

Statement – Regulation 274

February 2020

Regulation 274 requires teachers to be hired based on seniority and academic qualifications. Subject-area expertise, directly relevant experience, classroom management skills, extra-curricular commitment, school culture, “fit” and/or enthusiasm can only be considered based on those who make the seniority list. This means that new teacher college graduates cannot be considered for permanent teaching positions even when they are the best candidates to meet student and school needs; nor can a less senior teacher with a specific and needed skill set be hired if a more senior person is on the list, even if the latter person lacks the skill set required.

In the secondary panel, since teaching experience only counts within the hiring board, experienced teachers from other boards with valuable skills cannot be considered for permanent positions until they have spent months on the Occasional Teacher (OT) and Long-term Occasional (LTO) lists.

As a result of the regulation, there are also challenges with

- teachers being hired with the qualifications on paper for a particular subject area (eg German or music) but without the skills necessary to teach the class (level of fluency does not meet student/course needs or play the instrument that the class is meant to learn)
- a hiring process that can take 4-6 weeks
- positions not filled before the first day of school resulting in students having several short-term supply teachers for the first month, affecting the delivery of the curriculum, the classroom environment and the establishment of relationships and routines
- young people deterred from becoming teachers, since they cannot afford to wait years to be offered a full-time position
- no ability to hire teachers who reflect the equity and diversity of the student population.

We support transparent and reasonable hiring practices for teaching positions. However, seniority should not be the deciding factor – teachers are too important to the effective instruction of students.

To meet student needs and ensure the best teacher is in the appropriate classroom, we continue to recommend that Regulation 274 be revoked and replaced with a concise, consistently applied regulation. School boards should be required to develop and post fair and reasonable hiring practices for OT, LTO and permanent teaching positions.

The new regulation should identify the key factors for hiring, prioritizing the “best possible program” and the “safety and well-being of students,” provide the flexibility to meet student, board and school needs. We have been advocating for these changes since 2012 when the Regulation first came into place.