



Setting the Standard for Great Teaching
Fixer la norme pour un enseignement de qualité

Memo

Date: December 10, 2020
To: Members of Council
From: Chantal Bélisle, OCT
Deputy Registrar
Subject: Temporary Certificate

The Chair of Council has called a Special Meeting of Council pursuant to s. 3.04 of the College bylaws to discuss the creation of a new Temporary Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

The Ministry of Education, with the support of the Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE) and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE), has requested Council approval for the creation of a Temporary Certificate of Qualification and Registration for Ontario teacher candidates and labour mobility applicants. The Temporary Certificate would be a short-term emergency measure designed to address severe teacher shortages in Ontario's public school system caused by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A supporting briefing note for this request is provided as Attachment 1.

It is therefore recommended:

That Council approve the creation of a new class of emergency one-time and one-year Temporary Certificate of Qualification and Registration in the Teachers' Qualifications Regulation to help address teacher shortages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chantal Bélisle, OCT



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et des enseignants
de l'Ontario

Briefing Note

Temporary Certificate – COVID-19 Emergency Measure

Issue

The Ministry of Education, with the support of the Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE) and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE), has requested Council approval for the creation of a Temporary Certificate of Qualification and Registration for Ontario teacher candidates and labour mobility applicants. The Temporary Certificate would be a short-term emergency measure designed to address severe teacher shortages in Ontario's public school system caused by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused severe teacher shortages in Ontario school boards due to depleted Occasional Teacher availability lists or many OTs declining assignments citing health concerns. For example, one board is facing 40% teacher absenteeism. The shortages are a serious public interest risk as students are not being taught by qualified teachers.

Many school boards have had to resort to hiring unqualified individuals on Letters of Permission (LOP) who have never enrolled in, or completed, an initial teacher education program. These LOP holders are outside of the College's jurisdiction. To help address these shortages, the College

has put out a call to members who are certified, but not currently teaching, to consider a return to the classroom.

Current Certification Routes

The College has two certification routes:

- **General certificate of qualification and registration** - requiring the completion of an initial teacher education program and satisfying academic, professional suitability and math proficiency test requirements.
- **Transitional certificate of qualification and registration** -for those enrolled in an accredited multi-session initial teacher education program, who complete the first session and meet academic, professional suitability and math proficiency test requirements.

The Ministry has communicated to the College that there are insufficient numbers of general and transitional certificate holders who are available to address the critical shortage in Ontario.

Proposed Direction

The Ministry of Education, with the support of OADE and CODE, has requested the support of the College's Council to amend the College's Teachers' Qualifications Regulation (O. Reg. 176/10)

to create a pathway for teacher candidates enrolled in Ontario teacher education programs to help address the teacher shortage on an emergency basis. This pathway would create a Temporary Certificate and allow its holders to gain employment with a school board. Labour mobility applicants on similar temporary certificates could also apply for the Temporary Certificate.

Considerations

In discussions with Ministry staff regarding the proposal, College staff raised concerns, including:

- the Temporary Certificate should not allow teacher candidates without any teacher education foundation or practicum to enter the classroom as it would pose a public interest risk;
- these teacher candidates must be appropriately supervised;
- the pathway should be explicitly tied to a short term emergency measure in the TQR so the program structure as currently accredited should not be impacted; and
- this emergency measure should be temporary and end in one year.

In light of these considerations, the Ministry, in consultation with the College, is proposing a Temporary Certificate.

Temporary Certificate

The Temporary Certificate will have the following requirements:

- Open to teacher candidates who are have made successful progress towards completing an accredited Ontario teacher education program before December 31, 2021 (generally, candidates in the 3rd and 4th semester).

This requirement ensures that teacher candidates will have completed some foundational program coursework.

- Open only to those teacher candidates who have successfully completed a portion of their practicum. Many of these teacher candidates will already be in the school system completing practicum requirements.
- Faculties of education will have the authority to determine which teacher candidates they report to the College as having successfully completed the necessary program and practicum requirements.
- Temporary Certificate holders will have the continued support of advisors from the Faculty of Education.
- The certificate is meant to be a short term emergency measure and will expire on December 31, 2021. The certificate cannot be extended.
- Teacher candidates who receive the Temporary Certificate are still expected to complete their teacher education programs. The Temporary Certificate can be converted to a general certificate of qualification and registration if all program requirements are completed before December 31, 2021.
- The certificate will reference the holder's area of study in their program.
- The certificate will allow teacher candidates to be hired as OTs on days previously allocated as practicum days by the faculty of education to fulfill the practicum portion of a teacher education program. Faculties and teacher candidates will work together to ensure successful completion of the program;

- The certificate will permit teacher candidates to accept longer term occasional teaching opportunities with the approval of their faculty.
- The certificate is also open to labour mobility candidates who hold a similar temporary certificate in another province or territory.
- Other certification requirements must be met: application documents; fees; academic; professional suitability (incl. criminal record check) and Math Proficiency Test (can have condition to pass test by August 31, 2021).

Other Considerations

Faculties of Education have committed to appropriately supporting their candidates while they are teaching on these certificates and will offer pathways to complete the program.

While on the Temporary Certificate, these teacher candidates would be considered members of the College. These members would be required to adhere to the Standards of Practice and Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession. The College would have jurisdiction to address any conduct by these members in contravention of these standards.

There are approximately 2,000 teacher candidates in a potential pool of applicants for Temporary Certificates. The flexible approach in this proposal allows for placement of these teacher candidates in school boards on an urgent basis and supports staffing stability across the province.

The limited nature of this certificate and the requirement to complete the program for conversion, also ensures that the

programs will not require modification to accommodate the Temporary Certificate.

The provisions in the regulation to allow for the Temporary Certificate will need to be removed to make clear that this is a short-term emergency measure and not a permanent new certificate. The Temporary Certificate will not result in any additional operational costs to the College. The pathway is expected to be effective January 2021.

Although the College requested that Internationally Educated Teacher applicants be included in efforts to address the shortage, they are not included in the proposal.

Recommendation

It is recommended:

That Council approve the creation of a new class of emergency one-time and one-year Temporary Certificate of Qualification and Registration in the Teachers' Qualifications Regulation in order to help address teacher shortages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Link to Strategic Initiatives

This initiative aligns with Council Strategic Priority #1: Manage Risk More Strategically and Council Strategic Priority #3: Improve Stakeholder Engagement.

Next Steps

If Council approves of this direction, corresponding regulatory amendments will be sealed and signed-off by the Chair of Council and the Deputy Registrar. The College will then work with Ministry, OADE and other stakeholders to implement the new certificate.

Prepared by:
Policy and Research Unit

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December 10, 2020