

# **Registrar's Report to Council**

**March 21, 2024**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

I am pleased to present the College's first quarterly report to Council in 2024. This will be the last report organized around the College's three strategic priorities from the 2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan. The report provides statistics and activity for the fourth quarter of 2023 (October 1-December 31, 2023) as well as the 2023 year-end stats where appropriate. The report also includes updates on recent regulatory and legislative activity, and the College's responses thereto.

### **Acknowledgments**

Before delving into the quarterly report, I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge some recent appointments to the College's Senior Leadership Team.

It is with mixed emotions that I announce the retirement of Deputy Registrar, Chantal Bélisle, OCT. Chantal has been a central figure at the College since joining the organization in 2008. She held several roles before joining the Senior Leadership Team as Director of Investigations and Hearings (now Investigations and Professional Conduct) in 2015, and later being appointed as the Deputy Registrar in 2020. During a time of immense change, Chantal stepped up as Acting Registrar in 2022 demonstrating yet again her leadership and commitment in support of excellence at the College. I wish Chantal all the best in her future endeavours and thank her for her service to the College and the profession.

Many of you will know that Jamie Robertson, OCT, was appointed as Interim Deputy Registrar last year. It is my pleasure to officially welcome Jamie as the new Deputy Registrar, effective February 1, 2024. Jamie has been serving as Interim Deputy Registrar over the past several months while also serving as the Director of Investigations and Professional Conduct. I am thankful for his support during my first year as Registrar and look forward to continuing to work together to serve the public interest.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS REPORT**

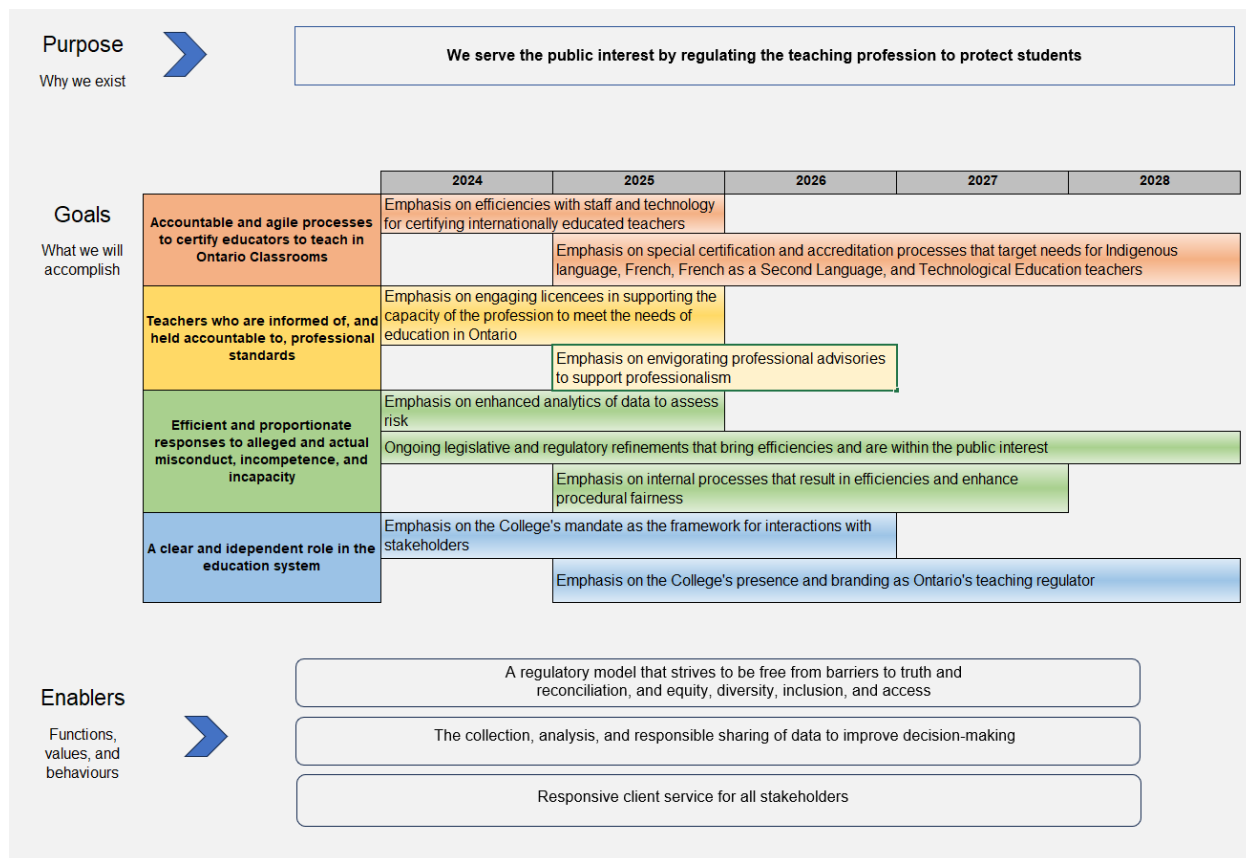
### **2024 – 2028 Strategic Plan Implementation**

As noted above, this Registrar's Report focuses on College work in the fourth quarter of 2023. As such, it is the final report that addresses the College's 2019-2023 Strategic Priorities.

At the October 5, 2023, Council Meeting, the College's 2024-2028 strategic plan was approved. Since then, the College's Senior Leadership Team has begun to develop implementation plans, considering the timing of aspects of the work ahead.

The areas of emphasis that have been charted out over the five-year cycle offer high-level information about how the College will work towards achieving the goals. Next, departments will focus attention on their specific work within each of the emphasized areas. College leadership will work with all staff to identify the indicators of success so that progress towards each of the goals can be tracked and monitored.

The infographic below shows how the College will move forward to achieve the identified goals over the next five years.



## Sexual Abuse Prevention Program

The College continues to make every effort to increase the Sexual Abuse Prevention Program (SAPP) compliance rate among members. A robust communications plan has been developed to ensure that members, boards, teacher federations and other members' organizations are kept up-to-date with respect to the College's enforcement of the requirement that all Ontario Certified Teachers (OCTs) complete the SAPP.

In mid-September 2023, the College sent school boards lists of their Ontario Certified Teacher employees who had not completed the SAPP to seek the boards' support in promoting members' compliance with this professional obligation. The information provided was the same as what is publicly available on the College's public register (*Find a Teacher*) but provided to Boards in aggregate to promote compliance.

To continue its efforts to enhance compliance with the SAPP, the College has completed its analysis on the implementation of administrative suspensions for OCTs who have not completed the SAPP. More information on this topic will be presented at the March 2024 Council meeting.

As of February 1, 2024, the SAPP completion numbers were:

- Completed – 220,438
- Incomplete – 9,515
- To Be Completed - 233 (members who are entitled to an extension)

### **Expedited Certification**

In December 2023 amendments made by the Minister of Education to subsection 3(3) of the Fair Registration Practices Regulation of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996* took effect. These amendments mandate that registration decisions be rendered to internationally educated applicants within 60 business days from the date that the application package is complete (i.e., all required documents have been received and confirmed as acceptable), a significant reduction from the previous timeline of 120 calendar days.

To support this change, the College's application system was updated to comply with the new legislated requirements. Effective January 2, 2024, the College modified its application processes by implementing a front-loaded approach for application requirements. This new process emphasizes the applicant's responsibility to prepare their documentation before starting the application process and includes additional self-serve features for applicants. The new process applies to, and will benefit all, College applicants. In addition, the validity period of an application has been adjusted from two years to one year. These changes to the application process were communicated via the College website.

### **Math Proficiency Test**

As a result of an Ontario Court of Appeal decision released on November 28, 2023, the Math Proficiency Test (MPT) will be reinstated as a requirement for certification with the Ontario College of Teachers. A message was posted on the College website to alert our stakeholders. The Court's decision can be viewed [online](#).

The College will work with the Ministry of Education as the government determines when and how the requirements of O. Reg. 271/19: Proficiency in Mathematics are amended to once again become operable. The College will also coordinate its implementation efforts with other stakeholders as needed, including the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), test providers, and others. The College will communicate relevant information to applicants as it becomes available and will receive successful MPT completion data.

### **Reporting to the Office of the Fairness Commissioner**

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) is an arm's length agency of the Ontario government that is responsible for ensuring that Ontarians with professional credentials from foreign countries have fair access to regulated professions and trades in Ontario. The College fulfills its reporting obligations to the OFC by annually submitting a report. The OFC reviews the College's registration practices ensuring they are transparent, objective, impartial, and fair for those who want to practice as a member of the teaching profession in Ontario. Per its reporting obligations, the College responded to the OFC's Risk Informed Compliance Framework questionnaire in December 2023. The responses will allow the OFC to assess the College's risk profile for complying with fair registration practice requirements. The questionnaire also supplements information the College provided in its 2022 Fair Registration Practices report and other periodic reports throughout the year.

## **Continued Increase in Employer Reports and Complaints**

The College received a significantly higher number of new complaints and reports from employers in 2023 than in any previous year. A total of 1,127 new matters were received, representing an increase of approximately 35% over the 836 received in the previous year.

The Investigations and Professional Conduct department have made available new tools to expedite reporting, including developing a fillable form for employer reports and an online form for members to self-report criminal charges and convictions. Enhancements and improved processes to enhance efficiency are either in process or planned for later in 2024, and updates will be provided in future reports to Council. However, to support the increase in workload, it is anticipated that additional staff resources may be required.

## **COLLEGE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

### **1. Strengthen transparency and accountability**

#### **Additional Qualifications**

Meetings were held in November 2023 for providers of Additional Qualification (AQ) courses. In total, 44 participants representing 45 institutions participated in the online sessions that provided updates on the development, accreditation, and reporting of AQs. The meetings included a review of information pertaining to temporary and transitional certificates as well as AQ provider criteria. The College has responded to questions about updated certification requirements and AQ accreditation practices.

Several months of research and development culminated at the end of 2023 with the completion of the draft guidelines for the *Holocaust Education and Countering Antisemitism* Additional Qualification (AQ), which was enacted into Ontario Regulation 176/10 Teachers' Qualifications in July 2023. The draft guideline was posted to the College website on January 11, 2024. Stakeholders are able to contribute feedback on the draft guideline via the provincial validation portal on the College website from January 11 to April 11, 2024. Final guidelines are expected to be available by the end of June 2024. AQ providers can begin course development based on the draft guidelines and submit courses for accreditation following alignment with the final guidelines. The *Holocaust Education and Countering Antisemitism* AQ will support teachers in the development of knowledge and skills to respond to compulsory learning expectations on Holocaust education in the Grade 6 and Grade 10 curriculum.

#### **Professional Advisories Cyclical Review**

Professional Advisories are plain language summaries of best practices, policies and legislation that govern and inform the practices of Ontario's teachers. They are aligned with the College's Standards of Practice and Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession.

A process was developed for the regular review of existing professional advisories to help keep the College's advice current and relevant, which included the development of an internal College work group. To support this work, additional consultations with members and other stakeholders will be held where necessary. The updated Professional Advisory on Additional Qualifications: Extending Professional Knowledge, first drafted in 2008, was reviewed and approved by the Standards of Practice and Education Committee at its

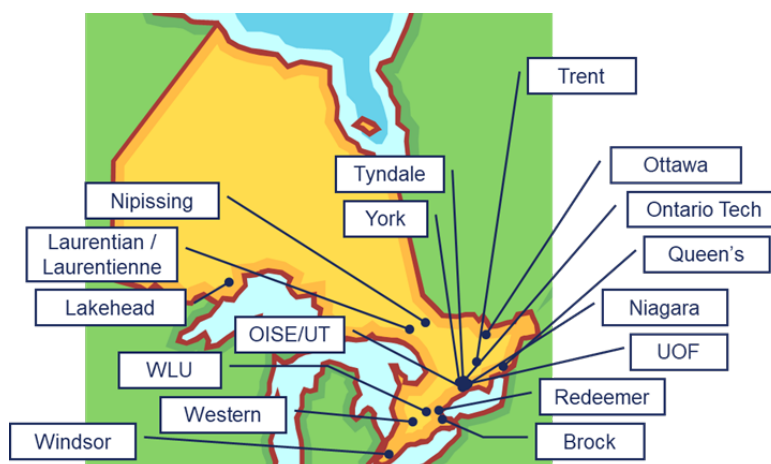
November 2023 meeting. The updated advisory was posted on the College website early in 2024.

### Program Accreditation

In 2023, the Accreditation Committee accredited two **new** pre-service teacher education programs in priority areas that have been identified by the sector:

- 1) A new technological education program was added at Lakehead University and is being offered at both the Thunder Bay and Orillia campuses. This makes technological education teacher preparation available in north-western Ontario. There are now six providers of technological education programs across the province.
- 2) A new French as a second language focus was added to the Primary and Junior divisional cohorts in the consecutive programs at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE).

There are now 56 accredited initial teacher education programs offered by 17 institutions in Ontario.



### Social Media

In 2023, the College implemented a renewed social media strategy that emphasized the quality of content over the sheer number of posts. As a result, we published 27 fewer posts compared to the previous year. While there was a decrease in total impressions and engagements, our data shows a positive outcome from this approach as our engagement rate increased by 1.7%. “Engagement” in this context refers to the level of interaction our audience has with the content, quantified through actions such as likes, shares, comments and clicks on posts. This means that despite fewer posts, the content resonated more with our audience, prompting a higher rate of these interactions.

The College's overall social media presence continued to grow across all platforms [i.e., X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube]. In mid-2023, we proactively deactivated our Instagram and Pinterest accounts as these platforms are geared toward lifestyle and do-it-yourself type content, both of which lack relevance to the College and its work.

From Q3 to Q4, our total number of followers across our social media platforms increased by 1.6% (1,039). Our year-over-year growth from 2022 to 2023 is 10.9%, an increase from 60,151 to 66,709 followers. Our continued growth demonstrates that we have effectively identified the most relevant platforms for our target audiences.

In collaboration with Client Services, Communications oversees responses to inquiries received via social media, including those from members and applicants. Between the third and fourth quarters of 2023, there was a notable 48% reduction in inquiries, dropping from 174 to 91. This decline is attributed primarily to enhancements in our FAQ platform ([help.oct.ca](http://help.oct.ca)), which has been extensively updated and expanded to address a wider range of common questions.

In 2023, we recorded a total of 708 messages, marking a 72% decrease from the 2,548 messages received in the previous year.

### Digital Newsletters

Communications develops, distributes, monitors and evaluates online engagement metrics for the College's newsletters including *Your College and You (YCA)*, which is sent to members and applicants monthly, and *The Standard*, our quarterly outreach to the public. Both newsletters consistently achieve open rates that meet or exceed the industry benchmark. On average, emails in the education sector have a 23% open rate.

#### *Your College and You* (monthly distribution)

In Q4, YCA recorded a 65% open rate for both English and French newsletters. This represents a 12% increase for English and a 7% increase for French, compared to Q3 2023. These gains are noteworthy as open rates typically trend lower in Q4.

Across 2023, the cumulative open rate for YCA's English emails was 58%, a slight 1% uptick from 2022. The French emails saw a more substantial increase, rising 4% to a 57% open rate year-over-year.

#### *The Standard* (quarterly distribution)

The Q4 2023 edition of *The Standard* achieved open rates of 48% for the English version and 55% for the French. This shows a very minor increase in English open rates from the Q3 2023 September issue, where the open rate was 46%. There was no change in the open rate for the French version.

Comparing year-over-year data, *The Standard* has seen a notable increase in open rates, particularly for the French version. The English version has maintained steady performance:

Language	2023	2022	Difference
English	45%	46%	↓ 1%
French	48%	30%	↑ 18%

In line with our commitment to continuous improvement, Communications actively monitors these trends and makes strategic adjustments to our content to better serve our readers.

### **Accessibility and AODA Compliance**

As required by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, the College will work collaboratively to make new content on the College's website accessible. We also ensure the videos uploaded to the College's YouTube channel meet these criteria.

During Q4, closed captioning was provided for the following:

- Standards of Practice and Education AQ provider information session
- Annual Meeting of Members (bilingual video, English and French subtitles)

### **2023 Year in Review – Registrar's Message**

In December 2023, a message from the Registrar was shared with members across numerous digital platforms, including the website, our newsletters and via our social media properties. The message thanked Ontario Certified Teachers for their hard work and dedication, while providing a recap of the College's work over the course of the year, including Council's new five-year strategic plan, adherence to new requirements in the *Fair Access to Regulatory Professions and Compulsory Trades Act (FARPACKTA)* and the implementation of changes to various College investigation and disciplinary processes introduced under *Bill 98: The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act*.

This message also highlighted the technological advancements made by the College to enhance operational efficiency and service delivery.

### **Complaint Resolution**

Complaint Resolution (CR) is a process for concluding complaints early in the investigation process, that leads to a final disposition. Resolving less significant matters through CR is a responsible use of resources, focusing the Investigations unit's time and resources on more serious complaints. CR panel meetings are conducted electronically and take place in either English or French, as required.

Single-member panels of the Investigation Committee (IC) held between October 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023, adopted 55 CR agreements between members and the College. Panels for the same period in 2022 adopted a total of 31 CR agreements. Thus, the volume of complaints assessed for CR more than doubled this past quarter, from 65 in 2022 to 135 in 2023, and the number of resolutions was up 77% when compared to the same period in 2022.

Staff assess every complaint for possible suitability for the CR program. As is the case for all IC dispositions, CR outcomes are not made public. However, the member, employer(s), and complainant(s) each receive a copy of the IC's Decision and Reasons, thus creating accountability. CR also allows the College to resolve low-risk complaints more expeditiously, in line with the College's commitment to be both nimble and responsive to members whose conduct has been impugned.

### **Internal Resolution**

Between October 1 and December 31, 2023, PC staff assessed 8 referrals to the Discipline Committee for suitability for carriage by in-house counsel (17 for the same period in 2022). Of those 8 matters, 3 (6 in 2022) were retained for internal prosecution (37.5%) and the remainder were transferred to external counsel.

## Tribunals

The Tribunals Unit continues to make improvements to the discipline process to better reflect public expectations, and to this end, has maintained its focus on reducing hearings timelines, implementing process efficiencies, and ensuring that hearings processes are fair and transparent.

In Q4 of 2023, the Tribunals unit continued to:

- close hearings files on a weekly instead of monthly basis, to shorten the overall lifespan of a file;
- work with a third party provider to refine the automated scheduling process used for panel selection of the Discipline and Fitness to Practise Committees; and
- work on a longer-term project to develop publicly available resources (i.e., FAQs and Glossary) that will provide accessible and transparent information about the hearings process, particularly to inform and assist self-represented members in Discipline or Fitness to Practise proceedings.

## 2. Manage risk more strategically

### Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS)

The College is committed to improving the customer experience for licensees and providers alike. In Q4 2023, the first phase of the Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS) modernization project was completed. The AIMS system manages the exchange of documentation and communication with over 50 Additional Qualification (AQ) providers for the accreditation of over 1,200 AQ courses and programs. Phase one addressed a number of priority changes informed by AQ provider input and implemented vital system upgrades. Phase two will continue until June 2024, addressing remaining identified needs. Providers report significant improvements in their experience as a result of these system upgrades.

### Data-Driven Approach to Encourage Self Service

The College has successfully concluded a project focused on gaining more comprehensive insights into user behavior on our website. We implemented Google Tag Manager to streamline the tracking of user interactions on these site, which we integrated with Google Analytics for detailed data analysis. Furthermore, we connected this system to Google Looker Studio for advanced data visualization.

This enhancement in data collection allows us to identify what content our visitors engage with most. The College is now better equipped to identify both the content our visitors are actively seeking and the content they are engaging with. This will allow us to align our content strategy more closely with user interests and needs.

### Quarterly and Yearly Comparison:

**\*Please note: view data is not available prior to Q4 2022**

Period	Months	Total Emails Received via *Web Tickets	Total help.oct.ca Views
Q1 2022	January-March	5,911	n/a
Q2 2022	April-June	6,803	n/a

Q3 2022	July-September	8,456	n/a
Q4 2022	October-December	2,211	95,809
<b>TOTAL 2022</b>		<b>23,381</b>	<b>95,809</b>
Q1 2023	January-March	2,109	134,092
Q2 2023	April-June	1,625	64,604
Q3 2023	July-September	1,191	98,275
Q4 2023	October-December	1,288	69,701
<b>TOTAL 2023</b>		<b>6,213</b>	<b>366,672</b>

\*The College receives inquiries through different channels, including via Web Tickets.

### Investigations

Between October 1 and December 31, 2023, three-member IC panels met 10 times. Six of these meetings were a part of the regular schedule. Four panels were for seized (the panelists remain assigned to the matter regardless of if their term ends) or urgent matters. Three-member IC panels considered 82 files and single member IC panels considered 55 files for a total of 137 files considered and disposed of by the IC. Of the 82 files considered by three-member panels, five files were referred to the Discipline Committee (DC). No matters were referred to the Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC). The referral rate to the DC and FTPC was six percent which highlights that the resources of those committees are focused on matters that raise the most serious issues of the protection of children and governing the profession in the public interest.

As noted earlier in the report, the increase in incoming Intake files leads to the opening of more new Investigation files as well. A total of 656 new Investigation files were opened in 2023, which is also the highest number of new Investigation files opened in any year since the College's inception and an increase of 29% from last year's total of 508. The College has seen a marked increase in the number of complaints related to social media and racism and discrimination, which partly accounts for the increased numbers. While the College continues to investigate and the IC continues to dispose of complaints at a record pace, the referral rate to DC and FTPC has remained relatively uniform. However, given the increase of files that have been transferred to Investigations to date, it is anticipated that DC will experience an upward trend in the volume and complexity of matters being referred. The relatively new statutory authority that permits the IC to address capacity matters at the Investigations stage will reduce the number of matters referred to the FTPC.

### Professional Conduct

The Professional Conduct (PC) Unit has continued to manage risk in 2023 by a) staying up-to-date with IC precedents when assessing matters for CR suitability, ensuring that resolutions proposed through this process are consistent with prior IC decisions and take into account the feedback of IC panel members; b) pressing forward with hearings using videoconference and electronic document sharing technologies, thereby avoiding delay and

reducing the risk of waning attention among participants, and other intervening events (e.g. health issues); and c) continuing to offer members *Undertakings to Resign & Never Reapply* in suitable cases, which reduces the need to hold costly and protracted hearings in some cases and eliminates the risks related to hearing outcomes.

Staff continues to meet its maximum interval goal of 45 days between Investigation Committee CR panel dates. This strategy prioritizes promptness of disposition of matters that are ready for the Investigation Committee's consideration avoiding delays that may result from waiting for panel agendas to be filled with a minimum threshold of ready cases.

The College is experiencing historical highs in terms of case numbers, as set out above, with 55 of 137 IC dispositions during the reporting period being reached through CR (41%), and that rate is climbing. The PC Unit will consider holding additional single-member IC panels as necessary to ensure that matters continue to be resolved in a timely fashion.

The PC Unit is also implementing a more proactive approach to monitoring and reporting compliance of members subject to terms, conditions and limitations. The PC Unit liaises with stakeholders to expand the pool of Prescribed Professional Learning course providers.

### **Tribunals**

In Q4 of 2023, Tribunals staff developed new procedures to dispose of matters before the DC more efficiently in cases where the new provisions at subsection 30.2(8) of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996* apply. The provisions at subsection 30.2(8) came into effect on June 8, 2023, when Bill 98 received Royal Assent, and permit the DC to revoke a member's certificate without holding a formal hearing where (1) the professional misconduct involves the sexual abuse of a student, a prohibited act involving child pornography, or a prescribed sexual act, (2) the member has been convicted or found guilty of an offence under the *Criminal Code* (Canada) for that same conduct, and (3) no further appeal of the member's criminal proceedings is available. In Q4 2023, the DC and FTPC approved the addition of subrule 9.03 to the Rules of Procedure of the Discipline Committee and of the Fitness to Practise Committee (the "Rules"), which codify the new procedures. This subrule has been incorporated into the Rules and posted on the College's website effective January 17, 2024.

## **3. Improve stakeholder engagement**

### **Stakeholder Engagement Events**

During the 2023 World Teachers Day on October 5, the College acknowledged the day and thanked OCTs in a social media post. The post also brought attention to UNESCO's focus on the global imperative to reverse the teacher shortage. The College continues to re-allocate resources toward addressing the teacher shortage by expediting certifications and enhancing overall service levels for members and applicants.

Every year, the College makes presentations to help build awareness and knowledge of the College, the teacher certification process, and the many available services and supports. These include presentations to faculties of education and different stakeholder groups such as school boards, federations, and their affiliates, as well as participating in plenary sessions. In Q4 of 2023 there was a total of 15 faculty presentations and numerous stakeholder engagement sessions.

The College continues to conduct presentations to members enrolled in the Principals' Qualification Program (PQP) and the Supervisory Officer's Qualification Program (SOQP) across the province throughout the year. The presentations reinforce the concept and importance of professional regulation, including the College's mandate to operate in the public interest and investigation and hearings processes. PQP presentations are held regularly in English and French. Additionally, there continues to be presentations about hearings processes to university students who are completing their studies in Education, and who attend discipline proceedings from time to time as part of their program requirements. College staff conducted three PQP and two SOQP presentations in Q4

College staff continue to engage with Indigenous organizations regarding the urgency to protect Indigenous languages and agency of Indigenous communities to offer initial teacher education programs. In the final quarter of 2023, staff met frequently with a number of Indigenous organizations including Six Nations Polytechnic, First Nations Technical Institute and Indigenous Institutes Consortium who were preparing grant applications to the Rideau Hall Foundation (RHF) Indigenous Teacher Education initiative. Staff discussed the accreditation process, shared templates, and responded to questions as the organizations prepared their RHF grant requests.

There continues to be collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, and various school boards across the province to present a new information session format for internationally educated teachers.

In December 2023, College staff facilitated an online professional learning session for educators working in Provincial and Demonstration Schools for the Deaf across southwestern Ontario. Participants engaged with the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession to address audism in teaching and learning environments. Excerpts from the Anti-audism Additional Qualification guideline and the Professional Misconduct regulation were discussed. Particular attention was brought to the section of the regulation pertaining to "making remarks or engaging in behaviours that expose any person or class of persons to hatred on the basis of a prohibited ground of discrimination under Part I of the Human Rights Code".

Also in 2023, the External Relations team presented or coordinated a total of 97 events, compared to 92 in 2022.

Other highlights include:

- Faculty presentations remained the same, 54 in both 2023 and 2022.
- Presentations for internationally educated teachers went up to five in 2023 compared to two in 2022.
- Member-related events went up to eight in 2023, compared to only one in 2022.

### **The Margaret Wilson Library**

The College continues to highlight the professional development resources offered by the Margaret Wilson Library such as eBooks, digital magazines and other materials. Since the last Registrar's Report, these resources have received 19,488 views on social media. Overall, for the year 2023, these resources have generated 110,728 views on social media.

The brochure for the Margaret Wilson Library was updated to inform teacher applicants and members of the library resources and services. The library provides publications and customized services for all members – whether they request materials online or to support their daily practice.

## STATISTICS

### Human Resources

Recruitment is ongoing as vacancies arise from time to time in the 204 full-time staff positions approved in the 2023 budget. The total staff complement includes regular College staff, staff seconded from school boards, and temporary staff as of December 31, 2023.

### Services to Applicants and Members

In Q4 of 2023, Client Services assisted 15,254 clients using various communication channels. The breakdown by channel is below:

Phone calls	10,181
E-mails	4,631
Callback feature	40
Escalated outbound calls	745 (Q2-4)
Reception	96
Social Media	58
Outreach sessions	126

In the fourth quarter of 2023, there were 10,249 clients who received assistance from a Client Service Assistant (CSA) the same day they contacted the College. The callback feature introduced in August 2023 continues to be well received by clients who appreciate the opportunity to either wait for a live agent or enter their phone number for a call back when it is their turn in the call queue.

Certification outcomes, new members for the fourth quarter of 2023:

TOTAL BY CERTIFICATE TYPE		
Certificate Type	Language of Teaching Qualifications	Oct. 1-Dec. 31, 2023
Certificate of Qualification and Registration	English	554
	French	68
Temporary Certificate of Qualification and Registration	English	0
	French	0
Multi-Session Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration (renamed on August 30, 2023 from Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration)	English	58
	French	10

<b>Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration</b> (introduced on August 30, 2023)	English	815
	French	95
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,600</b>

For the fourth quarter of 2023, the total number of certificates issued increased by 35% over the previous quarter. The Transitional Certificate of Qualification was largely responsible for this increase, with a total of 84 issued in the third quarter and 910 issued in the fourth quarter. The new Transitional Certificate was introduced on August 30, 2023 to assist in addressing systemic teacher shortages in the province by enabling teacher candidates to gain employment as certified teachers while completing their initial teacher education program.

<b>AVERAGE CERTIFICATION TIMELINE BY APPLICANT TYPE</b>			
<b>Applicant Type</b>	<b>October 2023</b>	<b>November 2023</b>	<b>December 2023</b>
Ontario	Same day	Same day	Same day
Labour Mobility	20 days	22 days	25 days
International	121 days	122 days	87 days

The average certification timeline represents the number of calendar days from the date the College is in receipt of all required documents to the date the certification decision was issued. For the final quarter of 2023, the average certification timeline for labour mobility applicants remained consistent and within the legislated timeline of 30 business days outlined in FARPACTA. During this time period, the average certification timeline for internationally educated teachers adhered to the requirement of 120 days or best efforts as mandated in the Fair Registration Practices Regulation 271/09.

<b>EXPEDITED LICENSURE LIST</b>		
	<b>Language of Teaching Qualifications</b>	<b>Oct. 1-Dec. 31 2023</b>
Received a Certificate of Qualification and Registration or had a certificate converted	English	12
	French	9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>21</b>

When the Temporary Certificate was introduced, the College also introduced an Expedited Licensure List which allowed district school boards to request an expedited process for applicants whom they wanted to hire. With the end of the Temporary Certificate, the Expedited Licensure List/Process has also concluded. As of December 1, 2023, the practice was discontinued except for requests received prior to December 1<sup>st</sup> which will be processed.

## Member Statistics

Status	Dec. 31, 2023	Dec. 31, 2022
Inactive/Non-Practising	252,936	246,280
Good Standing	228,182	229,272
Expired	21,476	21,504
Cancelled - Resigned	3,166	3,182
Revoked	493	469
Cancelled	265	265
Suspended - Interim	86	89
Suspended	17	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>506,621</b>	<b>501,082</b>

## Margaret Wilson Library

From October to December 2023, total library circulation of eBooks and print books remained steady compared to the same 3-month period in 2022.

The library continues to experience growth in its circulation numbers:

- Total circulation increased 5% year-over-year.
  - eBook circulation showed growth and increased 1.5%, with 3,788 eBooks borrowed in 2023 vs 3,730 in 2022.
  - In 2023, members borrowed 27,299 items versus 26,010 items in 2022.
- The top five subjects circulated across both formats were literacy, science and technology, math, social studies and special education.
- Print circulation increased by 5% year-over-year with members borrowing 8,691 items in 2023 vs 8,244 items in 2022.

The Margaret Wilson Library continues to serve members from across Ontario by providing responsive library support. For the 3-month period of October through December 2023, the library team had 304 interactions with members, compared to 406 over the same period in 2022. The decrease in interactions can be attributed to improvements to the College's self-serve options.

## Standards of Practice and Accreditation

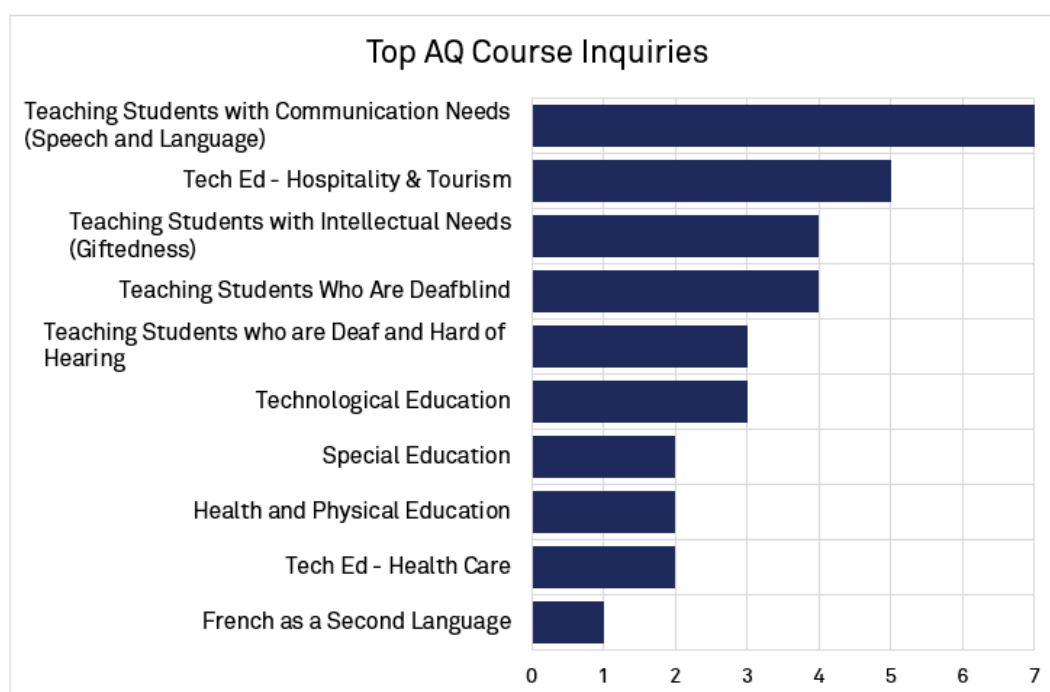
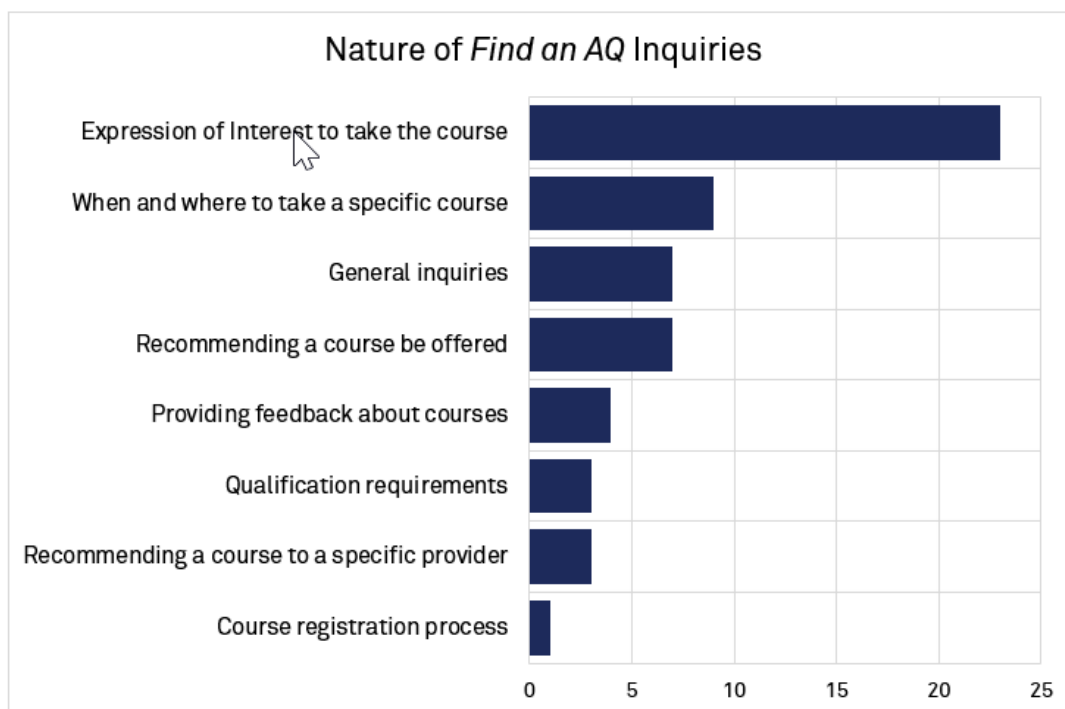
### In-Service Teacher Education

Description	Oct. 1 -Dec. 31, 2023 (Q4 - 2023)	Full Year 2023
Accreditation: Submitted Additional Qualification Courses	92	317
Courses Accredited	61	306
Governance Reviewed	4	16

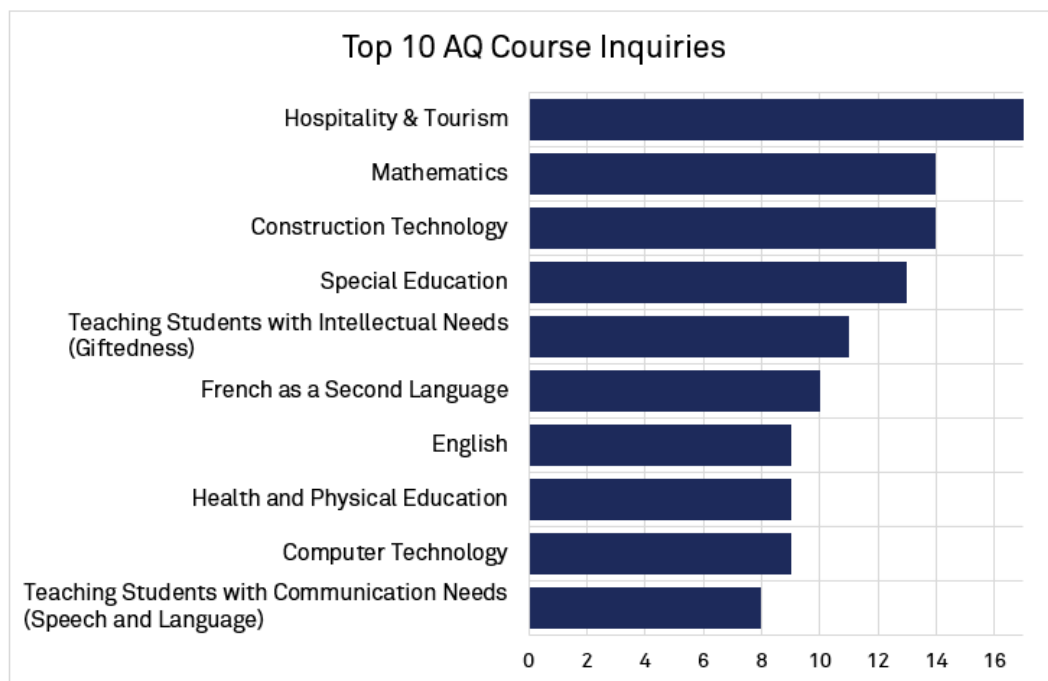
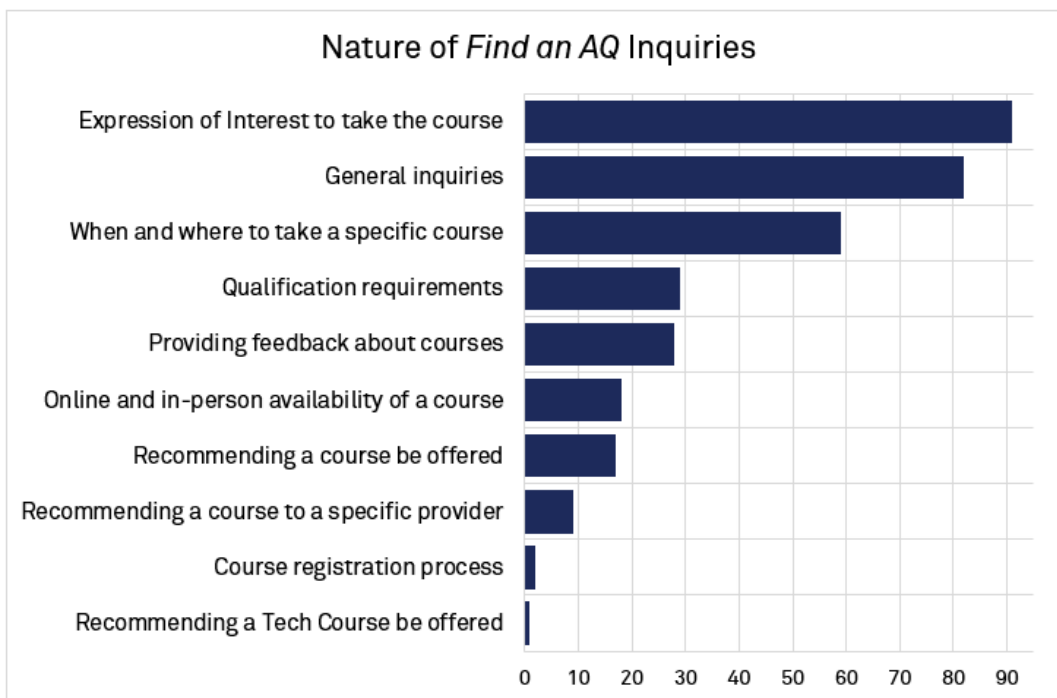
Draft guidelines posted to website	24 (EN: 12, FR: 12)	82
Final guidelines posted to website	34 (EN: 17, FR: 17)	72

### Find an Additional Qualification (AQ) Feedback Analysis

Oct. 1 – Dec. 31, 2023: Total Inquiries Received: 60 (51 English, 9 French)



**Full Year (2023):** Total Inquiries Received: 336 (269 English, 67 French)



**Pre-Service Teacher Education**

Accreditation Unit staff have continued to work with program providers and review panels in varying stages of the accreditation process. In 2023, eight decisions were rendered pertaining to thirteen programs of professional education offered by seven different providers in the province:

## Accreditation Pre-service Reviews and Program Changes

Accreditation Decisions (2023)		
Accreditation Renewals	Accreditation Renewal No Conditions	<b>Université Laurentienne</b>  <b>Ontario Institute for Studies in Education</b> of the University of Toronto (OISE) - including addition of a French as a Second Language focus in the Primary/Junior divisions  <b>Niagara University</b>  <b>Université d'Ottawa</b> - Technological Education
		<b>Lakehead University</b> - Technological Education  <b>Queen's University</b> – addition of two Intermediate/Senior teachable subject areas (Health and Physical Education and Social Science – General) to both the consecutive and concurrent programs  <b>Tyndale University</b> – adjustment of course and practicum sequence in response to the Transitional Certificate  <b>Lakehead University</b> – expansion of Intermediate/Senior teachable subject areas offered at the Thunder Bay campus to the Orillia campus (Environmental Science, Science - Biology, Science - Chemistry, Science – General, Mathematics)
Program Changes	Addition to Program	<b>Lakehead University</b> - Technological Education
	Substantial Change in Program	<b>Queen's University</b> – addition of two Intermediate/Senior teachable subject areas (Health and Physical Education and Social Science – General) to both the consecutive and concurrent programs  <b>Tyndale University</b> – adjustment of course and practicum sequence in response to the Transitional Certificate  <b>Lakehead University</b> – expansion of Intermediate/Senior teachable subject areas offered at the Thunder Bay campus to the Orillia campus (Environmental Science, Science - Biology, Science - Chemistry, Science – General, Mathematics)

## Investigations and Professional Conduct

### Intake

Description	Q4 Comparison		Full Year Comparison	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
<b>Origin of Concerns for New Intake files</b>				
- Member of the public	156	131	508	343
○ Secretary of Board – Teacher Performance Appraisal (Number included in public complaints) <sup>1</sup>	2	0	3	0
- Member of the College	34	16	86	49
- Registrar (including employer notifications)	137	104	533	444

<sup>1</sup> Reports related to resignation or termination as a result of unsatisfactory teacher performance appraisal.

- Minister of Education	0	0	0	0
Total New Intake Files	327	251	1127	836
- Resolved at Intake <sup>2</sup>	97	133	348	311
o Employer notifications resolved at Intake	12	17	65	66
- Transferred to Investigations Unit	151	115	656	508
- Active Intake files <sup>3</sup>	206	79	N/A	N/A
<b>Therapy and Counselling Funding Program</b>				
- New applications	0	1	5	6
- Applications approved	0	1	2	6
- Applications denied	0	0	0	0
- Applications being processed at end of reporting period	3	0	3	0

Between **October 1 and December 31, 2023**, Intake received approximately 210 telephone calls and email inquiries. While service standards state that calls and emails should be answered on the same day as they are received whenever possible, accumulated volume in the Intake Unit has led to challenges in meeting that standard.

In addition to addressing concerns by telephone and email, Intake completed the processing of 248 formal expressions of concern and employer notifications from October 1 to December 31, 2023. Timelines for Intake processing these files are as follows:

Files completed in under 30 days – 187.

Files completed in 30 to 60 days – 24.

Files completed in over 60 days – 37.

### Investigations

The following is the disposition of cases concluded by panels of the IC between October 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023, and January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> The number of Intake files noted as “Resolved at Intake” and “Transferred to Investigations Unit” in this chart may have been received by the College in a previous reporting period. The number of matters resolved or closed during a reporting period will therefore not match the number of new files received during the same period.

<sup>3</sup> The significant increase in active Intake files between end-of-year 2022 and end-of-year 2023 is due to the overall increase in a number of complaints against members that were received within the calendar year, compared to previous historic levels. Additionally, the volume level is pushing the boundaries of the unit's capacity for receiving complaints within the current staffing complement. As such, files are taking more time to be processed and this also increases the number of files that are pending action at Intake.

<b>Disposition of Cases<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>October 1, 2023- December 31, 2023</b>	<b>January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023</b>
Referred to Discipline Committee under subsection 26(5)(a)	5	33
Referred to Discipline Committee under subsection 26(9) - Direct Referral	3	3
Referred to Fitness to Practise Committee under subsection 26(5)(a)	0	5
Admonishment in person under subsection 26(5)(c)	12	48
Written admonishment under subsection 26(5)(d)	3	10
Caution in person under 26(5)(c)	2	12
Written caution under subsection 26(5)(d)	13	33
Advice under subsection 26(5)(d)	7	26
Reminder under subsection 26(5)(d)	5	15
Not referred following an investigation and no further action taken under subsection 26(5)(b)	19	73
Refused to investigate: not related to professional misconduct or incapacity under subsection 26(2)(a), OR, frivolous, vexatious, abuse of process, manifestly without substance or made for an improper purpose under subsection 26(2)(b) (Request for Direction)	8	43
Undertaking to Resign under subsection 26(5)(b)	6	13
Undertaking - Medical	0	8
TPA Undertaking under subsection 26(5)(d)	1	1
Complaint resolution under subsection 26(5)(d)	55	123
Coursework	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>450</b>

The total number of files considered by the IC does not include files that were abandoned or withdrawn. From October 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, 26 files were abandoned or withdrawn.

## **Policy, Governance and Tribunals**

### **Registration Appeals**

The Registration Appeals Committee is a statutory committee established under the Act that is objective, fair and transparent. The Committee reviews and makes decisions on appeals from applicants who were not granted College certification/membership or who were granted certification/membership with terms, conditions or limitations.

<sup>4</sup> Please note that individual files may have more than one disposition.

Between October 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023, panels of the Registration Appeals Committee met three times and heard four cases. The following table shows the appeals received and decisions rendered in Q4 of 2023 and for the full year:

<b>Registration Appeals</b>	<b>Oct. 1-Dec. 31, 2023 (Q4)</b>	<b>Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2023 (full year)</b>
Appeals received	2	21
Decisions rendered	4	15

The committee continues to process appeals fairly and expeditiously.

## **Tribunals**

### **Hearings Schedule**

For up-to-date information regarding upcoming Discipline hearing dates, please refer to the College website's hearing schedule: <https://www.oct.ca/public/complaints-and-discipline/hearing-schedule>. Fitness to Practise hearing dates are not displayed on the College website because they are closed to the public.

### **Discipline Committee Dispositions**

The following is a summary of the dispositions from the 15 concluded discipline hearings in Q4 of 2023 (i.e., from October 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023), as well as the dispositions for 2023 as a whole. Where a disposition included multiple sanctions (e.g., (1) reprimand; (2) terms, conditions or limitations; and (3) suspension) only the most severe sanction (i.e., suspension in the previous example) is recorded below. There was a total of 62 concluded discipline hearings in 2023.

<b>Disposition of Cases – Discipline Committee</b>	<b>October 1-December 31, 2023 (Q4)</b>	<b>January 1 – December 31, 2023</b>
Revocation	4	26
Suspension	7	26
Reprimand	2	6
Resigned – Cancelled	1	3
Terms, Conditions or Limitations	0	0
Withdrawal of Notice of Hearing	0	0
Not Guilty	0	0
Reinstatements denied	1	1
Reinstatements granted	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>62</b>

### **Fitness to Practise Committee Dispositions**

In addition to the above dispositions, the Fitness to Practise Committee concluded one hearing in Q4 2023 which resulted in the withdrawal of the Notice of Hearing in light of the member's undertaking to resign their membership, to never teach again in Ontario, and to have their membership status changed to "Cancelled – Resigned".

### Cumulative Volume of Open Hearings Files

The cumulative number of open hearings files at the end of Q4 (i.e., as of December 31, 2023) for the Discipline and Fitness to Practise Committees is summarized below:

2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
69	104	148	285	321

### Key data relating to the volume and nature of the work of the Discipline and Fitness to Practise Committees:

- There were **69 open hearings files** at the end of Q4 of 2023. This represents a **68% decrease** from the average cumulative volume of open hearings files at the end of Q4 from the previous four years (214.5 files).
- **63 hearings were concluded** in 2023. A matter is considered to be concluded after the hearing has ended, and the panel has issued its Decision and Reasons. This represents a **47% decrease** from the average number of concluded matters (118) in the previous four years. During Q4 alone, the number of concluded matters (16) was **48% lower** than the Q4 average over the previous four years (31).
- **114 panel days** were spent holding hearings, deliberation sessions, or pre-hearing conferences in 2023. The amount of time spent conducting the work of the Discipline and Fitness to Practise Committees (114 days) was **21% lower** than the average during the previous four years (145 days). During Q4 alone, the amount of time spent conducting the Tribunals' work (25 days) was **44% lower** than the Q4 average over the previous four years (44.8 days).
- **58 days** were spent conducting **contested** Discipline and Fitness to Practise proceedings (i.e., hearings and/or motions) in 2023. This represents a **41% increase** in the number of contested proceeding days compared to the average during the previous four years (41.3 days). During Q4 alone, 15 days were spent conducting contested proceedings, which was **7% higher** than the Q4 average over the previous four years (14 days).
- **49 uncontested proceedings** were heard in 2023. This represents a **55% decrease** compared to the average during the previous four years (108.8 uncontested proceedings). During Q4 alone, 11 uncontested proceedings were heard, which was **66% lower** than the Q4 average over the previous four years (32.5 uncontested proceedings).
- **7 pre-hearing conferences** were held in 2023. This represents a **46% decrease** from the average during the previous four years (16.8 pre-hearings). During Q4 alone, 3 pre-hearing conferences were held, which was **29% lower** than the Q4 average over the previous four years (4.3 pre-hearing conferences).

### Analysis

The above data reveals a few key trends in terms of hearings volume and output in 2023, and Q4 of 2023 in particular. First, the number of contested proceeding days has increased

significantly compared to previous averages (i.e., 7% increase in Q4 alone, and 41% increase in the full year). The data from Q4 and from 2023 as a whole indicates a significant decrease in uncontested proceedings (i.e., 55% decrease in Q4 alone, and 66% decrease in the full year), which is unsurprising given the rise in contested proceeding days.

Second, the concluded matters data (i.e., concluded proceedings in which a panel has released its final Decision and Reasons) indicates a significant decrease (i.e., 48%) during Q4 of 2023, and a similar 47% decrease in the full year. This decrease, however, is consistent with the increase in contested proceeding days and the decrease in uncontested proceedings, because it takes significantly more time and resources to conclude complex contested proceedings than uncontested ones.

Third, the sustained, high hearings volume over the past several years has contributed to a significant decrease in the cumulative volume of open hearings files, from its high of 321 in 2019 to 69 open hearings files at year-end in 2023. Noting the increased volume at intake and investigations, the College is continuing to monitor trends.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you and look forward to any questions or comments you may have.

Linda Lacroix, OCT  
Registrar and Chief Executive Officer