



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

Council Decision Note

Item: Amendment to Accreditation Regulation: Indigenous Institutes

Public Interest Rationale: Updating the definition of "permitted institution" to include Indigenous Institutes would support Indigenous education and teacher workforce development, while preserving the College's accreditation standards and public interest mandate.

Strategic Alignment: Agility in program accreditation aligns with Goal 1 of the Strategic Plan with respect to accountable and agile processes to certify educators to teach in Ontario classrooms, supported by a regulatory model that strives to be free from barriers to truth and reconciliation, and equity, diversity, inclusion, and access.

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Issue – The purpose of this decision note is to provide Council with an analysis of a proposed regulatory amendment to Ontario Regulation 347/02 *Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs* (the "Accreditation Regulation"), under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act* (the "OCTA"). The proposed amendment would broaden the definition of "permitted institution" to include the authority conferred on Indigenous Institutes under the *Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017* (the "IIA") and thereby permit eligibility for their programs to be accredited by the College as initial teacher education programs. The College has consulted with the Government of Ontario regarding this proposed amendment.

Background – *Indigenous Institutes and Programming*

Indigenous Institutes are legislated postsecondary institutions recognized under the IIA. Indigenous Institutes have experience delivering initial teacher education programs (with partner organizations) and possess a growing capacity to provide Indigenous teacher training.

There are nine Indigenous Institutes in Ontario that are recognized in legislation under the IIA to provide accessible postsecondary education and training to Indigenous students in a culturally supportive environment, and to provide education framed by Indigenous knowledge and languages, worldviews and Indigenous ways of knowing and living. Pursuant to the IIA, Indigenous Institutes have a legislative pathway to develop and deliver independent postsecondary programs to students.

The IIA recognizes the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (“IAESC”) as the quality assurance body for Indigenous Institutes, with responsibility for conducting organizational reviews and approving Indigenous Institutes to grant diplomas, certificates and degrees.

While some Indigenous Institutes are beginning to seek IAESC approval to grant degrees for teacher education programs, other institutes continue to work in partnership with publicly assisted postsecondary institutions for the program delivery.

Current Regulatory Framework

Under the Accreditation Regulation, a program of professional education may only be accredited by the College where the provider is a “permitted institution”.

Section 1 of the Accreditation Regulation currently defines a permitted institution as:

(a) a college, faculty or school of education in Ontario that is part of or affiliated with a university authorized to offer degrees under an Act of the Assembly; or

(b) an entity authorized under the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000*,

(i) to offer a program of professional education leading to a degree,
or

(ii) to operate or maintain a university

As a result, an entity without an Act of Assembly seeking accreditation of a professional education program must first obtain Ministerial consent under the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000* ("PSECEA"), following review by the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board ("PEQAB").

Proposed Amendment

To permit the accreditation of an initial teacher education program under the IIA, a regulatory amendment would be required to expand the definition of "permitted institution" in the Accreditation Regulation to include Indigenous Institutes that have obtained approval to offer a program of professional education leading to a degree from the IAESC pursuant to the IIA. This amendment reflects consistency with regulatory developments implemented over time.

Amending Ontario Regulation 347/02 to permit Indigenous Institutes to become "permitted institutions," where they have obtained approval from the IAESC, would be a significant step toward enabling Indigenous Institutes to seek accreditation for independent initial teacher education programs.

Indigenous Institutes would still be required to successfully complete a program review through the applicable quality assurance framework and obtain approval under the relevant legislative authority, either through IAESC under the IIA, or through a PEQAB review and Ministerial approval under the PSECEA.

Indigenous Institutes would retain the option to pursue either pathway, however, they would still be required to apply to the College's Accreditation Committee for accreditation of any initial teacher education program that would lead to licensure.

Accreditation Implications

The proposed amendment would not alter the College's statutory mandate or accreditation standards. Indigenous Institutes would still be required to:

- obtain program approval through an authorized quality assurance body (IAESC or PEQAB);
- apply to the Accreditation Committee for accreditation of the initial teacher education program; and
- demonstrate that the program meets all applicable accreditation requirements through reviews required pursuant to the Accreditation Regulation.

Risks and Mitigating Factors

Accreditation standards and oversight would remain within the College's authority. The proposed amendment represents regulatory modernization and alignment with the current legislative landscape. It also supports broader policy objectives related to Indigenous education and teacher workforce development, while preserving the College's accreditation standards and public interest mandate.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Impact

The proposed amendment aligns with the College's strategic plan commitment to a regulatory model that strives to be free from barriers to truth and reconciliation, and equity, diversity, inclusion, and access.

Recognizing Indigenous Institutes approved under the IIA as eligible "permitted institutions" would remove a structural eligibility barrier that currently limits Indigenous Institutes from independently seeking accreditation for initial teacher education programs. The amendment supports Indigenous self-determination in postsecondary education and teacher preparation and contributes to strengthening the Indigenous teacher workforce in Ontario.

Committee Meeting

On February 26, 2026, the Accreditation Committee approved a motion to expand the definition of "permitted institution" to include Indigenous Institutes recognized by regulation under the IIA, that have obtained approval from the IAESC.

Decision Sought

Regulatory Amendment

It is recommended:

That Council recommend to the Minister of Education the proposed amendment to O. Reg. 347/02 to expand the definition of "permitted institution" to include Indigenous Institutes recognized by regulation under the IIA, that have obtained approval from the IAESC.

Specifically, section 1 of Ontario Regulation 347/02 is amended by adding the following clause to the definition of "permitted institution":

(c) an entity authorized under the *Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017* to offer a program of professional education leading to a degree.

Next Steps

Should Council indicate support for the proposed regulatory amendment, College staff will engage with the Government of Ontario to develop draft regulatory amendments that would come to Council for consideration.