

# **REGISTRAR'S REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**December 3-4, 2020**

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## INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to present my final quarterly report to Council for 2020 organized around the College's three current strategic priorities. The report also includes information in response to undertakings noted from the October 2020 Council and a statistical overview of activity since the beginning of the calendar year.

The report begins with additional updates on recent changes in legislation.

### Ontario College of Teachers Act Amendments

- On November 5, 2020, Bill 229, *The Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020* was introduced in the Ontario legislature for first reading. Schedule 33 of the bill proposes amendments to the *Ontario College of Teachers Act* to safeguard students, modernize the College's governance structure and provide for a period of transition.

The College welcomes these changes. The majority of the amendments are consistent with previous recommendations from Council and the independent governance review initiated in 2018. These changes will come into effect after the bill has received royal assent in the legislature and the applicable sections have been proclaimed by government. Additional information on the legislation will be presented to Council during the briefing session on December 3, 2020.

### Regulatory Amendments

- On September 3, 2020, the regulation for Alternative Eligibility Requirements for Therapy or Counselling under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*, was filed as Ontario Regulation 493/20. The regulation addresses alternative eligibility requirements as well as withdrawal of allegation situations. The regulation was reviewed and approved by Council at its June 4, 2020 meeting and will support the Funding for Therapy and Counselling Program Policy approved by Council in March to guide the College's implementation of the program.
- On November 5, 2020, the regulation to define Prescribed Sexual Acts under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996* was filed as Ontario Regulation 615/20.
- Regulation 616/20, Physical or Mental Examinations was filed the same day and grants the Investigation Committee the ability to order medical assessments.
- Amendments were also filed on November 5, 2020 for Regulations 437/97 and 176/10.

Changes to the College's Professional Misconduct regulation (437/97) have been made to help break down barriers for Black, Indigenous and racialized students, and provide all students with the opportunity to succeed by recognizing hateful remarks or behaviour as forms of professional misconduct. The changes are further supported by the College's continuing commitment to inclusion, diversity and addressing systemic racism.

The Teachers' Qualifications regulation (176/10) was amended to include alternate certificates on a member's Certificate of Qualification and Registration. The changes make it possible to list all qualifications of Ontario's technological education teachers on member certificates and on the College's online public register, Find a Teacher. The regulatory amendments, approved by Council, officially recognize the education, work experience and professional competency of Ontario's technological education teachers. They also help to ensure equitable treatment of technological and academic qualifications.

All of the above regulations are now in force.

## **COLLEGE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

### **1. Strengthen transparency and accountability**

*[Costs associated with deliverables under this priority are covered by the Communication Services, External Relations and Information Technology cost centres.]*

- *A Tribunals Book of Authorities* is now available on the College website. This hearings resource contains legislation, case law and the College's professional advisories that are frequently referred to in Discipline or Fitness to Practise Committee hearings.
- In light of the College's decision to presumptively conduct all hearings electronically until at least December 31, 2020, internal and external counsel have been urged to proceed with scheduling e-hearings, particularly in matters that feature a student risk component and those that risk becoming excessively dated.
- The College continues to process new concerns and complaints from members of the public as well as reports from employers while navigating challenges posed by board closures due to COVID-19.

Employers have been advised that the submission of information by electronic means is Intake's preferred method of receiving documents, and employers have abided by this request. This has mitigated concerns with respect to the receipt and processing of physical mail.

Similarly, the College's current closure to in-person hearings, which may well be continued into 2021, should not result in delays in cases that are already dated or those that run the risk of becoming dated if they are not scheduled in a timely fashion. The risk with dated hearings is that participant, victim and witness memories tend to fade over time; participants may become less willing to take part in the hearing; and the evidence, generally speaking, may not be as strong or as complete as it would have been had the hearing taken place earlier.

- Monthly tracking of our *Your College and You* and *The Standard* e-newsletters helps identify topics of interest to readers. Positive open rates for our newsletters indicate that the content is of interest to members, applicants and the public. The average open rate for *Your College and You* was 46 percent in English and 35.8 percent in French in September. For *The Standard*, it was 35 percent in English and 43.8 percent in French.

These metrics are all well above the benchmark average for education based email of 23.4 percent.

Data shows that the most read stories in English in September included information about Find a Teacher and the COVID-19 related resources, specifically Anxiety Canada's back-to-school checklist, and the Ontario Ministry of Education's two resources: a guide to reopening schools and operational guidance in the case of a COVID outbreak at school. The most read stories in French included Find a Teacher, the Bump, Baby and Toddler Expo, and the Ministry's guide to reopening schools.

- Using Google analytics, we noted that 13,132 people viewed the September edition of *Professionally Speaking* online (as of October 8), and that 1,624 had viewed the digital version of *Pour parler profession*. Readers were most interested in the Investigation Committee case study, College news, hearings, the cover story "Supporting Student Success" and Apps Analysis. Readers of *Pour parler profession* were most interested in the Investigation Committee case study, College news, Apps Analysis, Great Teaching and the cover story "Supporting Student Success."
- To make high-priority information accessible, the College posted notices of the Annual Meeting of Members and the development of a new Additional Qualification (AQ) course guideline to address anti-Black racism on our website, and shared posts on social media along with information about College committees and what they do to support the College's mandate.
- We used plain language in an ad we placed in the Parents Engaged in Education monthly newsletter to promote our mandate and resources for parents. We furthered the use of plain language in the welcome letter to new members and in annual membership fee correspondence. We also updated our Essential Advice for the Teaching Profession brochure, providing new teachers with information and advice to inform their teaching practice.
- Information about College scholarships has been updated to add the Brian P. McGowan Scholarship for Resilience, which Council supported at its October meeting. Named for the College's fourth Registrar, the award will make \$1,500 available to a teacher candidate in an Ontario consecutive or concurrent teacher education program who will graduate in 2022. Applications will be assessed on a teacher candidate's demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity, and their tenacity to overcome significant barriers to achieve their academic and social goals to pursue a career in the teaching profession.
- In the December issue of *Professionally Speaking*, the College distributed its latest professional advisory -- *Professional Advisory on Professional Boundaries* -- to our 234,000 members in good standing. The advisory reminds members to respect their professional boundaries in the care of their students at school, at home or wherever learning occurs. The advisory highlights the critical importance of maintaining professional boundaries, providing practical advice to Ontario Certified Teachers at any point in their education careers. Posting the online version of the Professional Boundaries advisory helps to clarify members' professional responsibilities in accordance with professional standards, legislation and the law.

- The September issue of the College magazine's PS Poll highlighted the top eight professional advisories and guidelines that members reference the most in their practice. The same issue included an article about the College's new videoconferencing guidelines, and the re-tooled Great Teaching department showcased members who are putting the advice from the College advisory *Supporting Students' Mental Health* into action.

The September edition also maintained its easy-to-understand writing style with a featured article about "Confronting Inner Conflict" with strategies and professional development resources to help teachers move past biases. It also included information about AQs on teacher leadership, inclusive classrooms, reaching LGBTQ students, and the impact of COVID-19 on teaching requirements and early-career teachers.

- The College issued three news releases in November relating to the introduction of Bill 229, amendments to our professional misconduct regulation to address racism and discrimination, and the addition of technological qualifications to our certificates and public register.
- Staff have been implementing the College's 2020 *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act* (AODA) compliance protocols within 900 English and French documents consisting of AQ course guidelines, AQ surveys and standards-based teacher education resources. Ten training videos and five reference documents have been created to support the implementation of AODA compliance within AQ guidelines and standards-based resources.
- Staff virtually facilitated five presentations regarding the ethical standards and ethical leadership for Principal's Qualification Program (PQP) Part I candidates from the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario and l'Association des directions et des directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes.
- Staff facilitated the public release of the following draft AQ course guidelines for provincial validation:

Schedule A: One-session additional basic qualifications

- Music – Instrumental, Intermediate Division
- Music – Instrumental, Senior Division
- Music – Vocal, Intermediate Division
- Music – Vocal, Senior Division

Schedule B: One-session technological education additional basic qualifications

- Technological Design, Grades 9 and 10
- Technological Design, Grades 11 and 12

Schedule D: Three-session additional qualifications

- Music - Instrumental
- Music - Vocal, Intermediate and Senior
- Music - Vocal, Primary and Junior

Schedule E: One-session Honour Specialist Qualifications

- Music

## 2. Manage risk more strategically

*[Costs associated with deliverables under this priority are covered by the Communication Services, Information Technology, and Investigations and Hearings cost centres.]*

- The College has continually refined its electronic hearings processes and is gradually increasing the volume of hearings, while remaining sensitive to the unique circumstances that the COVID-19 pandemic presents. With the focus on electronic hearings, the College has implemented a few key initiatives to ensure that electronic hearings of the Discipline and Fitness to Practise Committees are conducted fairly and efficiently:
  1. The College has created a permanent Tribunals Technology Specialist position and has filled that position. The Tribunals Technology Specialist provides advanced training and testing with all new hearings participants, and attends all electronic hearings to provide technical support to the panel and participants as needed. In addition to overseeing all technological aspects related to conducting electronic hearings, the Tribunals Technology Specialist also works closely with the Manager, Tribunals to develop mid- and long-term plans for the continued improvement of the College's electronic hearings processes.
  2. Based on feedback received from various hearings participants, including committee members, staff, counsel and independent legal counsel, we are also piloting the use of a new videoconferencing platform that may offer improved stability and functionality for the specific purpose of conducting electronic hearings as efficiently as possible. Hearings have now been piloted using the new platform, and initial feedback is promising. Connectivity issues that disrupt the hearings process appear to be reduced with the new platform and improved "breakout room" functionality allows counsel and panel members to move more seamlessly between private and public sessions. Breakout rooms are an important feature of electronic hearings as they ensure, for example, that confidential panel deliberations are held in a private setting, which cannot be accessed by other hearings participants or by public observers. The Tribunals Unit will continue to monitor this initiative with a view towards longer-term planning.
  3. College staff have also revised processes relating to the swearing in or affirming of witnesses in contested electronic hearings to maintain the integrity of the hearings process. For instance, before a witness testifies in an electronic hearing, the panel Chair will confirm whether anyone else is in the room with the witness (to minimize the risk that a witness may be "coached" while testifying) and will confirm that there are no notes or documents in the witness's possession, to ensure compliance with the rules of evidence. Witnesses are also directed not to personally record any portion of the hearing. Similarly, public observers are required to complete an attendance request form (before they are provided with a link to an electronic hearing), in which they must agree, among other things: to not record any portion of the hearing; to not take any photographs or screenshots of hearing participants, documents or evidence presented during the hearing; to abide by any publication bans ordered; to not disrupt the proceeding in any way; and to not share the access information with anyone. The panel Chair issues a similar direction at the start of

every hearing. Tribunals staff are able to dismiss anyone from an electronic hearing who is disrupting the process or interfering with its integrity. These and other similar process enhancements are implemented on a regular basis with a view to reducing the risk of appeal in the College's discipline hearings, based on issues of procedural fairness.

- The College is currently in the process of reviewing a number of platforms to support the electronic retrieval of meeting agendas and materials by electronic means as well as to support the voting process during Council and committee meetings. The new software requirements will also respond to recent Council member requests to incorporate a real time leader board to track speaking requests. Members will be able to see that a request to be added to the speaker's list has been received and the order in which they will be called upon to speak. The new platform will be implemented to coincide with the our governance reforms.
- The Investigation Unit has added language to its notification letters to members that reflects that accommodations may be required during the pandemic and that accommodation requests will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The Investigations Unit has also amended its notification letters to members offering to assist members who may be having difficulty accessing federation assistance.
- As part of the Ministry of Education's initiatives to enhance sanctions for teachers who engage in racist or other discriminatory behavior, the College is developing a professional advisory on racism for College members. An internal work group of the College has begun initial research of provincial, national and international resources to support the development of the new advisory. The advisory will be shared with a broad cross section of stakeholders for expert and critical feedback during the development phase. The College is reviewing its own disciplinary cases as well as analogous cases from other regulators and other institutions. The advisory will be reinforced with a new Provincial Government Policy/Program Memorandum that will provide guidance in dealing with this behaviour.
- Given its access to the profession and our sensitivity to the challenges experienced by district school boards, the College stepped in to help address the province's teacher shortage in both virtual and physical classrooms. We sent 132,000 emails to three groups of teachers, including: members in Good Standing in non-teaching assignments, retirees and those suspended for non-payment of fees and recent Ontario graduates. The encouragement was simple: "If you want to help and can, here's how: It starts with keeping your license up to date."

More than 1,000 teachers reached out to the College with questions about the status of their license and hundreds voluntarily reinstated their membership. Because the College is committed to the public interest, we encourage having qualified teachers assigned to Ontario classrooms wherever possible and that the use of Letters of Permission or the emergency provisions under the *Education Act* is limited.

Reaching out to our membership also generated national media coverage resulting in more than 120 million views, a record for the College. This was a good opportunity to promote, as part of our work, the College's annual well-regarded Transition to Teaching study reflecting the employment trends of newly certified teachers.



- During the pandemic, staff have navigated between the Accreditation Committee and program providers to support timely and accurate collection of program pivot data to manage risk strategically in the public's interest. This nimbleness reflects a right touch regulatory approach; applying an appropriate amount of expectation for accountability with a lens of what is fair and reasonable.

It has been a consistent message that no application for program change would be required immediately by the College to adjust the delivery of programs of professional education in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Deans of Education were advised back in the Spring that descriptions of how program delivery and practicum adjustments have been made in the short-term would need to be documented and provided at a later date for accreditation accountability. Providers were alerted early on to keep a record of these changes, including such measures that are implemented in terms of technical and pedagogical support for instructors as they have pivoted to online delivery. Similarly, they were told to make note of any content shifts to bolster how to use technology as a teaching tool and any other syllabus redesign that resulted from input from best practices in online education research.

On August 17, the Pivot Report templates were distributed to faculties with a deadline for submission of this information for each accredited program of professional education by October 2, 2020. Every provider met this deadline.

Trends that are reported in the Pivot Reports were shared with the Accreditation Committee meeting in November. The two main areas of reporting for the Pivot Reports are: Requirement 6 format and structure with a pivot to online delivery of coursework, and Requirement 8 practicum.

Any changes that will be sustained or any further changes will need to be reported as substantial changes to the program as it was accredited in the last accreditation. That would be a second phase in the accreditation accountability process.

- As requested by the Ministry of Education, the College has expedited the development of virtual writing team sessions for AQ course guidelines, including American Sign Language as a Second Language – Schedule C (three sessions) and Langues des signes Québécois (LSQ) as a Second Language – Schedule C (four sessions).
- Accreditation reviews are underway for the following programs of initial teacher education:
  - Three programs of French language professional education, including one multi-session program
  - One program of Indigenous professional education
- Staff have notified members and stakeholders regarding the public release of the following two newly developed resources designed to deepen understanding and exploration of ecological consciousness and eco justice as an ethical stance within teacher education and professional practice: *Eco Placemats - Exploring Ethical Professional Practice: Ecological Consciousness & Eco Justice* and Eco-card versions of these placemats.

- The College's single largest budget obligation after salaries is occupancy costs. The College currently owns and occupies 85,000 square feet at 101 Bloor St. West and carries a mortgage of \$13.5 million. The College also pays an additional cost for property management, maintenance fees, utilities and taxes based on the number of square feet we occupy. In an effort to better understand our long-term occupancy requirements given the impact of what will most likely result in an expanded hybrid remote working model as well as our move to digitization, the College has launched an occupancy study. The study will involve consultation with Directors and Managers regarding our current business requirements with an eye to reducing our overhead costs.

### 3. Improve stakeholder engagement

*[Costs associated with deliverables under this priority are covered through the Communication Products, Communication Services, External Relations and Information Technology cost centres.]*

- The 2020 Annual Meeting of Members was held virtually on September 23, 2020. While the College has livestreamed this event since 2017, this was the first fully online annual meeting of members.

There were a total of 439 views, 113 on the French-language platform and 326 on the English-language platform. During the previous year's event, 518 people saw the English version while 71 saw the French. Attendees this year came from all areas of the province including Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Timmins and London. There were attendees viewing the annual meeting from many other Canadian provinces as well as attendees able to access the session from around the world, including the United States, Vietnam, Trinidad and Tobago, Saudi Arabia, Jamaica and Iran.

Over 100 questions were received and, as it would have been impossible to address each question during the meeting, the College committed to posting answers to all questions on the College's website within 10 days of the date of the annual meeting. English and French close captioned recordings of the annual meeting were also posted within this timeframe for the benefit of those who were unable to participate on the day of the event.

Facilitating the annual meeting of members in a virtual format ensures that the College is able to hear from a diverse group of members and the public from around the province, the country and the world. A virtual format also ensures there are fewer barriers for our members to participate and will be considered when planning future events of a similar nature.

- On November 24, the College presented to the Ottawa Carlton District School Board on the topic of duty to report and professional misconduct related to sexual abuse and sexual misconduct.
- This fall, I participated on a panel of regulators hosted by the Foresters' Association to promote self-regulation.
- The College continues to provide presentations to members enrolled in PQP and Supervisory Officer's Qualification Program (SOQP) across the province. The

presentations reinforce the concept and importance of self-regulation, including the duty of the College to operate in the public interest and provide interactive case studies to help candidates understand and reflect on the standards of practice and the ethical standards as well as the investigations and hearing process. From October 1 to November 30, 2020, College personnel presented at six PQP and SOQP sessions.

- The College visits Ontario faculties of education each year to provide teacher candidates with information on the role and responsibilities of the College. The Chair or her delegate participates in sessions for teacher candidates during their first two semesters that introduce the role of the College and the privilege of self-regulation. In addition, College personnel present to teacher candidates in the third or fourth semesters of their programs to provide detailed information concerning specific aspects of the College's work, such as ethical decision-making or advice provided to members through the professional advisories. Information regarding the registration process is also provided during these sessions. From October 1 to November 30, 2020, the College provided 16 presentations, compared to 13 for the same period in 2019. As a result of the pandemic, the presentations have been delivered asynchronously or in a synchronous format based on the faculty's need and preference, with all presentation packages delivered electronically. The move to providing supporting material by electronic means rather than in hard copy has resulted in not only a reduction in costs but also increased support for the College's environmental initiatives.
- To make the application process for the College scholarship program as accessible as possible, scholarship applicants were able to complete an online application. This year, over 650 active applications for the three scholarships were created, with 219 individual applications completed and submitted by the deadline on August 31, 2020.

The Scholarship Selection Sub-committee, comprised of Tim Gernstein, Jacqueline Karsemeyer and Colleen Landers, met on November 2<sup>nd</sup> to determine their recommendations for the three scholarship winners from the 219 eligible applicants. The sub-committee recommendations for the three scholarship winners were brought forward for approval to the November 12, 2020 meeting of the Executive Committee.

- Over the years, the College has participated in numerous popular community events targeting parents and guardians of school-aged children. The College's participation at such events is aimed at increasing public awareness of the College and encouraging members of the public to sign up for the College's free quarterly e-newsletter, *The Standard*. The onset of the pandemic and the implementation of restrictions on gatherings has resulted in the cancellation of these events. As the current health crisis continues, some organizers have explored the possibility of transitioning their events to an online platform. In the month of October the College participated in the Bump, Baby and Toddler Show, which resulted in an additional 28 subscriptions to *The Standard*. During October 2019, the College participated in five events.
- Since our last report, the College's social media audience grew by 1,715 followers on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube. Our attention to providing interesting, understandable and useful content continues to engage our audience and bring in new viewers. The College generally answers most inquiries received via social media within two business days to ensure good customer service. This is based on response time to private messages on Facebook, our most-used social

channel for such inquiries. Since our last report, College staff responded to 167 questions via Facebook direct message in English and French.

- The online annual report was published in advance of the Annual Meeting of Members in September. We also sent a print version to the Minister of Education and posted printable PDF versions on the College website. The report was promoted externally on the College website and on social media. The annual report contains messages from the Chair of Council, the Deputy Registrar and each of the College committees, along with financial information for the 2019 calendar year, transition to teaching statistics, and data about College membership.
- October 5 was World Teachers' Day. To highlight the resilience, professionalism and care of Ontario Certified Teachers in an especially challenging year, the College developed a seven-day, paid social media advertising campaign that began on September 29 and ran until World Teachers' Day. Using six, brief animated videos, the campaign represented the idea of resilience and invited Ontarians to like, share and comment in support of the province's teachers. The campaign reached more than 2.2 million people – doubling the reach of the 2019 campaign – and our ads were seen more than 10.6 million times. Interactions and video views together totaled 3.6 million (the 2019 campaign had 979,678 views and interactions). During the week the ads ran, we gained 368 new social media followers, representing ongoing engagement and interest beyond the duration of the campaign.
- In September, *Professionally Speaking* featured important professional development activities and public awareness initiatives happening online across Ontario. This included faculty presentations to teacher candidates and SOQP candidates, and online community events to discuss how we protect students and how teachers self-regulate.

Using social media, we invited and promoted member participation in consultations for additional qualifications for anti-Black racism as well as participation in the 2021 College Council election.

- This quarter, College staff led sessions at the Canadian Network of Agencies for Regulation (CNAR) annual conference on accessibility and culturally-responsive regulatory practices before an audience drawn from regulatory professionals, government and other stakeholders.
- College staff, in collaboration with a representative of the State and Provincial Psychology Boards, presented a session on change implementation at the Fall CLEAR Annual Education Conference. The presentation, entitled *Making it all Add Up: How Regulators Can Implement New Certification Requirements in a Transparent, Collaborative Way*, focused on a discussion of lessons learned in the implementation of the new Math Proficiency Test certification requirement and a new US psychology examination certification requirement.
- In a presentation entitled *Braiding Two Worlds: Developing Culturally-Responsive Regulatory Practices in an Era of Truth and Reconciliation*, staff shared the ongoing work of the Accreditation Unit to refine site visit questions and interview protocols for reviews involving Indigenous initial teacher education programs.

- College staff collaborate with faculties, government and other stakeholders as part of a shared commitment to ensure a high standard for teacher education programs in the province of Ontario. This relational work is especially timely and relevant during this period of emergency measures imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Pre-service program providers continue to reach out to Accreditation Unit staff as a valued source of guidance as they navigate adjustments to practicum placements in light of board-specific variations in face-to-face, online and hybrid program delivery. The unit receives multiple inquiries from providers and Ministry personnel weekly. Information requests address accreditation requirements, regulatory interpretations, program offerings, practicum and the reporting for certification of graduates.
- Staff have participated in a number of virtual meetings this Fall to provide updates to stakeholders including the Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE), Independent Deans/Directors of Education (IODDE) and the Affiliates regarding the Pivot Report accountability submissions and timelines.

Each faculty was assigned a Program Officer from the Accreditation Unit as a contact person to assist with any questions that might have arisen in the preparation of the COVID-19 Pivot Reports. Many faculties availed themselves of the opportunity to have guided walk-throughs of the accountability report either via tele or videoconference. In other cases, faculties submitted draft reports and were provided detailed feedback to inform their final submission. There has been frequent communication between staff and providers to discuss what information needed to be recorded and to advise the College of both current and anticipated implementation plans.

- Accreditation Unit staff sit at a number of different stakeholder tables at which teacher supply and demand tensions are discussed. Staff are often asked to explain the differences between multi-session and general program delivery models. Questions also arise regarding the differences between a Certificate of Qualification and Registration and a Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration. In order to enhance the effectiveness of collaboration with Faculties of Education, Ministry personnel and other sector stakeholders, the Accreditation Unit is preparing a *Provider's Guide to Multi-Session Programs and the Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration*.
- Staff have been working with the Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada (AAAC), to discuss challenges and align practices in light of the pandemic. College staff have participated in bi-weekly meetings as part of this national network of professional education accrediting bodies to share and learn. AAAC members have been keen to learn from us about both the April 2020 regulatory amendment in light of school closures and the accountability measures that have been leveraged with providers of professional education in Ontario. The template used for the Pivot Reports has been shared with other accrediting agencies and staff continue to be consulted by regulators from across the country to share how we are adapting site visit practices for a virtual possibility.
- Staff have engaged in conversations with the University of Western Ontario related to the *Teaching Students who are Blind/Low Vision AQ*.
- Staff have shared the Draft Schedule D Religious Education AQ course guidelines with the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario for review. The review process included

various consultation methods to reflect the perspectives and lived experiences of stakeholders in revising these important AQ course guidelines.

- College staff continue to work with Six Nations Polytechnic regarding the revision of Mohawk and Seneca Native language AQ course guidelines.

## STATISTICS

### Human Resources

- Recruitment is ongoing as vacancies arise from time to time in the 180.5 regular staff positions approved by Council for the 2020 budget. The following summary includes regular College staff, staff seconded from school boards and temporary staff as of November 16, 2020:

Budgeted positions for 2020	<u>181</u>
Staff with regular appointments	159
Temporary staff replacing staff on leaves and vacancies	9.5
Staff seconded from school boards	2
Vacant positions at the time of reporting	10.5
	<u>181</u>

### Services to Applicants and Members

Service Requested	Requests Processed Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2019	Requests Processed Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2018
Certificate Extension Approvals – 1 <sup>st</sup> Extension	36	54
Certificate Extension Approvals – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Extension	30	8
Statement of Professional Standing (SOPS)	1,057	972
Release of Personal Information (documents)	602	753
Alternative Documentation Route Approvals	45	31

- The 30 certificate extensions issued in 2019 were the final second extensions issued for those certified prior to the implementation of the enhanced program of professional education on September 1, 2015. While the amount of second extensions was higher in 2019 than in previous years, the volume of requests correlates with the higher number of internationally educated applicants who completed their applications prior to the change in regulation. Prior to August 31, 2015 Certificates of Qualification and

Registration with conditions were valid for three years with the possibility of two one-year extensions. As of September 1, 2015, the validity period of the certificate changed to a five-year period with the option for only one extension.

- Current or former applicants or members of the College may request copies of their documents on file (such as transcripts or statements of professional standing from jurisdictions outside Ontario) to be sent to other organizations. In 2018, the number of requests for these documents increased over previous years, signaling a wider acceptability of documents received through the College in lieu of official documents sent directly. As noted in the March 2020 Registrar's Report, in addition to the digital documents previously accepted through the Ontario Universities' Application Centre, World Education Services and other Canadian teacher regulatory authorities, the College has expanded the acceptability of digital transcripts received from verified transcript services such as National Student Clearinghouse, Parchment and My eQuals. With more of these services available to other organizations, the College may expect to see a decrease in requests for release of personal information to other institutions who previously had relied on the College for the availability of these documents.
- A Statement of Professional Standing (SOPS) is a required document confirming a member's teacher qualifications, date of initial certification, status with the College and any disciplinary history (if applicable) to be sent directly to an institution. SOPS are required from every jurisdiction in which an applicant has taught as a certified teacher in that jurisdiction.

The SOPS is an important document in the assessment of professional suitability. Alberta, British Columbia are consistently the most common jurisdictions in Canada for which members request a SOPS. Approximately 80 percent of all SOPS generated are sent to other provinces within Canada. These requests increased in 2019 for all provinces with the exception of Alberta. The remaining 20 percent of SOPS are generally sent to the members directly (for unknown use) or to other professional regulators, such as the College of Early Childhood Educators in Ontario.

- The jurisdictions with the most frequently issued SOPS on behalf of members were:

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Total processed Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2019</b>	<b>Total processed Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2018</b>
Alberta	253	268
British Columbia	109	86
Nova Scotia	92	74
Nunavut	79	54

### **Alternative Documentation Route Approvals**

- The College, like other professional bodies, requires that teacher education degree transcripts, undergraduate and graduate academic degree transcripts, SOPS and language proficiency test scores be sent directly to the College from granting

institutions, licensing bodies or testing agencies. This policy is one that is grounded in the College's statutory mandate to fulfill its objectives and to safeguard the public interest in doing so. Further, such a policy implicitly recognizes the significance of the required documentary evidence for the College in those roles.

Fair registration legislation introduced in 2006, along with amendments to the Ontario College of Teachers Act resulted in the introduction of the alternative documentation process. Applicants may be eligible to provide required documentation in alternative forms if they meet certain eligibility criteria, such as: specific conditions in a country such as war, political strife, natural disaster; applicant fear of repercussions if they request documents; institutions have closed or are unable to provide documentation due to documentation retention schedules.

### Member and Non-Member Statistics

Status	October 2020	October 2019
<b><u>Appears on the Public Register</u></b>		
Good Standing (incl. subject to terms, conditions, limitations)	230,600	233,968
Retired	157,297	152,455
Suspended Non-Payment of Fees	79,253	77,470
Expired	21,600	21,643
Cancelled – Resigned	3,303	3,374
Revoked	382	355
Cancelled	268	269
Suspended and Suspended – Interim	94	92
Sub Total	492,797	489,626
<b><u>Does Not Appear on the Public Register</u></b>		
Deceased	37,010	34,421
Unprofiled <sup>(1)</sup>	21,004	20,944
Closed	12,646	6,785
Removed	6,450	6,375
Unsubmitted <sup>(2)</sup>	5,909	10,018
Document Assessment	3,807	3,206
Denied	3,246	3,216
Never Registered	1,013	1,013
Evaluation Validity Expired	971	981
Submitted to Evaluation	431	565
Waiting for Payment Approval	430	435
Applicant Hold	427	347
Cancelled by Minister	121	122
Administrative Review	62	56



## Member and Non-Member Statistics

Status	October 2020	October 2019
Credential Evaluation Letter	10	10
Under Registrar Review	1	4
Sub Total	93,538	88,498
<b>Total</b>	<b>586,335</b>	<b>578,124</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> Record created when a document is received that cannot be linked to a member or applicant record. This occurs for new applicants who may arrange for documents prior to sending an application. Once the application is received, the document is moved to the new record.

<sup>(2)</sup> Record created when an individual starts but has not yet completed an application for certification.

## Margaret Wilson Library

- For the period from January to October 2020, members borrowed 26,044 items versus 26,369 items in the same period the previous year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, print items were not shipped between March 17 and August 10, 2020. The top five subject areas of print books circulated were literacy, math, inquiry, French and social emotional learning.
- During the same period, total eBook circulation increased 33 percent year over year. Members borrowed 16,953 items in the current period versus 12,766 items in the same period the previous year [full text and download]. The top five subject areas of eBooks circulated were math, online learning, literacy, special education and leadership.
- Library software enhancements enabled members to perform many more research database searches, a huge benefit for members. For the ten-month period January to October 2020, total searches increased 174% year over year. There were over one million searches in the current period versus 393,105 searches in the same period the previous year.

## Standards of Practice and Accreditation

### Accreditation Pre-Service Reviews and Program Change Requests

- In 2020, the Accreditation Committee rendered the following decisions pertaining to twelve programs of professional education offered at six different providers in the province:

Accreditation Decisions				Revocations <sup>(2)</sup>	Extensions to Accreditation Period <sup>(3)</sup>
Renewals		Program Changes			
With Conditions <sup>(1)</sup>	No Conditions	Addition to Program	Substantial Change in Program		
1	1	2	1	2	5

<sup>(1)</sup> Renewal with Conditions: In cases when accreditation is granted with conditions, Ontario Regulation 347/02, Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs, stipulates prescribed timelines within which the Dean must report to the Accreditation Committee on the progress in satisfying the conditions. Often, granting accreditation with conditions allows a provider to move forward in offering a fragile program (e.g. Indigenous education, technological education) with oversight of the Accreditation Committee.

Staff received the Initial Plan from the Dean of the Indigenous education program accredited with conditions within three months of the decision that was rendered in July 2020. The Lead Program Officer for this review will continue to track the evidence submitted to satisfy the outstanding conditions. The Accreditation Committee will review each plan and progress update as part of its monitoring mandate in the public's interest.

<sup>(2)</sup> Revocations: If the Accreditation Committee determines that a program has ceased to be offered, it has the responsibility to revoke the accreditation of the program. In this quarter, one part-time program that is no longer offered was revoked. In a second instance, two concurrent programs that were accredited separately were deemed to funnel to the identical program of professional education. The differences existed only in the pre-professional years and as such, the accreditation of the redundant program was revoked.

<sup>(3)</sup> Accreditation Period Extension: There is provision in Ontario Regulation 347/02, Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs for an extension of up to one year to the accreditation period. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Accreditation Committee extended the accreditation period for one provider (5 programs) from Spring 2020 until Spring 2021. This extension to the expiry deadline poses little to no risk to the public interest.

## Investigations and Hearings

- Staff supported two Complaint Resolution (CR) panels of the Investigation Committee during the reporting period: one on August 13, 2020 (7 matters) and the other on September 30, 2020 (5 matters). As has been the case throughout much of 2020, these panel meetings took place by videoconference using eScribe document sharing technology.

	<b>2020</b> (to Sept. 30)	<b>2019</b>
Memoranda of Agreement adopted by the Investigation Committee	55	86

- During the current period, three hearings were completed, bringing the total to 22 hearings completed in 2020 (36 in 2019). We also continue to provide prosecution instructions to the College’s external legal teams, leading to another 13 completed hearings in August-September 2020.

	<b>2020</b> (to Sept. 30)
<b>Internal</b>	
CR/Resolution by Undertaking assessments (all complaints are assessed for suitability)	223
CR resolutions (agreements adopted by single-member IC panels)	55
Resolutions by Undertaking (in incompetence/TPA complaints)	3
DC assessments (all DC referrals are considered for possible Internal Resolution prosecution)	45
DC hearings completed by Internal Resolution staff (in-house IR staff prosecutions)	22
<b>External</b>	
Prosecution/Penalty Instructions given to External Counsel – DC	65 hearings
Prosecution/Penalty Instructions given to External Counsel – FTPC	8 hearings

- The following chart summarizes concerns received at Intake for the period of January 1 to September 30, 2020, compared to the same period the previous year.

<b>Description</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Origin of Concerns for New Intakes</b>		
- Member of the public	181	233
— Secretary of Board – Teacher Performance Appraisal <sup>(1)</sup>	5	8
- Member of the College	33	55
- Registrar (including employer notifications)	251	352
- Minister of Education		0
<b>Total New Intakes</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>640</b>
- Resolved at Intake <sup>(2)</sup>	222	328
• Employer notifications resolved at Intake	59	73
- Transferred to Investigations Unit <sup>(2)</sup>	293	371
- Active Intake files	55	67

<sup>(1)</sup> Reports related to resignation or termination as a result of unsatisfactory teacher performance appraisal.

<sup>(2)</sup> The number of Intake files noted as “Resolved at Intake” and “Transferred to Investigations Unit” in this chart may have been received by the College in a previous

reporting period. The number of matters resolved or closed during a reporting period will therefore not match the number of new files received during the same period.

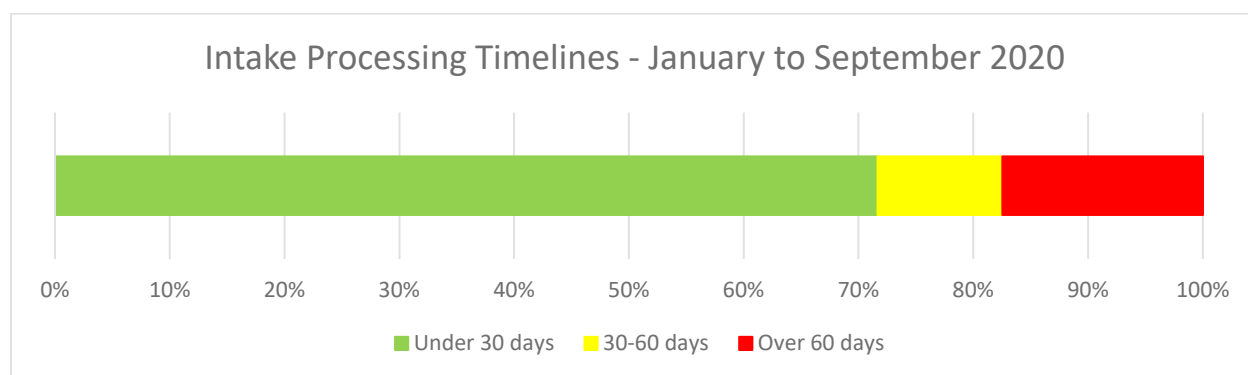
- Between January 1 and September 30, 2020, Intake received approximately 420 telephone calls and emails. The vast majority of calls to Intake are resolved on the day they are received. Email responses are typically sent within 24 hours.

In addition to addressing concerns by telephone and email, Intake completed the processing of 515 formal expressions of concern and employer notifications from January 1 to September 30, 2020. Timelines for Intake processing these files are as follows:

Files completed in under 30 days – 369 (71.6% of all files)

Files completed in 30 to 60 days – 56 (10.9% of all files)

Files completed in over 60 days – 90 (17.5% of all files)



The majority of the files that remained open for over 60 days were kept open as further information was needed from employers in order to determine an appropriate course of action. The duration of open Intake files was also affected by COVID-related closures at many school boards. Intake does regular outreach to employers to advise of the importance of providing the College with required information in an expeditious manner.

- The following is a summary of the disposition of cases concluded by panels of the Investigation Committee between January 1 and September 30, 2020:

Disposition of Cases	Complaints
Refused to investigate: not related to professional misconduct or incapacity 26(2)(a), OR, frivolous, vexatious, abuse of process, manifestly without substance or made for an improper purpose; 26(2)(b) (Request for Direction)	10
Referred to Discipline Committee under clause 26(5)(a)	51
Referred to Fitness to Practise Committee under clause 26(5)(a)	6
Not referred under clause 26(5)(a) or (b) and no further action taken	21
Written reminder under subsection 26(5)(d)	7
Written advice under subsection 26(5)(d)	7
Written caution under subsection 26(5)(d)	22

Disposition of Cases	Complaints
Written admonishment under subsection 26(5)(d)	21
Oral caution/ under subsection 26(5)(c)	0
Oral admonishment under subsection 26(5)(c) (in person)	31
Resolved through complaint resolution under subsection 26(5)(d)	55
Resolution by undertaking	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>246</b>

**Note:** Resolution by undertaking numbers include 10 matters resolved through the Pilot Undertaking to Resign and Never Reapply process. The total number of dispositions does not include 30 matters that were withdrawn or abandoned before reaching a panel of the Investigation Committee.

- Due to the pandemic, as of April 2020, Investigation Committee panels transitioned to electronic meetings. In May 2020, the Investigation Committee determined that all oral admonishments would be electronically delivered during the pandemic. The pandemic has posed some challenges, such as difficulty obtaining board or third party (e.g., court) information due to, for example, closures. As a result, there may be fewer files considered and disposed of by the Investigation Committee in 2020.
- The total number of open files at year end (Discipline Committee and Fitness to Practise Committee) is summarized below:

2020	-	291 (to Sept. 30)
2019	-	321
2018	-	232
2017	-	172
2016	-	218

- Discipline and Fitness to Practise Committee hearings can be categorized as contested or uncontested. Typically, in contested matters, the member does not admit to allegations of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity, and the hearing may involve witnesses and/or experts. An uncontested hearing proceeds on agreement and the member admits to, or pleads no contest to, the allegations.

Courts and tribunals continue to encourage resolutions through agreements wherever possible. When parties representing opposing positions are able to reach consensus, it allows resources to be focused on contested hearings of a serious nature.

In *R. v. Anthony Cook*, [2016] 2 S.C.R. 204, 2016 SCC 43, the Supreme Court of Canada examined the reasons joint submissions should usually be accepted by adjudicators, including that the defendant is giving up their right to a full hearing and that the parties, the public and other stakeholders often gain by having such agreements generally accepted. For example, witnesses are spared having to give testimony. The Court concluded that a very high threshold must be met in order to reject a joint submission. Before rejecting a joint submission, adjudicators must consider whether accepting it would bring the administration of justice into disrepute or would not otherwise be in the public interest.

The following table highlights the number of concluded matters of the Discipline and Fitness to Practise Committees between January 1 and September 30, 2020. Data from previous years is included for comparison.

**Concluded matters:**

Month	2020	2019	2018	2017
January	12	5	13	18
February	16	6	6	8
March	9	5	2	6
April	2	13	5	5
May	6	13	2	8
June	5	12	8	8
July	10	13	1	7
August	9	8	1	7
September	4	3	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>71</b>

- The Tribunals Unit continues to hold as many hearings as possible, while being sensitive to COVID-19 related restrictions. Notably, the volume of concluded matters has remained consistent with previous (pre-pandemic) years despite the considerable process changes that had to occur to pivot to an entirely remote working and hearings environment, and the stringent restrictions in place in Spring 2020. An anticipated dip in volume occurred in September 2020 as elected members returned to school under drastically new circumstances, and competing professional obligations understandably limited committee member availability to conduct hearings.

Given the changing nature of restrictions and the uncertain course of the pandemic, it is reasonable to anticipate a decreased number of concluded matters by year end (as compared to pre-pandemic years), despite the College's best efforts to hold as many hearings as possible. Nevertheless, the Tribunals Unit will continue to seek efficiencies to better support members of the Discipline and Fitness to Practise committees in conducting their core hearings work, and to hold as many hearings as possible in these unique circumstances.

## UNDERTAKINGS

At the October 1-2, 2020 Council meeting, we undertook to respond to the following requests:

- Make available presentations made by staff at webinars and the annual conference for the Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation. The presentations, entitled *Pass the Remote: An Electronic Hearings Primer* and *Anyone? Anyone? Bueller? Bueller? Who Can Support the Decision-Writing Process and How Can They Help* have been made available on CouncilNet, under Resources/Professional Opportunities.
- Accept and respond to comments and/or questions from Council members regarding proposed amendments to the Council Member Travel Policy. The questions and

corresponding responses were shared with the Executive Committee at its November meeting and will be discussed at a future meeting.

- Responses to concerns raised regarding the Council, Committee and Panel Member Harassment and Discrimination Policy were prepared and shared with the Executive Committee at the November meeting. No amendments to the policy were proposed.
- A motion brought forward by the Standards of Practice and Education Committee and approved by Council will be considered by the Editorial Board at its next meeting. The motion recommended that a regular standards based teacher education section be included in *Professionally Speaking/Pour parler profession*, supporting ongoing professional learning for teachers

I trust this information will be of assistance to you and look forward to any questions or comments you may have.

Chantal Bélisle, OCT  
Deputy Registrar