

**POLICY TRENDS IN ONTARIO  
EDUCATION  
1990-2006**

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Education policy in Ontario underwent significant change in the 1990s and the early years of the 21st century. Changes occurred in many areas of education policy influence, including curriculum, provisions for student diversity, accountability, governance, funding, teacher professionalism, teacher working conditions, and school safety. Political control shifted from David Peterson's Liberal Party (1986-1990) to the New Democratic Party led by Bob Rae (1990-1995), to the Conservative Party under Mike Harris (1995-2002) and his successor Ernie Eves (2002-2003), and back to the Liberals and Dalton McGuinty in the Fall of 2003. Notwithstanding political differences, evolution in the direction of provincial education policy has been remarkably consistent. All the governments supported policies for increased accountability through specification of curriculum outcomes, provincial testing of student performance, and regulation of teacher professionalism, as well as changes in governance (school councils and school board amalgamation) and equitable access to provincial education funds. There has been more fluctuation in policy between governments concerning academic streaming in the secondary education program, social equity, and in the policy instruments adopted to address teacher professionalization and student success (e.g., regulation versus capacity building).

This paper provides an overview of education policies, policy trends and debates in Ontario from 1990 to 2006. For the period 1990-1998 the review refers to original sources, but draws respectfully upon R.D. Gidney's landmark history

of Ontario education policy from the 1950s onward through the first three years of the Harris government's "Common Sense Revolution" (Gidney, 1999). We begin with an organizational and demographic profile of elementary and secondary education in Ontario. Then we provide a synopsis of major policy initiatives from 1990 to the end of the Conservative government era in 2003, followed by a review of policy initiatives emerging under the Liberal regime since 2003. This sets the context for a thematic discussion of policy trends associated with curriculum, governance, funding, and professionalization.

## **Profile of Ontario Education**

The Ontario public education system is led by the Ministry of Education and consists of 72 district school boards and 33 school authorities. School authorities are defined as geographically isolated boards and hospital school boards. School Boards are divided into four co-terminous jurisdictions: 31 English Public, 29 English Catholic, 4 French Public, and 8 French Catholic boards. These boards and authorities are further reorganized into six geographically defined regional areas, each having a regional office responsible for liaising between the Ministry of Education and the school boards or authorities, regarding education programs and facilities. The regional offices are located in Toronto, London, Ottawa, Barrie, North Bay/Sudbury, and Thunder Bay. In 2003-04, over two million students attended 4,010 elementary and 870 secondary schools. 73,340 elementary and 41,600 secondary teachers educated that student population (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005a). The government invested \$15.3 billion in education funding for that education system in 2003-04 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003b).

## **Chronology of Education Policy**

### **Policy Trends 1960-1990**

Under a 30-year Conservative regime in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, changes in Ontario education reflected many North American education trends. Examples included an elementary school curriculum steeped in philosophies of active learning and individualization according to student learning styles, developmental and academic progress, and interests (*The Formative Years, 1975; Education in the Primary and Junior Divisions, 1975*); provisions for special education (*Bill 82, 1982*); and early childhood education in the form of junior and senior kindergarten. The secondary school program shifted to a credit system to allow more choice in courses, eliminated promotion by grade level, and abandoned common graduation exit exams. It continued sorting students into program streams aligned with alternative post-secondary destinations -- university, community college, the workforce. Government policies in this era promoted local curriculum development based on provincial guidelines, under the premise that the curriculum taught should reflect locally determined needs.

Other education policy trends leading up to the 1990s were more local to the Ontario context. In the late 1960s the government legislated a consolidation of school boards from over 3000 to about 170. This ushered in the establishment of large school boards serving many elementary and secondary schools, and the creation of district office bureaucracies to manage the schools and to act as intermediaries between provincial policies and local concerns and needs.

Changes in federal immigration policies beginning in the 1960s resulted in a massive influx of non-European new Canadians and an increase in linguistic, racial, and cultural diversity in urban areas. In the mid-1970s the Toronto and the York Boards of Education adopted the first multiculturalism and race relations policies in education in the province. Subsequent school system policy responses to the changing demographic landscape can be traced to these origins.

The province took leadership in recognition of the federal government's promotion of official bilingualism (English and French) across Canada that began

with the federal *Official Languages Act* in 1969. Provincially, Core French became an obligatory component of the curriculum. French Immersion programs were established in response to local parent demand. Provisions for the education in French of French language minority students were strengthened under the federal *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom* 1982. Article 23 of the *Charter* guarantees access to education in the language of the official minority in the province or territory of residence. The Ontario Education Act was amended to mandate the creation of French Language sections in school boards across the province, with three Francophone trustees elected to each board. In 1991, the Liberal government created the *Direction des politiques et programmes d'éducation en langue française* at the Ministry of Education with responsibility for French language minority education in Ontario. Core French and French Immersion are managed by the Anglophone school authorities in Ontario.

In 1986 Conservative premier William Davis ended a long standing debate about funding equity for Catholic separate and the secular Public school systems. Up to that point, public funding for separate schools extended to Grade 10. The Davis government mandated full funding for the Catholic system through secondary school. The decision was supported by the other political parties. While it was disputed by private schools operated by other faiths on the grounds of religious discrimination, the policy was ultimately upheld in the courts.

Towards the end of 1980's the Liberal government commissioned a report on education, focusing in particular on the problem of secondary school dropouts (Radwanski, 1988). The most controversial proposals centered on recommendations to destream the secondary school curriculum, to reduce the secondary program to four years with a core curriculum for all, and to implement fully-funded early childhood education. These ideas were not enacted into policy by the Liberals, but they anticipated future policy initiatives.

## **Major Policies and Policy Initiatives: 1990-2003**

This section summarizes the major policy initiatives between 1990 and 2003. The items referred to are statements of government policy positions, policy directives, regulations, or legislation, and reports with recommendations commissioned by the government or other authoritative sources.

### ***The Common Curriculum Grades 1-9 (1995)***

*The Common Curriculum (1995)* was introduced by the Ministry of Education during the NDP years. It replaced the primary/junior (Grades 1-6) curriculum outlined in *The Formative Years (1975)* and in subject guidelines for Grades 7-9 developed under the secondary curriculum policy between 1984 and 1989. It was accompanied by *Provincial Standards Language, Grades 1-9* and *Provincial Standards Mathematics, Grades 1-9* and by subject area curriculum guides. *The Common Curriculum* brought the concepts of core curriculum, outcomes-based learning and curriculum integration into Ontario policy. All students were expected to attain common learning outcomes by Grades 3 and 6. The curriculum integrated traditional subject matter into four broad areas -- language arts, mathematics and science, arts, and self and society. Implementation was beginning when the NDP lost to the Conservatives in 1995.

### ***Transition Years, Grades 7, 8, and 9 (1992), and "Program Policy for Elementary and Secondary Education" (Policy/Program Memorandum No. 115,1994)***

These policies decoupled the Grade 9 curriculum from streaming into academic, general, and basic levels of difficulty. Under this policy all Grade 9 students followed the same program and were granted eight credits towards their high school diploma. Initially, the Rae government entertained the idea of destreaming Grade 10, as well, and of eliminating the program appendage to secondary school in Ontario for university-bound students, commonly known as Grade 13, though reconstituted in the mid-1990's as a set of advanced academic

courses called OACs (Ontario Academic Courses). Secondary school teacher and public opposition to these proposals, however, sidelined those plans.

***Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (1993)***

This document followed a 1992 Education Act amendment that required all school boards to adopt antiracism and ethnocultural equity policies. While multiculturalism was embedded in prior curriculum policies, school board policies were not mandatory until this time. The guidelines called for systemic policies targeting curriculum, learning materials, student assessment and placement, hiring, staffing, race relations, and community relations.

***Violence-Free Schools Policy (1994) and Bill 81: The Safe Schools Act (2000)***

The *Violence-Free Schools Policy (1994)* was announced by the NDP government after several widely publicized incidents in schools in Canada and the U.S., and in response to a government discussion paper entitled the *Safe Schools Report*. This policy was intended to assure students, teachers, and the public that all school boards had explicit policies in place to prevent and respond to violence. The Conservative government introduced further measures in June 2000. Whereas the 1994 policy simply required school boards to develop safe schools policies, *Bill 81: The Safe Schools Act* set a common provincial Code of Conduct for students, that included explicit standards of behaviour and consequences for serious infractions, including compulsory expulsion for possession of weapons, damaging school property, swearing at or threatening teachers. Implementation has been marked by controversy over the severity of consequences, the lack of flexibility for principals, and claims of racial profiling and bias against students with behavioural exceptionalities (Kalinowski, 2003b; Miller, 2003).

***For the Love of Learning. Report of the Royal Commission on Learning (1994)***

The NDP government commissioned a review of education in Ontario in mid-1993. The *Royal Commission on Learning (RCOL)* was released in January 1995. Many of the 167 recommendations in the *RCOL* pre-figured future policy initiatives, including: prescription of learner outcomes in core curriculum areas from Grade 1 to high school completion; reform of secondary education, including abolition of the fifth year, reconstitution of the program into two streams (academic and a general applied program), and a mandatory community service requirement; standardized report cards linked to the provincial curriculum; standardized testing of pupil performance on provincial curriculum expectations; a literacy test for high school graduation; establishment of an accountability agency to manage the provincial assessment system; creation of a College of Teachers; mandatory professional development and recertification of teachers; school-community councils; and equalization of per-pupil funding.

Within six months of the Royal Commission the Rae government was defeated by the Conservatives. Prior to the election, however, the NDP government mandated the establishment of school councils (*Policy/Program Memorandum No.122,1995*) consisting of representative parents, community members other than parents, teachers and the principal. School Councils were granted "advisory" powers in regards to school plans and budgets, but were not given site-based decision-making authority as envisioned in the *RCOL*. The NDP Minister also set up committees to plan for secondary school reform, an Ontario College of Teachers, the establishment of a provincial education accountability system, and to study the pros and cons for further school board amalgamation.

### *The Common Sense Revolution (1995)*

The Harris government swept into office in June 1995. A short document entitled “The Common Sense Revolution” outlined the directions of the Conservative party's political agenda -- reduce government bureaucracy and spending, cut taxes, eliminate the deficit, and rationalize government services. It also endorsed the NDP plans to implement a four year secondary program and to establish a standards-based core curriculum with standardized testing.

The new Minister of Education continued several of the NDP policy initiatives, including planning for an Education Quality and Accountability Office, the Ontario College of Teachers, school board amalgamation, and education finance reform. One dramatic reversal in policy concerned the equity policies enacted by the Liberal and NDP governments. The Conservatives shut down an Anti-Racism Secretariat created by the NDP, and its counterpart in the Ministry of Education, and took steps to remove references to pro-equity goals (e.g., anti-racism, gender) from future curriculum policy documents.

The new government's most dramatic action was to announce that school board operating grants would be cut \$400 million dollars for the final quarter of 1996 (almost \$1 billion dollars when extended over a full year). Many boards responded by announcing teacher layoffs, cuts in programs and services, and increases in property taxes. These local strategies contradicted the government's promise to protect classroom funding and to ensure equal student funding, and were used to justify further government intervention to reduce education costs.

### *Bill 30: an Act to Establish the Education Quality and Accountability Office (1996)*

With this act the Harris government established the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) as a semi-independent government agency apart from the Ministry of Education. The mandate for EQAO is to develop and

manage the administration and marking of standardized tests of elementary and secondary school pupils keyed to provincial curriculum expectations, to develop systems for evaluating the quality and improvement of education, to collect information on assessing academic achievement, to report to the public and the education ministry on test results and on the quality of public school education, and to recommend improvements in the quality of education and public accountability of boards. The EQAO testing program includes annual testing of Grades 3 and 6 students in reading, writing, and mathematics, annual testing in mathematics of Grade 9s, and Grade 10 literacy tests that students must pass for high school graduation. The first Grade 3 and Grade 6 assessments were administered in the Spring 1997. Full implementation of the Grade 10 Literacy Test began in 2002. EQAO also has authority to require schools and districts to submit annual school improvement plans that reflect results on provincial testing measures and locally-generated data on school performance and needs.

***Bill 31: Ontario College of Teachers (June 1996)***

This legislation formally authorized the creation of a self-regulatory professional agency for certified elementary and secondary school teachers, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). The legislation specified the composition and selection process for the College's governing council, and granted authority to the OCT over accreditation of teacher education programs, teacher certification, professional standards, and discipline. Some of these matters were previously managed by the Ministry of Education (e.g., certification, continuing education), and others, notably, professional conduct, by the teachers' federations under the *Education Act* and *Teaching Professions Act*. All certified teachers are now required to be members of the College, as well as of the teacher unions. The original structure of the governing council was contentious, because classroom teachers did not constitute a majority of the members. Some teacher interest

groups (e.g., the unions) argued that this was contrary to the principle of a self-governing profession. The government policy position stressed public as well as professional accountability, and the structure was also strategically designed to ensure that the teacher federations could not take political control of the College.

Two significant policy actions emerged from the College in its early years. First, was the development and adoption of *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*. The *Ethical Standards* recodified existing regulations for professional ethics and (mis)conduct from the *Education Act* and the *Teaching Professions Act*. The *Standards of Practice* represented the first time in Ontario policy history that any attempt had been made to specify in operational terms a multi-dimensional vision of teachers' professional knowledge and practice. The policy identifies teacher competency standards in five broad domains: Commitment to pupils and pupil learning; Professional knowledge; Teaching practice; Leadership and community; and Ongoing professional learning. Within each domain a set of standards, and indicators associated with those standards are specified. Under "Professional knowledge", for example, teachers must "know their subject matter, the Ontario curriculum and education-related legislation; know a variety of effective teaching and assessment practices; know a variety of effective classroom management strategies; and know how pupils learn and factors that influence pupil learning and achievement." OCT has used the *Standards of Practice* as a basis for evaluating and accrediting initial teacher education programs. The College did not specify initially how the *Standards of Practice* were to be used with teachers in schools. Subsequent legislation requiring a more standardized teacher appraisal system across the province, however, drew on the *Standards* as a provincial policy tool for influencing the quality of teachers and teaching.

The second major policy action undertaken by OCT was to develop and implement the province's first accreditation process for all ten initial teacher

education programs between 1997 and 2000 (the number of accredited university-based or affiliated teacher education programs has grown in recent years). The programs were accredited initially for a period of three years, and thereafter on a five year cycle.

***Bill 104: Fewer School Boards Act (January 1997)***

This legislation followed from a government committee report (Sweeney, Green, Bourdeau, & Wight, 1999) in January of 1996 that recommended a massive reduction in the number of school boards. It reduced the number of boards from 129 to 72, and renamed them "district school boards". The legislation created Francophone school boards (public and Catholic) as separate entities, rather than as sections within the English-medium boards. Bill 104 cut the number of school board trustees per board, and capped their salaries at \$5,000 per year (in large urban boards trustees were being paid as much as \$25,000 to 40,000 a year). The legislation had a powerful impact on the Toronto public school systems. It required consolidation of the six Toronto public boards into one district board serving over 300,000 students (co-terminous with the Toronto District Catholic School Board that already served the Metro area). Consolidation of school boards was supposed to reduce administrative costs and duplication of services. Critics argued that it eroded community participation in the governance of schools, and that it reduced teacher and student access to significant district support services that had evolved under the previous system.

***Bill 160, Education Quality Improvement Act (December 1997)***

Bill 160 brought closure to years of debate about disparities in per pupil funding associated with unequal access to local property tax revenues by jurisdiction (public versus Catholic) and by location (urban versus rural). Catholic boards only had access to the education portion of personal property

taxes. The public boards drew from commercial property taxes, as well. Geographically, the commercial/industrial tax base was greater in urban areas. Local communities differed in their capacity (and willingness) to raise supplemental revenues through local property taxes. The disparities in per pupil funding amounted to several thousand dollars across school boards.

All this changed under Bill 160. The government centralized control over education funding and removed the power of school boards to manipulate the education portion of local property taxes to supplement provincial grants. Property tax levies are now dictated by the government and the funds are collected, pooled, and redistributed on an equitable basis to English and French, public and Catholic school district boards. Greater restrictions were also placed on school board flexibility in the use of special purpose grants. Bill 160 mandated more financial accountability, requiring boards and the Ministry to publish annual Financial Report Cards to show how their dollars are spent.

Bill 160 was not just about money, but many of its provisions were linked to a policy of “student-focused funding”. The Bill defined classroom and non-classroom spending. This was significant, given the government's promise to protect classroom funding from budget cuts. Classroom costs included teachers, supply teachers, classroom assistants, learning materials, classroom supplies, library and computers for classroom use, guidance and psychological services, and staff development. Non-classroom expenses included teacher preparation time, school administrators, district consultants, and custodial services. The Bill also removed principals from the teachers' contract bargaining units. This action eliminated their right to strike and to negotiate contracts through the unions, and altered the professional relationships between classroom teachers and school administrators. From a labour perspective, principals were now officially part of the management. Following their decertification, principals formed a new provincial professional organization, the Ontario Principals Council.

Several provisions in Bill 160 had direct consequences for teachers' working conditions. The number of annual provincially-funded "professional activity" days was reduced from nine to four, allowing the government to claim that teachers would spend more time in the classroom with pupils. The Bill also legislated that class size limits, teacher preparation time, administrative release time, and the length of the school year would be set by the province and not through local school board negotiations with the teacher unions. These actions reduced the scope of collective bargaining over teacher working conditions.

Bill 160 led to conflict between the teacher federations and the government before and after its passage. Early drafts of the bill threatened teachers' collective bargaining rights and mandatory membership in the federations, and allowed for non-certificated personnel to "teach" some subjects (e.g., arts, physical education). In an unprecedented job action, Ontario teachers staged a protest walk out in the Fall 1996 that lasted ten days. While they did not stop Bill 160, the government did back off on threats to bargaining rights and statutory union membership, and on plans for non-certified teaching personnel.

Within days of Bill 160's enactment, the government announced plans to increase the number of teaching days, to reduce preparation time for high school teachers, and to increase the instructional time requirements for high school teachers. Government authorities claimed that teachers would spend more time with students. Teachers argued that the changes would increase the number of students taught and the marking workload with less time for preparation, not the amount or quality of time spent with students individually or in groups. The government also announced its intent to make high school teacher contributions to extra-curricular programs and activities mandatory, not voluntary. The stage was set for confrontations in contract negotiations in the Fall of 1998.

The immediate financial consequences of Bill 160 were not known until the government released its grant projections for September 1998. True to its

intent, the new formula did create more equal per pupil funding. Many of the English public boards experienced reductions in funding, while the Catholic and French language boards enjoyed gains in funding. The implications for the boards that lost out in the funding equalization process were enormous (as much as 10%), since they could no longer offset the losses by raising local taxes. The boards predicted layoffs, school closures, cuts in extra-curricular programming, adult education, and other areas. Ultimately, the government guaranteed three years of stable funding at the 1997-98 level, kicked in several million dollars in to help mitigate the costs of school district amalgamation, and created early retirement incentives to help the school districts generate payroll savings.

Repercussions of Bill 160 continued in the Fall of 1998 when the boards entered into contract negotiations with the teacher federations. Due to the provincial control over funding levels, the boards had little flexibility to bargain higher salaries and benefits. Furthermore, the increased managerial rights over teachers' working conditions significantly limited what teachers and boards could actually bargain. The 1998/99 school year was marked by work-to-rule actions (e.g., teachers cancelling extra-curricular and other "voluntary" services), lockouts and strikes. The conflicts were most acute for high school teachers, due to the new regulations affecting preparation time and instructional time. The government backed down on mandatory extra-curriculars, and some boards negotiated compromises in the preparation and teaching time requirements that satisfied the federations. Boards of education also confronted the province about the impact of Bill 160. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) announced that it would have to close 138 schools. While some schools were closed, the province allocated further funds to meet the unique needs of TDSB during the amalgamation process based on considerations for student linguistic, cultural, and economic diversity. The impact of the new funding policies remained an ongoing focus of public controversy, eventually leading to a government commissioned review of education funding (see "Rozanski report" further on).

### ***Bill 74 Education Accountability Act (2000)***

The *Education Accountability Act (2000)* extended governmental powers and regulations introduced initially under Bill 160. The Act redefined the measure of required secondary teacher instructional time from the average number of minutes per week per teacher (1250) to the average course load per teacher during the school year (6.67 out of 8 periods per day, up from 6 periods out of 8). This policy was challenged by the teacher unions and by school district administrators, because the Ministry initially did not allow the time teachers spend giving remedial assistance to individual students to count. Eventually, the government was forced to compromise and a more flexible interpretation of the instructional time requirement was adopted in subsequent legislation. Bill 74 also attempted, unsuccessfully, to make teacher participation in co-instructional activities mandatory, rather than voluntary. Co-instructional activities were defined to include any "activities other than those providing instruction that support the operation of schools or enrich pupil's school-related experience". This includes not only extra-curricular sports, clubs, and cultural activities, but also parent-teacher interviews, staff meetings, and school functions. The Bill proposed to grant principals the authority to assign co-instructional activities to teachers. These provisions met widespread opposition from teachers, and that part of the law was not proclaimed. The issue was not just about control over teachers' voluntary contributions to student learning and school operations. It was about the fact that these are the kinds of services which teachers have traditionally "withdrawn" during unsuccessful contract negotiations in work-to-rule situations. Bill 74 also redefined the average elementary and secondary school class sizes (24 pupils for primary and 21 for secondary school classes).

### *Secondary School Reform*

The Conservative government announced its intent to continue the secondary school reform agenda set in motion by the NDP, including the establishment of a four year rather than five year program beginning with Grade 9 in 1997, higher standards for graduation, a more common core curriculum for all students, standardization of report cards, and a literacy test requirement for high school graduation. Other elements of the reform proposals targeted greater opportunities for work experience, community service, and counseling all students through a teacher advisory system. The final design for reform, announced in January 1998, included decisions to restream and recredit Grade 9 (reversing the program model under *The Common Curriculum*), and to restructure the curriculum from three streams (Basic, General, Advanced) to two (Applied and Academic). Under the two stream program, the curriculum content was to be the same, but taught at a higher level of difficulty in the Academic stream. The plan was to phase in the reform, starting with Grade 9 in September 1999, and ending with a "double cohort" in 2003, when the last class of students under the five year program and the first under the new system reached graduation.

Implementation of the four year program proceeded, but not without controversy. The Grade 9 program was released in the Summer 1999, leaving little time for teachers to develop courses and before the textbook industry could respond to the requirements of the new curriculum. The struggle to meet the timeline for program development and implementation continued in succeeding years as the program was phased in, placing teachers under considerable stress (especially given the reduced preparation time and increased instructional time policies) and straining relations between teachers and the government.

A more fundamental debate developed around the perceived difficulty of the new curriculum. Evidence began to accumulate that secondary students, particularly in the Applied stream, were not faring well under the curriculum.

Government commissioned studies (King, 2002) and EQAO test results revealed lags in Grade 9 credit accumulation and a high proportion of Applied program students performing below provincial standards on the Grade 10 literacy test and in mathematics. This raised the specter of increased drop outs. The government initially held to the premise that this confirmed the rigor of the curriculum, and that students prepared under the new elementary program would be better prepared for the new program. Eventually, the Conservatives and their Liberal successors introduced policy changes to address the low performance of students in the Applied program on the literacy test and in mathematics (see below).

### ***Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test***

Approximately 30,000 students failed the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) in the initial two years (Kalinowski, 2003a). The repeated failure of the Literacy Test by a certain population of students and the inequitable distribution of high success rates across program streams led to changes in provincial program policy. The Conservative government allocated \$50 million to support the creation of a Grade 12 literacy course as an alternative route to satisfying the literacy requirement for those students who failed the test.

### ***The Ontario Curriculum: Elementary Program Revision***

Once the Ministry announced its intent to proceed with secondary school reform, it decided to revise the elementary school curriculum again, in order to ensure it was aligned with the new more rigorous high school program. Development of *The Ontario Curriculum* proceeded quickly. By June 1997 new Grade 1-8 curriculum documents were released for Language and for Mathematics. Provincial curriculum documents for other subject areas soon followed. *The Ontario Curriculum* replaced *The Common Curriculum*, and brought on several significant changes. The emphasis on curriculum integration

disappeared. Whereas *The Common Curriculum* specified expected learning outcomes by division (i.e., by the end of Grades 3, 6, and 9), *The Ontario Curriculum*, defined subject specific learning outcomes and standards by grade level. The new curriculum was accompanied by a standardized report card tailored to the outcomes and standards for each subject and grade. The Ministry also produced lesson planning software linked to the curriculum, which teachers do not have to use, but which has aided its implementation. Despite concerns about difficult content, especially in the primary grades, the greater clarity in curriculum expectations and in the reporting format evoked less negative reaction among classroom teachers than the secondary curriculum reforms.

***Teacher Testing Program, the Stability and Excellence in Education Act (2001) and the Quality in the Classroom Act (2001)***

In May 2000 the Harris government announced its intent to develop an "Ontario Teacher Testing Program" in order to promote teaching excellence in the classroom, including a qualifying test for teacher certification, a teacher recertification process, and provincial standards for regular teacher evaluation. Bill 80, the *Stability and Excellence in Education Act* was passed in June 2001. Bill 80 mandated that teachers would henceforth be required to undergo a recertification process on a five year cycle. There would be no formal test, however, teachers would be have to provide evidence of ongoing professional development activities (14 approved courses or course equivalents per cycle).

The government named the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) as the agency responsible for managing the mandatory Professional Learning Policy (PLP), including accreditation of professional development activities and administering the recordkeeping and appraisal processes for recertification. The province authorized start up funds, but made no provision for ongoing costs of managing the PLP. Siding with the teacher unions, the OCT leadership initially

opposed the linkage of professional learning to recertification, and advocated on behalf of teachers for the reinsertion of more professional development days into the regular work year, and for PLP funding through the boards. OCT developed a Professional Learning Framework that broadened the scope of professional learning activities from workshops and courses to conference attendance, action research, and other individual learning activities with documentation.

The *Quality in the Classroom Act* was passed in December 2001. The Act required beginning teachers to pass a standardized *Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test (OTQT)* in addition to their pre-service teacher education program as a condition of certification. The test covered topics such as the Ontario curriculum, lesson planning, school law, human development, classroom management, instructional skills, student motivation, assessment, student diversity, and parent involvement. As of January 1, 2003, writing and passing the OTQT became a requirement for membership in the College of Teachers. Over 97% of teacher candidates passed the first round of implementation. The high success rate reinforced the belief that new teachers “have a solid foundation of knowledge and skills” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003a), though it brought into question the necessity and expense of the test (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2001a, 2001b; Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 2001).

Another component of the *Quality in the Classroom Act* pertained to provincially mandated processes for ongoing teacher appraisal (before teacher evaluation policies and process were a local matter). The regulations stipulate that principals will evaluate teachers' classroom practice every three years (twice yearly for new teachers in their first two years). Boards were required to develop evaluation tools to assess teacher competencies against the *Standards of Practice*. These regulations did not kick in until the 2003/2004 school year and their impact on the work of principals and teachers remained uncertain in the interim.

### ***Bill 45 Equity in Education Tax Credit (2001)***

In the Spring 2001 the Conservative government passed legislation to allow parents who enrol their children in private schools to claim an income tax credit amounting to 50% of private school tuition up to a maximum of \$3500 per child. The legislation responded to long standing pressure from lobby groups within the private school sector, particularly the faith-based private school organizations (e.g., Jewish, non-Catholic Christian, and Muslim), for access to some government funding for education (given full funding for the Catholic school system). Critics argued that the tax credit policy robbed funding from an already cash starved public system (Ontario Public School Boards' Association, 2002, 2003), and pointed out that the government placed little accountability on private schools (non-certified teachers can be employed, no evaluations of teacher competency required, no requirement to take part in provincial testing). The Conservative government responded to early criticisms by suspending the tax credit program in the Fall of 2001. Prior to its defeat in 2003, the government restored the schedule for implementing the tax credit for private school tuition.

### ***Language Planning Policy in French Language School Sector***

There are certain Ontario education policies that pertain uniquely to the needs of French language minority students in the 12 public and Catholic French language school boards. The 1994 trilogy *Politique d'aménagement linguistique, Investir dans l'animation culturelle* and *Actualisation linguistique en français/Perfectionnement du français* in Ontario was produced in order to create a vision and support for the mandate of Franco-Ontarian schools to maintain and strengthen French language and culture within the Franco-Ontarian community. The 1994 language planning policy intended to counteract the assimilation of Francophones to the Anglophone majority by implementing measures to legitimize the use of French and to make the Francophone community more visible within the school setting. The policy addressed the administration and

organization of French language schools, as well as the involvement of parents and community organizations in the schools. In 2003, the Ministry undertook a public consultation process to update the *Politique d'aménagement linguistique*. The revised policy emphasized several areas of intervention: students' identity, instruction, excellence in teaching, and community involvement.

### ***Funding and the Takeover of School Boards***

In keeping with its emphasis on efficiency and fiscal restraint, the Conservative government legislated amendments to the *Education Act* that made it illegal for school boards to operate on deficit budgets. In June 2002 three of the province's largest public school boards (Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton) defied the law, insisting that they could not maintain educational services under the existing funding formula without deficit spending. The Toronto District Board (TDSB) adopted a budget with a \$90 million deficit, while the Ottawa and Hamilton boards submitted deficit budgets of \$18 million and \$16 million.

The government responded by invoking the relevant sections of the Education Act, appointing auditors to inspect finances and operations in each of these boards and to recommend options for cutting expenditures without directly reducing the budget for classroom expenses as defined under the province's student focused funding policy. In response to the auditors' reports, and to continued refusal of trustees in the three boards to revise their budget submissions, the government took over governing authority from the trustees and assigned government appointed "supervisors" to implement and oversee budget cuts and operations in the boards in August 2002. The supervisors were initially appointed for one year. As of September 2002 the government exercised direct control over 20% of the student body in the province.

Trustees and parents critical of the government portrayed the takeovers as an assault on local democracy (Kalinowski, 2002). Trustees retained an

honorarium and were required to meet, but they had no decision-making power, could only advise the supervisors upon request, and lost access to district staff services and supplies. The government and its supporters argued that it was acting responsibly in the face of inefficient management by school boards, and by the refusal of trustees to reduce administrative and other “non-classroom” expenditures in the wake of school board amalgamation and changes in funding introduced under Bill 160. While the boards’ defiance was unsuccessful locally, their actions did induce the government to undertake a comprehensive review of education funding.

### ***Reviewing the Funding Formula (Rozanski Report, 2002)***

In 2002, the government commissioned an Education Equality Task Force led by Mordechai Rozanski, President and Vice-Chancellor at the University of Guelph, to review six aspects of the provincial education funding formula: fund distribution between school boards, cost benchmarks, local expenditure flexibility, school renewal, special education, and student transportation.

The report, *Investing in Public Education: Advancing the Goal of Continuous Improvement in Student Learning and Achievement* (Education Equality Task Force & Rozanski, 2002), was meant to determine if the funding formula met the government’s stated objectives in terms of adequacy, affordability, equity, stability, flexibility, and accountability. Taking into account the fact that spending benchmarks were established in the mid-1990s, the report recommended a funding increase of \$1.8 billion over a three-year period and greater local board autonomy for expenditure to support at-risk students.

In December 2002, when the “Rozanski report” was released, all stakeholders welcomed the recommendations. Despite the report’s critique of the adequacy of education funding, Ministry of Education officials declared that the review “confirmed that the government's education funding reforms [were]

sound” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003c). The government introduced a series of funding packets for different programs in direct response to the Rozanski proposals. By March, the government had announced \$676 million in additional funds to be delivered over three years for learning resources, special education, a 3% increase in the salary-component of the funding formula, and student transportation (Office of the Premier, 2003). By April, an additional \$75 million was announced for school renewal, and \$74 million for small schools who were disadvantaged because of their size by the existing funding formula.

Teacher unions argued that the Rozanski report confirmed that the funding formula was not working and that the Conservative government was destroying the education system with inadequate funding (Ontario Secondary School' Federation, 2003). Critics called for funding to exceed the Rozanski proposals if the system were to catch up and to reflect inflation (Kalinowski, 2003c; Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association, 2003; Ontario Teachers' Federation, 2003a; People For Education, 2003a).

In September 2002, the scholastic year started with the majority of teachers working without a contract. By December little progress had been made (87 of 127 contracts still unrenewed). According to the Ministry of Labour, a 3% increase in teacher compensation was consistent with the salary increases negotiated by other public sector workers (Office of the Premier, 2002). The government allocated an extra \$340 million for teacher salaries to avoid classroom disruptions during contract negotiations. The funding was for one year. School boards were expected to find ways to fund the following years' 3% increase from their allocated budgets. Salaries, working conditions, staffing and supervision continued to stall settlements in some boards, and local teacher groups across the province undertook work-to-rule actions in the Spring. In May, the Toronto District Catholic School Board locked out its elementary school teachers due to their refusal to settle. After three weeks, the Conservative

government pushed through legislation (Bill 28) to end the lock-out. In addition to back-to-work orders, Bill 28 amended the Education Act to redefine the duties of teachers and what is considered “strike” action. This now included all actions that would have “the effect of curtailing, restricting, limiting or interfering with” normal teaching activities, as well as school or board programs such as *co-curricular* activities. This was designed to restrict future teacher work-to-rule actions. The teacher unions interpreted Bill 28 as mandating teachers to provide extra-curricular activities, succeeding where prior bills (e.g., Bill 74) had failed.

### ***The Schools We Need (2003)***

Shortly after the release of the Rozanski report, a position paper was published out of OISE/UT by Kenneth Leithwood, Michael Fullan, and Nancy Watson -- *The Schools We Need: Recent Education Policy in Ontario and Recommendations for Moving Forward* (Leithwood, Fullan, & Watson, 2003). The document summarized the different policy and implementation initiatives in the last seven years in Ontario, was supported by its own analysis of the funding formula (Lang, 2002), and offered suggestions on how to improve the system. The suggestions pivoted on the notion of reducing micro-management, increasing policy coherence, and creating a high pressure/high support environment focused on improving the capacity and results of public education. The Liberals drew overtly upon ideas from this document in their 2003 election campaign and following the Liberal win, one of the key authors (Fullan) was contracted as a special policy advisor to the Minister of Education.

### **The Liberal Shift (2003-2006)**

The Liberal party led by Dalton McGuinty defeated the Conservatives in the Fall of 2003. In their pre-election campaign, the Liberals promised to

cooperate more with teachers, to put more money into the system, to review some contentious teacher accountability measures, and to shift the provincial focus towards investment in improving student outcomes (e.g., better test scores, lower drop-out rates). More than anything, they promised to listen to what educators were saying was needed to enable improvements in student learning, and to take action accordingly. Premier McGuinty appointed Gerard Kennedy, the Liberal Party's former education critic, as Minister of Education (Kennedy resigned in April 2006 to seek the federal Liberal Party leadership post, and was replaced by Sandra Pupatello who was succeeded by Kathleen Wynne in September 2006). Dr. Michael Fullan, formerly Dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto and an internationally recognized expert in educational change and large scale reform, was recruited to act as a special advisor to the Premier and Minister of Education. In their first year, the Liberals set in motion a different approach to education policy and improvement, including the reversal of several high profile and hotly debated Conservative policy initiatives. Many policy directions undertaken during the first two years of the Liberal regime were formalized in June, 2006, under Bill 78 (An Act to amend the Education Act, the Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996 and certain other statutes relating to education). Bill 78 was a comprehensive piece of legislation that amended six existing acts: The Education Act, the Ontario College of Teachers Act (1996), the Education Accountability Act (2000), the Education Quality Improvement Act (1997), the Provincial Schools Negotiations Act, and the Upper Canada College Act. Details of policy initiatives reflected in the adoption and implementation of this legislation are woven into the ensuing narrative that follows up on policies and issues identified and addressed under the Conservative regime.

One of the Liberals' first actions was to remove the government supervisors in the Toronto, Hamilton, and Ottawa District School Boards, and to restore local governance to elected trustees. This action was celebrated by teachers and trustees as a return to democracy, and as symbolic of the new government's trust in the public education system (Boyle, 2004; Ontario Teachers' Federation, 2003b). The Province's temporary retreat from direct intervention into the financial management of school boards did not alter the expectation that school boards would balance their budgets in accordance with the Education Act. Despite substantial increases in provincial funding for education (see below), by November 2005 some boards started to complain that they needed additional funds to meet provincially negotiated salary requirements for teachers, since the new monies from the government were tied to specific government program priorities (Kalinowski, 2005). A few large school boards again tabled deficit budget proposals for the 2006/07 school year. The Liberals, like the Conservatives, did not concede to the pressure from these school boards (three out of 72), arguing that with the increased revenues, and modest inflation rates the boards should be able to balance their budgets (Kennedy, 2006). Once again, external auditors were appointed to review the boards' finances. In two boards (Toronto District School Board and Toronto District Catholic School Board) satisfactory new budgets were developed without escalating to the point of government takeover. In the third, Dufferin-Peel District Catholic School Board, continued resistance by the Board to initial recommendations by the external auditor led the government to appoint a financial expert to work with the Board to eliminate the \$15 million deficit in the Board's proposed budget. Unlike the Conservatives, the Liberals did not formally suspend the Board's powers and right to approve the eventual budget.

The tensions surrounding school board control over local finances were symptomatic of growing ambiguity over the role and authority of public school boards in the context of increasingly centralized government control and

influence over education funding, teacher working conditions (e.g., class size, teaching time), teacher compensation, school district improvement priorities, and other matters formerly considered the responsibility of local school boards. In addition, the Conservative government decision to cap trustee salaries at \$5,000 per year, was regarded by some as too little recognition for the amount of work required by trustees (especially in large school boards), and a disincentive to potential candidates for trustee positions. For the 2003 elections, for example, trustees in the Durham District School Board were acclaimed because there were not enough candidates for an election. While the more general issues surrounding the role and powers of school boards remained unresolved, Bill 78 did address the matter of trustee compensation. The act removed the \$5,000 salary cap and permits school boards to set trustee compensation adhering to a required process and more flexible limits set by the provincial government. The sources of funding for increases in trustee remuneration, however, were unclear.

### *Funding*

The Liberal governments' commitment to strengthening the quality in education performance and to improving the overall climate and support for public education was accompanied by substantial increases in provincial education funding during the first three years of its mandate. Mid-way through its first year, the Liberal government announced plans to invest an additional \$2.6 billion in education through 2006, echoing many of the Rozanski recommendations (the actual amount of new money invested by 2006 exceeded \$2 billion). This included increases in the base funding per pupil and in all funding grant categories to better reflect current costs, as well as significant new investments for initiatives targeted at improving student success, especially for students at risk of academic failure and drop out at both the elementary and

secondary school levels (see below). Consistent with its efforts to develop more positive relationships with teachers, the government also committed provincial funds for raises in teacher salaries within the time frame of current contract negotiations (see below). The Liberals revoked the Conservative's private school tuition tax credit policy. This action signaled the government's renewed commitment to public education while providing a source of additional funds. The new provincial funding came with restrictions and with added reporting requirements to ensure that school boards used the money for government priorities such as class size reduction and support for students at risk.

#### *Labour Peace with Teachers*

The teacher federations supported the Liberals in the election campaign partly because of the party's commitment to developing more positive relations with and restoring public confidence in teachers and the public school system. In addition to the increases in government funding for education programs, the government acted to mend the chaotic state of teacher contract negotiations. Collective agreements across the province expired in August 2004, and most remained unresolved as of January 2005. Some local unions were again advising their members to work-to-rule. The underlying issue was that agreements between school boards and union locals were hindered by the centralization of education funding, elimination of local control over the education portion of property tax revenues, and increased government constraints on flexibility in the use of funds budgeted for specific purposes. In an unprecedented action, provincial government officials met directly with representatives from the provincial teacher federations and school board associations to discuss the challenges in negotiating new contracts. This meeting was controversial because school boards were not invited, despite the fact contract negotiations are legally the responsibility of individual boards and union locals. The government

subsequently announced a guaranteed funding package for teacher salary increases across the province. Board access to those funds and to other new funds for staffing new government initiatives, however, was tied to new guidelines for local contract agreements. Essentially, the government demanded that local boards and unions negotiate four year contracts instead of three year terms, in order to reduce the frequent disruption in schools due to labour disputes. The release of provincial funds to support teacher salary increases at the proposed level was contingent upon settlement of local contract negotiations by June 1, 2005. The government upped the pressure on school boards and the federations by making additional funding for specialist teachers to increase elementary teacher preparation time to 200 minutes by 2008, and for 1300 new high school teachers to support the Ministry's secondary school Student Success initiatives contingent on labour agreements (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005b). The strategy succeeded. While these actions contributed to greater labour peace and stability, many local boards continued to struggle with funding for salary increases for teachers and other staff (whose compensation is not governed by teachers' collective agreements). The complexities of the funding issues are difficult to disentangle. Ministry salary guarantees for teachers, for example, were keyed to 1998 funding levels, not to current school board expenditure levels, and there were variable gaps among the boards between past and current funding for teacher salaries. The government provided additional funding for teacher compensation in keeping with its commitment, initially leaving the board's to find ways to make up gaps between the government funding and local compensation levels. Over the following year, the government also reallocated funds from some more discretionary funding categories to the teacher salary line, to help boards deal with the gap. Increased government funding for teacher salaries (and for other policy priorities, such as class size reduction) were welcomed locally, but not without a perceived loss of flexibility and increase in regulation on use of provincial funds at the school board level.

### *Teacher Control over Professional Matters*

The Liberal government responded to ongoing criticisms about the costs, need, and negative professional climate surrounding the initial certification test for new teachers, and the policy requiring recertification based on mandatory continuing education credits (COMPAS Inc., 2003; Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 2004a). Bill 82, the Professional Learning Program Cancellation Act, was passed in December 2004, thus ending the mandatory recertification requirements (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004b). According to one teacher federation leader "teachers never confused the on-going need for professional development with this artificial attempt by the previous government to regulate their professional lives" (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 2004b). Soon after, the government suspended the teacher qualifying test. These actions put an end to these professionally unpopular and questionably useful policies (there was no evidence of impact on teacher quality); however, the government did not entirely shelve its interest in ongoing professional learning and in initial certification requirements beyond the B.Ed. degree. Teachers were still required to report to College of Teachers about their participation in in-service education activities, and the beginning teacher qualifying test was replaced with a New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) as part of Bill 78 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006b). The Liberal election platform proposed the NTIP as a way to improve teacher retention. The need for more systematic support on-the-job for beginning teachers was argued a decade earlier by the Royal Commission on Learning. While teacher groups supported the induction program, they expressed concerns about the bureaucratic work it required for the OCT (Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, 2005).

Midway through its term, the Liberal government acted on a promise to restructure the governing council of the Ontario College of Teachers to better reflect the principle of a self-regulating professional body. As originally established, the council consisted of 17 elected members (13 representing classroom teachers), 14 government appointed members, and 4 segregated positions. In 2006, under Bill 78, the composition of the council was changed from 17 to 23 elected members, so that elected OCT members would hold a majority on the council. The new regulations did not permit teacher federation officials to run for the council, thereby responding to concerns about a takeover of control by teacher unions. Some federation voices argued that the simple addition of six elected positions to the council did not guarantee a genuine self-governing profession (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 2006).

#### *Student Learning: Progress and New Initiatives*

In terms of curriculum and support for improvement in student learning, the new Liberal government's actions during its first year emphasized refinement in and additional resources for existing policies and practices. A review of the Education Quality and Accountability Office was completed in 2004. Despite teacher criticisms of the utility and costs of the provincial testing system (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 2004a), the government remained committed to test-based accountability, and announced plans to revise the elementary testing program. The plan called for shorter assessments, administered later in the school year, more closely aligned to the curriculum, and more specific feedback on student performance (Education Quality and Accountability Office, 2004). These refinements reflected recurrent concerns from local educators about the stress effects of the original testing program for students and teachers, and about the timeliness and usefulness of the results.

The major thrust of the Liberal's education agenda was increased support for improvement in student learning. In 2004, less than two thirds of Grade 6 students met the provincial standards for the EQAO literacy and numeracy tests (54% of Grade 6 students). The Ministry of Education announced a target of 75% of Grade 6 (age 12) students attaining the provincial standards in reading, writing and mathematics by 2008 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004c). To back up this promise, the Ministry created a provincial Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat to lead and coordinate provincial improvement efforts, and committed \$160 million to support the appointment of 1600 literacy lead teachers in elementary schools, 1100 new elementary teachers (expanded to 3,600 by 2006), caps on JK–3 class size (maximum 20 students per JK-3 class by 2007/2008 , rather staffing for average class size), and the creation of provincial teams to assist schools with persistently sub-standard student performance (Ontario Education Excellence for All, 2004; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004c). The prior government had provided support for local literacy initiatives on a project basis, not as a province-wide initiative. The Liberal shift marked a change in scale and level of support, and a commitment to province-wide goals for student results. In 2004 the Secretariat initiated a provincial “Turnaround Teams Program” as part of its Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006d). The program involves sending teams of experienced principals, teachers and literacy experts to work directly with elementary schools where junior division (JK-3) students repeatedly perform below provincial standards on the province-wide tests. By 2006 about 105 schools were involved in the three year program. According to Ministry documents, 84% of turnaround schools served in the first phase of the program showed improved results. This direct intervention by the Ministry in support of specific schools and boards was without precedent. In an effort to widen the perceived success of this capacity building strategy to a greater number of persistently low performing schools, the Ministry allocated \$25 million for a related initiative in 2006, the Ontario Focused

Intervention Partnership (OFIP) (Wynne, 2006). The OFIP program targets elementary schools where two-thirds or more of students achieve below provincial standards on EQAO tests for three years. This program is designed to be supported by the province, but carried out by personnel in the boards where the identified schools are situated.

Annual reports of EQAO test results reveal positive improvement trends from 2001-2002 to 2005-2006 (e.g., EQAO, 2006). In English language schools, for example, the percentage of Grade 6 students scoring at or above the acceptable provincial standard (Level 3) in reading increased from 55% to 64%. In writing the percentage at or above Level 3 grew from 53% to 61%, and in mathematics from 54% to 61%. Overall these improvements were mainly due to shifts in the percentage of students at Level 2 to Level 3. The proportion of students' scores at Level 1 (lowest) and Level 4 (highest) remained stable for reading and mathematics, while for writing the percentages at both Levels 1 and 4 declined 3-4%. Interpretation of these results is subject to debate, but the general patterns of improvement over time do correspond to the Liberal government commitment to provincial improvement targets, and the multidimensional and sustained investments in local capacity building to achieve these targets by 2008.

Concerns at the secondary school level continued to focus on student failure and drop-out rates associated with the Grade 10 Literacy Test (OSSLT) and the Grade 9 and 10 math curriculum, especially for students enrolled in Applied level courses. One report (King, 2004) suggested that 60,000 students might not graduate due to failing the literacy test requirement. A group of parents filed a law suit charging that the test discriminated against ESL learners, learning disabled, and Applied program students (Canadian Press, 2004). Other independent reports substantiated claims that high proportions of ESL students were failing the test, and pointed to a simultaneous reduction in ESL services in urban areas where those students are concentrated (People for Education, 2003b;

2004). The Liberals remained committed to the literacy requirement and announced plans to revise the test and to provide further supports for students, including modifications to the literacy course alternative for those who fail the test. Acting upon recommendations from a review of the provincial testing program by assessment experts from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, modifications in OSSLT administration and scoring were implemented by the Spring 2005 (e.g., shift from a full-day test in the Fall to two half-day tests in the Spring to allow students more preparation time). In addition, the Ministry and the EQAO reoriented the emphasis on provincial testing from monitoring education quality towards the use of testing by teachers as a means to obtain diagnostic information on students' learning to help them succeed in school (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005c). The effects of increased attention and efforts by local educators and of changes in the provincial testing program and support produced positive results. The 2005 OSSLT pass rate reached 82%, including an 8% improvement from the preceding year for ESL students, 4% for Academic stream students, and 13% for Applied program students (Ontario Public School Boards' Association, 2005). While acknowledging that the OSSLT was no longer as much a barrier to graduation, teacher federations continued to oppose the provincial testing program. They claimed that teachers were well aware of student learning needs and associated problems in the curriculum and support system, and that money spent on EQAO would be better spent on increased funding for local efforts to support student learning (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 2005).

Student failure on the OSSLT was compounded by the poor performance of Applied level students on the EQAO Grade 9 mathematics test (only 26% met the provincial standards in 2004), and student failure rates in the compulsory math courses at Grades 9 and 10. Overall, this reinforced concerns about the effects on high school completion rates of the secondary school reform emphasis on a common curriculum and more rigorous learning expectations and

performance standards. One study (King 2004) concluded that 38% of students who entered Grade 9 at the start of the reform did not graduate in the expected four years. Many of those not graduating had already dropped out of school. King's analysis showed that students who fell behind in credit completion in Grades 9 and 10 were most at risk of dropping out. While the drop out and completion rates were not very different from those calculated 15 years earlier by Radwanski (1988), the fact that secondary school reform begun in 1996 had not improved the situation, despite the rhetoric surrounding core curriculum expectations and higher academic standards, was cause for concern and renewed action. The Liberals set a provincial graduation rate target of 85% by 2010, an increase from 68% when Premier McGuinty took office in 2003 (Office of the Premier, 2005).

The government responded in several ways. One focus of action was to initiate a multi-year process of review and revision of the secondary school reform curriculum. In light of the problems and concerns surrounding Grade 9 and 10 mathematics, the Ministry decided to move quickly on revision of the mathematics curriculum to make it more compatible with Applied students' practical needs and career goals (Brown & Boyle, 2004; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004a; Rushowy, 2005). By 2006 work had also begun on revisions to the Grade 11 and 12 mathematics curricula. One controversial issue was a proposal to remove calculus from the Grade 12 Advanced curriculum. University educators objected to the possible reduction in high level mathematics expectations. The Ministry responded by directing its Curriculum Council to consult relevant stakeholders about proposed changes to the existing curriculum.

Curriculum revision and adjustments to the Grade 10 Literacy Test were part of a more comprehensive plan by the Ministry to address ongoing needs and concerns about secondary school student learning and retention. Responding to numerous government commissioned reports (e.g., the Rozanski

report, King's studies) and advocacy groups such as People for Education, the government decided to focus its new efforts on students at risk of failure and dropping out. Student Success is the cover term applied to these initiatives. The government allocated \$100 million in funding initially for an array of Student Success initiatives: school teams to support academically at risk students, locally developed courses for workplace bound students, increased funding to schools serving students whose family circumstances are often linked to difficulty with academic success (e.g., low income, limited English proficiency), and more funding for technology. Government incentives and support for local innovation targeting potential drop outs later expanded to 105 innovative pilot projects (\$18 million), 131 "lighthouse projects" (\$36 million) and 70 schools (\$200 million) participating in a Rural Student Success Program (Office of the Premier, 2005; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006a). In 2005 the Ministry, in consultation with the School Boards' Association and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, introduced a policy and funding (\$89 million) to hire 1,300 new high school teachers by 2007-08 whose duties would be directly linked to support for students at risk of dropping out. Ultimately, government investments for Student Success initiatives reached about \$820 million in 2005, including: one Student Success teacher in each high school, reduced class sizes in key courses, continued funding for special projects, new textbooks and library resources, and support for technological education (Office of the Premier, 2005).

In addition to academic program and student support initiatives, the Ministry began taking action to expand the range and quality of vocational education opportunities for secondary school students. These actions included: creation of a high skills major combining work experience and academic accomplishments for students not bound for university or college; new dual-credit linkage programs between high schools and post-secondary institutions; and expansion of access and funding for student participation in cooperative education and apprenticeship programs in partnership with local employers and

trade unions. The apprenticeship program (\$30 million) included tax credits and bonuses for participating employers, and scholarships for returning drop outs. Collectively, these efforts reflected Ministry efforts to enhance the perceived status and value of trades work and training among teachers, parents, and students. These actions were portrayed as steps to reduce the drop out rate by increasing the relevance of the curriculum for non-university bound students. They marked a shift away from the ideology of a common core curriculum that characterized the initial design for secondary school reform in the mid-1990s.

Concurrent with new investments in vocational programs, the Liberals declared their intent to raise the school leaving age from 16 to 18 (Brennan, 2004). Legislation to do this was put forward in 2005. Bill 52 proposed to raise the compulsory school attendance age from 16 to 18, and permits the recognition of learning opportunities outside traditional schooling called equivalent learning (e.g., apprenticeship training). The Bill included a controversial regulation stipulating that individuals under 18 years of age need to have graduated from school or to be attending school in order to apply for a driver's licence ("An act to amend the Education Act respecting pupil learning to the age of 18 and equivalent learning and to make complementary amendments to the Highway Traffic Act, 2005). As of Summer 2006, the legislation mandating this policy (colloquially referred to as "Learning to 18" was still under debate in committees.

### *Health and Safety*

The Liberal government undertook new initiatives related to health and safety in schools in its first year. Partly in response to a Statistics Canada report on obesity among school age children, the government announced plans to ban junk food from elementary schools, issued nutritional guidelines for food and beverage sales in schools, and requirements for school boards to report on progress to local school councils (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004d). While

the removal of sugary soft drinks from elementary schools was supported by school personnel and the public, it meant a loss of revenue to schools and boards from the soft drink companies that was not compensated by the government (Kalinowski, 2003d). The government also announced its intent to introduce teacher-led daily physical activity into elementary school class routines (Office of the Premier, 2004). The program requires teachers in schools serving students from Kindergarten through Grade 8 to provide all students with twenty minutes of daily physical activity (program content and delivery are locally planned). Schools were given a year to prepare. It became a mandatory program requirement in September 2006. The teacher unions were supportive, but voiced concerns over the logistics (time, facilities), qualified supervision, and impact on other curriculum priorities (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario 2005a).

In partnership with the Ministry of Community and Safety and Correctional Services, the Ministry of Education set up a Safe Schools Action Team in 2004, and allocated \$9 million to review the Safe Schools Act and to administer a provincial plan for school safety audits, anti-bullying programs, and electronic monitoring systems to protect schools from intruders (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006c). In response to the Action Team's proposals, the government allocated an additional \$23 million to support anti-bullying programs across the province (Brown, 2005). While applauding these initiatives, some educator and parent groups argued that cameras should be monitored and could not compensate for continued reductions in school staff (Kalinowski & Brennan, 2004; Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2005b). Teachers called on the government to recognize the fact that staff in many schools were already implementing anti-bullying programs.

A second school safety issue addressed during the first two years of the Liberal government arose from implementation of the existing Safe School Act. The government's actions were partly in response to evidence of a dramatic

increase in suspensions under the Safe Schools Act (Toronto Star, 2005). Ministry of Education statistics also indicated that the Act was inconsistently implemented across the province, with suspension rates ranging from 5% to 36% of students in different school boards. Continuing allegations that minority students were being targeted by school personnel implementing the Act's disciplinary measures (Brown, 2004) resulted in a series of official complaints and an investigation by the Ontario Human Rights Commission. The Commission's report (Bhattacharjee, 2003) concluded that disproportionate numbers of Black youth and students with disabilities were affected by implementation of the Safe School Act disciplinary measures (e.g., mandatory suspension for certain offences) interpreted by many as a zero tolerance policy (although the Act does not use this term) (Toronto Star, 2005). The Toronto District School Board was identified at the center of the problem. In response to the Commission's findings, the TDSB directed principals to find alternative discipline strategies and took controversial steps to begin gathering data on student race/ethnicity and other personal characteristics to monitor any biases in the enactment of disciplinary actions in the schools (Toronto Star, 2005).

## **Thematic Commentary on Policy Trends**

This section reviews the evolution of elementary and secondary education policy in Ontario since 1990 across four domains: curriculum, governance, finances, and teacher professionalism. Each domain is considered in terms of five policy trends: standardization, centralization, accountability, regulation and capacity building.

### **Curriculum**

The changes in Ontario's curriculum since 1990 reflected a general trend in Western education focusing on outcomes as delineated by centralized offices, such as provincial Ministries of Education. This began with the *Common Curriculum (Grades K-9)*, which specified common learning outcomes within four broad curriculum areas that all students were expected to attain by the end of Grades 3, 6 and 9. The trend was more fully developed in the mid-1990s under the *Ontario Curriculum (Grades K-8)* and in curriculum documents issued for the four-year high school program. The provincial curriculum specifies learning outcomes by subject and grade at all levels, and by program stream (Academic, Applied) at the secondary level. The emphasis on curriculum outcomes was expanded to incorporate provincial "standards" for acceptable and non-acceptable student performance on the expected outcomes. The standards are integral to the assessment and reporting of student performance on provincially standardized report cards. They are also used in marking and reporting of results on the province's standardized tests of student performance.

The standardization of curriculum in terms of expected student outcomes was accompanied by a policy shift regarding equity in student learning. The underlying ideology is that there are core learning expectations that all students are expected to achieve according to the same standards, and that equity is accomplished by ensuring that that happens. Flexibility and differentiation in programming and instruction should be based on evidence of student performance against the standards, not on student membership in sub-groups defined by gender, racial, cultural, or socio-economic characteristics. This ideology and approach to curriculum and instruction has proven difficult to maintain, particularly at the secondary level. Cumulative evidence of difficulty attaining the core academic expectations among certain groups of students has led the current Liberal government to consider the need to significantly modify the Academic versus Applied program curriculum, to provide alternate ways of

satisfying graduation exit requirements (e.g., the OSSLT) and to undertake increased investment in vocationally-focused secondary school education.

The current curriculum documents are very explicit about the desired learning outcomes for students, but say little about how teachers should teach. This contrasts with curriculum policies prior to 1990, which were grounded in theories of child development, teaching, and learning. It can be argued that the outcomes-based curriculum trend is aligned with an image of teachers as professionals who are capable of determining what works best for students, and who do not need to be "told" what teaching methods to use. This "professionalization" argument is countered by increased measures to hold teachers accountable for student learning, and to rationalize teachers' working conditions, such as reducing preparation time and increasing instructional time.

Increased accountability for student learning in relation to provincial curriculum expectations is another significant curriculum policy trend. This begins with the specification of specific subject and grade-level expectations and standards for student outcomes that create a uniform basis for assessing student performance. The coupling of the curriculum to a common report card linked to provincial curriculum expectations exemplifies another strand of the new performance accountability trend. The establishment of the Education Quality and Accountability Office, the administration of standardized tests of literacy and numeracy aligned with the provincial curriculum, and public dissemination of test results are further expressions of curriculum accountability. While schools are required to submit school improvement plans to EQAO, as of 2006 there were no provincially prescribed rewards or sanctions attached to school or teacher performance, as measured by student results. Beginning in 2004, however, the Ministry, in partnership with school boards, undertook a series of initiatives designed to provide intensive assistance directly to elementary schools where a majority of students persistently perform below provincial expectations.

This kind of government directed and sponsored intervention to improve student learning in specific schools represents a distinctly new policy strategy.

The new accountability trends began to hold students, not just teachers and schools, more accountable for their performance on the provincially prescribed curriculum expectations. Initially, this was limited to the Grade 10 Literacy Test, which must be successfully completed for students to earn their high school diploma. This makes the testing program high stakes for pupils, and challenges any rhetoric that standardized testing is mainly a mechanism for monitoring and assessing school performance for quality control and improvement purposes.

Under the Conservatives the locus of accountability remained focused on schools, teachers, and students. Beyond setting performance standards and establishing mechanisms for measuring local performance against those standards, the government did not hold itself accountable for the quality of student results. This changed under the Liberals. By setting provincial goals for student EQAO test performance (75% at acceptable standards by Grade 6) and high school completion (85% graduation rate by 2010), the government made itself accountable for providing the direction and resources to enable this to happen. Overall, the accountability system has evolved from its initial focus on monitoring the quality of student learning and school performance towards an emphasis on the systematic use of student performance data by school system personnel as a basis for identifying and addressing student learning needs. This shift in emphasis is commonly described as a focus on assessment *for* learning, in contrast to a focus on assessment *on* learning. The shift is clearly associated with the change in political power between the Conservative government that first installed the curriculum and accountability system and the Liberal government that followed. As described in this policy narrative the Liberal government has taken steps to refine the provincial testing program while increasing the pressure

on schools to attain targeted levels of student performance. At the same time, the government has invested heavily in developing the capacity (funds, resources, expertise, working conditions) of local school personnel to engage in ongoing learning-focused improvements aligned with accountability results.

## **Governance**

It is possible to imagine a scenario in which governing authorities set common standards and goals for performance, establish accountability systems for monitoring performance, create support systems to help service providers attain the goals, and maximize the flexibility for providers to discover how to achieve those ends. That was not the scenario to emerge in the outcomes and standards-focused Ontario education context in the 1990s. The trend was towards greater centralization and regulation with diminished support. As explained, the shift in policy after the Liberals took power in 2003 focused on strengthening the support system within the framework of standards and accountability.

The governance of education in Ontario changed significantly in the 1990s, particularly since school board amalgamation in 1997. The creation of school boards serving very large numbers of students, often over a wide geographic area, was coupled with a significant reduction and constraints on spending for central office and school board administration and support services to schools. The real and perceived "distance" between district offices and schools, and the resource capacity of district offices to monitor and support schools diminished. The direct ties between school board trustees and their constituencies were also diminished by the increased size of school districts.

As the links between district offices, boards, and schools were weakened by amalgamation, the province increased centralized control over funding and many areas of policy formerly delegated to local authorities, such as the length of the school year, teacher preparation time, class size, and school capacity (Bill 160, Bill 74). The Conservative government also went beyond mandating boards to develop policies to prescribing the content of those policies (e.g., *Safe Schools Act* consequences for student misbehaviour, *Quality in the Classroom Act* regulations for teacher evaluation). The intentions of these policies are to promote consistency across the province, but the by-product is increased central control.

The greatest challenge to the 150 year tradition of local governance of education through locally elected school board trustees was the takeover of three of the provinces' largest school boards by provincial authorities in 2002, and the replacement of administrative control under Ministry appointed "supervisors". Ostensively, this measure was taken in response to the decisions of trustees to submit deficit budgets in contravention of the law. The government's experiment with direct control by politically appointed administrators set a precedent with uncertain implications for the future of education governance. While the Liberals restored power to local trustees, issues of education governance remained in play, particularly because of the increased role and control of the central government over education funding levels and uses.

The introduction of School Councils and a Parent Advisory Council at the provincial level, could be seen as a kind of change in governance. However, the School Councils were only granted advisory powers, and their role in school governance has depended more on the principal's orientation to the School Council than on their legislated powers. There is no evidence to suggest that School Councils have led to more decentralized control over school management.

Another significant change in education governance linked to school board amalgamation was the creation of co-terminous French language public

and Catholic school districts. This responded to lobbying from Ontario's French language communities to gain more complete control over the planning and delivery of education to the province's French language minority communities.

### **Education Finances**

Education funding in Ontario was almost wholly centralized under Bill 160. The government took away the power of local school boards to raise funds by manipulating the education portion of local property taxes. This prevents the boards from topping off provincial grants for basic operating costs and regular programs, and inhibits their capacity to fund unique special programs and services keyed to locally determined needs and priorities. By centralizing control over the education levy on property taxes, however, the province was able to address issues of greater equality in per pupil funding for students, regardless of location, district type (public, Catholic, French or English), and property tax wealth. In addition to ensuring a more standardized per pupil funding policy, the government placed more regulations and accountability on the use of provincial grants. Failure to comply led the province, under the Conservative administration, to take over non-compliant boards and to appoint non-elected supervisors to administer board operations while finding ways to cut expenditures and balance the budgets. The Liberals acted quickly to remove the supervisors, but did not immediately take steps to alter the funding policies. By 2005-2006 several large school boards were again challenging the provincial funding policies and levels, and led again to government intervention to force certain school boards to find ways to cut and balance their annual budgets.

The centralization, standardization, accountability and regulation of education funding from the province has been a thorn of contention since the passage of Bill 160 in 1997. While some boards benefited from the change (Catholic, French language), the prohibitions on raising local funds, government measures designed to reduce overall funding for 'non-classroom costs' (as defined in policy), and government allocations tied to "stable" funding rather than inflation, led to persistent cries of underfunding from the boards. The constraints on local authority to raise supplemental funds have limited the capacity of boards to independently respond to salary demands of teachers. The Conservative government in the 1990s is remembered as having made drastic reductions in funding for public education. It is widely acknowledged that the Liberal government that followed made adequate funding for public education a priority, and that the government has substantially increased its education budget. Taking inflation into account, however, the system has not fully recuperated from the funding cuts under the previous administration. Furthermore, critics argue that local use of much of the new funding under the Liberal regime is highly regulated and targeted for specific Ministry mandated or sponsored policy and program interventions. In short, the education finance system in the province has become increasingly regulated as well as centralized.

The funding situation stimulated the emergence of an alternative system of monitoring the state of funding for public education that does not depend on government control of data about the costs of education at the local level. A parent lobby group, People for Education, was formed in the context of the disputes surrounding the passage of Bill 160. This group began carrying out and publishing the results of annual surveys of elementary and secondary across the province. The surveys inquire about many issues, such as class size, support personnel and services, library services, textbook availability, school budgets, how much money local parent groups and teachers are contributing to supplement provincial funding, and how these supplemental funds are used.

The evidence from these surveys has contradicted government claims that the system is adequately funded for required education programs and services, and has revealed continuing inequities in funding at the school level, as wealthy parent communities have greater capacity to supplement school funds.

### **Teacher Professionalization**

The establishment of the Ontario College of Teachers could be viewed as a significant step towards the professionalization of teachers. It is not evident, however, that teachers gained increased professional autonomy and control as a result of the College. This is not to diminish the College's accomplishments, such as the development of *Ethical Standards* and *Standards of Practice*, and the establishment and implementation of a teacher education program accreditation process. Perceived gains in professional autonomy and control, however, were offset by government policy measures that superseded or constrained the College's capacity to shape the nature and context of teacher professionalism in the province. The *Stability and Excellence in Education Act (2001)* and the *Quality in the Classroom Act (2002)* that mandated the qualifying test for initial certification, recertification linked to mandatory continuing professional learning, and the standardization of teacher appraisal processes were government policy initiatives. They did not originate as OCT proposals, and the OCT went on record as opposed to some elements of those policies. The government, however, designated OCT as the implementation agency responsible for managing the Qualifying Test and the recertification process. While the Liberal government abolished the qualifying test and repealed the recertification process adopted by the Conservatives, they did not abandon the notion of entry requirements beyond the B.Ed., nor or teacher recertification. This was specifically manifested in government policy mandating and regulating a uniform two year teacher induction process for new teachers. While organized

teacher groups welcomed the promise of additional support for the development and retention of beginning teachers, implementation of the program and the associated appraisal process remained under the control of school and school district authorities, not in the hands of teachers themselves through the College.

The establishment of the Ontario College of Teachers created a rift in teacher leadership. OCT took over powers that had been previously carried out by the teacher unions (e.g., control over disciplinary proceedings) and challenged the chief spokesperson role of the unions on teachers' behalf. Initially, the unions tried unsuccessfully to gain control of the College leadership by running a slate of candidates for the College's governing board. Now the organizations co-exist, but they do not act as partners in their dealings with teachers, school boards, and the Ministry. In terms of teacher professionalization, it is also noteworthy that in accordance with the original legislation, non-teachers appointed to the OCT governing board outnumbered the certified teachers elected by its members. The legislation governing the role and structure of the OCT came under review when the Liberals took power. As part of Bill 78, the government restructured the composition of the governing council of the OCT so that the majority of members would be elected by teachers, rather than appointed by the government. As of 2006 it remained uncertain what consequences this might have on the work and influence of the College on policies affecting teacher professionalization.

Since Bill 160, the role of the Ontario teacher federations became more narrowly restricted to labour advocacy. Opportunity for teacher participation in policy development and matters associated with teachers' professional status shifted from the federations to the College of Teachers. The power of the unions was further eroded by the changes to the provincial funding formula and by regulations over teacher working conditions invoked in Bill 160, Bill 74, and Bill 28. Centralization of funding and the removal of local board authority to raise additional money through property tax adjustments severely constrained the

unions' capacity to bargain increased wages and benefits. Legislation to control things like class size, preparation time, instructional time, and the number of instructional days by provincial regulation, rather than by contract negotiation removed much of the traditional working conditions content of collective bargaining from local teacher union control. The Conservative governments' efforts to delimit the power of the unions through more centralized control and regulation of funding and working conditions resulted in an overall reduction in teacher autonomy in the province that has not been fundamentally offset by the presence and actions of the College of Teachers. Although the Liberal government adopted a more cooperative approach to working with organized teacher groups, they did not relax these more centralized controls over funding, working conditions, and local bargaining rights. The Liberals took a further step towards centralization and standardization of teacher contracts by entering into direct conversations with leaders from the provincial-level teacher federations about increases in teacher compensation and the term of collective agreements, and by linking the release of additional funds for programs and resources to school board compliance with the provincially set guidelines for local contracts. This represented a further erosion of traditional local bargaining rights and power, and may lead to an eventual policy shift to province-level contract negotiations.

In this narrative we have charted the major education policy initiatives undertaken by successive governments in the Province of Ontario from 1990-2006 that pertain to the elementary and secondary public education system. In our description and analysis, we have attempted to show that certain policy trends have persisted despite changes in provincial political leadership from New Democrats to Conservatives to Liberals over this 16 year period. These include centralization of finances and governance, the adoption of common results-oriented standards for teaching and learning, increased regulation of teaching as a profession, increased accountability for the quality of student

performance through systems of standardized testing, and attention to school safety. Notwithstanding the consistency in these trends, different governments have not necessarily taken the same approach to policy development and implementation. These differences in approach are most clearly evident in the shifts that occurred following the assumption of power by the Liberals after eight years under a majority Conservative government. The Conservative government emphasized the reduction and rationalization of education expenditures, increased government control over teachers' working conditions and compensation, and quality control through increased accountability for local spending and student learning outcomes in relation to centrally prescribed goals and standards. Publicly this government conveyed little confidence in the opinions of teachers as to directions for improvement in the education system, and invested more in developing a provincial accountability system than in developing the professional and material capacity of local educators to meet the provincial expectations placed upon them. The significant shift that began to take shape under the Liberal government was marked by a new willingness of government authorities to engage education professionals in defining the problems and solutions that need to be addressed, to assume joint responsibility for student success, and to invest significantly in developing the capacity of education professionals, schools and school districts to achieve provincial goals. In effect, the Liberal government increased the performance and accountability expectations for schools and school boards, but coupled this pressure with substantially more and varied types of support to assist with the accomplishment of provincially mandated goals for performance and improvement. This recent policy investment in local capacity building augmented but did not fundamentally change the long term ongoing provincial education policy trends towards centralization, standardization, accountability and regulation.

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**Provincial Authorities Responsible for Education. 1990 – 2004**

<b>Party: Premier</b>	<b>Minister</b>	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Policy/Bill/ Reform/ Act/Report</b>
<p><b>Liberal</b></p> <p>Dalton McGuinty 2003-present</p>	<p>Hon. Kathleen Wynne 2006-present</p> <p>Hon. Sandra Pupatello 2006</p> <p>Hon. Gerard Kennedy 2003-2006</p>	<p>Ministry of Education</p>	<p>An Act to amend the Education Act respecting pupil learning to the age of 18 and equivalent learning</p> <p>Bill 78 An Act to Amend the Education Act, the Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996 and certain other statutes relating to education</p> <p>Bill 82, Professional Learning Program Cancellation Act, 2005</p> <p>Ontario Literacy &amp; Numeracy Secretariat, 2004</p>
<p><b>Progressive Conservatives</b></p> <p>Ernie L. Eves 2002-2003</p>	<p>Hon. Elizabeth Witmer 2002-2003</p>	<p>Ministry of Education</p>	<p>Bill 28 Back to School and Educational and Provincial Negotiations Act, 2003</p> <p><i>Investing in Public Education</i> (Rozanski Report), 2002</p>
<p><b>Progressive Conservatives</b></p> <p>Michael D. Harris 1995-2002</p>	<p>Hon. Janet Lynne Ecker 1999-2002</p>	<p>Ministry of Education</p>	<p>Bill 45 Equity in Education Tax Credit, 2001 (private school tuition tax credits)</p> <p>Quality in the Classroom Act, 2001 (<i>Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test</i>)</p> <p><i>Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession</i>, 2000</p> <p><i>Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession</i>, 1999</p> <p>Bill 80 Stability and Excellence in Education Act, 2001 (teacher recertification continuing education policy)</p>

	<p>Hon. David Johnson 1997-1999</p> <p>Hon. John Snobelen 1995-1997</p>		<p>Bill 74 Education Accountability Act, 2000</p> <p>Bill 81 Safe Schools Act, 2000</p> <p>Secondary School Reform, 1999-2003</p> <p><i>The Ontario Curriculum (Grades 1-8), 1997</i></p> <p>Bill 160 Education Quality Improvement Act, 1997</p> <p>Bill 104 Fewer School Boards Act, 1997</p> <p>Bill 31 Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996</p> <p>Bill 30 Education Quality and Accountability Office Act, 1996</p> <p><i>The Common Sense Revolution. 1995</i></p>
<p><b>New Democrat</b> Robert K. Rae 1990-1995</p>	<p>Hon. David Cooke 1993-1995</p> <p>Hon. Tony Silipo 1991-1993</p>	<p>Ministry of Education and Training</p>	<p>Policy/Program Memorandum No. 122 (School Councils)</p> <p><i>The Common Curriculum, 1995</i></p> <p><i>For the Love of Learning: Report of the Royal Commission on Learning, 1994</i></p> <p>Politique d'aménagement linguistique, 1994 (Language planning)</p> <p>Investir dans l'animation culturelle, 1994</p> <p>Actualisation linguistique en français/Perfectionnement du français, 1994</p> <p>Policy/Program Memorandum No. 115, 1994 (Destreaming of Grade 9)</p> <p>Violence-Free Schools Act, 1994</p> <p><i>Antiracism &amp; Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards: Guidelines for Policy</i></p>

	Hon. Marion Boyd 1990-1991		<i>Development &amp; Implementation,</i> 1993 <i>Transition Years, Grades 7,8 &amp;9,</i> 1992
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