



Introduction

The Ontario College of Teachers licenses, governs and regulates the profession of teaching for its 193,000 members. In doing so, it acts in the public interest. It sets standards of practice and ethical standards, investigates complaints against members and conducts disciplinary hearings as appropriate. It accredits both pre-service and in-service teacher education programs.

Minister of Education Gerard Kennedy, in his March 2004 paper *Revitalizing the Ontario College of Teachers*, outlined a number of areas that the government intends to address with a view to strengthening self-regulation in the teaching profession.

In response to the Minister's initiative, College Council struck an Ad Hoc Committee on College Governance to consult with College members, education partners and the public, commission research, and prepare a response to the Minister of Education.

The committee extended invitations to College members, and stakeholder, regulatory and community groups for sessions in Windsor, London, Toronto, Ottawa, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. The committee also accepted written submissions from interested parties unable to appear before the panels. Panels of the ad hoc committee began consultations across Ontario in May. (See Appendix 1.)

The committee requested that submissions focus on seven issues raised by the Minister in his paper:

- 1. Input into the number and type of elected and appointed members of the College Council.
- 2. Ideas to ensure the independence and de-politicization of the College.
- 3. A process for the validation of future public appointments to Council.
- 4. Ideas to improve voter turnout and to attract more candidates to run in Council elections.
- 5. The role of candidate slates in the electoral process.
- 6. The need for new conflict of interest guidelines for elected and appointed members.
- 7. The role for the College in fostering a better understanding of the profession.

The public opinion research firm COMPAS Inc. was commissioned to survey 1,000 College members with respect to their opinions on some of these key questions raised. COMPAS also carried out a series of nine focus groups in three Ontario cities.

The College found in our consultation and research a lack of understanding of its roles and initiatives.

The Minister's paper does not reflect the results of the collaborative work of the Council since 1997. Appendix 2 outlines some of the College's initiatives since 1997.

This response focuses on the seven areas that were central to our consultations.

The committee sincerely thanks those who made presentations or who submitted their thoughts in writing.

1. Makeup of the College Council

Participants in the consultation process proposed a variety of models for a revamped College Council. All stressed how important it is that any changes to the Council's makeup strengthen the College's legitimacy with professional educators, and build public confidence that our self-regulatory body will carry out its duty to serve and protect the public interest.

One view held by some participants is that the Council will not be seen as representative of the profession until it includes a majority of classroom teachers. This view was supported by the data gathered in the survey of Ontario teachers and focus groups with members of the College carried out by COMPAS for the committee.

Other participants believed – as the Royal Commission on Learning urged in its recommendation for the establishment of a self-governing body for teachers – that,

"Professional educators should form a majority of the membership of the College with a substantial representation of non-educators from the community at large"

while at the same time,

"whatever mechanisms are adopted, it is critical that no one interest group have undue influence in the College."

There are currently 31 members on Council – 17 elected and 14 government appointees, as outlined in the following chart.

The College recommends a Council of 33 members – 23 elected and 10 government appointees – as outlined in the following chart.

Changes to the composition of Council would require changes to the *Ontario College of Teachers Act* and its regulations.

Summary of Council positions

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL	CURRENT	RECOMMENDED		
Regional positions	6	10*		
System positions	7	7		
Principal/vice-principal position(s)	1	 3 1 position for each of: English public system English Catholic system French public/Catholic systems 		
Supervisory officer position	1	1		
Faculty of education position	1	1		
Private school position	1	1		
Total Elected Members	17	23		
Appointed Members	14 Must include 2 French-speaking positions	10 Must include 2 French-speaking positions		
Total Members	31	33		

^{*}The College Council's Election Committee will review the allocation of regional positions

Educator involvement expanded

In recommending an expanded Council, the College wants to ensure a majority of professional educators. Increasing the number of regional positions to 10 while simultaneously reducing the number of government appointed members on Council is a significant move to address concerns of imbalance. In the proposed model a minimum of 23 individuals will be members of the Ontario College of Teachers.

Ad hoc committee members considered all of the various governance models proposed during the consultation. Models with lesser numbers would not provide a sufficient number of Council members for statutory, standing, regulatory and special committees. Greatly expanded models would be too unwieldy.

Other categories

The recommended model expands the complement of principal/vice-principal representatives on Council to three, one to represent each of Ontario's public, Catholic and French school systems.

The recommended model recognizes the distinct role of principals/vice-principals within each system and within the profession. The Council does not accept the argument about "peer review" raised in submissions by various principal representatives. Panels composed of elected and appointed Council members are able to assess and judge fairly issues of professional conduct for all members of the College of Teachers, based on the evidence presented.

The voices of College members in private schools, faculties of education and of supervisory officers are valuable, and belong on Council. The recommended model includes these existing positions.

The College recommends an increase in the minimum number of French-speaking Council members – four elected and two appointed.

2. The Independence of the College

There is a widespread perception that the College is not an independent and self-regulating body. The College is an independent organization subject to the laws of the province. It relies on the Ministry of Education and the provincial cabinet to give the force of law to regulations the College develops.

Members of the College may not be aware that the government did not take the advice of the College on mandatory professional learning or language proficiency requirements for new teachers, and took years to grant final approval to regulations on teacher qualifications and the accreditation of teacher education programs.

The government, having granted the profession the important responsibility of self-regulation, should recognize the College's expertise and leadership in this regard and make College-initiated regulatory change a priority.

Since its establishment the College has worked co-operatively with other education stakeholders on a number of issues and initiatives including, for example, teacher supply and demand, an induction program and an access program for internationally trained teachers.

The co-operation of all members and associations/federations is a necessary aspect of the ongoing health of education in our province. It is essential that the teacher federations work collaboratively with the College to promote the profession of teaching and support the ongoing work of the College.

The election of the majority of members of Council makes the College, to some extent, a politicized institution. The perspectives on education of elected members and public appointees with varying backgrounds, roles and concerns mean that there will always be healthy debate on Council.

The *Ontario College of Teachers Act* places on the College the duty "to serve and protect the public interest." This duty overrides individual political interests.

Elected and appointed members of all Councils have worked collaboratively over the last seven years. (See Appendix 2.)

3. Public Appointments

Many College members are unaware of how the public appointment process works and often assume that public members of Council are political patronage appointments.

Our consultations showed that those who are more knowledgeable about the appointment process are more confident about it. The knowledge that the Public Appointments Secretariat works to identify suitable candidates and that nominations by the Minister of Education are reviewed by an all-party committee of MPPs is reassuring to College members. The Minister should continue to encourage individuals and education stakeholders to nominate candidates with appropriate skills to serve as public representatives on Council.

The Council believes that greater understanding of the appointment process is needed.

4. Council Elections

The College is concerned about low voter turnout in College elections and is committed to increasing member interest and involvement. Voter turnout was 32 per cent in 1997 – high for elections to self-regulatory governing bodies – and fell to 14 per cent in 2000 and 4.4 per cent in 2003.

The COMPAS poll of College members identified lack of information on candidates as a key reason for low voter turnout in the last College election, with 44 per cent of the 1,000 teachers surveyed citing this reason. Twenty-two per cent said non-voting is a protest against the College, while nine per cent said there is no point to voting given that candidates endorsed by the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) have historically won every seat. Five per cent of survey respondents said that online voting was an important reason for low turnout.

The Council recognizes that the College must ensure that significantly more information about candidates for Council is available in a variety of formats before the Council election in 2006. The Election Committee will also address other issues concerning online voting. Among these is a review of the requirement for members to supply their social insurance number to vote online as a unique identifier for ballot security purposes.

Voting process

In the first Council election, each member was eligible to vote for all system categories and one regional position. In the second and third Council elections – against Council's advice – the provincial government limited each member to vote for one regional position and the system or category position related to their employment.

The ad hoc committee heard from a number of individuals and organizations with differing perspectives on both models.

Attracting more candidates

The number of candidates standing for the 17 elected positions on Council has declined from 440 in 1997 to 42 in 2003.

College members may choose not to seek election given the additional responsibilities of Council and committee service, travel, and time away from work and families. The workload of Council members in addition to their full-time job is significant. As well, parents may not appreciate the frequent absences of their child's teacher or their school's principal throughout the school year.

There is a need to find local solutions that support elected Council members. For example, teachers find it much easier to commit to time away from the classroom for College business if they are always replaced with the same occasional teacher.

5. Slates and Endorsements

A number of participants in the province-wide consultation expressed the view that the practice of stakeholder organizations endorsing slates of candidates for College elections can have the effect of discouraging educators from standing for election or voting.

Others pointed out that some organizations invest a great deal of time and effort in identifying suitable candidates to ensure equitable representation with respect to gender, geography and language.

The survey of College members showed support for the endorsement practice. According to the COMPAS survey, 53 per cent of the members polled approved of federations supporting candidates for election to the College Council. Twenty-eight per cent disagreed and 19 per cent didn't know or refused to comment.

Our consultations showed concerns that no one group have voting influence over other groups.

Conflict of Interest Guidelines

The Council must be free from conflict of interest.

While many College members are comfortable with the election of local federation/association officials to the College Council – 39 per cent in the COMPAS survey – fewer were comfortable with the election of provincial officials (29 per cent). The consultation showed that others feel that some restrictions are appropriate for provincially elected officials of stakeholder organizations.

Measures to prevent provincially elected leaders from other education organizations – for example teachers' federations, principals' councils – being elected to College Council would reduce the possibility as well as the perception of conflict.

The College recommends that the provincially elected leader and those employed by provincial stakeholder organizations be ineligible to seek election to or accept a public appointment to the College Council.

7. A Better Understanding of the Profession

The consultations with College members demonstrated that many are not well informed about the College's legislated mandate or its role in education in Ontario. Communication must be improved with our members about our role and accomplishments.

The Committee believes that the College must continue to work in partnership with all groups in education to build a deeper and broader understanding of education and of the teaching profession.

Members of the Ad Hoc Committee on College Governance

Appreciation is expressed to the contributors whose considered presentations helped to inform the members of the ad hoc committee and to the College staff for their assistance and support.

The committee members were: Nancy Hutcheson (Committee Chair and Council Vice-Chair), Patrick Daly (Committee Vice-Chair), Ernie Checkeris, Ted Coulson, Marilyn Laframboise (Council Chair), Patrick Slack, Anne Vinet-Roy, Doug Wilson (Registrar – non-voting).

APPENDIX 1

Summary of Ad Hoc Committee Regional Sessions

A consultation process was approved by Council at its March 25-26, 2004 meeting to assist in the development of a response to the Minister of Education's paper regarding College governance. Regional sessions were held in six communities across Ontario to solicit advice from College members, stakeholder representatives and the public, and the Ad Hoc Committee on College Governance solicited advice from their College Council colleagues in an additional session.

Invitations

A letter of invitation was issued to education stakeholders, regulatory bodies and community groups on April 22, 2004, outlining the dates, locations and language of sessions where the ad hoc committee would receive presentations. The letter also contained an invitation to provide written submissions by June 30, 2004 in addition to or in lieu of a personal presentation.

Information on the review of College governance was provided to over 40,000 College members in the April 2004 edition of the College's e-mail service *Your College and You*. Members were invited to contact the College for additional information regarding the regional sessions and also advised that written presentations would be accepted until June 30, 2004.

In total, the ad hoc committee received 71 presentations

ORGANIZATION NAME	LOCATION	PRESENTERS	
Association des directions et des directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes	Toronto	Serge Plouffe (président)	
Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens	Toronto	Laurent Joncas (directeur général)	
Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators	Toronto	Terry Gorrie (Past Executive Director) Sally Hooper (Executive Director)	
Catholic Principals' Council	Ottawa	Brent Wilson (Past President)	
of Ontario	Toronto	Terri MacDonald (President) Lou Rocha (Executive Director)	
	Sudbury	Don Hopkins	
Conference of Independent Schools of Ontario	Toronto	Janet M. Lewis (Executive Director) George L. Briggs (Executive Director Designate)	
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario	Windsor (Greater Essex Teacher Local) Ottawa (Ottawa-Carleton Teacher Local) Thunder Bay (Lakehead Teacher Local) Toronto (Upper Grand Teacher Local) (Simcoe County Teacher Local) Sudbury (Rainbow District Teacher Local) (Algoma Teacher Local)	Elaine Astles Paul Dewar (Vice-President) Christina Lofts (President) Sharlene Smith (1st Vice-President) Catherine Wiznuk (Vice-President) Emily Noble (President) Gene Lewis (General Secretary) Jerry De Quetteville Doug Cook (Staff Officer) Lu Eccles (Early Literacy Teacher) Ann Hoggarth (President) Mark Butt (Elementary Teacher) Janet Bigham (Elementary Teacher) Pat Gordon (President) Gayle Manley (President) Darlene Mead (Political Action Chair)	

ORGANIZATION NAME	LOCATION	PRESENTERS	
Individual Presentations	London Windsor Toronto Thunder Bay Sudbury	David Dean (retired Principal) Craig Smith (Teacher) Brian Rivait (Principal) Duncan Green (former ADM, Ministry of Education) John Fraser John Ricker Margaret Wilson (former College Registrar) Joseph W. Atkinson (former College Registrar) Christy Radbourne (Teacher) Diane Leblovic (former Council member) Audrey Hadfield (former Council member) Cristina Montès (Teacher) Richard Taylor Jean Hanson (former Council member)	
Independent School Associations of Ontario	Toronto	Herman Proper (Chair) Les Black	
Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools	Toronto	John Vanasselt (Director of Communications)	
Ontario Association of Deans of Education	Toronto	Allen Pearson (Chair) Jennie Piekos (Research Associate, Council of Ontario Universities)	
Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association	Toronto	Paul Whitehead (President) Bob Anderson (Director, Catholic Education)	
Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association	Toronto	John Watts (President) John Wheatley (Executive Director)	
Ontario Christian School Teachers' Association	London	Hilda Roukema (Executive Director) Mary Haven	
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association	London (London District Unit) Windsor (Windsor-Essex Elementary and Secondary Units) Ottawa (Eastern Ontario and Ottawa-Carleton Units) Toronto Thunder Bay (Thunder Bay Secondary Unit) (Northwest Unit) Sudbury (Sudbury Elementary and Secondary Units)	Sheila Brescia (President) Shelley Malone (1st Vice-President) John McLaughlin (President – Elementary Unit) Brian Hogan (President – Secondary Unit) Marilies Rettig (President – Eastern Unit) Linus Shea (President – Ottawa-Carleton Unit) Donna Marie Kennedy (President) Don Cattani (President – Secondary Unit) Dan Maltais (President) Dan Charbonneau (President) Marilyn Onucky-Vervega (Corresponding Secretary) Sheila Prusila	
Ontario Federation of Home and Schools Associations, Inc.	Windsor Toronto	Lesley Schuurs (Past President) Sue Robertson (President) Judy Watson (Policy Chair)	
Ontario Federation of Independent Schools	Ottawa	Elaine Hopkins (Executive Director)	

ORGANIZATION NAME	LOCATION	PRESENTERS	
Ontario Principals' Council	London Windsor Ottawa Toronto Sudbury	Doug Acton Isabella Beattie Ian McFarlane Ted Whiteland (President) Mike Benson (Executive Director) Ardeth Gordon	
Ontario Public School Boards' Association	Toronto	Rick Johnson (President) Bill Crothers (Vice-President Central East Region) Jeff Sprang (Director of Communications)	
Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association	Toronto	Tony Tumminieri (President) Frank Kelly (Executive Director)	
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation	London (District 23 Grand Erie) (District 8 Avon Maitland) (District 11 Thames Valley) (District 21 Hamilton-Wentworth) Windsor (District 9 Greater Essex) Ottawa (District 26 Upper Canada) (District 25 Ottawa-Carleton) Toronto (District 13 Durham) Thunder Bay	Mary Garland (Vice-President) Kelly Currie (Negotiator) Tom Barker (Teacher President) Wendy Anes Hirschegger (President Elect) Karl Dean (Staff Officer) Jeff Moore (President) Brad Bennett (President) Dina van den Hanenberg (District Officer Susan Rab (President – Teachers' Unit) Rhonda Kimberley-Young (President) Rod Albert Pat Jeremy (Past President) Duncan Vipond (District Vice-President)	
	(District 6A – Thunder Bay) Sudbury (District 3 Rainbow)	Terry Hamilton (President) Sam Martin (President)	
Ontario Teachers' Federation	Toronto	Yvan Roy (President) Lindy Amato (Director, Professional Affairs)	
Organization for Quality Education	Toronto	John Bachmann (Past President) Doretta Wilson (Secretary)	
Together in Education (ETFO, OECTA, and OSSTF)	London	John Ryrie (OSSTF District 24 President) Rick Moffitt (ETFO Waterloo Unit Communications Officer) Bill Brazeau (OECTA Waterloo Unit President)	

Additional submissions received

David and Ros Dykema John Kerr Saturlino Leandro John Long Dan McIvor M.E. Smith

Pauline van Staveren

Conseil ontarien des directrices et des directeurs de l'éducation de langue française

APPENDIX 2

Seven Years of Success

The members of three successive College Councils have worked collaboratively to achieve numerous successes over the last seven years.

Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession – The five standards and their key elements define what it means to be a teacher in Ontario. The College consulted with educators, education partners and the public before Council passed the standards as a College bylaw in 1999. The standards are used in teacher education programs – pre-service and in-service – and by College members, school boards, the Ministry of Education and other sectors of the education community. They are intended to ensure common understanding by members of the profession and of the public about what teachers expect of themselves and of their fellow professionals.

Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession – Council incorporated the ethical standards into College bylaws to articulate the values and responsibilities of members of the College. The ethical standards are intended to be used in conjunction with the standards of practice by our members, school boards, the Ministry of Education and other sectors of the education community.

Professional Learning Framework – The professional learning framework articulates the many ways in which members of the College pursue lifelong learning. The framework, approved by Council in 2000, is a comprehensive description of the professional learning opportunities for the teaching profession in Ontario.

Growing into the Profession – The Council approved this white paper in 2003. It identifies crucial supports required to ensure the professional success of new teachers, and recommends that the provincial government establish and fund a formal mandatory two-year mentoring and induction program for new teachers. The recommendations are based on the College's research with beginning teachers and broad consultation with new and experienced teachers.

Public Register – The College was one of the first regulatory bodies in Ontario to make its public register of members available through its web site, www.oct.ca. The public register averaged over 95,000 hits/month during the first six months of 2004, with a record 103,688 hits in May.

Bill 160: Non-Certified Instructors – The Council's advice to the government that permitting uncertified and unqualified persons to teach in Ontario classrooms would not be in the public interest led to the withdrawal of sections of the bill. These sections would have permitted the use of paraprofessional instructors in publicly funded schools.

Public/transparent disciplinary hearings – The College established a process of holding disciplinary hearings open to the public as prescribed in legislation. This transparency ensures the protection of the public interest as well as procedural fairness for College members.

Bilingual services – Council has ensured that all services and information to members and the public are offered in both official languages, French and English.

Professionally Speaking/Pour parler profession – The College's quarterly magazine is offered in both official languages. The magazine is one of Canada's top 50 magazines in English-language readership.

Professional Misconduct Regulation – Council developed and approved a regulation that defines professional misconduct for College members. Committees rely on this regulation when hearing or disposing of complaints about the misconduct of members.

Protecting Our Children – The Council responded to recommendations following a public inquiry by Justice Sydney Robins to review regulations and procedures regarding sexual misconduct by members. Council made changes to accommodate vulnerable witnesses (typically children) to ensure that allegations of abuse or other misconduct by members are disclosed and addressed.

Professional Advisory Related to Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct – The College issued an advisory on sexual misconduct and abuse and how to preserve professional boundaries, with reminders of professional reporting responsibilities.

Implementation of a criminal record screening process – For greater protection of the public, the College introduced a policy requiring new applicants to the College to provide a criminal record check. The policy came into effect in 1999.

Dispute Resolution Program – The College developed and implemented a dispute resolution program to promote the resolution of suitable complaints through a means other than a full investigation and hearing.

Maintaining and Ensuring Competency – The Council made 15 recommendations to the provincial government for maintaining and ensuring teacher competency. Recommendations included a written test for all new applicants for an Ontario teaching licence and a formal assessment process for teachers pursuing additional qualifications. The College strongly advised against mandatory professional learning.

Labour Mobility – In co-operation with other Canadian jurisdictions, the College developed a process whereby any teacher certified in jurisdictions in Canada can be certified in other Canadian jurisdictions, with some terms, limitations and conditions. This allowed increased employment opportunities for College members to work outside the province, and for Ontario school boards to employ teachers certified in other provinces.

Language Proficiency – Council approved a regulation partially accepted by the provincial government to require candidates for membership in the College to provide evidence of English or French language proficiency, if they did not receive their teacher education in either of those languages.

Access Program – The College, in partnership with the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) and community agencies LASI and Skills for Change, is leading a government funded bridging project – Teach in Ontario – to help teachers who have been trained outside Canada receive support to qualify for licensing in Ontario.

Changes to Teachers Qualifications Regulation – The Council has developed proposals for comprehensive changes to Regulation 184/97, which is the basis on which the College issues teaching certificates. The recommended changes would result in the first major overhaul in required teacher qualifications since 1978.

Revision of AQ course guidelines – The Standards of Practice and Education Committee revised over 200 Additional Qualification course guidelines, some of which were up to 25 years old, to meet today's curriculum requirements.

Accreditation of pre-service programs – The College's Accreditation Committee carried out an initial accreditation of all pre-service teacher education programs in Ontario between 1997 and 2000. The College was granted formal accreditation responsibilities in 2003 and has begun to review accreditation of existing programs and to accredit new programs.

Updating of Teacher Credentials – The College received 300,000 records of certified teachers from the Ministry of Education, some dating back to 1910, and in a variety of formats and widely varying degrees of accuracy. The College updated individual teacher records, identifying over 2,000 individuals teaching without appropriate credentials, and worked with employers to address these anomalies.

Statistical Reports on Teacher Supply – Drawing on teacher certification data, the College has developed regular reports on teacher retirements and resulting implications for the profession. These reports placed the issue of teacher supply on the public agenda and are a resource for the education sector as numerous partners work with the Ministry of Education to address the problem.

Transition to Teaching Study – In 2002, the College began a five-year study of new graduates to find ways to decrease the number of new teachers leaving the profession in the first five years after they graduate. The Ministry of Education has provided the College with funding for this initiative.

Teacher candidate recruitment videos/brochures/job fairs – Each year College staff members promote the teaching profession and provide information on how to become a teacher with information displayed at numerous job fairs and videos streamed on the College's web site.

Be the Spark Campaign – In partnership with other education stakeholders, the College developed a campaign to attract people to teaching, particularly in mathematics, science and computer studies.

State of the Teaching Profession Survey of Members – The College surveys annually a representative sample of its members on important education issues. This unique resource reflects statistically valid feedback from teachers in all publicly funded school systems in the province.

Annual and updated Certificate of Qualification for all members – Each year the College mails new certificates and interim certificates to all College members, with an update of their status, additional qualifications, any added terms, limitations or conditions and an up-to-date membership card.

Ontario College of Teachers Foundation – Council established a foundation in 2002 to recognize, support and sustain excellence in the teaching profession. An annual scholarship rewards the achievements and characteristics of individuals who model the best values of teaching.

Margaret Wilson Library – The College library supports the professional development of College members and the work of the College Council and its committees.

More information on these and other College initiatives can be found at www.oct.ca, which offers the public and College members more than 20,000 pages of online information as well as a wide variety of online services for members, applicants and school boards.

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