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AIT Means *Business As Usual* for Principals

When Canada's revised Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) comes into effect on August 1, 2009, the Ontario College of Teachers will be ready to accept applications from teachers certified in other Canadian jurisdictions on a certificate-for-certificate basis.

When the AIT is in effect, the College will accept a current teaching certificate from another Canadian jurisdiction as meeting our basic requirements without requiring additional education, experience or assessment. This will be the case for all other teaching regulatory bodies in Canada.

The passage of Bill 175, the Ontario Labour Mobility Act (OLMA) introduced in legislation in early May, will allow regulatory bodies like the College to comply immediately with the AIT notwithstanding existing regulations. The OLMA will also require regulators to change their regulations within one year to make them consistent with policies and procedures introduced to be compliant with the AIT.

College staff has already begun the work of ensuring that our certification processes enable us to implement the AIT. We expect certification of applicants from other jurisdictions to be *business as usual*. The College currently certifies approximately 500 teachers each year who were originally certified to teach in another Canadian jurisdiction.

As a principal, you will be familiar with the Ontario teaching certificate that lists a member's academic and professional qualifications and status with the College. What you see on the certificate of a member who has applied under the AIT will not change in terms of credentials.

What will be different is that those who are certified under the provisions of the AIT will now

receive a permanent certificate rather than an interim certificate. They will not be required to successfully complete 194 days of teaching, a condition that a member who received their teacher education outside Ontario currently must fulfill before applying for a permanent certificate.

However, the College Council has recommended changes to regulation that will apply to all successful applicants. They have recommended that all new members receive a permanent certificate, that the interim certificate no longer be available and the one-year teaching experience condition be removed for everyone.

Teachers who were educated and certified outside of Canada may be awarded a certificate with conditions if the College considers their teacher education was not comparable to that in Ontario.

There are changes coming to Ontario's teaching certificate, but not because of the AIT. We are introducing a professional designation in the fall for members of the College that will, along with some design changes and the elimination of the interim certificate, give the certificate a fresher and more professional look. The College will be communicating these changes to our members as they come into effect.

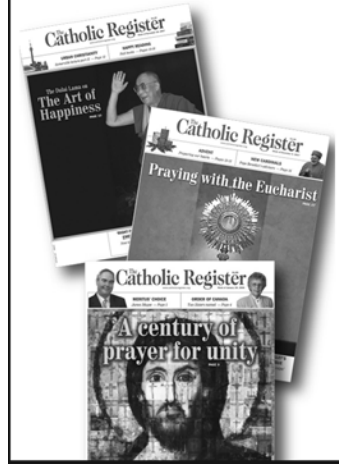
The changes brought about by the AIT will bring benefits to teachers and students alike and will increase employment options for teachers. These changes have the potential to enrich learning opportunities for Ontario students who will meet members of the profession from other parts of the country.

Visit the Ontario College of Teacher's website at www.oct.ca for further information.

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