



**ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION**

Leading Education's Advocates

Ontario Public School Boards' Association

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Honourable Liz Sandals
Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
14th Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Sandals:

OPSBA is aware that as Minister of Education you have received many letters from public school boards that we represent regarding rescinding Ontario Regulation 274/12 Hiring Practices. Our boards view the hiring of the most qualified and suitable teachers to be a matter of protecting students' rights and are committed to having open and transparent processes to accomplish this. Ontario is a vibrant and diverse society and restraints on hiring may impede school boards' efforts and mandates to ensure that their teachers collectively reflect their diverse communities. This has been a priority for public boards and is consistent with the Ministry's Equity and Inclusion strategy. It is important to note, as well, that the regulation has the ability to be a significant deterrent to attracting excellent teacher candidates into faculties of education and ultimately into the teaching profession. In addition, the regulation, in its current form, prevents boards from hiring experienced teachers from other jurisdictions and thus restricts labour mobility, both within the province and between provinces.

OPSBA understands the political difficulty of trying to get this regulation rescinded at this time and would like to propose some options to ensure that boards can meet their primary mandate as spelled out in the Education Act - "to promote student success and well-being."

One option is to have Regulation 274/12 apply differently or not at all to the various boards/unions. If it still must apply to public school boards then the government should allow our boards to engage in local discussions, based on pre-determined guiding principles, to seek mutual agreement. As was the case with the LTO evaluation process recently released, if there is no agreement between the board and the union then it would default to the existing or an amended regulation.

OPSBA recommends the following amendments to Regulation 274/12:

1. A requirement that people to be interviewed for contract positions is that they be on the LTO list and have a successful evaluation, but that seniority not be the requirement for interviews. The principal or person designated through a board's hiring process should be able to select the potential candidates from the LTO list based on the job requirements for the school as outlined in Regulation 298 regarding "best possible program." The Board/Principal could select any number of candidates to interview and the appointment to a contract position should not default to a fixed number of candidates based on seniority. The interview is important and the board/principal should have the broadest range of candidates from which to select.
2. Boards should be able to consider contract teachers or teachers with experience from anywhere, but at the very least other Ontario public school boards. An exemption must be made for experienced teachers from other jurisdictions so that they may be interviewed for contract positions.
3. Boards through their hiring procedures should be able to vet all applicants for a specific contract teaching position.
4. The reference to a set number of 5 candidates to interview should be removed.
5. The 10 month and 20 day minimum requirement should be removed.
6. The board should be able to designate, on a regular basis, the teaching areas required for their LTO list.

Hiring should be based on the principles of equity, transparency and fairness. Hiring practices should be determined by school boards. School boards operate at the local community level and they understand the needs of students in their communities. Just as importantly, they have the moral and legal responsibility to represent student and community interests.

We strongly believe one of the key roles of school boards is to be responsive at the local level to the expectations of parents of school-age children and youth. Parents in Ontario expect school boards to protect the high quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. They expect school boards to protect the future of the education system by hiring teachers based on the best interests of all students and the learning environment.

The options suggested to change Regulation 274/12 will ensure that the students of Ontario have the best possible teachers to maximize the opportunities for sustained student success. OPSBA looks forward to your consideration of and response to this important request.



Michael Barrett
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