

# WHAT MATTERS TO YOU IS IMPORTANT TO US



**F**inding out what matters to teachers and principals is one of my most important goals as the new registrar of the Ontario College of Teachers. Knowing this, the next step is to connect what is relevant to members to what we do at the College. We want to communicate with school leaders and teachers about the challenges they face and how we, at the College, can support them and increase our relevance to the membership.

This communication may occur through collaborative projects, consultations, research or other methods of both providing useful and meaningful information to members, and receiving from members insights and perspectives that inform our work. We would like to show you how we are supporting quality in teaching and advancing public confidence in education by highlighting the professionalism of our members. This is a key area that can assist principals. The more respect and confidence that parents and local communities have in the teaching profession, the easier it is for school communities to build partnerships and gain credibility for schools.

In keeping with this commitment to high professional standards, the College is launching a professional designation, Ontario Certified Teacher (OCT), for the teaching profession. It is a way for members to outwardly display a symbol that they belong to this highly respected, skilled and qualified teaching profession. They can proudly use the designation to tell the public they are a certified member of the College whether they serve as classroom teachers, principals, supervisory officers or in one of the many other roles within our profession.

Like many of you, I have worn several hats in my career in education: teacher, vice-principal, principal, senior leadership team member at the College, assistant professor at York University's Glendon College and now registrar. Yet at core, I am a teacher. That has remained constant over the past 20 years. There has not been a year in my career that I have not taught and been energized by learners. Even while at the College, I have taught an informal French class to colleagues. This is something that is a big part of me. If it is not formal teaching, it is creating a learning environment in the place where I am. This is an important value for me.

I initially came to the College from the London District Catholic School Board where I worked as a vice-principal and principal and taught at the elementary and secondary levels. I taught Core French and French Immersion. I have also taught in France and Italy. Teaching French as a second language is a passion and second-language learning opportunities have been a focus throughout my

career. Learning another language makes us more understanding, tolerant, appreciative and respectful of other cultures.

I have drawn on my experience as a principal many times in my career and that expertise allows me to look at issues and challenges through that lens. The role of principal provided an excellent opportunity for leading staff and building community and that is one of the reasons I chose to become a principal. As a principal, I enjoyed engaging with staff, the whole community and students. This experience has served me well at the College.

I initially joined the College in 2001 for a more province-wide perspective of education. I am a lifelong learner and I am always looking for the next learning opportunity. You may engage in learning through course work or by earning degrees, but a new challenge, a new place of work or a new position is another way of engaging in lifelong learning.

I believe strongly in collaboration, whether in a school community or at the College. I support bringing an array of ideas to the table, viewing them collectively and hearing the variety of voices. We strive to find opportunities to engage the teaching profession in the process of shared leadership and decision-making.

In a regulatory body, like ours, relationships and collaboration with the College council and our many stakeholders are essential. Our common interest is student learning. That is what we are all about. The College's mandate requires us to regulate the teaching profession in the public interest. What is the public interest? The heart of it is ensuring that students have good learning opportunities. For us, that means making sure our members are equipped with the skills and knowledge to deliver that to students. I look forward to opportunities to work with you to achieve our common goals.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce the College's new deputy registrar, Joe Jamieson. Joe is a familiar face in our organization and he takes on his new role at the College September 14. He has provided invaluable leadership to three departments in his eight years with the College and served as the director of Investigations and Hearings prior to his appointment as deputy registrar.

It is a privilege to serve as the College's registrar and I am excited about working with College council, staff, you and our other stakeholders in celebrating a profession that serves everyone in society.

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Visit the Ontario College of Teachers' web site at [www.oct.ca](http://www.oct.ca) for further information.