



November 21, 2023

Diana Miles, Chair of Council
Ontario College of Teachers
101 Bloor Street West
Toronto, ON M5S 0A1

Dear Chair Miles and Governing Council:

I have read with interest your new Strategic Plan and was very pleased to see that the College is striving to be recognized for making decisions and processes that are independent of the government. I was also pleased to see that you plan to engage stakeholders in a meaningful and structured manner.

OTF looks forward to informing the important work of the College through meaningful collaboration and consultation. While I understand that OTF and Affiliate staff have worked together productively over the years, there is a concern that the expertise of the Federations is not being maximized by the College.

Council members may not be aware that the Teaching Profession Act makes faculty of education students associate members of the Ontario Teachers' Federation. I believe that if this Council was aware of that connection that Council may have been interested in OTF's collaboration or consultation regarding the new Transitional Teacher Certificate prior to its approval at your special meeting in July. Had OTF or any of the Federations been consulted, we would certainly have emphasized concerns that this new certificate undermines the professionalism of the programs that the College accredits. Is it in the public interest to have teacher candidates who have not completed their programs to be in front of classes of students? While this measure was meant to address daily occasional teacher shortages, what will prevent these certified, yet unqualified individuals from taking full-time positions? Is it in the best interest of the public, or in the interest of the education system, to move so quickly on this significant change without having fulsome discussions with provincial partners?

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While I understand that the Sexual Abuse Prevention Program (SAPP) was legislated by the current government and was not the creation of the College, I would be remiss if I did not remind the Governing Council that the legislative object of the College is "To provide for the ongoing education of members of the College". It is not the mandate of the College to provide ongoing education to members. It has been the position of OTF and our Affiliates that true professional development is driven by the professional needs identified by each member of the profession. In our opinion the SAPP, would have been a more successful program had the Federations been consulted on its development and implementation.

I was disappointed to learn that the College's policy on presentations to the Governing Council effectively ends our ability to communicate directly with the ultimate decision makers of the College. I would ask that the Governing Council consider instituting a policy that would allow the President of OTF to meet with the Council annually in a similar fashion to that proscribed to the Minister of Education in the College of Teachers Act. Of course, the President of OTF would always be open to meeting with the Chair of the College throughout the year as a more collaborative relationship is beneficial for both organizations.

I look forward to your response and I am available to speak with you if you would like to discuss this matter more fully.

Respectfully,



Yves Durocher
President
Ontario Teachers' Federation

YD/JB/lg