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Ontario's Teaching Regulator  
L'organisme de réglementation  
de l'enseignement en Ontario

January 26, 2026

Chris Cowley, OCT  
President  
Ontario Teachers' Federation  
10 Alcorn Avenue, Suite 100  
Toronto ON M4V 3A9

Dear Mr. Cowley,

Thank you for your recent letter and interest in presenting the work of the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) to the Council of the Ontario College of Teachers.

As you are aware, Council has approved a Public and Stakeholder Engagement Pathways policy to ensure information presented to Council is grounded in their strategic governance role and issues within their decision-making purview in accordance with its legislated mandate. Having reviewed your proposed presentation alongside this policy, a Council presentation is not required at this time.

Consultation and gathering perspectives of individuals impacted by Council and College decisions is important to us and we have existing, proven avenues for collecting that data. OTF is a valued contributor to consultations for recurring initiatives such as professional advisories, Additional Qualification guideline development and survey development for Focus on Teaching. OTF participated in the recent leadership pathways initiative and continues to provide input in the ongoing professional standards review. At the staff level, regular meetings at all levels and departments ensures robust consultation between our organizations to the benefit of the education sector.

As you plan to share this response with your members, I welcome this opportunity to address some points and respond to the questions from your members you have identified in your presentation.

College membership fees last increased in 2023. The fee has been fixed at \$200 since that time. Prior to 2023, the fee was fixed for three years during which time the College drew down on reserves so the organization would absorb the impact of program expenses and inflation, not members. To this day, our membership fee remains one of the lowest among all Ontario regulatory bodies.

Certification services continue to improve as we streamline processes and implement new technology. As shared in the quarterly Registrar's Report to Council, complete applications are consistently processed within legislated timelines. This means automatically issued decisions for Ontario applicants, decisions rendered within 30 business days for labour mobility applicants (applicants from other Canadian provinces/territories) and 60 days for international applicants. These timelines are met while processing surging application volumes and achieving increasing levels of total certification.

Your presentation indicates members want to know how resources are allocated towards investigations. In recent years, the College has continued to invest by hiring staff resources and utilizing external counsel to address the caseload. Our focus is addressing concerns in as timely a manner as possible for the sake of all parties – members, students and the public interest. Given the increase in the number of concerns received by the College – 1,272 in 2024 compared to 625 in 2020 and 54 in 1997 – the College spending is necessarily allocated to address those concerns.

The College's financial decisions are transparent and accountable. Council's Audit and Finance Subcommittee meets regularly and reports publicly to Council on their work and recommendations. Their responsibility for overseeing the College's financial position is central to their fiduciary duty and supports organizational outcomes that serve the public interest.

Lastly, I want to assure you and all OTF members that teacher voice and perspective is strongly represented within our new governance model. Our current model now has 84 Ontario Certified Teachers involved in the governance function – a significant increase from our old model.

Using a competency-based selection process, Council members who are also members of the profession are chosen for their knowledge, competencies and skills. Committee and roster members are similarly selected and bring unique perspectives and insights to serve in their governance roles and carry out the statutory and regulatory mandate functions of the College. A key part of their orientation process is understanding the mandate of partners within the education sector, and where and when consultation occurs.

I invite you to reach out to the Registrar to make arrangements to join College staff in the Membership Services, Standards of Practice and Accreditation or Investigations and Professional Conduct departments at an upcoming regularly scheduled meeting. They can provide additional background to these member questions as well as reiterate the channels available for feedback and how valued that input is for our decision-making in the public interest.

I appreciate your congratulations of my new role and invitation to meet. I hope the response above addresses your feedback. I look forward to our organizations working together in the future to benefit Ontario's students, their teachers and the education system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph Fiorino".

Joseph Fiorino, JD, LL.M.  
Chair of Council

Copy: Linda Lacroix, OCT/EAO  
Registrar and Chief Executive Officer



Joseph Fiorino, Chair of Council  
Ontario College of Teachers  
101 Bloor Street West  
Toronto, ON M5S 0A1

Dear Chair Fiorino,

I am writing to congratulate you as you begin your term as Chair of the Governing Council of the Ontario College of Teachers.

Both of our respective organizations play important and defined roles within Ontario's education system and we look forward to continuing a collaborative relationship that serves the interests of teachers, students and the public.

You will surely know that the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan of the College aims to further its collaboration and cooperation with its stakeholders. As President of the largest constituency of the College, I trust you will agree that it is important for College Council to hear about the equally important role the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) plays within our profession. It's in this vein that I'm asking you to reconsider a decision made by your predecessor and allow me to present to you and to the Governing Council a deputation of what we do at OTF.

Although I'm aware of the changes in governance that occurred at the College in 2022, which makes it harder for outside organizations to be invited to present to the College's council, there have been exceptions made and I'm requesting an exception so that your decision makers can be made aware of areas of mutual interest and to surface areas of concern that our members have identified as priorities.

As the Minister of Education alluded to in his presentation to College Council on December 11, 2025, there has never been a more urgent time for cooperation and collaboration between stakeholders in education. It would therefore be appropriate for me to offer a deputation of the attached .pdf presentation. This would provide insight into the perspectives and concerns of Ontario's teachers as the Council continues to make decisions that shape the future of our profession. Please understand that your response to our request will be shared with our members as part of my responsibilities to report on efforts to engage meaningfully with OCT.

In this spirit of collaboration, I would like to extend an invitation to meet at a mutually convenient time. This is something I have done with previous OCT chairs and believe it would be a great opportunity to welcome you to your new role.

Thank you for your reconsidering this request, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Chris Cowley  
President, Ontario Teachers' Federation

Winter 2026

**Presentation  
to the Ontario  
College of  
Teachers  
Governing  
Council**



## OTF/FEO—What we do

The Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF), represents all teachers in Ontario's publicly funded schools.

OTF exists by statute, namely the *Teaching Profession Act* of 1944.

OTF advocates for the teaching profession and public education through its four Affiliates: AEFO, ETFO, OECTA, and OSSTF.

Together, OTF and its Affiliates support teachers' professional interests and promote the integrity and quality of Ontario's publicly funded education system.

# Governance Structure—OTF/FEO and its Affiliates



**OTF/FEO's 160,000+ members include all teachers represented within the memberships of its four Affiliates.**

**Association des enseignantes  
et des enseignants  
franco-ontariens (AEFO)**

**AEFO teacher members work in French-language public and Catholic elementary and secondary schools in Ontario.**

**Elementary Teachers'  
Federation of Ontario  
(ETFO)**

**ETFO teacher members work in English public elementary schools in Ontario.**

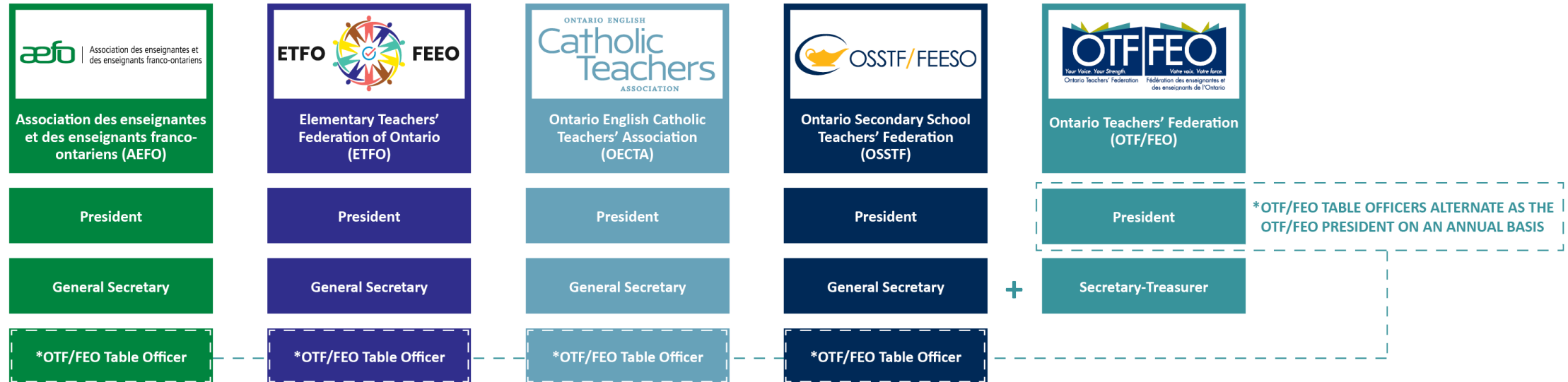
**Ontario English Catholic  
Teachers' Association  
(OECTA)**

**OECTA teachers work in English Catholic elementary and secondary schools in Ontario.**

**Ontario Secondary School  
Teachers' Federation  
(OSSTF)**

**OSSTF teacher members work in English public secondary schools in Ontario.**

# Governance Structure—OTF/FEO Executive



# Governance Structure—OTF/FEO Board of Governors



President	General Secretary
First Vice-President	Second Vice-President
OTF/FEO Table Officer	OTF/FEO Governor
OTF/FEO Governor	OTF/FEO Governor
OTF/FEO Governor	OTF/FEO Governor



President	General Secretary
First Vice-President	Vice-President
Vice-President	OTF/FEO Table Officer
OTF/FEO Governor	OTF/FEO Governor
OTF/FEO Governor	OTF/FEO Governor



President	General Secretary
First Vice-President	Second Vice-President
Past President	OTF/FEO Table Officer
OTF/FEO Governor	OTF/FEO Governor
OTF/FEO Governor	OTF/FEO Governor



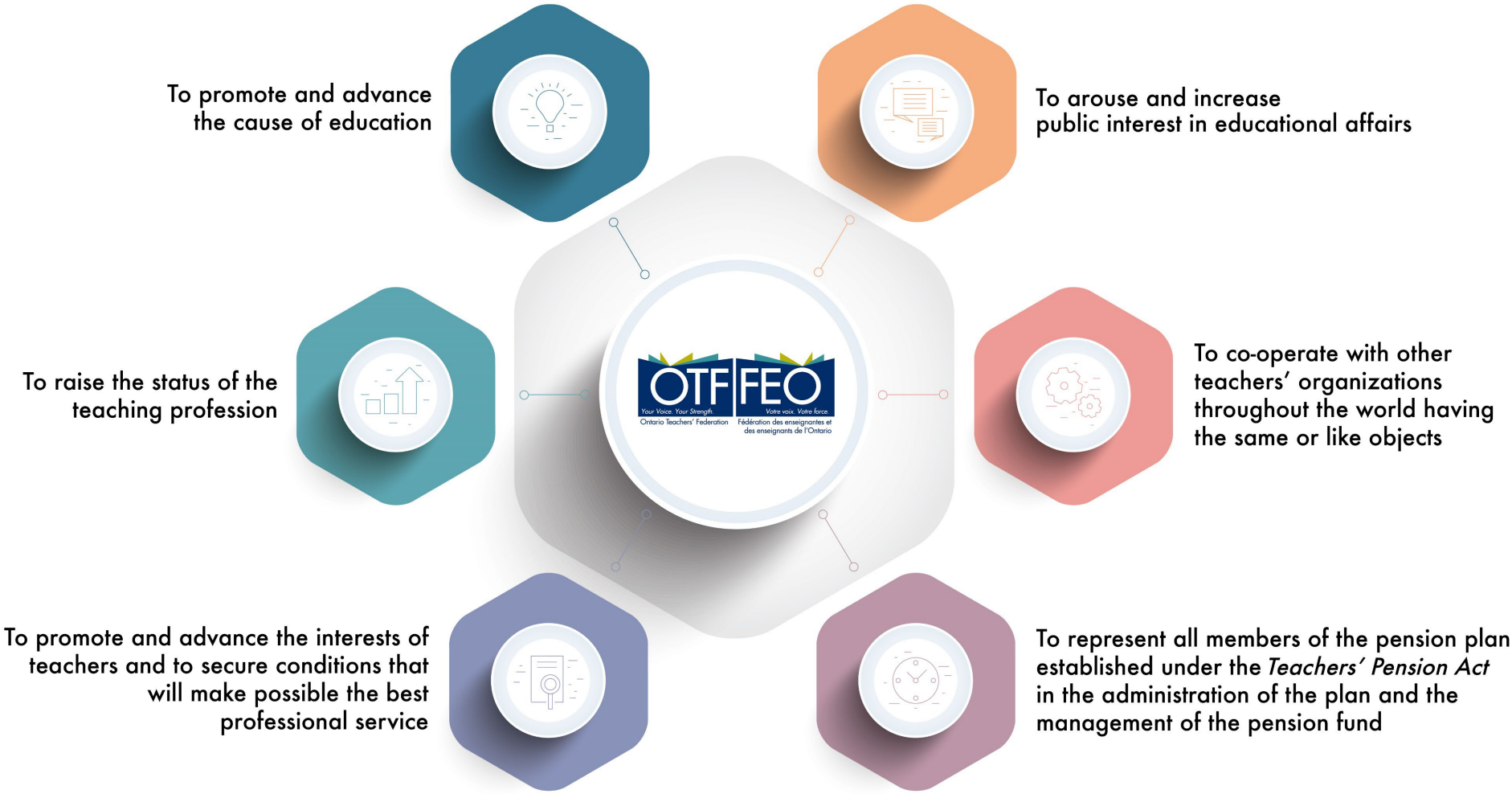
President	General Secretary
Vice-President	Vice-President
OTF/FEO Table Officer	OTF/FEO Governor
OTF/FEO Governor	OTF/FEO Governor
OTF/FEO Governor	OTF/FEO Governor

## Key duties of OTF/FEO Governors and its Executive

Board of Governors' Meetings	Key Duties of Governors
Winter Meeting (January)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive the report of the auditors</li> <li>• Receive draft budget and proposed OTF fee</li> </ul>
Spring Meeting (April)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve budget and OTF fee</li> <li>• Appoint auditors</li> <li>• Vote on the Ontario Teachers' Federation Fellowships</li> </ul>
Annual Meeting (August)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint committees and workgroups</li> <li>• Elect and install officers (Executive)</li> </ul>

Executive Meetings	Key Duties of Executive
The Executive has the authority to act on behalf of the Board of Governors between meetings and oversee key responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out Board business (subject to ratification)</li> <li>• Liaise with the Minister of Education</li> <li>• Guide education policy</li> </ul>

# OTF/FEO LEGISLATED OBJECTS



# To promote and advance the cause of education

Support communication, advocacy, and collaboration in education by:

- Publishing reports and position papers
- Advocating along with our Affiliates for public education and teaching
- Networking and collaborating with stakeholders and parties



To promote and advance  
the cause of education



# To raise the status of the teaching profession

Promote the teaching profession and uphold professional standards by:

- Advocating for strong preservice teacher education
- Upholding professional standards and conduct
- Protecting teachers' professional judgment



To raise the status of the  
teaching profession



# To promote and advance the interests of teachers and to secure conditions that will make possible the best professional service

Advocate for teacher support, equity, and professional growth by:

- Promoting successes in teacher recruitment and retention
- Offering voluntary professional learning opportunities (e.g., OTF Connects webinars)



To promote and advance the interests of teachers and to secure conditions that will make possible the best professional service



# To arouse and increase public interest in educational affairs

Raise awareness and celebrate contributions to public education by:

- Informing the public about harmful policy decisions
- Highlighting ongoing and emerging concerns (e.g., underfunding and mental health)



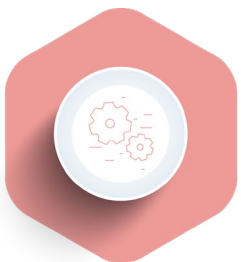
To arouse and increase  
public interest in educational affairs



# To co-operate with other teachers' organizations throughout the world having the same or like objects

Engage in international outreach and collaboration in education by:

- Funding international assistance projects
- Hosting visiting international delegations
- Attending global education conferences and supporting the initiatives of the Canadian Teachers' Federation and Education International



To co-operate with other teachers' organizations throughout the world having the same or like objects

To represent all members of the pension plan established under the *Teachers' Pension Act* in the administration of the plan and the management of the pension fund

Support governance and oversight of the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan by:

- Co-sponsoring the Plan with the Ministry of Education
- Monitoring long-term Plan health
- Raising issues on behalf of the Affiliates and members



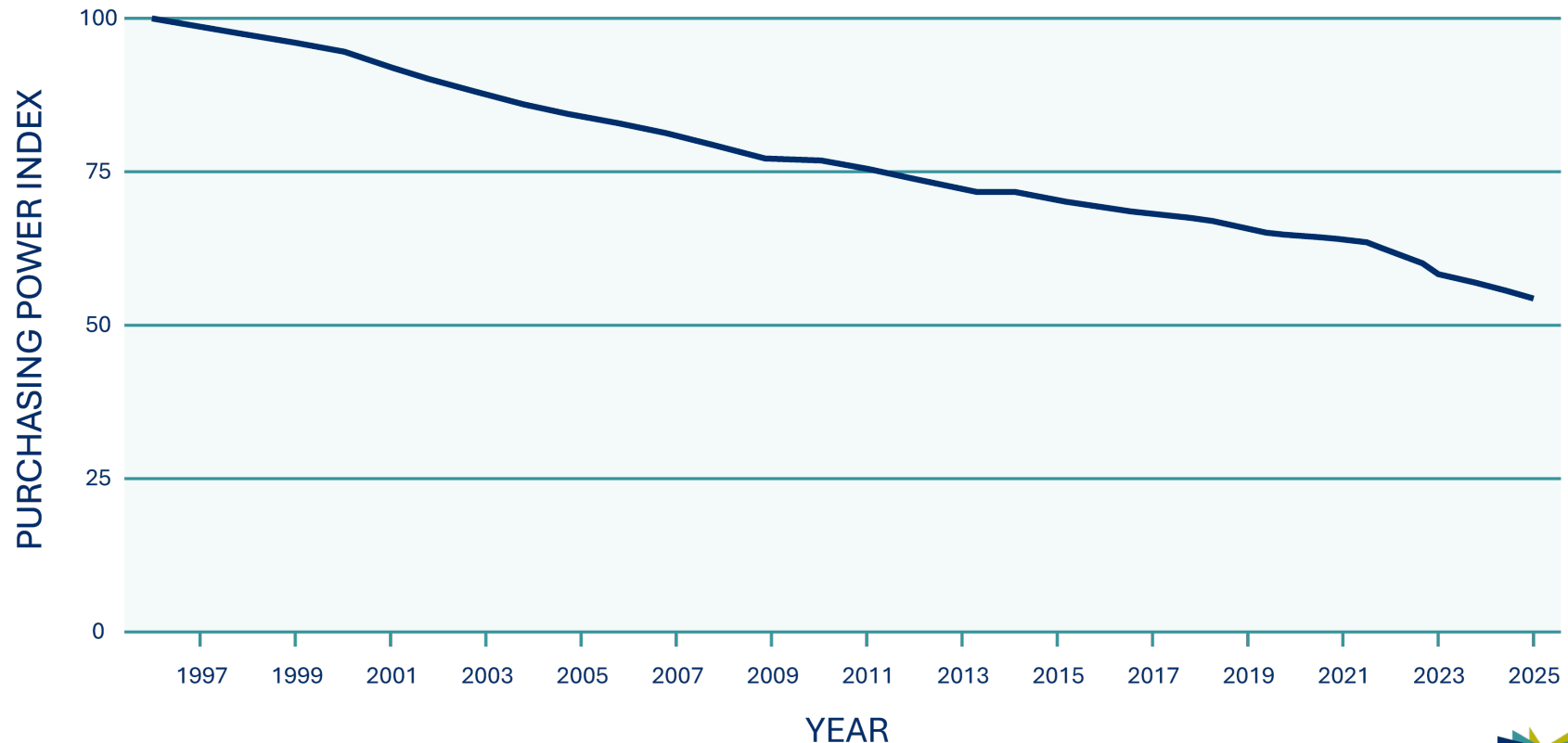
To represent all members of the pension plan established under the *Teachers' Pension Act* in the administration of the plan and the management of the pension fund



# Why have the Ontario College of Teachers fees risen?

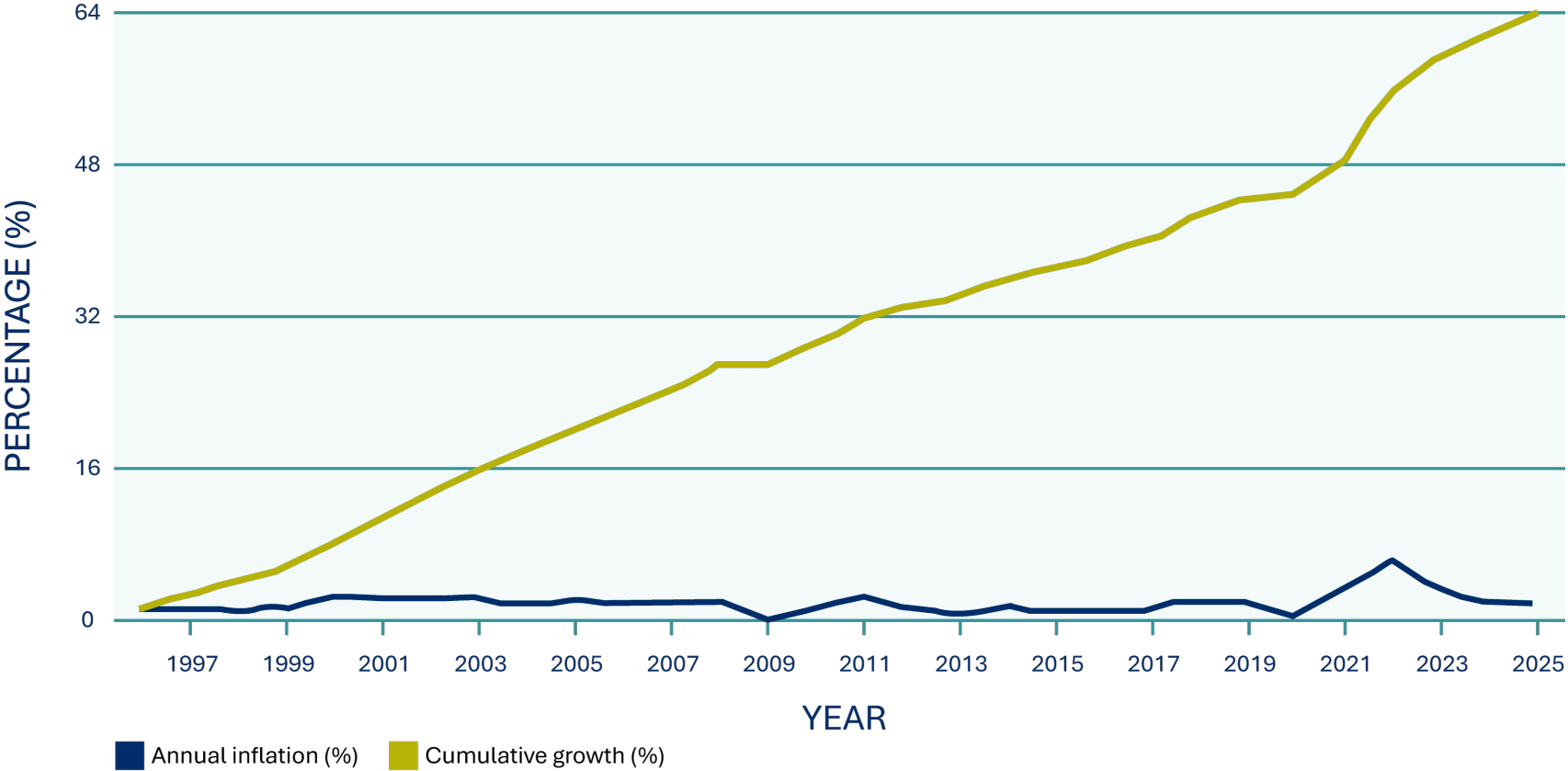
**OCT FEES VS. INFLATION:** Why do OCT fees rise faster than inflation? Is this justified?

The graph below shows the decline in annual purchasing power, meaning that \$100 in 1996, for teachers of the province, only gets them \$68 worth of goods in 2025.



# OCT FEES VS. INFLATION: Why do Ontario College of Teachers fees rise faster than inflation? Is this justified?

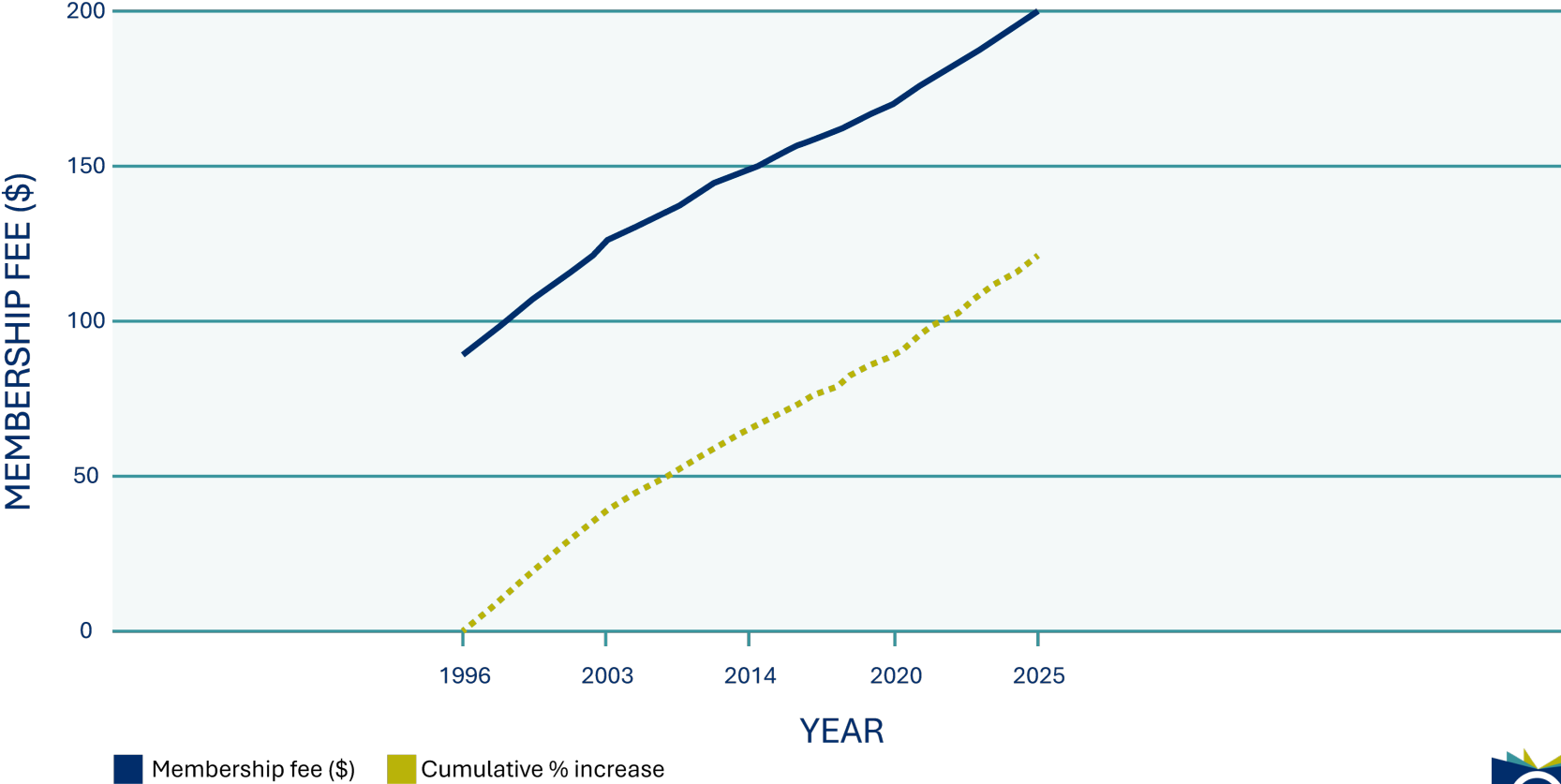
The graph below shows the rate of inflation in Canada during the same period, which is close to 82 per cent, year-over-year, from 1996 to 2025.



**OCT FEES VS. INFLATION:** Why do Ontario College of Teachers fees rise faster than inflation?  
Is this justified?

The graph below shows the rise in fees at OCT over the same period. The fee is now 122 per cent greater than it was in 1996, when the College was first established.

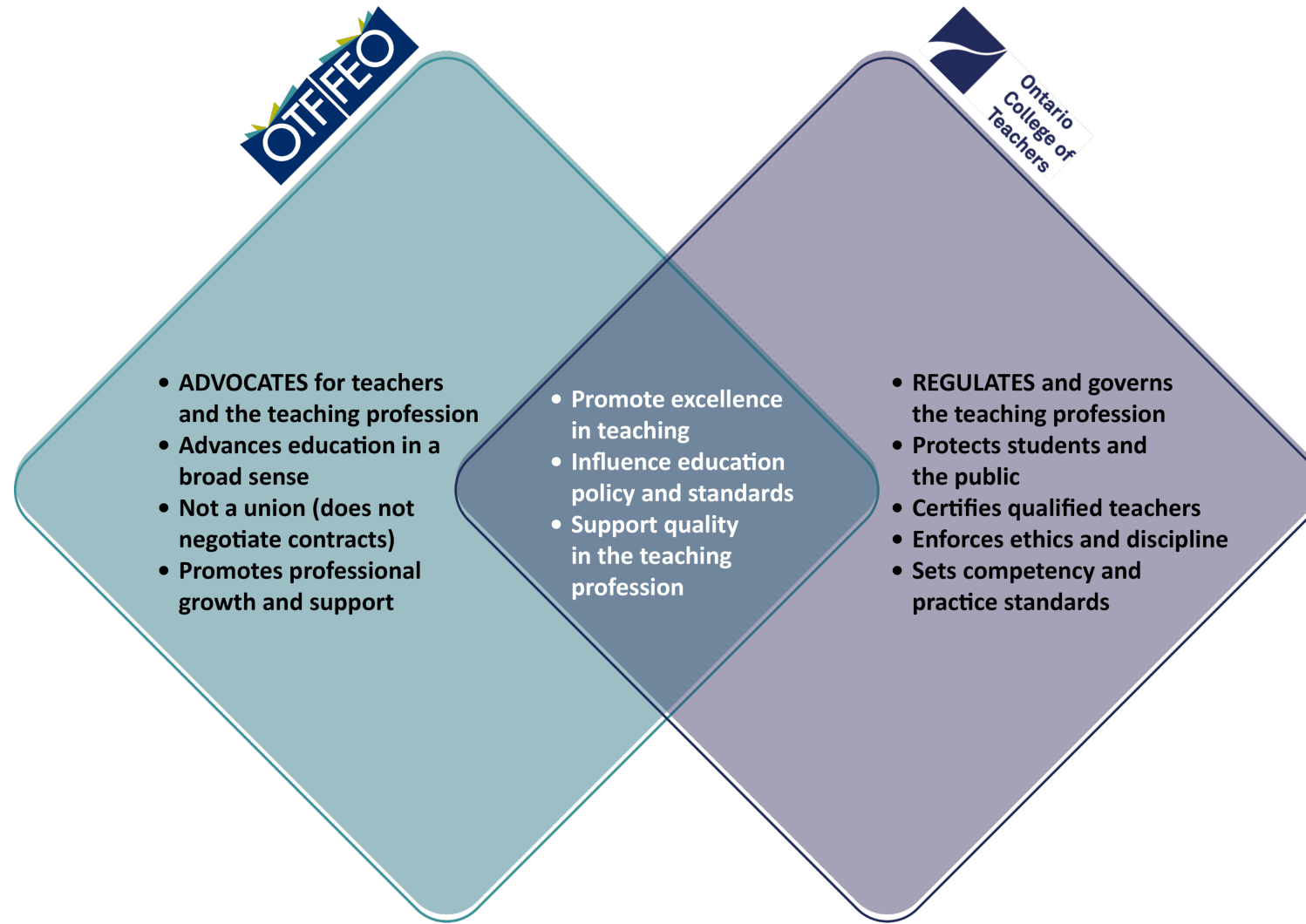
**CONCLUSION:** OCT fees have outpaced inflation by 40 per cent since 1996.



## Answers OTF and its members are looking for...

- Are certification services improving, or is spending focused on investigations?
  - We are aware that changes and challenges to types of certification are reasons that explains gaps in certification services, however are there any other reasons to explain the obstacles to rapid service for certification?
  - Can resources be directed to accelerate the recognition of degrees and certifications granted by foreign universities?
- Could OTF provide comment on OCT's financial decisions in a formal or informal way?
  - As OTF members are the main contributors to OCT financial accounts, could we be of service and provide feedback on this matter?
- OTF active members comprise approximately 80 per cent of all OCT members and approximately 90 per cent of working OCT teachers.
  - OTF feels that it would be in the interest of OCT to engage meaningfully in greater collaboration.

# Clarifying mandates



## Clarifying mandates

The overarching mandate of the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) is to **ADVOCATE** for and promote the teaching profession in Ontario, and to advance the cause of education in its widest possible sense. OTF is not a union and does not engage in collective bargaining. Its role is broader and focused on the profession as a whole.

The Ontario College of Teachers' primary mandate is to **REGULATE** and govern the teaching profession in the public interest. This means their main focus is not on serving teachers or school boards, but on protecting students and the public by ensuring competent and ethical teaching standards.

## Members voices

**TEACHERS' VOICE:** As sole funders, teachers deserve meaningful input.

**IMPACT ON DECISIONS:** Without the benefit of teacher perspectives, decisions made by Governing Council are less informed than they otherwise might be.

**OCT GOVERNANCE RISK:** Teachers represent the group most affected by OCT decisions, yet their feedback seems to be unwelcomed.