

Teacher Supply and Demand Report on the Consultation

Introduction

On May 4, 2001, the Council of the Ontario College of Teachers met to discuss and consider issues related to the themes explored in the 1999 *Minister's Task Force on Recruitment and Renewal*. As a result of that meeting, the Council directed the Registrar to consult with interested stakeholders to discuss these themes further and to report back to Council. The consultation session was held on September 25, 2001.

The consultation was designed to meet two objectives:

- To assist the College in developing advice to the Minister of Education to support the government's key role of ensuring that there is an adequate supply of qualified and certified teachers for Ontario classrooms and for leadership positions; and
- To identify concrete and achievable activities that the College and other partners can undertake collaboratively to ensure that the goal of having a qualified and certified teacher in every classroom and in every leadership position can be met.

Background

Recent studies by the Ontario College of Teachers indicate that there are shortages of qualified teachers in Ontario. While some progress has been made over the last few years, increasing the overall supply of teachers does not necessarily address all of the shortages. The College projects that there will continue to be shortages over the next several years by subject, geographic region, specialist and leadership qualifications, and language of instruction.

Reducing training and certification standards to meet projected shortages is a retrograde step. The College believes that the maintenance of current standards is an important consideration when designing strategies to address this issue.

The College participated on the Minister's Task Force on Teacher Recruitment and Renewal in 1999. This Task Force identified four general themes related to teacher supply and demand on which it made recommendations:

- Teacher Education
- Incentives and Flexible Work Arrangements
- Information and Data Management
- Communications and Outreach

Two Ministry-sponsored stakeholder initiatives flowed from this Task Force. The Ministry of Education Teacher Supply and Demand Working Group reported this spring on a model for projecting teacher requirements over ten years. The Ministry recently invited stakeholders to participate in a Teacher Recruitment Working Group. This group began its work August 2001 with a focus on policy options for recruitment and retention of teachers.

In addition, the College is engaged in a longitudinal study of the transition to teaching of 2001 and 2002 teacher education graduates. With Ministry of Education support, this study will track the retention and employment of the graduates over five years.

Organization of the Consultation

The consultation session was held on September 25, 2001 in the Council Chambers of the Ontario College of Teachers. A discussion paper reflecting the Council's consideration of the issues in the Ministry of Education Task Force Report had been provided to participants in advance. The discussion paper outlined issues related to the four themes that were identified in the Ministry Task Force Report and listed the following questions for input:

Theme 1: Teacher Education

- ✓ How can the College support the development of programs and services that meet both the pre-service and in-service needs of teachers?
- ✓ Which of the following strategies would be most useful in addressing the teacher supply and retention issue:
 - the development of part-time teacher education programs;
 - the development of specialized faculties of education;
 - creation and funding for additional spaces in faculties of education;
 - more and varied language and orientation programs for teachers whose training was not in English or French;
 - mentoring programs for teachers new to the profession; or
 - distance learning for teacher education.
- ✓ How can we target new and existing spaces in teacher education programs to meet specific areas of shortage and to ensure that there are qualified applicants to fill them?

Theme 2: Incentives and Flexible Work Arrangements

- ✓ Which of the following strategies would be most useful in addressing the teacher supply and demand issue:
 - mentoring programs for new teachers;
 - incentives to attract and retain teachers in subject and geographic areas of need;
 - additional re-employment of retired teachers;
 - financial incentives for teachers to take additional qualifications courses; or
 - providing scholarships and bursaries for successful completion of pre-service and in-service programs.
- ✓ What organizations need to be engaged in implementing these strategies?
- ✓ What role should the College play in supporting the implementation of these strategies?

Theme 3: Information and Data Management

- ✓ How important is it to establish a comprehensive, cooperative information and management database to facilitate the management of teacher supply and demand issues in Ontario?
 - What considerations should the College take into account when working with relevant stakeholders to develop such a database?
 - How can the College, other stakeholders and the Ministry best build on the work done to date at the Ministry and through the Working Group referred to above?
 - What considerations should be taken into account regarding the use of the database?
 - What issues are of highest priority for research once the database is established?
 - (Some issues that have been suggested by the Council include:
 - the importance of induction and mentoring in the early years on the retention levels in teaching;
 - analysis of the decline in the numbers of males entering the teaching profession;
 - the impact of compensation on teacher recruitment and retention;
 - quantifying the retention patterns in the profession;
 - identifying the factors that influence the length of time that a teacher spends in the profession; and
 - the provision of forecasting information to school boards.)
 - How should the project be funded?
 - How should the database be managed to ensure that the data is comprehensive, open, accessible and used responsibly?

Theme 4: Communications and Outreach

- ✓ What additional communication and outreach strategies should the College of Teachers consider implementing to ensure that Ontario has an adequate supply of qualified teachers?
- ✓ What communications strategies has your organization implemented? Are others being developed?
- ✓ How can the College support the communications strategies implemented or being developed by education stakeholders to recruit and retain teachers?
- ✓ What initiatives can be undertaken to support, strengthen and co-ordinate school boards' recruitment strategies?

The agenda, along with the discussion paper, was sent out to various invitees, attached hereto as Appendix A. In addition, packages were sent to the Executive Committee and members of the Ministry Task Force for their information.

In order to help focus the discussion, Frank McIntyre presented an overview of the College research on this topic.

Since the resources of all educational organizations are limited, the participants were asked which of the themes identified above should receive the highest priority for action by the College and why.

A total of 24 invitees participated in the consultation session. A report of their discussions is summarized below.

Summary of Discussions

Teacher Education

1. Flexible new teacher education program delivery

The consultation participants identified the importance of adding further teacher education capacity beyond the present levels in the province. Without drawing resources from traditional programs or competing for teacher education candidates whose interests and needs are well met through existing programs, new initiatives should introduce important new flexibility in program delivery. These new initiatives should meet particular regional needs, draw additional French language populations into teaching, address persistent subject shortages and encourage teaching as second career options.

Additional pathways to teaching can be creative means of enlarging the applicant base for teacher education programs. Among the approaches that garnered the broadest support are the following:

- *Part-time teacher education programs* – to provide greater flexibility in the delivery of the academic, professional and teaching practicum requirements of Ontario teacher education programs in formats, sequencing and time schedules that can be balanced with substantial ongoing employment and/or family commitments of individuals who might not otherwise be able to pursue teaching careers. Part-time programs must fully meet the standards and be equivalent to full-time one-year teacher education programs;
- *Teacher education partnerships of education faculties and school boards* – to overcome space and resource constraints for faculties that are otherwise limited in their capability for new or expanded teacher education programs; to extend the accessibility of teacher education to individuals who may be school board employees such as educational assistants who may be encouraged to make the leap to teaching through such partnerships with their employers; and to add to the geographic reach of program availability;
- *Satellite campuses* – to meet regional needs for accessibility to teacher education and to reinforce the likelihood that new graduates will pursue teaching employment in their home regions;

- *Concurrent programs* – to expand the base of undergraduate students who explore teacher education as an option, especially for students in subject shortage fields such as mathematics, computer studies, physics and chemistry, as well as for French language program undergraduates generally; and
- *Distance education components* – where it is possible to deliver a component of the teacher education program without compromising the content of the program or the need for in-classroom experience, introduce distance education courses to permit some students to complete components of their programs that would otherwise not be readily available to them for reasons of geography or scheduling.

These new initiatives have the potential to draw more individuals into teaching with interests and abilities related to persistent shortage fields, such as French language teaching, mathematics, sciences, technology, especially if designed for and combined with recruitment efforts directed to appropriate populations on a regional, subject or and/or language basis.

2. Investing in new teachers

The guidance, supervision and support of highly experienced and successful teachers are essential for the professional formation of new teachers. Associate teacher shortages are a barrier to even the current higher levels of teacher candidates across the province. Newly appointed teacher education graduates need orientation and induction experiences as they prepare for their first teaching assignments. Over the first three-to-five years of teaching, the new teacher requires consistent and meaningful support from more experienced colleagues.

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 meaningfully in a successful mentoring process. Similarly, incentives and resources to support practicum supervision, induction and mentoring are scarce. Programs designed to provide teacher time, recognition, professional development and curriculum resources in support of the transfer of teaching practice knowledge from an experienced to a new generation of teachers is critical to the success of new teachers and their long term retention in the profession. At the same time, properly supported practicum supervision and mentoring opportunities for experienced teachers can sustain their professional satisfaction and continuation in teaching.

The resources suggested by the participants included the following for Associate Teachers and new teacher mentors:

- Release time for curriculum, instruction, student evaluation and other planning, team teaching and observed practice, and professional feedback;
- Professional learning opportunities that support mentoring and practicum supervision and support and recognition for such studies;
- Curriculum resources to expand practical professional formation opportunities; and

- Compensation to Associate Teachers and mentors.

In addition, the following resources were suggested for support of new teachers:

- Intensive summer induction programs that provide opportunities for guided planning prior to school opening and orientation to the first-time teachers' new school board and some of their new school colleagues;
- Payment for these summer induction experiences as a form of incentive or “golden welcome” to reinforce the welcoming of valued new colleagues;
- Release time to spend with mentors on planning and feedback, as well as for observation and team teaching with mentors and other experienced teachers; and
- Retired teacher re-employment as mentors and to provide release time for vice-principals and principals for mentoring and other school leadership roles.

Incentives and Flexible Arrangements

3. Teacher Education Incentives

Increased participation in teacher education requires incentives directed to undergraduates and others. Incentives are a very concrete expression of welcome and valuing around which comprehensive recruitment initiatives can be packaged. The high cost of university education today results in heavy student loan burdens for many students. The cost of an additional year of study to pursue a teaching career may be daunting – and is often viewed that way especially by the person about to graduate with French language ability and/or in mathematics, physics, chemistry, computer studies or other programs that open up higher paying careers in business, industry or government.

There was considerable support in the consultation for these measures:

- Student loan forgiveness programs – for all new candidates or, for a defined period of time, for candidates who enroll in targeted teacher shortage fields;
- Bursary or scholarship programs for teacher education; and
- Signing bonuses – as welcome incentives to new teachers visibly highlighting the value placed on new entrants to the profession.

These measures should be based on research on what is effective in other jurisdictions and focus group testing to quickly identify what new measures would be most effective in the Ontario context. Multi-year loan forgiveness programs and “signing/staying” bonuses should be considered to support long term commitment to the field.

4. Teacher Financial Incentives

Individual dedication to teaching, personal commitment to the process of helping a new generation develop and acquire skills and knowledge, the joy and satisfaction in seeing one's students gain new understanding – these are the sources of the energy and drive that underlie effective career-long teaching professionals. At the same time, public recognition and valuing of the contributions as a professional is symbolized by the compensation, benefits and working conditions provided for their employment. The

consultation participants in large measure expressed concern that teacher salaries and workload have lost ground to other professions and that this contributes to a lessening of interest in teaching and, again, especially among those who possess highly compensable skills in mathematics, computer studies, technology, sciences and bilingualism.

Among the prominent financial recognition suggestions were the following:

- Increased starting salaries for new teachers;
- Greater experience recognition for salary grid placement, especially in such fields as Technological Studies;
- Improved supplementary maternity and parental leave programs and flexible work arrangements to recognise and support younger women in entry to, return to, and continuation in the profession;
- Compression of salary grids to allow more competitive progression to maximum salaries; at the same time, recognition of the value of experience in classroom teaching through introducing some additional compensation beyond grid maximums at 15, 20 and/or 25 year intervals;
- Subsidized professional learning similar to that available to employees from most business, industry and government employers; and
- Professional learning program offerings designed to support valued roles of associate teachers, mentors, and for new teachers, new vice-principals and new principals.

Information and data management

5. The need for complete, open, accessible and transparent data

All participants acknowledged the need for more complete, reliable data related to the management of teacher supply and demand. No one organization in Ontario has access to all of the relevant data that is required. For the first time a significant amount of data relevant to this topic is available through the Ontario College of Teachers' register and this data was used to prepare the College's recent forecast studies. While the College can contribute a great deal of data to an information and data management project, the Ministry of Education, the Ontario Teachers' Federation and its affiliates, schools boards, faculties of education, and the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board also have additional information which is essential for such a project to be comprehensive and useful. All partners have an interest in having access to the data for planning purposes.

Either one database can be established or information from the relevant databases can be shared. Regardless of what method is used to compile the data, participants unanimously agree that protecting the privacy of individual teachers is a principle that must be adhered to without exception whenever data is shared.

In addition, all participants agreed that it is essential that those who contribute data for a common purpose receive reports back on relevant information that is collected. One example that was given related to school boards. The participant said that school boards were often requested to provide data to various organizations but sometimes didn't

receive information back on how this data was used or analyzed. They would welcome reports back on how to adjust strategies to better meet their needs for recruiting and retaining teachers. Therefore, the request for and use of data should be reciprocal.

The participants recognized that the development of a comprehensive, open and transparent database or the development of appropriate reciprocal arrangements for the collection and sharing of data is a large, costly undertaking. They would support approaching the Ministry of Education to fund the development of the relevant protocols or database.

6. What we need to know

Once a comprehensive database has been established or the protocols have been developed to share relevant data, the data can be used, for example, for forecasting, developing recruitment strategies, researching career patterns, tracking entrance, mobility and exits of teachers from Ontario's system, and so forth.

The participants agreed that it would be helpful to undertake research in the following areas:

- *Incentives to enter the profession* – research should be undertaken at the university level to determine what incentives or conditions would encourage graduates to enter teacher education programs;
- *Survey of retired teachers* – many teachers have retired on the 85 factor and could continue to contribute to the profession under the conditions that are permitted by the Teachers' Pension Plan. Surveys should be undertaken to determine what incentives or conditions would encourage retired teachers to work for the period of time that they are permitted to under the pension plan provisions. For example, is it possible to encourage a retired physics teacher to teach one OAC physics course? Encouraging retired teachers to teach for limited periods of time could allow boards to fill highly specialized vacancies;
- *Occasional teacher pool* – many teachers have been hired into full time positions from the occasional pool. How large is the current occasional teacher pool? Some of these occasional teachers are mothers with young children. Has the occasional teacher pool been reduced because of a change in the demographic profile of individuals wanting to supply teach? To what extent are unqualified individuals being hired as occasional teachers?;
- *Immigrant teacher pool* – immigrants with teaching qualifications are a source of teachers in Ontario. They provide a rich and varied resource to Ontario's teaching pool. The participants suggested that research be undertaken to determine whether all immigrants with teaching certification from their country of origin take steps to become qualified in Canada/Ontario. Research should be undertaken to determine what additional supports should be put in place to enable these individuals to become qualified and certified to teach in Ontario; and

- *Unqualified individuals* – Participants reported that there is an increasing number of unqualified individuals placed in classrooms. There is an increase in the number of letters of permission and temporary letters of approval granted. No reliable data exists with respect to the number of teachers who are teaching classes outside of the subjects recorded on their certificates. Participants recommended that research be undertaken to determine the extent of this problem so that strategies can be implemented to rectify it.

Communications and Outreach

7. *Valuing our teachers*

In order to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers, teaching must be seen as a valued and important profession and Ontario must be seen as a desirable and supportive place in which to teach. All participants supported initiatives that increase positive messages about the profession and raise its stature.

Participants described many of the initiatives that their organizations were undertaking to support the profession. These include developing mentoring kits for new teachers and their mentors; sharing of courses and teaching techniques on-line; holding teacher appreciation days or weeks; sharing of best practices through booklets and publications of success.

8. *Suggestions for enhancement*

In order to improve communications and outreach to teachers and encourage others to enter the profession, participants suggested that the following strategies be considered:

- *Promotion and recruitment program through web-based tools* – consideration should be given to the creation of a website to post all teaching vacancies. Explore new ways and new language for communicating the excitement of the profession. Young people who will be entering the teaching profession are technologically literate and respond to new media. To communicate with them effectively, we should try to communicate through their preferred communications sources;
- *Encourage business and industry to support teachers* – raising morale in the profession can be accomplished through many vehicles. The support of the business community sends an important message to teachers. Participants commented on how much teachers appreciate recognition that some businesses provide for teachers through promotions and discounts that recognise the work that teachers are doing; and
- *Encourage the government to communicate support for the teaching profession* - the overwhelming consensus of the participants was that the public and teachers perceive that many government announcements and initiatives in education include negative messages about the teaching profession. Future announcements and initiatives should be framed with a view to reflecting the high quality of teaching in

the province and promote teaching as a valued and high stature profession. Efforts in this regard will contribute greatly to teacher morale and reinforce strategies to recruit excellent teacher education candidates in all subject areas.

Conclusion and Recommendations

At Council's request, staff held a consultation with the main education stakeholders on issues related to teacher supply and demand. The consensus of the stakeholders is that the province of Ontario is in the midst of a significant teacher shortage. School boards increasingly experience difficulty in identifying certified teachers with the qualifications required, especially in certain broadly hard-to-staff subjects and assignments. Early and effective action is required.

Staff recommends to the Executive Committee that Council approve the following motion:

THAT Council receive the report of the Teacher Supply and Demand Consultation and asks that:

- The Registrar forward the report to the Ministers of Education and of Training, Colleges and Universities, the Deans of Education and the participant stakeholder groups;
- The College meet with the Minister of Education to review the recommendations contained in the summary of discussion from the Special Meeting of Council held on May 4, 2001 and recommended approaches to the eight areas identified in this report;
- The Registrar co-ordinate a conference(s) with appropriate stakeholders to develop coordinated and collaborative action plans to implement activities from each of the areas identified in the report; and
- The College funding from Ministries for appropriate initiatives in 2002.

FINAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Organization	In Attendance
Ontario Association of School Business Officials	
Ontario Public School Boards' Association	✓
Ontario Parent Council	
Ontario Principals' Council	
Ontario Association of Deans in Education	
Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education	✓
Ontario Catholic Student Council Federation	✓
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation	✓
Institute for Catholic Education	✓
Education Quality & Accountability Office	
Council of Directors of Education	✓
Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association	✓
Teachers' Pension Plan Board	✓
Ontario Teachers' Federation	✓
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario	✓
Independent School Association of Canada	✓
Ontario School Counsellors' Association	✓
Canadian Education Association	
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association	✓
Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario	✓
Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, Inc.	✓
Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association	✓
Ontario Secondary School Students' Association	
Ontario Catholic School Business Officials Association	
Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association	✓
Ministry of Colleges, Universities and Training	✓
Ministry of Education - Elementary/Secondary Business and Finance Division	
Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques	✓
Association des enseignantes et des enseignants	✓
Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario	
Association des conseillères et des conseillers des Écoles publiques de l'Ontario	✓
Parents partenaires en Éducation	✓
Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne	
Association des directions et des directions adjointes	✓
Association des surintendants et des surintendents francophones	
French Language Education & Policy Branch	✓
Total No. of Invitees:	36
	✓ = 24

OBSERVERS:

Chair

Vice-Chair

Registrar

Executive Committee Members = 1

College Professional Staff = 3