



Ontario
College of
Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes
et des enseignants
de l'Ontario



Focus on
Teaching

2025 *Focus on Teaching*: Executive summary



Executive Summary

2025 Focus on Teaching: A Survey of Ontario Teachers

The 2025 *Focus on Teaching* survey is the third year in which the Ontario College of Teachers collected large-scale data from members to better understand the evolving professional experiences of Ontario Certified Teachers (OCTs). Of the 229,836 members in good standing who received the survey, 36,749 responded, resulting in a 16 percent participation rate. Most respondents (93%) completed the English version, reflecting the broader language profile of College membership.

Building on survey refinements developed through consultation with educators, system leaders, and sector partners, the 2025 survey included 31 items that inquired about teacher training, their application of equitable practice, experiences in professional practice, career motivation, demographic identity, and future plans.

Entry to the Profession

Patterns of Entry and Years of Experience

The Ontario teaching workforce continues to be shaped by long-serving educators:

- 25% entered within the last 10 years;
- 30% entered between 11 and 20 years ago; and,
- 41% of respondents began teaching in Ontario more than 20 years ago.

These proportions closely mirror findings from the 2024 survey.

During the 2024-2025 school year, a larger proportion of respondents employed within the last five years, in particular, held daily occasional, supply, or long-term occasional roles, while higher percentages of those employed longer tended to hold full-time permanent positions. Comparisons between respondents employed within the last 20 years and those employed for more than 20 years show differences in their interests in changing teaching assignments and their desire to remain teaching in their current subject or grade areas.

Certification and Jurisdiction

More than three-quarters of respondents (77%) completed their initial teacher education (ITE) program in Ontario. Seventeen percent trained internationally and five percent trained elsewhere in Canada. More than three-quarters of respondents who trained in Canada (73%) and who trained internationally (67%) held full-time permanent teaching positions during the 2024-2025 school year. Employment patterns varied across these groups. Proportionally, a higher percentage of respondents who completed their ITE program internationally reported not having as much employment as they wanted during this school year, when compared to those trained in Canada.

Preparedness for Teaching

Among respondents who began teaching between 2021 and 2025 and completed their ITE program in Ontario:

- 64% indicated their ITE program prepared them adequately, well, or extremely well for working in the teaching profession; and,
- 21% indicated their ITE program prepared them poorly, or extremely poorly for working in the teaching profession.

Differences emerged across certification years, with a larger proportion of recently certified respondents reporting feeling well or extremely well prepared by their ITE program. Regardless of reported levels of preparation for the teaching profession, more than three-quarters of respondents reported being committed

to embedding equitable practices in their daily work. Among respondents who believed they were well prepared by their ITE program, larger proportions reported being prepared and supported in embedding equitable practices. Respondents who did not receive their initial training in Ontario reported being prepared and supported in embedding equitable practices in similar proportion to those who believed their ITE program in Ontario adequately prepared them for the teaching profession.

New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)

Among respondents who began teaching in the past five years:

- 33% believed NTIP supported their transition into the teaching profession in Ontario adequately, well, or extremely well;
- 14% believed they were poorly or very poorly supported; and,
- 45% did not have access to NTIP or were not aware of NTIP.

A larger proportion of respondents who reported that NTIP supported their transition well or extremely well indicated that they have been prepared and are supported in embedding equitable practices in their daily work, when compared to those who believed they were poorly supported. At the same time, regardless of their NTIP experience, over three-quarters of respondents reported commitment to embedding equitable practices in their daily work.

Career Choice and Motivation

Teaching as a First Career

Two-thirds of respondents (66%) indicated that teaching was their first career, a result consistent with the 2023 and 2024 surveys.

Top Motivators

Respondents identified five primary motivators for continuing or rejoining the profession:

1. I love supporting the success of students (80%).
2. Teaching is a noble profession, and I take pride in working in the education sector (51%).
3. Provides me with financial security (49%).
4. Working with stimulating and supportive colleagues (48%).
5. Lifelong learning: there are always opportunities for personal growth and learning in the education sector (39%).

These top motivating factors were consistent across respondents trained in Canada and internationally.

Motivators Across Demographic Groups

Motivations varied across identity groups, revealing meaningful differences:

- More than one-quarter of respondents who did not have a disability reported that having a good work-life balance was a motivating factor for staying in or

rejoining the profession (28%), while a smaller proportion of those who identified as a person with one or more disabilities cited this factor (19%).

- Respondents who self-identified as non-binary reported being motivated by their social duty and/or their interest in providing leadership in education at larger proportions than their responding cisgender peers.
- Motivational differences also emerged across sexual orientation groups. Social duty and working with stimulating and supportive colleagues was reported by a larger proportion of respondents who described their sexual orientation as queer.
- Across racial categories, respondents who self-identified as Southeast Asian, Black, South Asian and/or Jewish reported being motivated by their pride in working in the education sector in larger proportions than those who described their racial category as white. Financial security was reported as a motivating factor by more than half of respondents who self-identified as white, East Asian, and Southeast Asian; and among smaller proportions of those who described their racial category as South Asian, Black, and/or Middle Eastern or West Asian.

Together, these patterns reflect varied professional experiences and aspirations across the teaching workforce.

Experience and Professional Practice

Position Types

Across all respondents, the two most common roles reported for the 2024-2025 school year were full-time permanent (60%) and daily occasional or supply teaching positions (14%).

Amount of Employment

Across all respondents, 69 percent reported having about as much employment as they wanted during the 2024-2025 school year, while 12 percent reported not having as much employment as they wanted and 12 percent reported having more employment than they wanted.

Employer Type

Employment experiences differed between English- and French-language school boards. Among respondents in full-time permanent positions, a larger proportion of those employed in English-language boards reported having about as much employment as they wanted during the 2024-2025 school year, while a larger proportion of those in French-language boards reported having more employment than desired.

Intentions to Leave by Position Type

Reported intentions to leave the profession varied by position type. Almost three-quarters of respondents in a principal or vice-principal position reported plans to leave within the next 10 years, with more than half indicating plans to retire within five years. While more than half of respondents in full-time permanent teaching positions reported plans to leave within the next

10 years, one-quarter indicated no current departure plans. In contrast, larger proportions of respondents in long-term occasional teaching positions, both full-time and part-time, indicated no current plans to leave within the next decade.

Barriers to Full-Time Teaching

Among respondents who were first employed as a teacher in Ontario within the last five years and not teaching full-time, the most frequently reported barriers to securing full-time teaching positions were:

1. Impact of seniority in the job environment (55%).
2. Geographic location – available positions are located far from my place of residence (33%).
3. No full-time positions or vacancies (13%).

Among internationally educated teachers who were not teaching full-time, the most frequently reported barriers to securing full-time teaching positions were:

1. Impact of seniority in the job environment (26%).
2. Geographic location – available positions are located far from my place of residence (23%).
3. I am told I don't have "Canadian Experience" (21%).

Demographics and Sense of Belonging

Sense of Belonging

While many respondents in the full survey sample reported that they rarely or never experienced a diminished sense of belonging during the 2024-2025 school year, further analyses using disproportionality indices highlight the different experiences reported by several equity-deserving groups.

Disproportionality for Equity-Deserving Groups

Within the results of the 2025 *Focus on Teaching* survey, disproportionality index values were determined to understand the extent to which various demographic groups reported disproportionate experiences with diminished sense of belonging due to discrimination, racism and/or microaggressions across different aspects of their work environment, relative to all survey respondents.

Disproportionate experiences of diminished sense of belonging were reported by several equity-deserving groups. Over-representation of respondents who always or often experienced a diminished sense of belonging across various work environments (in the classroom setting, in the broader school community, with colleagues, etc.) was particularly noted among those who considered themselves to be a person with a disability, and those who self-identified as non-binary, bisexual, gay and/or lesbian. Similarly, disproportionate experiences within various work

environments were observed across several racial categories, particularly among respondents who self-identified as South Asian, Black, Middle Eastern/West Asian, Indigenous to North America (including First Nations, Metis, Inuk and Inuit), Jewish, and mixed-race.

Career Metrics by Demographics

Across motivations, career pursuits, and reasons for leaving the profession, respondents' experiences varied by identity. One notable example is the reported interest in principal or vice-principal roles across demographic groups. Among respondents who held full-time permanent teaching positions, more than one-quarter who self-identified as Black reported an interest in pursuing a principal or vice-principal position over the next five years. Similarly, larger proportions of respondents who self-identified as non-binary, pansexual and/or queer indicated an interest in advancing to other school leadership positions.

Aspirations and Experiences

Future Career Pursuits

Over the next five years, respondents' top reported career pursuits included:

1. Continue to teach in current subject area and capacity (57%).
2. Move to teaching in another grade or subject area (20%).
3. Other school leader (such as department head/school-based curriculum leader) (15%).

Other aspirations included principal or vice-principal roles (11%) and secondments (11%). Trends differed by year first employed, panel, and timing for leaving the profession.

Career aspirations of members were closely related with the planned timing for exit from the profession. A larger proportion of respondents interested in moving from full-time permanent to daily occasional or supply roles reported intentions to leave within the next three years (54%), compared to those interested in other teaching pathways.

The majority of respondents interested in pursuing principal or vice-principal roles also reported departure intentions, with almost 80 percent planning to leave within 10 years.

The most commonly reported barriers to pursuing alternative paths within the profession were:

1. Loss of seniority when changing district school boards (23%).

2. Too many administrative hurdles to apply for new opportunities (20%).
3. Desired positions are not frequently available or hiring (18%).

At the same time, four in 10 respondents (40%) reported that they do not wish to pursue other opportunities.

Leaving the Profession: When and Why

Leaving the Profession

Respondents estimated the following timelines for leaving the profession:

- 21% intend to leave within three years;
- 27% within four to 10 years;
- 14% after more than 10 years; and,
- 27% do not currently plan to leave within the next 10 years.

Among respondents who may permanently leave the profession within the next five years, the most reported reasons for leaving included:

1. Impact to my mental health (35%).
2. Retirement (34%).
3. Feelings of lack of safety and/or security in the school or system (24%).

Additional influences included overall lack of job satisfaction, desire for change, challenges facing instruction that resulted from the pandemic, lack of career growth opportunities, and physical health challenges.

Differences by Length of Employment in the Profession and by Panel

As years of employment in education increased among respondents, substantial increases in retirement plans were reported, ranging from six percent among those employed within the past five years to 67 percent among those employed for more than 20 years. Conversely, as years of employment increased among respondents, reported thoughts of leaving the profession due to a lack of long-term job stability decreased.

Panel-based differences revealed varied experiences related to mental health concerns across elementary, secondary, and dual panel respondents. More than one-third of those in the elementary panel reported impact to their mental health as a reason for leaving the teaching profession within the next five years, while a smaller proportion of dual panel respondents reported this. Conversely, a larger proportion of dual panel respondents reported lack of long-term job stability as a reason they may leave the profession, compared to those working in elementary or secondary panels.

Interactions with the College

Respondents also shared feedback regarding their interactions with the College, including perceptions of service quality, clarity, and communication. These insights support ongoing improvements to regulatory processes, transparency, and service delivery.

Conclusion

The 2025 *Focus on Teaching* survey highlights a profession deeply dedicated to student success, grounded in professional pride, and committed to embedding equitable practices within their daily work. At the same time, the results identify ongoing challenges affecting teacher retention, sense of belonging, career advancement within the profession, impact to mental health, employment stability, and access to early career supports.

Together, the results provide a comprehensive picture to inform system-level efforts aimed at supporting the teaching profession over the long term.

 [oct-ooeo.ca/fb](https://www.facebook.com/oct-ooeo.ca/fb)

 [oct-ooeo.ca/yt](https://www.youtube.com/oct-ooeo.ca/yt)

 [oct-ooeo.ca/X](https://www.x.com/oct-ooeo.ca/X)

 [oct-ooeo.ca/li](https://www.linkedin.com/oct-ooeo.ca/li)



**Ontario
College of
Teachers**

Ontario's Teaching Regulator

For additional information:
Ontario College of Teachers
101 Bloor St. West
Toronto ON M5S 0A1

Telephone: 437-880-3000
Fax: 416-961-8822
Toll-Free (Canada and U.S.A.):
1-833-966-5588
TTY: 711
Email: info@oct.ca
oct.ca