

For immediate release

Ontario Teachers' Federation calls for Ontario College of Teachers to Address Certification Backlog

TORONTO, June 1, 2022 — Ontario's publicly funded education system continues to experience a shortage of qualified teachers in part due to delays at the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT).

All publicly funded school teachers and administrators in Ontario must be certified by the OCT and be members of the OCT. Unfortunately, many qualified teachers continue to face delays in becoming certified by the OCT. Teachers who could be in classrooms are waiting weeks and months with no response to emails or phone calls despite several attempts.

This is not a new a problem as the following message was posted on the OCT website on June 9, 2020:

While our staff are working remotely, our processes and timelines are delayed. We will provide more information as the situation continues to evolve. Please continue to check this page for updates. Thank you for your patience.

While the OCT Registrar, Dr. Derek Haime, acknowledged and apologized for the delays in the certification process at the OCT's annual meeting in September 2021, the delays are continuing to be a barrier for qualified teachers to make their way into Ontario classrooms.

The Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) is calling on the OCT to finally resolve the delays in the certification process. Members of the profession are encouraged to participate in the following petition:

<https://www.change.org/p/ontario-college-of-teachers-place-importance-on-speeding-up-the-process-of-receiving-ontario-teaching-certificates>

"The OCT is meant to inspire public confidence by protecting the public interest through licensing, accreditation, and discipline. Regrettably, public confidence is undermined when qualified teachers are unable to become certified while teaching positions continue to go unfilled on a daily basis. Calls and emails to the OCT go unanswered for months at a time and members are frustrated that there is no ability to contact council members or hold them accountable under the new governance model. Unnecessary delays at the OCT are compounding the shortages and band-aid solutions like accessing retirees and undergrads are not viable for the long-term. Our schools, teachers, and students are under an unnecessary strain," states OTF President, Chris Cowley.

The Ontario Teachers' Federation is the advocate for the teaching profession in Ontario and for its 160,000 teachers. OTF members are full-time, part-time and occasional teachers in all the publicly funded schools in the province—elementary, secondary, public, Catholic and francophone.

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