



Ontario College of Teachers

# NEW TEACHER INDUCTION

growing into the profession



# Foreword

Ontario has an opportunity to effect widespread improvement in teaching practice in our province's schools during this decade.

The opportunity lies in the massive turnover in our teaching population and the entry into the profession of tens of thousands of eager new teachers whose education in modern teaching methods equips them to take teaching excellence in our schools to a new level.

This opportunity may be lost, however, if our education system fails to capitalize on the wisdom and knowledge of experienced teachers and administrators who are retiring in unprecedented numbers.

In a 2000 document on ensuring competency in the teaching profession, the Ontario College of Teachers recommended a two-year induction program for new teachers to ensure that they continue to develop and refine their skills.

The evidence proves that the quality of teaching is the largest single variable in student learning. The evidence also shows that an effective induction program, which includes mentoring, fosters new teachers' self-confidence and competence, helps them improve their teaching practice, and helps them grow into and stay in the profession.

Yet, in 2002, fewer than 20 per cent of Ontario's new teachers had mentors. Fewer than half our new members were satisfied with their orientation and induction.

When newly-certified teachers are given support grounded in professional standards and a clearly articulated vision of successful teaching, student learning improves.

The profession must find an effective way to transmit the collective wisdom of experienced teachers to the new generation and provide more support for their early years in the classroom.

The College of Teachers is calling on the provincial government to require and fund induction programs in every school board, and we have developed a framework for a systematic induction program. This is based on current research and extensive consultation. Our recommendations reflect the generous feedback and advice we received from Ontario's teachers, school and board administrators and other education partners. This report would not exist without their involvement, and we are indebted.

We have an opportunity, through an exemplary induction program, to create new learning communities within our schools and foster commitment to the highest standards of professional ethics and practice. An induction program will contribute to the professional growth of individual teachers and promote collaborative school cultures with a focus on student learning.

The teachers who are bringing their knowledge and commitment to Ontario's classrooms in the next few years will form the core of our teaching profession for the next three decades. We must embrace this historic opportunity to make a significant and lasting improvement to the quality of teaching and learning in our schools.

The profession must find an effective way to transmit the collective wisdom of experienced teachers to the new generation.

As the self-governing body that regulates the teaching profession in the public interest, the College of Teachers is responsible for ensuring the provision of the initial and ongoing professional education of our members.

We view the early years – particularly the first two – of our members’ teaching careers as a continuation of the learning process that begins in faculty of education classrooms, continues with practice teaching and intensifies as new teachers learn on the job.

The College believes that we must create a systematic way to ensure that the professional skills and knowledge of all our members is enhanced by the teaching and learning inherent in an induction program. Our new teachers will benefit greatly; Ontario’s students will benefit more.

*W. Douglas Wilson*

W. Douglas Wilson  
Registrar & Chief Executive Officer  
Ontario College of Teachers



## Growing into the profession

Every year, Ontario College of Teachers records show that 10,000 new teachers enter Ontario's elementary and secondary classrooms. Almost 7,000 of these are new graduates from Ontario's faculties of education.

Every year, Ontario Teacher Pension Plan records show that about 3,500 teachers leave full-time classroom teaching prior to retirement.

More than 60 per cent of Ontario school boards say that retaining teachers is a problem, according to a survey done in 2000 by the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

Since its founding in 1997, the College has focused on the challenges of teacher recruitment and retention in this decade of massive changes to Ontario's teaching population. Three years ago, in April 2000, we recommended in *Maintaining, Ensuring and Demonstrating Competency in the Teaching Profession* "That employers be required to provide a two-year induction program, the core components of which would be defined by the College, to beginning teachers employed on a regular basis to ensure that they continue to develop and to refine the knowledge and skills required by members of the teaching profession."

The evidence shows that planned and sustained support for new teachers, in an induction program, helps them during their transition from student to full-fledged professional and is vital to keeping them in the profession.

The Royal Commission on Learning, reporting in 1995, recommended "that school boards be required to provide appropriate and sustained professional support to all first-year teachers, to ease their entry into full-time teaching." Their suggestions included support from "mentor teachers or consultants."

In 1991, according to a study done for the Teacher Education Council, Ontario, 89 per cent of the province's school boards were in various stages of planning, developing and implementing induction programs, most of which included mentoring.

But a decade later, findings from the Ontario College of Teachers' *Transition to Teaching* study show that only about one in five of Ontario's new teachers are involved in mentoring programs.

In 2000, the Education Improvement Commission identified professional development as one of the four cornerstones of continuous improvement for Ontario's education system. The commission addressed the issue of funds for professional development. It reported that the average spending on training across all sectors was \$776 per employee or 1.6 per cent of payroll. The health/education sector spent only \$423. Based on the then-current education payroll of \$10.6 billion in Ontario, the commission estimated that the average 1.6 per cent of payroll would be \$170 million a year for professional development.

What new teachers want most is constructive feedback and advice from an experienced mentor and support from principals, vice-principals and colleagues. They want to improve their teaching practice. They want to grow into their profession.

Teachers' federations, school boards, the Ministry of Education, faculties of education and the Ontario College of Teachers have all been investigating ways of addressing the crucial issues of retention and new teachers' professional growth. As one participant in last year's Ontario Teachers' Federation/Council of Directors of Education symposium, Teaching Matters, suggested: "We must put into place support structures for new teachers ... this structure must include real support."

The College has embedded the notion of collaboration and mentoring into the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*. It has also identified mentoring as an important opportunity for teacher leadership within the *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession*.

The College is already working in partnership with several school boards to design induction programs based on these standards.

In the spring of 2003, the College met with groups around the province to discuss a proposed induction program framework. Participants included new teachers, directors of education, supervisory officers, principals and vice-principals, staff development officers, program consultants, teacher-mentors, school council chairs, trustees, parents and representatives from federations, faculties of education and the Ministry of Education.

From this consultation emerged broad support for an induction program, including mentoring and significant release time. Consensus was that the program be flexible to meet local needs and that it incorporate research and review processes. Participants also identified the challenges they face: hirings after September, assignments for new teachers, lack of resources and the implications of release time.

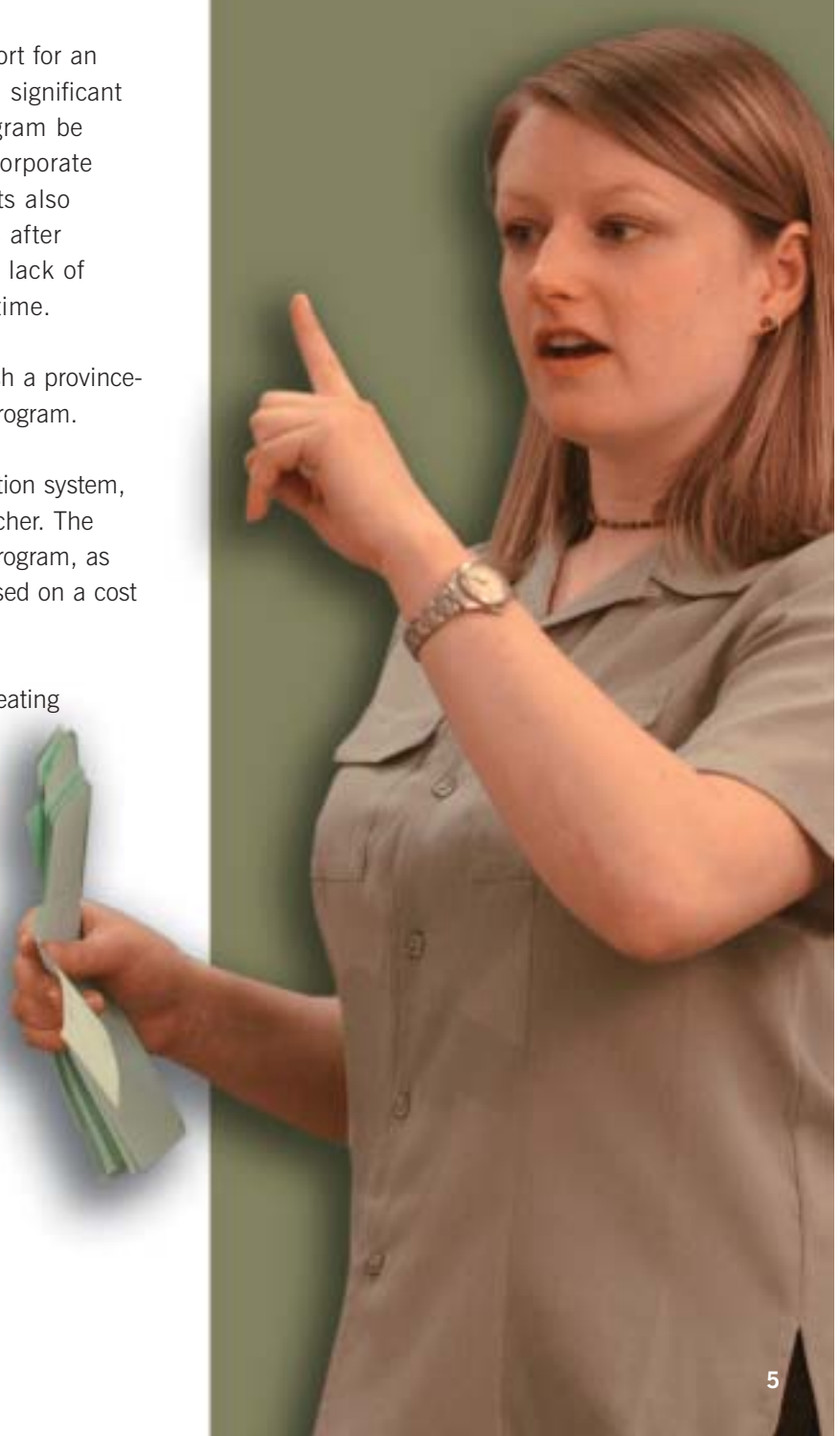
The College believes that it is time to establish a province-wide framework for a mandatory induction program.

The College estimates that it costs the education system, on average, \$4,400 to recruit and hire a teacher. The College proposes that a two-year induction program, as outlined in this paper, can be established based on a cost of \$4,000 per new teacher.

Targeted and sustained funding is crucial. Creating support networks requires commitment and recognition through time and funding from provincial sources. Induction will not work if it is an “add-on.”

Successful induction of Ontario’s newest teachers is crucial to their professional and personal well-being. It is also crucial to the growth and development of the teaching profession and to the excellence of the province’s education system.

**What new teachers want most is constructive feedback and advice from an experienced mentor and support from principals, vice-principals and colleagues.**



## Benefits of induction

The primary focus of an effective induction program is on supporting new teachers in techniques that will help them help their students succeed. Evidence shows that the quality of teaching is the largest single variable in student learning. This commitment to student learning will improve achievement.

Teachers' ongoing learning is also an important model for students of the necessity for lifelong learning.

It is clearly in the public interest to invest the resources required to ensure that the professionals who will teach in and administer Ontario's schools for the next three decades build on the strongest possible foundation of their colleagues' learning and experience. An induction program that is built into school improvement plans will provide communities with the assurance that the culture of their schools improves continuously.

And it is clearly in the public interest to ensure that our education system takes the very basic steps that are necessary to improve retention of new teachers trained at public expense.

An induction program in which peers, principals and the system support a new teacher has a significant effect on that teacher's confidence and competence. The new teacher becomes more effective in the classroom, grows professionally, has greater job satisfaction and integrates more easily into the school culture. Induction reinforces the continuum of teacher education, bridging the pre-service and in-service phases of a teaching career. Induction provides a comprehensive framework for teachers to synthesize and integrate the academic and theoretical components of their pre-service education, with their real life, on-the-job classroom experiences and teaching assignments.

Teacher induction offers professional learning opportunities, growth and renewal for all those involved. Experienced teachers benefit from mentor training. They get satisfaction from passing on their knowledge, and they benefit from the fresh ideas and experiences of their newer colleagues. As one secondary school teacher said during the recent consultation, "Mentoring improves my teaching, too."

How new teachers succeed or fail to meet their expectations and the expectations of others depends on how their professional peers support, encourage and challenge them.

## Linking induction to the standards of practice

The standards of practice are based on the belief that personal and professional growth is a developmental process, and that teachers move through a variety of career and life stages. The standards require teachers to base their practice on:

- commitment to students and student learning
- professional knowledge
- teaching practice
- leadership and community
- ongoing professional learning.

Successful induction programs embed the language and best practices identified in professional standards throughout the program.

Ontario education researchers Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan discuss the relationship of mentoring and professional standards in their 1999 work, *Mentoring in the New Millennium*. They argue that teaching must be framed and informed by professional standards of practice that define what good teachers should know and be able to do as well as what qualities and dispositions they should possess and display.

To ensure excellence, the Ontario College of Teachers defines the teaching profession through the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*, the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and the *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession*. The standards provide broad descriptors of quality practice and generate an image of what it means to be a teacher in Ontario.

Teachers, both new and experienced, have reported the benefits of using the College's standards to frame and guide their inquiry within a mentoring relationship.

All pre-service and in-service programs leading to teacher certification must show how they support the standards. So must an induction program.

## Guiding principles of induction

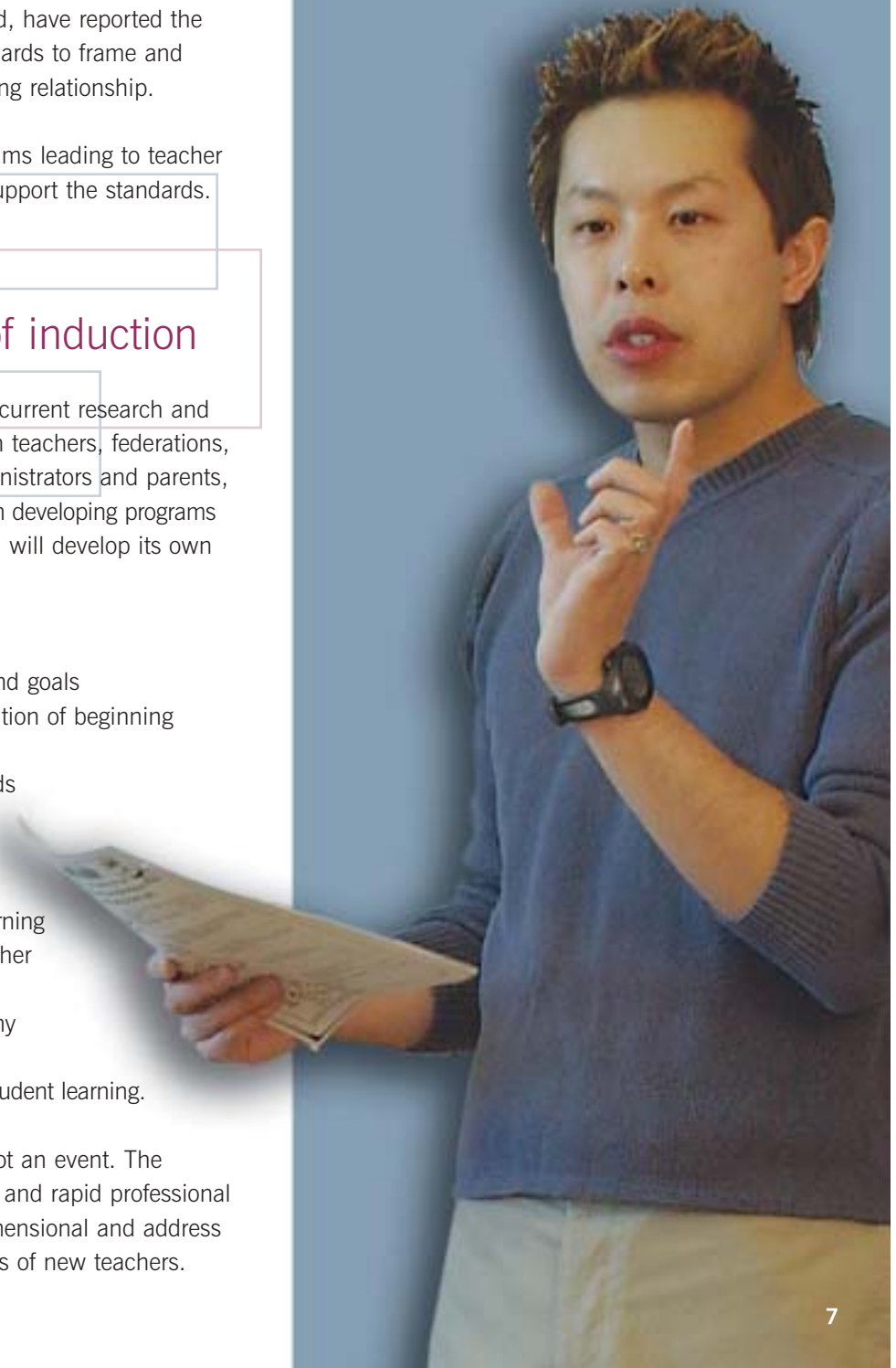
A set of broad principles, based on current research and validated in recent consultation with teachers, federations, boards, faculties of education, administrators and parents, sets the framework to assist boards in developing programs for their own context. Each program will develop its own unique features.

An exemplary induction program:

- has a clearly articulated vision and goals
- focuses on the support and retention of beginning teachers
- is based on professional standards
- includes a planned mentoring component
- acknowledges that becoming a teacher is a process of lifelong learning
- focuses on classroom-based teacher learning
- is the shared responsibility of many educational partners
- enhances teaching practice and student learning.

Becoming a teacher is a process, not an event. The induction period is one of continual and rapid professional growth. Support should be multidimensional and address a variety of the developmental needs of new teachers.

Experienced teachers benefit from mentor training. They get satisfaction from passing on their knowledge, and they benefit from the fresh ideas and experiences of their newer colleagues.



The induction process can be divided into phases: before-school orientation, beginning-of-the-year orientation, initial assistance and support, and ongoing assistance and support.

Several excellent guidebooks provide resource material on organizing a developmental school-based program. One is *Professional Beginnings*, published by the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario in 2002.

Specific components that form the foundation of exemplary programs emerge from the guiding principles and an understanding of new teacher development.

An effective induction experience:

- provides initial school and classroom orientation
- benefits from ongoing, school-based peer support
- provides orientation to the school board
- includes a mentoring component
- provides resources, time and support structures
- offers professional learning opportunities for both new teachers and mentors
- demonstrates administrative support, understanding and commitment
- creates opportunities for reflection and self-assessment
- focuses on new teacher concerns as well as system priorities
- is standards-based.

## What new teachers need

For the *Transition to Teaching* study, the College mailed questionnaires to 2,200 first-year teachers in March and April of 2002. Of the 550 who responded, 96 per cent had teaching positions. Only 53 per cent reported some level of satisfaction with their orientation. Less than half reported that their classroom resources and board in-service professional learning were satisfactory. Of the one-in-five who reported that they had received formal or informal mentoring, only half said the experience was satisfactory or somewhat satisfactory.

The survey asked new teachers to identify their top professional development priorities in terms of advancing their confidence, competence and professionalism. The teachers said their first priority was mentoring. They identified the benefits of mentoring as collaboration, feedback, observation and sharing with experienced colleagues. They also needed constructive feedback and support from principals and vice-principals and the opportunity to network with other new teachers.

Their second priority was more opportunities to broaden their teaching practice and instructional planning. Gaining experience in classroom management and meeting the diverse needs of students was high on their list of classroom concerns.

Their third priority included learning more about assessment and reporting to parents. New teachers who were coping with combined grades or special education assignments or teaching grades with provincial testing said they were inadequately prepared for these positions. They felt unable to teach the new curriculum.

The first-year teachers also highlighted the importance of recognition and support from colleagues, administration and parents. They need to feel valued for the difficult job they are doing.

The findings from this survey reflect the literature on new teacher needs and concerns. (See for example, Danielson 1999; Hargreaves and Fullan, 1999; Huling, 2001; Paquay et al, 1996; Perrenoud, 2001; Veenman, 1984).

The new teachers who attended the consultations, when asked what supports would be helpful, asked for mentoring support. They also wanted more formal orientation, help with classroom resources and more opportunities for professional learning. Federation representatives characterized it as a shift to a “culture of support.”



New teachers would benefit from additional learning experiences in:

- mentoring
- assessment, evaluation and reporting to parents
- teaching practices that respond to the diversity of learners
- creating a positive learning environment
- classroom management
- curriculum planning
- technology.

New teachers would also benefit from more formal recognition, support and being valued as a teacher.

Currently, experienced teachers who would like to mentor new colleagues face challenges such as lack of time and resources.

In September 2001, educators from across Ontario gathered at the College to consider the report of the Minister's Ontario Teacher Supply and Demand Working Group. The report of their discussions described the issue: "Heavy teaching schedules, administrative and teaching related commitments discourage many teachers from taking on associate teacher roles and leave little time for mentors and new teachers alike to engage in a successful mentoring process."

Participants in the consultation suggested that resources include release time for planning, team teaching, observing practice and feedback; professional learning opportunities that support mentoring; compensation for mentors and intensive summer induction programs.

Despite the difficulties inherent in setting up and sustaining mentoring relationships, new and experienced teachers alike advocate support for mentoring.

**experienced teachers who would like to mentor new colleagues face challenges such as lack of time and resources.**



## Mentoring a priority for new teachers

The College's consultation and *Transition to Teaching* study confirmed the findings of numerous researchers – mentoring is a priority for new teachers. Yet for 2001 and 2002 teacher education graduates, fewer than 20 per cent were in a mentoring program.

The involvement of a mentor is the most powerful and cost-effective intervention in an induction program. The roles, knowledge base and skills associated with mentoring are documented in an array of program resources and research studies. (See, for example, Janus, 1996; Gold, 1996; Ganser, 1999; Robbins, 1999; Huling-Austin, 1990; Little, 1990). These roles can range from an informal buddy who offers moral and emotional support to a trained advisor who provides skillful coaching, feedback and assessment related to teaching practice.

During the consultation, new teachers and board representatives alike emphasized the importance of non-evaluative, voluntary mentoring. They also talked of the need for flexibility, particularly so that teachers beginning their careers in supply or occasional positions can participate. New teachers, in describing their positive experiences, often mentioned formal or informal one-on-one support from another teacher who provided advice, observation, feedback and support.

The mentor supports, guides, advises, reflects, solves problems and gives feedback. This support remains separate from the evaluation process. Mentors are also information-brokers, role models, confidantes and friends. Mentoring goes well beyond helping the new teachers “make it through to June” of their first year.

The attitudes and skills that mentors bring to the partnership and their willingness to add to these skills are essential to productive mentoring. Thoughtful in-service makes it possible for the new teacher-mentor team to experience professional growth in a mutually beneficial relationship that involves support and challenge.

Mentors must be selected carefully, according to specific criteria. Whether mentors apply for the role or are invited to take on this leadership opportunity, their participation must be voluntary. An effective mentor has strong interpersonal skills, credibility in the school and school board, a demonstrated openness to learning, respect for multiple perspectives, a commitment to supporting and nurturing a new teacher, collaborative and co-operative skills and excellent classroom practice.

Mentoring involves a unique skill set that can be acquired through professional learning. Professional learning for mentors is most effective if it is ongoing and evolves as the partnership develops. The role is too complex for one-time training. Mentors should have regular opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in:

- adult learning and development
- the mentoring role
- instructional strategies
- needs of new teachers
- reflective practice
- communication skills
- observation strategies
- stages of learning to teach
- coaching and conferencing.

## Framework for an induction program

The vision of teaching made visible in the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*, *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and the *Professional Learning Framework* is the foundation for any induction program.

### The new teacher

For the purposes of the induction program, a new teacher is defined as one newly certified in Ontario, that is, one who has joined the Ontario College of Teachers within the last three years.

## Induction program elements

The College sees these elements as essential to an effective two-year induction program:

- goals
- clearly defined links to professional and ethical standards
- orientation
- support
- mentoring
- professional learning
- recognition
- release time
- evaluation.

Each board and school, with the support and participation of resource staff, new teachers, administrators, and members from faculties of education and teacher federations, will design the details of the program so that it meets their needs.

### 1. Goals

The College believes that the induction program must have the following goals:

- improve student learning
- attract and retain new teachers
- help new teachers improve their teaching practice
- integrate new teachers into the culture of their school
- provide professional development opportunities
- contribute to a collaborative school environment
- demonstrate to the public that new teachers have the skills and support they need to be effective teachers.

Teachers in each board may want to add to this set of goals to reflect their own circumstances.

### 2. Clear links to professional and ethical standards

A firm belief in the power of the classroom teacher to affect student learning is at the heart of an effective induction program. Improving the quality of student learning is ultimately the most important outcome.

**A firm belief in the power of the classroom teacher to affect student learning is at the heart of an effective induction program.**



When new teachers receive support that is grounded in the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and in a clearly articulated vision of successful teaching, improving student learning is an achievable goal.

The College standards require teachers to base their practice on:

- **commitment to students and student learning**  
Teachers are dedicated to engaging and supporting student learning. They treat students equitably and with respect. They encourage students to grow as individuals and as contributing members of society. They assist students to become lifelong learners.
- **professional knowledge**  
Teachers know the curriculum, the subject matter, the student and teaching practice. They know education-related legislation, methods of communication and ways to teach in a changing world.
- **teaching practice**  
Teachers apply professional knowledge and understanding of the student, curriculum, teaching and the changing context of the learning environment to promote student learning. They conduct ongoing assessment and evaluation of student progress. They modify and refine teaching practice through continuous reflection.
- **leadership and community**  
Teachers are educational leaders who create and sustain learning communities in their classrooms, in their schools and in their profession. They collaborate with their colleagues and other professionals, with parents and with other members of the community to enhance school programs and student learning.
- **ongoing professional learning**  
Teachers are learners who acknowledge the interdependence of teacher learning and student learning. They engage in a continuum of professional growth to improve their practice.

Teachers occupy a position of trust and influence. Ethical standards of the College require that teachers:

- maintain professional relationships with students
- recognize and respect the privileged nature of the relationship
- demonstrate impartial and consistent respect for all students as individuals with distinctive and ongoing learning needs and capacities
- respect confidential information
- model respect for human dignity, spiritual values, cultural values, freedom, social justice, democracy and the environment
- work to create a professional environment that supports the social, physical, intellectual, spiritual, cultural, moral and emotional development of students
- base relationships with parents or guardians in their role as partners in the education of students on respect, trust and communication
- act with integrity, honesty, fairness and dignity
- advise when policies or practices exist that should be reviewed or revised
- comply with the laws and regulations.

The induction program must have clear links to these standards.

### 3. Orientation

#### **“Concrete support, information, policies.”**

– *priority for first-year teachers,  
Transition to Teaching*

The College recommends in the first year a structured orientation for new teachers, before school begins, to consist of meetings at the board and at the school level, handbooks and other written documents and opportunities for discussion with colleagues.

New teachers should attend a session organized by their school board. There, board officials and other education partners will welcome the new teachers and pass on information about the board. This could include information on the board’s mission, priorities, policies, structure, programs, professional development program and culture.

New teachers should also participate in an orientation session at their school. In addition to learning about their school culture, policies, procedures, routines, mission, schedules and physical plant, they will meet the other teachers and staff.

These sessions provide the new teachers with opportunities to meet other new teachers and to either meet or choose their mentor.

To accommodate new teachers hired after the school year begins, the board and the school should run the orientation sessions a second time and more often if needed. Orientation materials should remain available in the schools for those new teachers hired as occasionals.

#### 4. Support

##### “Support from administration.”

– *priority for first-year teachers,  
Transition to Teaching*

The College recommends that the induction program include supports in the school for the new teachers. The supports, which will vary from school to school, can become part of the school improvement plan.

Administrators should make sure new teachers have the curriculum resources they need and that they are in contact with colleagues in a variety of networks, whether they are grade or subject specific. The need for an adequate resource base for new teachers is particularly acute in the French-language system.

Collaborative planning and teaching can also ease the isolation many new teachers experience.

Administrators should make every effort to give new teachers appropriate teaching and classroom assignments. This means, where possible, not assigning new teachers to portable classrooms, combined grades, special education assignments or grades involved with EQAO testing. Administrators can also offer support by not overloading the new teacher with extracurricular activities.

**The need for an adequate resource base for new teachers is particularly acute in the French-language system.**

**Federations and boards already partner in providing good structured orientation sessions, although it is often difficult to include those new teachers hired late in the year or in occasional positions. New teachers described the challenges of not knowing the “unwritten rules” or where to find resources and not being sure of the administrative requirements of the school.**

*from the 2003 consultation*



In areas where the schools are small, as in Northern, rural or French-language boards, it may be that new teachers have to take on the more challenging assignments. In that case, boards and schools should make every effort to see that the new teachers have the resources they need to support them.

Administrators can give new teachers early information about the timelines and procedures for assessment and evaluation of the teachers themselves and of their students. Regular meetings with administrators alleviate stress and provide practical information to facilitate teacher and student assessment.

Administrators may need some additional support and resources, particularly as the induction program gets started.

## 5. Mentoring

### **“Constructive feedback from an expert teacher.”**

*– priority for first-year teachers,  
Transition to Teaching*

The College strongly recommends a mentoring program in which experienced teachers team up with new teachers.

The College sees the role of a mentor as non-evaluative and voluntary. The mentor is to be coach, information provider, advisor, role model and support. A mentor must have qualities that go beyond those of an exemplary teacher. The mentor should have:

- credibility within the school and board
- strong interpersonal skills
- commitment to the professional growth of new teachers
- excellent classroom practice
- commitment to ongoing professional learning.

**New teachers praised the school supports they did receive, including the support from principals, teachers, other school staff and board-wide staff. They also described their struggles with challenging assignments, lack of classroom resources, a climate of low morale and job uncertainty. Board representatives outlined the hiring realities of smaller schools and schools with a high percentage of new teachers.**

*from the 2003 consultation*

Partnerships could be based on common grade levels or subject areas, classroom proximity, personal compatibility or other criteria. New teachers and mentors could select each other after getting acquainted in an orientation setting. Although teams will usually be in the same school, distance partnerships can also work well using e-mail and web sites to communicate. And, as new teachers suggested during the consultation, it is also possible that in some circumstances a recently retired teacher may be an appropriate mentor.

The College believes that school boards and federations should collaborate on developing the criteria for selecting mentors.

The mentor and new teacher, as a team, will assess the new teacher’s needs, set out goals and develop an action plan. A team might choose to work on:

- communicating with parents
- using the ethical standards to help shape relationships with students
- classroom management
- teaching strategies
- areas for professional learning
- assessing students
- planning curriculum
- using technology
- meeting a range of diverse needs of students.

**New teachers asked for mentoring support. Like the board representatives, they emphasized the importance of a non-evaluative and voluntary relationship built on trust and the need for flexibility.**

*from the 2003 consultation*

The College recommends that the work of the team involve a continual cycle of classroom observation, feedback, reflection and action. As the new teacher gains experience, the team will review and refine its goals. In its second year, the team could add an action research project or devise other ways of working that will enhance the new teacher’s practice.

The College recommends that over the course of two years, the mentor-new teacher team receive release time or be compensated for working together outside of the school year or day. This will allow them to have the time to get the full benefit from the mentoring relationship.

## 6. Professional learning

### “PD days with other teachers in my area of specialty.”

– *priority for first-year teachers,  
Transition to Teaching*

As part of the induction program, both mentors and new teachers will be provided with professional development opportunities.

The College recommends that mentors receive training prior to beginning the role on topics such as:

- adult learning
- mentoring roles
- needs of beginning teachers
- communication skills
- skills of reflective practice
- coaching strategies including observation and conferencing.

The College also recommends that new teachers, in consultation with their mentors, participate in professional learning opportunities that will help them improve their teaching practice. The per capita grant of \$4,000 for each new teacher should include a designated allotment for professional development.

While the first year will have a more formal structure, the second induction year should provide greater opportunities for self-directed, job-embedded professional learning. These could include action research projects, web-based support groups, Additional Qualification courses, curriculum unit planning and a variety of other professional learning activities.

Participants supported the need for professional development opportunities for both new teachers and mentors. New teachers wanted to job shadow master teachers and meet with other teachers to reflect on their teaching practice.

*from the 2003 consultation*

The College believes that school boards and federations should collaborate on developing the criteria for selecting mentors.



## 7. Release time

**“More time to reflect upon teaching practices and time to develop quality programs.”**

– *priority for first-year teachers, Transition to Teaching*

Both mentors and new teachers must have paid time to participate in the program. The College recommends that mentors get time for training. The teacher-mentor team would get time (up to eight days) for their ongoing mentoring activities and also time (up to four days) for professional development opportunities.

Participants were unanimous in supporting the notion of release time for mentoring.  
*from the 2003 consultation*

How boards structure the paid time will vary. They may include, for example, some combination of release time, Saturdays, paid time after work or pay during holidays.

## 8. Recognition

**“A more positive public perception.”**

– *priority for first-year teachers, Transition to Teaching*

The College recommends that planned recognition be part of the induction process.

Release time, resources and professional learning are part of the recognition for both mentor and new teacher. But the induction should also include more explicit and formal recognition. This could take the form of congratulatory letters from the principal or board, a certificate of participation, or a public, social occasion that celebrates the mentors and new teachers.

The College would recognize participation in the program if the board applied for Professional Learning Program credits.

New teachers described feeling a lack of respect for teachers from students, parents and the public. They welcomed the notion of recognition.  
*from the 2003 consultation*

## 9. Evaluation

The College recommends that the induction program, not the participants, be evaluated at the end of each year, both at the local and system level. This evaluation should draw on the reflections of both mentors and new teachers.

The board would report on how the induction program budget is spent and how many teachers participate, both as new teachers and as mentors. The board could also develop a qualitative tool, perhaps a written survey, focus groups or exit interviews, to evaluate the program and make improvements.

Participants supported evaluation of the program and asked that the College define indicators of success.  
*from the 2003 consultation*

The College will continue its *Transition to Teaching* survey to see how many new teachers take part in induction programs

and the level of their satisfaction. In addition, boards will need to keep track of how many new teachers decide not to continue in the profession.

### Estimated cost for two-year induction program

Mentor training	\$4,000,000
Time for mentoring activities	24,000,000
Board administration and support	3,000,000
Professional development for new teachers	9,000,000
<b>Total cost of two-year induction program</b>	<b>\$40,000,000</b>

This is based on 10,000 new teachers in 72 school boards. The cost of induction is \$4,000 per new teacher over two years. The estimated average cost of recruiting a new teacher is \$4,400.



## Conclusion

The Ontario College of Teachers knows that we as a profession are recruiting an outstanding generation of committed new teachers to our classrooms. We also recognize that the profession needs to foster the professional growth of individual teachers, especially those new to the profession.

An effective induction program will help teachers make the transition from their pre-service education to the classroom. By supporting teachers in their new environment and helping them enhance their knowledge and skills, we help them find satisfaction in teaching and more of them will stay in the profession. By helping them improve their teaching practice, we improve student learning.

The College recommends that:

- the provincial government move in a timely way to require all school boards to implement two-year induction programs
- the school funding formula be amended to provide new, sufficient, targeted and sustained funding for these programs
- school boards be required to report annually on the implementation of their program, but that boards have discretion in how they structure their program
- induction programs in all boards include these essential elements: goals, clear links to professional standards, orientation, support, voluntary mentoring, professional learning, recognition, release time and evaluation
- the role of mentor be voluntary.

**An effective induction program will help teachers make the transition from their pre-service education to the classroom.**



## Appendix 1

### The consultation process

The Ontario College of Teachers prepared a consultation paper, *New Teacher Induction: Growing Into the Profession*, in English and French. In the paper, the College proposed an induction program framework and components based on what the research had shown to be effective. The consultation paper also included a proposed budget model.

The College invited new teachers, board representatives and provincial stakeholders to provide input on the paper during structured and facilitated consultation sessions. The paper, along with an interactive web feedback form, was also posted on the College web site on April 11, 2003. Members of the College and the broader public were invited to review the paper and complete an online feedback form or submit written comments via e-mail or mail.

The paper, along with the feedback form, was also mailed to the deans of all of Ontario's faculties of education, inviting their feedback.

Ministry of Education staff were thoroughly briefed on both the paper and the consultation process.

The purpose of the consultation was to gather data from multiple perspectives. The face-to-face consultation was conducted in two phases.

In the first phase, the College conducted focus groups with new teachers across the province. Focus groups were also held with board representatives, including directors of education, supervisory officers, principals and vice-principals, staff development officers, program consultants, teacher-mentors, school council chairs and trustees.

Ten focus group sessions were held, seven English-language sessions and three French-language sessions. More than 100 new teachers and almost 100 board representatives, representing more than one-third of school boards in the province, participated in the consultation sessions.

During these sessions, participants received a brief overview of the background and context for the initiative and then had an opportunity to provide input. College staff facilitated the sessions and led participants through a series of open-ended questions.

In the second phase, provincial stakeholders were invited to attend a feedback session at the College. Supervisory officers, principals, deans, trustees, parents, federation and Ministry of Education representatives participated in the consultation.

In the session for provincial stakeholders, participants were provided with an overview of the findings to date and then given the opportunity to provide input.

Where participants gave consent, sessions were audiotaped. A recorder also took notes during the sessions. Facilitators also publicly recorded information on flip charts during the sessions. Professional staff reviewed and analysed all data for content to identify emergent themes and issues of concern.

### Overview of major findings

- There is broad support for an induction program from new teachers, board representatives and provincial stakeholders.
- Hiring realities make orientation at the school and board level a challenge to organize.
- New teachers found school resources lacking and some teaching assignments unreasonable.
- A variety of approaches to mentoring exist.
- New teachers highlighted a need for ongoing opportunities for professional learning.
- An induction program needs to be firm on goals and program components but flexible in structure and operation.
- Creating release time for mentoring is necessary and may be difficult to carry out.
- Teachers believe respect for the teaching profession needs to be enhanced.
- Research and review processes regarding the impact of induction programs need to be incorporated into the induction framework.
- The induction framework must be flexible so that it can be adapted to meet local needs.

There is broad support for an induction program from new teachers, board representatives and provincial stakeholders.



