

Regulation 274: Barrier or Opportunity for Newly Certified Ontario Teachers?

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Received May 12, 2019; Revised June 19, 2019; Accepted July 02, 2019

Abstract Newly certified teachers in the province of Ontario, Canada encounter a series of hurdles imposed by Regulation 274 before they qualify for full-time employment in the profession. Provincial Faculties of Education and US border colleges, which were certifying Ontario teachers, graduated an unprecedented number of newly certified teachers. Between the years 2006 - 2015, the annual surplus of newly certified teachers in the province reached 7,800. Faced with the results of heavy over-certification and underemployment of teachers brought on in large part by lax government control and seemingly unrestricted access to teacher education programmes, the provincial government initiated an ill-conceived reaction and introduced legislation, known as Regulation 274, to staunch the flow of newly certified teachers. In addition to Regulation 274, the government launched a plan-of-action that resulted in changing the one-year teacher education program to a two-year program while cutting the number of seats available within Faculties of Education to one-half post 2015 numbers. Regulation 274, characterized at the time by the Premier, as an “over-correction”, required newly certified teachers, beginning in 2015, to be subject to policies and standards that restricted their immediate entry into the rank and file of classroom teachers. While the trend in supply and demand has favoured employment opportunities for Ontario teachers since 2016, Regulation 274 is still in effect. Given the restrictions of 274 and the added expense of another year of specialized education, this study sought to identify the job-seeking behaviours and plans, in the current employment climate of the province of the first cohort of graduates from the two-year program in a northern Ontario university, exiting in 2017. Employment prospects and other social factors were found to influence employment decisions of these new teachers.

Keywords: regulation 274, teacher education programmes, employment of newly certified teachers

Cite This Article: Blaine E. Hatt, Nancy Maynes, and Anna Liisa Mottonen, “Regulation 274: Barrier or Opportunity for Newly Certified Ontario Teachers?” *American Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 7, no. 7 (2019): 463-470. doi: 10.12691/education-7-7-5.

1. Introduction

This study took place in a small northern Ontario university that has, since its inception, been well regarded for the quality of its teacher preparation program. In response to new legislation provincially, and fiscal and management constraints within the university, the current program focus is on the development of graduates with teaching certification through the new 2-year program. Earlier foci on various routes to certification through concurrent education options are being phased out by this university and the institution will graduate the last cohort of concurrent education teachers from its campuses in the spring of 2019. The university hosted its first graduation for the initial 2-year program cohort of teachers under Regulation 274 in the spring of 2017. On this campus, there were 184 two-year teacher graduates in this initial cohort, and the current study was designed to examine the job-seeking behaviours of newly certified teachers in this cohort and to identify, if possible, any variables that might

correlate to the behaviours. Specifically, we asked newly certified teachers upon completion of their B. Ed. programme to complete a questionnaire that would give evidence of the impact of Regulation 274 on plans or activities to seek employment. We know of no other studies that have taken place in Canada to examine the employment-seeking behaviours of newly certified teachers.

In 1995, the government in Ontario, under the leadership of the Minister of Education and Training, determined to create a “useful crisis” in public education in order to initiate significant reforms. The result was Bill 160 which gave the province control of municipal taxes, introduced standardized tests, cut teaching preparation time, determined class sizes, and granted early retirement to late career teachers. Critics argued that Bill 160 was not only an attack on the local control of public schools and on the influence of teacher union bargaining, but an unnecessary confrontation and deliberate undermining of public confidence in the quality of Ontario’s education system [1]. The effect of Bill 160 was to build on the 1993 Social Contract introduced by the previous government

and to solidify central control of the public education system in Ontario; the ripple effects of these actions have been felt throughout each of the ensuing years but no more so than with the introduction of Regulation 274 in 2012 and its subsequent, damaging, consequences for new teacher employment.

Regulation 274 was a government-made solution to a government-created catastrophe that struck post-secondary teacher education programmes and prospective new teacher employment opportunities with tsunami force. While it occurred within the context of a set of complex factors, many of those factors are the direct responsibility of action taken by the provincial government. For example, the oversupply of teachers seeking K-12 teaching positions in the province can in large part be traced to the granting of faculties of education in Ontario universities that previously were not authorized to offer a degree in teacher education; to teacher education programmes with special ministerial consent to operate in Ontario; to the granting of United States border colleges offering programmes designed for and marketed in Ontario; to Ontarians who pursued teacher education in Australia, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere in Canada and abroad; and, to more teachers migrating to Ontario from other provinces and countries.

Other factors that can be directly laid at the feet of government are: increases in the number of entrants into teacher education programmes across the province; geographical inequalities particularly in respect of teacher-student ratios and students requiring special assistance; increased tension between and among government, teacher and non-teacher unions, and boards; and, increased regulations regarding teachers, teacher education, and classroom teaching [2]. About the only factor not under the direct control or influence of government was the demographic imbalance of student enrollment; specifically, declining enrollments in small, urban, rural, and depressed settings in large metropolitan areas contrasted with increased enrollment in more affluent urban and metropolitan areas.

Changes in enrollment trends to institutions that certified Ontario teachers, and increases in retirement rates of currently employed teachers, brought about a dramatic change in supply and demand trends between 2012 and 2015. During this time, the province saw an average of approximately 450 additional retirements among teachers per year. Supply and demand for newly certified teachers was positively impacted by the increased rate of retirements and the decreased rates of graduates. This impact was further influenced by the introduction, in 2015, of the two-year certification program, with a simultaneous reduction in the number of government-funded seats in initial and established teacher education programmes resulting in an anticipated high demand for newly certified teachers in 2017 when the first cohort of two-year teacher candidates in the province graduated. Forecasts for teacher retirements of approximately 4,500 annually between 2016 and 2020, are anticipated to cause a further shift in the supply and demand trends in favour of newly certified graduates and was anticipated to result in a small shortage of teachers in some areas of expertise between 2016 and 2018 [3].

However, this first 2-year programme cohort, and future graduates from Ontario teacher education programmes are restricted by the policies and standards of Regulation 274 from immediate entry into the workforce. A newly graduated teacher, certified by the Ontario College of Teachers, first needs to apply and be interviewed for inclusion on a board's roster of occasional teachers. They then need to have "taught as an occasional teacher in one or more schools of the board (i.e., within the jurisdiction of a single board of education) for at least 20 full days during a 10-month period that is within the five years immediately preceding the day the application is submitted" (Reg. 274/12, n. p.) [4] to qualify for inclusion on the board's long-term occasional list. They need to have "completed a long-term assignment in a school of the board that was at least four months long and in respect of which the teacher has not received an unsatisfactory evaluation" (Reg. 274/12, n. p.) [4] and, be among the five applicants with the most seniority with the board to be interviewed and possibly be offered a permanent teaching position.

Under the provisions of Regulation 274, from the time of graduation, a new teacher is likely to need 2 years to complete all the requirements to be offered a permanent contract if other candidates do not have higher seniority than the applicant. If the teacher is lacking in seniority with the board, it could be an additional 3 or more years before a permanent contract is proffered. The impact of hiring "new" teachers who are 3 to 5 years removed from their preparation program introduces a whole new construct into teacher hiring practices that has yet to be sorted out and raises the question of pedagogical currency [2].

In September 2013, during the Ontario provincial legislature's daily question period following the introduction of Regulation 274, the premier-of-the-day while responding to concerns about nepotism in boards and the controversial hiring practices that are governed by Regulation 274, was quoted in a Toronto Star newspaper article as saying that, "I recognize that there may have been an over-correction in terms of some of the issues that had been brought forward." This response is extremely ironic, given that it's now 2019 and this regulation is still in place and still has a profound, negative impact on new teacher hiring practices in the province.

The latest version of Transition to Teaching [5] reports, "Ontario's decade-long teacher surplus is at an end" (n.p.). Taken at face-value, this statement and the one that asserts that there are "sharply lower unemployment rates among early-career teachers in 2018" (n.p.) belie the fact that there are teacher shortages, province-wide, in French as a Second Language (FSL) and in French as first language and that first year English-language teachers, who do not hold FSL credentials, with the exception of those who hold Intermediate/Senior qualifications in math or science as one or both of their teaching subjects, will experience precarious employment (short term) that will persist for years. The prospect of full-contract employment for the majority of English-language teachers in the province of Ontario is not particularly optimistic with Transition to Teaching, [5] reporting that:

Despite several years of improved job opportunities in the Ontario publicly funded school system, some

early-career teachers are slow to progress from daily occasional teaching rosters to permanent teaching contracts. This is especially so for English-language program graduates who do not hold FSL qualifications. In 2018, we found that only 30 per cent of these non-FSL teachers in English-language district school boards held permanent contracts five years after initial licensing. (p. 8)

To put the matter differently, 70 percent of non-FSL teachers in English-language district school boards did not hold a permanent contract five years after initial licensing which coincides with the introduction of Regulation 274.

2. Methodology

The Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) started in 1998 to examine actual employment trends of teachers annually. OCT has a provincial focus and the data reported from its study differs from our current study in three key ways. The OCT annual study focuses on provincial employment trends and institutions certifying teachers are not identified in the aggregated data; there is a relatively low response rate in the OCT survey (19%); and the OCT data examines actual employment outcomes whereas our study examines employment-seeking behaviours. In our research study we used survey methodology which is an appropriate method for our research purposes and offers us, as researchers, a number of advantages [6-10].

Survey methodology, in the form of student response questionnaires, recognizes students as active partners in the process of self-formation and as being responsible for their own learning and formation. Self-formation, as stated by Klemenčič & Chirikov [11], is “the basis for achieving the broader societal objectives concerned with human capital development for economic purposes: developing skills, improving productivity, increasing potential for innovation and economic growth” (n.p.). Survey methodology can provide insights into attitudes and opinions that are less available through other methodologies [12].

Despite the research benefits of survey methodology, we acknowledge that the widespread use of student experience and engagement surveys is subject to questions of validity, reliability, and characteristics of quality evidence. Speaking to these questions, our survey was designed to ascertain, measure, and provide evidence that supports inferences about the impact of Regulation 274 on the lives of newly certified teachers as they continue their process of self-formation as classroom educators. The key aspect of the validation of the survey instrument lies in assessing whether the assumptions included in the theory defining the construct (in this case the impact of Regulation 274 on student satisfaction with the process of gaining employment as a full-time or contract teacher) are credible. Credibility is closely related to reliability and in the case of our student survey, conducted online for ease and expediency of reply, respondents had the opportunity to address each question in like manner, whether selecting an item on a checklist, choosing a number in a 1-5 Likert scale, or providing one word or one number responses to questions asked. The guidelines for administering the survey and scoring the results were uniformly applied and consistent for all respondents.

In determining the characteristics of quality evidence, we took advantage of software design support for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data gave us access to the perception and applicability of the participants’ responses, while providing us opportunities to seek co-relational trends in the data. The qualitative data helped us develop our theories and explanations of the impact of the identified issues as evidenced in the quantitative data. Campbell and Profetto-McGrath [13] employed this approach to identify the skills and attributes required of clinical nurse specialists dedicated to promoting evidence-based practices. Also, Gibbert et al. [14] utilized a similar method to determine the usefulness of and potential barriers to a course on evidence-based practices in the public health sector.

As indicated above, surveys have both advantages and disadvantages as research tools. Demographic data is readily collected using surveys [12]. Additionally, researchers are able to explore several variables in the collected data, to support generalizations to comparable populations, and to benefit economically in both time and money, especially if the survey is administered through online methods [15]. It is wise to recognize the disadvantages of survey methodology to lessen over-generalization of survey research findings. Also, it is important to recognize that when response scales are part of the survey design, a particular characteristic is that the survey data provide estimates, rather than precise measurements, related to the target population [10] and this may be particularly characteristic: 1) if the respondent numbers are low and therefore not representative of the entire target population, biases may be inherent in data [15]; 2) if misreporting is widespread the accuracy of the responses may be suspect [7]; 3) surveys are by nature subjective and respondents may be unreliable assessors of their own behaviour [7]; or, 4) careless administration or analysis of survey data can result in errors [16].

Survey design methods are effective in avoiding or mitigating many of the disadvantages if sample planning and designing procedures for obtaining population estimates, including establishing the desired response rate and criteria for determining accuracy in responses, is included [7,10,17]. In order for us, as researchers, to ensure accuracy in interpreting the data and to establish a level of confidence in the interpretation of the data (i.e., the confidence interval), precision in the data collection was of primary importance. We calculated the mean and variance from the survey data thereby providing confidence intervals related to each major conclusion that is supported by the survey data [7]. We, as researchers, were able to determine the importance of the results of the research (i.e., the statistical power) [18] as the survey data allowed for a calculation of effect size.

We selected Survey Monkey as a survey medium in response to the resources of time; the distribution location of potential respondents [10]; and, to allow participants flexibility in engaging with the survey. Through this medium, automated data collection tools were available to ease tabulation and data manipulation [19]. Survey questions were designed to elicit “answers that are reliable and valid measures” ([20], p. 2) of the employment-seeking behaviours of the new teacher candidates who

were invited to participate. Questions were also worded to use terms that would be familiar and clear to the participants because they directly related to their programme outcomes [10,12,20,21]; and, the questions were designed to provide a survey of a reasonable length [12] while employing neutral, unbiased, language [10,22].

The purpose of the survey was to look at trends in employment-seeking behaviour of newly certified teachers and to examine factors that may influence those trends [23], most especially that of Regulation 274. As a result, the online survey for this study was designed to provide the qualitative/demographic data and quantitative data that were deemed to be applicable to the research question. In addition, we determined to create a survey that would be sustainable and have the capability to continue in use for a significant number of years as we plan to examine longitudinal trends; and, hopefully, provide quality indicators that will improve employment practices [24,25]. We incorporated questions related to a broad range of employment seeking behaviours within the current participant group and potential limiters to their choices [14,24,26,27,28].

We posted the survey for this study to existing in-house emails for all second year consecutive education students immediately after they went out on their final practicum as conclusion to their program (e.g., on February 17, 2017). The Registrar's Office and Student Services were enlisted to make the initial contact with potential participants as the e-mails were unavailable to researchers until after the end of term and the official posting of final grades. The email communication was sent to all second-year teacher candidates (N=184 students in Year 2 courses) and each was invited personally to participate in the study. Five reminder emails were sent to all potential participants bi-weekly between March 2017 and the end of May 2017 in order to correspond to variations in timing of hiring practices within local school boards across the province, and in hiring cycles for non-Canadian agencies.

3. Data Analysis and Results

Of the 184 pre-service teachers invited to participate in the study 63 accepted the invitation. The response rate was 34.2%, which is an acceptable level of response and stronger than the minimal response rate of 30% that most researchers require for analysis [29,30]. Two approaches were used to analyze the data: first, discrete questions were analyzed for trends in responses; second, data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 22 to allow us to examine relationships between variables and group differences across the data set.

Through a careful analysis of the data, a number of trends were found to exist among this group of newly accredited preservice teachers in respect of their employment-seeking behaviours:

- 1) Twenty-one participants (33%) felt that they were adequately prepared and ready to apply for contract positions because their qualifications are in high needs grades/subjects (perceived as being French and Math/Science). There are provisions in Regulation 274 to allow school boards to adapt hiring practices to fill vacancies in high demand

teaching areas without the usual requirement for these teachers to first engage in occasional teaching, and acquire long-term occasional positions before being eligible to apply for full time contract positions. Interestingly, public school teacher applicants seem to be more confident and/or strategic about applying for contract positions immediately than their separate school cohort members (21 or 33% vs. 3 or 4.76 %) but this trend is not out of proportion to the number of respondents applying only to one board affiliation.

- 2) Nine of the participants (14%) planned to apply for teaching positions only in their own home community. This finding, although not a focus of the study, is worthy of further investigation to determine factors that may be influencing this trend such as: circumstances related to family commitments, personal relationships, or contingent employment in local contexts that provide social and economic security during the time between certification and full time employment. This group of respondents may see the location of future employment as a non-negotiable condition as they enter the profession.
- 3) Six of the participants (9%) who responded to this survey planned to apply for teaching positions on reserves that serve Indigenous students, with four of those teachers planning to apply outside of Ontario. This trend may highlight the need to focus further attention on preparing Indigenous teachers to teach in Indigenous reserve contexts. This low rate of engagement with employment opportunities in Indigenous communities is despite the fact that a recent focus within the university is on preparing teachers to engage in teaching in Indigenous communities in the province. In fact, each academic year, the university partners with principals in Indigenous education environments to provide onsite interviews in the search for new teachers for their schools and frequently posts advertisements to qualified or soon-to-be-qualified teachers to encourage them to consider employment on reserves, often in northern parts of Ontario or in the northern territories of the country. Presently, a full complement of teachers could not be acquired for these schools with the level of uptake indicated in these data.
- 4) Similarly, only eight of the participants (12.7%) showed intentions to apply to any of Ontario's independent schools and only two (3%) intended to apply to an independent school outside of Ontario. Perhaps the university needs to make more formal overtures to these schools to have them advertise teaching positions within the university's usual communication networks and to make their needs known more broadly to potential applicants.
- 5) Thirty-nine of the participants (62%) planned to back up school employment applications by also applying to other venues. This result is not merely indicative of new graduates who need to find employment but, based on their four terms of education curricula and classroom practica, provides clear evidence that this group of

pre-service teachers fully understand the precarious nature of early career employment in Ontario under the constraints of Regulation 274.

- 6) Only seven participants (11%) planned to apply to non-educational employment if plans for educational employment with school boards did not materialize. The most frequently sought non-accredited forms of employment were tutoring, teaching in a non-credited system or context, and coaching.

Provincial legislation has essentially discriminated in its impact on newly certified teachers. As a direct result of the restructuring of teacher education programmes from two terms to four (essentially, from 1 academic year to 2), these new teachers are the most highly trained ever produced in the province of Ontario. They leave faculties of education equipped with additional university courses, additional practica, and additional time for experiential learning, refinement of praxis, and reflection on their pedagogical roles, relationships, and orientation to classroom teaching. Yet, with the constraints imposed by Regulation 274, they are forced into a period of little or no professional progress. This should be of grave concern to the teaching profession and to the general public in Ontario.

Such limited access to the profession is unlike any other profession that we, as researchers, are aware of and forces newly certified teachers to proceed through a graduated, time-consuming, lockstep process while acquiring the seniority necessary for full employment even though they are fully qualified for available job openings. This state of gatekeeping is a direct result of Regulation 274 and is problematic given that each preservice teacher is provincially subsidized during the province's education programme. In our education programme, pre-service teachers pay a two-year tuition fee of \$13,868.80 that is subsidized by a total two-year provincial grant of \$11,320.00. In short, the province of Ontario has subsidized the total preparation costs, of approximately \$25,000.00 for each preservice teacher in our two-year program by 45%. The reality of this may well be of concern to taxpayers in Ontario when heavily subsidized human capital in public school education is unemployed, underemployed, or employed in jurisdictions outside the province.

A large number of participants (84%) indicated that they intended to take additional qualification (AQ) courses to become certified in more than one division before seeking or acquiring full-time employment. Province-wide, pre-service and in-service teachers have the opportunity to take AQ courses that extend their initial qualifications in one division: Primary/Junior (P/J), Junior/Intermediate (J/I), or Intermediate/Senior (I/S) to another and give them the opportunity to apply for jobs in an additional contiguous division. Expanding one's qualifications into an additional division provides a new teacher an employment advantage. This is especially important for newly certified English-language teachers given the reality of the employment market as reported by the 2018 version of *Transition to Teaching* as explained in the report:

Marked differences are evident in 2018 in the types of first-year teacher contracts based on language of instruction. Just seven per cent of English-language program graduates without FSL qualifications gain

permanent teaching contracts in their first year. This compares with 31 per cent of FSL teachers and 64 per cent of the graduates of French-language teacher education programs. Contract differences are even sharper comparing English-language teachers employed by Ontario district school boards (just two per cent permanent contracts) with Ontario French-language district board employees (52 per cent), Ontario English-language district board FSL teachers (29 per cent), and Ontario independent school boards (39 per cent). (p. 8)

Schoolboards may view newly certified English-language teachers as being more versatile, more flexible, or more valuable to their schools if their qualifications have been extended from one to two divisions. *Transition to Teaching* [5] reports that the "main driver of the annual demand for new teachers is the number of teacher retirements" (p. 3) and projects teacher shortages to occur annually through 2025 forecasting that "the number of new teachers is insufficient to meet the retirement vacancies and recruitment needs that will arise from enrolment growth in some regions of the province" (p. 6). The writers of the report further project that: "Unless some increase occurs in one or more of the various sources of Ontario teacher supply, teacher shortages can be expected to reach well beyond [existing] French-language and French as a second language teacher shortages" (p. 7).

The majority of participants in the study (54 of 63) demonstrated that they were responsive to these projections/forecasts and striving to maximize their market potential by pursuing AQ courses "on their own time and using their own financial resources" (p. 9). However, the cost of AQ courses for some newly certified teachers may be prohibitive and place them in a position of greater disadvantage when applying for teaching positions. It would appear that without further qualifications, Regulation 274 is handing this sector of new teachers a double setback in terms of their ability to seek contract employment.

One of the surprising results of the data analysis, for the researchers, was the relatively high proportion of participants who indicated an intention to pursue an advanced degree. Nine of the participants (14%) indicated that they planned to pursue a graduate degree, either full-time (5 or 8%) or part time (4 or 6%) immediately after accreditation. It would be interesting to undertake a future study of the career projection plans of this group and determine if there is a connection between the pursuit of an advanced degree and long-term career plans.

Fully one-third of the participants (33%) planned to teach immediately after certification outside Canada in either full-time contract positions (19 or 30%) or part-time (8 or 12%). The preferred destinations for international employment included Australia, China, England, Hong Kong, United Arab Emirates, and the United States of America. However, the time commitment of those intending to teach outside Canada and then return to Canada when employment prospects, specifically in Ontario, improved was within one to five years. It might well be argued that international teaching is enriching for any newly certified teacher but it would appear that for this cohort seeking full time international teaching

employment is another way to avoid the graduated employment process enforced by Regulation 274.

The majority of the participants favouring international teaching experience regard it as temporary, as an experiential holding pattern, while they await more favourable employment opportunities in Ontario. Notwithstanding the perspective of the majority, one participant indicated a desire to remain in her/his chosen country for the duration of her/his career.

The majority of participants (53 or 84%) felt compelled to work full-time after graduation even though many expected that full-time employment would not be in their chosen field of education. Eighteen participants (28.6%) indicated that they would need to accept full-time employment immediately after teacher certification in a job or work environment that would not allow them to use the pedagogical knowledge, skills, and attitudes that they had acquired in their teacher education programme. This situation is problematic on two fronts: 1) unemployment or underemployment of a highly educated workforce is not maximizing the provincial investment in human capital; and, 2) unemployment or underemployment may diminish the strong confidence and expressions of readiness that these newly certified teachers feel and have successfully demonstrated in education curricula and in classroom practica.

Forty-six participants (73%) determined that they had developed a strong theoretical framework for teaching as a result of their professional preparation. Additionally, fifty-five participants (87%) determined that they had developed a strong praxis of teaching because of their course work and their practica. These strong determinations would indicate that within this group of participants, most were confident that they were ready to face the day-to-day challenges and opportunities for pedagogical and personal growth in the teaching profession. And, the majority of participants (40 or 63.5%) emphasized that they had had many opportunities within their teacher preparation programme to enrich their professional development by acquiring additional skills and certificates (e.g., Tattered Teddies, Suicide Prevention, Bullying Prevention, technology and software enrichment).

Being hired for a new teaching position, if only for occasional teaching, traditionally involves an interview process. Of the participants in this study, 45 (71.4%) felt they had received appropriate support to assist them in the preparation of documents and applications for teaching positions and 51 participants (81%) felt that they had received sufficient support to adequately prepare them for interviews for teaching positions. However, there was an expression that workshops, presentations, mock interviews, and other professional development sessions should be repeated and made more broadly available to all preservice teachers to avoid conflicts with work on class schedules; perhaps, to be embedded in a specially designed course.

Despite additional professional development training and certification, admittance into the profession as a contract teacher requires an indeterminant amount of time. The prospect of full time employment for these newly certified teachers, the majority of whom are English-Language teachers with no French or French

Second Language qualifications, may extend to many months or years. Transition to Teaching [5] sets the scene:

As work opportunities increase for early-career teachers [who are English-language graduates], graduated entry to full employment [as legislated by Regulation 274] continues for most of these new Ontario teachers. Most still need to spend many months or even years on daily occasional rosters with a specific school board before gaining eligibility to apply to long term occasional or permanent contracts with that specific board. (p. 11)

In spite of the dose of reality as reported by Transition to Teaching [5], these newly certified teachers are fully aware, and seemingly accepting, that full-time employment may take a non-specific amount of time to achieve within the confines of Regulation 274. For the majority of them, their work-around Regulation 274 is to buttress teaching employment opportunities with other forms of short-term or part-time employment.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

One of the unique features in our second year of the two-year education programme is the three-week service learning practicum. The purpose of the practicum is to introduce pre-service teachers to a range of community service opportunities wherein they can use some or all of their expanding pedagogical knowledge, skills, or attitudes. Preservice teachers are responsible for setting up and booking their own service learning practicum. Some of the most sought-after bookings are in museums, science shows, labs, police community liaison placements, and children's special needs organizations. In addition to the experiential learning obtained through service learning, preservice teachers obtained first-hand experience working in related or tangential fields of interest not within an established school system. Such exposure is intended to help preservice teachers engage in meaningful employment options while transitioning into a full time teaching position. However, despite the enriching qualifications garnered through community service experience, we recognize that newly certified teachers would not be content with alternate employment over the longer term while pedagogical knowledge, skills, and attitudes remain largely untapped. In recognition of this probability, we examined their employment intentions within a broad range of possibilities.

The results of our study indicated some interesting trends in the employment seeking behaviours of newly graduated teachers from Ontario's new two-year teacher accreditation program. While there are factors informing new teachers' decisions to move to other employment situations rather than seek employment in their home school board context, a large majority intend to seek teaching positions within the province, despite the extended process of finding full time employment in their profession under the legislation of Regulation 274.

We can trace a tendency for some new graduates to seek employment that will generate optimal income as soon as possible, but this group was a relatively small proportion of the population participating in this study and the employment being sought was compatible with being

available for part-time teaching jobs. Some newly certified teachers were intending to leave Ontario and some to leave the country to seek employment. Notwithstanding the confidence and self-assurance that these young teachers have respecting global employment opportunities as evidenced by a minority of participants, mobility trends were not dominant in our research data.

The analysis of our research data indicates that the participants in this study who were drawn from the first two-year cohort of new teachers were cognizant of the conditions surrounding teaching opportunities in the province of Ontario and yet chose, optimistically, to bide their time, position themselves within their chosen school board(s), and work within the systematic process that is legislated for new teachers under Regulation 274 to acquire full time contract employment. Transition to Teaching [5] describes the process:

Legislation first introduced in fall 2012 normally requires a graduated entry pathway to permanent employment as a teacher in Ontario district school boards. New teachers start their Ontario teaching careers on daily occasional rosters with a board before gaining eligibility to apply for that district board's long term occasional postings and eventual eligibility to compete for permanent employment opportunities with the board. The daily occasional roster service is not transferable to another district school board's competitions. With the French-language teacher shortage that emerged a few years ago, this requirement was dropped for French district school board hiring. The requirement continues, however, to apply to most English-language district school board hiring, (p. 11)

It would appear, that the practica which these newly certified teachers participated in during their two-year programme and which placed them in the same school board, usually local to home communities, served as a support network that helped them build confidence in their teaching ability and establish collegial contacts that would potentially benefit them as new career teachers. They may have felt that making and maintaining an active profile in their chosen board(s) was preferable to the inherent risk(s) of accepting part or full employment in another Canadian jurisdiction or international context. By remaining active in the local school board(s), collegial contacts with those presently employed by the board(s) could continue to be cultivated and information about employment opportunities and support letters of recommendations could be easier to obtain. Networking targeted toward employment opportunities within a chosen board(s) could be broken by distance or lack of daily contact if new teachers accepted other non-school employment or chose to pursue educational employment outside the jurisdiction(s).

As mentioned earlier in this paper, in a public announcement in 2013, the Ontario premier-of-the-day, referring to the legislation of 2012 that enacted Regulation 274, characterized the Regulation as an "overcorrection" by the government in response to a large teacher surplus caused by the convergence of a number of complex factors. Our study demonstrates that new teacher graduates, who are leaving a two-year certification programme are, in large numbers, willing to engage in the extended process of seeking full-time employment in

teaching within Ontario. However, times change and the circumstances that converged and brought about the enactment of Regulation 274 no longer exist. Current practices of hiring occasional teachers within boards give evidence of patterns that are marginally compliant with the regulation, and the creative use of emergency supply teachers to overcome provisions in Regulation 274 indicate that school boards have already created paths around some provisions of this restrictive legislation. It would seem that these boards are likely to concur that the regulation has outlived its original purpose.

The first cohort of two-year graduates in the province were ready, willing, and able to teach and felt confident and knowledgeable about their professional qualifications and their ability to engage in enactive learning with students in the classrooms across Ontario. It's time to level the playing field. It's time to allow new teacher graduates in the province to compete freely for new full-time contract teaching positions in all provincial school board competitions as is presently the case for French-language teachers. It's time to retract Regulation 274.

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