

# Information for Internationally Educated Teachers



2010



Internationally Trained Teacher Navigation Guide .....	3
i. What This Guide Is .....	3
ii. A Teacher Navigation Map .....	3
iii. Weighing the Facts.....	3
iv. Researching Related Careers .....	4
v. Inspiration for the Journey .....	4
vi. Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway .....	5
vii. All About English .....	5
1. Becoming a Certified Teacher in Ontario .....	6
1.1 Requirements .....	6
1.2 The Process.....	7
1.3 List of Documents to Submit .....	7
1.4 Language Requirements .....	8
1.5 QECO.....	9
2. Maximizing Opportunity in a Tough Market .....	9
2.1 Job Search Websites for Educators .....	9
2.2 How Do I Market Myself? .....	9
2.3 Professional Development .....	11
3. Labour Market Trends in 2010 and Beyond .....	11
3.1 Introduction.....	11
3.2 Demographics and Declining Enrolment .....	12
3.3 The Teacher Surplus .....	15
3.4 Which subjects are in demand? .....	17
4. Where to find work in education .....	19
4.1 Geography .....	19
4.2 Who will employ teachers? .....	19
5. Alternative/related career paths.....	21
5.1 From TeachInOntario.ca .....	21
5.2 From The Working Centre .....	22
6. Understanding the Ontario Education System.....	23
Next Steps.....	23
I'm an Internationally Trained Teacher. What do I do when? .....	24

## Internationally Trained Teacher Navigation Guide

### i. What This Guide Is

A number of New Canadian teachers continue to settle in the Kitchener-Waterloo community from abroad. Many hope to pursue their passion - teaching. Yet, many typically find barriers in the journey. “It is so complicated to learn about local opportunities for teachers” is a statement made by many. “Why is it so hard? I have found it frustrating to get clear information about what it takes to get hired.” Despite the frustrating barriers that individuals have experienced, many of those we have met in the last five years hope to teach in the “system” in our immediate community. We have prepared this guide to help build your confidence as you persist in finding out more.

### ii. A Teacher Navigation Map

There is much to learn about the system and the culture of teaching and learning as you proceed with your career investigations. Don’t take shortcuts.

Am I cut out to be a teacher in the Province of Ontario? You will not find an answer to this question right away. Be patient with yourself. It takes time to slowly sift through the data and to gather the information you must have before a valid decision can be made. This guide is a navigation map to help orient New Canadian teachers to labour market trends and certification and hiring issues that are highly relevant to teachers. It may help you, the reader, answer complex questions like:

- How does teacher hiring and training happen in the province of Ontario? (See chapter 2 and 4) Why is it so frustrating to try to gather information?
- How do I go about getting certified as a teacher in the province? (See chapter 1)
- What trends impact the supply and demand of teachers in our specific community, and in other communities that I might move to? (See chapter 3)
- How do I understand and interpret the labour market realities for improved decision-making? (See chapters 3, 4 and 5)
- How would I go about finding a job and improving my professional networks? (See chapter 2)
- Why is it so difficult to get hired in the local boards of education? (See chapter 3)
- What specific demographic factors impact these challenges? Will these challenges change over time? (See chapter 3)
- Are there special “niche sectors” that can guide me in my efforts toward gaining employment in these sectors? (See chapters 2 and 4)
- Are there specific subject areas that will help maximize my chances of getting hired in the system? (See chapter 3)
- How do I work with a counsellor to review these issues step by step?

### iii. Weighing the Facts

- This guide will not guarantee with 100 per cent success that you will attain well paid, secure employment as a teacher in the Province of Ontario. (However, it will increase your chances of moving toward this goal).
- This guide does not tell you exactly what career decision to make. Your decision is personal and yours alone. There are many valid reasons you may wish to advance in your steps to “get into the teaching system” – and there are just as many reasons you may choose not to proceed with this career after weighing the evidence.
- This guide does not substitute for your own careful research work. Talking to people, volunteering in the profession, getting Canadian tutoring experience, and searching websites for accurate information

generally takes about a year before you gather all the data. Please allow yourself this time as you proceed with your settlement activities in the community.

- This guide, if followed, will reduce personal and financial risk for you and your family as you make difficult decisions. But it does not change some rather harsh labour market realities that all teaching applicants, whether New Canadian or not, experience in this hiring climate. The guide was compiled because The Working Centre realizes it is not easy to become a “fully certified teacher” and to find paid employment in the system. We ask you to read and review all data carefully. Absorbing the statistics around “supply and demand” is an important part of your research as you move forward.

#### **iv. Researching Related Careers**

- This guide gives you creative tips on “researching related careers.” Your passion for the work, and your transferable skills as a teacher, can apply in specific training niches in industry, in human relations work, in adult and youth counselling and employment community-based sectors, in private schools, in instructional design and distance education, working with youth at risk, and as a fee-for-service tutor in learning enterprises of many kinds. Where will your skills and values take you?
- These are only a few brainstormed ideas – there are more. Use thorough, carefully researched avenues of investigation to understand the possibilities. All of these paths (and many more) are potentially rewarding avenues for career enjoyment. Talk to your counsellor as a first step.
- Labour market truths are complex. You may wish to pick a related career right away, but do take your time. You will want to absorb some of the demographic trends impacting opportunities in this document carefully.
- Remember as you review your life and work plan that non-standard work is extremely common in this labour market for many professionals. Your professional life may initially include two to three part-time teaching or research jobs at the same time as you make your way in a new and different culture. This is common. The typical career path for teachers in Ontario has evolved. It is very common for teachers to spend years supply teaching and working LTO (Long-term Occasional) positions before finding a permanent position.
- Some of the facts presented in this document, for both the Working Centre counsellor and international teacher alike, may initially leave a discouraging impact on the hopes you brought with you to Canada. The more you read local newspapers, national newspapers like the Globe and Mail, and journals that pertain to the culture of the teaching profession, in addition to the websites presented in this document, the more navigation expertise you will have.
- Your strength lies in your networks, in the friends and allies you make, and the persistence of your search.

#### **v. Inspiration for the Journey**

- The teaching culture in general is a culture of volunteering. Canadians volunteer to get ahead in this sector. Schools in your neighbourhood, or community recreation centres, are a great place to start building your contacts and experience. This document describes these steps further in section 2.2. Do not shortcut this step.
- Your future employers and educational institutions you attend for more training will demand a volunteering background. They want to see how you fit. See section 2.2 for more detailed discussion of such expectations.
- What skills can you practice as a volunteer? Be selective about the place that you choose to contribute your time. Make sure it fits the picture of what you hope to learn. You will acquire “systems knowledge”. Talk to a counsellor about this if you are not sure where to start.
- The world is a global place. The professions of teaching, of adult education, of instructional design, and many growing occupational branches of social work and settlement work are all eager to accept new applicants with fluencies in diverse languages and cultures. Do not let temporary barriers stop you; the world is a place of possibility. Keep eyes and ears open to the positive developments that you see around

you! Ontario is a rapidly changing society. We are confident that your multi-cultural gifts as a newcomer will eventually be appreciated. There are currently many advocacy actions going on that will accelerate systems change so that entry to the professions is easier.

## **vi. Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway**

- Do not be afraid to bother people if your counsellor talks to you about the necessity of information interviews for your strategy. This important career tool for aspiring teachers is emphasized in this document in section 2.2. The professionals you approach will typically understand how such an interview works, and will not find your request strange. Practice the protocol of such interviews with a counsellor. Always write thank you notes. Let people know how valuable you found the time with them.
- Your counsellor will chat with you about “short, medium, and long range goals.” Most people find this helpful. We have found that it is useful to break plans down into small steps.
- Celebrate progress toward your goals, even if the progress is a small step in the overall picture.

## **vii. All About English**

- The fear of “imperfect English” is a well-based fear in a profession that demands advanced communication arts. Strengthen diction and correct any language weaknesses carefully. Not all teenage students in the high school system are sympathetic to unusual inflections or rhythms in speech.
- Speak to your counsellor directly about the many resources in the community. Many of these are not expensive. Choose a style that suits you, but keep advancing in your goal of perfect English.
- Advanced conversation classes at Conestoga College are available for reasonable fees. Talk to your counsellor for more detail.
- Conversation circles run by the YMCA are held in many neighbourhoods. Choose an “advanced” level that will stimulate and challenge you. Check out locations with the YMCA.
- Self-directed English pronunciation lab work is available through The Working Centre. Talk to your counsellor.
- Consider a Toastmaster’s course. This is an informal speech skills course that Canadians from all walks of life enjoy to sharpen their public speaking skills. It is lively, fun and supportive.
- The formal English requirements for teaching in Ontario are reviewed in section 1.4 of this guide. Study this carefully, but continue to advance in every informal way you can to excel in your chosen profession.

## 1. Becoming a Certified Teacher in Ontario

Note: This section is just a brief overview – for complete details please refer to:

[http://www.oct.ca/become\\_a\\_teacher/registration\\_guides/outside\\_ontario\\_e.pdf](http://www.oct.ca/become_a_teacher/registration_guides/outside_ontario_e.pdf)

### 1.1 Requirements

#### The basics

Ontario requires a minimum of:

- successful completion of elementary and secondary education
- three years of postsecondary education
- one full year of teacher education.

#### The degree

- is from a postsecondary institution outside Canada or the United States accredited in the jurisdiction where the institution is located.

#### Completion of a valid teacher education program

- You must have successfully completed an acceptable teacher education program for teachers educated outside Ontario. The teacher education program must include one year of full-time study leading to a valid teaching certificate issued by the appropriate certification authority.
- The program must also include practice teaching and course work in foundations in education and teaching methods covering two consecutive Ontario divisions of the Ontario school system: Primary (grade 1-3), Junior (grade 4-6), Intermediate (grade 7-10), Senior (grade 11-12).
- The College will recognize a portion of your initial teacher education program completed via distance education provided the program included a face-to-face practicum or if you have had one year of teaching experience in a jurisdiction outside Ontario where you hold teacher certification.
- To be eligible for certification, you will still have to satisfy requirements for two methodology courses in a face-to-face environment and meet the academic and language proficiency requirements for certification

#### Specific content requirements for the teacher education program

Your teacher education program must equal a year of full-time study in the country in which you were originally certified. If you completed a four-year degree that included a teacher education program, at least one-quarter of the course work must have included teacher education.

Your teacher education program must have included at least:

- 40 per cent of one year focused on teaching methods – preparation in how to teach students in particular grades or subject areas
- 20 per cent of one year focused on education foundations – the history, philosophy and psychology of education
- 20 per cent in any other area of education
- A minimum of 40 days of practice teaching supervised by the program provider. (The College will accept evidence of at least one year of teaching experience as a certified teacher subsequent to your teacher certification if you have not met this minimum practicum expectation.)

The program must train you to teach grades in **two** consecutive divisions of the Ontario school system:

- Primary/Junior Divisions (Kindergarten to Grade 6)
- Junior/Intermediate Divisions\* (Grades 4 to 10)
- Intermediate/Senior Division\* (Grades 7 to 12).

\*Any training that prepares you to teach the Intermediate or the Senior division grade levels must include methodology for teaching subjects at those levels

## **Specific requirements for Technology Studies Teachers**

To teach technological education subjects in Ontario, you must:

- have an Ontario secondary school graduation diploma or equivalent
- successfully complete one year of acceptable teacher education leading to a valid teaching certificate issued by the appropriate certification authority. The teacher education program must include practice teaching and course work in foundations in education and teaching methods covering technological studies subjects.
- have five years of related wage-earning, business or industrial experience in the area(s) of technological studies covered by the teacher education program. A maximum of three years of postsecondary education in a trade may be substituted for up to three of the five years. No less than 16 months of trade experience must be continuous employment. Teaching experience may not be substituted for the required trade experience, and
- demonstrate proof of competency in the area(s) selected as teaching option(s) in the teacher education program.

## **1.2 The Process**

### **Timeline**

When you submit all of your document you'll get a registration number in 10 to 15 business days. Evaluation of your credentials takes 4 to 6 weeks. You have 2 years to submit all documents.

### **The four steps to evaluation**

Step 1: You will need to submit some documents with your application and arrange for other documents to be sent directly to the College by institutions on your behalf. If any of your documents are in a language other than English or French, you will need to have them translated before you submit them to the College.

Step 2: Contact the institutions where you completed your postsecondary education and ask them to send the documents you need directly to the College. If the College receives your documents in a language other than English or French, we will send copies to you. You will need to have these documents translated and return them to the College.

Step 3: Send in your registration form, the documents you submit yourself and fees.

Step 4: When the College receives all requested documents and fees, we will evaluate your qualifications. If you meet the requirements for certification, the College will notify you in writing requesting payment of the annual membership fee (currently \$120). The fees are based on the calendar year and are not pro-rated. If you join the College in November, you will still have to pay the full amount. The College will send you your interim certificate. This is your initial licence to teach in Ontario.

### **OR**

If you do not meet all of the requirements, the College will tell you which additional steps you need to take.

## **1.3 List of Documents to Submit**

*You need to submit to the College:*

1. Original registration form. Please be sure to sign the Applicant's Declaration on page 17.

2. Photocopy of proof of identity.
3. Photocopy of proof of change of name, if applicable.
4. Photocopy of employment authorization, if you are not a Canadian citizen.
5. Photocopy of teaching certificate(s).
6. Canadian criminal record check report (signed original).
7. Fee of \$362.

*As well, you must ask your alma mater to send directly to the College:*

1. Academic record of teacher education.
2. Academic record of postsecondary degrees.
3. Statements of Professional Standing.
4. Proof of proficiency in English or French, if applicable.

*If you are a Teacher of Technological Education, you also need to send:*

1. Photocopy of your Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent.
2. Wage-earning experience.
3. Proof of competence.

For details on what to submit and translation requirements go to

[http://www.oct.ca/become\\_a\\_teacher/registration\\_guides/outside\\_ontario\\_e.pdf](http://www.oct.ca/become_a_teacher/registration_guides/outside_ontario_e.pdf)

The registration form is also located there.

### 1.4 Language Requirements

If you completed your teacher education in English in these countries:

Canada, Montserrat, Anguilla, Nigeria, Antigua and Barbuda, New Zealand, Australia, Republic of Ireland, Bahamas, Saint Kitts-Nevis, Barbados, St. Lucia, Belize, St. Vincent, Benin, Seychelles, Bermuda, Sierra Leone, Botswana, Trinidad and Tobago, British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Cayman Islands, United Kingdom, Cameroon, United States, Dominica, Uganda, Ghana, US Virgin Islands, Grenada, Zambia, Guyana, Zimbabwe, Jamaica...

Then you do not need to provide further information or take a test.

If you complete your education in French in these countries:

*Benin, Guinea, Canada, Haiti, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Congo - Dem. Republic, Luxembourg, Congo – Republic, Mali, France, Monaco, French Guyana, Seychelles, Guadeloupe, Senegal...*

Then you do not need to provide further information or take a test

### What about people from other countries?

1. If your teacher education program was completed entirely in either English or French, please have a letter sent directly to the College from the head of the institution you attended. The letter needs to confirm that the language of instruction for the entire program was either English or French when you attended the institution.

**OR**

2. If your primary or secondary and postsecondary education were in French or English, but your teacher education program was in another language, please arrange to have letters sent to the College from these institutions confirming the language of instruction was English or French.

**OR**

You must complete an approved language assessment. The testing authority must send your results to the College. Here are the approved tests:

#### English

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)



- Internet-based Test (TOEFL iBT)

## French

- Test pour étudiants et stagiaires au Canada (TESt-Can)

For information on test scores or contacts about testing refer to

[http://www.oct.ca/become\\_a\\_teacher/registration\\_guides/outside\\_ontario\\_e.pdf](http://www.oct.ca/become_a_teacher/registration_guides/outside_ontario_e.pdf)

## 1.5 QECO

Once you have received your interim certification to teach in Ontario you can apply to QECO for qualifications assessment. QECO assesses your education and experience to identify where you fit on the teacher's pay scale. You will begin at level A1 (the lowest level) and can move up from this level depending on your education level. QECO will also let you know what you can do to improve your standing on the pay scale. Go to <http://www.geco.on.ca/> to find more information.

## 2. Maximizing Opportunity in a Tough Market

### 2.1 Job Search Websites for Educators

- [www.educationcanada.com](http://www.educationcanada.com) is a very popular job posting site where you can make a profile
- <http://www.jobsineducation.com/> is not as popular as EC but has many postings as well as a number of First Nations Job postings
- <http://www.edujobscanada.com/> and <http://www.academicwork.ca/> are primarily for college and university jobs
- [www.applytoeducation.ca](http://www.applytoeducation.ca) is a website where you create a detailed portfolio. Many school boards will use only ApplyToEducation, which makes it important but do keep in mind that to actually apply to jobs you will need to buy credits. However, if you want a job in that school board, there is no way around it. E.g. in Waterloo Region you will have to pay money to apply for the position.

A note on acronyms and titles you might encounter in a job posting:

- An Occasional Teacher is a teacher who can supply, or fill in for a sick or absent teacher.
- The Occasional Teacher List (OTL) is a list of supply teachers. The public boards in Waterloo Region typically open up this list only once a year and have limited hiring, usually in the spring. Keep an eye on their websites for this opening.
- LTO is a Long-Term Occasional where you will cover all duties (including planning and reporting) for the regular teacher who is on maternity leave, long-term illness or leave of absence.
- FTE means full-time equivalent. Often the FTE number is listed as a decimal number. For example, if you see a posting that says "FTE 0.4, this position will be 4/10th of a full time position. These contracts can be combined (e.g. 0.2 FTE and 0.4 FTE).

### 2.2 How Do I Market Myself?

The market for teachers in Ontario, particularly in Waterloo Region, is very saturated. Job hunting is very competitive. It's important to market yourself well to find that job.

#### **Volunteering and networking to increase your visibility**

Volunteering is important. The old adage "it's not what you know, but who you know" aptly describes the education sector as principals want to hire people that they know and trust. Your ability to present

yourself as a confident, effective, engaging pedagogue will be essential to your success in education. Volunteering and developing a positive reputation is critical to your pathway. After volunteering for a time you'll be in a much better place to have an information interview with a principal to discuss your future and present her/him with your marketing materials. In a highly competitive market like this, the likelihood of simply sending in a resume and being hired is extremely low. Developing rapport and trust with a principal will go a long way towards you finding a job. Do not skip this step.

Visit a school in your neighbourhood to inquire about volunteering. To see the Waterloo Catholic District School Board's volunteer policy visit [http://www.wcdsb.ca/AP\\_Memos/PDF/APO001.pdf](http://www.wcdsb.ca/AP_Memos/PDF/APO001.pdf).

## **Business cards**

Many teachers, particularly teachers on the Occasional Teacher List (supply list) create business cards – with each school they visit, they give these cards to the principals who then use them to contact these teachers for occasional teaching duties. Some principals will have a stack of a few cards which they commonly turn to. This way, you'll 1. Get called in more often and 2. Spend more time in one specific school, developing your reputation and relationships which will hopefully turn into a job. Check with your school board about how supply days are assigned. Remember that your positive classroom performance will be your best business card.

## **Portfolios**

Portfolios have become a standard thing to bring to an interview. They should be graphic and attractive, in a protective case/binder. They should include a resume, references, your philosophy of education, photos of your teaching experience, lesson plans, and any other awards or certifications you may have. Special conferences you have helped to organize; sports teams; theatre or music production – all are useful in your portfolio. Be sure to check with Human Resources before the interview to ensure that portfolios will be permitted in the interview.

## **Resume CDs**

Some teachers choose to create an electronic resume/portfolio which they put on CD and distribute to principals that they meet. This not only markets yourself in the same way that portfolios do, they also display to principals that you are tech-savvy, something which is becoming increasingly important. In particular, you should display that you are capable of using technology effectively in the classroom – computers, electronic whiteboards, projectors, etc.

## **Website**

Why on earth would a teacher need a website? It's very common in Ontario (teachers looking for work in particular). The website could be an example of how you'd use technology to communicate with your students, develop their IT abilities, and could also be a marketing tool – many teachers create an "online portfolio" with their resume, pictures of them teaching and examples of lessons they've created.

Note: Social networking can be an excellent tool and your worst enemy. Sites like Facebook, Twitter and MySpace leave an online legacy for all to see. Ensure that your online reputation does nothing to affect your chances at employment; the respect you've earned of administrators, teachers and students

### 2.3 Professional Development

Since the market is so competitive, professional development is very important. It's very common for teachers to take **AQ**, **ABQ** and **Masters** courses in the summers and also during the school year.

**ABQ** stands for Additional Basic Qualification and this expands the grade range that you can teach. There are four ranges: Primary, Junior, Intermediate and Senior. Teachers trained in Ontario will have at least 2 consecutive qualifications. It's common to take ABQ courses to expand the grade range that you can teach. This opens up the number of positions you can apply for and makes you more flexible to prospective principals. For example, If you are J/I qualified you can teach from grades 4-10. If you apply to a school that ranges from grades K-6, you will only be able to teach 3 of the grades in the school, however, if you expanded your range to include P/J/I you would be able to teach in all levels of elementary/middle school.

**AQ** stands for Additional Qualification. These courses expand your knowledge base. Some are one session and some have 3 parts which lead to specialization. Special Education is a very important AQ to have as it is a subject area with identified need. After taking Special Education AQ's you will be prepared to become Special Education Resource teacher and even teach in a segregated classroom. ESL is also very helpful as you will be better prepared to teach an increasingly diverse population, particularly if you teach in one of the growing school boards around the GTA. There are also courses which help to lead you to Principal qualifications.

AQ and ABQ courses are taken from universities which have a faculty of education. They can be completed on-site, online and by correspondence. For a full listing, refer to:

[http://www.oct.ca/additional\\_qualifications/search/?lang=en-CA](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/search/?lang=en-CA)

Many faculties of education offer **Masters in Education**. You can find details on the websites of each faculty. Here is a list of all of the faculties in Ontario:

[http://www.oct.ca/become\\_a\\_teacher/faculties.aspx](http://www.oct.ca/become_a_teacher/faculties.aspx)

## 3. Labour Market Trends in 2010 and Beyond

There are a number of trends that suggest caution as a new teacher in 2010 enters the market. The following data is meant to make you aware of the trends that are contributing to the teacher surplus that is creating this challenging market. This data is not meant to discourage you from pursuing your career. Job opportunities do exist for people who work hard and effectively network and market themselves.

### 3.1 Introduction

The Ontario College of Teachers has published some labour market trends:

College data shows:

▪ *the annual retirement rate is now headed steadily downward*

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- *government-funded spaces for one-year teacher training at Ontario education faculties jumped from 5,000 in '98-99 to 6,500 in 2000-01, a level that continues today*
  - *fewer teachers are leaving the profession in the early years of teaching. Only one in 13 leave in their first three years*
  - *new teacher education programs have emerged in the province*
  - *interest in teaching has surged 15,000 apply to faculties now compared to 8,000 in '97-98*
  - *US border colleges have added to the supply. In 1998, American-based teacher education programs provided 500 teacher candidates per year. By 2002, the number of US grads applying for College membership in Ontario rose to 1,300.*
  - *school boards also have access to a growing pool of retirees who can work for up to 95 school days a year without affecting their pensions*
  - *College membership has grown from 172,000 in 1998 to 193,000 in 2004. Teachers must be licensed by the College to teach in Ontario's publicly funded schools.*
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(From [http://www.oct.ca/media/news\\_releases/20050525.aspx?lang=en-CA](http://www.oct.ca/media/news_releases/20050525.aspx?lang=en-CA))

### 3. 2 Demographics and Declining Enrolment

Many factors must be reviewed to understand how birth rates and generational size directly impacts teacher recruitment practices. Current data shows that enrolment has been falling in Ontario due to a smaller number of children being born. According to the Ministry of Education, enrolment in Ontario schools has been and will continue to drop:

- *Enrolment in Ontario schools declined by 90,000 students between 2002-03 and 2008-09.*
  - *Between 2008-09 and 2012-13, enrolment is projected to decline by 56,000 students.*
  - *In 2008-09, 57 out of 72 Ontario school boards have smaller student populations than in 2002-03.*
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This is according to the Ministry of Education's website (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/enrolment.html>).

The ministry created a committee to look at the issue and provide recommendations (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/DEWG.pdf>).

According to the report the data is a middle ground projection based on anticipated births and migration. However, not every school board will face a decline:

*There are 72 district school boards in Ontario. The projected decline of 72,000 is a net result of a projected decline of 97,000 students in 60 boards and projected growth of 25,000 students in 12 boards between 2007–08 and 2012–13.*

## **Trends by region**

Regional issues must be reviewed by a prospective teacher. Are there regions in Ontario that present brighter prospects for the aspiring teacher? Enrolment varies significantly from one region of the province to another. Between 2002–03 and 2007–08:

- *Toronto declined by 9 per cent, but other parts of the Greater Toronto Area (referred to in this document as “Other GTA”\*) experienced growth.*
  - *Northern Ontario experienced the largest rate of decline – over 12 per cent since 2002–03. Declining enrolment was a reality for many school boards in northern Ontario for several years before it emerged as a province-wide trend.*
  - *Eastern and south western Ontario each experienced declines of over 7 per cent.*
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*\* Other GTA comprises the regions of Durham, Halton, Peel, and York.*

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In the next five years, the only region of the province that is expected to see enrolment growth is the Other GTA. Declining enrolment will be the norm in all other regions, with the largest expected rate of decline in northern Ontario. Between 2007–08 and 2012–13:

- *Toronto is projected to decline by over 4 per cent, while the Other GTA is projected to grow – the only region where growth is projected.*
  - *The rate and effects of declining enrolment vary significantly across the province, and some school boards are experiencing growth.*
  - *Northern Ontario is projected to have the largest rate of decline – over 13 per cent.*
  - *Eastern and southwestern Ontario will each continue to experience rates of decline of about 6 per cent to 7 per cent.*
- 

Some time after 2012 and before 2020, Ontario’s school-aged population is expected to begin growing again.

*At a regional level, however, this growth will likely be confined to the Other GTA, while other regions will see enrolment stabilize or continue to decline. Over all, at the provincial level, only slight growth above the 2012–13 enrolment level is projected. During the period from 2012 to 2020:*

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- *Toronto's school-aged population is projected to decline only minimally, while the Other GTA's is projected to continue growing at a higher rate than previously – about 8 per cent.*
  - *Northern Ontario is projected to have the largest rate of decline – over 12 per cent.*
  - *Central, eastern, and southwestern Ontario will decline at more modest rates of about 2 per cent to 3 per cent for the former and about 5 per cent for southwestern Ontario.*
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Is enrolment also dropping in **French language school boards**? The French language boards are not facing the same trends:

*Both English- and French-language boards have experienced a decline in enrolment since 2002–03. The overall rate of decline in French-language boards, however, has been lower than in English-language boards – 1 per cent and 4 per cent respectively.*

*Projections indicate that most of the 60 English-language boards will experience enrolment decline by 2012–13; only a few will experience growth. In contrast, about half the 12 French-language boards are expected to grow.*

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Are **Private Schools** a factor in Declining Enrolment? Does that mean that there will be major growth in private schools?

*Some participants in our consultations raised the question of whether enrolment in private schools is a cause of declining enrolment in the publicly funded system. According to information provided by the Ministry of Education, there is no link. Over the past few years, the proportion of students enrolled in private schools – 5.7 per cent of all students – has not changed. This information supports the view that declining enrolment is primarily a demographic trend: fewer students are enrolled in publicly funded schools because there are fewer school-aged children.*

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Many **First Nations schools** are not included in the public school system. The First Nations population in Canada is actually the youngest and fastest growing (according to the last census). Furthermore, First Nations communities are often underserved by teachers. Unfortunately the report doesn't seem to go into much detail about First Nations demographic projections, but here is what it says:

*Aboriginal students are an important exception to the pattern of declining enrolment – their population has been growing while most other student populations are declining. The problem of students whose local school has closed having to go outside their community for education is one shared by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. However, it can have particular significance for Aboriginal students, who, if they have to*

*attend a school outside their community, may find themselves removed as well from their culture.*

*The term Aboriginal includes First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Not all Aboriginal students attend provincially funded schools. The elementary and secondary education of First Nation students who live and attend school in First Nation communities is the responsibility of the federal government. The education of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students who live in the jurisdiction of school boards and attend Ontario's publicly funded schools is a provincial responsibility. Funding for these students' education is provided through the GSN, and for the purposes of funding they are treated like other students of the board.*

### **E-Learning**

The report provides recommendations that may or may not be adopted by the government. One of the recommendations is to increase **E-Learning** and alternative delivery. Some First Nations communities have been using E-Learning for secondary schools and this might be a growing sector in education. In fact Ontarians can take a variety of high school courses online (<https://www.virtualhighschool.com/> is one such example) and through some school boards. If this is of interest to someone, exploring training options might be a good idea – there don't seem to be specific Additional Qualification courses to address this issue but perhaps the courses called Integration of Information and Computer Technology in Instruction might be of assistance. There are a number of Masters programs which delve into this growing area of education.

## **3.3 The Teacher Surplus**

### **Introduction**

There is a surplus of teachers in Ontario. Research has shown that many teachers are unemployed, underemployed or spend months or years supply teaching and occasional teaching before finding full-time work. In addition to declining enrolment rates there are more teachers being trained in Ontario, in other provinces, in American border colleges and Internationally Educated Teachers gaining OCT membership than there are teachers retiring.

In 2000 there were 8,857 newly approved teachers in Ontario (from Ontario training programs, American border training programs, and International programs). These teachers were faced with a retiring teacher population that was creating some 7,096 positions, a difference of 1,761. Those 1,761 teachers would be able to find supply positions that could turn into contracts or full time work. Fast forward to 2006 data, where we now have some 12,434 newly trained teachers and only an estimated 5,325 retiring teachers, leaving 7,109 teachers seeking employment.

### **Trends for English-language teachers**

As we discovered in the previous section, the situation is often different depending on the language and location of instruction. The following is from the Ontario College of Teachers' Transition to Teaching publication:

*Many education graduates found lean pickings when they searched for their first Ontario teaching jobs in the 2006–07 school year. Only two in five (41 per cent) of 2006 graduates*

*found regular employment by spring 2007. This low job success rate was even worse than the 51 per cent rate experienced by new graduates the year before.*

*The province's English-language teacher employment market is now highly competitive. New teachers compete for jobs with large numbers of surplus teachers, many of whom are still hoping to move from occasional to regular teaching jobs one, two or even three years after graduation. Competition for longer-term occasional assignments is especially challenging, with many recently retired teachers in this job market.*

*"It has been very difficult to get any sort of teaching position. I applied to five school boards and literally hundreds of postings before getting on a supply teaching list."*

*-Elementary occasional teacher, Toronto region*

*Many supply positions are filled with retired teachers, which limits the opportunities for new graduates.*

*Unemployed primary-junior graduate, northeast Ontario*

*Fewer than one in three first-year English-language teachers (32 per cent) responding to this year's Transition to Teaching surveys report they found regular jobs. Nearly two in five (38 per cent) say they did not find enough occasional, contract or regular employment to teach as much as they wanted in their first year in the profession.*

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To read the full article refer to:

[http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally\\_speaking/december\\_2007/transition\\_english.asp](http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally_speaking/december_2007/transition_english.asp)

### **Trends for French-language Teachers**

According to the same report, employment rates for French speaking graduates are much higher than English-language teachers.

Among graduates of French-language teacher education programs who were teaching in spring 2007, about two in three (64 per cent) held regular teaching jobs. This employment rate is similar to the 67 to 70 per cent rate reported by comparable first-year teachers in each of the past four years. More than four in five (83 per cent) say they taught as much as they wanted in their first year in the profession. Only four per cent say they were not able to find any teaching job. By year end, only five per cent still relied on daily occasional assignments for their teaching employment.

For the full article refer to:

[http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally\\_speaking/december\\_2007/transition\\_french.asp](http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally_speaking/december_2007/transition_french.asp)

### **Trends for Internationally Educated Teachers**

The employment rate for Internationally Educated Teachers in their first year of teaching in Ontario is significantly lower than Ontario-trained teachers.



*Despite often substantial teaching experience in other countries, very few IETs [Internationally Educated Teachers] find jobs in Ontario school boards in today's competitive teacher-employment market.*

*Of the new Canadian teachers responding to the Transition to Teaching survey of IETs who received their first Ontario teaching license in 2006, only one in 12 (eight per cent) say they were able to find regular teaching jobs in publicly funded Ontario school boards in 2006–07. This compares with two in five Ontario faculty of education graduates of 2006.*

*“It has been a very frustrating year for us. I should have been told from the outset which provinces required teachers, rather than arriving only to find that Ontario has too many teachers and not enough jobs. Why are graduates still being trained here in such large numbers if they can't find employment here?”*

*-Occasional elementary teacher,  
10 years teaching experience in England*

*According to the report there is more hope for Internationally Trained Teachers in independent and French-language schools:*

*Independent schools are an important teaching alternative for new Canadian teachers. Two in five (42 per cent) who found regular teaching jobs in the 2006–07 school year say they are employed in private schools.*

*“In my first year of teaching in Ontario, I'm satisfied that at least I have a teaching job. As I'm teaching in a private school my pay is very low as compared to public school teachers.”*

*-Independent school math and English teacher,  
five years teaching experience in India*

*French-language school boards and French as a Second Language courses in English-language boards also provide some job opportunities for the small numbers who can teach in French. Most of this group is employed, with almost half in regular teaching jobs. Only one in 20 new Canadian teachers not able to teach in French found regular jobs in Ontario school boards.*

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For the full report please refer to:

[http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally\\_speaking/december\\_2007/transition\\_new-canadian.asp](http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally_speaking/december_2007/transition_new-canadian.asp)

### **3.4 Which subjects are in demand?**

The Ontario College of Teachers has said that Internationally Educated Teachers are finding more opportunities in independent and French language schools. It's also important to consider the

teacher's subject area; for some subjects there is a lot of opportunity. This is an excerpt from an OCT article in 2005 (unfortunately not more up to date):

### *Some shortages persist*

*Although the general teacher shortage is clearly over for Ontario, substantial staffing challenges in filling specialized teaching roles continue to plague Ontario school boards.*

*The 2004 phase of the College's Transition to Teaching study found that certain new graduates continue to be in high demand, especially graduates of French-language teacher education programs and those with physics, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, business studies and technological qualifications. Among the graduates of 2003, those who hold these qualifications had a 50 per cent greater chance of landing a regular teaching appointment in the first year following graduation.*

*Another indicator of specialized shortages can be found in the number of school board requests for hiring and assignment exemptions each year. In each of the past three years, school boards have required between 2,700 and 3,000 special authorizations for regulatory exemptions because they were unsuccessful in their attempts to recruit appropriately qualified teachers for advertised job vacancies - through both Letters of Permission and Temporary Letters of Approval (TLA).*

*Ministry of Education data on Letters of Permission issued to school boards to hire individuals who are not qualified as teachers in Ontario shows that school boards continue to be unsuccessful in recruiting certified teachers for more than 1,200 openings each year.*

*Among the areas for which school boards could not find certified teachers are French first language, French and English as second languages, technological studies, foreign languages, business studies, Special Education, sciences and mathematics.*

*The College of Teachers issues TLAs when school boards wish to assign a licensed teacher without the specific qualifications required for the assignment because they have tried but were unable to recruit teachers with the required additional qualifications for the assignments.*

*The 2003-04 school year saw a record number of these TLAs, with 1,500 authorizations across the province. French as a Second Language, Special Education, teacher librarian, technological studies and English as a Second Language each reached their highest annual numbers of TLAs province-wide since the inception of the College in the 2003-04 school year.*

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Note: Text bolding was added by the authors. (Source: [http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally\\_speaking/june\\_2005/?lang=en-CA](http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally_speaking/june_2005/?lang=en-CA))

### **Focusing on Positive Trends**

While this data can seem clearly discouraging there are a few positive trends the reader will want to focus on and sift through carefully:

- The projected growth in enrolment in Durham, Halton, Peel, York will likely lead to growth in the number of teachers and teachers should consider teaching in these regions (see [http://esip.edu.gov.on.ca/english/profiles/BoundaryMap\\_detail.asp?MAP=english-public-south](http://esip.edu.gov.on.ca/english/profiles/BoundaryMap_detail.asp?MAP=english-public-south) for a map of the school boards in Southern Ontario)
- More French language school boards will see growth compared to English language school boards
- First Nations populations will grow at a faster rate than non-First Nations populations
- Internationally Educated Teachers have found more opportunity in independent and French schools
- French, physics, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, business studies, special education, ESL, FSL and technology teachers are in greater demand

New teachers need to consider this information in their strategic job search.

## 4. Where to find work in education

### 4.1 Geography

This document only contains information for employment in Ontario. As discussed in section 3, the 4 areas identified by the Ministry of Education as areas with increasing enrolment are Durham, Halton, Peel and York.

The following are a few resources to aid in decision making on which geographic area you would like to focus your job search on:

- Here is a great website which provides maps of the English public and Catholic and French school boards in Ontario and links to their websites:  
<http://esip.edu.gov.on.ca/english/core/BoardByBoundaryMap.asp>
- Here is a site that lists teacher salaries in each province:  
<http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/FactsStats/teacherpaid.asp>
- This is a really interesting resource from the Ontario Secondary Schools Teacher's Federation: It is a document which covers each school board in Ontario and gives salary and benefit information including information for Occasional Teachers and even working conditions.  
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=3952,3949,580,442,365,Documents&MediaID=686&Filename=wheretoteach-Nov-2006.pdf>

### 4.2 Who will employ teachers?

#### Public/Catholic schools in Ontario

<http://sbinfo.edu.gov.on.ca/brdall.asp> contains a list of all public and catholic school boards in Ontario.

How do I apply to a school board? Each school board has their own unique process to applying for teaching positions. Some school boards will allow those outside of their board to apply to individual schools/job postings. For some, you'll have to apply through a central application process on their website. For many school boards it is a requirement that you become an Occasional Teacher on their OT list. This means you will have to go through an interview to get hired with the board before you can

apply to individual positions. If accepted, you'll be on the supply list, meaning that you can be called to fill in. Once on this list you'll be able to apply for positions. Check the board's website for information on their hiring process.

## **Tutoring**

There are lots of opportunities to tutor. It's good experience and can pay the bills while waiting for certification. You could advertise yourself through community postings, word of mouth, or on classifieds sites such as [www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org), [www.kijiji.ca](http://www.kijiji.ca), or [www.yourclassifies.ca](http://www.yourclassifies.ca).

Alternatively, there are a number of private tutoring companies which hire teachers. A few in the area are: Sylvan, Excel, Oxford, and a number of others that you can find on Canada411 -

<http://canada411.yellowpages.ca/search/si/1/tutoring/kitchener%2C+on>

## **Private schools and religious based schools**

<http://www.ofis.ca/> is the Federation of Independent Schools. You can find a list of all private schools in each area of the province.

<http://www.oacs.org/> is the Alliance of Christian schools in Ontario. They have job postings on this site and you'll be able to find a list of schools.

<http://www.namf.ca/> is the North American Muslim Foundation which has job postings.

<http://www.mwlcanda.org/canada/schools.htm#ontario> is a list of Islamic school in Ontario from the Muslim World League.

<http://www.kosherdelight.com/CanadaJewishSchools.htm#ONTARIO> is a list of Jewish schools in Ontario.

## **French public schools in Ontario**

Keep in mind that each school board has their unique hiring policies and you'll need to check their website for full details.

<http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/franco-schoolboards.html> is a list of all French school boards in Ontario

## **First Nations education**

Teaching in a First Nations school is a wonderful opportunity. There are often positions open teaching in First Nations schools and positions will come up throughout the year, due to a number of circumstances, the first and foremost likely being geography. Many communities are in Northern Ontario, some in sub-Arctic climates and many are fly-in only or accessible only by winter (ice) road. This is teaching in a culturally different and unique setting compared to most places in Southern Ontario which can be very rewarding. The decision to teach in a First Nations community should be carefully considered; there are challenges to teaching on a First Nations Community including climate, isolation, resource deficits due to underfunding and high teacher and administrator turnover. Furthermore, these communities are continuing a process of healing and many social issues must continue to be addressed. Overcoming these challenges, however, can present a greater sense of accomplishment for both the teacher and student. While teaching in a First Nations community is an opportunity to gain Canadian teaching experience, it should first and foremost be viewed as an opportunity to positively affect students in need of strong, effective teachers. For more information on First Nations teaching, feel free to contact Cameron at [camerond@theworkingcentre.org](mailto:camerond@theworkingcentre.org) for an information interview.

## 5. Alternative/related career paths

### 5.1 From TeachInOntario.ca

The following suggestions are from <http://www.teachinontario.ca/tio/en/about.htm>:

#### **Heritage Language Teaching**

*Heritage Language Programs* is the term for language instruction programs offered by school boards for languages other than English or French. Uncertified teachers may be considered by some school boards to instruct Heritage Language Programs if certified instructors are not available.

#### **Adult Continuing Education**

Continuing education programs are courses offered by school boards, community colleges, universities and private institutions to adult learners. These courses are sometimes offered during the day, but most are offered during the evening. Continuing Education instructors are generally hired on a contract basis. The salaries and working conditions vary widely, depending on the employer, the course being taught, as well as the qualifications and experience of the instructor.

Please note that high school credit courses offered by a board through continuing education require a certified teacher.

#### **Working as an Education Assistant**

*Education Assistants or Teaching Assistants* work alongside teachers in elementary, secondary and adult education classrooms. There are different types of Education Assistants, but they all support students. The duties of an Education Assistant may include such things as helping special needs students with individualized programming or assisting the teacher with classroom setup.

The minimum qualifications to become an Education Assistant are an Ontario High School Diploma or equivalent, proficiency in English or French, and enthusiasm for the job.

Each school board has different requirements for Education Assistant positions. In many boards, Education Assistants have specialized training and/or education.

Visit the school board <http://sbinfo.edu.gov.on.ca/brdall.asp> for job postings and more information about the required qualifications.

#### **Early Childhood Education and Daycare**

Many organizations such as daycare centres, religious groups, YM/YWCAs and government or community agencies offer early childcare services. In order to qualify to work as an early childhood educator, you must have a diploma or a degree in early childhood education (ECE). Children in ECE and daycare programs can range in age from early infancy to six years old.

For more information on a career as an early childhood educator, please consult the Association of Early Childhood Educators website <http://www.aeceo.ca/>.

#### **Private Schools**

Ontario's private schools are not required by law to hire certified teachers, although many prefer that teachers be certified.

A list of all of Ontario's private elementary and secondary schools is available on the Ministry of Education's website <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/privschr/index.html>. Visit the school website for more information about available positions and required qualifications.

## Community Colleges and Universities

A teacher's certificate is not required to teach in Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology, nor is it required to teach within Ontario's university system. However, in order to be considered for a teaching position at this level, candidates are usually required to hold a Masters or Doctorate degree in the area of specialty.

## English as a Second Language

English as a Second Language (ESL) programs operate province-wide in many different locations. ESL teachers in elementary and secondary schools must be certified by the Ontario College of Teachers and must hold the ESL Additional Qualification.

ESL positions outside K – Grade 12 do not require certification with the College, including those found in colleges, universities and private language centres.

To find out more about teaching English as a Second Language in Ontario, please visit the Teachers of English as a Second Language of Ontario (TESL Ontario) website <http://www.teslontario.ca/>.

## 5.2 From The Working Centre

The following is a list of related employment ideas generated at The Working Centre

- Certified teachers are often hired to mark EQAO standardized testing in the summers - <http://www.oame.on.ca/main/index1.php?lang=en&code=eqaoinfo>
- Tutoring through an agency ( Eg: Oxford, Sylvia, Scholar's Hall, Great Expectations, Tutor Ontario, Tutor Doctor, Kumon, Summit learning Centres) or privately tutoring by advertising on bulletin boards and classified sites such as kijiji.ca, craigslist.com, yourclassifieds.ca
- Pathways Program <http://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/home.html>
- YMCA – Has many educational programs
- Montessori Schools <http://www.montessori.on.ca/>
- Waldorf Schools <http://www.waldorf.ca/>
- Churches – Many churches have Sunday school instruction opportunities as well as cultural/language teaching

## Other related areas of work

These creative areas of focus and talent can be explored more fully with a counsellor. Assess your transferable skills carefully to decide whether any of these “related career” choices may appeal.

- Settlement work – a growing field with newly developing certifications
- Career Development Practitioner certification (for career and employment counselling)
- ESL Certification (TESL examination)
- Translation / Interpretation
- Human Resources certification
- Nature Interpreter (Children's Museum)
- Masters in Education Planning
- Instructional Design
- Social work and community development work
- Program planning and project design
- Social research (may require special competencies)
- Youth leadership roles; recreation roles; specialized setting for at risk youth
- Health educator roles
- Diversity specialists

## 6. Understanding the Ontario Education System

### Job Shadowing

Talk to principals, people in your network, teachers you have met, or work with your counselor to find job shadowing opportunities. Classrooms in Ontario may be very different than the classrooms you've taught in at home. New Canadian candidates immersed in specific Ontario-defined subject matter areas, targeting specializations and grade levels you are specifically interested in, acquire more in-depth cultural and systems orientation to a school system that may be organized with values, behaviours, and performance expectations quite different from your own background and training as a teacher. Job shadowing will afford you a hands-on opportunity to observe an Ontario classroom. You will become acquainted with local and provincial classroom management and instructional styles, strategies, and ethics. A focused immersion experience provides you with critical career information that you should not do without as you consider your steps forward. Such immersion will guide you in making the most important decision in this process: do I want to be a public school teacher in Ontario?

Note: You will need a recent vulnerable sector police check to volunteer in schools.

### Curriculum and Teacher Expectations

For the most comprehensive resource on working as a teacher go to <http://www.teachinontario.ca/tio/en/about.htm>. This site includes information on curriculum, roles and responsibilities, the school community and teacher expectations in the province of Ontario.

### Next Steps

- Read this document again. Talk to an employment counselor. Use the demographic data in this document to make your job search strategic and effective
- Volunteer, find related work, get involved in education and build your network of educators and principals
- Consider re-training and academic upgrading options. Take English classes and join conversation circles
- Read the Ontario curriculum and related legislation and find out what is expected of teachers in Ontario. Preparing and educating yourself in order to be an effective teacher is an ongoing, career-long process. Being prepared to show that you are a capable and knowledgeable teacher who is ready to step into a classroom, plan and deliver lessons, manage a diverse classroom, assess, report, communicate with parents, get involved in the school community and, most importantly, inspire your students will be the most important step in your job search.
- Stay positive! If you market yourself well, build your network, take steps to build on your Canadian experience, strategically improve your credentials, consider demographics in your job search and stay patient and flexible you will find work as a teacher in Ontario. This will be a long-term project but a passionate and dedicated life-long educator will use their passion as motivation to stay positive and committed to lighting the flame that resides in each student. Good luck to you.

*“Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.”*

*-Socrates*

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## I'm an Internationally Trained Teacher. What do I do when?

	Short-Term Goals	Medium-Range Goals	Long-Term Goals
<b>Learning English</b>	Full-time attendance in English Classes and achieving Canadian Benchmark Level 8 English	Enrol in a pronunciation course	If necessary, seek assistance of a language coach
	Use the pronunciation lab at The Working Centre	Join Toastmasters to enhance public speaking skills	Read education philosophy, policy, studies and guides in English
	Join a conversation circle in your community	Pursue intensive media immersion in English	Ongoing advanced English study
	Complete TOEFL or IELTS	Read in subject area in English	
<b>Licensing and Certification</b>	Engage in decision making about career path	Submit all documents to OCT and have academic institutions forward all documents to OCT on your behalf	Receive interim certification and complete required number of teaching days to obtain full certification
	Make decisions about whether to seek certification	Have submitted documents translated	Complete QECO assessment
		If necessary complete steps outlined by OCT	
<b>Career Decisions and Volunteering</b>	Read about Ontario's education system at <a href="http://www.teachinontario.ca">www.teachinontario.ca</a>	Find related volunteer opportunities	Find related volunteer opportunities
	Job shadow in schools	Volunteer in publicly funded/private schools	Volunteer in publicly funded/private schools
	Find related volunteer opportunities	Perform information interviews with teachers and principals	Consider upgrading qualifications through ABQ and AQ courses
	Use experience and observation to make decisions about career goals and use this as in career path decision	Build professional network	
	Consider demographic trends to target your job search and networking	Identify mentors within system	
<b>Finding Work</b>	Survival job	Find related employment (e.g. language instructor)	Gain employment in education in Ontario
	Read "Information for Internationally Educated Teachers" document and work on career plan with a counselor	Create business cards, portfolio* and e-resume/e-portfolio *ensure that all volunteer experiences are represented	
	Begin working on teaching resume	Develop interview/job search skills through attending interview/job search workshops	