

The Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession

Members of the College refine the knowledge, skills and values described in the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* through ongoing professional learning.

The *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession* outlines opportunities for ongoing professional learning for members. The framework provides for this growth and development through the identification of accredited pre-service and in-service programs of professional teacher education and a wide range of other learning opportunities.

Background for the Professional Learning Framework

Professional learning may take a variety of forms. Following their pre-service training, members of the College can complete courses or programs that are identified in *Regulation 184/97, Teachers Qualifications*, made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*. These courses or programs are accredited by the College and offered by registered providers. They are outlined in this document. When a member successfully completes one of these courses or programs, it is recorded on the Certificate of Qualification.

Members of the College stay current and up to date in many ways beyond completing Additional Qualification courses and programs. Examples of these professional learning opportunities are identified in this document. Educators can participate in or facilitate professional development activities, mentor colleagues, join professional networks, engage in research activities, and read books and articles about educational issues.

Professional learning is at the heart of teacher professionalism. In addition to the accredited in-service programs, members of the Ontario College of Teachers engage in a wide variety of professional learning in order to improve their practice and enhance student learning. All of these opportunities are an integral part of the professional learning framework. Educators participate in learning opportunities offered by their employers, the Ministry of Education, faculties of education, professional organizations, federations and subject associations. Through this professional learning, College members demonstrate a commitment to continued professional growth.

By developing the *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession*, the Ontario College of Teachers meets its legislated mandate to “provide for the ongoing education of members of the College.” It also informs the public of the many ways educators remain knowledgeable and current.

The Professional Learning Framework:

- acknowledges the commitment members of the teaching profession make to professional learning
- highlights a range of options to improve practice and enhance student learning
- identifies programs and professional learning activities accredited by the College
- assists members of the College to identify, collect, reflect upon and celebrate their learning experiences and accomplishments
- assures the profession and the public that College members have the opportunity through professional learning to remain current throughout their careers.

The Professional Learning Framework Supports the Following Principles:

The goal of professional learning is the ongoing improvement of practice.

Teacher learning is directly correlated to student learning.

The professional learning framework encourages learning activities based on provincial legislation and policy, system needs, personal growth needs and student learning needs. The framework also encourages members of the College to identify and pursue their strengths and personal interests to further their professional learning.

Standards-based professional learning provides for an integrated approach to teacher education.

All programs and professional learning activities accredited by the College must be designed to support the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*.

Exemplary professional learning opportunities are based on the principles of effective learning.

The framework takes into account individual career and personal priorities. It outlines professional learning activities that are varied, flexible and accessible to members of the College.

Teachers plan for and reflect on their professional learning.

Responsible lifelong learning is continuous learning that is initiated by members of the College and directed and reviewed by them on an ongoing basis.

Learning communities enhance professional learning.

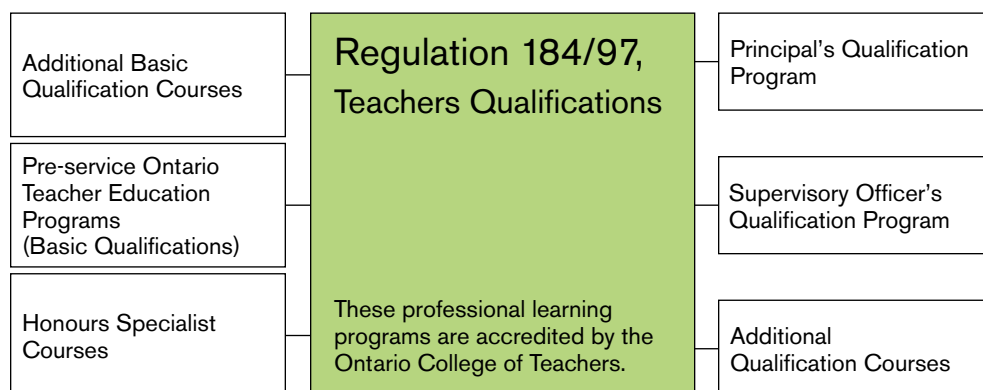
The professional learning framework encourages collaboration. It supports ongoing commitment to the improvement and currency of teaching practice as an individual and collective responsibility.

Professional Learning Required in Legislation

Regulation 184/97, Teachers Qualifications

Regulation 184/97, Teachers Qualifications made under the Ontario College of Teachers Act identifies the programs currently recognized by the Ontario College of Teachers. These include:

Certification Programs: Regulation 184/97, Teachers Qualifications



Other Opportunities for Professional Growth and Development

The challenge for members of the College today is to maintain and extend their professional knowledge and skills in a rapidly changing educational environment. Educators engage in many forms of professional learning. The range of opportunities reflects the complexity of the teaching profession and identifies ways that educators remain current in their practice.

Opportunities for professional growth and development might include but are not limited to:

Academic Programs

Currently the Certificate of Qualification includes only completed degree programs. Members of the Ontario College of Teachers may choose to:

- participate in programs or courses offered through universities, colleges or other institutions or organizations that do not always lead to academic degrees.

These programs may be prerequisites to enrolment in the certification programs listed in Regulation 184/97, Teachers Qualifications.

Research Activities

Members of the Ontario College of Teachers may choose to:

- inquire into teaching practice
- plan and conduct research activities to enhance teaching and learning
- work collaboratively with others to contribute to the knowledge base of teaching and learning
- explore ways to access and use educational research.

Professional Networks

Members of the Ontario College of Teachers may choose to:

- partner with business, industry, colleges and universities
- contribute to subject councils, the work of the federations or other professional organizations
- participate on school-based committees
- serve on a local school community committee or school council.

Professional Contributions

Members of the Ontario College of Teachers may choose to:

- participate in, present at, or organize conferences, workshops and institutes
- contribute to a professional publication.

Mentoring and Networking

Members of the Ontario College of Teachers may choose to:

- serve as an associate teacher
- become involved in a mentoring partnership
- learn with colleagues through co-operative planning and problem solving
- form study groups.

Professional Activities

Members of the Ontario College of Teachers may choose to:

- maintain a professional portfolio
- arrange opportunities to observe exemplary practice
- stay current by reading educational books and journals
- share ideas and resources with other colleagues
- participate in curriculum writing and/or assessment projects.

Learning through Practice

Members of the Ontario College of Teachers may choose to:

- develop and implement curriculum materials
- participate in school-based collaborative inquiry
- implement a new instructional or assessment strategy
- conduct and publish action research projects
- pilot new initiatives individually or with colleagues.

Technology and Learning

Members of the Ontario College of Teachers may choose to:

- increase their competency in computer, telecommunication, videoconferencing, CD-ROM and videodisc technology
- join a listserv
- integrate technology into teaching practice
- enrol in a distance education program.

Members of the Ontario College of Teachers may also choose to determine other options for learning beyond these examples.



The Ontario College of Teachers uses the processes described in the professional learning framework to guide its consultation and research activities.

These processes are being used to develop, implement and initiate the revision of the standards of practice, ethical standards and the professional learning framework. They also provide the opportunity for the accreditation of pre-service and in-service teacher education programs.



Conclusion

The *Foundations of Professional Practice* articulates the knowledge, skills and values inherent in the ethics, the practice and the ongoing professional learning of College members.

The ethical standards, the standards of practice and the professional learning framework are interconnected. Their overarching purpose is to guide College members in their practice so they can more readily enhance student learning.

The *Foundations of Professional Practice* provides a vision for exemplary professional practice for all teachers in Ontario.