student's understanding of the material and his ability to write an original document. See the version below in which direct wording from the source document is underlined. In addition, the writer has not invited the parents to the information meeting. He has asked for the parents to contact him but has not indicated that a meeting is planned. Therefore, the demands of the task have not been met.

This was a double. Not sure if this was just my computer!

## **FAILING LETTER**

*Dear parents,*

*Welcome to New Directions School! We have an exciting year planned and we hope you will join us. We need parents to serve on the governing board of the school. Therefore, you can join community members to decide what textbooks to use. You can tell everyone whether you think that there should be extracurricular activities and where they should be held. You can be on the board for two years and can liaise with community members, even asking them to pay for use of our school's facilities. If you don't like our current code of conduct, you can bring forth your own ideas. The board and the principal can consult you on any matters on which they want your input. Maybe the school population has declined and we need to share quarters with another school. You'll be able to make your suggestions and share your ideas. The board has been set up by the Quebec Education Act and can have up to 20 members. An information session will be held next month and we hope you will attend. Moreover, we want parental input. It's essential. Hope to see you there.*

*Betsy Teacher*

### ***This letter would fail for the following reasons:***

**#5. Structure** (structural weaknesses; poor organization; lack of coherence; illogical flow of ideas; lack of transition between ideas)

**#3. Integration** (failure to integrate source material sufficiently; lack of detail from the text; failure to synthesize or summarize source material)

### ***Comments:***

This letter indicates that the writer has read the source document and the language in the letter is correct; however, it has no organization. The writer has taken bits of information from different parts of the document but there is no introduction defining what a governing board is, or who is on it. The writer has not indicated that she is a member of the board. It is not clear whether the board has any powers or whether it is just a place to meet and give personal opinions about how the school should be run. Some of the connectors between sentences (therefore, moreover) are confusing and inappropriate. The writer should consider using paragraphs to help organize her thoughts so that there is a clear flow of ideas.

## **PASSING EMAIL**

*Dear fellow committee members,*

*Three weeks ago I sent out a letter to all our parents inviting them to our information meeting in October and encouraging them to attend and to consider joining the board. A good number of parents responded and it was interesting to see that a number of them have administering or managing experience. However, most would appreciate more info on how the board works and on the time involved.*

*Unfortunately, only a small number are able to attend the information meeting we will need to make sure that we keep in contact by other means.*

*Based on these responses, I feel confident that we will be able to fill the vacancies on the board. I will give you more detailed information at our upcoming meeting. We can discuss how best to ensure that our meeting is interesting and informative. We can also decide how to keep in touch with possible members who are unable to attend the information meeting.*

*See you at the meeting next week.*

*Joe Teacher*

### ***Comments:***

This letter gives the committee members an update on responses to the letter. It indicates that the writer believes that there will be parents interested in joining the board and explains that he will give them more information at the next meeting. He gives a couple of his own suggestions which is not a problem. There are minor language errors but not enough to cause a problem.



## FAILING EMAIL

Hi,

*Remember I sent a letter to parents about the information meeting for the governing board? Well, that was two weeks ago and some answers have come in. Things are looking good. We should be able to fill the spaces. What we need to do now is to plan the agenda of the meeting so that the parents will feel engaged and committed. I know that assemblies can be boring but we need to jazz things up so everyone will stay awake and want to come back for future meetings. Is there someone who would like to plan some refreshments and someone else who would like to suggest ideas for an opening statement that would get all of us inspired? Let me know how you think we can make this meeting a success and what role you specifically can play. Thanks for your input. Perhaps we can "reply all" so that everyone can share their ideas. Then, I'll try to pull them all together.*

*Cheers,  
Joe*

### ***This letter would fail for the following reasons:***

**#8 instructions** (Not following instructions; demands of the task are either not addressed or not at all achieved; purpose is not evident to the reader)

**#3. Integration** (Failure to integrate source material sufficiently; lack of detail from the text; failure to synthesize or summarize source material)

### ***Comments:***

This email does not address the demands of the task. Although it is well written, it does not comment on any patterns in the responses from the parents. There is also no reference to the fact that the committee will be meeting again shortly and that more information will be available at that meeting. It is not clear that the writer has actually read the source document as he /she has not summarized the information in the table.

The tone is very informal, but in some settings, this would not be inappropriate, so this would not be a cause for failure.

## EXAMPLE #3

### TASK 1: Letter to Parents

#### SCENARIO:

You are a teacher at Grant Smith School where the staff has been looking at a variety of Ministry of Education documents which discuss the increasing importance of lifestyle choices for the health of our children. For the past three years, the staff and parents have worked on improving the nutritional habits of the school population, including improving cafeteria offerings, holding cooking classes, etc., and some improvement in this area has been noted. The staff now wishes to broaden their focus on lifestyle by focusing on physical activities.

The MEESR has published several studies and undertaken a variety of initiatives in this regard. The staff has now formed a committee to implement some of these ideas. The committee has been particularly impressed with the Kino-Québec program, and the Plaisirs d’hiver campaign and would like to make this the focus for the upcoming year’s project. As a member of this “Winter is Fun” committee, you have been asked to write to the parents outlining the initiative and inviting their feedback.

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Read the information document *Winter Fun in Schools* found in **APPENDIX I**.
- 2) Write a letter of approximately 300-500 words to new and returning parents to the school. In the letter,
  - Briefly outline the background for this initiative
  - Include key ideas from the information document that will give parents a general idea of the Plaisirs d’hiver campaign. You do not need to give parents every detail.
  - Invite them to speak with you or email you to discuss the possibility of participation, through involvement in the planning or supervision of activities.
  - Indicate your interest in knowing about specific skills or abilities they might be able to demonstrate.

#### Your writing will be evaluated for:

1. Content and integration of source material: Quality of synthesis/summary of your information document (without plagiarism); coherence and organization of ideas, (including paragraphing)
2. Language and clarity: Accuracy of grammar, format and mechanics;
3. Tone and register: Choice of language appropriate for the audience and situation.

## **TASK 2: Email to the Winter is Fun Committee**

### **SCENARIO:**

Two weeks have passed since you wrote your letter [above] to the parents seeking their involvement. During this time, you received written responses from about 50 parents and talked in person with about 10 more; there are 500 students at the school. [The responses are summarized in **APPENDIX II**, which follows.] A meeting of the Winter is Fun Committee will take place next week at which time you will report fully on the parent response. In the meantime, you have been asked to keep the committee members informed.

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

Based on the information in the table that follows, send an email of about 150-300 words to the members of the Winter is Fun Committee. In this email, you must:

- Summarize the responses of the parents in a few brief lines
- Comment on a couple of notable patterns that you see
- Give your opinion on whether there is enough interest on the part of parents to move ahead with this plan
- Explain that you will give more detailed information to the committee at the next meeting.

### **Your writing will be evaluated for:**

1. Content and integration of source material: Quality of synthesis/summary of your information document (without plagiarism); coherence and organization of ideas, (including paragraphing)
2. Language and clarity: Accuracy of grammar, format and mechanics;
3. Tone and register: Choice of language appropriate for the audience and situation.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **INFORMATION DOCUMENT for TASK 1: LETTER**

#### **BACKGROUND**

The rapid rise in obesity over the past few years clearly indicates that lifestyle factors, such as physical activity and nutrition, play important roles in the growing problem of childhood obesity observed across North America.

The current generation of children and adolescents is more sedentary than that of its parents or grandparents. Many children today take part in passive pastimes, a number of which are considered obstacles to regular physical activity and sports. According to the findings of the 2004 Community Health Survey, children aged 6 to 17 who spend more time watching television, playing video games and using the computer are at a greater risk of being overweight or obese. The amount of time 12- to 17-years old spend in front of a screen has increased significantly from 9 hours a week in 1988 to 20 hours a week in 2004. Numerous scientific studies corroborate the relationship between increased screen time and obesity.

As the initiatives below reveal, the Québec government is acting on a number of fronts—at the provincial, regional and local levels—to improve the health of young people and provide environments conducive to good health. In addition to the measures associated with the government action plan and the opportunities provided by the “Healthy Schools” approach, other important initiatives exist. The most important ones are briefly described below.

#### **KINO-QUÉBEC PROGRAM**

Kino-Québec is a government program that has been in existence since 1978. Administered by the MEESR, the MSSS and the public health branches of health and social service agencies, the program is intended to promote a physically active lifestyle to help improve the well-being of Quebeckers. Among its action priorities for 2005-2008,

Kino-Québec focuses on schools, among other players, to create sustainable environments that encourage regular physical activity in and around schools. To achieve this goal, the program relies on interministerial and intersectoral partnerships, as well as on awareness-raising and mobilization initiatives conducted through its network of consultants. Every year, Kino-Québec and its partners invite the schools to submit proposals for installing or purchasing equipment to foster physical activity and good nutrition, or for promoting safety and ethics in physical and sports activities. Schools are also invited to organize activities as part of the Plaisirs d’hiver campaign.

## **WINTER FUN IN SCHOOLS**

Last year, about 700 elementary schools and childcare services encouraged their children to take part in *Winter Fun*. They promoted activities offered by municipalities, organized outings with homeroom teachers and daycare staff, gave outdoor physical education classes; assigned students “active homework;” gave introductory snowshoeing, skating and cross-country skiing classes; held special activities in the schoolyard conducted by Physical Education and Health teachers and daycare staff; organized theme days such as the “Snow Ball,” etc. Here are some ideas for other activities that could be held in schools:

- Hold a Winter Olympics or sports challenge.
- Offer extended recess periods.
- Encourage *Winter Fun* projects carried out jointly by homeroom teachers and specialists (e.g. speech therapists) that incorporate drawing, arts and crafts, quiz games or writing compositions related to the activities that have been organized.
- Incorporate activities around the theme of *Winter Fun* into Physical Education and Health classes, for example:
  - by using the skating rink, trails or park near the school to introduce the children to certain physical and sports activities
  - by recognizing children who have invited other children or adults to join them in playing outside (participation certificate template)
- Let children and their families know about the *Winter Fun* activities organized by the municipality and its partners.
- Organize an active outing to a regional park, ski area, etc.
- Set up a safe environment in the schoolyard, have the activity run by young leaders and supply the equipment needed for various games and activities, such as mini-soccer in the snow, iceball, dodgeball, street hockey, ice tag, scarf chase, making snowmen, snow sculptures, etc.
- Organize family activities outside school hours and incorporate a system for lending sports and outdoor equipment.
- Partner with the municipality to take advantage of existing facilities or to set up new ones that appeal to children or shine the spotlight on the students’ artistic talents (e.g. skating on the rink to music recorded by the school orchestra).

### **Keys to success**

- Promote activities organized by your school and winter activity sites in your municipality using various communication tools such as posters, promotional leaflets, invitation cards, school radio, Web site, etc. Promotion often makes all the difference in the level of participation.
- Make sure that safety is an integral part of the organization and supervision of activities as well as the set-up of the facilities.

- Plan back-up activities in case the weather does not cooperate.

### **Invitations to Winter Fun activities**

- Organize a *Winter Fun* activity in your school and send out invitations to students and their families, co-workers and school administrators in order to get the entire school and community to rally around *Winter Fun* activities!

### **Examples:**

- The footpath's a mile, let's walk for a while!
- The rink is now snow-free, let's go and play hockey!
- We can rent skates at these places then tie up our laces!
- Through the forest was fine, let's hike that way again!
- No need to stay inside. There's a new toboggan slide!
- Get in shape for May and the Grand Défi Pierre Lavoie. You can't sit through the winter and expect to be a winner!
- When the sun's shining bright, snowshoeing's just right!
- Perfect weather for skiing together!
- Hockey, ringette and figure eights: it's time to lace up your skates!
- Dress warmly, button up tight, and you'll see the cold won't bite!
- The town has planned some family fun. Let's go see what's going on!
- Let's get ready for the Grand Défi Pierre Lavoie in May! If we keep moving this winter, we might be top winner!

## APPENDIX II

### INFORMATION DOCUMENT for TASK 2: EMAIL

#### General reaction to the initiative

Positive response: parents think this is a good initiative	35
Negative response: parents who think this should not be the school's priority for a number of reasons (see below)	20

#### Concerns raised by parents

School is for reading, writing and arithmetic; leave the rest up to the parents	6
Many students already spend a lot of time at hockey practice and other physical activities organized outside of school. No need for more	5
Would support if the activities do not interfere with the regular curriculum	4
Would support if the activities take place during school hours: children already spend a lot of time at school and should not be staying longer	4
Concern about the cost of equipment to get everyone skating, skiing, or tobogganing. Parents cannot be expected to supply equipment.	7

#### Offers of help

Parents who would be able to help during school hours	8
Parents who would be able to help after school hours	5
Parents who could give instruction (2 ski instructors, 3 accomplished skaters)	5
Parent who could help get deals on used equipment	1

## *EXAMPLE RESPONSES: PROFESSIONAL WRITING TASKS*

### **PASSING LETTER**

Dear Parents,

Greetings from Grant Smith School, the staff are very excited to be starting a new year and we want to let you know about one of the projects which we hope to implement this year.

There is a big concern in society about the inactivity of young people and studies show that there is a relationship between the amount of time children spend on computers or watching television and the rates of obesity. The Quebec government has a program which is working to address this problem, Kino-Québec. Among the initiatives which Kino-Québec proposes is that schools participate in a “plaisirs d’hiver” program which encourages physical activities during the winter months. The staff thinks this is a great idea so we have been looking at the document which Kino-Québec has sent us, a document which includes, among other information, details of other schools experiences in taking up this challenge. We have now set up the Grant Smith “Winter is Fun” committee. I am a member of this committee.

There are lots of ideas in the Kino-Québec information that we could try but we will need some help and we are hoping that you, the parents, will be able to lend us a hand. Activities could certainly include outdoor games, stories about winter adventures or books about parts of the world that have even longer and more severe winters than we do here in Quebec. There could be outings to parks or rinks and we might even be able to coordinate with the municipality to see how we could make facilities more available to our students, and maybe even to our families. If we had the equipment, we might be able to introduce our students to outdoor activities like snowshoeing or cross-country skiing. We are very open to suggestions.

We hope that you share our enthusiasm for this initiative and that you may have ideas, equipment or time to offer us. Please contact me to let me know what you think of this campaign, if you are able to help us in any way to implement it. You do not need any special skills, but if you have a particular interest or skill, please let us know. As always, these projects always work best with lots of people on board and with cooperation between home and school.

Thanks in advance for your ideas and help, I look forward to hearing from you.

Bob Teacher

### ***Comments:***

This letter is not perfect as there are some language errors and spelling mistakes.



However, the letter meets the goals set out in the instructions by giving parents an overview of the reason for the initiative and the proposals from Kino-Québec. It also asks for parents' availability to help and their general reaction to the idea.

## **FAILING LETTER**

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to another exciting year at Grant Smith. Our staff is looking forward to teaching your children; however, we also recognize that education is more than academics. So, this year we have decided to focus activities on the overall theme of "Winter is Fun" and to get our students excited about winter and active both indoors and out. I am a member of the "Winter is Fun" committee and we have lots of activities planned which we want to share with you and which we hope you will help us implement.

In the classroom we will be looking for ways to incorporate winter activities into the regular curriculum – two ideas we are already working on: reading stories about winter, and trying science experiments about the different qualities of snow. For example, what weather conditions are the best for making snowballs and snow men? Some physical education classes will take place at nearby parks or rinks. We can skate or snow shoe or play dodge ball in the snow. To finish up the season, we will be having a winter Olympics where there will be medals not only for winners, but for participation and effort. We will also be working with our municipal authorities to identify facilities and activities which are available not only to the school population but also to families in the neighbourhood. We hope you will take advantage of these opportunities to practice winter sports outside with your children. We have lots of ideas.

But this project can extend beyond regular school hours and we hope that you can help us organize and supervise activities during the lunch hour and after school. Or maybe you can help with field trips during the day. Can you offer skiing or skating lessons to those of our students who have never tried these sports? Can you help us find equipment for our students? There are so many ways that you can help and we know that you will want to.

Please contact me with information about your availability and your skills so we can work together on this exciting initiative.

Looking forward to meeting you and working with you to make winter more fun for teachers, students and families.

Sincerely,

Jane Teacher

This letter would fail for the following reasons:

**Misrepresentation:** Significant misrepresentation of source material; evidence of miscomprehension of the source material or task; misleading or misinforming the audience about the information in the document

**Integration:** Failure to integrate source material sufficiently; lack of detail from the text; failure to synthesize or summarize source material

**Instructions:** Not following instructions; demands of the task are either not addressed or not at all achieved; purpose is not evident to the reader

***Comments:***

The student has misrepresented the information in the source document because she has indicated that the committee has already decided on specific activities that the school will be offering. There is no reference to the fact that the activities mentioned were outlined in a Ministry document which outlined the Kino-Québec program and some of the ways other schools had implemented the program. The student failed to integrate much of the material in the source document and it is not clear that she even read the first two sections of the document. By failing to integrate information from these sections, the student did not follow instructions which state specifically that the letter is to give some background to the project. The language in the letter is acceptable although the tone is more casual and familiar than would be expected from a teacher. Some readers might find the tone unacceptable.

**TASK 2 EMAIL**

**PASSING EMAIL**

Dear fellow committee members,

As you know, I sent out a message to parents a couple of weeks ago about our Winter is Fun committee. I have received quite a few responses and the reaction is somewhat mixed. Although a majority of those who answered said they thought this was a good initiative, others raised concerns which we will have to consider. For example, some parents want to make sure that special activities do not take time away from the basics; I think we all agree with this but we will have to be clear about how the program will complement but not detract from reading, writing and arithmetic. There are also the expected worries about getting equipment and about whether or not students already spend a lot of time at school.

I think we can address these concerns, especially since we have parents available to help us both during and after school hours. We even have parents with expertise in skating and skiing.

I'll give you more information at our next meeting. Looking forward to moving ahead with this project.

George

***Comments:***

This email is a pass because it gives the committee a summary of the parental responses without going into detail or giving specific numbers. The writer clearly thinks the project can work given the level of response but also draws the committee's attention to the concerns which must be addressed.

**FAILING EMAIL**

Dear committee members,

Well, I got responses from parents about our Winter is Fun initiative. I must say that I was disappointed in the response. I thought that everyone would be really excited, but the parents raised issues about equipment costs and the fact that they don't want us to do anything except teach the ABCs (and math, of course!) I don't know how we can convince them. My letter was enthusiastic and I thought it would be well received and we would have parents knocking on the door to offer their help or bringing us sports equipment. I don't know where to go from here. Do you guys have any ideas? Maybe Grant Smith is just not ready for this kind of program.

Let me know. I'm feeling ready to abandon the project.

Stephanie Teacher

This email would fail for the following reasons:

**Integration:** Failure to integrate source material sufficiently; lack of detail from the text; failure to synthesize or summarize source material

**Instructions:** Not following instructions; demands of the task are either not addressed or not at all achieved; purpose is not evident to the reader

***Comments:***

This email is very vague and it is not clear that the student has looked closely at the numbers. Although the writer has indicated some of the concerns raised by parents, she does not give a summary of the responses which, in fact, are more positive than negative. She has also not indicated that she will give more information at an upcoming meeting. Instead, she has written a very personal message; some would feel that the tone is not professional.