

# Professionally Speaking

SEPTEMBER 2020

THE PUBLICATION OF THE  
ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

**2021 COUNCIL  
ELECTION**

See pp. 44 – 57  
for details.

**NOMINATIONS**

open August 18 –  
November 27.



## Supporting Student Success

Four innovative teachers offer strategies for  
student success in a COVID-19 world. p. 29

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Primary	● ◆ ▲
Junior	● ◆ ▲

### ABQ INTERMEDIATE

Business Studies	● ◆ ▲
English	● ◆ ▲
Family Studies	● ◆ ▲
First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies	● ◆ ▲
French as a Second Language	● ◆ ▲
Geography	● ◆ ▲
Health & Physical Education	● ◆ ▲
History	● ◆ ▲
Mathematics	● ◆ ▲
Science - General	● ◆ ▲

### ABQ SENIOR

Biology	● ◆ ▲
Chemistry	● ◆ ▲
English	● ◆ ▲
Environmental Science	● ◆ ▲
Geography	● ◆ ▲
History	● ◆ ▲
Mathematics	● ◆ ▲
Physics	● ◆ ▲
Social Sciences	● ◆ ▲
Science - General	● ◆ ▲
Visual Arts	● ◆ ▲

### HONOUR SPECIALIST

Biology	● ◆ ▲
Business Studies	● ◆ ▲
Chemistry	● ◆ ▲
Dramatic Arts	● ◆ ▲
English	● ◆ ▲
French as a Second Language	● ◆ ▲
Geography	● ◆ ▲
Health & Physical Education	● ◆ ▲
History	● ◆ ▲
Mathematics	● ◆ ▲
Music	● ◆ ▲
Physics	● ◆ ▲
Science - General	● ◆ ▲
Social Sciences	● ◆ ▲
Technological Education	● ◆ ▲

Visual Arts	● ◆ ▲
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### THREE-PART ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Cooperative Education Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Cooperative Education Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Cooperative Education Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Environmental Education Part 1 <b>NEW</b>	● ◆ ▲
Environmental Education Part 2 <b>NEW</b>	● ◆ ▲
First Nations, Métis & Inuit Peoples Part 1	● ◆ ▲
First Nations, Métis & Inuit Peoples Part 2	● ◆ ▲
First Nations, Métis & Inuit Peoples Specialist	● ◆ ▲
French as a Second Language Part 1	● ◆ ▲
French as a Second Language Part 2	● ◆ ▲
French as a Second Language Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Guidance & Career Ed Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Guidance & Career Ed Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Guidance & Career Ed Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Health & Physical Ed (P/J) Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Health & Physical Ed (P/J) Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Health & Physical Ed (P/J) Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Inclusive Classrooms Part 1 <b>NEW</b>	● ◆ ▲
Inclusive Classrooms Part 2 <b>NEW</b>	● ◆ ▲
Inclusive Classrooms Specialist <b>NEW</b>	● ◆ ▲
Integration of Information & Computer Technology in Instruction Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Integration of Information & Computer Technology in Instruction Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Integration of Information & Computer Technology in Instruction Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Kindergarten Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Kindergarten Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Kindergarten Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Mathematics, Primary & Junior Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Mathematics, Primary & Junior Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Mathematics, Primary & Junior Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Reading Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Reading Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Reading Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Religious Education in Catholic Schools Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Religious Education in Catholic Schools Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Religious Education in Catholic Schools Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Special Education Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Special Education Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Special Education Specialist	● ◆ ▲

Teacher Leadership Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Teacher Leadership Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Teacher Leadership Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Teacher Librarian Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Teacher Librarian Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Teacher Librarian Specialist	● ◆ ▲
Teaching English Language Learners Part 1	● ◆ ▲
Teaching English Language Learners Part 2	● ◆ ▲
Teaching English Language Learners Specialist	● ◆ ▲

### ONE-SESSION QUALIFICATIONS

Adult Education	● ◆ ▲
Classroom Management	● ◆ ▲
Orientation To Teaching In Ontario	● ◆ ▲
Outdoor Experiential Education <b>NEW</b>	● ◆ ▲
Safe & Accepting Schools	● ◆ ▲
Special Ed - Behaviour	● ◆ ▲
Special Ed - Communication - Autism	● ◆ ▲
Special Ed - Communication - Learning Disability	● ◆ ▲
Student Assessment & Evaluation	● ◆ ▲
Teaching & Learning Through e-Learning	● ◆ ▲
Teaching Combined Grades	● ◆ ▲
Teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit Children	● ◆ ▲
Teaching LGBTQ Students	● ◆ ▲
Teaching Mild Intellectual Disability	● ◆ ▲
Use and Knowledge of Assistive Technology	● ◆ ▲

### TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Communications Tech Grades 9/10	● ◆ ▲
Communications Tech Grades 11/12	● ◆ ▲
Computer Tech Grades 9/10	● ◆ ▲
Green Industries Grades 9/10	● ◆ ▲
Tech Design Grades 9/10	● ◆ ▲
Tech Design Grades 11/12	● ◆ ▲

### EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT STAFF

Communicating Effectively with Parents	■
Creating Inclusive Work Environments	■

SESSION DATES	REGISTRATION DEADLINE
<b>FALL</b> Sep 28 – Dec 04, 2020	Sep 11, 2020
<b>FALL/WINTER</b> Nov 09 – Feb 12, 2020	Oct 23, 2020
<b>WINTER</b> Jan 25 – Apr 09, 2021	Jan 08, 2021

**\$685** - ABQ Primary, ABQ Junior, One-Session AQ, Three-Session AQ (excluding FSL Part 1) **\$745** - ABQ Intermediate, ABQ Senior, ABQ Technological Ed, Honour Specialist, FSL Part 1 **\$75** - Educational Support Staff





24



29



34

# Contents

## Upfront

<b>At the College</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>From the Chair</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Deputy Registrar's Report</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Letters to the Editor</b>	<b>12</b>

## Connections

PS Poll, In Your Profession, In Your Classroom, Tools of the Trade	<b>13</b>
--	-----------

## Departments

<b>Great Teaching: Student Mental Health</b>	<b>20</b>
Here's how teachers are using guidance from the College advisory on student mental health in their classrooms.	
<b>Remarkable Teacher</b>	<b>24</b>
Award-winning cook and TV host Mary Berg on the high-school teacher who encouraged excellence.	

## Features

<b>Supporting Student Success</b>	<b>29</b>
Inspiring educators offer strategies for student success in a Covid-19 world.	
<b>Confronting Inner Conflict</b>	<b>34</b>
When personal and professional values clash, these strategies can help teachers move past their biases.	

## Teacher Resources

<b>Reviews</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Tech Class</b>	<b>43</b>

## Election

Council election call 2021	<b>44</b>
----------------------------	-----------

## Governing Ourselves

College News, Investigation Committee Case Study, Hearings	<b>58</b>
--	-----------

## Final Exam

Hamza Haq, star of <i>Transplant</i> , shares how a drama teacher helped him find his calling.	<b>72</b>
--	-----------

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**TRANSLATION** Thomas Brouard; Geneviève Dubé; Pierre Ducharme; Mélissa Dufour; Luci English; Julie Fournel; Lori Hall; Pamela Lipson; Eleanor Paul; Véronique Ponce; Francine Tardif; Stéphanie Tétreault

**CONTRIBUTORS** Gabrielle Barkany, OCT; Chantal Bélisle, OCT; Richard Bercuson (reviews); Brian Jamieson; Nicole van Woudenberg, OCT; Olivia Yu

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**The College is the self-regulating professional body for Ontario teachers. Membership is open to anyone qualified to teach in the province and required to maintain an Ontario teaching certificate.**

**The College is trusted to regulate the teaching profession by setting standards of practice and accrediting teacher education programs.**

**The College also sets the requirements for entry into the profession, investigates complaints involving members and takes appropriate disciplinary action.**



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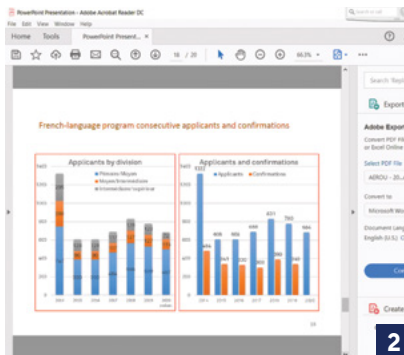
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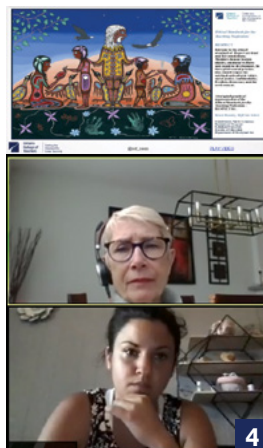
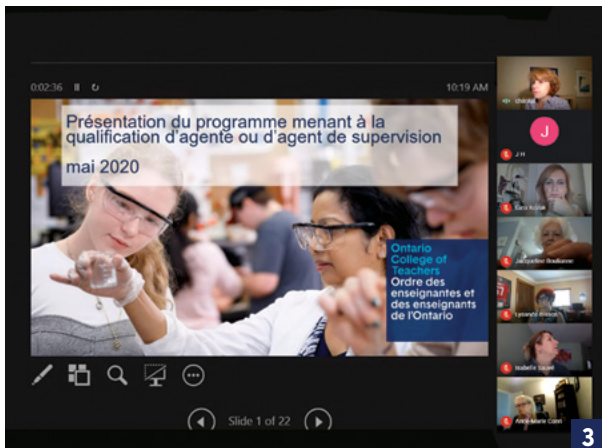
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## AT THE COLLEGE



While College staff members continued to practise physical distancing over these past several months, they still managed to connect with teacher candidates, administrators and the public through online presentations and events, offering information about the work of the College, answering questions and supporting the safety of Ontario students.



1-2) The College presented to members of the Association of Education Registrars of Ontario Universities.

3) College Deputy Registrar Chantal Bélisle spoke with Supervisory Officer's Qualification Program candidates at an event hosted by the Association des gestionnaires de l'éducation franco-ontarienne.

4) Representatives from the College connected with teacher candidates in the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program at Queen's University.

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# Serve on Council

Your voice is needed.

BY NICOLE VAN WOUDENBERG, OCT

@Nicole\_OCTOEE0



The first time I ran for Council was in 2006. I didn't win. I tried to run again in 2011, but didn't get past the nomination stage.

Obviously, I wasn't deterred. In 2015, I was a successful candidate and began my first three years by serving on the seventh Council. It seems like just yesterday when I was elected Chair and Tim Gernstein Vice-Chair at the inaugural meeting of the eighth Council.

Together with our 37-member team, we self-regulate the teaching profession in Ontario. Professional self-regulation is a privilege. It reaffirms that Ontario Certified Teachers are integral to setting direction for the teaching profession. Professional members who serve on Council do so in the public interest.

Once elected, Council members take an oath or affirmation confirming their duty to act and make decisions in the public interest. Moreover, they explicitly affirm that "I will ensure that other memberships, directorships, voluntary or paid positions or affiliations that I may hold will not interfere or conflict with the performance of my duties as a Council member."

This is an exciting time for the College. We find ourselves at a crossroads. This Council has made recommendations to the Minister for changes to our governance model and is awaiting government action. Until then, we abide by our existing election regulation and begin the process of encouraging members to consider running for Council.

In the December 2019 issue ([oct-oeeo.ca/December2019](http://oct-oeeo.ca/December2019)) Tim and I invited you to reflect on your experience and consider serving as a member of Council. I am coming up on my sixth year as a Council member and it has been one of the most impactful learning experiences of my career.

Whether you are new to the profession or a seasoned administrator, your voice is needed at the table. I highly encourage members who self-identify with an under-represented group to consider serving on Council. Check out the videos on [oct.ca](http://oct.ca) to learn more. Your colleagues will be happy to nominate you: just ask them — I dare you.

Follow me at @Nicole\_OCTOEE0 for updates. **PS**

*Nicole van Woudenberg*



## Get students excited about voting before they turn 18!

Elections Ontario wants to help you bring the democratic process to life in the classroom with free teaching tools available on our website at [elections.on.ca/resources](https://elections.on.ca/resources).

- › Teach 16- & 17-year-olds how to add their name to the Ontario Register of Future Voters—a list that automatically adds them to the voters list when they turn 18.
- › Get classroom lesson plans and exercises that teach students in Grades 5 & 10 about the democratic system.
- › Download *Voting in Ontario* teaching materials.

You can download these materials at [elections.on.ca/resources](https://elections.on.ca/resources).  
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# Resilience

What defines professionalism in Ontario educators.

BY CHANTAL BÉLISLE, OCT



**N**ever would we have anticipated living through a global pandemic. Yet, here we are.

If we could make two observations about living through COVID-19 over the last few months, they would be that resilience is required and, as practitioners, we are resilient.

Many of you are returning to learning environments this fall in circumstances far different from those you left abruptly earlier this year. You are required to define a new “normal” from what was familiar not so long ago. The way you immersed yourself in new technologies within a very short time frame in order to interact with your students and colleagues, in and of itself, has been astonishing.

The changes in your respective environments brought about by COVID-19 demand that you consider new and different ways to connect with your students, their parents and guardians, your colleagues and your employer.

Change can be unnerving, yet it can also serve to motivate. How you respond is as much a lesson to your students as anything you'll draw from the curriculum. Students, too, need to appreciate the importance of adaptability and resiliency.

The College was also required to adapt and demonstrate its resilience. Deemed an essential service, we quickly transitioned to provide our services working

remotely while maintaining our commitment to protect the public interest.

Professional members continue to promote our ethical standards of trust, respect, integrity and care. We identify values such as knowledge and skills that are distinctive to the teaching profession, including professionalism, honesty, accountability and transparency, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, inclusivity and respect for diversity, respectfulness and teamwork.

In recent months, we've had to pivot to address changes in legislation that have affected licensing, we have published video-conferencing guidelines to assist practitioners, and we've established a program to help students who have been sexually abused. We have also altered our physical environment to protect our staff, visitors and Council members.

We've learned that each moment provides a new opportunity. What remains constant is our resilience and a reliance on each other, our adherence to our professional and ethical standards and a positive outlook that serves us — and the public we serve — come what may. **PS**

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Chantal Bélisle'.

# Tell us what you think!

In the spirit of open conversation and to support an array of perspectives, Professionally Speaking welcomes letters to the editor. The opinions expressed in letters are solely those of the authors and should not be interpreted as the view of the College. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Letters should be sent to [ps@oct.ca](mailto:ps@oct.ca), be in response to content in the magazine, and include the writer's phone number and registration number.

## Character Driven

In everything she teaches, Pareen Gill, OCT, looks for ways to nurture the whole child.

BY STUART FOXMAN

**A**t Cornsight Public School in Collingwood, Ont., Ann Boucher once had a student named Pareen. School wasn't fun for her. Pareen, the only student there with brown skin, had been bullied the previous two years. Every day, she'd come home crying. Now, in Boucher's Grade 4 class, Pareen found an ally.

Boucher showed kindness and compassion. She sought ways to compliment Pareen, and encouraged her to try out for basketball, which Boucher coached. Pareen excelled. "She was a special girl," says Boucher. "I tried to make her feel good about herself and increase her confidence."

This isn't a story about Boucher. It's about Pareen Gill, OCT. That little girl decided on her career right then, in 1991 in Grade 4.

"That's why I wanted to be a teacher, to help other children the way Mrs. Boucher helped me," says Gill. "Empathy, caring and respect are values I have today because of Mrs. Boucher, who demonstrated these as a teacher. I knew one day when I was a teacher, I'd do everything to bring those traits to my students."

She has. In 2019, Gill earned a Certificate of Achievement from the Prime Minister's awards for Teaching Excellence. The award summary states that for her, character "matters as much as academics."

Gill, who teaches Grade 3/4 at Nottawa Elementary School in Collingwood, is in her 13th year of teaching. She started her career at Cornsight, where Boucher was her colleague for six years.

Looking back, Gill doesn't remember much of the curriculum from when she was in Grade 4. But she vividly recalls



Pareen Gill, OCT, fosters an inclusive and caring environment for her Grade 3/4 class at Nottawa Elementary School in Collingwood, Ont.

June 2020 Professionally Speaking 15

## What a joy to start my day reading this article.

Great Teaching, June 2020 issue of *Professionally Speaking*.

This teacher (and her teacher before her) exemplify everything that a good teacher should be. How sad that so many teachers do not understand that establishing an environment of true mutual respect and caring is the cornerstone of successful teaching and learning. This teacher recognizes that she is not only an educator, but a parent, mentor, guide, social worker and, above all, a role model to her students. This is not only an article about excellence in teaching, but also a guide to good parenting and to all in any leadership position. Everyone, regardless of age, wants to be seen, acknowledged and appreciated with kindness.

Retired but still invested in learning,

**Judith (Judy) Gould, OCT, was an environmental education teacher, Grades 4–8, with the Durham District School Board.**

# 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting of Members

Wednesday, September 23, 2020 | 5:30–6:30 p.m.

## CHAIR'S ADDRESS

Chair Nicole van Woudenberg, OCT, will report on Council's activities from last year.

## DEPUTY REGISTRAR'S ADDRESS

Deputy Registrar Chantal Bélisle, OCT, will reflect on College initiatives from 2019.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Hear from the chairs of the Discipline, Governance and Standards of Practice and Education committees.

## ENGAGE WITH US

Have questions?  
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## LIVE-STREAMING

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## Go-To Guidance

Here are the top eight professional advisories and guidelines from the College you'd be most likely to reference, according to our latest poll. (Access all the College advisories at [oct-ooeo.ca/advisories](https://oct-ooeo.ca/advisories)).

1. ***Supporting Students' Mental Health***
2. ***Maintaining Professionalism — Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media***
3. ***Video-Conferencing Guidelines***
4. ***Duty to Report***
5. ***Safety in Learning Environments — A Shared Responsibility***
6. ***Additional Qualifications: Extending Professional Knowledge***
7. ***Responding to the Bullying of Students***
8. ***Professional Misconduct of a Sexual Nature***



## Do you receive multiple copies of the magazine?

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# Pop Quiz with Daniel Chorney, PhD

BY LAURA BICKLE



September brings with it excitement — and sometimes anxiety — for teachers. But this year, the anxiety side of the equation may have tipped the scale for some. “If you are feeling anxious about returning you are definitely not alone. Other teaching staff, students and parents are anxious too,” says Daniel Chorney, PhD, a registered psychologist and member of Anxiety Canada’s Scientific Advisory Committee. He contributed to the organization’s COVID-19 website section, which offers resources on return-to-school concerns and how to manage COVID-19-related anxiety in general.

We asked Chorney to share how to help yourself, colleagues and students cope.

### What can teachers do to be best prepared to return to school?

Staff should readjust expectations of themselves and others. The idea of “doing what you can, given the circumstances” should be understood by all.

Think of exactly *what* you are anxious about. A common experience for individuals with anxiety is having automatic thoughts. We simply believe these thoughts without challenging them. Writing down your thoughts and looking at them more clearly is a helpful way to see just what it is you’re anxious about. Then you can decide if it’s worth worrying about or a helpful worry.

### How can teachers deal with anxiety in the classroom?

Work on mindfulness: focus your attention on what you are doing in the present moment. This could mean remembering why you are an educator (helping others, education itself or being part of a community) and then holding that in your awareness while you are teaching. Just by being there you are engaging in and living your values. That’s making a good choice based on your values, and not based on anxiety.

### What are the signs of anxiety?

Physical symptoms include upset stomach or nausea, headaches, racing heart and feeling sweaty, and sometimes feeling dizzy or shaky. Thoughts tend to race and focus on harm or threat (“What if I get COVID and then spread it to my family?”). When individuals start avoiding the people, places or things that make them anxious, they often become what we call “functionally impaired.” Some people can push through the event but experience extreme feelings of distress. Avoidance and extreme distress are typically when we recommend speaking with a professional.

### What resources do you suggest for teachers to help themselves and their students?

Our “7 Tips for Educators Returning to School During COVID-19” ([oct-oeeo.ca/anxietytips](http://oct-oeeo.ca/anxietytips)) includes strategies to model good coping behaviours while acknowledging that sometimes you feel anxious too — and that’s OK. We want children to know anxiety is normal. It’s how we deal with it that matters.

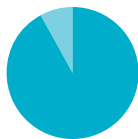
The website can also guide you to the free MindShift CBT app, a portable tool that children, teens and adults can use to help manage anxiety.

# By the Numbers: Cracking the Code

Computer coding in the classroom.

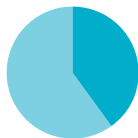
BY STEVE BREARTON

## WRITING THE FUTURE



**92%**

Ontario students (aged 12 to 18) and their parents, surveyed in early 2018, who said knowing how to use digital technology is very or extremely important to the students' future.

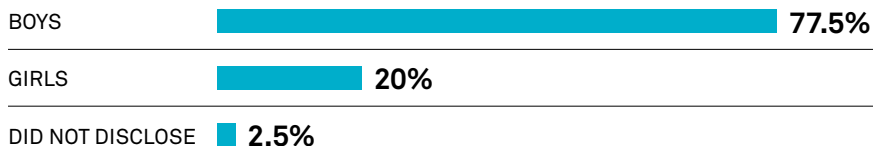


**38%**

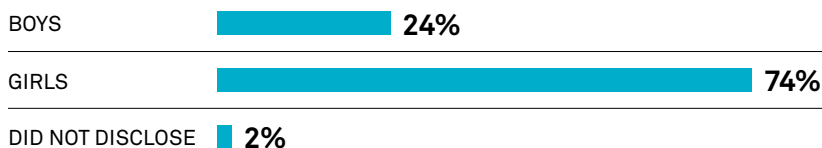
Students polled who said their schools offered instruction in coding or programming.

## GENDER GAP

CANADIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, BY GENDER, WHO SELF-REPORTED AS BEING COMPETENT IN CODING, ACCORDING TO A 2018 STUDY:



STUDENTS WHO REPORTED THEMSELVES AS HAVING NO EXPERIENCE IN CODING, ACCORDING TO THE SAME STUDY:



## HOUR OF CODE

**3,130**

Total number of Canadian events hosted in 2019 by Hour of Code, an organization dedicated to "demystifying code."

**50%**

Female participation during Hour of Code events

## TECH SAVVY

**20**

Number of AQ courses offered by the College in 2020 that assist teachers who want to integrate computer technology into the classroom.

## TWEET SHEET

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### OISEUofT

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@OISEUofT

18.7K  
FOLLOWERS



For #TreatiesRecognitionWeek @OISELibrary pulled together a list of resources for teaching and learning about treaty rights and relationships. Check it out here: [oct-oeeo.ca/ryy5x8](https://oct-oeeo.ca/ryy5x8)



### Next Gen Men

Re/Undefining what it means to "be a man" by engaging, educating, and empowering men and boys in schools, communities, and workplaces.

@NextGenMen

4,261  
FOLLOWERS



To recognize the start of #PrideMonth, youth program manager @jonathoncomfort created a list of high-quality #LGBTQ+ children's books for parents to read with their young ones or teachers to include in their classroom. #PrideMonth2020



### Canada's History

An organization with a mission to make the discovery of our nation's past relevant, engaging, empowering and accessible.

@CanadasHistory

15.2K  
FOLLOWERS



#DYK Canada's History has educational resources about black history? Check out our Black History in Canada issue of Kayak and the accompanying lesson plans and classroom activities! [ow.ly/gi0X50zghwo](https://ow.ly/gi0X50zghwo)

Sources: Actua National Coding Survey, The Learning Partnership, Ontario College of Teachers, Hour of Code



## Professional Practice

Any teacher will tell you it's hard to take students away from their cellphones. Social media gives teens the freedom to connect and share content, but issues of privacy, cyberbullying, internet addiction and pornography pose serious challenges.

Three years ago, I created a card game called Don't Hate the Player. Students create a story about an online experience based on a hand drawn from 92 situation and character cards. Their hand might find them dealing with online bullies, for example, or a friend who shares images without permission. Students then problem solve about their situation and learn from each other's experiences, too.

Two years ago, I presented the game at the Ontario Art Education Association's conference. And last year, I began using the game as a teaching tool at Central Technical School. So far, it's been a great success!

**ELIZABETH BASSKIN, OCT, IS AN OCCASIONAL TEACHER WITH THE TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD.**

### HAVE A CLASSROOM IDEA TO SHARE?

Send it to us at [ps@oct.ca](mailto:ps@oct.ca) and your advice could be published in an upcoming issue! Check out our Professional Practice Research archive at [oct-oeeo.ca/research](http://oct-oeeo.ca/research).

## New Video-Conferencing Guidelines

BY STEFAN DUBOWSKI

With so many teachers turning to video conferencing to communicate with students, the Ontario College of Teachers released guidelines ([oct-oeeo.ca/videoguidelines](http://oct-oeeo.ca/videoguidelines)) last spring to help you use the technology safely and effectively.

Video is a valuable way to engage with students when they're not in the classroom with you. It can help them feel connected, even when they're isolated from their peers and school. But with new tools come new responsibilities and challenges. "There are considerations with respect to technology, security, privacy, confidentiality, and consent," the guidelines say, with these main recommendations.

- **Follow procedures** — Use employer-approved video systems. Learn all you can about the platform to ensure confidentiality and privacy. Avoid using your personal email or social media accounts to communicate with students.
- **Stay professional** — Remember, the standards you have

to meet in class apply in video, too. You'll want to be as professional in tone and language as possible. Keep focused on instructional topics — nothing personal.

- **Prioritize safety and security** — Use your professional judgment to make sure your video sessions are safe and secure: tell students and parents that videos may be recorded, and keep notes as you normally would for in-person classes.

The guidelines also point to the College's professional advisories to help you deal with bullying and student mental health, which can be complicating factors when it comes to online communication.

Along with these recommendations comes advice for working with any new technology: Almost everyone involved is learning. "Be patient with yourself, your students, with parents and guardians."



# Apps Analysis

BY STEFAN DUBOWSKI

## Toca Nature

*Available in French*

Toca Nature offers a pristine landscape where players get to create wildlife, grow forests, and find out what bears, deer and other animals love to munch on. They also get to experience their generated habitats throughout the entire day and night as the game presents an accelerated trip around the sun lasting just a few minutes. The app's designer says he wanted to create an environment "to amplify the mysteries and magical moments that could be experienced in the wild." Aligns nicely with Ontario's Grade 1 science curriculum, which includes understanding life systems.



**DEVICE** Apple, Android  
**SOURCE** Apple App Store (\$5.49), Google Play (\$5.49)  
**RATING** 4+, Everyone

## DragonBox Big Numbers

*Available in French*

This app teaches children aged six to nine how to add and subtract multi-digit numbers — but it's so much fun, they might not even realize they're learning. DragonBox Big Numbers introduces the Nooms, who plant apple trees, collect fruit and do other things to keep their world turning. Players help by sorting material and solving math problems. Instructions are minimal and picture based so it might take time to figure things out. But if they persevere, players won't want to quit. It's ideal for Grade 3s, who are starting to study multi-digit addition and subtraction.



**DEVICE** Apple, Android  
**SOURCE** Apple App Store (\$10.99), Google Play (\$9.99)  
**RATING** 4+, Everyone

## Habitica: Gamified Taskmanager

*Available in French*

Habitica transforms task management into a game where users become avatars on a quest for prizes. Players create to-do lists and identify habits, and the app rewards them for completion. Users can win pets for their avatars or real-life bounty such as an hour of TV. Knowing how to set and reach goals are key steps to success for many high schoolers; they're especially pertinent for students in the Grade 12 Skills for Success After Secondary School course. Main app content is available in English and French but tutorials are English only.



**DEVICE** Apple, Android  
**SOURCE** Apple App Store (free), Google Play (free)  
**RATING** 4+, Everyone

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 Teaching in the Catholic System  
 Mathematics 7 and 8  
 Student Assessment and Evaluation  
 Use and Knowledge of Assistive Technology  
 Teaching Students with Communication Needs/Autism Spectrum Disorders

### SCHEDULE D COURSES

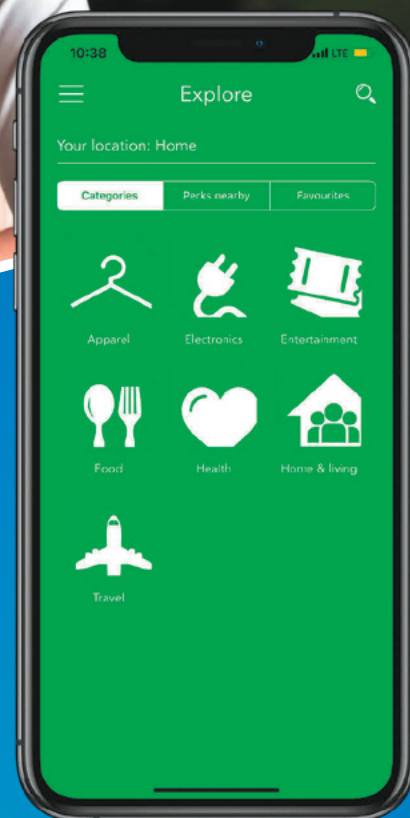
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 French as a Second Language  
 Guidance and Career Education  
 Integration of Information and Computer Technology in Instruction  
 Teacher Librarian  
 Kindergarten  
 Mathematics Primary/Junior  
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# As a Matter of Fact

**It's never been more challenging to decipher the news. What's true? What's false? What's *really* going on? To help students wade through this tricky terrain and learn about journalism, these compelling resources can spark discussion and learning.**

BY CAELI MAZARA

## 1) Factitious *free*

This quiz site shines a light on fake news items, directing students to decide whether a news story is real or fake. Students can read a snippet of the story, reveal the news source for a more educated guess, then click or swipe right and left (if playing on a phone or tablet) to answer. The fun format is a great launching pad for discussions on bias.

**GRADES 7–12 | VISIT [factitious.augamestudio.com](http://factitious.augamestudio.com)**

## 2) Curio.ca *Subscription fee varies; available in French*

CBC brings its news, radio and documentary archives into the classroom with Curio. The database is always growing, with new content added every week. Curio offers a vast catalogue of media, including curated collections like Climate Change, Fighting Racism and Discrimination, and more.

**GRADES K–12 | VISIT [curio.ca](http://curio.ca)**

## 3) Teaching Kids News *free*

Find a deep well of news articles aimed at students from Grades 2–8 on this easy-to-navigate site. Teachers can access resources to help spot fake news, links to related podcasts, tips for talking about difficult news, writing and discussion prompts, and reading suggestions for each story.

**GRADES 2–8 | VISIT [teachingkidsnews.com](http://teachingkidsnews.com)**

## 4) Bad News

Bad News lets students take on the role of fake news producers. The simple design allows students to dive right in and explore the mechanics behind disinformation in news stories. An explainer doc for educators gives helpful advice for in-class use and links for further study.

**GRADES 9–12 | VISIT [getbadnews.com](http://getbadnews.com)**

## 5) NPR *free*

NPR brings its high-quality radio programming into the classroom. Easy to navigate and available on a range of devices, NPR allows students to browse an enormous database of audio content. Teachers can use the content to spark conversations, delve into curriculum material, and engage students in current events regardless of reading ability.

**GRADES 8–12 | VISIT Apple App Store or Google Play**

## 6) Scholastic Kids Press *free*

Journalism for kids by kids, the Scholastic Kids Press covers a wide range of news topics and encourages budding journalists. For those students who want to do more than just read the news, any young reporter between the ages of 10 and 14 can apply to join the team.

**GRADES 5–8 | VISIT [kpcnotebook.scholastic.com](http://kpcnotebook.scholastic.com)**

## 7) Newsfeed Defenders *free*

This game aims to help students understand what makes good journalism, and how and why news can be manipulated. To play, students run a news site and monitor the integrity of the site over time. They need to watch out for fake news, click bait ads and more, to keep their site honest.

**GRADES 6–12 | VISIT [icivics.org/games/newsfeed-defenders](http://icivics.org/games/newsfeed-defenders)**

## 8) CIVIX *free; available in French*

How does language impact understanding of the news? (Are they riots, demonstrations or peaceful protests?) How do social media algorithms shape perspectives? Activities and case studies dive into headline-making events and package them for engaging classroom discussions.

**GRADES 4–12 | VISIT [newsliteracy.ca](http://newsliteracy.ca)**



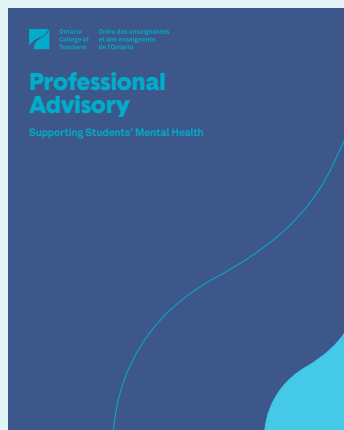
# Student Mental Health

The College advisory *Supporting Students' Mental Health* offers direction and advice to members. Here's how many are putting those ideas into action.

BY STUART FOXMAN

The College regularly issues advisories on subjects critical to the work of Ontario teachers and the well-being of the province's students. Every day, members demonstrate their professionalism and judgment by applying the guidance in the advisories to their work on behalf of Ontario students.

**In this issue: *Supporting Students' Mental Health***



In her Grade 7 class at Valley Park Middle School in Toronto, Susie Barraud, OCT, knows there are many ways to measure how her students are faring. That's why she wanted to talk to one girl who lacked focus and wasn't keeping up with her work. It wasn't just the academics that worried Barraud. Was something wrong?

Barraud had built trust with the student over the school year, so the girl confided. Her father was controlling and overbearing, which had taken a toll. "Her self-esteem was shot, she was sad all the time, and she didn't know where to fit in," says Barraud, who's also curriculum leader for Wellness, Inclusion and Social Justice.

The girl felt better just discussing her feelings. Barraud found another way to help. At times, she sat the girl near two other students who were also dealing with anxiety, and gave them group work. The three students became friends and formed a mutual support society.

"We all carry baggage and can help each other move through it," says Barraud. "The classroom teacher has

to build community within the room."

In 2018, the College issued an advisory called *Supporting Students' Mental Health*. It aims to help members better understand the issues, recognize behaviours of concern, and respond appropriately.

What are some Ontario Certified Teachers doing to take the ideas and recommendations in the advisory and bring them to life every day?

It starts with how a teacher frames mental health supports. This isn't just about mental illness. As the advisory notes, optimal mental health is also about having the ability to adapt, cope and manage thoughts, feelings and behaviours. That's mental wellness.

Every student, whether they have a specific mental health challenge or not, needs an encouraging space in which to learn. Providing one matters for learning and for mental health, and teachers are expert in cultivating such spaces.

"Wellness encompasses physical, emotional and cognitive aspects of well-being. When all of those components are addressed in classrooms and schools, you have a nourishing environment," says Sharon Pyke, OCT,



**“Kids want to be heard. They don’t always need advice, but they do need an outlet.”**

— Susie Barraud, OCT

superintendent of education — Student Well-Being, Greater Essex County District School Board.

Paying attention to students’ mental health isn’t an add-on, she says, it’s foundational. “School has to be a safe place intellectually and emotionally,” says Pyke.

Reflecting on the College advisory, Barraud says teachers can bolster wellness through routine practices. She papers her classroom door with inspirational quotes to set a positive tone. Barraud often talks to the students about their ups and downs to normalize those conversations, and takes a keen interest in their lives outside school. “Get to know the *people* your students are,” she says.

It sounds basic but these efforts add up. Barraud notes the importance of creating a sense of connection and belonging — “an awareness of each other,” she says.

Simple things can matter. “How’s the weather?” That’s how Tom Doherty, OCT, greets each of his students as the day begins. Their answers — sunny, rainy, stormy, cloudy — correspond to how they’re feeling.

Doherty teaches kindergarten to Grade 2/3 at St. John School in Red Lake, Ont. (in the northwest region of the province), which is part of the Kenora Catholic District School Board. Having the children become mood meteorologists makes them more aware of their emotions, and more comfortable talking about them in plain language. That also helps Doherty decide when he needs to lend a hand.

He understands that the way children deal with success, failure, school and life revolves greatly around their mental health. “I’m focused on the whole of the student,” says Doherty.

Everyday interactions take a different flavour when you view them as a chance to enhance wellness too. Lindsay Drozd, OCT, puts a mental health lens on things like being visible and approachable between classes, waving and smiling at students, and asking how their day is going.

“Students need a sense that they’re wanted. Just having a caring adult is critical,” says Drozd, a student success teacher at Essex District High School, about a 20-minute drive from Windsor.

That feeling of care can come across in many ways. What if a student says they blanked on a test? Pyke says it’s important to validate emotions. So don’t solve problems for them, don’t say they probably did better than they think, and don’t tell them it’s OK because the test doesn’t count for much.

Instead, acknowledge that they’re upset. This communicates that you empathize with what they’re experiencing, without trying to talk them out of the feeling. Then ask why they think they blanked, and discuss ways to avoid that in the future.

“That can build important skills like resilience,” says Pyke. “It’s not just an opportunity to learn, but also a mental wellness moment.”

Hafiz Printer, OCT, keeps an eye on how his students perceive themselves. He says some who struggle become self-critical. They might tell themselves, “I’m not good enough” or

## Signs of concern

Educators can, through awareness, understanding, experience and initiative, keep learning environments functional, inclusive, safe and welcoming to support learning and help students to excel.

In the scope of their practice, teachers cannot diagnose ailments or propose treatment. However, teachers’ roles enable them to observe students closely. They are often the first to see changes in student behaviour.

Signs for possible concern may include:

- significant drops in school marks;
- changes to sleeping or eating habits;
- avoiding friends and family;
- frequent, angry outbursts;
- drinking a lot and/or using drugs;
- not doing things they usually like to do;
- worrying constantly;
- frequent mood swings;
- obsession or lack of concern about weight/appearance;
- lacking energy or motivation;
- feeling down; and
- risky behaviour.

See the advisory, background-er and video — with information about detection, intervention and support — at [oct-oeo.ca/StudentMentalHealth](http://oct-oeo.ca/StudentMentalHealth).



**Students might tell themselves, “I can’t do this.” Printer’s solution: add the word “yet” to those statements. Changing that language can shift a student’s mindset.**

— Hafiz Printer, OCT

## Be Aware of Boundaries

Always maintain a professional relationship with students and recognize that each situation is different. Respect students’ personal space when addressing concerns about behaviour. Ensure that they understand what you can and cannot do in your role. With respect to communicating electronically online and via social media, act online as you would as a professional in person. Observe, listen, inform and involve others, but do not counsel unless this is your role and you have the appropriate training. Beware of over-care or over-stepping boundaries. For example, be aware that some students can misconstrue help as intimacy. Consult your principal or vice-principal frequently.

Professionals also practise self-care. Recognize your stressors and know the resources that are available to you.

*Excerpted from the College advisory, Supporting Students’ Mental Health.*

“I can’t do this.” Printer’s solution: add the word “yet” to those statements. Just changing that language can shift a student’s mindset, says Printer, who teaches Grades 7–12 at the Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Board Canada.

He’s mindful of the small things that can support the classroom function and also mental health. For instance, Printer says that when students have a chance to lead some of their learning, it builds confidence and offers them more voice and choice.

Tesa Fiddler, OCT, says even something as benign as letting students pick their seats can have a mental health benefit, by helping them to self-regulate. “It gives them agency in their learning, and responsibility. Students feel more in control,” says Fiddler, co-ordinator of Indigenous education at the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board.

Mental health literacy can be woven into the curriculum too. For instance, Barraud used the J.K. Rowling book *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* to help her class explore themes of depression and anxiety. She started the lessons before the COVID-19 outbreak, then continued online, at the very time her students were facing the stress of lockdown and disruption.

This was all based on *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban: A Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) Novel Study*, developed by Dr. Mark Sinyor, a psychiatrist at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, and Donaleen Hawes, psychologist and superintendent of education for the Catholic District

School Board of Eastern Ontario.

Rowling has described her own clinical depression, and said the Dementor characters in *The Prisoner of Azkaban* can be a metaphor for her experiences. In the book, Harry faced psychological distress, and feelings of despair and isolation. Anyone can, any time. Barraud wanted her students to see how Harry dealt with and overcame those challenges.

“The kids love it — wow, Harry had these cognitive distortions,” says Barraud. “It becomes relatable. They realize they’re not alone. It’s a platform to let kids write about what they feel.”

If you’re not feeling healthy, in every way, it’s harder for learning to happen, says David Benay, OCT, a health and physical education teacher in Orléans, Ont.

At École élémentaire publique Jeanne-Sauvé, Benay teaches the children about mindful movement (such as doing a live action version of the Mastermind board game). On long walks, he asks them to get in touch with their senses — the feel of grass, the sounds of birds. Or he’ll let them organize games and choose their activities. Together, it all helps the students to focus, be in the moment, hone leadership and self-regulate.

Benay says we used to think that classroom lessons improved us above the shoulders, and the gym below the shoulders. Not so. “You can’t separate the head from the body. Both learning environments need to take care of the entire body,” he says.

Beyond day-to-day learning, other



## Drozd watches for changes that could be signs of concern, like drops in grades or attendance, high-risk behaviours, angry outbursts, or lack of motivation.

— Lindsay Drozd, OCT



aspects of the school environment can promote mental wellness.

At Drozd's school, classes painted rocks for World Kindness Day (the school's courtyard was filled with more than 500), giving teachers a chance to talk about what kindness looks like and why it's important. Drozd also points to intramural sports that build school spirit and assemblies that have themes surrounding compassion or resilience.

What do these events have in common? "Many just appear to be fun, but their value, in creating a safe and inclusive community, goes a long way to support mental health," says Drozd.

Sometimes, students need more explicit support. As the College advisory states, teachers should ask themselves what they're doing to create a caring environment in which students feel valued, engaged and respected. That's part of it. What also matters is knowing enough about mental health to remove stigmas, detect issues, and either help directly or draw on the right school, board and community resources.

Drozd holds community circles in her class, using a ball as a talking piece. Every student can respond or pass on every prompt. She chooses prompts that support mental health, even if it's just to ask what's one thing that's going well or not going well. Depending on their answers, Drozd notes which students she wants to touch base with privately.

"If a positive and trusting climate is established, students feel more comfortable sharing," Drozd says.

She, too, shares with students if

she's had a stressful week (while still maintaining healthy boundaries). As a result, "Students feel relief," says Drozd. "They learn they aren't alone."

Drozd watches for changes that could be signs of concern, like drops in grades or attendance, high-risk behaviours, angry outbursts, or lack of motivation. And she's aware of the guidance, social work and mental health professionals who can intervene. That's critical when students might be in crisis (e.g., self-harming, suicidal thoughts).

The College advisory underscores a teacher's primary job. "It's looking after a student's holistic well-being. Students can't learn if they don't have their basic needs met. Part of that is love and security," says Fiddler.

Teachers have a unique vantage point, reminds Barraud. She says school is the very place that's a hotbed of emotions, as students grapple with learning demands, peer pressure and their social and physical development. It's also where students might reveal much about the issues they're facing, in what they say or how they act. Know your student "and when something seems off," says Barraud.

Know your own capabilities too. Educators aren't mental health experts, but don't have to be to support their students. They just have to be nurturing teaching professionals.

"Kids want to be heard, so we have to become better listeners," adds Barraud. "They don't always need advice, but they do need an outlet. You don't need a psychology degree to let students know that they matter." **PS**

## Learn more

- College advisory Supporting Students' Mental Health: [oct-oeeo.ca/StudentMentalHealth](http://oct-oeeo.ca/StudentMentalHealth)
- Canadian Mental Health Association: [cmha.ca](http://cmha.ca)
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health: [camh.ca](http://camh.ca)
- Children's Mental Health Ontario: [cmho.org](http://cmho.org)
- School Mental Health Ontario: [smho-smso.ca](http://smho-smso.ca)
- Mental Health Commission of Canada: [mentalhealthcommission.ca](http://mentalhealthcommission.ca)
- SickKids, Centre for Brain & Mental Health: [sickkids.ca/Brain-Mental-Health](http://sickkids.ca/Brain-Mental-Health)
- Aboriginal Health Access Centres: [allianceon.org/aboriginal-health-access-centres](http://allianceon.org/aboriginal-health-access-centres)
- Government of Ontario: [ontario.ca/page/mental-health-services-children-and-youth](http://ontario.ca/page/mental-health-services-children-and-youth)
- TeenMentalHealth.org: [teenmentalhealth.org](http://teenmentalhealth.org)





# Recipe for Success

**TV cook and *MasterChef Canada* champion Mary Berg credits her high school history teacher, Nancy Malcolmson, with encouraging her to ask questions, think critically and go the extra mile.**

BY BILL HARRIS

**M**ary Berg, star of the cooking series *Mary's Kitchen Crush* and former champion on *MasterChef Canada*, admits she has always been “a bit of a gold-star kid. Give me a sticker? Yes! I really like a gold star.”

With all of her recent success, Berg feels it's time to give someone else a gold star. She's enthusiastically awarding it to Nancy (Turner) Malcolmson, OCT, her history teacher in Grades 10, 11 and 12 at Pine Ridge Secondary School in Pickering, Ont.

“She's one of those teachers who *could* do anything, but I couldn't imagine her doing anything else, because of how much impact she's had on so many people,” Berg says. “She was just so pumped about history! Canadian history in particular! She was so engaging and had such a presence that I think every single person in her class listened and took something home.”

Berg says that anything and everything she has done since high school has been greatly aided by the enduring lessons Malcolmson taught, which went well beyond the history curriculum. Malcolmson was a strong female role model whose influence on Berg extended into the concepts of having an analytical approach, looking at things with a critical eye, and understanding that it's fine to have opinions as long as you can back them up.

“When everyone's going through adolescence and teendom, high school teachers have so much more influence than just the subject they're teaching,” says Berg. She adds that she reached out to Malcolmson after high school as well, when she needed a confidence boost in her early days at Wilfrid Laurier University while studying for an undergrad degree (which she followed with a master's degree at the University of Toronto).

“I think she knew at the time how much she meant to me, but it would be lovely for her to know that her influence has continued,” Berg says. “Because honestly, with everything that's happening in the world right now, being able to look back critically on history and not just take it as written, but take it in the context in which it was written, is more valuable than ever, and that's something she taught.”

Malcolmson, who still is teaching at Pine Ridge, is gratified to hear such complimentary words coming from a former student. “Obviously, this is a real honour,” she says. “If I gave her some encouragement, I'm just so happy, because that's what I try to do. To know that you're still in there somewhere, being that voice, that's pretty amazing.”



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Malcolmson wants everyone to know that the Mary Berg the public sees on TV is the real Mary Berg. “That is who she is!” she says. “I cheered for her on *MasterChef Canada*, and then on her own show (*Mary’s Kitchen Crush*).

Certainly, Berg’s bubbly, energetic and warm personality comes across on television as she displays her substantial cooking skills. But looking back on what she was like when she first entered Nancy Malcolmson’s history class in Grade 10, Berg doesn’t think her subsequent “left turn,” as she puts it, into becoming a public person is something anyone could have predicted.

Berg recalls. “My high school years were spent in genuine pursuit of academia. I’ve always loved reading and researching, distilling facts, drawing connections, and then taking all those things and dialing them into a piece of work to convey how you feel.”

So Berg was inclined to like history anyway, but it turns out Malcolmson was absolutely the right teacher at the right time. “She really sparked something in me,” Berg recalls. “She was always so encouraging of our opinions and feelings, but you had to back them up. It was a ‘find what you’re interested in, but you need to give me the potatoes with the meat’ kind of thing.”

Malcolmson says one of the pillars of her teaching philosophy dates back to a specific incident when she was facing her own career choices.

While studying at the University of Toronto, Malcolmson recalls a formative moment when she considered a career in law. To help her decide, her mother arranged a meet-up and conversation with a lawyer. “He told me very nicely, but very bluntly, that I’d be limited in my career because I was a woman. When I decided I wanted to become a teacher, I never forgot that incident. I told myself, ‘I don’t ever want to be that person who limits someone, rather than giving them encouragement.’”

Malcolmson’s brand of smart encouragement opened up a whole new world of possibilities for Berg. For example, they both fondly remember a video project Berg did on the War of 1812. And true to form, both credit the other for its success.



Nancy Malcolmson, OCT, teaches history at Pine Ridge Secondary School in Pickering, Ont.

“I still have the DVD she made when she had to do a Grade 12 presentation on the War of 1812. Other students make videos, but that wasn’t enough for Mary, no, no, no,” Malcolmson says with a chuckle. “If you’re Mary, you can’t understand the War of 1812 unless you grab your mom, load her in a car, drive her down (to Queenston, Ont.) to Brock’s Monument and every other spot of historical significance, and record the whole thing, and then bring it back and create this piece of amazing teaching.”

The presentation even included a bloopers reel. “I think I cried, I was laughing so hard,” says Malcolmson. “And everybody learned something.”

But Berg insists the reason she was so enthused, and willing to even try something like that, was Malcolmson.

“Again, I wasn’t the most outgoing person, I wasn’t in drama — I painted sets for plays, but I wasn’t in them,” Berg says. “But that project on the Battle of Queenston Heights was one of my favourite projects in high school.”

While Berg remembers herself as being quiet and timid in her high school days, Malcolmson put an interesting twist on that theory. “If you had asked me then, I don’t know if I would have expected it,” Malcolmson says, referring to Berg’s TV career. “I could have seen her being a teacher. I know she says she was shy, but she could turn it on.”

Mary wouldn’t be the first to speak up, Malcolmson recalls, “but once you got her going, she had convictions, and they’d come out in the best possible way. So looking back now, I can see all the elements there. She just needed the time and the opportunity to put them together.” She adds, “She had more risk-taking in her than she realizes. She would have been good at whatever she tried.”

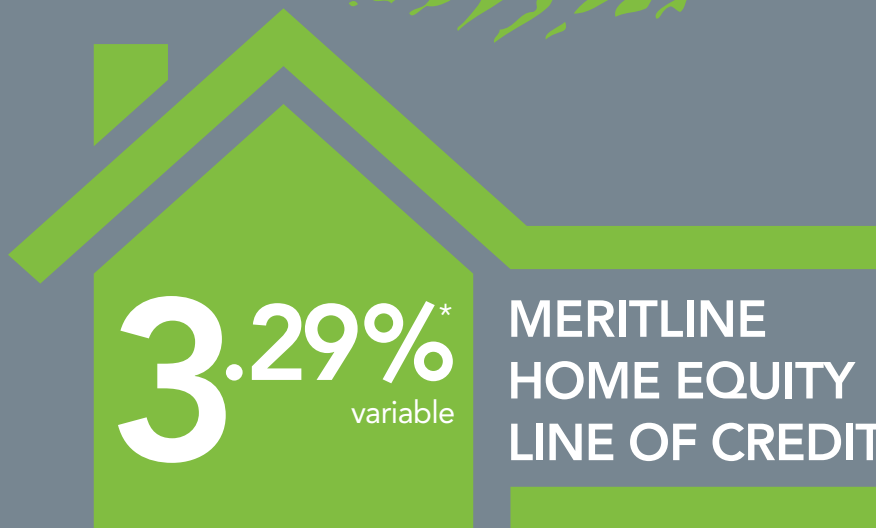
When it comes to things Berg does well, her talent for cooking — a skill that has opened doors for her in the TV world — was obvious back then, too. “I was that kid who would bake and bring things into class,” Berg admits.

Malcolmson confirms, “The baked stuff came to school a lot. She was amazing at it and she’d work it into presentations. That was just Mary.”

Between memories of high school and its projects (baked goods included) and support of current successes, there’s clearly mutual admiration between the two. Malcolmson is proud of Berg’s accomplishments. And the former student is grateful for her teacher’s influence and guidance. Gold stars, all around. **PS**

*In this profile, notable Canadians honour the teachers who have made a difference in their lives and have embraced the College’s Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession, which are care, respect, trust and integrity.*

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# Supporting Student Success

Inspiring educators offer strategies for student success in a COVID-19 world.

BY TEDDY KATZ



Diana Wang-Martin, OCT

**C**COVID-19 turned lives upside down for teachers and students alike. This pandemic has highlighted in big yellow marker the types of skills students are going to need to be successful in life and in their careers: self-reliance, creativity, critical thinking, reinvention and resilience.

Four innovative Ontario Certified Teachers share how they've taught these skills in unique ways both in and outside of their classrooms.

## BRINGING CREATIVITY INTO THE CLASSROOM

When an award-winning science teacher at Glenforest Secondary School in Mississauga, Ont., stands in front of her class, her mind is on much more than the content.

"I'm always thinking about what creative ways I can come up with to make it memorable because when I think of my high school days, I don't remember the content I learned," says Diana Wang-Martin, OCT, laughing. "I remember the projects I did and the experiences."

In 2018, Wang-Martin received the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence for her innovative methods

she's infused in her teaching over her 17-year career.

She often turns to unique hands-on experiential projects that help her students develop the skills they need to be successful.

One project last year is a case in point. The Grade 9 IB students at her high school taking science and French courses participated in an interdisciplinary activity. They were matched with younger students at a nearby French Immersion elementary school. The goal was to have the high school students teach a bilingual science lesson to the elementary kids.

The elementary school children spent a day at the high school, and the older students tested out their lessons on the youngsters. They then refined their lessons and created an illustrated children's science book featuring the elementary students as characters in the book.

"Through projects like this one, we are not just teaching kids the science content but also giving them the chance to build the skills they need," Wang-Martin explains. "By working with each other as well as with the



Terrance Saunders, OCT

## **“What I saw was the need for high expectations. There was a need to help [the students] not be afraid to shine.”**

elementary kids they’re building their leadership, collaboration and communication skills in particular.”

She adds, “Very quickly they realized that some of their lessons were too detailed or too complex. And on the spot, they had to use their creativity to bring it down to a level the elementary students could understand.”

Wang-Martin is now trying to find funding to get the illustrated book published. “I’ve been told that I’m not able to keep things small,” she laughs.

It is the same with extracurricular programs Wang-Martin spearheads. She helped form a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) club, which caught the attention of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Under her guidance, a group of students organized three mammoth conferences, including one that featured close to 1,800 students from all over Canada, with the aim to get more students interested in STEM.

One year student organizers partnered with an organization and raised about \$90,000 in sponsorship and brought in 50 speakers including industry leaders from Microsoft, Siemens and General Motors.

Another year they even invited Prime Minister Trudeau. He was unable to attend, however, the students kept reaching out to him on Twitter with Wang-Martin’s encouragement. Eventually after some back and forth with the Prime Minister’s staff, they were invited to Ottawa to meet him.

“The kids will remember that for the rest of their lives. And I will too. I think they learned from that the idea of resilience. If you really want something and you just keep pushing, it can happen.”

### **TACKLING SYSTEMIC RACISM**

Just a few months into his first job as a teacher, Terrance Saunders, OCT, was asked by his principal to come to her office at a school in a Toronto neighbourhood with one of the city’s highest child poverty rates.

The principal had visited his class and saw the Grade 1 students rotating through activities that Saunders had been trained to teach them. Trembling, he didn’t know how to respond when the principal said she had concerns. “I’m not sure there is learning taking place,” she said. “Our children need something different.”

The young teacher was devastated and near tears. But it became a defining moment. “It shifted my teaching to the realities of what do you do with children who arrive at school already marginalized,” Saunders says. “The principal just knew these children needed a special kind of teaching to show them they could be successful.”

Thirty-four years later, Saunders has found innovative ways to engage his students, many of whom are from single-parent homes.

In 2019, he was awarded a certificate of achievement from the Prime Minister’s Awards for Teaching Excellence for the way he’s turned to the power of the arts, drama and dance, and integrated that with language arts and social studies. This, in turn, has helped the Grade 6 to 8 students he now teaches build their self-esteem and confidence.

“What I saw was the need for high expectations. There was a need to help them not be afraid to shine,” Saunders says. “They bring with them the insecurity, the impact of subtle racism, and all the stereotypes of society.”



Saunders teaches his students about critical thinking and how to ask difficult questions. He uses an anti-oppression and culturally relevant framework and pedagogy with his students. He often has them examine key events in history by looking at those who were excluded and silenced — something his students can relate to from their own experience. The hope is through these stories the students will find their own voice.

The year's work culminates in the annual drama production Saunders produces. "I don't do Disney," he laughs.

One theatrical production explored the traditional narratives of Confederation amid Canada 150 celebrations by looking at it from the perspective of non-signatories to the *British North America Act*.

He included segments showcasing often forgotten contributions from Sikh- Canadian soldiers fighting for Canada, the No. 2 Construction Battalion of 1916 of African-Canadians, the plight of Indigenous youth in residential schools, and the treatment of Chinese-Canadians in the Second World War.

Another production focused on the life of Michaëlle Jean, after she became the first Black person to be named Governor General. The students researched her life as an immigrant to Canada, learned about some of the early racism she endured and performed a play about her life that the Governor General attended. According to Saunders she was moved to tears. "Her story was very powerful. It was a wonderful way to champion her as an educator. Her nomination to this post is indicative of what education can do for you," he says.

Saunders cast one of his Muslim students wearing a hijab in the role of Michaëlle Jean. "I wanted to ensure that a first generation Muslim girl wearing a hijab could envision herself as a leader."

Saunders's mother had been his Grade 2 teacher when he was growing up in the Bahamas. He never saw

himself teaching then, but "it was certainly an experience that has impacted me greatly because I saw the care and love she provided for not only me but all the students." Now the 62-year-old recognizes he found his calling. "This is my gift. A friend of mine said to me recently, you are still going to be [teaching] at 90."

### PROMOTING SELF-RELIANCE

Venessa Poirier, OCT, believes it's never too early to teach self-reliance and to empower students to take control of their own learning — even if it's before they know how to read and write.

Poirier teaches Grade 1 at École élémentaire catholique Lamoureux in Ottawa. The school is one of a handful there that uses a cutting edge approach to teaching: putting the students in charge of what they do for a few hours every day.

Poirier lets them know what they need to complete in two-week intervals, and the students decide on their own what they want to work on and progress at their own pace.

It's called "personalized learning" and it turns her classroom into a beehive of activity. The six- and seven-year-olds learn to think on their own as they walk around her classroom to get their worksheet and the tools that they need to complete the work.

"It makes the students become a lot more responsible," Poirier says. She adds, "The students are motivated by this type of learning. It is new and different for them."

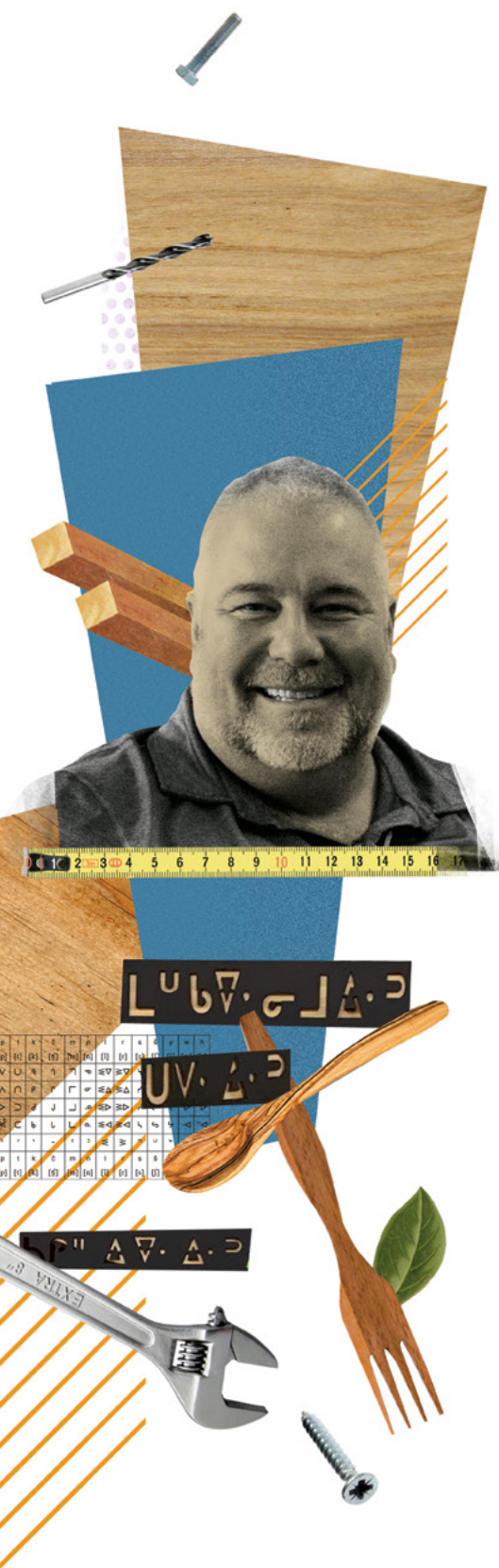
She also introduces her students to computers and using apps to complete some projects.

At the beginning of the year, the Grade 5 and 6s come into the class to show her students how to use a Chromebook for the first time. Within an hour, Poirier says her children are experts. Even more impressive is how they learn to respond when the internet is down, or when they forget to plug in their computer and have to turn to pencil and paper. "They are



Venessa Poirier, OCT





Ken Liddicoat, OCT

able to adapt to different situations. By teaching them in these different ways, they just become more resilient,” Poirier says.

That became even clearer when COVID-19 hit and many children in the province struggled when they had to turn to online learning. Poirier says her students seemed to adapt without difficulty because they were already using the technology.

Through her online teaching, Poirier is able to work with students at different learning levels. “I’m able to give a student who is struggling extra help, and with someone who is more successful, I’m able to push them further,” Poirier says.

After eight years teaching this way, Poirier has changed how she introduces new topics. At the beginning of her career, she would explain everything off the top. Now she keeps her comments to a minimum and lets the students lead the discussion. “Everything starts from their point of view and what they observe. That’s a good way to let them become more curious,” Poirier says.

## REINVENTION AND RESILIENCE

Ken Liddicoat, OCT, is a perfect example of how students can reinvent themselves. And if they have the right skills in their tool belt, they can make quite an impact.

Liddicoat had worked as an auto mechanic for 16 years when, in 2007, a friend recommended he go into teaching. Twelve years later, he became a 2019 recipient of an Indspire Award for his significant contribution to Indigenous student success.

“We’re making a difference in students’ lives,” Liddicoat says. “It’s very humbling.”

Liddicoat, who is non-Indigenous, teaches at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School in Thunder Bay, Ont., a private Indigenous school that serves 24 remote northern communities. Most of the students fly in and are boarded in the city. The school tries to teach them how to be resilient, set

goals, shut out distractions and have pride in their Indigenous roots.

Six years ago, Liddicoat led a team that fundraised and developed a First Nations Trade School within the school. They completely transformed classrooms built in the 1960s into four state-of-the-art shops for teaching manufacturing technology, transportation technology and culinary arts.

“We’re teaching them so many valuable life skills,” Liddicoat says. “Like making food, or just knowing how things work and how to fix them.” He adds, “These are skills that they can use in any industry or take back with them into their communities. The demand is there in their [northern] communities. They need cooks, carpenters or entrepreneurs ... there’s a huge need for people who work in the trades.”

Liddicoat says these are valuable jobs and the COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated that. “You can see with the pandemic — a lot of the people who work in the trades are [essential].”

Liddicoat focuses on project-based learning where students develop skills by using their imaginations to design and solve problems to build something that performs a function. One of the favourites for his students was building electric guitars.

Last year, his manufacturing students worked with the construction class to build wooden buddy benches now found throughout the school. His manufacturing students designed the metal detail that was embossed onto the benches using Oji-Cree syllabics.

One of the highlights for Liddicoat comes every year when the school travels to one of the 24 feeder communities to play hockey and broomball. Last year, they drove 18 hours to Sandy Lake First Nation where he saw one of his former students working as the school’s maintenance supervisor.

“Whether or not I had a direct influence on him choosing that as a career, being able to see him using those skills to benefit his community is a huge feel good.” **PS**



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# Confronting Inner Conflict

**When personal and professional values clash, these strategies can help teachers reflect on and move past their biases, beliefs and understanding.**

BY JENNIFER LEWINGTON

**A**s professionals, teachers commit themselves to high standards of practice to promote student success. But like the rest of society, they also draw on personal experiences, cultural traditions and, sometimes, religion to define their identity.

A collision between personal values and professional obligations poses special challenges for teachers when their personal views don't align with how they are expected to handle sensitive topics such as teaching sex-ed, managing the classroom, fostering gender and racial diversity, and promoting inclusion of learners with special needs. Learning to recognize — and resolve — inner conflicts is key to professional satisfaction, say education leaders.

"It is so important for teachers to be true to themselves, to be genuine and human," says Cathy Bruce, OCT, president of the Association of Canadian Deans of Education and dean of Trent University's School of Education and Professional Learning. "When we are not true to ourselves, we don't last in the profession."

Equally important, she adds, is for a teacher "to be a professional and to be ethical in the care of all students .... The job is to allow the student to flourish in their own way."

Sometimes teachers find themselves at odds with contentious school board policies. At Avon Maitland District School Board, recognized for its pioneering efforts to end segregation of those with physical and intellectual disabilities, veteran elementary teacher Amy Kipfer, OCT, previously worked as board coach for full inclusion, advising teachers on how to manage this new challenge.

Her first step was to listen. "You have to be open to a conversation, one-on-one with a colleague, to hear them and their concerns," she says. As a coach, she looked to a teacher's past experiences with students with special needs to identify effective pedagogical strategies. "Ultimately the teacher wants to see that the student has success in the class," she says.

That same goal motivates Christopher Alexander, OCT, a high school teacher for 11 years, conflicted over what he views as a well-intended policy that he feels sometimes misses the mark for some of his students. "Most teachers are in it to get the best for the students and the best out of students," he says. "The full-inclusion policy didn't necessarily seem, all the time, to be doing that and, in fact, often was running contrary to that."

Alexander, who teaches computer

science, robotics and business at a high school in St. Marys, Ont., cites some success stories from collaborations with education assistants assigned by the board to work with students with learning disabilities in his classroom. Still, he questions the value of full inclusion when high-needs students attend a regular class at the expense of participating in potentially beneficial physical therapy or life skill sessions outside the classroom.

Alexander and his board start in the same place — what's best for the child? — but may not always agree on the answer. In supporting all his students, Alexander adopts two strategies to ease his inner conflict. One is his willingness to experiment.

In the classroom he hangs a sign that reads "This could fail" — a motto to encourage students to try their best even when not all works out as planned. He applies that same approach to teaching all students, including those with special needs. "I still have the ability to try and give it my darndest."

The other is a commitment to transparent conversations. In job applications, he says, "I have been candid in saying 'I understand what you are doing, I understand the intent, but hire me knowing I don't think it is perfect yet.'"



A different inner conflict plays out when teachers, thrust into unfamiliar settings, struggle to recalibrate their practice. The “biggest clash” occurs when French-language teachers from big-city schools with 20 or so children in the same grade move to small-town northern Ontario, where low-enrolment schools combine students from multiple grades in the same room, says Mireille Major-Levesque, OCT, superintendent of education at Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales.

“It’s a completely different way of functioning,” she says, with teachers expected to rethink programs for “busy bees in one classroom all doing different things.”

Discipline issues also generate inner angst when experienced teachers find themselves out of step with shifting social norms.

“Sometimes teachers have varied expectations of what students need to do and how kids should be behaving,” says Amine Aidouni, a superintendent of schools with Conseil des écoles publiques de l’Est de l’Ontario. The

issue “becomes tricky,” when rigid discipline produces unintended consequences, such as penalizing young Black men more than white students for the same infraction.

Africa-born Aidouni, a former elementary and high school principal in Ottawa, recalls one incident in which some Black students engaged in a boisterous conversation in a school hallway.

“I could see some teachers looking at them uneasily as if they were doing something wrong and needed to be watched more closely,” he says. Instead, he encouraged the teachers to “laugh and joke with them, share stories and break the ice rather than adopting a suspicious attitude about what is going on.”

Such overtures, he says, build trust between teachers and students instead of stoking suspicion based on fear or misconceptions.

The Ontario College of Teachers is currently working on a new resource on anti-oppressive practices, developed by and for designers and instructors of Additional Qualification courses, with teachers invited to critically explore their beliefs and biases.

A recent peer-reviewed study by education researchers in the United States found teachers as likely as non-teachers to have racial bias, underscoring the need for teacher training and supports.

“We found, perhaps not surprisingly, that teachers have similar levels of bias [as] non-teachers,” says Natasha Warikoo, a sociologist at Tufts University and a co-researcher on the study. “We have this idea that schools can be the place where teachers are miraculously going to guide kids and create an unbiased racial democracy,” she adds. “That’s unrealistic because teachers are part of society. Why would you expect them to be different?”

She says effective teachers reflect on their grading and discipline practices — and invite colleagues into the classroom as observers — to guard against unconscious race or gender discrimination. High-performing teachers, she adds, ask: “What do I need to do as an educator to support the students in front of me?”

The answer is not always obvious.

Several years ago, Alana Butler, OCT, was an occasional teacher of social studies who worked with at-risk students at a Toronto high school. When a student rushed up to embrace her in the school hallway to celebrate an achievement, Butler was chastised by a fellow teacher for ignoring the school’s “no hugging” policy.

Butler, now an assistant professor of at-risk learners and student success at Queen’s University faculty of education, never initiated hugs but also felt it was wrong to push away a student.

“It was a dilemma for me,” says Butler, who counsels teacher candidates to follow school policy while recognizing that research finds value in “therapeutic hugs” for at-risk students.

When teachers are uneasy about meeting their obligations to teach sensitive topics, such as sex-ed and gender identity, one solution lies in tapping pedagogical resources.

Amid the 2018–19 controversy over a revised Ontario sex education curriculum, Trent University School of Education assistant professor Denise



Handlarski designed six short video tutorials with matter-of-fact tips for teachers to ease their anxiety.

But she is emphatic that, as professionals, teachers are obligated to explain uncomfortable topics. “If you are teaching Grades 1 to 6 or 7/8, you could be expected to teach sex-ed,” says Handlarski. “If that is a hard ‘no’ for you, then this isn’t the right job for you.”

That same clear-eyed commitment applies to a teacher’s professional obligations to transgender or gender non-conforming students in the classroom.

“Under the law, any person regardless of their gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation is entitled to experience our public [education] system without discrimination,” says Lee Airton, assistant professor of gender and sexuality studies in education at Queen’s University faculty of education and author of *Gender: Your Guide*, a primer on navigating gender diversity and related issues in everyday life.

A teacher with personal views on gender-neutral pronouns is also a professional required to respect a student’s wish to be addressed as he, she or they. “You as a professional teacher must do your very best to not misgender people,” says Airton.

In meeting the Ontario College of Teachers’ *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*, practitioners have a responsibility to demonstrate care, respect, trust and integrity. If asked by a student about gender identity, a teacher uncomfortable about the discussion must demonstrate “warmth and compassion” and take action, such as directing the student to school or community resources, to be of meaningful assistance. “That is the minimum you must do,” says Airton.

Struggling teachers need not feel alone, especially when part of a positive school culture, says education researcher Andy Hargreaves, a visiting professor at the University of Ottawa and research professor in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College.

“Some of the subterranean dilemmas are there and the only way to get around that is with a very strong culture of

collegiality,” he says. “Effective collaboration needs a moral purpose and usually a clear focus and structure, but it also needs solidarity. Solidarity does not mean compliance; it means high trust with high openness.”

That approach underpins the culture of Resurrection Catholic Secondary School in Kitchener, Ont., which serves students from 100 countries. Last year, Ophea (Ontario Physical and Health Education Association) recognized Resurrection for its efforts to promote student health and well-being.

Then school principal Chris Woodcroft, OCT (recently promoted to superintendent of education with the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board), credits Resurrection’s teacher-leaders for creating “a trusting environment where we can have that open dialogue with regards to what our expectations are.” The school abides by Catholic teachings while promoting gender-neutral pronouns, encouraging classroom strategies that recognize immigrant children as “we” not “them,” and fostering respect for Indigenous culture.

“We have a great staff in Kitchener, but everyone has those individual and collective moral blind spots, including unconscious personal and cultural bias,” says Lisa Hodgkinson, OCT, program lead for religion and family life at Resurrection for the past nine years and its lead teacher on Indigenous studies.

Several years ago, in a truth and reconciliation exercise for school staff, she worked with local Indigenous elders and students to present information about Indigenous culture. The initial response, a mix of interest, indifference and hostility, set the stage for uncomfortable conversations that led to a better understanding of the Indigenous world view and Canada’s legacy of colonialism.

For Hodgkinson, the experience reinforced the power of self-reflection in reconciling one’s personal beliefs, views and professional duties. “It is very important to step back, honestly assess, and not dismiss the voice you don’t want to hear,” she says. “Spend time to reflect on what your purpose is [as a teacher].” **PS**

## Helpful resources

**Here are some learning resources to aid in reconciling personal views and professional obligations:**

The Ontario College of Teachers has a website link to professional development on topics that include teacher leadership, inclusive classrooms and teaching LGBTQ students. **[oct-oeoo.ca/AQ](http://oct-oeoo.ca/AQ)**

*Gender: Your Guide: A Gender-Friendly Primer on What to Know, What to Say, and What to Do in the New Gender Culture.* By Lee Airton. **[oct-oeoo.ca/genderyourguide](http://oct-oeoo.ca/genderyourguide)**

*Collaborative Professionalism: When Teaching Together Means Learning for All.* By Andy Hargreaves and Michael T. O’Connor. **[oct-oeoo.ca/collaborativeprofessionalism](http://oct-oeoo.ca/collaborativeprofessionalism)**

Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why **[oct-oeoo.ca/helpingchildrensucceed](http://oct-oeoo.ca/helpingchildrensucceed)**

Teaching Tolerance **[tolerance.org](http://tolerance.org)**

Helping At-Risk Students Succeed **[oct-oeoo.ca/atriskstudents](http://oct-oeoo.ca/atriskstudents)**

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation offers resources on Indigenous history, residential schools and links to First Nation, Métis and Inuit organizations. **[oct-oeoo.ca/TRCresources](http://oct-oeoo.ca/TRCresources)**

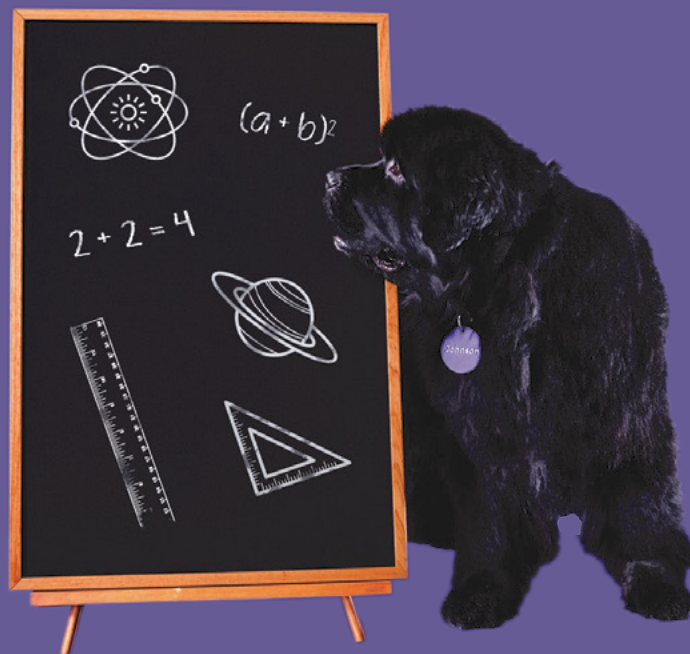
The Learning Exchange offers webinars on Indigenous-focused collaborative inquiry. **[oct-oeoo.ca/thelearningexchange](http://oct-oeoo.ca/thelearningexchange)**

The University of British Columbia produced a teacher reference booklet on decolonizing pedagogy for the Aboriginal Focus School, Vancouver School Board. **[oct-oeoo.ca/decolonizingpedagogies](http://oct-oeoo.ca/decolonizingpedagogies)**

Trent University School of Education’s Sex Education for Teachers & Students offers video series and resource links. **[oct-oeoo.ca/teachingsexed](http://oct-oeoo.ca/teachingsexed)**



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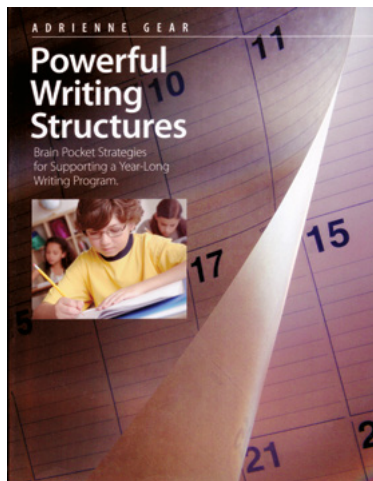
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# Your guide to recently released books

and other teaching resources.

Borrow a copy of any of the books reviewed in *Professionally Speaking* by connecting with the Margaret Wilson Library. Email [library@oct.ca](mailto:library@oct.ca), access your College account via [oct.ca](http://oct.ca), use the OCT Membership App, or call 416-961-8800 (toll-free in Ontario 1-888-534-2222), ext. 679. For reviews of French-language resources, visit [pourparlerprofession.oeeo.ca](http://pourparlerprofession.oeeo.ca).



*Powerful Writing Structures: Brain Pocket Strategies for Supporting a Year-Long Writing Program*, Pembroke Publishers, Markham, Ont., 2020, softcover, ISBN 978-1-55138-344-6, 198 pages, \$24.95, ebook: \$21.95, [pembrokepublishers.com](http://pembrokepublishers.com)

## Powerful Writing Structures

BY ADRIENNE GEAR

Using her own classroom experience and infectious love for teaching as foundation, Adrienne Gear unpacks how to implement a balanced writing program throughout an entire school year. It shows educators how to become more reflective, purposeful and intentional writing teachers and offers tools to help students become effective and clear writers.

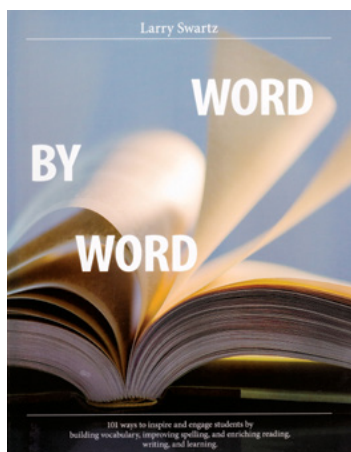
Gear's program is organized into what she refers to as "brain pockets." Within each of these "pockets" educators are given details on how to develop student understanding of various writing forms such as: personal narratives, descriptions and persuasive pieces.

In a user-friendly and simple-to-follow format, the author outlines how

to organize an effective writing program that is manageable for both the educator and students. As well, she provides practical suggestions for conferencing and coaching students while demonstrating how feedback helps students improve and grow as writers.

One of the most valuable parts of each chapter is a list of recommended picture books the author refers to as anchor texts, which could be used to introduce each writing form. Mini-lessons are connected to recommended mentor texts so that students have a clear sense of what their writing can look like. Gear also provides the reader with samples of student work and relevant blackline masters to accompany the mini-lessons.

**Janice Chisholm, OCT, is an early years reading coach, JK–Grade 2, with the Toronto District School Board.**



*Word by Word: 101 ways to inspire and engage students by building vocabulary, improving spelling, and enriching reading, writing, and learning*, Pembroke Publishers, Markham, Ont., 2019, softcover, ISBN 978-1-55138-338-5, 160 pages, \$24.95, [pembrokepublishers.com](http://pembrokepublishers.com)

## Word by Word

BY LARRY SWARTZ

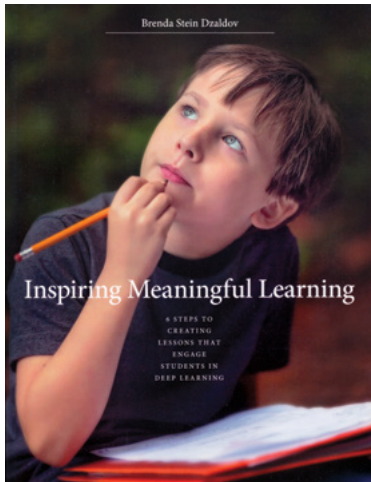
This is a delightful collection of lesson ideas for word building and word exploring. Organized by themes, this text will tantalize, intrigue and inspire language arts teachers to rush into their classrooms and showcase these strategies with students.

Swartz examines language acquisition at the level of the all-important single word. The text is chock full of playful ways to incorporate word analysis into everyday classroom activities. Each page offers exciting entry points for all ages to engage in meaningful wordplay. The suggestions are a wonderful balance of tried-and-true tactics combined with recent and relevant examples and references. There's no filler here, just page after page of a joyful celebration of words, their sounds and their meanings.

Each chapter explores a plethora of possibilities for word attack and appreciation. From poetry to spelling to texting, the offerings are practical and can be put into play in most any teaching context. The author grounds every suggestion in sound reasoning, making it clear why each activity is useful in the development of language.

*Word by Word* is an ode to words and a beautiful reminder of why we love them. It elegantly emphasizes how important words are to establishing essential reading and writing skills in the quest for deepening knowledge. Studying words in situations both familiar and foreign offers students opportunities to become their own lexicographer.

**Joe Restoule General is a learning resource teacher at Jamieson Elementary School in Ohsweken, Ont.**



*Inspiring Meaningful Learning: 6 Steps to Creating Lessons That Engage Students in Deep Learning*, Pembroke Publishers, Markham, Ont., 2018, ISBN 978-1-55138-334-7, softcover, 128 pages, \$24.95, [pembrokepublishers.com](http://pembrokepublishers.com)

## Inspiring Meaningful Learning

BY BRENDA STEIN DZALDOV

Two ongoing responsibilities for teachers are the preparing and planning of engaging lesson plans, and checking in with students to measure their understanding.

Author Brenda Stein Dzaldov addresses both of these areas in her six-step approach to creating engaging and effective lessons. Teachers are encouraged to welcome students into learning, and then share learning goals to help build a positive rapport. There are lesson outlines and templates to help draw students into topics. For example, the author highlights the importance of tapping into students' background knowledge to prompt discussion and deep thinking. For assessment, the author suggests one

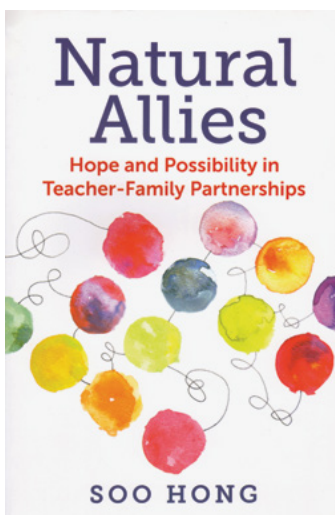
approach would be to allow students to take ownership of their learning through self-assessment.

This combination of rapport, lesson content and pedagogy are then used to inspire meaningful learning.

As the author writes, "I have seen how an organized, practical lesson design, backed by the theory around what educators know about engagement, motivation, and learning, can make our jobs much easier and truly fulfilling — because meaningful learning ensues."

The book includes sample K–8 classroom lessons, guided questions, templates and tips to use in the classroom environment.

**Teresa Ross, OCT, is a secondary school teacher with the Niagara Catholic District School Board.**



*Natural Allies: Hope and Possibility in Teacher-Family Partnerships*, Harvard Education Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2019, ISBN 978-1-68253-424-3, softcover, 232 pages, US\$33, [harvardeducationpress.org](http://harvardeducationpress.org)

## Natural Allies

BY SOO HONG

Soo Hong, an associate professor and chair of education at Wellesley College, in Massachusetts, explores the complex and historically dynamic tensions that can prevent open-minded relationships between schools and families. Grounded in rigorous research, Hong's book suggests that educational institutions, which hold the bulk of power, may create and sustain barriers to productive relationships between these groups.

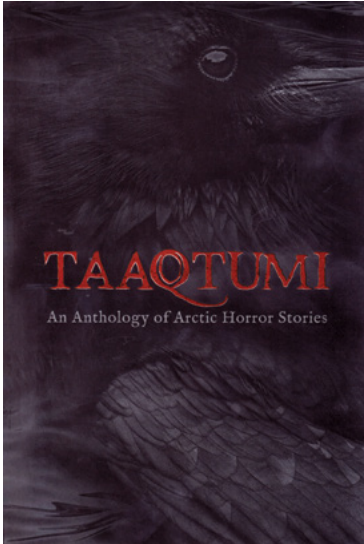
A positive educational experience for students is based on engagement and student-centred programming (versus school-centred programming), a shift from the traditional delivery model. Hong observed a handful of teachers who successfully engaged families in public, charter and pilot schools in Massachusetts and Washington, D.C.

Establishing an initial connection with families, and valuing their experiences, was critical in relationship building.

Hong suggests the first step to change is to acknowledge the systemic oppression that exists in the traditional communication model between schools and families, and to work at blowing it up. To achieve this, the book suggests, schools need to be inclusive, progressive, unique and equitable. They must offer multiple opportunities for connection, invite meaningful conversation, invest deeply in teachers and students, and value the cultural experiences of students. Trust, at the centre of it all, must be established to move relationships forward.

**Jennifer Wyatt, OCT, is head of the junior school at Trinity College School in Port Hope, Ont.**





*Taaqtumi: An Anthology of Arctic Horror Stories*, Inhabit Media, Iqaluit, 2019, ISBN 978-1-77227-214-7, softcover, 184 pages, \$16.95, [inhabitmedia.com](http://inhabitmedia.com)

## Taaqtumi

This collection's Arctic setting — steeped in isolation, cold and remoteness — compounds the dread and fear in each of its stories. The horror genre lives and breathes, allowing us to examine our own demons and fears of the unknown. *Taaqtumi* dabbles in these tropes, but also infuses some unique flavours thanks to the authors' experiences and the stories' settings.

There's something in this collection for every kind of horror buff, from tales of zombies (*ijiraujat*) to monsters and a *nanurluk* (giant polar bear). Some stories are short enough to serve as creepy read-alouds for teens while others demand a longer attention span and a deeper dive. The collection is not suited to an elementary-age audience, though, as the horror can be intense and haunting.

Secondary and post-secondary English teachers may want to select a story or two to complement a genre study. Educators interested in expanding their geographical horizons by travelling via fiction will also experience a fascinating glimpse into the northern culture and climate — while being scared out of their wits.

One compelling feature of this anthology is its modernity. Many of the tales offer a futuristic Arctic environment setting, while still being cognizant of its Indigenous past and present. Eerily enough, a couple of stories feature a post-pandemic world, suggesting some particularly prescient authors are included in the mix.

**Joe Restoule** General is a learning resource teacher at Jamieson Elementary School in Ohsweken, Ont.



*Character Powers Reading Cards: Inspirational stories that build character in kids*, self-published, 2019, softcover, ISBN 9781999219604, 27 story and character cards, \$35, [characterpowers.com](http://characterpowers.com)

## Character Powers

CREATED BY MICHAEL KRONICK

This resource of 22 story cards from Toronto educator Michael Kronick, OCT, helps show students how character education shapes how they see themselves and others. Students can identify and cultivate their strengths and build self-esteem.

Each card features a well-known person and their particular strength of character. The flip side of each card tells that person's story. Keywords highlight the character traits as well as some of the more challenging vocabulary. *Character Powers* is marketed to ages 8+, but some younger readers may find words like *echelon* or *prodigy* to be a challenge.

The card deck features a rich and inspiring group of Canadians such as Terry Fox, David Suzuki, Viola Desmond

and Shannen Koostachin. It also includes culturally diverse examples of important figures from around the world including young people such as Anne Frank and Malala Yousafzai.

Students will see how a particular character strength made a difference in the person's life, and questions on the card prompt them to consider how it can make a difference in their own.

These self-directed reading, writing and art activities would be a great addition to any junior or intermediate classroom. *Character Powers* helps students develop literacy skills, recognize and appreciate qualities in others, and build confidence.

**Caroline Pignat, OCT**, is a two-time Governor General's Award-winning author and a high school teacher with the Ottawa Catholic School Board.

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• TEL: 416-763-4121 • FAX: 416-763-5225 • [jobs@glcetschool.com](mailto:jobs@glcetschool.com)

### LOOK FOR THESE STORIES AND MORE IN THE NEXT EDITION OF

## ***Professionally Speaking:***

- Professional Advisory on professional boundaries
- OCTs working in remote communities
- Tools to support student collaboration

# Big Data, Big Changes

A high school teacher starts a computer science competition to tap students' natural data-parsing capabilities.

BY STEFAN DUBOWSKI



Gr. 12 students present their research findings on the effects of water filtration on emotions.

**THE CHALLENGE** Give students the confidence to become strong data scientists.

**THE SOLUTION** Have them compete in a two-semester “big data” challenge.

**LESSONS LEARNED** Sacha Noukhovitch, OCT, wanted to help his Grade 11 and 12 computer science students at Earl Haig Secondary School in Toronto form a stronger link between the way he believes they naturally want to learn and the activities they undertake at school.

Today's students view the world differently than previous generations, he says. “They're learning through data and information .... They trust their virtual experience sometimes more than their physical experience.

So Noukhovitch created the National High School Big Data Challenge, a two-semester competition in which students dive into data from government and non-profit sources to research real-world issues and solutions.

Participants work in teams of four, tackling topics according to whatever theme the competition has set for the

year. The environment has been the main thrust since the Canadian Commission for UNESCO started sponsoring the program in 2017.

The teams get access to publicly available scientific data starting as early as September. For the next four months they learn how to use the computer programs needed to conduct the hefty research and synthesize their findings into a compelling report. Students are paired with experts in the tools and scientific areas they're researching.

Their reports are published in the *STEM Fellowship Journal* ([journal.stemfellowship.org](http://journal.stemfellowship.org)). STEM Fellowship is the organization that runs the competition; it's a non-profit that supports studies in science, technology, engineering and math. Noukhovitch is one of its founders.)

Come February the teams are invited to a conference in-person or online to present their findings to judges from academia, science communication and policy leadership.

**OBSERVATIONS** Students tackle eye-opening topics. Last year's reports included one on the link between a

community's water quality and people's emotions, and another on solutions to ocean acidification. But even more impressive is the students' personal development. Teams often become intensely attached to the topics they researched. And they discover they can think deeply about real-world problems and develop practical responses.

“The biggest outcome of the program is a digital citizenship position that students develop through the challenge, and a computational thinking and evidence-based approach to real-world problems,” Noukhovitch says.

Noukhovitch has seen students with little computer science experience take the top prize. That's because the program is primarily about tapping their natural curiosity and directing it with data. “It is not a coding competition. It is a challenge to make sense out of big data, generate independent ideas and back them up with what this data-native generation is good at: computational thinking.” **PS**

## YOU CAN DO IT TOO!

- 1) Student teams visit the STEM Fellowship website — [oct-oeeo.ca/stemfellowship](http://oct-oeeo.ca/stemfellowship) — to learn what's involved.
- 2) October to January, teams take part in online workshops and mentorships to learn the tools and conduct research.
- 3) Teams submit their findings as reports, which are published in the *STEM Fellowship Journal*; participants are invited to present to judges.
- 4) Winners are rewarded \$1,000.

*The College's professional advisory Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media — Updated ([oct-oeeo.ca/ecommm](http://oct-oeeo.ca/ecommm)) guides members' professional judgment in the use of technology.*





# Council Election Call 2021

Notice is hereby given that an election will be held from **Monday, March 8, 2021, to Monday, April 12, 2021**, to elect 23 representatives to the College Council, in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 293/00 under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*.

## A message from the Deputy Registrar

The election for the ninth Council of the Ontario College of Teachers has begun.

Information in this issue of *Professionally Speaking* and the next two will help you to:

- understand what Council members do;
- seek a position on Council or nominate a colleague; and
- vote in your region and system/category.

You can nominate someone by completing an electronic process online. You will also be able to vote

electronically beginning on Monday, March 8, 2021 — provided you are a member in good standing as of Wednesday, February 24, 2021. A ballot in the Members' area of **oct.ca** will list all the positions for which you can vote.

The list of qualified candidates will be posted on **oct.ca** on January 8, 2021, along with a voter forum and candidate blogs. The March 2021 issue of *Professionally Speaking* will include voting information and detailed biographical information for each candidate. Candidate and voting

information will also be available on the website for reference.

Where possible, we will place ads in stakeholder publications.

An external auditor will oversee the process.

If you have a question about eligibility requirements, the nomination process or simply need more information, please call our election information line at **416-961-8800** (toll-free in Ontario **1-888-534-2222**), ext. 558.

**CHANTAL BÉLISLE, OCT  
DEPUTY REGISTRAR**

## Call for nominations

The College is accepting nominations for 23 elected Council positions. The deadline for nominations is Friday, November 27, 2020.

To serve on Council, you must:

- be a College member in good standing;
- reside in Ontario;
- meet the residential or employment requirements (see pp. 47–50) for the position you are seeking;
- not be employed by, elected or appointed as an official of one of 13 excluded provincial organizations

(see below) or serve as a president of a local branch of any of these organizations. If you are, you must resign your position before you take a seat on Council in July 2021;

- not be employed by the Ontario College of Teachers for the 12 months preceding July 1, 2021;
- be eligible to serve the entire three-year term of Council; and
- meet the terms of the conflict-of-interest guidelines set out in the regulation.

To be nominated, you must meet

all these requirements, except the one requiring you to resign a post in the organizations listed under “Exclusions.”

As part of your nomination, you must complete an attestation agreeing to meet all the requirements.

Nominations can be completed online. Go to **oct-oeo.ca/nominations**. Assistance is available by calling the election information line at **416.961.8800** (toll-free in Ontario **1.888.534.2222**), ext. 558 or via email at **youdecide2021@oct.ca**.

## Exclusions remove possible conflicts of interest

Are you employed by or serve in an elected or appointed capacity with any of the 13 provincial organizations listed here? If so, you can run for Council but must resign your post and find employment suited to your nomination category before you take your place on Council.

- Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes

- Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens
- Association des gestionnaires de l'éducation franco-ontarienne
- Catholic Principals' Council | Ontario
- Council of Ontario Directors of Education
- Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
- Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association
- Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association
- Ontario Ministry of Education
- Ontario Principals' Council
- Ontario Public Supervisory Officers' Association
- Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
- Ontario Teachers' Federation



## Mark Election 2021 on your calendar

**Twenty-three College members will be elected to the ninth Council in 2021, in accordance with the following schedule:**

**AUGUST 2020** Notice of election and call for nominations published in the September edition of *Professionally Speaking* and posted on the College's website.

**AUGUST 18, 2020** Nomination period opens. Online nomination process available on the College website.

**NOVEMBER 27, 2020** Nomination period ends at 5 p.m. EST. Candidates must submit biographical information and completed nominations.

**JANUARY 8, 2021** List of confirmed candidates posted on College's website; candidate blogs and voter forum available.

**FEBRUARY 16, 2021** Candidate biographies and voting information published in the March edition of *Professionally Speaking* and posted on the College's website.

**FEBRUARY 24, 2021** Members must be in good standing as of 5 p.m. EST to vote.

**MARCH 8, 2021** Eligible voters can cast their ballots on the College app and in the Members' area of the College website.

**APRIL 12, 2021** Election day. Voting ends at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

**APRIL 13, 2021** Ballots tabulated, candidates notified.

**APRIL 14, 2021** Election results posted on the College's website and in the June issue of *Professionally Speaking*.

## Who Serves on Council?

College members elect 23 of the 37 members of Council, the governing body of the Ontario College of Teachers.

Members are elected from Ontario's English, French, Catholic, and public elementary and secondary school systems, and serve three-year terms.

Principals and vice-principals, supervisory officers, private schools and faculties of education elect Council members to four of the 23 positions.

The provincial government appoints the remaining 14 members of Council from parents, various professions and the general public.

## Objects of the College

The College's objects, as set out in the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*, are to:

- regulate the profession of teaching and govern its members;
- develop, establish and maintain qualifications for membership in the College;
- accredit professional teacher education programs offered by post-secondary educational institutions;
- accredit ongoing education programs for teachers offered by post-secondary educational institutions and other bodies;

- issue, renew, amend, suspend, cancel, revoke and reinstate Certificates of Qualification and Registration;
- provide for the ongoing education of members of the College;
- establish and enforce professional standards and ethical standards applicable to members of the College;
- receive and investigate complaints against members of the College and to deal with discipline and fitness to practise issues;
- develop, provide and accredit educational programs leading to Certificates of Qualification

additional to the certificate required for membership, including but not limited to the Certificates of Qualification as a supervisory officer; and to issue, renew, amend, suspend, cancel, revoke and reinstate such additional certificates;

- communicate with the public on behalf of the members of the College; and
  - perform such additional functions as are prescribed by the regulations.
- In carrying out its objects, the College has a duty to serve and protect the public interest.



## What a Council member does

**C**ouncil ensures that policies are established in accordance with the College's objects as set out in the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*.

Council provides oversight and direction to the Registrar, the College's chief executive officer.

During their three-year term, Council members protect the public interest, serve their profession, grow as leaders and develop skills in board governance.

The Chair of Council is a full-time position and is responsible for representing Council publicly as well as presiding over Council and Executive Committee meetings. There are at least four Council meetings each year. Each Council member attends Council meetings and serves on at least two committees, each of which meets three or four times a year. All committees of Council are composed of elected and appointed members. Committees such as Accreditation and Discipline require additional time to serve on panels. Most committee chairs also serve on the Executive Committee, which meets about five times a year.

On average, Council members dedicate 25 to 60 days a year to Council business, depending on their committee assignments. Meetings are held in Toronto.

The College provides thorough education sessions to orient new Council members to the College and its activities, current issues, policies and procedures before they assume their Council and committee responsibilities.

The College reimburses an elected member's employer for the member's absence while attending Council and committee meetings during regular workdays. If summer meetings are required, the member is compensated directly at a rate of \$150 per day. Travel, accommodation and meal expenses are reimbursed.

### UNDERSTAND COMMITTEE ROLES

Three videos are being created to help you better understand Council's governance roles and responsibilities. You can watch them at [oct-ooeo.ca/councilelection2021](https://oct-ooeo.ca/councilelection2021).

The first provides an overview of the roles of the Investigation, Discipline and Fitness to Practise committees. The second examines the responsibilities of the Standards, Accreditation and Accreditation Appeals committees. The third reviews the work of the Finance and Governance committees.

All Council and committee members have a duty to serve the public interest and each committee has a mandate determined by the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*, regulations and bylaws.

## What position are you seeking?

**E**ach of the 23 elected positions represents a separate electoral category to ensure a balance of geographic, elementary, secondary and system perspectives. Each position also has its own nomination criteria.

### THERE ARE:

- 12 regional positions (reflecting six geographic regions in Ontario);
- seven system positions (reflecting English public, English Roman Catholic, French public and French Roman Catholic school systems in Ontario);
- one principal/vice-principal position;
- one supervisory officer position;
- one faculty of education position; and
- one private school position.

To serve on Council, you must be in good standing with the College, reside in Ontario and — if you're seeking a regional or system seat — hold a regular teaching assignment in an elementary or secondary school.

All regional and system positions are open to full-time staff. Six of the regional positions are open to regular part-time or occasional teachers. Part-time and occasional teachers are eligible to serve if they teach for at least 10 days during each year of their term of office. A partial day of teaching is considered a full day for these purposes. If you are elected to a part-time position, you will need to remain employed and provide evidence of 10 teaching days each year to stay in office. If you are a guidance counsellor, librarian, mentor or consultant directed to supervise or co-ordinate subjects or programs, you are considered to be providing instructional services and are eligible to run for regional and system positions.

To be eligible to run for one of the category positions (principal/vice-principal, supervisory officer, faculty of education and private school), you are required to be qualified for and employed in that position.

You are not eligible to serve on Council if you are employed by or are an elected or appointed official of any of the 13 organizations at the provincial level or serve as a president of one of these organizations at the local level (see "Exclusions" on p. 45). If you do occupy one of these positions, you may run for election but must resign your position and obtain the necessary employment before you can take your place on Council.

If you are a former employee of the Ontario College of Teachers, you are eligible to run for a position if at least 12 months have elapsed between when you last worked at the College and the start of the Council term on July 1, 2021. A College member who previously served on Council is eligible to run if at least three years has elapsed since they last served on Council.

You must be eligible to serve the entire three-year term of Council. Those who sign your nomination papers — your nominators — must meet the same eligibility requirements for the position.

You cannot stand for election for more than one position.

# Regional positions

You can run for one of these 12 regional positions provided:

- you are a College member employed full time (FT) or part time (PT) as a classroom teacher by a district school board, school authority, private school or the Provincial Schools Authority;
- you live in one of the municipalities or areas specified for each region.

## SOUTHEAST REGION — PT/FT SOUTHEAST REGION — FT

The Southeast Region includes: Ottawa, Prescott, Russell, Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Hastings, Lennox, Addington, Lanark, Renfrew, Leeds, Grenville, Frontenac and Prince Edward.

## SOUTHCENTRAL REGION — PT/FT SOUTHCENTRAL REGION — FT

The Southcentral Region includes: Northumberland, Kawartha Lakes,

Peterborough, Clarington, Simcoe, Haliburton, Muskoka, Dufferin, Wellington, Peel (including Mississauga), Halton, Waterloo, Niagara and Hamilton.

## SOUTHWEST REGION — PT/FT SOUTHWEST REGION — FT

The Southwest Region includes: Brant, Essex, Lambton, Elgin, Middlesex, Huron, Perth, Bruce, Grey, Oxford, Haldimand, Norfolk and Chatham-Kent.

## CENTRAL REGION — PT/FT CENTRAL REGION — FT

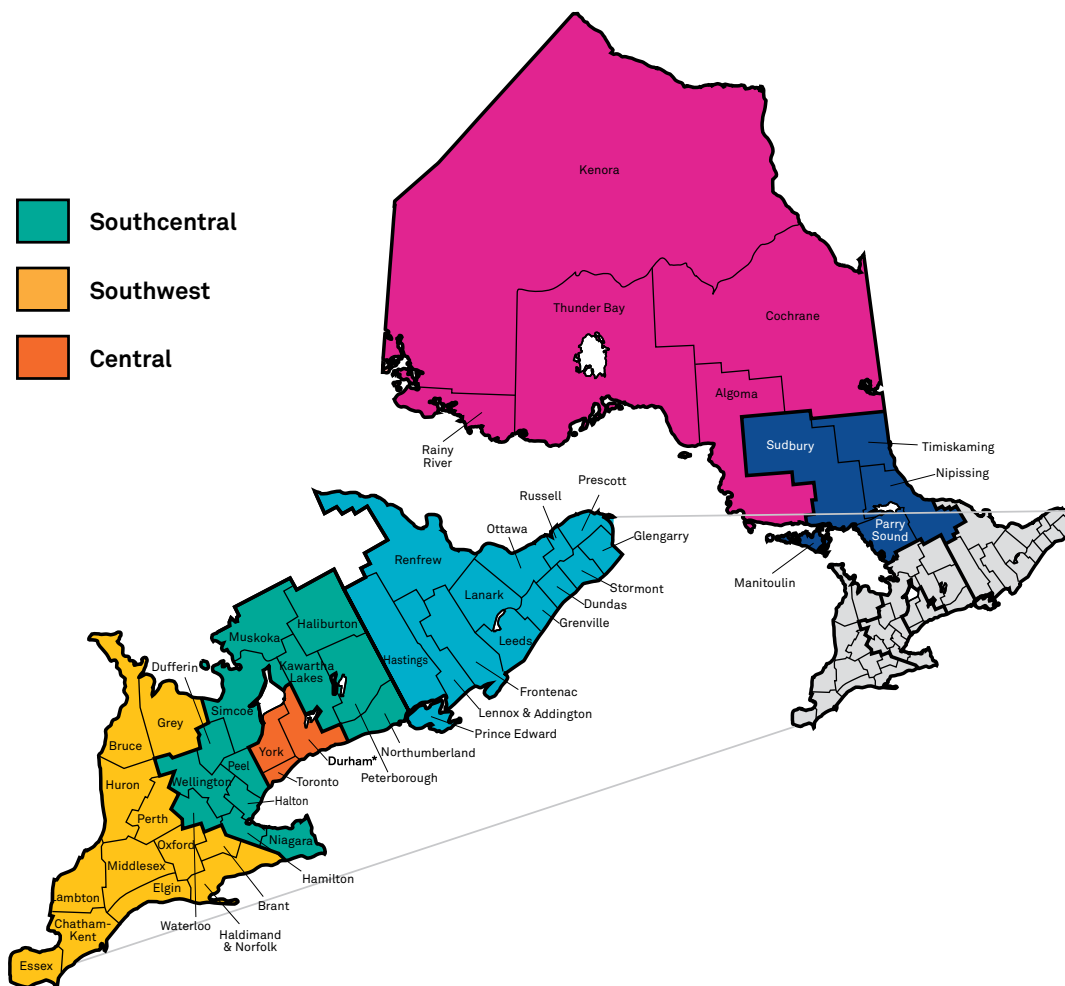
The Central Region includes: Toronto, York and Durham (excluding Clarington, which is in the Southcentral Region).

## NORTHWEST REGION — PT/FT NORTHWEST REGION — FT

The Northwest Region includes: Algoma, Cochrane, Kenora, Rainy River and Thunder Bay.

## NORTHEAST REGION — PT/FT NORTHEAST REGION — FT

The Northeast Region includes: Sudbury, Manitoulin, Timiskaming, Nipissing and Parry Sound.



# System positions

If you are a College member who is not employed as a vice-principal, principal or supervisory officer by a private school or by a faculty of education as a tenured or tenure-track faculty member, you are eligible to run for the provinciewide position related to the system (reflecting English public, English Roman Catholic, French public and French Roman Catholic school systems) in which you are employed full time. You must be part of your employer's regular teaching staff.

## ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PUBLIC BOARD ELEMENTARY

You may run for this position if you are employed full time as a qualified elementary classroom teacher by an English-language public district school board, the Provincial Schools Authority or a school authority, other than a Roman Catholic school authority or a board of a secondary school district. You may not be employed in a French-language instructional unit.\* You are also required to hold the qualifications required to teach a course or class in the Primary or Junior division or in the first two years of the Intermediate division.

## ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PUBLIC BOARD SECONDARY

You may run for this position if you are employed full time as a qualified secondary classroom teacher by an English-language public district school board, public school authority or the Provincial Schools Authority. You may not be employed in a French-language instructional unit.\* You are also required to hold the qualifications required to teach a course or class in the last two years of the Intermediate division or in the Senior division.

## ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ROMAN CATHOLIC BOARD ELEMENTARY

You may run for this position if you are employed full time as a qualified elementary classroom teacher by an English-language Roman Catholic district school board or a Roman

Catholic school authority, and are not employed in a French-language instructional unit.\* You are also required to hold the qualifications required to teach a course or class in the Primary or Junior division or in the first two years of the Intermediate division.

## ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ROMAN CATHOLIC BOARD SECONDARY

You may run for this position if you are employed full time as a qualified secondary classroom teacher by an English-language Roman Catholic district school board. You are also required to hold the qualifications required to teach a course or class in the last two years of the Intermediate division or in the Senior division.

## FRENCH-LANGUAGE ROMAN CATHOLIC BOARD ELEMENTARY

You may run for this position if you are employed full time as a qualified elementary classroom teacher by a French-language Roman Catholic district school board or school authority and work in a French-language instructional unit.\* You are also required to hold the qualifications required to teach a course or class in the Primary or Junior division or in the first two years of the Intermediate division.

## FRENCH-LANGUAGE ROMAN CATHOLIC BOARD SECONDARY

You may run for this position if you are employed full time as a qualified secondary classroom teacher by a French-language Roman Catholic district school board. You are also required to hold the qualifications required to teach a course or class in the last two years of the Intermediate division or in the Senior division.

## FRENCH-LANGUAGE PUBLIC BOARD ELEMENTARY OR SECONDARY

You may run for this position if you are employed full time as a qualified elementary or secondary classroom teacher by a French-language public district school board or the Provincial Schools Authority at Centre Jules-Léger or a public school authority that operates a French-language instructional unit.\* You are also required to hold the qualifications required to teach a course or class in the Primary, Junior, Intermediate or Senior division.

*\*French-language instructional units do not include immersion programs. If you are not certain about whether you are part of a French-language instructional unit, contact the election information line.*



## Check Out Our Video

Interested in running for Council elections? Watch this short video at [oct-oeeo.ca/councilelection2021](http://oct-oeeo.ca/councilelection2021) to find out about how you can serve your profession, the nomination process and other important information.



## Committing to Council

### What is the time commitment for Council members?

Council members attend a minimum of four Council meetings a year. Members also serve on at least two of Council's statutory, standing or special committees. Some committees require additional panel work from its members. Bilingual Council members may be asked to serve on additional committees or panels because of their French-language fluency. Chairs of Council committees usually have additional responsibilities. Council members require 25 to 60 days of leave per school year on average. On occasion, work may take place on weekends and during the summer.

### How long is the term of office?

The term of office for Council is three years.

### When would I assume responsibilities as a Council member?

If elected in April 2021, you will take office on July 1, 2021. You will be expected to attend a two-day orientation session from May 27–28, 2021. The inaugural meeting of the ninth Council will take place on Tuesday, July 6, 2021. Your term of office will continue until June 30, 2024.

## Category positions

If you are a College member who is qualified and employed in any of the following categories, you are eligible to run for the provincewide position related to your area of qualification and employment.

### PRINCIPAL/VICE-PRINCIPAL

You may run for this position if you are qualified (holding Parts I and II of the Principal's Qualification program) and employed as a principal or vice-principal and are not employed at a private school.

### FACULTY OF EDUCATION

You may run for this position if you are employed by a post-secondary institution at a school or faculty of education offering programs accredited by the College and are in a tenured or tenure-track position.

### PRIVATE SCHOOL

You may run for this position if you are employed by a private school that has submitted to the Ministry of Education a current notice of intention to operate a private school. (Private school classroom teachers who are members of the College may also run for regional positions.)

### SUPERVISORY OFFICER

You may run for this position if you are qualified and employed as a supervisory officer.



## See the candidates in our March issue

Watch for the March 2021 issue of *Professionally Speaking* for a complete and alphabetized list of all candidates by position.

Candidate information will also be posted to the College's website by **February 16, 2021**.

### THIS WILL INCLUDE:

- biographical statements;
- attestations;
- photos; and
- information from their nominations.

Candidate and nominators' names must reflect what is on the College's

public register.

You will also be able to learn more about those running for election in the categories relevant to you via the College's website, candidate blogs and an online voter forum.

The list of confirmed candidates will appear on **oct.ca** on January 8, 2021, along with candidate blogs and the online forum.

### YOUDECIDE 2021 INFORMATION

Nomination procedures have been developed in accordance with Regulation 293/00.

The procedures are available to College members on the College's website.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

### ELECTION INFORMATION

**416.961.8800** (toll-free in Ontario **1.888.534.2222**), ext. 558  
Email: **youdecide2021@oct.ca**

# Council decisions shape the teaching profession

The colleagues you nominate in the 2021 Council election — 23 positions are now open — will be responsible for helping to shape the future of Ontario education in the public interest.

The College is accepting nominations until November 27, 2020.

Nominees are people just like you. They share the same professional dedication and commitment to providing quality learning experiences for students. And, like you, they care about professionalism in teaching.

If you haven't considered running for Council before, think about it now. You can:

- bring your classroom and school-based experience to bear on the policy decisions Council makes to continuously improve the teaching profession;
- share your knowledge, insights and the benefits of the relationships you've developed to expand your horizons in the interest of the profession.

As a member of Council, you — or a colleague you nominate and help to elect — might serve on the Accreditation Committee. You could directly influence the classroom readiness of new teachers who will work alongside you for years to come via decisions that affect the preparation they receive in pre-service programs.

Or you might serve on an Investigation, Discipline or Fitness to Practise committee and be a key figure in how the College responds to complaints about individual members.

The Investigation Committee determines how the College responds to the 150-plus complaints it receives annually. Discipline Committee or Fitness to Practise Committee panels

hear allegations about more than 100 members per year to determine if they will be allowed to continue in the profession.

Council members serving on the Standards of Practice and Education Committee are responsible for ensuring that ethical and practice standards influence the quality of teaching in Ontario.

When *Professionally Speaking* drops into your mailbox, you are receiving an award-winning magazine whose overall editorial policy and content have been reviewed and approved by the Editorial Board, which comprises Council members. The board reviews all material gathered for each issue and determines what is published.

As a Council member you will play an active role in reviewing the content of Additional Qualification courses and a vast range of issues concerning teachers' qualifications. You will also participate in decisions on issues such as the transparency of the College's processes.

You can expect to discuss the role the College has in advancing the teaching profession. Each year, you will also, either as a member of the Finance Committee or as a member of Council, decide on the annual budget and the membership fee that funds the College's work.

These are important topics for every College member. You already debate many of these issues regularly with your colleagues. At least one might give you pause to consider actively participating.

It's your College. Run, nominate, vote.

You owe it to yourself as a professional, to your colleagues and to the teaching profession to play your part.



## Tour the College

If you're considering whether to run as a candidate in the 2021 Council election, take a video tour of the College to see what we do at

**[oct-eeo.ca/collegetour](http://oct-eeo.ca/collegetour)**.

You can view the Council members at work, the College's call centre, hearing rooms, the Margaret Wilson Library and the departments that support Council's work.

## Submit more than the minimum

Even though you only need 10 qualified nominators, it's best to submit a few more.

Each person who nominates you must also be a current member of the College and eligible to seek election in your category. This means they must have the same employment and qualifications required for the position you are seeking.

By adding a couple of extra qualified nominators (up to a maximum of 15), you'll be covered in the event that one or more is judged ineligible.

Ensure that your nominators are in good standing by checking our public register at **[oct.ca](http://oct.ca)** under Find a Teacher.

# Nominations at a glance

## 1 Check your eligibility

- Are you in good standing?  
You are required to be a College member in good standing to stand for nomination.
- Do you meet the residential and/or employment requirements for the position you seek?



## 2 Complete the steps of the nomination process online.



## 3 Get at least 10 colleagues to support your nomination.

- Check the College website to ensure that each nominator is in good standing.
- Ensure that each nominator is eligible to run for the position you seek.
- Make sure that none of your nominators has supported the nomination of any other person seeking the same position.



## 4 Write your biography.



## 5 Provide a photo of yourself.



## 6 Read the attestation carefully before confirming.



## 7 Complete all requirements and submit your nomination package no later than 5 p.m. EST on November 27, 2020.



*Please note: Strict election timelines prevent the College from accepting nominations after this date.*



## Nominees required to attest

**W**hen you stand for Council election, your nomination package must include a signed statement indicating that you are eligible for the position and that the information in your submission is accurate.

You must attest that you are prepared to take the oath of office and to disclose whether you are employed by or an elected or appointed official of one of 13 excluded organizations (see p. 45). If you are, you must affirm that you are prepared to resign from any such position held at the local or provincial level and obtain the necessary employment required by the position you are seeking before taking office as a member of Council.

## Check it out

Every election a candidate submits a nomination in which one or more of their nominators are ineligible.

Your nominators must be able to run for the position you are seeking. They must not have nominated anyone else for that position.

**To be safe, why not ask more than 10 colleagues — the minimum requirement — to sign and support your nomination.**

## Know the nomination requirements

**If you're seeking nomination for one of the 23 available positions on Council, be mindful of the requirements.**

**1) Review the nomination requirements carefully.** The information you are asked to provide is specified in the regulation and intended to help electors choose the best candidates.

**2) Acquire supporting signatures from at least 10 College members who are eligible to run for the position you are seeking.** For example, if you are running for the English-Language Public Board Elementary position, you must have 10 or more people support your nomination who also qualify to run for that position. Please note: *A member can nominate only one colleague per position.* However, members can nominate other colleagues for any other position they are eligible to seek. The names and membership numbers of each of your nominators will be published in the March 2021 issue of *Professionally Speaking*.

**3) Submit your nomination no later than 5 p.m. EST on Friday, November 27, 2020.** The College will review each nomination to ensure that the candidate and nominators meet the position requirements. Each candidate will receive written confirmation of receipt of their nomination. Nominees will be notified whether they are a confirmed candidate within 10 working days. A list of confirmed candidates will appear on the College's website in January 2021 and in *Professionally Speaking's* March 2021 issue.

Learn more about the nomination process and eligibility requirements in the Question and Answer section on pages 55 and 56.

You can also call the College's election information line at **416.961.8800** (toll-free in Ontario **1.888.534.2222**), ext. 558 or send an email to [youdecide2021@oct.ca](mailto:youdecide2021@oct.ca).

## Follow. View. Visit. Share.

Connect with  
your College



[oct-oeoo.ca/pi](https://oct-oeoo.ca/pi)



[oct-oeoo.ca/fb](https://oct-oeoo.ca/fb)



[oct-oeoo.ca/ig](https://oct-oeoo.ca/ig)



[oct-oeoo.ca/li](https://oct-oeoo.ca/li)



[oct-oeoo.ca/yt](https://oct-oeoo.ca/yt)



[oct-oeoo.ca/tw](https://oct-oeoo.ca/tw)

**OCT.CA**



Ontario  
College of  
Teachers

Setting the  
Standard for  
Great Teaching

If you are unsure about eligibility, please call the information line at

**416.961.8800**

(toll-free in Ontario  
**1.888.534.2222**), ext. 558



## Voting is easy

**Voting in the 2021 Council election is easy because you will:**

- receive a streamlined ballot to vote for candidates in the school system where you work;
- be able to cast up to four votes including:
  - two regional positions based on where you live plus one additional category position (if applicable); or
  - up to two system positions (reflecting English public, English Roman Catholic, French public and French Roman Catholic school systems) depending on the system in which you work.
- If you are unemployed or not employed in education, you will continue to receive ballots for the two regional positions based on where you live.

### ADDITIONAL RULES

- All Provincial Schools Authorities are recognized as eligible employers.
- Former Ontario College of Teachers employees can seek election to Council provided their employment has ended at least 12 months before the Council term starts on July 1, 2021.
- A College member who previously served on Council is eligible to run if at least three years have elapsed since they last served on Council.
- A current Council member is eligible to run if they will be eligible to serve the entire term of the next Council without exceeding the maximum consecutive service allowed under the College's Act.

## Oath/affirmation of office

**B**efore they can take their seat on Council, elected members and provincial appointees must take an oath or affirmation. Failure to do so renders them ineligible to serve.

The College makes a Commissioner of Oaths available to swear in new Council members.

### THE OATH/AFFIRMATION IS

*I will faithfully and impartially, to the best of my knowledge and skill, perform the duties of a member of the Council of the College and any committees of the Council on which I sit.*

*In so doing, I will ensure that the guiding principle in the performance of my duties is the duty to serve and protect the public interest, which is my duty as a Council member and a duty of the College.*

*I will perform the duties of my position without favour or ill will to any person or entity.*

*I will ensure that other memberships, directorships, voluntary or paid positions or affiliations that I may hold will not interfere or conflict with the performance of my duties as a Council member.*

*So help me God.*

(The last line is omitted in an affirmation.)

# Questions and Answers

**L**ooking to run in the 2021 Council election? Have someone else in mind to nominate? Wondering whom you can vote for?

The following series of frequently asked questions and answers will address some of your most common queries.

If you're thinking about running or nominating someone to stand for office, it's best to begin early. It can take a little time to obtain the right nominators to properly complete and submit your nomination. The good news is that you can apply online at your own pace. Complete your nomination at [oct-oeeo.ca/nominations](https://oct-oeeo.ca/nominations).

We'll also send election updates to all *Your College and You* subscribers. If you haven't already, please sign up in the Members' area on [oct.ca](https://oct.ca) to get on the list.

## **I thought that the governance model was changing. Why are we even having an election?**

Council has debated and approved recommendations to the Ministry to replace elections in favour of selection processes, which clearly define the roles, expectations and competencies of Council and committee members. It is important to note that changes to the governance structure require legislative change, and this has not occurred. Until the provincial government introduces legislation that may alter the current configuration and responsibilities of the governing Council, the College is responsible for staging an election to fill 23 of the 37 existing Council positions. The College is bound by the *Ontario College of Teachers Act* and the election regulation made under it.

If the province introduces legislation to reform the College's governance structure, the College may be required to cancel the 2021 election or truncate the three-year term of the next Council.

## **If I am elected, how long will I be a member of Council?**

Under the current legislation, Council members are elected for a three-year term. As noted, if the legislation changes, it is possible that term lengths could change.

## **I have a busy lifestyle. Why should I consider standing for Council election?**

College Council sets the policies and priorities that regulate your profession. Council members are people like you — teachers, school and board administrators, and parents from across Ontario, who share your commitment to students' well-being and make decisions on matters of importance to the profession.

## **How do I know if I am eligible to stand for election to the College Council?**

You are eligible to run if you are a College member in good standing, reside in Ontario and meet the specific eligibility requirements for a position.

Candidates for the regional and system positions (reflecting English public, English Roman Catholic, French public and French Roman Catholic school systems) must be employed by their board as regular teaching staff on a full-time (most positions) or part-time basis (some positions). Elected Council members may not hold or be seconded to any other position.

## **Can I run for more than one position?**

No. You can stand for nomination in one category only.

## **How many positions are available and what are the eligibility requirements?**

There are 23 positions. Four are designated for supervisory officers, principals/vice-principals, faculties of education and private schools. Six regional and seven system positions are open to full-time regular teaching staff. Six regional positions are open to full-time as well as part-time regular teaching staff.

## **Are there exceptions to the eligibility requirements?**

Candidates who are employed by or hold an elected or appointed position in one of 13 specified federation, professional or government organizations at the local or provincial level (see p. 45) must sign an attestation that they will resign from that position if elected to Council.

A College member who previously served on Council is eligible to run if at least three years have elapsed since they last served on Council.

A current Council member is eligible to run if they will be eligible to serve the entire term of the next Council without exceeding the maximum consecutive service allowed under the College's Act.

## **Are employees of the College eligible to run for office?**

No. In addition, a former employee of the College is only eligible if at least 12 months have elapsed between when they last worked at the College and the start of the Council term.

## **Can I be a candidate if I am a College member in good standing and I am retired or teach occasionally?**

If you taught 10 days in the 12 months preceding November 27, 2020, you can seek nomination for one of the six regional positions open to part-time teachers.

If you are elected to that position, you must continue to teach at least 10 days in each year of the Council term.

## **Some positions are open only to full-time classroom teachers. How are full time and part time defined?**

A full-time teacher is one who is employed as part of any employer's regular teaching staff and who is assigned in a regular timetable to provide instruction to elementary or secondary school students on a full-time basis.

A College member who would otherwise be a full-time classroom



teacher but who is on parental, sick, family or compassionate leave is considered a full-time teacher.

A part-time teacher is one who is employed as a part of any employer's regular teaching staff and assigned in a regular timetable to instruct elementary or secondary school students on less than a full-time basis or to teach on an occasional basis.

A College member who would otherwise be a part-time classroom teacher but who is on parental, sick, family or compassionate leave is considered a part-time teacher.

Part-time teachers must teach a minimum of 10 days per year during their Council term.

#### **Can I run for election if I am on a negotiated leave?**

No. Only those on parental, sick, family or compassionate leave are eligible to run. No other leaves, such as four-over-fives or educational leaves, qualify.

#### **Are teacher-librarians, guidance counsellors, consultants and other College members who are employed full or part time eligible to stand for election?**

Yes. They are considered classroom teachers and are eligible to run for positions open to those who are full-time or part-time classroom teachers.

#### **How do I get nominated?**

Submit a completed nomination package to the Registrar by 5 p.m. EST on November 27, 2020. Submit the completed package online at [oct-oeeo.ca/nominations](https://oct-oeeo.ca/nominations).

You will need the signatures of 10 College members who, at the time of signing, are eligible to run for the position you are seeking and who have not signed the nomination form of anyone else for the same position.

Your name and your nominators' names must reflect what is on the College's public register.

#### **When will I know whether I have been confirmed as a candidate?**

The Registrar will respond to your nomination in writing within 10 business days.

#### **As an official nominee, can I circulate campaign information through the College?**

Candidates are required to submit biographical information that will appear in the March 2021 issue of *Professionally Speaking* and on the College's website. All candidate information will be available in English and French. The College will translate the material.

Candidates are required to supply information about their teaching experience, current teaching assignment, federation experience and involvement (if any), other education-related activities or memberships, participation in professional development and personal professional interests, plus a statement describing their understanding of the duty to serve and protect the public interest.

Candidates will also be able to communicate with the electorate using their own blog accessible via the College website, and will have the chance to take part in an online forum where members can post questions and comments. Improvements have been made to the blog and online forum since the last election. Confirmed candidates will receive information on these options.

#### **Are elected Council members paid?**

If you are an elected Council member and you are on a leave of absence to attend a Council or committee meeting, the College will reimburse your employer for salary expenses incurred in the hiring of a temporary replacement. If you are required to attend a meeting during a vacation period, you will receive an honorarium of \$150 per day of service or \$75 for meetings and preparation time that are less than three hours. The College

also reimburses members for expenses incurred during College-related business.

#### **How can I get more information as a potential candidate?**

If you are thinking about seeking a Council position, please visit the College's website at [oct.ca](https://oct.ca) for the latest election news, or call the College at **416.961.8800** (toll-free in Ontario **1.888.534.2222**), ext. 558 or email [youdecide2021@oct.ca](mailto:youdecide2021@oct.ca).

#### **If I've served on Council for two consecutive terms, can I run again in 2021?**

No. One full term of Council (three years) must elapse before you can run again.

#### **I work for a Provincial Schools Authority. Am I eligible to run for election?**

Yes. Election legislation recognizes all Provincial Schools Authorities as eligible employers.

#### **There are too many positions to vote for and candidates I don't know. How can I be an informed voter?**

The College is using every available platform — including its website, *Professionally Speaking*, e-newsletters, videos, webinars and social media — to provide election information. You can also call our information line or access [oct-oeeo.ca/councilelection2021](https://oct-oeeo.ca/councilelection2021).

#### **If I am a candidate in the next election, who is going to vote for me?**

Voters who live in your region and work in your school system (or additional category) position will be voting for you.

#### **I am employed as a part-time vice-principal. Am I eligible for the principal/vice-principal position?**

You are eligible to run for the position if you hold the required qualifications (PQP Part I and Part II) and are part of your employer's regular teaching staff and assigned on a full-time or less than full-time basis to work as a vice-principal or principal.

## Council has a duty to serve the public interest

The College exists to regulate Ontario's teaching profession so that the public can be confident that practitioners put students' well-being and academic success first.

Elected and publicly appointed Council members — teachers, administrators, parents and others — make decisions as a Council based on the public's shared interest in supporting students and strengthening the profession.

To describe their understanding of that duty, candidates must include a statement in their nomination packages that describes what they believe it means to serve and protect the public interest. Candidates

must also disclose whether they hold any elected or appointed position in one of 13 excluded organizations (see p. 45) and to attest that they will resign from that position if they are elected.

Council members put their service to the public above all other interests. Accordingly, each member of Council is required to take an oath of office or affirmation (see p. 54) and promise in writing not to take direction from any other organization. Those elected will also be required to report, in writing to the Registrar, all funding they may have received related to the election process, including amounts and sources.



## Préférez-vous nous lire en français?

**Rien de plus facile!**

Pour mettre à jour vos coordonnées, il suffit de vous rendre dans la section réservée aux membres du site de l'Ordre à [oeeo.ca](http://oeeo.ca).

## Cast your votes electronically

You can vote electronically to elect members to the ninth Council — provided you are a member in good standing with the College as of 5 p.m. EST on Wednesday, February 24, 2021.

The election will be conducted entirely online via the Members' area of the College website at [oct.ca](http://oct.ca). You can vote there or via the College's app.

It's simple: Log in to your Members' area account from the main page of the College website and follow the instructions. If you have not opened an account, you can do so now. Just visit [oct.ca](http://oct.ca) and click on the Members tab at the top of the page.

Election ballots will be available in the Members' area from **9 a.m. EST on March 8, 2021, until 11:59 p.m. EDT on April 12, 2021**, after which the voting function will be removed. You will have access to a ballot that includes

all of the positions for which you are eligible to vote.

Ballots will be tabulated and verified on **April 13, 2021**, and the results will be posted to the College website on **April 14, 2021**.

### SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATIONS ELECTRONICALLY

You can submit your nomination electronically through a simple online process.

Nominations are due before 5 p.m. EST on Friday, November 27, 2020. You can start the process as early as August 18, 2020, by going to [oct-oeeo.ca/nominations](http://oct-oeeo.ca/nominations) and creating an account.

That account will allow you to prepare and compile the information you need for your application — at your own pace and when your schedule allows. Simply follow the instructions for each step.

You can edit your biography, upload your photo, start collecting information about your minimum of 10 nominators, and decide how you want to share your understanding with voters about the duty to serve and protect the public interest.

Once all the pieces are complete, press "Submit" and your nomination package will be sent to the College. You will receive an automatic response confirming it has been received, and you will hear within 10 business days whether you are a confirmed candidate. **PS**

Help is always available through the information line at **416.961.8800** (toll-free in Ontario **1.888.534.2222**), ext. 558 or via email at [youdecide2021@oct.ca](mailto:youdecide2021@oct.ca).



## MISSION

Placing students' interests and well-being first by regulating and promoting excellence in teaching.

## VISION

Trusted to regulate the teaching profession in Ontario.

## VALUES

The Ontario College of Teachers commits to:

- protect the public interest;
- quality, excellence and professionalism;
- honesty and integrity;
- accountability and transparency;
- efficiency, effectiveness and fiscal responsibility;
- sustainability;
- inclusivity and respect for diversity; and
- respectfulness and teamwork between the College Council, staff and stakeholder community, each respecting the other's role.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### 1. STRENGTHEN TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

- develop objective and subjective key performance indicators for the College that are measurable, observable and perceivable;
- make improvements to the discipline process to better reflect public expectations; and
- use plain language internally and externally in all communications to better connect the public and College members to the work of the College.

### 2. MANAGE RISK MORE STRATEGICALLY:

- focus more on managing risk and less on operational issues in Council meetings;
- increase public awareness of the ongoing professional development activities of all College members;
- annually conduct an environmental risk scan;
- analyze College data and trends as a basis for creating additional guidance and member resources; and
- utilize the recommendations of the 2018 Governance Review to ensure improved governance and oversight.

### 3. IMPROVE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:

- clarify and better communicate the privilege and benefits of self-regulation; and
- enhance the effectiveness of collaboration with government constituent organizations and other regulators.

## OBJECTS

The College has a duty to serve and protect the public interest by carrying out the following objects in the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*:

- regulate and govern Ontario teachers;
- determine requirements for College membership;
- accredit professional teacher education and development programs, and provide for members' ongoing education;
- develop, accredit and provide for programs leading to a teaching certificate and Additional Qualifications;
- issue, renew, amend, suspend, cancel, revoke and reinstate Certificates of Qualification and Registration;
- set and enforce professional and ethical standards for College members;
- investigate and resolve complaints against College members regarding allegations of professional misconduct, incompetence and fitness to practise; and
- communicate with the public on behalf of College members.



# Governing Ourselves

*This section provides updates on licensing and qualification requirements, notification of Council resolutions and reports from various Council committees, including reports on accreditation and discipline matters.*

## Early Teaching Careers Interrupted

**The 2019–20 Ontario school year started well for most recent education graduates. COVID-19, however, knocked thousands of early-career teachers temporarily off their professional tracks when schools had to close in mid-March.**

New teachers in 2019 joined a welcoming employment market as the school year began. Improved employment outcomes identified in recent *Transition to Teaching* annual surveys continued apace. Almost 19 in 20 newly licensed teachers in their first year in the job market in Ontario successfully found teaching jobs. Their six per cent unemployment rate is similar to the previous school year and far below the 16 per cent jobless rate for first-year teachers reported in our 2017 survey.

However, when Ontario schools closed in March 2020, most first-year teachers had not yet secured permanent teaching jobs. More than eight in 10 of them (85 per cent) were still in precarious employment arrangements, and many found themselves with no further teaching assignments or fewer weekly teaching days once physical schooling ended for the school year.

Half of all first-year teachers not in secure permanent teaching contracts in March 2020 — including those with long-term occasional, shorter-term contracts and on daily occasional rosters — say they had no further assignments or had their teaching assignments reduced over the remainder of the school year.

Daily roster occasional teachers suffered the most substantial rate of teaching assignment losses. More than four in five of these first-year teachers (83 per cent) report no further assignments or reduced assignments following school closures. Moreover, almost all of these school-closure-affected daily roster teachers (90 per cent) say they had no more teaching days at all once schools closed.

Although daily roster teaching is significantly less common these days after the first year of teaching careers, eight in 10 second- through fifth-year roster teachers also report they had no further assignments or reduced assignments once schools closed.

Job loss among daily roster teachers was pervasive. It hit English-language, French as a Second Language and French-first-language occasional teachers all across the province. Applying the 2020 survey findings to the full population of graduates in their first five years of teaching, an estimated 5,600 College members had their employment disrupted by Ontario school closings, most

having no further teaching assignments whatsoever over the final few months of the school year.

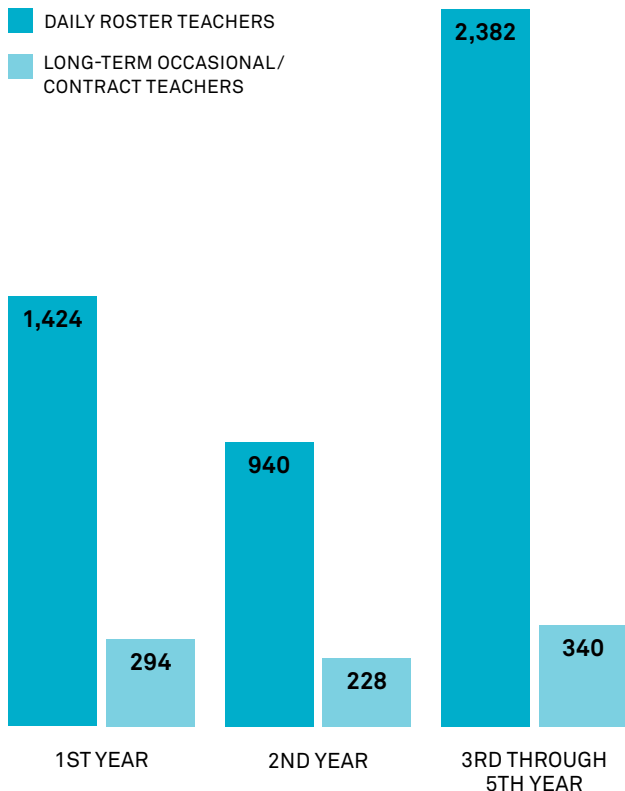
The negative employment impact of school closures is also evident in College member reports of underemployment. For several years, a steadily increasing number of recent graduates reported teaching as much as they wanted to throughout the first school year of their careers. But underemployment jumped to 35 per cent in 2020, from a low of 15 per cent in our 2019 survey.

Although Ontario schools did not continue the employment of thousands of early-career teachers to support virtual teaching roles in the early months of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, the good news is that this employment loss does not appear to have discouraged these early-career Ontario teachers. Almost all teachers affected by school closures (99 per cent of them) report they hope to teach again in the 2020–21 school year.

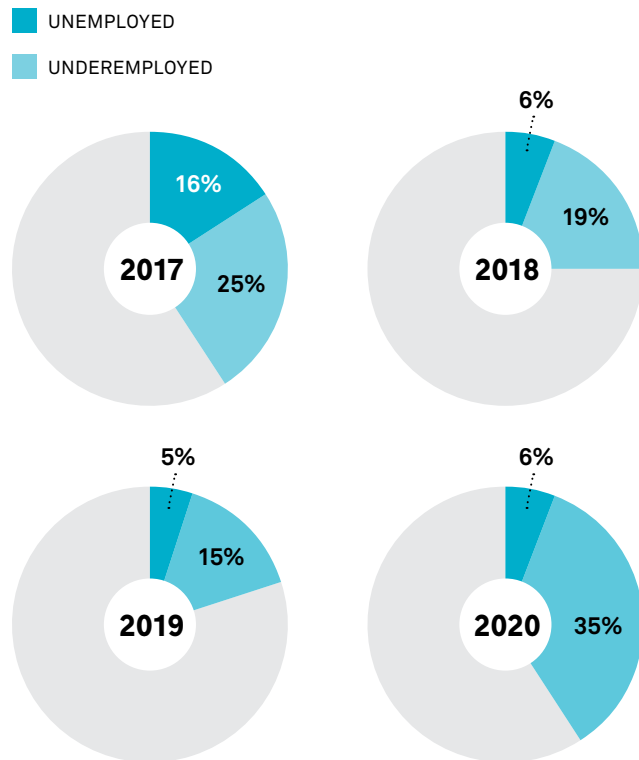
Varied models of school opening may be in place in school boards across the province in September — conventional regular classroom teaching, continuation of remote learning, and blended versions with virtual online teaching and reduced physical classroom teaching. Early-career teachers who have not yet settled into permanent teaching contracts are eager to teach alongside their colleagues in physical classrooms and in synchronous and asynchronous virtual teaching roles to help ensure Ontario's students receive the best educational opportunity possible in these challenging pandemic times. **PS**

*Transition to Teaching* annual surveys provide information on the changing early-career Ontario teacher labour market from 2002 to the present. The 2020 survey received 4,014 returns from teachers first licensed between 2010 and 2019, and new-to-Ontario teachers educated elsewhere and Ontario-certified in 2018 and 2019. The full report of this year's study will be available on the College website in February 2021.

## EARLY-TEACHING CAREERS INTERRUPTED BY SCHOOL CLOSURES



## FIRST-YEAR ONTARIO EDUCATION GRADUATES TEACHING IN ONTARIO



## New Appointments



### Linda Lacroix, OCT

The College welcomes Linda Lacroix, OCT, as its new director of Investigations and Hearings. Lacroix is a seasoned educator with 29 years of experience in the education sector,

holding diverse leadership positions. Most recently, she was director, French Language Teaching and Learning Branch, at the Ministry of Education.

From 2013 to 2018, Lacroix was the superintendent of education for the Conseil scolaire public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario. During her career, she was a school principal for 15 years and has been and continues to be a member of various provincial committees, networks, as well as community-level ventures.

Lacroix holds a masters in education from the Université d'Ottawa, and a bachelor's degree in education as well as a bachelor of arts from Laurentian University.



### Todd Lalonde

The College Council welcomes Todd Lalonde, who was appointed to Council in June 2020 for a two-year term. Lalonde is a supervisor with the City of Cornwall, Infrastructure and Municipal Works Division.

He is an elected trustee and serves as chair of the Catholic District School

Board of Eastern Ontario. Lalonde also serves as a regional director for the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA), elected by fellow trustees from across Eastern Ontario. He chairs OCSTA's Catholic Education and Trustee Enrichment Committee and is a provincial appointee to the St. Lawrence Parks Commission.

Lalonde has served as a board member on the Children's Treatment Centre — Cornwall Ontario, the Family Counselling Centre of Cornwall & United Counties (now Inspire Community Support Services), and the United Way of Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry. He also served as a volunteer for the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.

Lalonde has a broad educational background from Algonquin College in Ottawa and St. Lawrence College in Cornwall.



## Élaine Legault

The College Council welcomes Élaine Legault, who was appointed to Council in May for a two-year term. Legault is a consultant for the Conseil des Organismes Francophones de la Région de Durham (COFRD) and an ardent advocate for Ontario's French community.

Now semi-retired, Legault served 22 years as COFRD's executive director providing

French- language services to Durham Region in arts and culture, immigration, employment and family justice.

She served as a trustee of the Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud (now Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir) for 10 years, two as board chair, and three years as chair and trustee of the French-language section of Durham Catholic District School Board. She has also been a member of several school parent councils.

Over the years, Legault has been involved with French organizations such as L'Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO), Réseau Ontario, the Mouvement des Cursillos Francophone du Canada, and has served on committees for the City of Oshawa.

In 2014, she received the Order of La Pléiade from the International Organization of La Francophonie for distinguished service to the ideals of co-operation, friendship and promoting the role of the French language. She is also a recipient of Compagnie des Cents-Associés and Prix Hommage Théâtre Action awards. **PS**

## Council Meetings

### At its June 4, 2020, video conference meeting, College Council:

- welcomed newly appointed Council members Bonnie Oakes Charron and Elaine Légault;
- received a quarterly report from the Chair;
- accepted the December 31, 2019, audited financial statements of the Ontario College of Teachers;
- reappointed KPMG as the College's auditor for 2020;
- approved the regulation on Alternative Eligibility Requirements for Therapy and Counselling to clarify that funding ceases upon the withdrawal by the student — or in the case of a minor, the student's parent or guardian — of the allegation of sexual abuse or prohibited act involving child pornography; and
- approved a Compensation Philosophy and Process for College employees. **PS**

## INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE CASE STUDY

## What would you do?

*The College's Investigation Committee considers all complaints made to the College about its members and reviews all information resulting from investigations.*

*The committee can dismiss a complaint or refer the matter, in whole or in part, to the Discipline or Fitness to Practise committees for a hearing.*

*The Investigation Committee may also caution or admonish the member in writing or in person, or provide written reminders or advice, or ratify a Memorandum of Agreement reached through the complaint resolution process.*

*By law, cases under investigation are confidential. For the education of members, the following account, based on facts from real cases, raises important questions about teacher conduct, such as what is appropriate and what is not.*

*Details have been altered to respect confidentiality.*

The College received a complaint from a parent regarding Louise, a high school teacher. Louise sent an email to a parent regarding his son's academic progress.

The email contained inappropriate comments such as:

- "He is not just a pretty face then."
- "Is he as mature as he should be for his age? Sometimes I wonder."
- "I doubt he will ever make the NBA. He will need to learn how to walk properly before he can jump."

The teacher claimed that the comments were made to make light of the email regarding the student's poor academic performance.

If you were a member of the Investigation Committee panel,

what would you have issued to Louise?

- an admonishment in person (most severe)
- a written admonishment
- a written caution
- written advice
- a written reminder (least severe)

### THE OUTCOME

The panel was concerned that Louise sent an email to a parent that contained inappropriate comments about his son. The Investigation Committee panel decided to caution her in writing. **PS**



# Invitation to apply

## COLLEGE COUNCIL VACANCY: SUPERVISORY OFFICER CATEGORY

College members who are qualified and employed as a Supervisory Officer are invited to apply to serve in this vacant Council position.



### Serving on Council

Council governs the College. It is currently made up of 23 members of the College elected by their peers and 14 members of the public appointed by the provincial government. Council ensures that policies to regulate the teaching profession are established in accordance with the College's objects as set out in the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*. The successful individual will serve until June 30, 2021, the end of the term of the current Council.

Council members protect the public interest, serve their profession, grow as leaders, and develop skills in board governance.

**The application deadline is September 30, 2020.**

To find out more and how to apply, visit [oct.ca](http://oct.ca).



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# Invitation to apply

## COLLEGE COUNCIL VACANCY: FACULTY OF EDUCATION CATEGORY

College members who are employed by a post-secondary institution at a school or faculty of education offering programs accredited by the College, and are in a tenured or tenured-track position are invited to apply to serve in this vacant Council position.



### Serving on Council

Council governs the College. It is currently made up of 23 members of the College elected by their peers and 14 members of the public appointed by the provincial government. Council ensures that policies to regulate the teaching profession are established in accordance with the College's objects as set out in the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*. The successful individual will serve until June 30, 2021, the end of the term of the current Council.

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# Discipline Summaries

*Three-member panels of the Discipline Committee conduct public hearings into cases of alleged incompetence or professional misconduct. Panels are composed of elected and appointed Council members. The certificate of a member found to be incompetent or guilty of professional misconduct may be revoked, suspended, and/or made subject to terms, conditions or limitations. In findings of professional misconduct, the committee may also reprimand, admonish or counsel the member, impose a fine, and order the member to pay costs.*

*Summaries of recent disciplinary cases are published on the following pages. Where the name of an employer is withheld, it is typically to protect the identity of students or to comply with a publication ban ordered by a court or the tribunal. Copies of the full decisions are available at [oct.ca](http://oct.ca) → **Members** → **Complaints and Discipline** → **Decisions**.*

*The College publishes professional advisories, available at [oct-oeeo.ca/](http://oct-oeeo.ca/) **advisories**, which are intended to inform members' professional judgment and practice. For more information about the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession, please visit [oct-oeeo.ca/ethical](http://oct-oeeo.ca/ethical).*

*For a glossary of terms used in these summaries, please visit [oct-oeeo.ca/](http://oct-oeeo.ca/) **DecisionGlossary**.*

**MEMBER** Adrian Michael Black  
**REGISTRATION NO** 400220

**DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions

A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of Adrian Michael Black for physical abuse and failure to supervise students. He is a teacher employed by the Upper Canada District School Board.

Black made inappropriate contact with a student by grabbing and pulling him and by pushing and/or blocking students in a doorway. He also failed to adequately supervise these students after they ended up outside, which resulted in another student's injury.

Certified to teach in June 1990, Black attended the hearing on February 5, 2020, and was represented by legal counsel.

The Discipline Committee panel found Black guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his teaching certificate be suspended for four months. The panel also directed that he appear before it to receive a reprimand.

He must also successfully complete, at his own expense, a course regarding professional boundaries, classroom management and anger management. He needs to do so within 180 days of the decision.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Members of the profession are expected to conduct themselves in a composed and professional manner and they must not resort to the inappropriate use of physical force against students."

**MEMBER** Martin Gaeton Bonello  
**REGISTRATION NO** 444525

**DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions

A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of Martin Gaeton Bonello for inappropriate conduct. He is a teacher formerly employed by the Peel District School Board.

Certified to teach in July 2001, Bonello did not attend the hearing on November 12, 2019, but was represented by legal counsel.

Bonello made a culturally insensitive and unprofessional comment to a student.

His disregard for board policy and compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* in his woodworking technology class demonstrates that he also failed to adequately supervise his students.

The Discipline Committee panel found Bonello guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his teaching certificate be suspended for six months. The panel also directed that he appear before it to receive a reprimand. He needs to do so within 90 days of the panel's order.

He must also successfully complete, at his own expense, a course regarding classroom management with a focus on supervision and sensitivity training. He needs to do so prior to resuming or starting a teaching position or any position requiring a Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "The fact that the Member received two suspensions from his Board, and a written caution and written admonishment from the College's Investigation Committee, raises serious concerns regarding his professional judgment."

**MEMBER** Roshan Canagasaby  
**REGISTRATION NO** 531715

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the teaching certificate of Roshan Canagasaby for engaging in verbal, physical, emotional and sexual abuse of female students. He was employed by the Halton District School Board.

His conduct included:

- having inappropriate sexual conversations with, and making sexually suggestive comments or gestures to students;
- rubbing his head down the chest area of students; and
- running his hand down the backs of students.

The definition of sexual abuse under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*, 1996 includes touching, behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by a member toward a student.

Certified to teach in June 2008, Canagasaby attended the hearing on January 20, 2020, and had legal representation.

The Discipline Committee panel found Canagasaby guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his Certificate of Qualification and Registration be revoked. The panel also ordered that he receive a reprimand.

In its decision, the panel stated, "The Member's conduct is unbecoming a member, in that it undermines the reputation of the teaching profession."

**MEMBER** Kevin Ho-Wai Chan  
**REGISTRATION NO** 573032

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the teaching certificate of Kevin Ho-Wai Chan for sexually abusing a female student. He was a tutor at a Toronto private school.

Certified to teach in March 2010, Chan did not attend the hearing on January 17, 2020. He had no legal representation.

Chan spent time alone with the student. He gave her rides in his car, spoke with her about personal and intimate issues, frequently held her hand, hugged her, and kissed her on the cheek in a way that violated her sexual integrity.

The definition of sexual abuse in the *Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996* includes touching, behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by a College member toward a student.

In a criminal court, Chan was found

guilty of sexual assault and sexual interference. He was sentenced to 90 days of incarceration to be followed by three years of probation. He was also made the subject of a number of ancillary orders.

The Discipline Committee panel found Chan guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his Certificate of Qualification and Registration be revoked. The panel also ordered that he receive a reprimand.

In its decision, the panel stated, “Members are expected to create a safe learning environment for students, and not to exploit their position for their own sexual gratification.”

**MEMBER** Douglas Christopher Dale  
**REGISTRATION NO** 278313

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the teaching certificate of Douglas Christopher Dale for sexually abusing two students. He was formerly employed by the Peel District School Board.

Certified to teach in August 1997, Dale did not attend the hearing on November 25, 2019, and did not have legal representation.

Dale engaged in an inappropriate personal and sexual relationship with two students.

In a criminal court, he pleaded guilty to and was convicted of sexual exploitation of the students. He was sentenced to 30 months’ custody and made subject to various ancillary orders.

The Discipline Committee panel found Dale guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his Certificate of Qualification and Registration be revoked. The panel also ordered that he receive a reprimand.

In its decision, the panel stated, “The Member’s conduct was also unbecoming a member of the profession, in that he undermined the reputation of the profession and violated the trust that parents, students and the public place in teachers.”

**MEMBER** Salim A. Dato, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 474147

**DECISION** Reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel reprimanded Salim A. Dato, a teacher employed by the Toronto District School Board, for unprofessional conduct.

This matter was heard by the panel on March 9, 2020. Dato, who was certified to teach in June 2004, attended the hearing and had legal representation.

Dato verbally and physically abused a student by making inappropriate remarks and using physical force to redirect him.

The Discipline Committee panel found Dato guilty of professional misconduct and directed him to appear before it to receive a reprimand.

The panel also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course covering appropriate boundaries, with a focus on anger management. He must do so within 90 days of the panel’s order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, “Despite challenging student behaviour, members of the teaching profession must maintain their composure and interact professionally with students, which the Member failed to do.”

**MEMBER** Lillian Eileen Donaldson  
**REGISTRATION NO** 443592

**DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of Lillian Eileen Donaldson for a pattern of inappropriate and unprofessional conduct, despite prior warnings from the school board and the College. She is a teacher employed by the Halton District School Board.

This matter was heard by the panel on November 12, 2019. Donaldson, who was certified to teach in May 2001, attended the hearing with her legal counsel.

One inappropriate comment includes telling the class that if she had a child like Student 1, she would drive him to the Grand Canyon and leave him there.



## Write to Us!

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**We look forward to hearing from you!**



The Discipline Committee panel found her guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that her teaching certificate be suspended for one month. She was directed to appear before the panel to receive a reprimand.

The panel also ordered her to successfully complete, at her own expense, a course regarding classroom management with a focus on adolescent development and student sensitivity issues. She needs to do so within 90 days of the panel's order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Members of the profession must maintain their composure, even when dealing with challenging issues in the classroom."

---

**MEMBER** David Peter Duncker  
**REGISTRATION NO** 423953

**DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions

A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of David Peter Duncker for inappropriate conduct. He is a teacher employed by the District School Board of Niagara.

Certified to teach in May 1999, Duncker attended the hearing on February 7, 2020, and was represented by legal counsel.

Duncker engaged in an inappropriate personal relationship with a female student, which included sending her gifts, picking her up in his car and going out for coffee and shopping, and hugging her. He also engaged in regular, inappropriate electronic communications with her.

The Discipline Committee panel found Duncker guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his teaching certificate be suspended for two years. The panel also directed that he appear before it to receive a reprimand.

He must also successfully complete, at his own expense, a course on boundary violations. He needs to do so within three months of the decision.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "The Member demonstrated a profound lack of professional judgment by fostering an inappropriate personal relationship with a student."

**MEMBER** Drew Trent Ferris, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 449959

**DECISION** Reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel reprimanded Drew Trent Ferris, a teacher employed by the Bluewater District School Board, for inappropriate conduct.

This matter was heard by the panel on February 4, 2020. Ferris, who was certified to teach in September 2001, attended the hearing with his legal counsel.

Ferris had physical contact with students on a bus in order to manage their behaviour. In particular, he pinched one student on the arm, which resulted in a bruise. He also made an example of a student and mocked him in front of his class on two occasions.

The Discipline Committee panel found Ferris guilty of professional misconduct and directed him to appear before it to receive a reprimand.

The panel also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course regarding classroom management and appropriate communication with students. He must do so within 90 days of the panel's order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Members are expected to act in a professional manner and to exercise good judgment and compassion for students."

---

**MEMBER** Stephen Owen Gartshore  
**REGISTRATION NO** 417889

**DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions

A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of Stephen Owen Gartshore for inappropriate conduct. He is a teacher employed by the Toronto District School Board.

Certified to teach in August 1998, Gartshore attended the hearing on January 21, 2020, and was represented by legal counsel.

Gartshore's inappropriate conduct and comments include:

- striking his hand down on a student's desk;
- speaking to a student with a loud,

raised voice because the student did not complete his seatwork; and

- allowing the student to leave his classroom without supervision.

Gartshore was previously cautioned and admonished by the College's Investigation Committee for similar inappropriate conduct.

The Discipline Committee panel found Gartshore guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his teaching certificate be suspended for two months. The panel also directed that he appear before it to receive a reprimand.

He must also successfully complete, at his own expense, a course on classroom management and discipline. He needs to do so within 60 days of the decision.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Members are expected to serve as role models for students, to create a safe and supporting learning environment for their students and to behave in accordance with the standards of the profession."

---

**MEMBER** Neil Gibb, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 244049

**DECISION** Reprimand, conditions

A Discipline Committee panel reprimanded Neil Gibb, a teacher employed by the York Catholic District School Board, for inappropriate conduct.

This matter was heard by the panel on February 26, 2020. Gibb, who was certified to teach in November 1993, attended the hearing with his legal counsel.

Gibb engaged in a concerning pattern of inappropriate conduct, and he did not improve his behaviour after repeated warnings from his board.

He made several inappropriate remarks to students, swore in class, yelled at students and disciplined them by having them do pushups.

The Discipline Committee panel found Gibb guilty of professional misconduct and directed him to appear before it to receive a reprimand.

It also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course regarding respectful relation-

ships with students and classroom management. He must do so prior to starting or resuming any teaching position or any position for which a Certificate of Qualification and Registration is required.

In its written decision, the panel stated, “Members are expected to serve as role models for students, which the Member failed to do by repeatedly making inappropriate comments, swearing and yelling in class.”

---

**MEMBER** Brian John Hathway  
**REGISTRATION NO** 495973

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the teaching certificate of Brian John Hathway for sexually abusing a student. He was a teacher formerly employed by the Upper Grand District School Board.

Certified to teach in August 2005, Hathway did not attend the hearing on March 10, 2020. He had no legal representation.

Hathway engaged in a pattern of inappropriate grooming behaviour and subsequently abused a student.

He was sentenced, in a criminal court, to one year in custody for each of the four counts of which he was convicted, to be served concurrently, followed by three years of probation. He was also made the subject of a number of ancillary orders.

The Discipline Committee panel found Hathway guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his Certificate of Qualification and Registration be revoked. The panel also ordered that he receive a reprimand.

In its decision, the panel stated, “The Panel denounces the Member’s misconduct in the strongest terms.”

---

**MEMBER** Justin Charles Henri  
**REGISTRATION NO** 631042

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the teaching certificate of Justin Charles Henri for sexually abusing two female students. He was an occasional teacher formerly employed by the Trillium Lakelands District School Board.

Certified to teach in August 2012,

Henri did not attend the hearing on February 3, 2020. He had no legal representation.

Henri sent one student Facebook messages of a sexual nature. He kissed her on several occasions and touched her in a sexual manner. He also engaged in a boyfriend-girlfriend-type relationship with another student during which they had sexual intercourse.

The Discipline Committee panel found Henri guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his Certificate of Qualification and Registration be revoked. The panel also ordered that he receive a reprimand.

In its decision, the panel stated, “The public’s trust in the teaching profession is eroded when members abuse their position of trust and authority to sexually and emotionally abuse their students.”

---

**MEMBER** Tom Walter Keenan, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 201312

**DECISION** Reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel reprimanded Tom Walter Keenan, a teacher employed by the Algoma District School Board, for unprofessional conduct.

This matter was heard by the panel on March 9, 2020. Keenan, who was certified to teach in June 1993, did not attend the hearing but had legal representation.

Keenan made demeaning comments to a student and consumed alcohol while supervising students.

The Discipline Committee panel found Keenan guilty of professional misconduct and directed him to appear before it to receive a reprimand.

It also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course covering professional boundaries. He must do so within 90 days of the panel’s order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, “Members are expected to serve as positive role models for students, which the Member failed to do.”

---

**MEMBER** Jennifer Allyson Leon  
**REGISTRATION NO** 490731

**DECISION** Suspension,

reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel suspended the teaching certificate of Jennifer Allyson Leon for unprofessional conduct. She is employed by the Ministry of Education as an elementary teacher at a school for the deaf.

Leon, who was certified to teach in April 2005, did not attend the hearing on January 30, 2020, but had legal representation.

Leon demonstrated a lack of empathy for students by “often exhibit[ing] anger and frustration” toward students and by being “rough and abrasive.”

The Discipline Committee panel found Leon guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that her certificate be suspended for one month. She was also directed to appear before the panel to receive a reprimand. She needs to do so within 90 days of the order.

In addition, she was directed to complete a course of instruction, at her own expense, regarding anger management and classroom management. She needs to do so prior to starting or resuming a teaching position for which a Certificate of Qualification and Registration is required.

In its written decision, the panel stated, “Teachers hold a unique position of trust and authority. They must model appropriate behaviour for students and encourage students in the pursuit of learning.”

---

**MEMBER** Victor Ly  
**REGISTRATION NO** 670351

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the teaching certificate of Victor Ly, a teacher formerly employed by the Halton District School Board, for criminal conduct.

In a criminal court, Ly was found guilty of 19 charges including making child pornography, invitation to sexual touching, extortion, transmitting a sexually explicit image for the purpose of making child pornography, luring a child for the purpose of making child pornography, possessing and distrib-

uting child pornography.

He was sentenced to a five-year custodial sentence and was made subject to a number of ancillary orders.

Certified to teach in July 2015, Ly did not attend the hearing on January 17, 2020, nor was he represented by legal counsel.

The Discipline Committee panel found Ly guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his Certificate of Qualification and Registration be revoked. The panel also ordered that he receive a reprimand.

In its decision, the panel stated, "The panel denounces the Member's misconduct in the strongest terms."

---

**MEMBER** Alan Philip Markham  
**REGISTRATION NO** 422136

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the Certificate of Qualification and Registration of Alan Philip Markham for sexually abusing a female student. He was formerly employed by the Keewatin Patricia District School Board.

Markham was certified to teach in February 1999. He did not attend the hearing on November 8, 2019, and had no legal representation.

Markham engaged in inappropriate electronic communications with a student at his school on the Tinder dating app. His remarks were of a sexual nature, and therefore, constitute "sexual abuse" under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996*.

The Discipline Committee panel found him guilty of professional misconduct and directed the Registrar to revoke his Certificate of Qualification and Registration. The panel also directed that he receive a reprimand within six months of the panel's order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Engaging in the sexual abuse of a student is a clear breach of the standards of the profession."

---

**MEMBER** Gurjit Kaur Marok  
**REGISTRATION NO** 444472

**DECISION** Suspension,

reprimand, conditions

A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of Gurjit Kaur Marok for dishonest conduct. She is a teacher employed by the Peel District School Board.

Certified to teach in June 2001, Marok attended the hearing on February 14, 2020, with her legal counsel.

Marok misused sick days to attend a conference in the Bahamas, used her position as a teacher to access confidential student information, and misled her colleagues in order to distribute marketing materials to solicit business for personal gain.

The Discipline Committee panel found Marok guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that her teaching certificate be suspended for one month. The panel also directed that she appear before it to receive a reprimand.

She must also successfully complete, at her own expense, a course regarding professional ethics. She needs to do so within 90 days of the panel's order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "... the Member's deceitful and self-serving conduct is unbecoming a member in that it undermined the reputation of the teaching profession."

---

**MEMBER** Robert Steven  
McColeman, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 258113

**DECISION** Reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel ordered that Robert Steven McColeman be reprimanded for inappropriate conduct. He is a teacher employed by the Upper Grand District School Board.

This matter was heard by the panel on October 24, 2019. McColeman, who was certified to teach in June 1993, attended the hearing with his legal counsel. He failed to supervise students under his care. He failed to prevent three students from driving a motor vehicle during instructional time. That failure resulted in the students being involved in an accident.

He also did not immediately report the accident to the school's administration.

The Discipline Committee panel found McColeman guilty of professional

misconduct and directed him to appear before it to receive a reprimand.

The panel also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course on classroom management and effective supervision, including student safety in an auto shop/transportation technology class. He must do so within 90 days of the panel's order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Members of the profession must prioritize student safety."

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**MEMBER** Lydia Maurice Nakhla, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 477616

**DECISION** Conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel ordered that the certificate of Lydia Maurice Nakhla be subject to terms, conditions or limitations due to a finding of incompetence. She is a teacher formerly employed by the Conseil scolaire catholique Providence.

Certified to teach in October 2004, Nakhla did not attend the hearing on February 24, 2020, and was not represented by legal counsel.

Nakhla displayed in her professional responsibilities a lack of knowledge, skill or judgment, and a disregard for the welfare of a student.

She was given two performance appraisals as part of the New Teacher Induction Program. She received a "Development Needed" rating on the first one and an "Unsatisfactory" on the second.

Prior to filling or resuming a teaching position or any position that requires a Certificate of Qualification and Registration, she must successfully complete, at her own expense, an Additional Qualification or Additional Basic Qualification course that covers teaching and learning strategies, assessment and evaluation of student learning, and classroom management.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "... the Panel considers that the Member's performance should be monitored closely for the first year after any resumption of her duties, to ensure that it continues to be satisfactory."



**MEMBER Paul Nolis**  
**REGISTRATION NO 507131****DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions, costs

A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of Paul Nolis for inappropriate conduct. He was an occasional teacher employed by the York Region District School Board.

This matter was heard by the panel on November 12–13, 2019. Nolis, who was certified to teach in August 2006, did not attend the hearing and did not have legal representation.

His conduct included:

- making numerous inappropriate remarks to students, which had a negative psychological or emotional effect. In doing so, he undermined the confidence of students with academic struggles and created an atmosphere of intimidation instead of encouragement;
- inexcusably refusing to allow an injured student to seek first aid, and creating a dangerous condition by leaving a room unlocked that resulted in injury to another student; and
- refusing the board's remediation attempts by failing to attend meetings and follow the remedial recommendations made by administrators in their occasional teacher incident reports.

Nolis also engaged in a pattern of unreasonable and vexatious conduct during the College disciplinary proceedings by making unfounded accusations and threats against the College and its counsel when they were simply conducting themselves according to their professional roles in the discipline process.

The Discipline Committee panel found Nolis guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his teaching certificate be suspended for 14 weeks. He also received a written reprimand.

The panel also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course regarding maintaining appropriate boundaries with students and a course on classroom

management. He needs to do so prior to starting or resuming a teaching position or any position for which a Certificate of Qualification and Registration is required.

He was also ordered to pay the College \$12,500 in costs, which must be paid within six months of the panel's order. Cost orders are compensatory, rather than punitive, in nature. Unco-operative or vexatious conduct during the disciplinary process can lengthen the duration of the proceedings and increase the expense to the College.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "His conduct was also unbecoming a member in that it undermines the trust and respect accorded to the profession."

**MEMBER John Thomas Orme**  
**REGISTRATION NO 440553****DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions, costs

A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of John Thomas Orme, a teacher employed by the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, for a repeated pattern of inappropriate conduct.

This matter was heard by the panel on September 18, 2019. Orme, who was certified to teach in June 2001, did not attend the hearing. He had no legal representation.

Orme made inappropriate comments to students, both orally and in writing. He also assigned inappropriate journal topics and inadequately supervised students. The Discipline Committee panel found him guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his teaching certificate be suspended for three months.

He was directed to appear before the panel to receive a reprimand. He needs to appear within three months of the panel's order. The panel also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course on professional boundaries with a focus on sensitivities toward students. He needs to do so prior to returning to teaching.

He was also ordered to pay \$3,000 in costs within 90 days of the order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "The aggravating factors in the Member's case are the repeated nature of his conduct despite three disciplinary investigations by the Board and his failure to take the remedial course directed by the Board in 2010 until July 2015."

**MEMBER Geoffrey James Orton**  
**REGISTRATION NO 256166****DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the Certificate of Qualification and Registration of Geoffrey James Orton for misconduct of a sexual nature, among other things. He was employed by the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

Orton was certified to teach in June 1996. He attended the hearing on November 4, 2019, and had legal representation.

On more than one occasion, Orton looked at the cleavage of two female students. As a result of his conduct, both students felt uncomfortable and one of them began wearing sweaters and high-neck tops.

He also failed to adequately supervise his students on multiple occasions. For example, he did not immediately intervene when students filled plastic bottles with gas, lit them on fire and threw the lit objects into the garbage.

The Discipline Committee panel found him guilty of professional misconduct and directed the Registrar to revoke his Certificate of Qualification and Registration. The panel also directed that he receive a reprimand.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Engaging in behaviour of a sexual nature towards students, such as looking at the cleavage of female students, is a clear breach of the standards of the profession and an abuse of the Member's position of trust and authority as a teacher."

**MEMBER** Matthew Dale Palmer  
**REGISTRATION NO** 500529

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the Certificate of Qualification and Registration of Matthew Dale Palmer for criminal conduct. He was formerly employed by the Bluewater District School Board.

Palmer was certified to teach in July 2007. He did not attend the hearing on October 23, 2019, and had no legal representation.

Palmer engaged in a sexual relationship with a minor he met at a local church.

He was found guilty of sexual exploitation in a criminal court. He was sentenced to six months' custody and 18 months' probation. He was also made the subject of a number of ancillary orders.

The Discipline Committee panel found him guilty of professional misconduct and directed the Registrar to revoke his Certificate of Qualification and Registration. The panel also directed that he receive a reprimand.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "The public's trust in the teaching profession is eroded when members are convicted of sexual offences."

**MEMBER** Nina Pogossian, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 428585

**DECISION** Reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel reprimanded Nina Pogossian, a teacher employed by the Toronto District School Board, for inappropriate conduct.

This matter was heard by the panel on October 25, 2019. Pogossian, who was certified to teach in March 2001, attended the hearing and had legal representation.

Pogossian scolded, grabbed and shook a kindergarten student. This conduct constitutes physical and psychological or emotional abuse.

Pogossian had been previously disciplined by her board for similar misconduct in the past.

The Discipline Committee panel found Pogossian guilty of professional

misconduct and directed her to appear before it to receive a reprimand.

It also ordered her to successfully complete, at her own expense, a course regarding classroom management and anger management. She must do so within 90 days of the panel's order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "The Member breached appropriate teacher-student boundaries when she grabbed Student A by both arms and shook her."

**MEMBER** Walter Schweigel, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 179452

**DECISION** Reprimand, conditions, undertaking  
A Discipline Committee panel reprimanded Walter Schweigel, a teacher formerly employed by the Toronto District School Board, for unprofessional conduct.

This matter was heard by the panel on November 5, 2019. Schweigel, who was certified to teach in June 1986, attended the hearing with his legal counsel.

Schweigel engaged in the practice of teaching while adversely impacted by his abuse of alcohol. He failed to report on several occasions, did not notify the school prior to his absences, did not arrange for an occasional teacher to cover his classes, and did not provide lesson plans.

The Discipline Committee panel found Schweigel guilty of professional misconduct and directed him to appear before it to receive a reprimand.

It also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course on appropriate professional ethics. He must do so prior to starting any teaching position for which a Certificate of Qualification and Registration is required.

Schweigel also entered into an "undertaking and acknowledgement" with the College, which sets out conditions that must be met before he can hold a position for which a certificate is required. In its written decision, the panel stated, "It is unacceptable for a teacher to practise

his profession while adversely impacted by alcohol abuse."

**MEMBER** Thomas Albert Shackleton, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 180228

**DECISION** Reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel ordered that Thomas Albert Shackleton be reprimanded for repeated instances of inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour directed at colleagues and students. He is a teacher formerly employed by the Toronto District School Board.

This matter was heard by the panel on December 9, 2019. Shackleton, who was certified to teach in June 1995, did not attend the hearing. He did not have legal representation.

Shackleton's conduct included repeated vulgar, demeaning and racist comments.

The Discipline Committee panel found Shackleton guilty of professional misconduct and directed him to appear before it to receive a reprimand. He needs to do so prior to starting or returning to any position requiring a Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

It also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course covering professional ethics and appropriate communications with students. He must do so prior to starting or returning to any position requiring a Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Members of the profession are expected to be responsible adults, model good values and behaviour, and play a supportive role for students."

**MEMBER** Saadia Syed  
**REGISTRATION NO** 481308

**DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel suspended the teaching certificate of Saadia Syed for unprofessional conduct. She was formerly employed by the York Region District School Board.

Syed, who was certified to teach in January 2005, attended the hearing on February 13, 2020. She had no legal representation.

Syed submitted 48 false expense receipts, totalling over \$42,000, and received payment of over \$41,000 from the board's benefits provider.

In a criminal court, she was found guilty of one count of Use Forged Document. She received a conditional discharge, was placed on probation for three years and was ordered to complete 100 hours of community service.

The Discipline Committee panel found Syed guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that her certificate be suspended for 12 months. She was also directed to appear before the panel to receive a reprimand.

In addition, she was directed to complete a course of instruction, at her own expense, regarding ethics. She needs to do so prior to returning to teaching or to any position for which a Certificate of Qualification and Registration is required.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Even though the Member's misconduct did not target students, the Member's unethical behaviour tarnished the reputation of the teaching profession as a whole."

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**MEMBER** Donald Ashley Thompson  
**REGISTRATION NO** 440021

**DECISION** Suspension, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of Donald Ashley Thompson for a pattern of inappropriate conduct. He is a teacher formerly employed by the Toronto District School Board.

Certified to teach in September 2001, Thompson did not attend the hearing on November 11, 2019, but was represented by legal counsel.

Thompson was physically and verbally abusive to his students on multiple occasions. He grabbed, pushed, hit, physically shook and yelled at students.

The aggravating factors in Thomp-

son's case are the multiple incidents of misconduct and his prior disciplinary history with the school board and the College.

The Discipline Committee panel found Thompson guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his teaching certificate be suspended for four months. The panel also directed that he appear before it to receive a reprimand.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Teachers are expected to find appropriate ways to communicate instructions and directions to students that do not involve physical or verbal abuse."

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**MEMBER** Luigi Trinchi  
**REGISTRATION NO** 480848

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand, costs  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the teaching certificate of Luigi Trinchi, a teacher formerly employed by the Toronto Catholic District School Board, for engaging in voyeurism.

Certified to teach in July 2004, Trinchi did not attend the hearing on November 8, 2019, nor was he represented by legal counsel.

In a criminal court, he was found guilty of surreptitiously making a visual recording of a female colleague. He was given a suspended sentence and 12 months of probation.

Trinchi and this colleague were involved in an intimate relationship. She posed nude during a Skype video conversation with him. She thought the video was being live-streamed and not recorded. Without her knowledge, Trinchi took and retained a number of screenshots of her while she was nude. After the end of their relationship, he sent the nude pictures to a list of recipients including her family, friends and colleagues.

The Discipline Committee panel found Trinchi guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his Certificate of Qualification and Registration be revoked. The panel also ordered that he receive a reprimand. He was also ordered to

pay the College \$5,000 in costs, which must be paid within six months of the panel's order. Costs orders are compensatory (to reimburse the College for the expenses of disciplinary proceedings) rather than punitive.

In its decision, the panel stated, "The Member's conduct undermined the reputation of the teaching profession and as such, will not be tolerated. He has accordingly forfeited the privilege of holding a teaching certificate and being a member of the teaching profession in Ontario."

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**MEMBER** Thomas Steven Vincer  
**REGISTRATION NO** 164745

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the Certificate of Qualification and Registration of Thomas Steven Vincer for criminal conduct. He was formerly employed by the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board.

Vincer was certified to teach in June 1975. He did not attend the hearing on December 9, 2019, and had no legal representation. Vincer repeatedly engaged in the sexual touching of a male student.

He was found guilty of sexual assault in a criminal court and sentenced to an 18-month custodial sentence to be followed by one year of probation. He was also made the subject of a number of ancillary orders.

The Discipline Committee panel found him guilty of professional misconduct and directed the Registrar to revoke his Certificate of Qualification and Registration. The panel also directed that he receive a reprimand.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "The Panel believes that revocation is the only appropriate and proportionate order in light of the Member's misconduct."

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**MEMBER** Marcello Rosario Vite, OCT  
**REGISTRATION NO** 114211

**DECISION** Reprimand, conditions  
A Discipline Committee panel reprim-



manded Marcello Rosario Vite, an occasional teacher employed by the Toronto District School Board, for verbally abusing students.

This matter was heard by the panel on February 13, 2020. Vite, who was certified to teach in June 1972, attended the hearing with his legal counsel.

Vite repeatedly made insensitive and inappropriate comments to students, some of which were embarrassing or upsetting to them. The comments were about students' ethnicities, sexual orientation, relationship status and other personal issues.

The Discipline Committee panel found Vite guilty of professional misconduct and directed him to appear before it to receive a reprimand. The panel also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own expense, a course relating to professional boundaries with students and a course relating to appropriate communication with students, including cultural sensitivity training. He must do so within 90 days of its order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "The aggravating factors in the Member's case are the serious and repeated nature of his misconduct."

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**MEMBER** Elizabeth Marie Von Eppinghoven

**REGISTRATION NO** 101450

**DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions

A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of Elizabeth Marie Von Eppinghoven for inappropriate and unprofessional conduct despite warnings from the board and the College. She is a teacher employed by the Toronto District School Board.

Certified to teach in October 1993, Von Eppinghoven attended the hearing on December 16, 2019, with her legal counsel.

Von Eppinghoven left her students alone with a student teacher for 10–15 minutes to go to Tim Hortons.

When she came back, she threw a book at a student.

The Discipline Committee panel found Von Eppinghoven guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that her teaching certificate be suspended for one month. The panel also directed that she appear before it to receive a reprimand. She must also successfully complete, at her own expense, a course on effective student discipline. She needs to do so within 120 days of the panel's order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "It is unacceptable for members of the teaching profession to resort to violence when attempting to discipline students."

---

**MEMBER** Donald Andrew Wai

**REGISTRATION NO** 285693

**DECISION** Suspension, reprimand, conditions

A Discipline Committee panel suspended the certificate of Donald Andrew Wai for unprofessional conduct. He is a teacher employed by the Toronto District School Board.

This matter was heard by the panel on November 18, 2019. Wai, who was certified to teach in June 1996, attended the hearing with his legal counsel.

Wai tapped female students on the shoulder, and he touched them with his shoe in a manner that made the students feel uncomfortable. These were inappropriate forms of physical contact and he ought to have used verbal cues instead to provide the students with direction. During a practice drill, he also instructed students to extend their shirts in a way that exposed their stomachs.

The Discipline Committee panel found him guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that his teaching certificate be suspended for one month. He was directed to appear before the panel to receive a reprimand.

The panel also ordered him to successfully complete, at his own

expense, a course regarding respecting appropriate professional boundaries with students. He needs to do so within 200 days of the panel's order.

In its written decision, the panel stated, "Tapping students on the shoulder and tapping a student lying on the ground with a shoe to get their attention is disrespectful."

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**MEMBER** Avery Jean Wilson

**REGISTRATION NO** 642874

**DECISION** Revocation, reprimand, costs  
A Discipline Committee panel revoked the teaching certificate of College member Avery Jean Wilson for engaging in an inappropriate personal and sexual relationship with two male students.

She held supervisory responsibilities over a school's boarding students and lived in the dormitory part time.

Certified to teach in July 2014, Wilson did not have legal representation and did not attend the hearing on December 7, 2018, or December 4, 2019. The Discipline Committee panel found Wilson guilty of professional misconduct and ordered that her Certificate of Qualification and Registration be revoked. The panel also ordered that she receive a reprimand. She was ordered to pay the College \$20,000 in costs. She needs to do so within six months of the panel's order. A costs award is compensatory rather than punitive in nature. The panel found that Wilson's conduct lengthened the duration of the proceeding, thus increasing the expense to the College.

In its decision, the panel stated, "Engaging in secret, inappropriate relationships with students in the midst of their sexual and emotional development has the potential to cause lasting and severe emotional damage for the students." **PS**

Copies of the full decisions are available at [oct-oeo.ca/decisions](http://oct-oeo.ca/decisions).

# The Doctor is In

**Hamza Haq, the star of *Transplant*, shares how a drama teacher helped him find his calling — and why he regrets not paying more attention in physics class.**

BY LAURA BICKLE

- Born in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, October 1990
- Father is an electrical engineer, mother has her masters in organic chemistry
- Youngest of four, with two sisters and one brother
- Moved to Ottawa at age nine
- Attended Bayshore Public School for Grades 4 and 5; D.A. Moodie Intermediate School for Grades 6 to 8 and Bell High School for Grades 9 to 12
- Graduated from Carleton University with a BA in film studies and a minor in law in 2012
- Had a multi-episode arc on *This Life* in 2016 for which he was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award for Best Guest Performance in 2018
- Appeared in the mini-series *The Indian Detective* with Russell Peters and William Shatner in 2017
- Stars in *Transplant*, a medical drama on CTV and Crave
- *My Salinger Year*, in which he performs with Margaret Qualley and Sigourney Weaver, was released this year



## Describe yourself in elementary school in three words.

Inquisitive, jolly, energetic.

## Describe yourself in high school in three words.

Arrogant, insecure, lazy.

## What was your favourite subject in school and why?

Drama. I mean, that has to be obvious, right?

## What was your most challenging subject and why?

History. It was difficult to get my head around what was deemed relevant when so much was being left out.

## What songs take you back to your school days and why?

"Fallin'" by Alicia Keys, my first slow dance in Grade 6; "My Sacrifice" by Creed reminds me of getting together with the boys to watch wrestling; "Hey Ya!" by Outkast was the song I used as

the background in the first movie I made in Grade 8. And anything by Linkin Park.

## What books are you currently reading?

The entire collected works of Rumi and *Night of Power* by Anar Ali.

## What do you wish you had been taught in school but weren't?

Taxes and fiscal responsibility.

## My most embarrassing moment at school was ...

I bought four candy grams on Valentine's Day for this girl I had a crush on in my math class who also sat next to me. The following day she requested to be moved to another seat.

## In school I struggled with ...

Attendance.

## Most important life lesson learned at school?

Hard work trumps raw talent.

## Fondest school-related memory?

Performing Beowulf at the Sears Ontario Drama Festival Showcase in St. Catharines in Grade 11.

## Quality you most appreciated in a teacher?

Listening to a student's concerns.

## Which subject do you wish you had paid more attention to and why?

Physics, because my mom always beats me in physics-related *Jeopardy!* categories!

## Best advice that a teacher gave you during your school years?

I wasn't the best actor in drama class, but I got better parts in the plays because my drama teacher told me that hopefully if other brown kids got to see me acting and having fun, maybe they'd be interested in trying it as well and discovering it was meant for them. It was a huge lesson on the importance of representation. **PS**



A portrait of a smiling Black woman with long brown braids, wearing red-rimmed glasses and a white collared shirt. The background is a solid magenta color.

**"My advice? Plan early."**

- Alison Robinson  
Teacher

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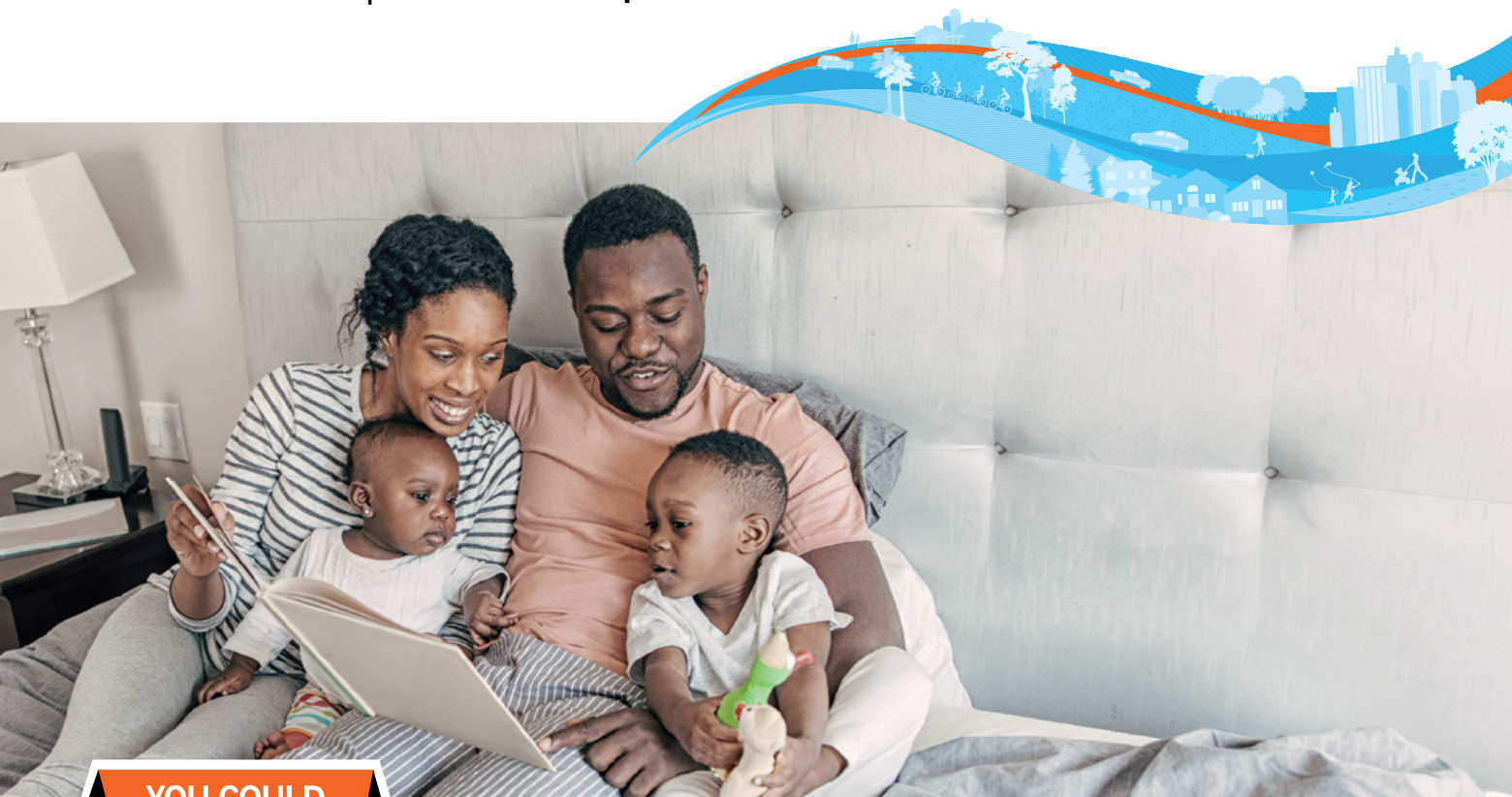
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