

Changes to Alberta's regulations, Practice Review of Teachers Regulation, the Certification of Teachers Regulation, and the Superintendent of Schools Regulation, took effect in February 1999. Along with the Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy (1998), the development of the Quality Teaching Standard (1997) and the *School Act*, these changes constitute the most comprehensive competency, growth and teacher evaluation benchmarks in Canada. The Quality Teaching Standard ministerial order is the first of its kind in Canada. The Standard applies to teacher training and certification, professional development, supervision and evaluation. It describes the knowledge, skills and attributes or competencies required of Alberta teachers. All teachers are expected to meet the Quality Teaching Standard throughout their careers.

The Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy requires that teachers pursue lifelong learning and develop an annual professional growth plan. The policy also requires that principals evaluate any teacher who may not be meeting the Quality Teaching Standard.

In late 1998, Manitoba enhanced its teacher training programs by increasing the credit hour requirement for successful completion of a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree. The program went from a four-year concurrent model of 120 credit hours (i.e., education and arts and science courses taken together) to a five-year consecutive model of 150 credit hours (i.e., a three-year Bachelor of Arts followed by a two-year B.Ed.).

In Quebec, professionalization is the hallmark of teacher training. In 1996, the Ministry of Education defined a set of 11 occupational skills for the teaching profession, including specific references to professional competence in information technologies and continuing professional development. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills development focusses on helping future teachers integrate ICT into their teaching activities so that they can better prepare their students for the growing presence of technologies in all facets of life.

The Northwest Territories recognizes the importance of revising and introducing new curriculums to meet the educational needs of students, and the fact that teaching staff must be properly introduced to new curriculums and receive training and support to translate the curriculums into learning experiences. Because the roles are changing for teachers and principals as they now work more closely with the community, the professional development and training they obtain is reflecting these changing roles. Workshops are held at the territorial level to introduce and explain new or revised curriculum. Boards of education also hold workshops supported by the ministry.

In Nova Scotia, changing curriculums, coupled with the challenge of designing effective learning experiences for diverse students and the opportunities offered by new technologies to enhance teaching and learning, have highlighted the need for comprehensive, meaningful and high-quality professional development programs. This is creating a challenge for the Department of Education as time and cost, availability of substitute teachers, access, resources and the availability of specially tailored programs become issues. This is being addressed in two ways: first, targeted funding for professional development has been tied to key initiatives in areas such as ensuring literacy success, special education policy implementation and use of information technology across the curriculum. Second, special professional development funding was provided to an innovative Junior High School Network Project to support school-based improvement plans focussed on improving student learning.