



By **Michael Salvatori**, OCT
Registrar and Chief Executive Officer
Ontario College of Teachers

What **YOU** Need to Know about the **NEW** Teachers' Qualifications Regulation

Four years of work → Thousands of Ontario College of Teachers' members across Ontario consulted → A milestone revision

The College has made sweeping changes to the Teachers' Qualifications Regulation (TQR). This is the first major update for the regulation in more than three decades. In one initiative, we are creating benefits for all our members, principals, vice-principals, supervisory officers and teachers.

As part of this revision, we have removed the 194-day teaching in Ontario requirement and streamlined the number of certificates from six to two. We have also updated teacher education to reflect curriculum in classes and the qualifications teachers and school leaders need to be equipped for the classroom in the 21st century, including a new group of 64 courses in technological education and a new three-part kindergarten course.

We have made significant changes to our system of teacher qualifications, from initial training right through to the additional qualifications (AQ) courses that teachers take throughout their careers.

These changes are the culmination of four years of consulting, feedback and revision. It began with the College going into the field with dozens of different and wide-ranging questions: What do you think is important for certification in the 21st century? What courses do teachers need?

Members across the province were involved with council members and college staff in revising qualifications programs. Our education partners, including CPCO, provided helpful input at all stages of the review. Just as you consult with your school community of staff, parents and students on important issues, we consulted with our members and partners.

The teachers' qualifications review resulted in 66 recommendations about teacher-education programs based on those consultations. The changes that we made reflect what members said are important.

I believe we are an exemplary model for the country in how far we have gone to remove barriers and facilitate labour mobility. The College is fully compliant with the pan-Canadian labour mobility agreement and recommendations made by the Ontario Fairness Commissioner.

The complicated system of six certificates is gone. The Interim Certificate of Qualification is no longer issued. There are now two: a Certificate of Qualification and Registration, and a Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

The transitional certificate is for those teachers enrolled in a multi-session program. When they complete their requirements, they will receive a Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

Both certificates will list qualifications and any terms, conditions and limitations. The new system is simpler and more transparent for everyone. Consolidating the certificates facilitates labour mobility across Canada and minimizes barriers for internationally educated teachers.

We are going to give internationally educated teachers a certificate that has the same name as the others. It honours their many years of teaching experience in their own countries and validates that they are already teachers.

One of the key areas in the new regulation is technological education. Our Canadian economy needs more people trained in skilled trades. We need more students in their high school years that have the opportunity to learn about broad-based technologies. Technological teachers will be able to choose from 64 new AQ courses that comprise a new Schedule F and to gain greater knowledge in an area of expertise.

A new three-course specialist kindergarten program will start in 2011. We have teachers who want to be part of the early childhood learning initiative. They have an opportunity to have a deep rich, understanding of the child's needs, to learn how to develop a meaningful program and how to work in collaboration with early childhood educators to meet the needs of the learner.

There will be a new full-year program for teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing. The Principal's Qualification Program guideline was completely revised, as will the Supervisory Officer's Qualification Program.

The work we have done on the regulation represents our commitment to being responsive as a self-regulatory body. We are making changes to our own requirements for certification and AQ courses. We have created new courses based on feedback from members so that school leaders and teachers already in their careers are taking courses that reflect education in the 21st century.

We are listening and we will continue to listen. I welcomed the opportunity to attend the CPCO conference in Windsor in April and enjoyed discussing issues that are important to you. As we roll out TQR changes, we are here to help you if you need any additional information.

The changes are not yet done. The College is continuing with its plan to finish Phase 5 of the Teachers' Qualifications Review, which focuses on initial teacher education. We look forward to continuing the professional dialogue with our members and our education partners.