

AGREEMENT-IN-PRINCIPLE

Labour Mobility Chapter of the Agreement on Internal Trade/Teaching Profession
1999 09 29

This agreement-in-principle is developed in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 7 of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT), and aims to reduce barriers to teacher mobility. It is intended to allow any teacher who holds a teaching credential in one province or territory to have access to teacher certification in any other province or territory in order to be eligible for employment opportunities in the teaching profession.

This provisional agreement will remain in effect until the assessment of commonalities and differences required under Annex 708 is completed, at which time the Parties will enter into a new agreement.

The parties agree to the following statements:

- Changing landscape
- Commonalities
- Subject area expertise
- Transparency

Changing landscape

Teacher education/teacher certification in Canada is an evolving, not a static, landscape. A number of significant changes have occurred since the provincial teacher certification officials met in Toronto in February 1994.

- The Royal Commission in Ontario recommended the Ontario College of Teachers (O.C.T.), which came into operation in May 1997.
- Nova Scotia issued a report on the consolidation of teacher education programs, and subsequently reduced the number of education institutions from eight to four. On the other hand, in British Columbia, a new elementary teacher education program at Malaspina University-College (Nanaimo, British Columbia) began in 1997.
- Teacher education programs are undergoing significant change. For example, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Manitoba have moved to a minimum two-year post-degree B.Ed. for graduates from within province. Quebec has moved to a four-year integrated B.Ed. following two years of cégep.

- There is a growing recognition of the need for more than an eight-month academic year of preparation and of the need for an extended school experience component in teacher education.
- Recognition is increasing of the need to include mathematics, science, and technology in the preparation of teachers who deliver those programs, including appropriate background in these areas for elementary teachers.
- The minimum requirements for teacher certificates have not kept up with the changes to teacher education programs. Regulations governing teacher certification change more slowly than teacher education programs.
- Issues related to the suspension/cancellation of teacher certification and criminal records checks are the subject of increasing public awareness and scrutiny.

However, within the changing landscape, there are a number of commonalities among the jurisdictions in teacher education and teacher certification.

Statement of commonalities

- The majority of Canadian provinces and territories require completion of a professional teacher education program consisting of a minimum of 30 semester credit-hours of course work and practicum for teacher certification.
- In terms of professional teacher education course work, in general, provinces and territories do not prescribe content; however, course work in teaching methodology and educational psychology are common to all teacher education programs.
- With the exception of some programs in Ontario, approved teacher education programs within Canada contain a minimum 12-week practicum experience.
- Although all jurisdictions, ultimately through the power of legislation, have the authority to change certification requirements in order to comply with the spirit of the AIT, some have contractual/protocol arrangements that require consultation with, or approval by, the profession and/or teachers' union.

Course work - subject areas

Most jurisdictions have requirements that all teachers have postsecondary course work background in the subject areas of the K-12 school curriculum within their jurisdiction. This is emphasized more clearly in the preparation of secondary teachers who are expected to have some depth in the subject areas in which they teach. This is normally completed within a first degree.

In most jurisdictions, elementary teachers are also expected to have course work in the subject areas of the curriculum. This varies from New Brunswick's requirement of course work in general subject areas, to Ontario's acceptance of any bachelor's degree. In the case of British Columbia, it is 60 credits, including six credits of English, six credits of Canadian Studies, three credits of Mathematics and three credits of Lab Science.

There are some subject areas recognized within some jurisdictions, which are not found in the K-12 curriculum of other jurisdictions. For example, religious studies, heritage, or international and First Nations languages are specific to a jurisdiction.

TRANSPARENCY

Teachers wishing to move between provinces and territories must have access to information on the requirements for qualification in each jurisdiction. Recognizing the importance of this matter, all jurisdictions will publish their certification requirements on an annual basis. Jurisdictions will publish their requirements on a Web site and will also make them available to the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada for posting on its Web site.

Mobility provisions

The Parties further agree that a teacher is entitled to receive a teaching credential from the receiving province or territory under the following conditions.

All applicants must:

- hold a valid teaching credential from a Canadian province or territory
- have completed a professional teacher education program consisting of a minimum of 30 semester credit-hours of course work and practicum for teacher certification
- provide all documents required by the receiving province or territory
- satisfy any requirements of the receiving province or territory with respect to "fit and proper person", currency of practice, and language proficiency

Applicants fall into one of three (3) categories.

Category #1

Applicants who have completed a minimum of four years of postsecondary education¹ and hold a degree(s) completed at a university that is a member of the Association of

Universities and Colleges of Canada or any other university degree(s) deemed equivalent by the receiving province or territory, will be issued a teaching credential in the receiving province or territory based on the following.

An applicant who satisfies the basic requirements of the receiving province or territory will be granted a teaching credential by the receiving province or territory.

OR

An applicant who does not satisfy all requirements of the receiving province or territory will be granted a teaching credential valid for a period of time (to be determined by the receiving province or territory) — said time period to be reasonable, in the circumstances — during which time the teacher will be required to complete successfully any outstanding academic/professional preparation requirements of the receiving province or territory.

Category #2

Applicants who hold a degree/diploma in vocational, technical, or technological studies equivalent to the requirements of the receiving province or territory will be issued a teaching credential by the receiving province or territory based on the following.

Applicants who satisfy the equivalent standards, including any work experience requirements, of the receiving province or territory will be granted an appropriate teaching credential by the receiving province or territory. In some instances, the teacher may be required to complete successfully any outstanding academic/professional preparation requirements of the receiving province or territory during the validity period of the teaching credential.

Category #3

Applicants who hold a teaching credential based on academic/professional preparation that does not fall into either of the above two categories will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the receiving province or territory, and may be granted a teaching credential in the receiving province or territory if they meet the necessary equivalent academic/professional preparation. In some instances, the teacher may be required to complete successfully any outstanding academic/professional preparation requirements of the receiving province or territory during the validity period of the teaching credential.

CONTINUING COMMITMENT

The Registrars for Teacher Certification will continue to work on the reconciliation of the standards for teacher certification, and on accommodation mechanisms to facilitate the mobility of teachers between the provinces and territories.

Note:

1. British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador consider years of postsecondary beyond Grade 12 or equivalent.