

Occasional Teachers' Access to  
Professional Learning

Final Report for the Elementary Teachers'  
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## ***TABLE OF CONTENTS***

<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>15</b>
DEMOGRAPHICS .....	15
EDUCATION .....	15
WORK .....	16
FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	17
INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	18
SUMMARY .....	19
Implications .....	19
<b>STUDY PURPOSE .....</b>	<b>21</b>
OCCASIONAL TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	21
STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....	22
Focus groups.....	22
Online survey.....	23
STUDY FINDINGS.....	23
<b>GENERAL OCCASIONAL TEACHER POPULATION.....</b>	<b>24</b>
DEMOGRAPHICS .....	24
Age.....	24
Gender .....	24
Heritage .....	25
Language.....	25
EDUCATION .....	26
Year degree granted .....	26
Place degree was granted .....	26
Language of instruction .....	26
WORK .....	27
Years of occasional teaching .....	27
Current employment status .....	27
Area certified to teach.....	28

Areas occasional teachers taught the most last year.....	28
Teaching in areas not certified to teach.....	29
Number of school boards.....	30
Permanent teaching contract.....	30
Location of permanent teaching .....	31
Reason for leaving .....	32
Children .....	32
Care provider .....	32
Intent in five years.....	32
FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	33
No professional learning .....	34
Professional learning delivery .....	34
Reason for participating in formal professional learning.....	35
Topic of the formal professional learning .....	35
Further formal professional learning .....	36
Funding for formal professional learning.....	37
Time of day.....	37
Reasons for inconvenience.....	38
Convenient timing .....	38
What month .....	39
Travel .....	39
Learning about formal professional learning opportunities .....	39
INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	40
Most prevalent .....	40
Mentoring.....	40
Focus of mentoring.....	41
Frequency of mentoring.....	41
Mode of communication with mentor .....	42
Online sources .....	42
Types of online sources .....	42
Content of online source .....	43
Frequency of consultation.....	43

Virtual learning community .....	44
Support for a virtual learning community .....	44
<b>RETIREEES .....</b>	<b>45</b>
DEMOGRAPHICS .....	45
Age .....	45
Gender .....	45
Heritage .....	46
Language .....	46
EDUCATION .....	46
Year degree granted .....	46
Place degree was granted .....	46
Language of instruction .....	47
WORK .....	47
Years of occasional teaching .....	47
Current employment status .....	47
Area certified to teach .....	47
Areas retirees taught the most last year .....	48
Teaching in areas not certified to teach .....	49
Number of school boards .....	50
Permanent teaching contract .....	50
FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	51
No professional learning .....	51
Reason for participating in professional learning experience .....	52
Topic of the formal professional learning .....	53
Further formal professional learning .....	54
Funding for formal professional learning .....	55
Time of day .....	55
Convenient timing .....	55
What month .....	56
Travel .....	56
Learning about formal professional learning opportunities .....	57
INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	57

Most prevalent .....	57
Mentoring.....	58
Online sources .....	58
Virtual learning community.....	58
<b>NEW ENTRANTS .....</b>	<b>59</b>
DEMOGRAPHICS .....	59
Age.....	59
Gender .....	59
Heritage .....	60
Language.....	60
EDUCATION .....	61
Year degree granted .....	61
Place degree was granted .....	61
Language of instruction .....	62
WORK .....	62
Years of occasional teaching .....	62
Current employment status .....	62
Area certified to teach.....	63
Areas new entrants taught the most last year.....	63
Teaching in areas not certified to teach.....	64
Number of school boards.....	64
FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	65
No professional learning .....	65
Reason for participating in formal professional learning.....	65
Topic of the formal professional learning .....	66
Further formal professional learning .....	67
Funding for formal professional learning.....	67
Time of day .....	68
Convenient timing .....	68
What month .....	68
Travel .....	69
Learning about formal professional learning opportunities .....	69

INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	70
Mentoring.....	70
Focus of mentoring.....	71
Frequency of mentoring .....	72
Mode of communication with mentor .....	72
Online sources .....	73
Types of online sources .....	73
Content of online sources .....	73
Frequency of consultation.....	74
Virtual learning community.....	74
Support for virtual learning community.....	74
<b>CAREER OCCASIONAL TEACHERS .....</b>	<b>75</b>
DEMOGRAPHICS .....	76
Age.....	76
Gender .....	76
Heritage .....	77
Language.....	77
EDUCATION .....	77
Year degree granted .....	77
Place degree was granted .....	78
Language of instruction .....	78
WORK .....	79
Years of occasional teaching .....	79
Current employment status .....	79
Area certified to teach.....	80
Areas career occasional teachers taught the most last year .....	80
Teaching in areas not certified to teach.....	81
Number of school boards.....	81
Permanent teaching contract.....	82
Reason for leaving .....	82
Children .....	83
Care provider .....	83

Intent in five years.....	83
<b>FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....</b>	<b>83</b>
No professional learning .....	83
Reason for participating in formal professional learning .....	84
Topic of the formal professional learning .....	85
Further formal professional learning .....	85
Funding for formal professional learning .....	86
Time of day .....	86
Convenient Timing.....	87
What month .....	87
Travel .....	88
Learning about formal professional learning opportunities .....	88
<b>INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....</b>	<b>88</b>
Most prevalent .....	89
Mentoring.....	89
Focus of mentoring.....	90
Mode of communication with mentor .....	90
Online resources.....	90
Types of online sources .....	91
Content of online source .....	91
Frequency of consultation.....	92
Virtual learning community.....	92
Support for a virtual learning community .....	93
<b>INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED OCCASIONAL TEACHERS .....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED OCCASIONAL TEACHERS - WESTERN COUNTRIES .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS .....</b>	<b>95</b>
Age.....	95
Gender .....	95
Heritage .....	96
Language.....	96
<b>EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>96</b>
Year degree granted .....	96

A poor response rate made it impossible to determine a meaningful range for the year IETs received their teacher education degree.....	96
Place degree was granted .....	97
Language of instruction.....	97
WORK .....	98
Years of occasional teaching .....	98
Current employment status .....	98
Area certified to teach.....	99
Areas IETs (Western) taught the most last year .....	99
Teaching in areas not certified to teach.....	100
Number of school boards.....	100
Permanent teaching contract.....	101
Reason for leaving .....	101
Children .....	101
Care provider .....	101
Intent in five years.....	101
FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	102
No professional learning .....	102
Reason for participating in formal professional learning.....	102
Topic of the formal professional learning .....	103
Further formal professional learning .....	104
Funding for formal professional learning.....	104
Time of day .....	105
What month .....	105
Travel.....	106
Learn about formal professional learning opportunities .....	106
INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	107
Most prevalent .....	107
Mentoring.....	107
Focus of mentoring.....	108
Frequency of mentoring.....	108
Mode of communication .....	109



Online resources.....	109
Types of online sources .....	109
Content of online source .....	110
Frequency of consultation.....	110
Virtual learning community.....	111
Support for a virtual learning community .....	111
<b>INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED OCCASIONAL TEACHERS –.....</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>NON-WESTERN .....</b>	<b>112</b>
DEMOGRAPHICS.....	112
FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	112
INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	113
<b>TEACHERS OF THE NORTH .....</b>	<b>114</b>
DEMOGRAPHICS.....	114
REASON FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING.....	114
FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	115
INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING .....	115
Independent reading.....	115
Networking.....	116
Mentoring.....	116
Using websites.....	116
Virtual learning community.....	117
CHALLENGES.....	117
<b>APPENDIX A: NORTHERN ONTARIO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD MAPS.....</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: OCCASIONAL TEACHER access to professional learning SURVEY .....</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>144</b>

## ***LIST OF FIGURES***

Figure 1. General Occasional Teacher Population - Age.....	24
Figure 2. General Occasional Teacher Population - Gender.....	24
Figure 3. General Occasional Teacher Population - Heritage.....	25
Figure 4. General Population Occasional Teachers: 2004-2009 Graduation Year. ....	26
Figure 5. General Population - Years of Occasional Teaching. ....	27
Figure 6. General Occasional Teacher Population - Current Employment Status.....	27
Figure 7. General Occasional Teacher Population - Areas Certified to Teach.....	28
Figure 8a and b. Divisions and Subject/Discipline Occasional Teachers Taught the Most Last Year.....	28
Figure 9a and b. General Occasional Teacher Population - Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach.....	29
Figure 10. General Occasional Teacher Population - Number of School Boards. ....	30
Figure 11. General Occasional Teacher Population - Years of Permanent Teaching. ....	30
Figure 12a and b. General Occasional Teacher Population - Permanent Teaching Within and Outside Canada.....	31
Figure 13. Teachers who taught Permanently Less than 5 Years - Reason for Leaving. ..	32
Figure 14. General Occasional Teacher Population - Formal Professional Learning Participation.....	33
Figure 15. General Occasional Teacher Population - Reason for Participating in Formal Professional Learning.....	35
Figure 16. General Occasional Teacher Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning.....	36
Figure 17. General Occasional Teacher Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning.....	37
Figure 18. General Occasional Teacher Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred.....	37
Figure 19. General Occasional Teacher Population - Reasons Formal Professional Learning Times were Inconvenient.....	38
Figure 20. General Occasional Teacher Population - Convenient Time for Formal Professional Learning.....	38
Figure 21. General Occasional Teacher Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation. ....	39
Figure 22. General Occasional Teaching Population - Learning about Formal Professional Learning Opportunities. ....	39
Figure 23. General Occasional Teacher Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning.	40
Figure 24. General Occasional Teacher Population - Focus of Mentoring. ....	41

Figure 25. General Occasional Teacher Population - Frequency of Mentoring. ....	41
Figure 26. General Occasional Teacher Population - Mode of Communication with Mentor. ....	42
Figure 27. General Occasional Teacher Population - Types of Online Sources. ....	42
Figure 28. General Occasional Teacher Population - Content of Online Sources. ....	43
Figure 29. General Occasional Teacher Population - Frequency of Online Consultation. ....	43
Figure 30. General Occasional Teaching Population - Support for Virtual Learning Community. ....	44
Figure 31. Retiree Population - Age. ....	45
Figure 32. Retiree Population - Year Degree was Granted. ....	46
Figure 33. Retiree Population - Area Certified to Teach. ....	47
Figure 34a and b. Divisions and Subject/Discipline Retirees Taught the Most Last Year. ....	48
Figure 35. Retiree Population - Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach. ....	49
Figure 36. Retiree Population - Number of School Boards. ....	50
Figure 37. Retiree Population - Number of Permanent Teaching Years. ....	50
Figure 38. Retiree Population - Reason for Participating in Formal Professional Learning. .....	52
Figure 39. Retiree Population - Topic of Formal Professional Learning. ....	53
Figure 40. Retiree Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning. ..	54
Figure 41. Retiree Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning. ....	55
Figure 42. Retiree Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred. ....	55
Figure 43. Retiree Population - Inconvenient Months for Formal Professional Learning. ....	56
Figure 44. Retiree Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation. ....	56
Figure 45. Retiree Population - Learning about Formal Professional Learning Opportunities. ....	57
Figure 46. Retiree Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning. ....	57
Figure 47. New Entrant Population - Age. ....	59
Figure 48. New Entrant Population - Heritage. ....	60
Figure 49. New Entrants Population - Year Degree Granted. ....	61
Figure 50a and b. New Entrant Population - Place Degree Granted. ....	61
Figure 51. New Entrant Population - Years of Occasional Teaching. ....	62
Figure 52. New Entrant Population - Area Certified to Teach. ....	63
Figure 53. Divisions and Subject/Discipline New Entrants Taught the Most Last Year. ....	63
Figure 54a and b. New Entrant Population - Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach. ....	64
Figure 55. New Entrant Population - Number of School Boards. ....	64

Figure 56. New Entrant Population - Reason for Participating in Formal Professional Learning.....	65
Figure 57. New Entrant Population - Topic of Formal Professional Learning. ....	66
Figure 58. New Entrant Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning.....	67
Figure 59. New Entrant Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning. ....	67
Figure 60. New Entrant Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred. ....	68
Figure 61. New Entrant Population - Inconvenient Months for Formal Professional Learning.....	68
Figure 62. New Entrant Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation. ....	69
Figure 63. New Entrant Population - Learning about Formal Professional Learning Opportunities. ....	69
Figure 64. New Entrant Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning. ....	70
Figure 65. New Entrant Population - Focus of Mentoring.....	71
Figure 66. New Entrant Population - Frequency of Mentoring. ....	72
Figure 67. New Entrant Population - Mode of Communication with Mentor. ....	72
Figure 68. New Entrant Population - Types of Online Sources.....	73
Figure 69. New Entrant Population - Content of Online Sources. ....	73
Figure 70. New Entrant Population - Frequency of Online Consultation. ....	74
Figure 71. Career Occasional Population - Age. ....	76
Figure 72. Career Occasional Population - Heritage.....	77
Figure 73. Career Occasional Population - Place Degree Granted. ....	78
Figure 74. Career Occasional Population - Years of Occasional Teaching.....	79
Figure 75. Career Occasional Population - Current Employment Status.....	79
Figure 76. Career Occasional Population - Area Certified to Teach. ....	80
Figure 77. Areas Career Occasionals Taught the Most Last Year. ....	80
Figure 78a and b. Career Occasional Population - Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach.....	81
Figure 79. Career Occasional Population - Number of School Boards. ....	81
Figure 80. Career Occasional Population - Years of Permanent Teaching. ....	82
Figure 81. Career Occasional Population - Reason for Leaving Permanent Position. ....	82
Figure 82. Career Occasional Population - Reasons for Participating in Formal Professional Learning.....	84
Figure 83. Career Occasional Population - Topic of Formal Professional Learning.....	85
Figure 84. Career Occasional Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning.....	85

Figure 85. Career Occasional Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning.	86
Figure 86. Career Occasional Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred.	86
Figure 87. Career Occasional Population - Inconvenient Months for Formal Professional Learning.	87
Figure 88. Career Occasional Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation.	88
Figure 89. Career Occasional Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning.	89
Figure 90. Career Occasional Population - Focus of Mentoring.	90
Figure 91. Career Occasional Population - Types of Online Sources.	91
Figure 92. Career Occasional Population - Content of Online Sources.	91
Figure 93. Career Occasional Population - Frequency of Online Consultation.	92
Figure 94. Career Occasional Population - Support for Virtual Learning Community.	93
Figure 95. Western IEOT Population - Age.	95
Figure 96. Western IEOT Population - Heritage.	96
Figure 97. Western IEOT Population - Place Degree Granted.	97
Figure 98. Western IEOT Population - Years of Occasional Teaching.	98
Figure 99. Western IEOT Population - Area Certified to Teach.	99
Figure 100a and b. Divisions and Subject/Discipline Western IEOTs Taught the Most Last Year.	99
Figure 101a and b. Western IEOT Population - Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach.	100
Figure 102. Western IEOT Population - Number of School Boards.	100
Figure 103. Western IEOT Population - Reason for Leaving Permanent Position.	101
Figure 104. Western IEOT Population - Reason for Participating in Formal Professional Learning.	102
Figure 105. Western IEOT Population - Topic of Formal Professional Learning.	103
Figure 106. Western IEOT Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning.	104
Figure 107. Western IEOT Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning.	104
Figure 108. Western IEOT Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred.	105
Figure 109. Western IEOT Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation.	106
Figure 110. Western IEOT Population - Learning about Formal Professional Learning Opportunities.	106
Figure 111. Western IEOT Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning.	107
Figure 112. Western IEOT Population - Focus of Mentoring.	108

Figure 113. Western IEOT Population - Frequency of Mentoring. ....	108
Figure 114. Western IEOT Population - Mode of Communication with Mentor. ....	109
Figure 115. Western IEOT Population - Types of Online Sources.....	109
Figure 116. Western IEOT Population - Content of Online Source. ....	110
Figure 117. Western - Frequency of Online Consultation. ....	110
Figure 118. Western IEOT Population - Support for Virtual Learning Community. ....	111

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## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

The purpose of the study was to explore how occasional teachers engaged in professional learning. More specifically, it sought to examine the strategies occasional teachers used to participate in professional learning and the challenges occasional teachers experienced when attempting to engage in professional learning. This study employed mixed methods: 8 focus group sessions across the province of Ontario and an online survey. Four hundred and forty survey links were requested and sent out to potential participants; 371 surveys were actually completed. Findings in this report are organized into 6 areas. First presented are the responses of the entire occasional teacher population that participated. The data are then broken down into five more specific categories to provide more detailed information about occasional teachers who are retirees, new entrants, career occasional teachers, internationally educated occasional teachers and teachers in the north. This executive summary includes a brief description of the demographic makeup of occasional teachers, education and general work history of the occasional teacher workforce who are members of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO). A general synopsis of occasional teachers' formal and informal professional learning is presented followed by some general recommendations.

### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

The occasional teachers who responded to the online survey ranged from 22 to 69 years of age. While the average was 40 years, approximately 40% of the respondents were between 25-39 years of age. New entrants over-represent younger teachers in the profession. Retirees represented older teachers in the profession. Overall the ratio of men to women was approximately 1:9 and this was rather consistent throughout the various groupings.

In sum, the general occasional teacher workforce tends to be fairly young (under 40 years of age), female, speak English as their first language and mainly identify with the British Isles (England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales) (42%), Western European (France, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, Greece) (18%), and Canadian (19%) heritage.

### **EDUCATION**

For 275 participants who responded, the range, in years, for completion of a teacher education program was 1960 - 2010: a spread of fifty years. A little more than half (54%) completed their teacher education degree between the 2004 and 2009. New entrants, for the most part, graduated more recently than occasional teachers from the other groups, particularly retirees.



The majority of the occasional teachers (78%) completed their teacher education degree in Canada, with most completing an education program in the province of Ontario (88%). Seventy-six (22%) of occasional teachers responded that they received their teacher education outside of Canada, with 57% of the seventy-six from the United States, 18% from India, 11% from Australia, and 9% from the United Kingdom.

Language of instruction for the teacher education program was overwhelmingly English (98%), with French at 2%.

In sum, the majority of occasional teachers were educated in Ontario in an English language program with a little more than half receiving their teacher education degree within the past seven years.

## **WORK**

Almost 90% of the respondents have been occasional teachers for ten years or less, and of those teaching for ten years or less, the majority are within their first two years of the teaching profession (mainly new entrants). However, many retirees have been teaching occasionally for five years or less as well. Of the 351 that responded, 255 (73%) indicated that they intend to pursue a full-time teaching position within the next five years. Almost three-fourths (71%) of occasional teachers indicated that they work on a day-to-day (known as daily) basis. The remaining twenty-nine percentage were either on maternity leave, federation release, had completed the allowed number of days to teach as a retired teacher, or worked in different employment combinations such as a long-term occasional teaching position, or were working in a combined work arrangement (combined in the sense that they work on a daily occasional basis in addition to holding an LTO or part-time permanent contract).

Almost 70% of respondents were certified to teach primary/junior level. This is not surprising as all participants were members of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO). Most participants indicated that they taught mainly in the areas of primary/junior (70%) and in the areas of French (4%) and special education (4%). Approximately 30% of the occasional teacher population do *not* teach in areas for which they are not certified to teach. For those who did teach in areas they are *not* certified, they did so at the intermediate level (18%) and often in French (17%).

In sum, the majority of the occasional teachers (90%) have been teaching occasionally for less than ten years, mainly in the areas of primary/junior (70%) and in the subject areas of French (4%) and special education (4%). Many occasional teachers teach in areas they are not qualified to teach and do so mainly at the intermediate level (18%) and in the subject of French (17%).

## FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning for this study was defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (e.g. workshops, additional qualifications (AQ) courses).

Approximately 80% of respondents indicated that they had participated in some form of formal professional development. There were many reasons why occasional teachers participated in formal professional learning. Some of these included: social/professional networking, to gain additional qualifications, being paid to participate, to improve their teaching practice, to build their résumé, for personal interest, because it is negotiated as part of the collective agreement, as a requirement in order to apply for jobs, and to learn about board/ministry initiatives and changes.

Occasional teachers looked for a number of topics when engaging in formal professional development. These topics included: classroom management, instructional strategies, contact procedures, technology and various subjects and disciplines. Occasional teachers also provided a number of different motives for why they would continue with further formal professional learning. The most prevalent motivations were: being paid for time in formal professional learning, eligibility for an increase in pay, eligibility for improved qualifications, preferential access to teaching jobs, free or low-cost fees for formal professional learning opportunities, more convenient locations and time, more relevant/interesting topics, and current information on government initiatives that are not familiar to the occasional teacher.

Approximately half (46%) of occasional teachers paid for their own formal professional learning opportunities. This, however, was not consistent across the different groups of occasional teachers. Retirees as a group seemed to participate less in formal professional learning that required them to pay, whereas new entrants were more willing to pay for their formal professional learning.

It appeared that much of the formal professional learning occurred after school (47%). Occasional teachers appeared to be satisfied with this arrangement but there were a substantial number of them (50%) that would have preferred if the formal professional learning occurred during the school day.

Occasional teachers strongly agreed that April was the best time of the year for formal professional learning. December, June, July and August were considered the least suitable time of the year for formal professional learning.

Travel associated with attending formal professional learning was a concern for teachers in the north. It was also a concern for other occasional teachers across the province, but

for different reasons. Teachers of the north in the focus groups described scenarios where after school formal professional learning in one community is only accessible to those occasional teachers in that particular community. Many felt that it was not worthwhile to fly or drive long distances for a formal professional learning opportunity. Others in rural communities mentioned road conditions and weather as a factor in whether or not they would attend formal professional learning. And lastly, teachers in urban centres described their frustration of trying to attend formal professional learning opportunities while travelling on public transit or navigating heavy traffic.

## **INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Informal professional learning for this study was defined as any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (e.g. learning to speak a language, playing a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

When asked about the types of informal learning in which they engaged, the general occasional teacher workforce reported: conversations with other teacher and friends (27%); learning from resource material such as books, professional journals and academic journals (23%); resources collected while working as an occasional teacher (21%); using material from the internet (21%); and volunteering in classrooms (8%).

Participants were asked if someone mentored them, either formally or informally, with regard to occasional teaching. Of the 354 (95%) that responded to this question, 70% indicated that they were mentored either formally or informally. When asked if this was part of a formal mentorship program, less than half the people who indicated yes to mentoring responded. This is not surprising as almost half (45%) of the respondents were teachers new to the Ontario education system and could potentially be eligible for the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). Most of the mentoring centred on instructional strategies (28%) and classroom management (27%).

When questioned about using online sources, 85% of the 351 participants responded that they did consult online sources. Some of the online resources and programs occasional teachers used included blogs, email, podcasts, webcasts, websites, listserv, social networks, online journals and discussion boards. Eighty-three percent of occasional teachers were willing to participate in a virtual learning community, but indicated a number of items that had to be considered for their continued engagement: formal sessions on how to use the technology; content had to be relevant to occasional teaching; the virtual learning community had to be easy to access; there had to be some level of confidentiality (perhaps a secured site); the information shared had to be current; the responses had to be credible; and there had to be some moderation to ensure that the site does not become a “social networking” site.

## SUMMARY

While most occasional teachers engage in some form of formal professional learning, most of their professional learning comes from informal learning.

### *Implications*

- Occasional teachers, as a group, require professional learning that is specific to their work situation.
- Formal professional learning opportunities should occur during the day and after the school day.
- The best time of the year to hold formal professional learning is April.
- Formal professional learning opportunities should be offered at a reasonable cost.
- Better methods of communication within and among the occasional teacher workforce will help occasional teachers with their access to professional learning opportunities. Some districts are required to have news bulletin boards visible in the staff room for occasional teachers. Not one person in the focus groups or on the survey indicated that they learned about potential professional learning through this communication strategy.
- In general, the content of the formal professional learning should be useful to occasional teachers so that the lessons learned can be maximized across a number of grade levels and/or subject areas.
  - For example:
    - Intermediate division
    - French
    - Technology
- The occasional teacher workforce is not a homogenous group, but rather composed of a number of sub-groups. Each of these groups have unique professional learning needs, motivation for participating in professional learning and circumstances that bring specific challenges. Each group, therefore, employs different strategies to gain access to professional learning. The various groups of occasional teachers do seek out and want different additional formal professional learning opportunities.
  - In general:
    - Internationally educated occasional teachers (IEOTs) – both Western and non-Western – would benefit learning more about how the education system works in Ontario and about the content of the Ontario curriculum.
    - IEOTs (non-Western) would benefit with more attention to cultural difference issues and information about the school climate of Ontario schools.

- Career occasional teachers would benefit most from information sessions that contained current changes in the Ontario education system and new ministry initiatives.
- New entrants require the most support and seek this support on a number of fronts: classroom management, instructional strategies, accessing actual work, networking, and subject and discipline content. Formal mentoring program specifically for new entrants would be useful.
- Retirees who teach in their area of expertise and within the same school district that they held their full-time position require little formal professional support other than keeping current with changes in school and ministry initiatives as they arise.
- Teachers of the North require special consideration in terms of more financial support to participate in formal professional learning.
- More time and effort is needed to create resources and supports online for occasional teachers. These supports can include:
  - Websites dedicated to occasional teaching
  - Blogs that focus on issues around occasional teaching
  - Learning groups supported by recognised institutes that can moderate the interactions

## ***STUDY PURPOSE***

The purpose of the study was to explore how occasional teachers engaged in professional learning. More specifically, it sought to examine the strategies occasional teachers used to participate in professional learning and the challenges occasional teachers experienced when attempting to engage in professional learning.

### **OCCASIONAL TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Presently, there is a sizable contingent workforce of non-permanent teachers working in school systems in the Western world (Hanawar, 2007; Morrison, 1999a, 1999b; McIntyre, 2005, 2006). In Canada, one-fifth of the teacher workforce is non-permanent teachers (Work and Life-long Learning (WALL), 2005). In Ontario, the number of teachers working in non-permanent teaching arrangements (hereafter referred to as occasional teachers) is growing substantially. Of new graduates (2006-07), less than one in three will acquire full-time permanent teaching in their first year. It is estimated that it will take teachers, new to the system, as long as three years to receive a permanent contract, if they ever do (Anthony, de Korte & Kim, 2008; McIntyre, 2006; 2007).

Occasional teachers have been described as the 'educational bridge' when the classroom teacher is absent (National Education Association, 2003). Yet, support for this group of teachers is limited. Previous research has shown that occasional teachers teach and manage classrooms in different ways than full-time permanent teachers (Jennings, 2001; Pollock, 2008). Occasional teachers have limited access to formal professional learning, rely heavily on informal learning to support their work and require skills and knowledge that is different from those teachers in full-time permanent teaching positions (Pollock, 2006, 2008, 2009). Occasional teachers are motivated to seek out informal and formal modes of learning as current professional learning opportunities do not always meet their specific professional development needs (Pollock, 2008).

A common view of teaching as a profession is that it requires expert knowledge (Clarke & Newman, 1997; Furlong, Barton, & Whitty, 2000). It also involves continual learning and application of this expert knowledge, often referred to as continuing professional development (CPD). Day and Sachs (2004) describe the term broadly as "all the activities in which teachers engage during the course of a career which are designed to enhance their work" (p. 3). Competing (and complementary) models of CPD have attempted to capture the complex phenomena of on-going professional learning of teachers (Cochrane-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Hargreaves, 1994; Jackson, 1968; Lieberman, 1996), but none of these models are appropriate for occasional teachers because of their work arrangement. Occasional teachers have limited access to formal professional development and when they do, it is often not applicable for their specific work arrangement. It is more difficult for occasional teachers to be a part of a professional learning community that is school site specific because occasional teachers' work sites

can literally change on a daily basis. By default, occasional teachers tend to rely more on informal professional learning that often occurs on-line and their practices align more with workplace learning literature that predominantly views formal learning as insufficient (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and focuses more on the “ways in which workers learn through informal processes” (Hodgkinson, 2009, p. 159). Hodgkinson (2009) points out two key ideas about the processes of learning workplaces that are under-used in teacher development but essential for occasional teachers continued professional learning: 1) learning is an integral part of everyday workplace practices and 2) workplace learning is predominantly a social and cultural process. For occasional teachers to continue learning they require a learning community focusing on the work that they do on a daily basis.

## **STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

A mixed methods approach was used to explore how occasional teachers engaged in their professional learning. In order to capture a provincial snapshot of occasional teaching within elementary English speaking public school boards, an on-line survey was developed and distributed across the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario occasional teacher membership. Focus groups were utilized for survey development. Survey development began November 2009 and continued until April 2010 with 8 focus groups conducted to test and develop survey questions. The survey went online in the month of April 2010 and closed on June 13, 2010.

### *Focus groups*

According to an unpublished internal survey of occasional teachers conducted by the Ontario Ministry of Education in 2007, the provincial occasional teacher workforce consisted of three broad groups: new entrants (40%), career occasional teachers (40%) and retirees (20%). A large proportion of new entrants are also teachers educated outside of Canada (McIntyre, 2006). For this reason, five sub-groups were targeted for the focus groups: 1) internationally educated occasional teachers new to the Ontario English-speaking public school system; 2) occasional teachers who have graduated from an Ontario teacher education program within the past five years; 3) teachers considered career occasional teachers because they view their occasional teaching as a career, are not retired, and are not seeking full time work; 4) retirees collecting an Ontario Teachers’ Pension for five years or more; and 5) occasional teachers in northern Ontario. Eight focus groups were organized. The location for these focus groups included rural, northern, urban and sub-urban. A few of the focus groups consisted of a mixture of occasional teachers from the previous mentioned sub-groups while others were specifically focused on internationally educated teachers, retirees, and teachers in northern Ontario. The intended focus group size ranged from 5 to 12; actual sizes ranged from one to 9 participants. The focus group sessions were approximately 2 hours long. In the first hour participants were asked to describe the strategies used to participate in professional learning and to also include some of the challenges they

encountered. In the second hour, participants were asked to answer pilot survey questions focusing on occasional teachers' access to professional learning. They were also encouraged to comment on the survey design, question design and content. The focus group sessions were audio recorded and transcribed afterwards.

### *Online survey*

The survey went through approximately seventeen iterations; once after each of the 8 focus group sessions and after 9 individual reviews by occasional teachers, ETFO representatives, PhD students, statistics experts, and academics in two other universities. The final survey consisted of 69 close-ended questions (most included an 'other' for participants who did not find an appropriate response). None of the participants should have completed all 69 questions as the survey was organized in a manner where a response to a question would bring the participant to a particular related question, skipping irrelevant questions. The only question that *required* a response was the first question, which was not part of the actual data collection, but rather participants' consent. None of the remaining survey questions were forced questions; participants could choose not to answer a question and still proceed to the next question. **SurveyMonkey** was the online survey software program used to house the survey online. Electronic invitations were sent to occasional teachers who were members of the Elementary Teachers, Federation of Ontario. For anonymity and confidentiality reasons, participants interested in participating in the survey were asked to send an email requesting a link to the survey. The email was received by a third party who would then forward a link to the potential participant. Each participant received a different link to the survey site. 440 survey links were sent out to potential participants, 371 surveys were completed.

## **STUDY FINDINGS**

The findings are organized into six categories. First presented are the responses of the entire occasional teacher population that participated. The data is then broken down into five groups to provide more accurate detailed information of specific sub-groups of occasional teachers such as retirees, career occasional teachers, internationally educated occasional teachers (Western and non-Western), new entrants, and teachers in the north.



## GENERAL OCCASIONAL TEACHER POPULATION

### DEMOGRAPHICS

#### Age

Those who responded to the online survey were anywhere from 22 to 69 years of age. While the average was 39.7 (40) years, approximately 52% of the respondents were between 25-39 years of age.

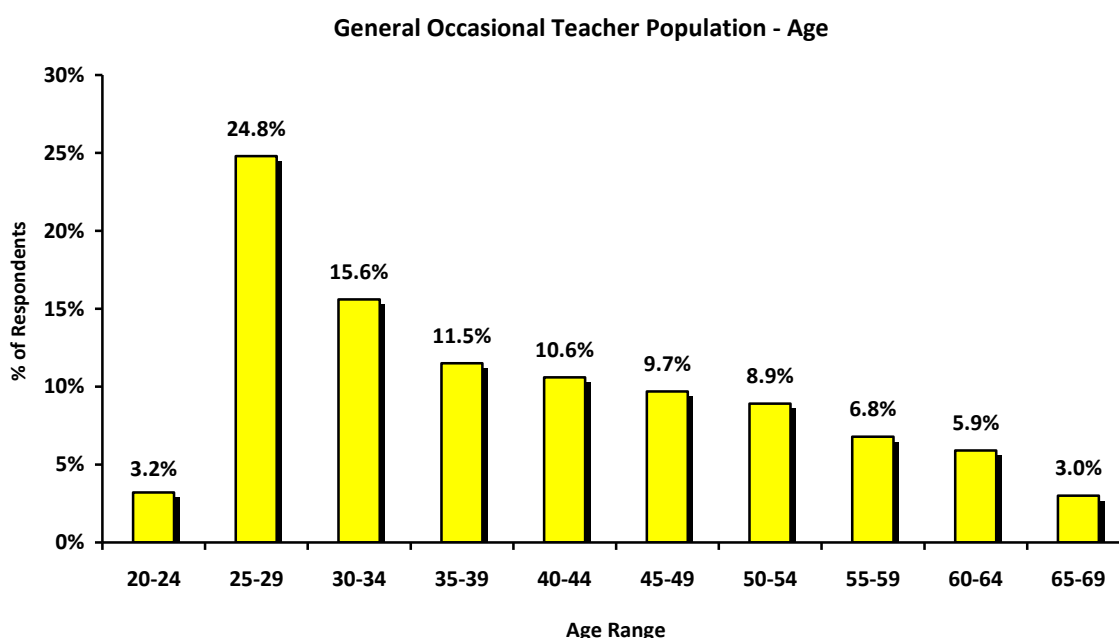


Figure 1. General Occasional Teacher Population - Age.

#### Gender

Of the 371 occasional teachers that responded, 350 included their gender for a response rate of ninety-four percent. Forty-two (12%) identified themselves as male and 308 (88%) identified themselves as female.

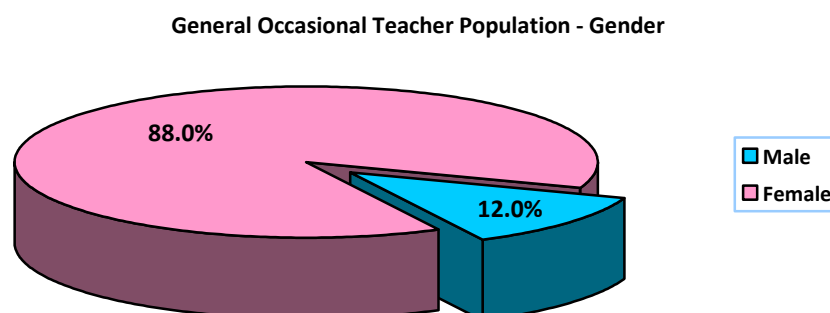


Figure 2. General Occasional Teacher Population - Gender.

### Heritage

Of the 416 responses, 41% identified with being British (England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales), 18% responded Western European (France, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain and Greece), and another 19% indicated that they were Canadian.

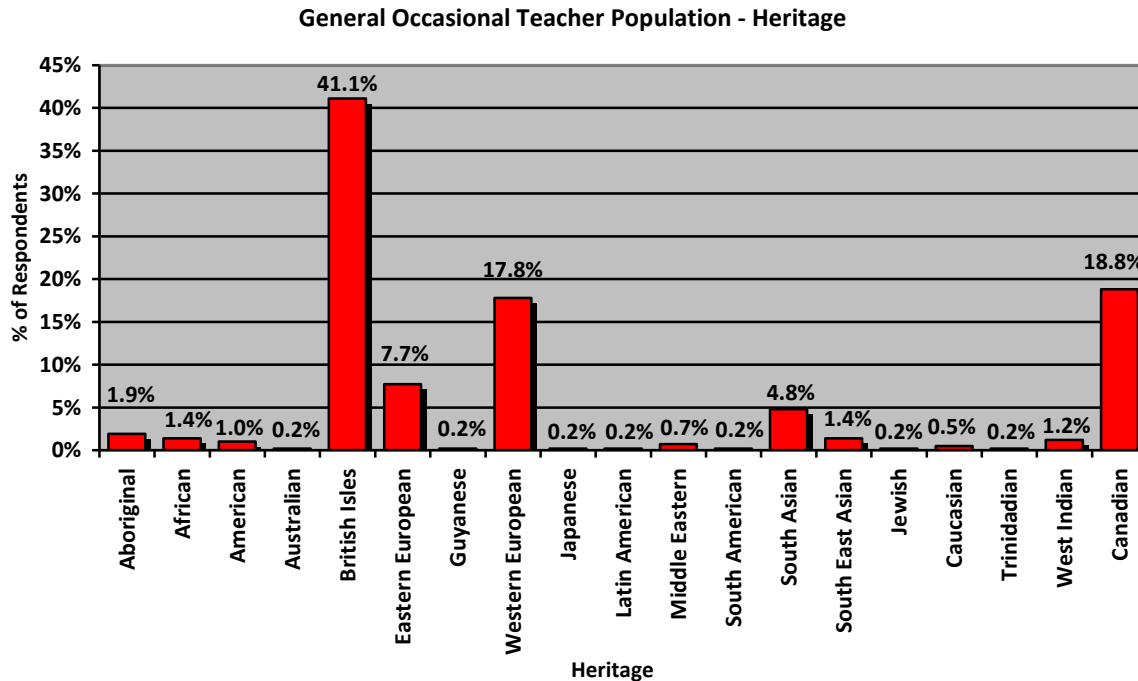


Figure 3. General Occasional Teacher Population - Heritage.

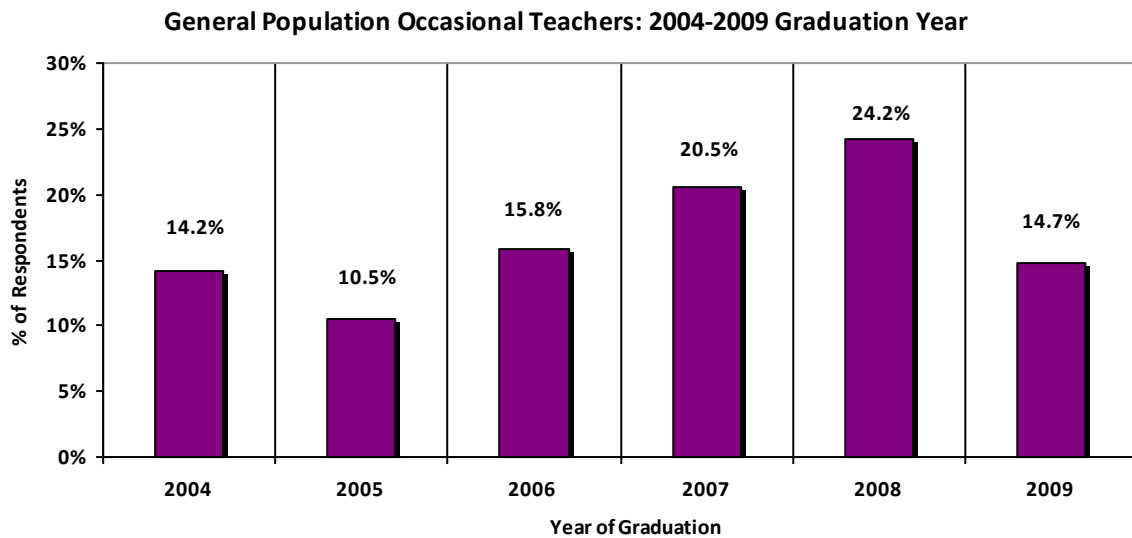
### Language

Out of 351 occasional teacher responses, an overwhelming majority (90%) of the participants indicated that English was their first language.

## EDUCATION

### *Year degree granted*

For 352 participants that responded, the range, in years, for completion of a teacher education program was 1952 - 2010, a spread of fifty-eight years. A little more than half (53%) completed their teacher education degree between the years 2004-2009.



**Figure 4. General Population Occasional Teachers: 2004-2009 Graduation Year.**

### *Place degree was granted*

Of the 350 who responded, 274 (78%) completed their teacher education degree in Canada, with the majority completing an education programs in the province of Ontario (88%), the next largest group received their teacher education in Quebec (7%).

Seventy-six (22%) occasional teachers responded that they received their teacher education outside of Canada, with 57% of the seventy-six from the United States; 18% from India, 11% from Australia and 9% from the United Kingdom.

### *Language of instruction*

The language of instruction for the teacher education program was overwhelmingly English (98%) with French at 2%. Of the 351 that responded, 95% indicated that English was their first language. The other 5% represented a number of languages including Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Croatian, Dutch, Cantonese, Farsi, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Korean, Latvian, Malayalam, Polish, Punjabi and Ukrainian.

## WORK

### *Years of occasional teaching*

Of those who participated, 348 indicated the number of years of occasional teaching. Almost 90% of the respondents have been teaching occasionally for ten years or less and of those teaching for ten years or less the majority are within their first three years.

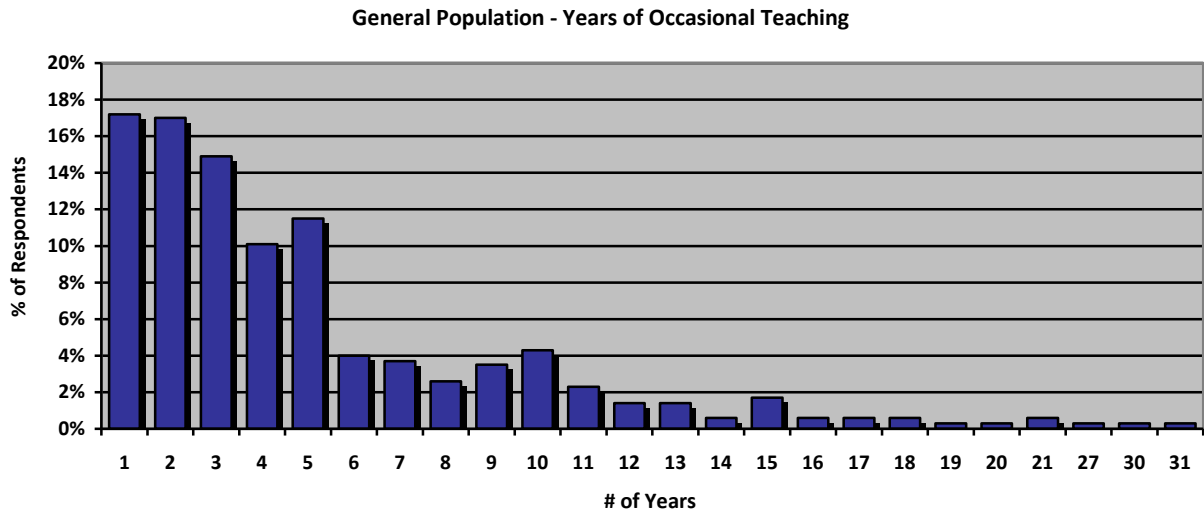


Figure 5. General Population - Years of Occasional Teaching.

### *Current employment status*

Participants were asked at the time of the survey if they were currently working as an occasional teacher. Almost three-fourths (71%) indicated that they work on a day-to-day (known as daily) basis. Two percent were either on maternity leave, federation release, or had completed the allowed number of days to teach as a retired teacher. Others worked in different combinations: 20% were currently completing a long-term occasional teaching position and 7% were working in a combined work arrangement (combined in the sense that they work on a daily occasional basis in addition to holding an LTO or part-time permanent contract).

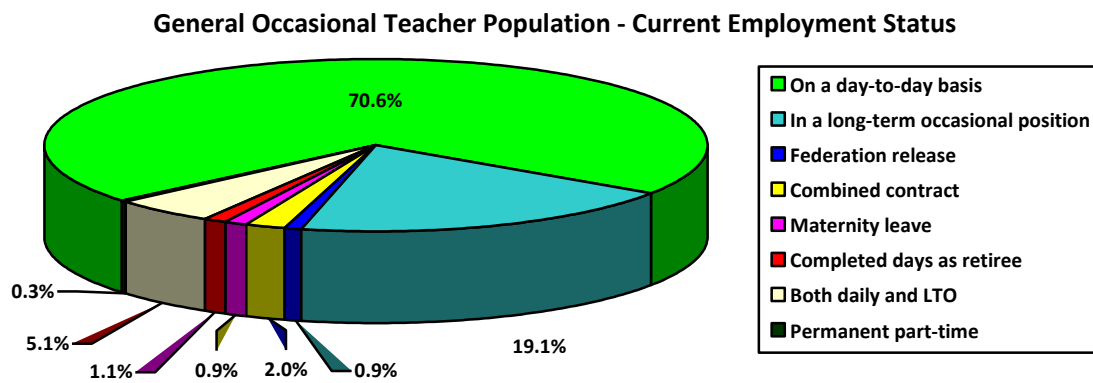
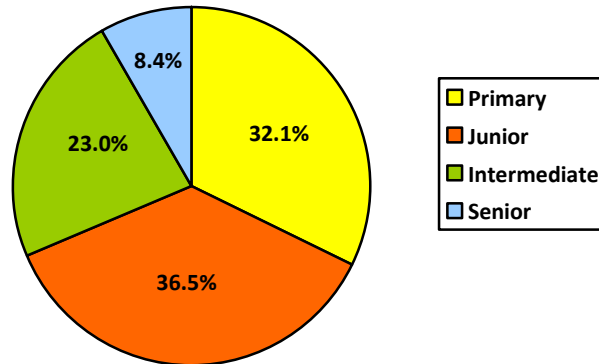


Figure 6. General Occasional Teacher Population - Current Employment Status.

### *Area certified to teach*

Almost 70% of respondents were certified to teach primary/junior level. This is not surprising as all participants were members from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO).

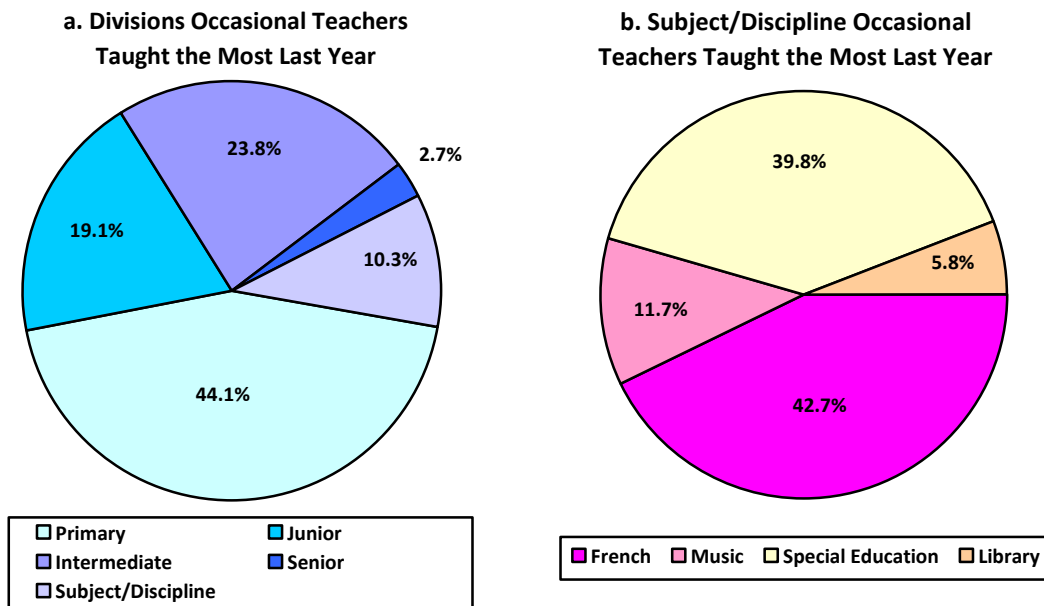
**General Occasional Teacher Population - Areas Certified to Teach**



**Figure 7. General Occasional Teacher Population - Areas Certified to Teach.**

### *Areas occasional teachers taught the most last year*

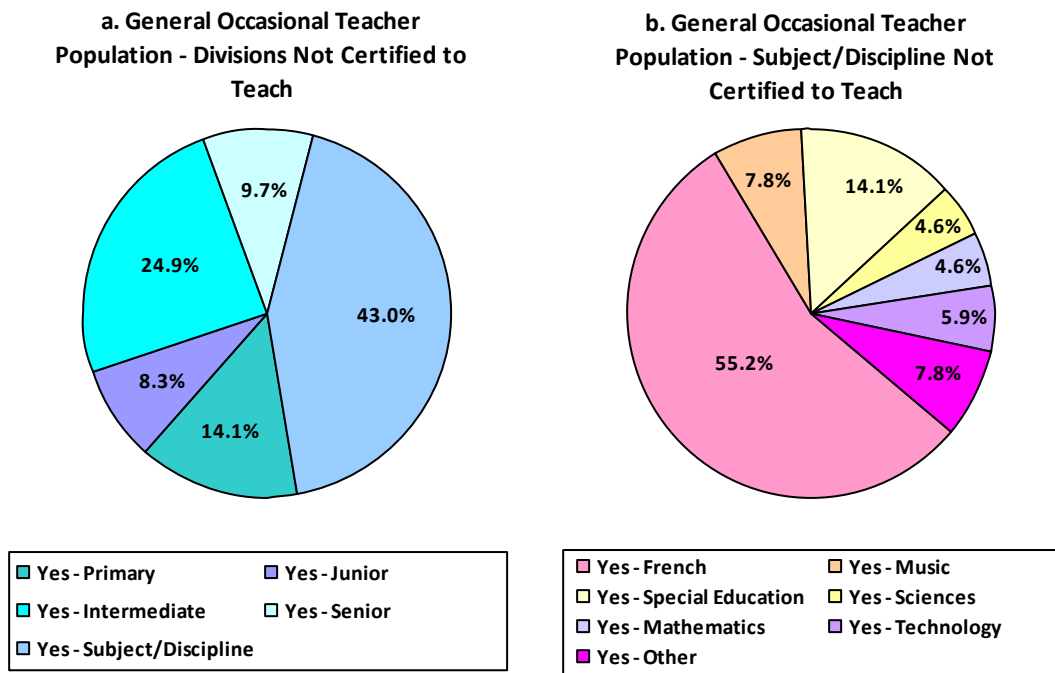
Respondents were asked to indicate at what school level or subject area (i.e. French, Special Education) they did most of their occasional teaching in the past 12 months. Three hundred and forty participants answered this question and this is what they indicated:



**Figure 8a and b. Divisions and Subject/Discipline Occasional Teachers Taught the Most Last Year.**

### *Teaching in areas not certified to teach*

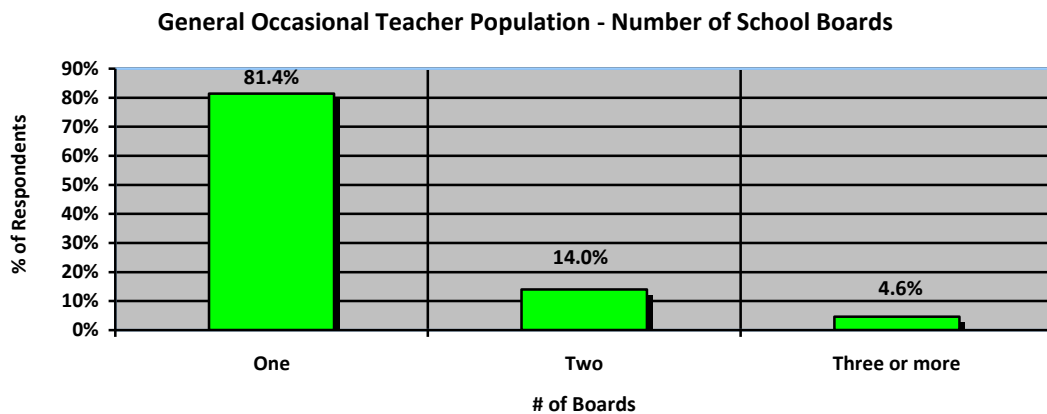
Participants were asked if they taught in a division or subject area (i.e. French, Special Education) in which they were not certified. Almost a third indicated that they had not taught in a division or subject area in where they were not certified. Another third indicated that they had taught in divisions for which they were not certified to teach, and the last third indicated the various subject areas they taught but were not certified to do so.



**Figure 9a and b. General Occasional Teacher Population - Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach.**

### *Number of school boards*

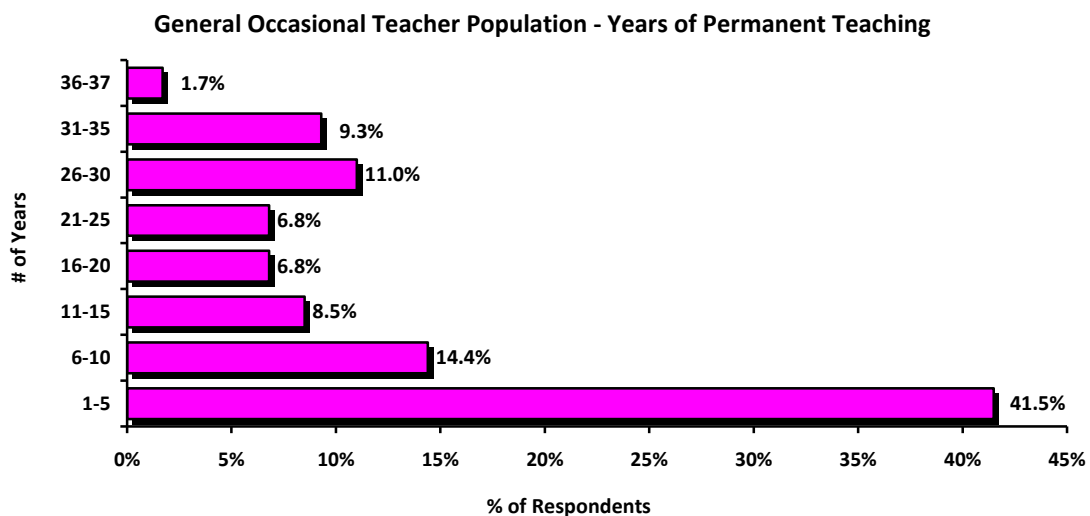
When asked how many school boards they have worked for within the last 12 months as an occasional teacher, 350 people responded, with an overwhelming majority (81%) indicating that they only worked for one school board within the last 12 months. Fourteen percent indicated working for two school boards and five percent indicated working for three or more school boards within the last 12 months.



**Figure 10. General Occasional Teacher Population - Number of School Boards.**

### *Permanent teaching contract*

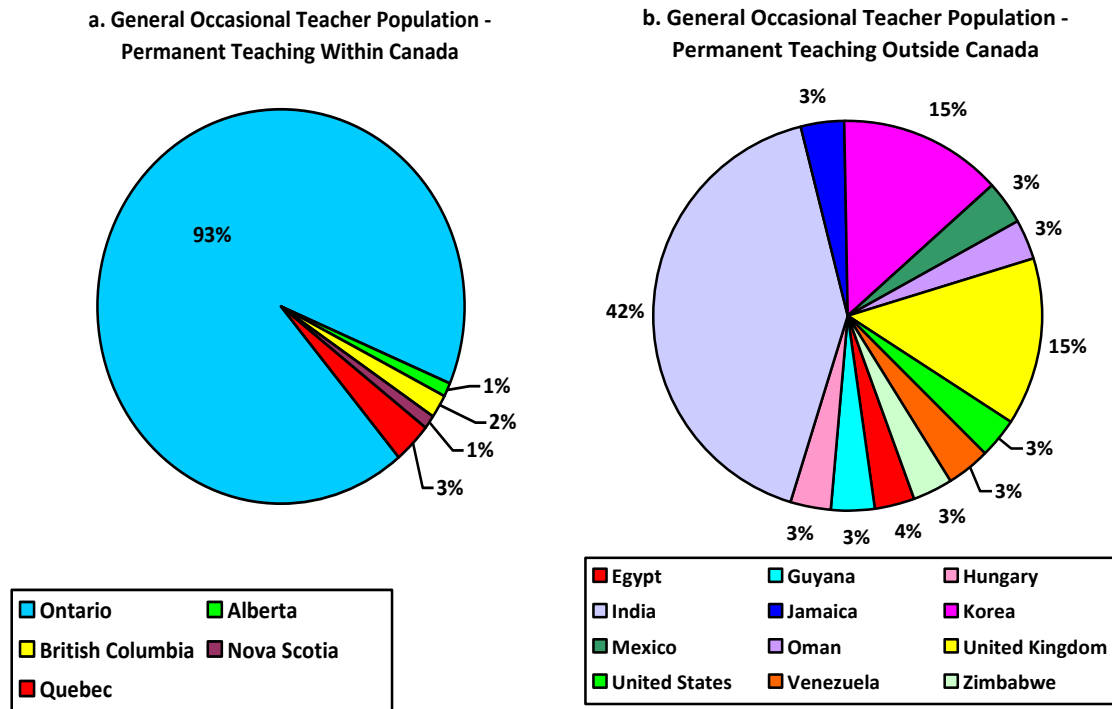
Participants were asked if they had held a permanent teaching position previously (including Canada and/or other countries in private or public school systems). Of the 351 that responded, 120 (34%) indicated that they had worked as a full-time teacher. The number of years that they taught in a permanent teaching position varied from one year to 37 years.



**Figure 11. General Occasional Teacher Population - Years of Permanent Teaching.**

### *Location of permanent teaching*

Participants were asked where they held their permanent teaching position. Of those that responded to the question, three fourths (76%) taught in Canada. For those who did teach in Canada, 70% did so in Ontario; others taught in the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Quebec. Some of this permanent teaching occurred outside of Canada (24%).

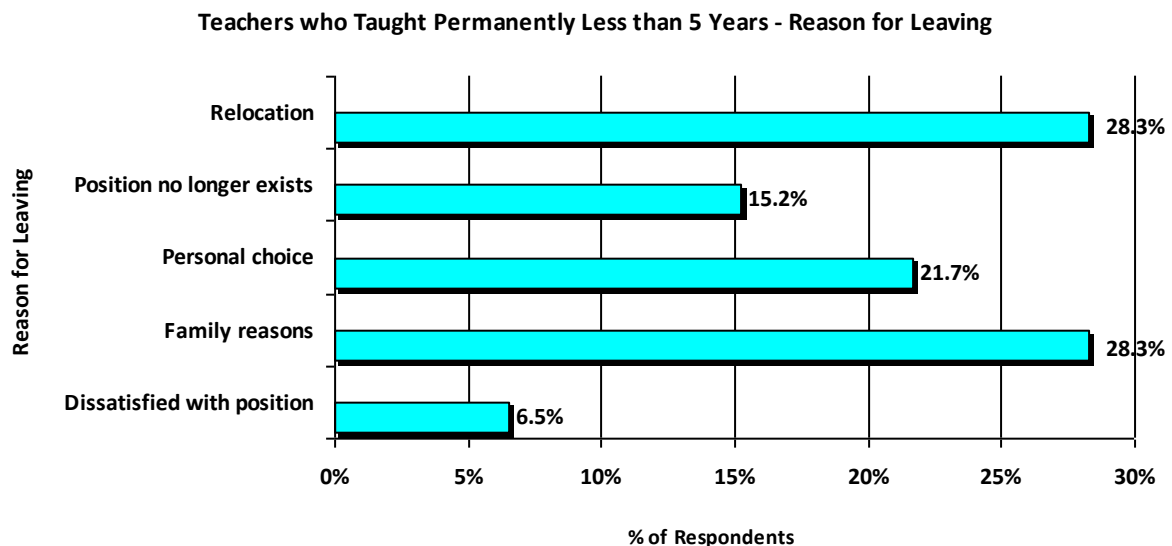


**Figure 12a and b. General Occasional Teacher Population - Permanent Teaching Within and Outside Canada.**



### *Reason for leaving*

Respondents who left their permanent teaching position with five or less years of permanent teaching gave a number of reasons for leaving from relocation (from a different country, province, region or education system), not being satisfied with the position, family reasons or personal choice, to reasons out of their control, such as the position no longer existing (i.e. redundant, being deemed surplus).



**Figure 13. Teachers who taught Permanently Less than 5 Years - Reason for Leaving.**

### *Children*

Of the 348 participants who responded to whether or not they have children under 18 years of age living in their household, 124 (36%) indicated 'yes,' while 224 (64%) indicated 'no'. Almost half of the respondents (48%) indicated that being a caregiver for a child was a major factor in their decision to work occasionally.

### *Care provider*

Three hundred and fifty participants responded to the question: Are you a primary caregiver for an adult? Five percent indicated that they were the primary caregiver for an adult. Of those who answered yes, 45% indicated that being a caregiver for an adult was a major factor in their decision to work occasionally.

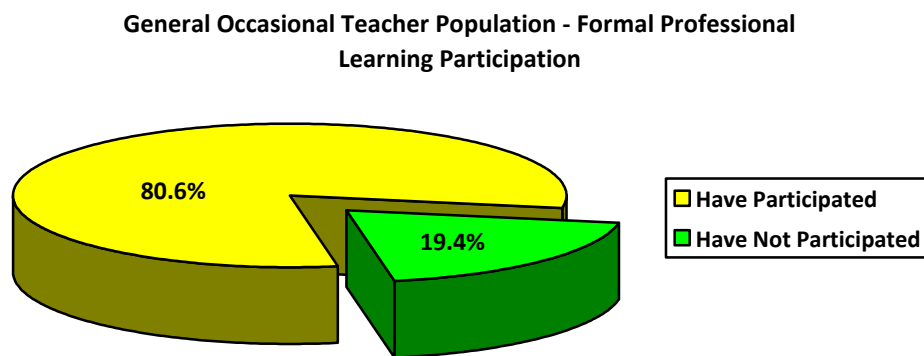
### *Intent in five years*

Of the 351 occasional teachers that responded, 255 (73%) indicated that they intend to pursue a full-time teaching position within the next five years.

## FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning for this study was defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualifications (AQ) courses).

Respondents were asked if they have participated in any formal professional learning within the past 12 months. Eighty-one percent indicated that they had participated in some form of formal professional development.



**Figure 14. General Occasional Teacher Population - Formal Professional Learning Participation**

### *No professional learning*

Of the 19% (71 responses) that indicated they had not participated in any form of professional learning, 42% (30 responses) indicated that there were no opportunities for formal professional learning. The remaining 58% (41 responses) indicated that there were opportunities for professional learning and provided the following reasons for not participating.

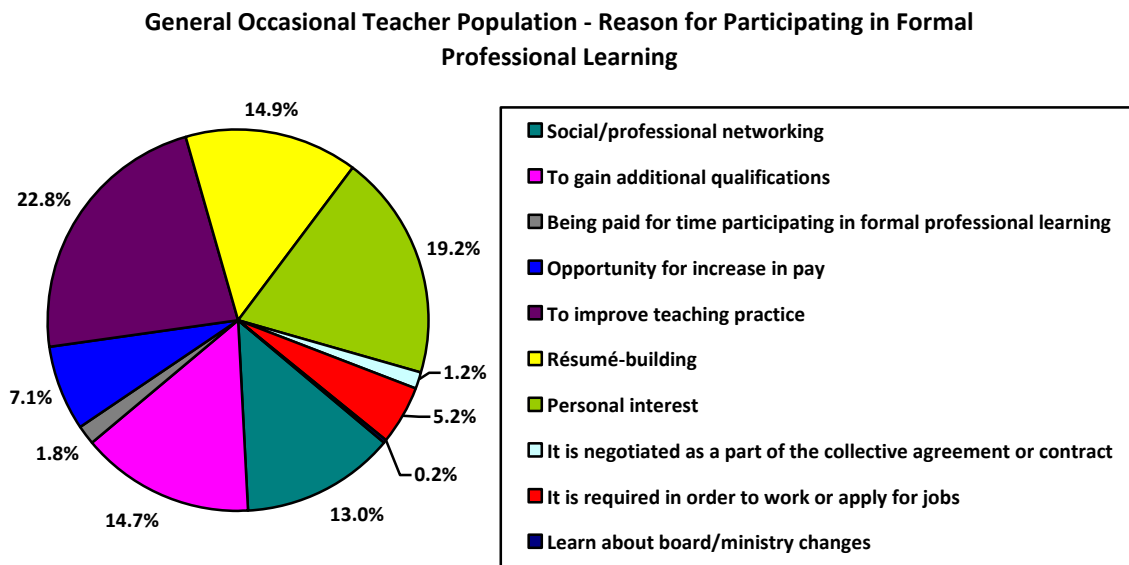
Reason for Not Participating in Professional Learning	% of Respondents
I do not have the time	13.9%
Cost is a factor	20.1%
I am recently retired and do not feel the need	21.6%
Maternity Leave	1.5%
I do not find any of the present professional learning helpful for occasional teaching	13.9%
Location of courses offered is not convenient	1.5%
I do not see the need to participate in any kind of formal professional learning	4.6%
Lack of time and lack of access through the school boards because I am only occasional	1.5%
There is no formal professional learning available for occasional teachers in my area	4.6%
I have difficulty accessing information about formal professional learning for occasional teachers	9.3%
I present professional learning workshops to OTs	1.5%
Never presented itself	1.5%
Often the topic is not of interest to me	1.5%
No new local courses offered, I have taken them already or have experience in those areas. Unaware of university courses offered	1.5%
There are only a few formal professional learning opportunities and I have previously taken the same topics	1.5%

### *Professional learning delivery*

Of the respondents who participated in some type of formal professional learning within the last 12 months, 81% indicated that most of the formal professional learning was sponsored by the school district (22%), ETFO locals (22%), and through additional qualification courses (19%), with school sponsored professional learning opportunities at 9%, and 3% from the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP), with the remaining 25% consisting of professional learning from various other sources such as taking language courses, training associated with sports and athletics, and graduate level courses.

### *Reason for participating in formal professional learning*

Participants were asked why they participated in formal professional learning within the last 12 months. A little less than a fourth (23%) indicate that they did so to improve their teaching practice. Nineteen percent thought that it provided an opportunity for an increase in pay. Another 15% specified that they participated in formal professional learning to gain additional qualifications; a further 15% did so as a way to build their teaching résumé. Thirteen percent reported that they participated in formal professional learning as a way to network, professionally and socially; 7% pointed out that they did it for personal interest; 5% drew attention to participation in formal professional learning being required in order to work or apply for jobs; 2% wrote they were being paid for the time to participate, and 1% said that they engaged in professional learning because it was negotiated as part of their collective agreement.



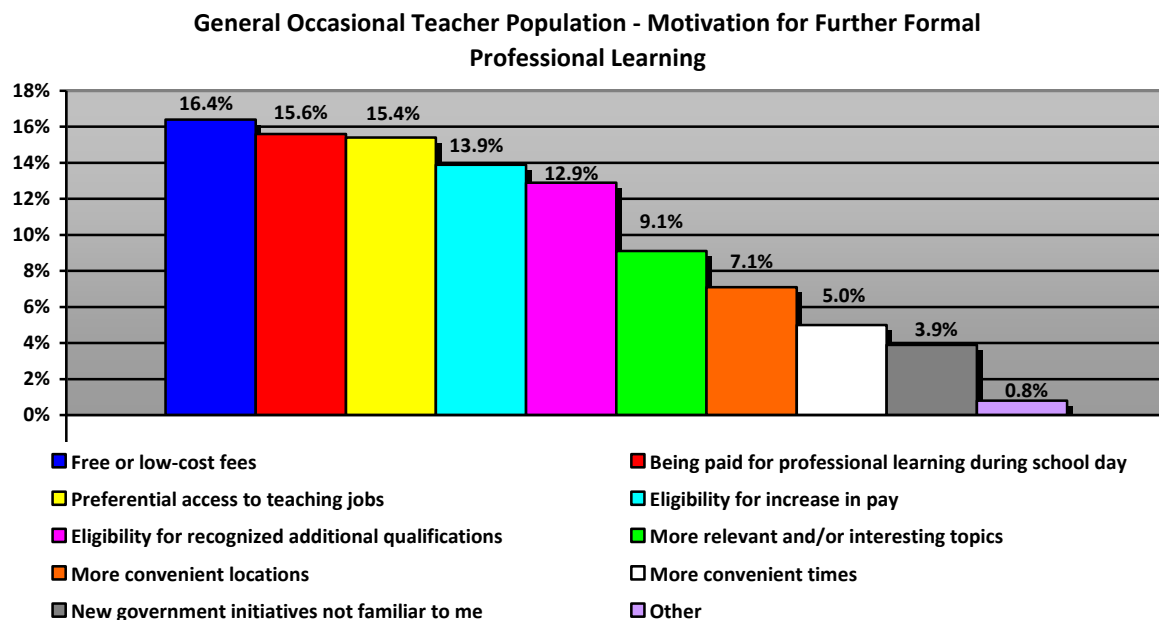
**Figure 15. General Occasional Teacher Population - Reason for Participating in Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Topic of the formal professional learning*

Four-fifths (79%) of the respondents included the main focus of their formal professional learning within the last 12 months. Thirty-seven percent indicated instructional strategies; 24% stated that subject/discipline was the focus; 12% indicated classroom management, with another 12% specifying ministry/board implemented policies/program initiatives; 7% highlighted technology as the focus; 6% indicated the focus was around how to secure more teacher employment; with the remaining two percent including assessment, legal issues, how to better administrate income, and developing and coaching athletes.

### *Further formal professional learning*

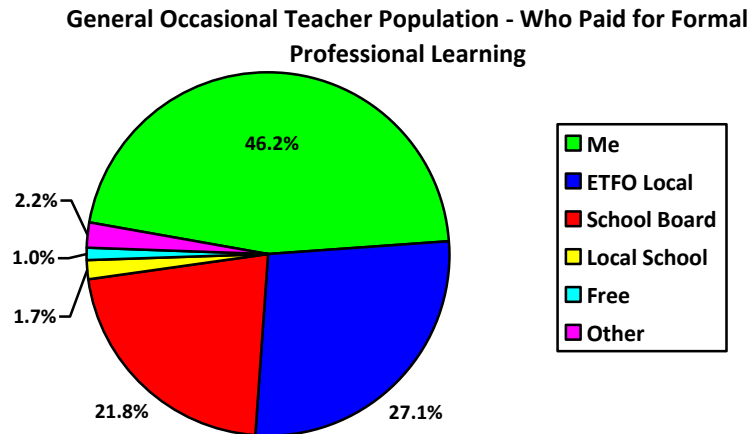
Interestingly, participants' motivation to participate in further professional learning centred on labour issues and/or finances. For example, sixteen percent indicated free or low-cost fees as a factor. This was not surprising as focus group participants spoke about the cost of enrolling in additional qualification courses that are substantially more expensive than other forms of teacher professional learning especially when they had neither the guarantee of work to recoup the fees nor any guarantee that the additional qualification would mean more frequent work as well. Another 16% indicated that if they were paid for the time spent in formal professional learning they would participate. Focus group respondents also echoed this sentiment. Many mentioned that to participate in some of the formal professional learning meant that they lost a day of pay whereas if they were employed in a full-time teaching position they would not. They indicated that they would like to be paid their daily wages for attending the formal professional learning that occurs during the school day. Fifteen percent suggested that they would participate in further professional learning if it somehow enabled them to have some type of preferential access to future teaching jobs. If the formal professional learning allowed for some type of improved qualifications or formal recognition, 13% indicated that they would participate in the professional learning. Nine percent indicated that if the topic were more relevant and/or interesting they would consider participating in the formal professional learning.



**Figure 16. General Occasional Teacher Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Funding for formal professional learning*

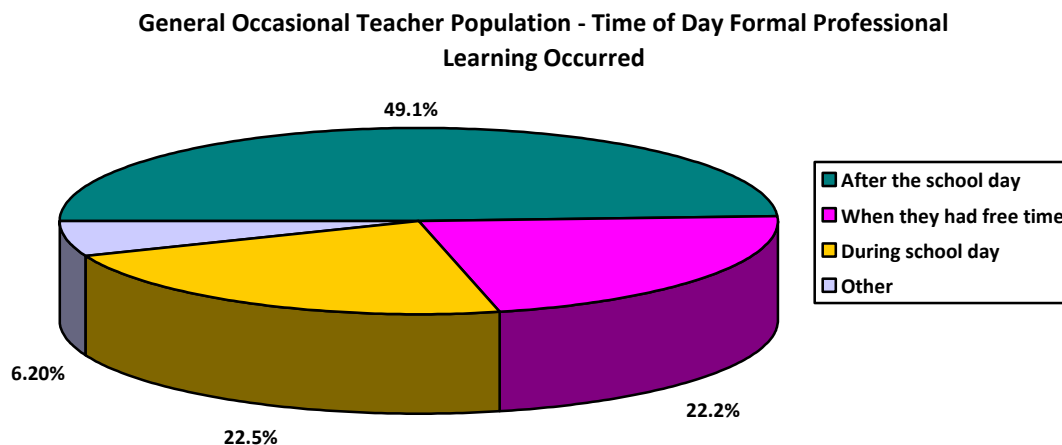
Almost half of the participants (46%) indicated that they paid for the formal professional learning opportunity. Twenty-seven percent identified their ETFO local; 22% pointed out the school board; 2% indicated a local school; 1% said their formal professional learning opportunity was free.



**Figure 17. General Occasional Teacher Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Time of day*

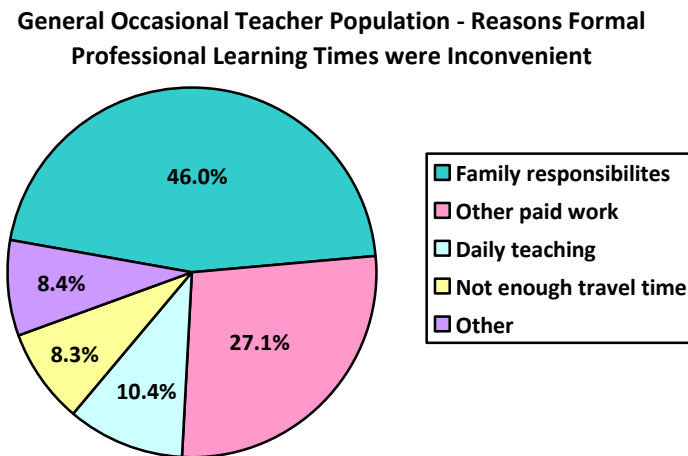
Almost half (49%) of the occasional teachers indicated that after the school day was when most of the formal professional learning occurred. Twenty-two indicated that they engaged in formal professional learning (i.e. correspondence courses) when they had free time. Others indicated that the formal professional learning occurred during the school day (either as a regular school day or an assigned PD day).



**Figure 18. General Occasional Teacher Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred.**

### *Reasons for inconvenience*

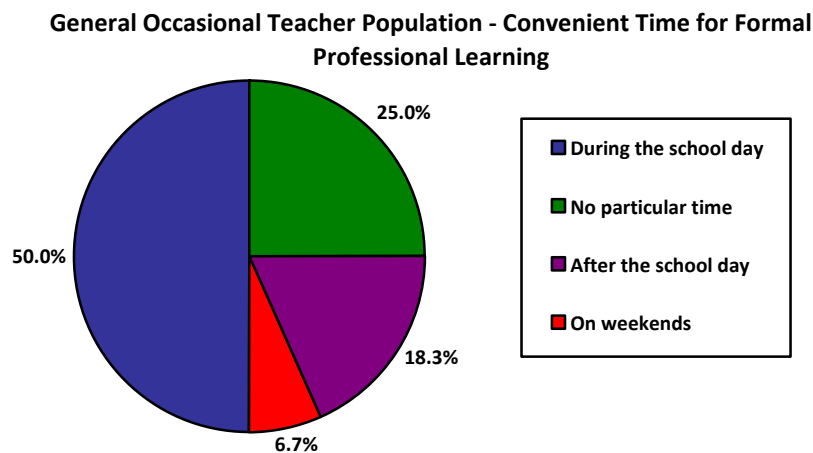
Of the 295 responses, 87% indicated that these times were convenient for them. Those who did not think these times were convenient indicated that it conflicted with family responsibilities (46%), other paid work (27%), daily teaching (10%), and that they did not have enough time to travel to location (8%).



**Figure 19. General Occasional Teacher Population - Reasons Formal Professional Learning Times were Inconvenient.**

### *Convenient timing*

Participants were asked about the most convenient time for them to participate in formal professional learning. Those that responded indicated that during the school day was the most convenient (regular school day or in-school PD days). One-fourth suggested no particular time (i.e. online or by correspondence); 18% favoured after the school day; 7% suggested the weekend.



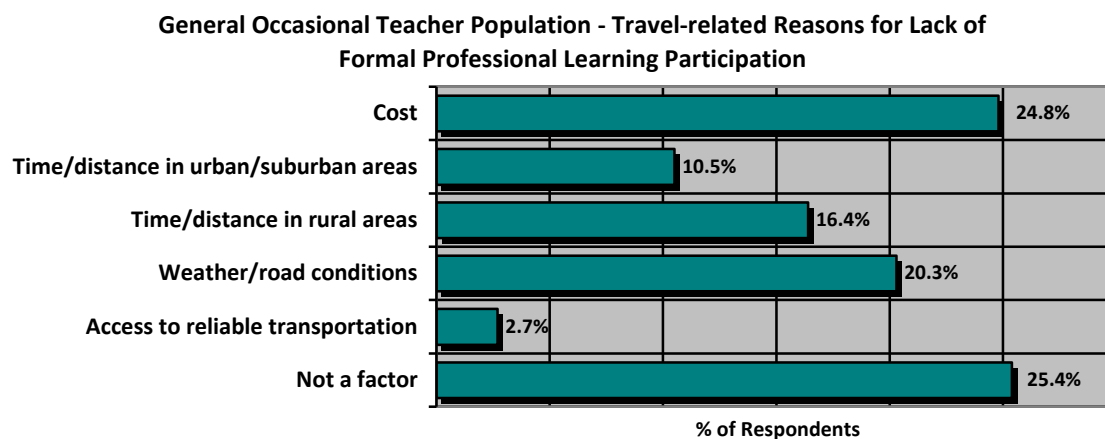
**Figure 20. General Occasional Teacher Population - Convenient Time for Formal Professional Learning.**

### *What month*

Respondents indicated that the months of September (9%), December (20%), January (9%), June (10%), July (14%) and August (13%) were not the best months to hold formal professional learning. Months that seem favourable were: February, March, April (most favoured), May, October, and November.

### *Travel*

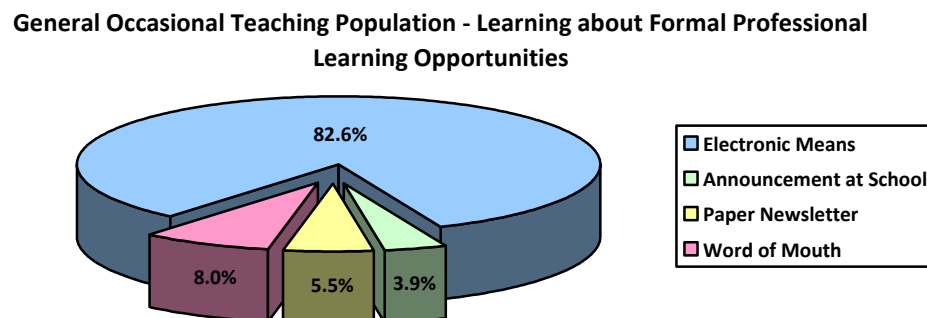
Out of the 316 people who responded to this question, one quarter (25%) indicated that there were no reasons related to travelling that prevented them from participating in formal professional learning. The other 75% cited reasons that prevented them from travelling to formal professional learning opportunities.



**Figure 21. General Occasional Teacher Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation.**

### *Learning about formal professional learning opportunities*

Eighty-three percent of the respondents indicated that they found out about learning opportunities electronically (i.e. flyer, newsletter, email, ETFO local website or provincial website or board website). This high percentage is not surprising as many participants in this study had to be fairly proficient in using online interfaces in order to do the online survey.



**Figure 22. General Occasional Teaching Population - Learning about Formal Professional Learning Opportunities.**

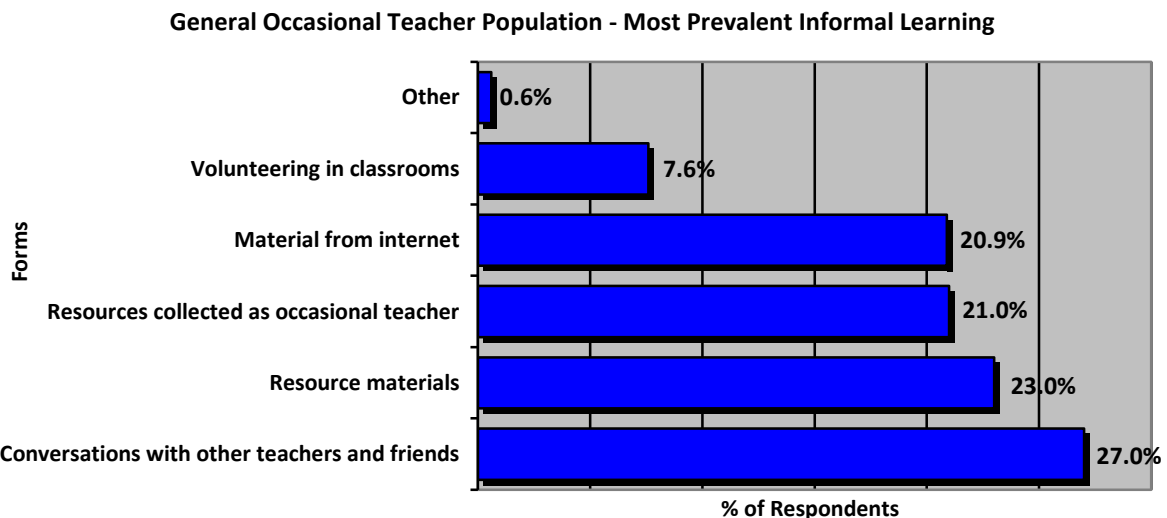


## INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Informal professional learning for this study was defined as any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, playing a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

### *Most prevalent*

When asked the types of informal learning they engaged in, occasional teachers reported: conversations with other teachers and friends (27%); learning from resource material such as books, professional journals and academic journals (23%); resources collected while working as an occasional teacher (21%); using material from the internet (21%); and volunteering in classrooms (8%).



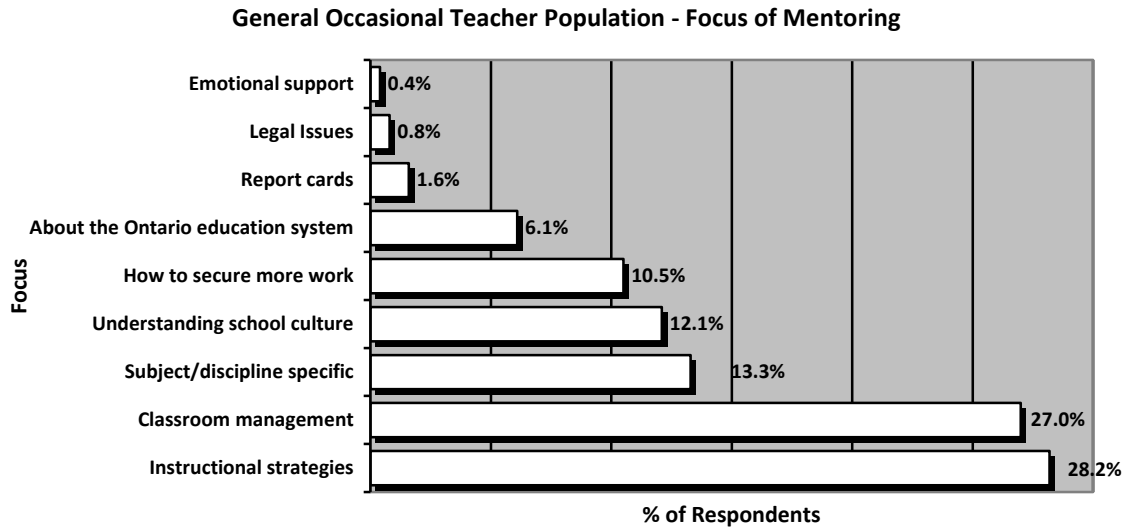
**Figure 23. General Occasional Teacher Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning.**

### *Mentoring*

Participants were asked if someone mentored them, either formally or informally, with regard to occasional teaching. Of the 354 (95%) that responded to this question, 70% indicated that they were mentored either formally or informally. When asked if this was part of a formal mentorship program, less than half the people who indicated yes to mentoring responded. Of those who did (108 respondents), 24% indicated that their mentoring was part of a formal program. Of those formally mentored 88% indicated that it was organized through the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP), school board or school. It was not clear if the school board or school formal mentoring program was actually a part of the NTIP program.

### *Focus of mentoring*

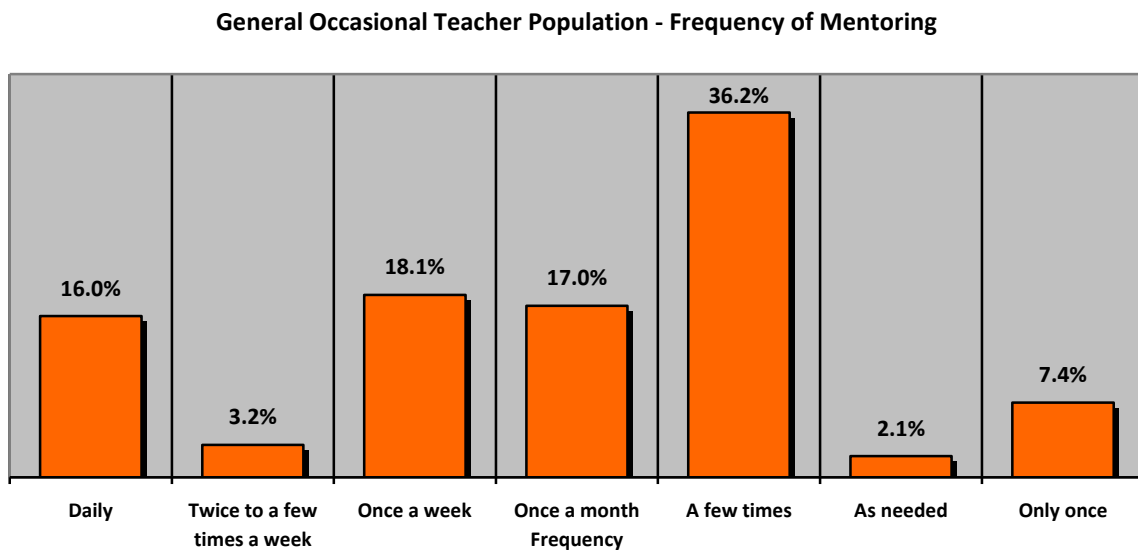
Not surprisingly, most of the mentoring centred on instructional strategies (28%) and classroom management (27%).



**Figure 24. General Occasional Teacher Population - Focus of Mentoring.**

### *Frequency of mentoring*

Even though some of the mentoring was formal, participants' responses indicated a wide range of contact with their mentor from only once to daily.

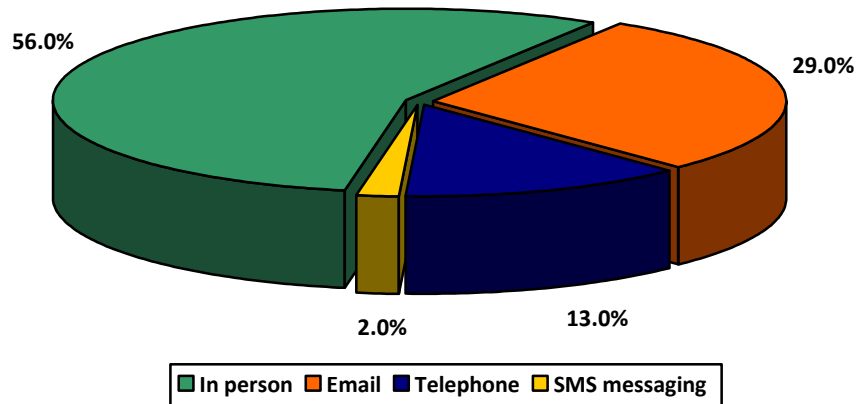


**Figure 25. General Occasional Teacher Population - Frequency of Mentoring.**

### *Mode of communication with mentor*

Approximately half (56%) pointed out that most of their mentoring occurred in person, while 29% indicated it was via email and 13% communicated with their mentor by phone. A small fraction of those who responded communicated by texting/SMS messaging.

**General Occasional Teacher Population - Mode of Communication with Mentor**



**Figure 26. General Occasional Teacher Population - Mode of Communication with Mentor.**

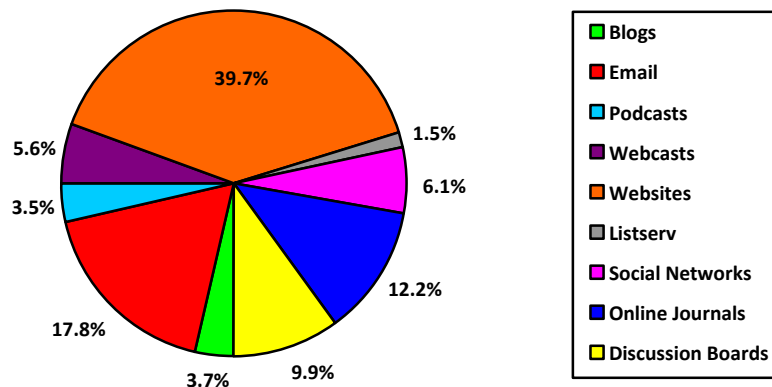
### *Online sources*

When questioned about using online sources, 351 participants responded. Of these responses, 85% indicated that they did consult online sources for their professional learning.

### *Types of online sources*

Respondents indicated that they used a variety of different online sources such as blogs, email, podcasts, webcasts, websites, listservs, social networks, online journals, and discussion boards.

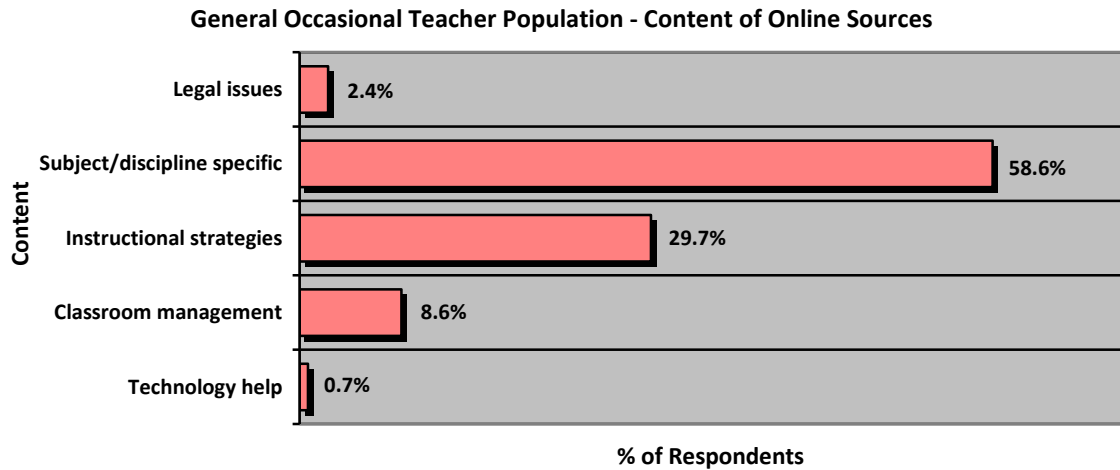
**General Occasional Teacher Population - Types of Online Sources**



**Figure 27. General Occasional Teacher Population - Types of Online Sources.**

### *Content of online source*

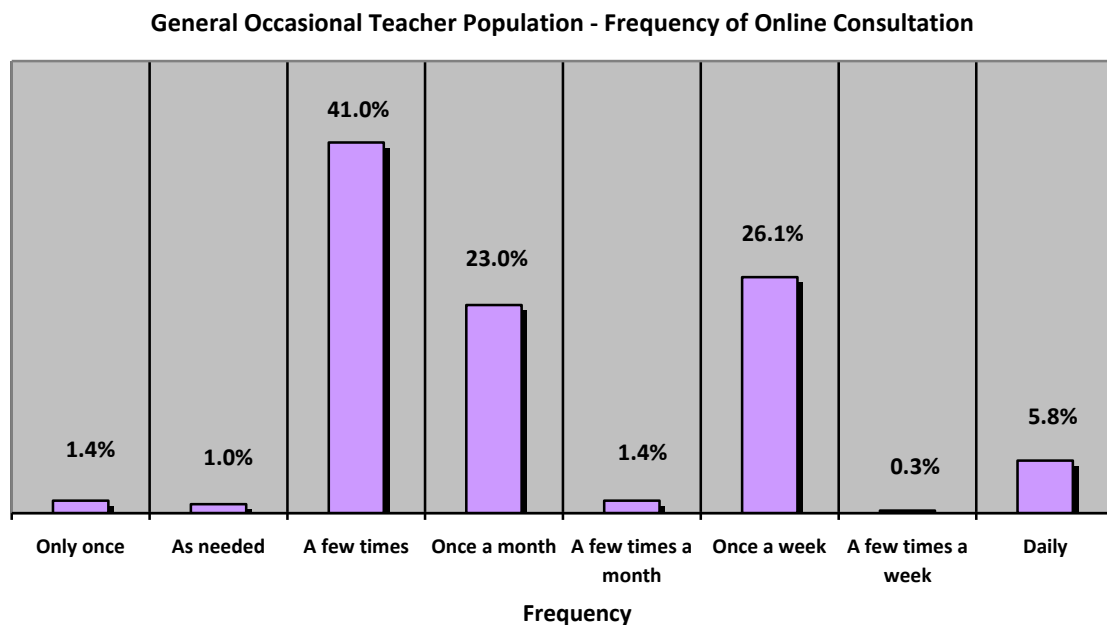
Occasional teachers were asked what information they searched for online. Fifty-nine percent indicated they searched for information about a school subject or discipline. Another 30% indicated they were searching for information on instructional strategies and 9% of occasional teachers who responded searched for material on classroom management.



**Figure 28. General Occasional Teacher Population - Content of Online Sources.**

### *Frequency of consultation*

Occasional teachers who participated in the survey were asked how often they consulted these online sources within the last 12 months. Responses ranged from only once to daily.



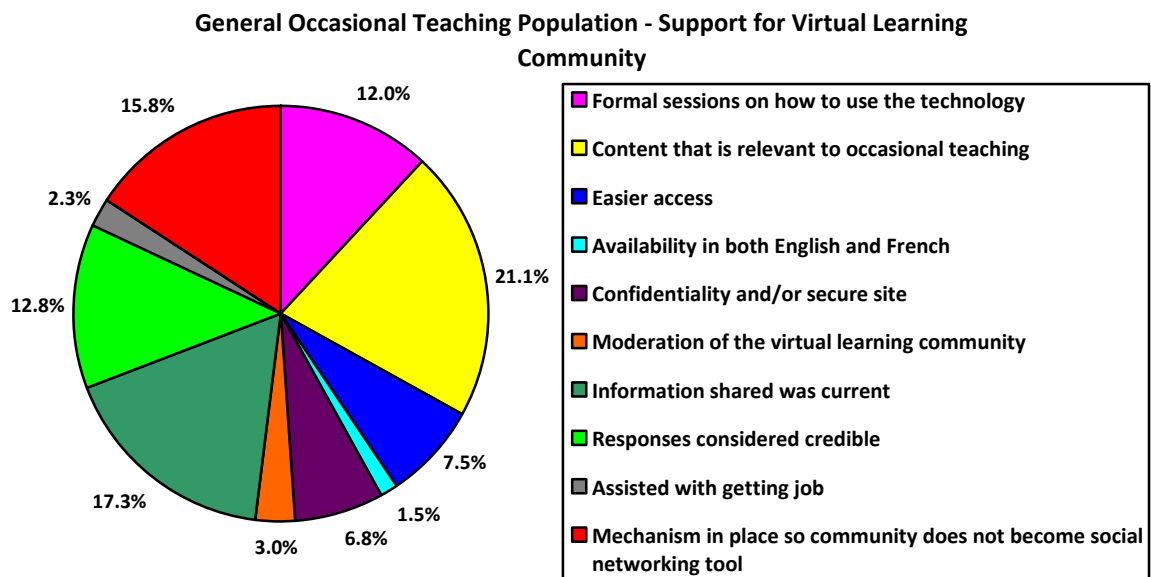
**Figure 29. General Occasional Teacher Population - Frequency of Online Consultation.**

### *Virtual learning community*

Participants were asked if there was a virtual learning community for occasional teachers, would they use it. The majority of the participants responded (352) and of those who did, 83% indicated that they would. This is not surprising as the survey was distributed online and those who participated are more likely to be occasional teachers that are comfortable with information technology and are fairly proficient in the skills required to utilize online information and tools.

### *Support for a virtual learning community*

Participants pointed to a number of conditions required for them to participate in a virtual learning community. The most prevalent conditions were that the material be relevant to occasional teachers (21%) and that the information be current (17%).



**Figure 30. General Occasional Teaching Population - Support for Virtual Learning Community.**

## RETIREEES

Retirees, as a sub-group of occasional teachers, were the most difficult to engage in the focus group sessions. However, those who did participate gave great detail about their professional learning and provided informative feedback on the survey draft. Of the 371 participants in the online survey, 40 self-identified as being retired. Retirees as a group also had a lower completion rate for the online survey, meaning many retiree participants left a large number of questions unanswered. The number of years teaching in a full-time position and the number of years teaching as an occasional teacher were cross referenced to confirm that they were retirees. Occasional teachers were considered retirees if they had a teaching career in a full-time teaching position and were now collecting a pension while teaching occasionally or if they also taught occasionally for their entire teaching career and were now also collecting a teachers pension.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

#### *Age*

The age range for retirees was from fifty-five to sixty-eight with an average age of 61 years old. Not surprisingly, retirees are over represented in the upper age ranges. Of the 33 respondents that included their age, 37% were between 55-59, 43% were between 60-64, and 20% were over 65 years of age.

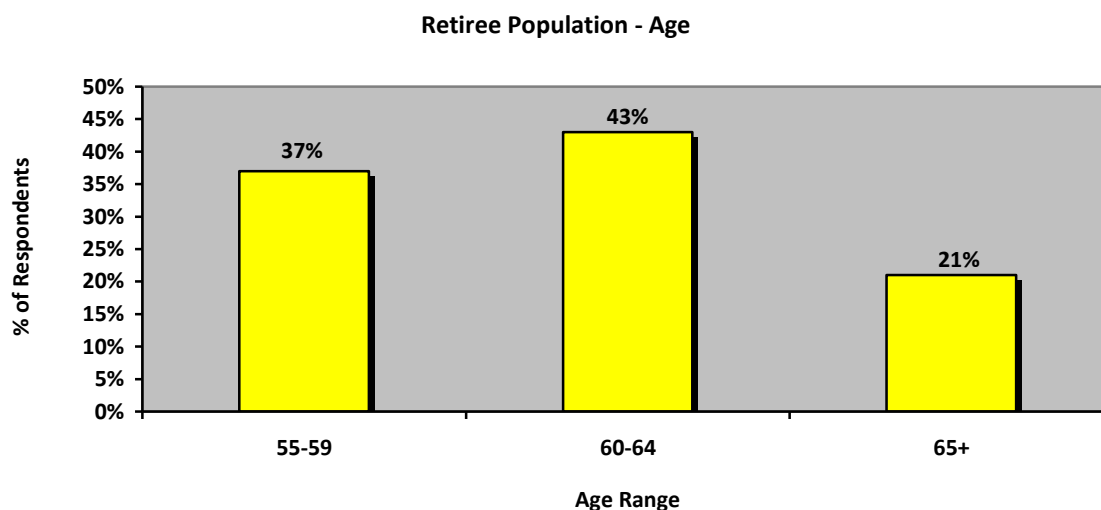


Figure 31. Retiree Population - Age.

#### *Gender*

Thirty-five people stated their gender. Seven (20%) were male and 28 female (80%).

### *Heritage*

Retirees in this study identified with the following heritages: Aboriginal (1), African (1), British Isles (24), Eastern European (3), Western European (8), Latina American (1), Jewish (1), and Canadian (6).

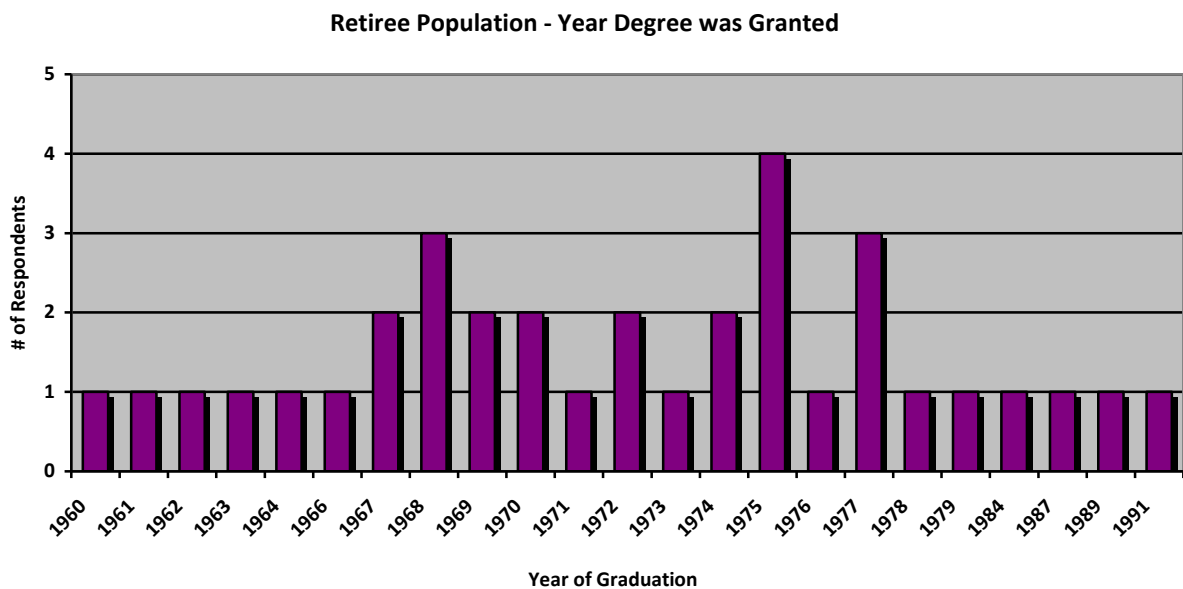
### *Language*

Ninety-two percent of retirees identified English as their first language.

## **EDUCATION**

### *Year degree granted*

The range in years for degree completion for retirees that responded to the survey was from 1960-1992.



**Figure 32. Retiree Population - Year Degree was Granted.**

### *Place degree was granted*

The response rate for where retirees received their education degree was very low. Of those that responded, all, except for one, obtained their teacher education in Canada. One person received their education in the United States. Those who received their formal teacher education in Canada did so in the Ontario (29 respondents), Alberta (2 respondents), Quebec (2 respondents) and Saskatchewan (one respondent).

### *Language of instruction*

Thirty-four retirees responded that English was the language of instruction for their teacher education. One retiree indicated that French was the language of instruction for his/her formal teacher education.

## **WORK**

### *Years of occasional teaching*

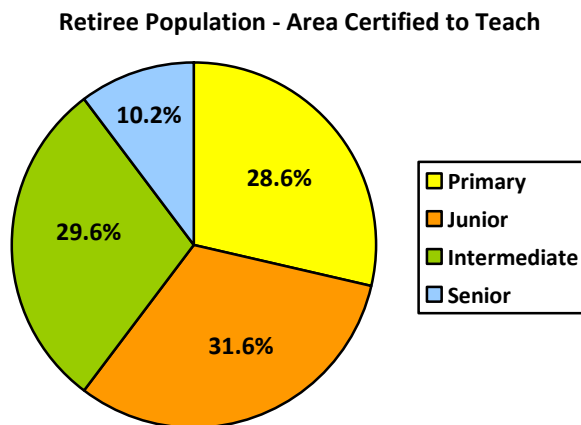
Of the 34 retirees that responded to the question of how many years have they taught as an occasional teacher, 65% have worked as an occasional teacher for five years or less.

### *Current employment status*

Twenty-eight retirees were working on a day-to-day basis, one was completing an LTO position, four completed the allowed number of days of occasional teaching as a retiree and two were working both in an LTO position and daily occasional teaching concurrently.

### *Area certified to teach*

The areas retirees were certified reflected that of the general occasional teacher population described earlier in the report.

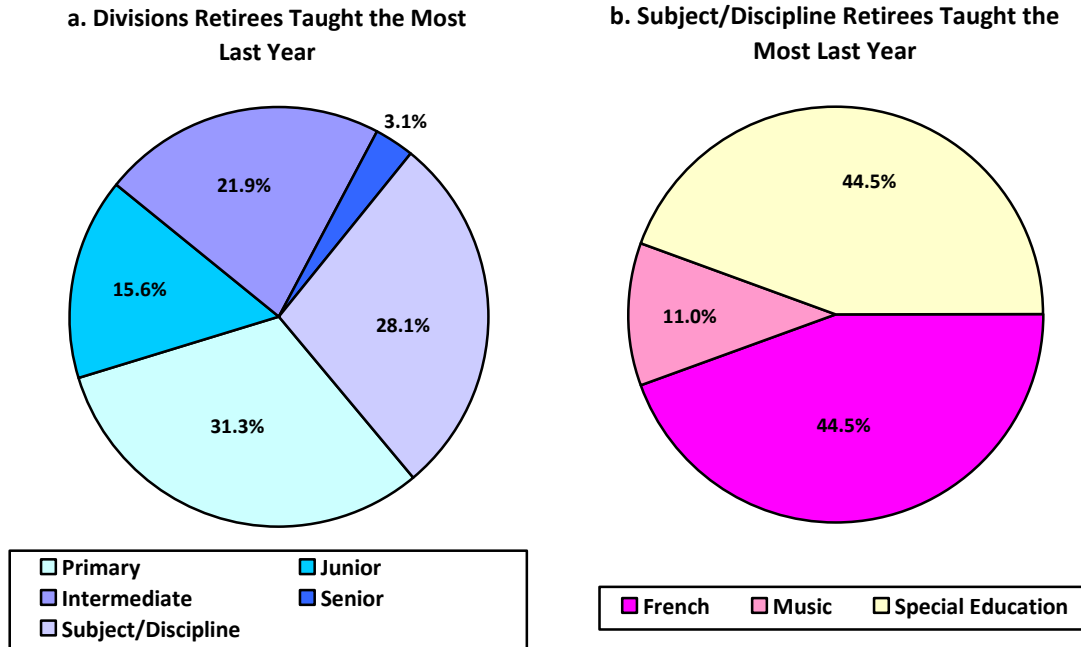


**Figure 33. Retiree Population - Area Certified to Teach.**



### *Areas retirees taught the most last year*

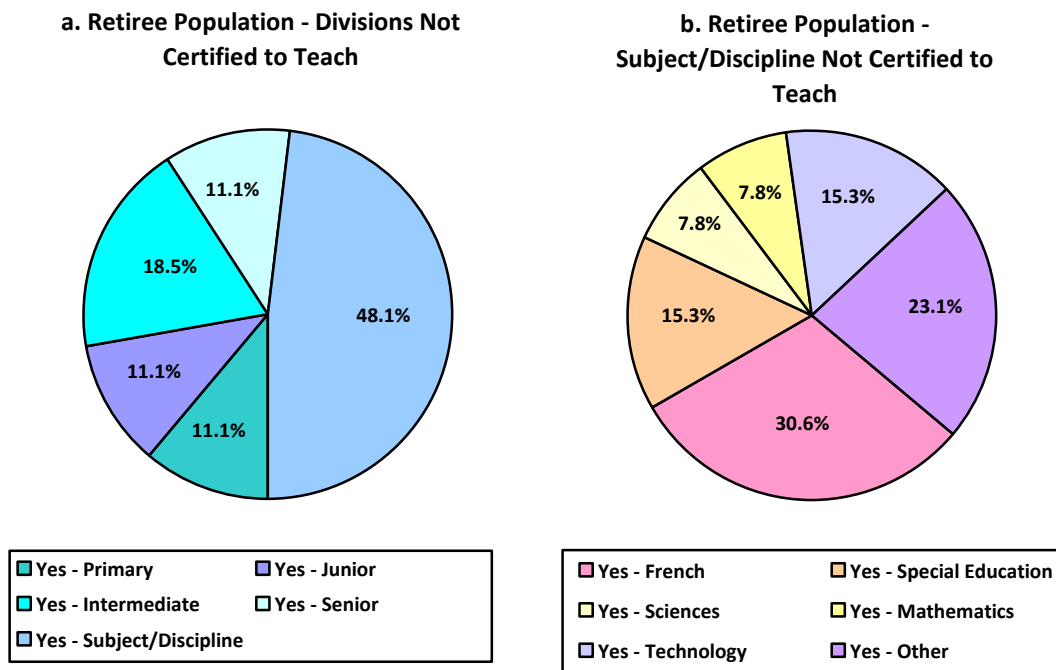
In terms of divisions, retirees who answered this question (23) indicated that most of the work occurred as follows, with twenty eight percent choosing to identify the subject or discipline in which they did most of their teaching instead of the division:



**Figure 34a and b. Divisions and Subject/Discipline Retirees Taught the Most Last Year.**

### *Teaching in areas not certified to teach*

In comparison to the overall responses, retirees tended to *not* teach in areas that they were not certified. For example, 47% of the retirees that responded indicated they had not taught in a division or subject area in which they were not certified, while only 29% of the general population could say the same. This pattern can possibly be attributed to the fact that retirees have well-established professional networks of people who know about the individual teacher's area of expertise and they are called to teach in these expert areas. Another reason could be that retirees with experience within a particular division or subject have a wealth of knowledge about the curriculum and skills to deliver this curriculum and probably self-choose to work only in classrooms for which they are well prepared. Retirees only have a limited number of days that they can teach and probably are much more particular about what work they accept, unlike new entrants who are mostly looking for full-time permanent work and often accept any work that is available both as a source of income but also as a way to professionally network with hopes of opportunities for further work or consideration for a full-time position. Another 40% of retirees indicated that they taught in a different division (mainly intermediate) and a few taught in subject areas outside of their expertise.



**Figure 35. Retiree Population - Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach.**

### *Number of school boards*

Retiree responses to how many school boards they worked for within a 12 month period reflected that of the general occasional teacher population. This is not surprising as the retirees within the focus groups indicated that they usually worked for the school district where they had held their previous full-time teaching position; most in the actual school where they worked in the past. This is also not surprising as many of the retirees indicated that it was the professional colleagues and principal that they knew during their full-time teaching career that were requesting them for occasional teaching.

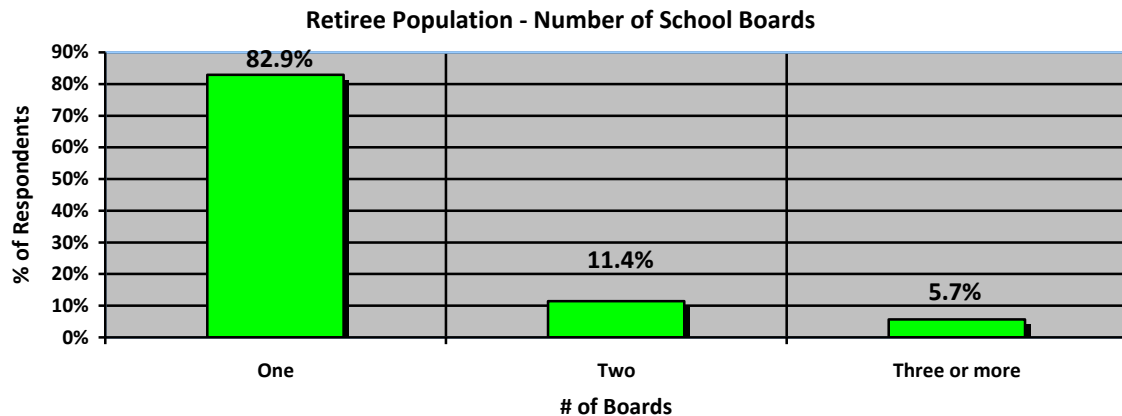


Figure 36. Retiree Population - Number of School Boards.

### *Permanent teaching contract*

Survey responses indicated that 120 individuals held a permanent teaching contract at some point in their teaching career. These positions were inside and outside of Canada. Of the 120 individuals who did have a permanent teaching position, 38 were retired teachers. For the retired teachers that responded the length of their permanent teaching career was between 18-37 years, with an average of 29 years. Seventy percent of the retirees that responded have between 26-35 years of full-time teaching experience.

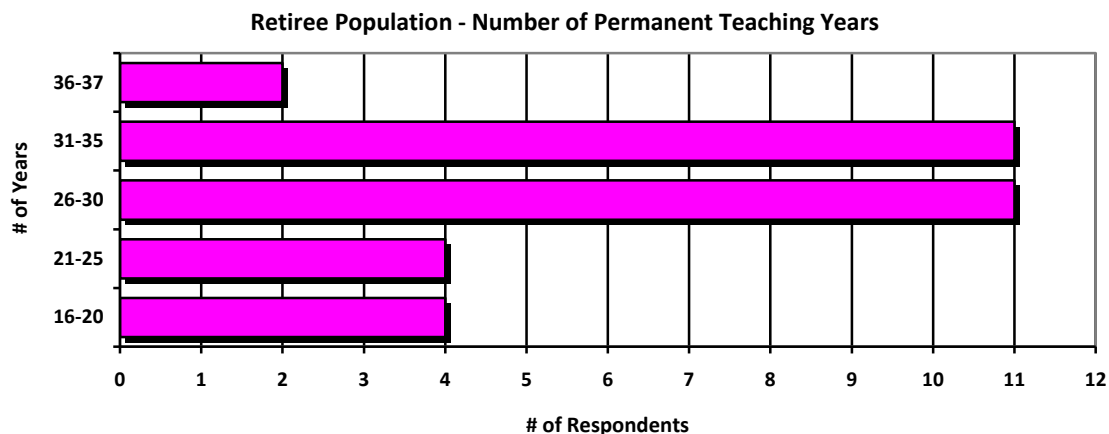


Figure 37. Retiree Population - Number of Permanent Teaching Years.

## FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

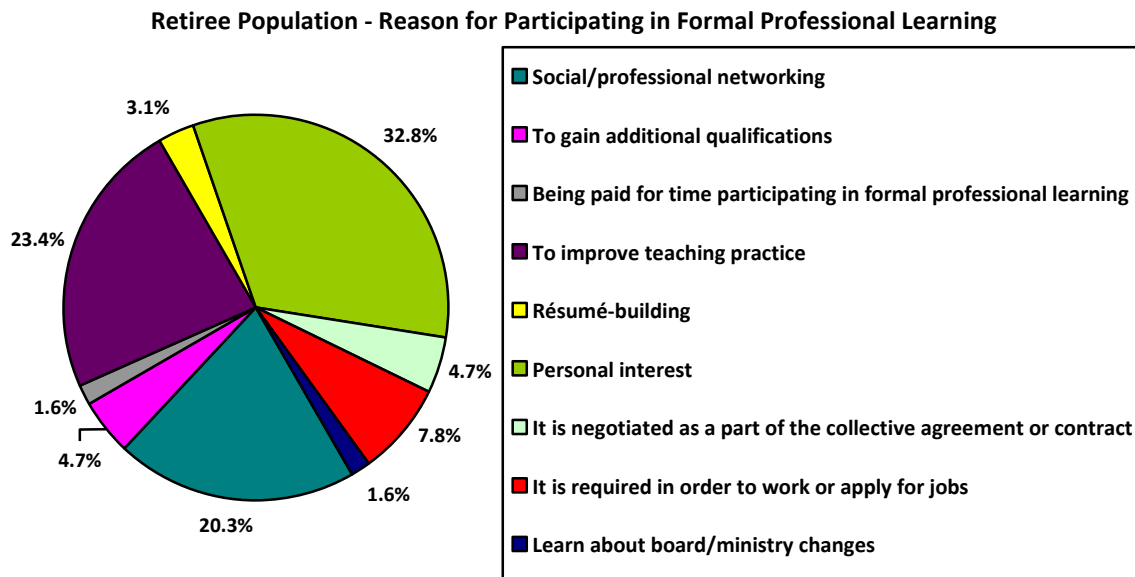
Eighty-one percent of the general occasional teacher population participated in formal professional learning. Retirees had a lower participation rate of 53% with 47% of these respondents indicating that they did not participate in any type of formal professional learning opportunities within the past 12 months. It is not surprising that there is a reduced level of engagement in formal professional learning from retirees; it is reflective of findings from previous studies on the subject. For example, it was difficult to find and secure retiree participation in the focus groups for this study. As a sub-group, retirees were the least represented in the online survey as their participation was relatively poor. Retirees have indicated they: a) do not feel they need any more formal professional learning as the expertise gained from their long teaching careers provides them with the necessary skills to successfully teach occasionally, b) they have no interest in participating in any more formal professional learning, c) they tend to have an established professional working network created from their years of full-time teaching and therefore do not need to participate in any type of formal professional learning to network for more work and d) they do not intend to pursue a full-time teaching position in the future and are not interested in using formal professional learning events as a way to build their résumé. These reasons were provided when retirees answered the question of why they were not participating in any type of formal professional learning (discussed next). It is interesting that the engagement level is of almost 50% for this group, but this may be because those few who are motivated to participate in formal professional learning are over represented in this online survey.

### *No professional learning*

Eighteen retirees provided a reason for not participating in any formal professional learning. The main reason was that they were recently retired and did not see the need to attend any formal professional learning.

### *Reason for participating in professional learning experience*

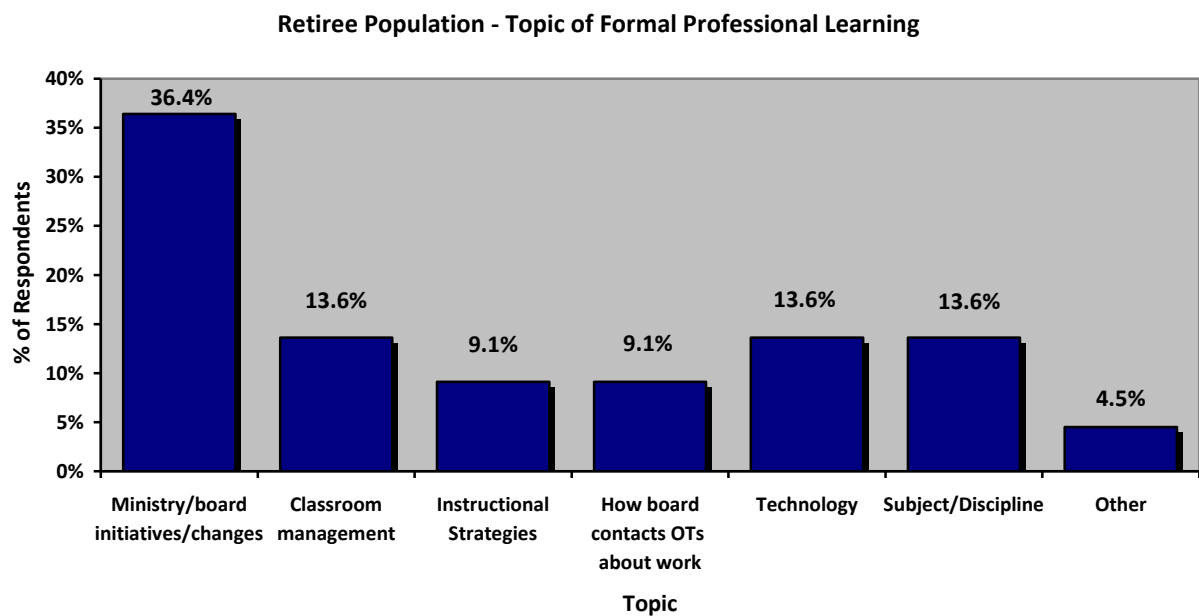
In comparison to the entire sample, retirees appeared to participate in formal professional learning more for social/professional networking reasons (20%) and personal interest (33%) than the general population (13%) and (19%) respectively. Retirees reflected the desire similar to the general population to participate in formal professional learning opportunities to improve their teaching practice (23%), but had less of an interest in gaining additional qualifications (5%), increase in pay (0%) or résumé building (3%).



**Figure 38. Retiree Population - Reason for Participating in Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Topic of the formal professional learning*

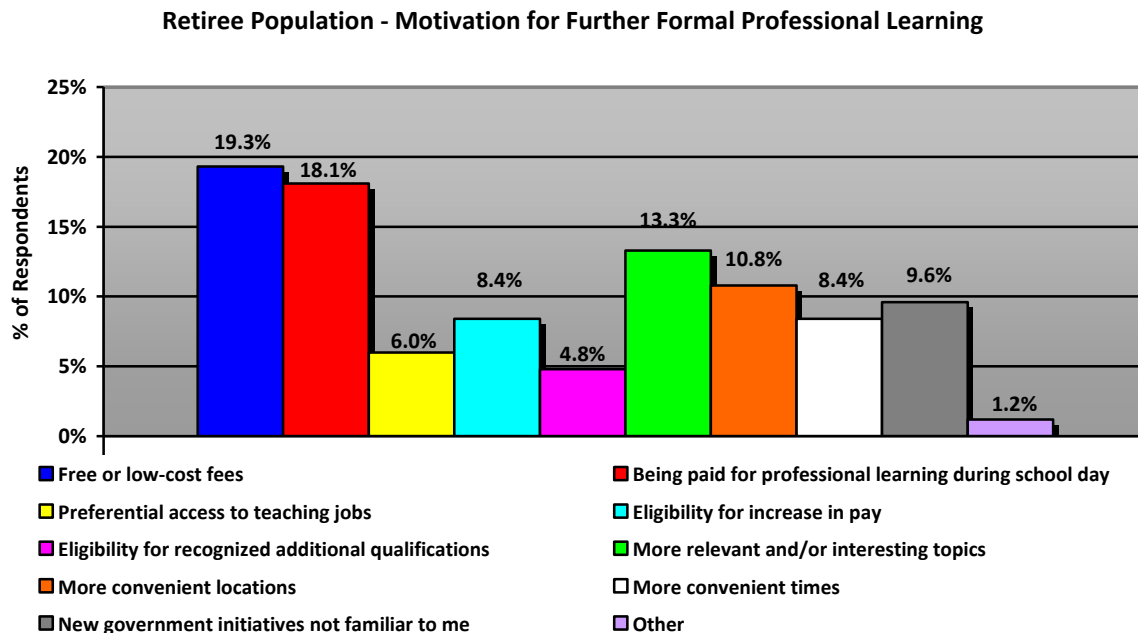
The retirees who participated, did not participate in formal professional learning that focused on: assessment, developing and coaching athletes, how to secure more work or legal issues. This does not mean they were not interested in these topics -- there may not have been any formal professional learning opportunities for a particular region, or the time and location may not have been convenient. The most prevalent topic of formal professional learning that retirees engaged in was that of information about ministry/board implemented policies/program initiatives and changes (36%). Of lesser prevalence were topics around classroom management (14%), technology (14%), subject or discipline area (14%) and instructional strategies (9%) and how the local board contacts occasional teachers for daily work (9%).



**Figure 39. Retiree Population - Topic of Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Further formal professional learning*

Retirees also responded to the question of what would motivate them to participate in further formal professional learning. Retirees, similar to the general population, reported that being paid for the time spent in formal professional learning would motivate them to participate further (18%). Free or low-cost fees (19%) for formal professional learning opportunities was also something that retirees in this survey thought would encourage them to participate in more professional learning. Being eligible for an increase in pay (8%) or for improved qualifications/formal recognition (5%) or preferential access to jobs (6%) did not appear to be as strong an incentive for retirees. This comes as no surprise as an increase in pay may have an adverse effect on the pension retirees collect. Retirees in the focus groups also indicated that they were not interested in further qualifications as in most cases the occasional teaching was being used as a way of transitioning out of their teaching career. Considering that the majority of retirees who do occasional teaching do so in the school and or district to which they have spent their entire teaching career, most have few issues with access to daily occasional work and therefore are not engaged in strategies meant to increase the frequency of their work. Lastly, retired teacher who teach occasionally have a limited number of days that they can teach and most do not have any difficulty reaching this amount of work.

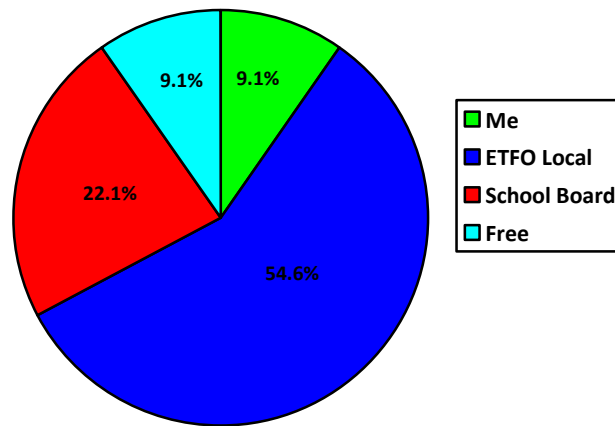


**Figure 40. Retiree Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Funding for formal professional learning*

While almost half of the general population indicated that they paid for the formal professional learning (46%), only 9% of retirees paid for the formal professional learning. Retirees in their responses indicated that union locals (55%) and school boards (22%) paid for their formal professional learning or it was free (9%).

**Retiree Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning**

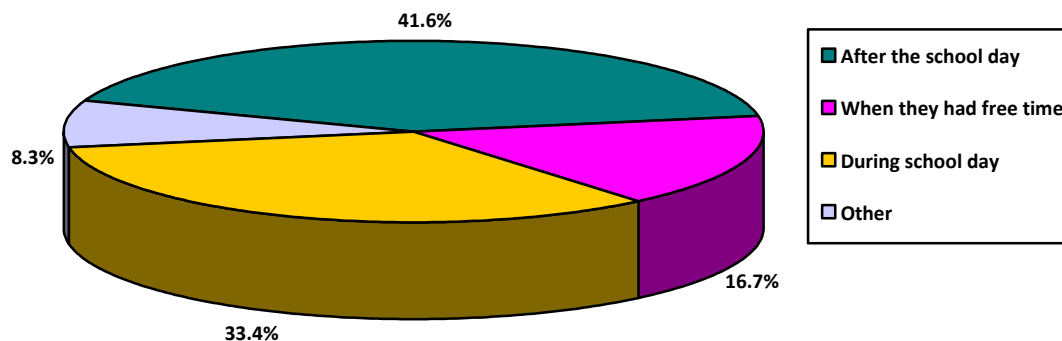


**Figure 41. Retiree Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Time of day*

For those retirees who did participate in formal professional learning, 42% indicated that they did so after the school day while another 33% indicated that they engage in formal professional learning during the school day.

**Retiree Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred**



**Figure 42. Retiree Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred.**

### *Convenient timing*

Only 24 retirees responded when asked if the above times were convenient for them. Of these responses 22 indicated that yes these times were convenient for them and two indicated that no these times were not convenient for them.



### What month

Fifty-two retirees answered that the months of the year that they felt were not suitable times for formal professional earning were: January (13%), February (13%), July (21%), August (18%) and December (10%). It appears for retirees who participated in this study, the more suitable months for formal professional learning were: March, April, May, September, October and November.

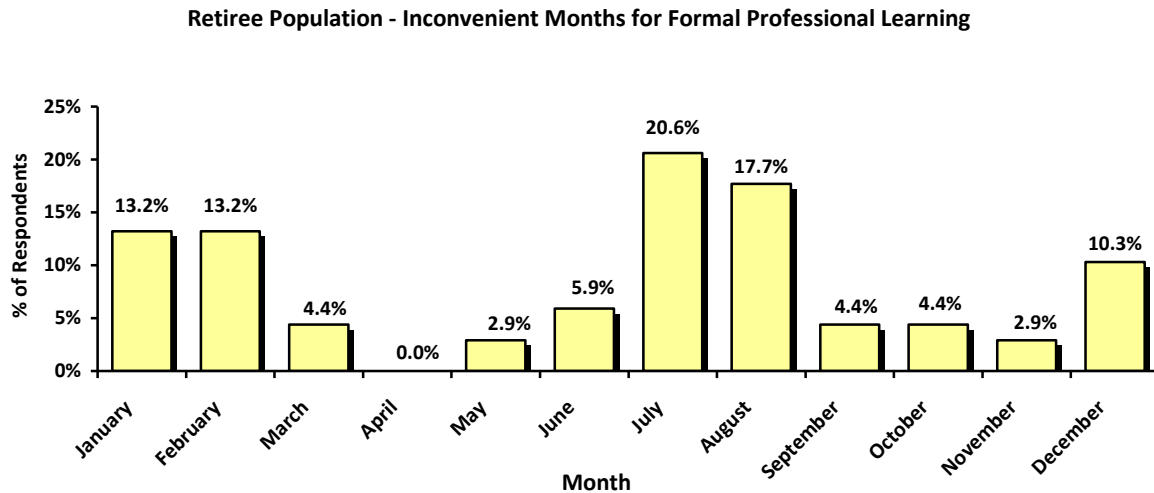


Figure 43. Retiree Population - Inconvenient Months for Formal Professional Learning.

### Travel

Out of the twenty-eight retirees that responded to this question, 18% indicated that there was no reason related to travel that prevented them from participating in formal professional learning. For retirees, weather/road conditions (27%), cost (accommodations, meals, etc.,) (25%) and time/distance in rural areas (18%) were the most prevalent travel factors for them in attending formal professional learning opportunities.

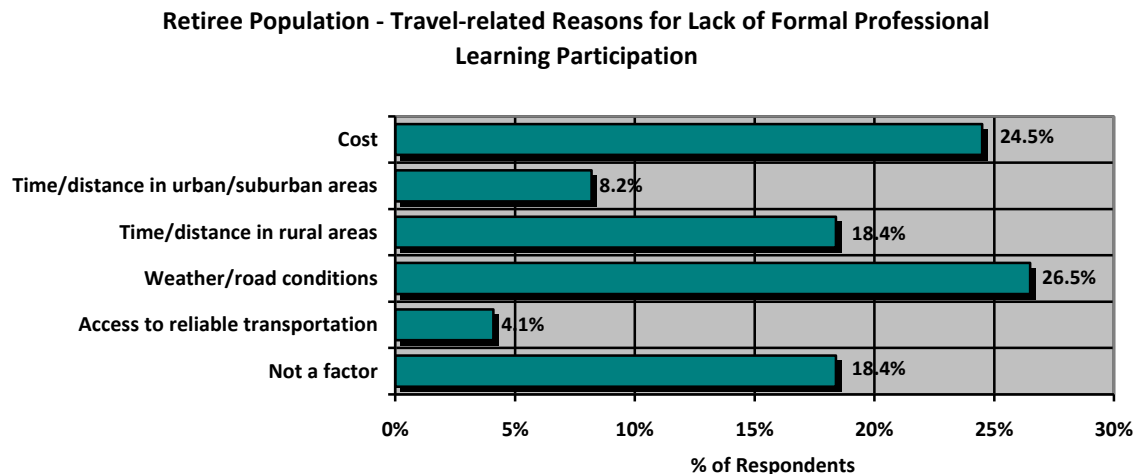
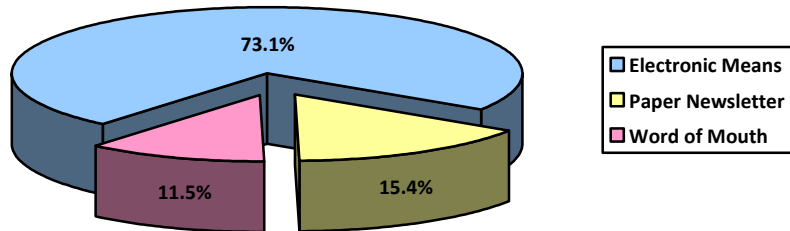


Figure 44. Retiree Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation.

### *Learning about formal professional learning opportunities*

While retirees tended to also learn about formal professional learning opportunities through electronic means (73%), they also relied more on paper newsletters (15%) more than the general occasional teacher population (6%).

**Retiree Population - Learning about Formal Professional Learning Opportunities**



**Figure 45. Retiree Population - Learning about Formal Professional Learning Opportunities.**

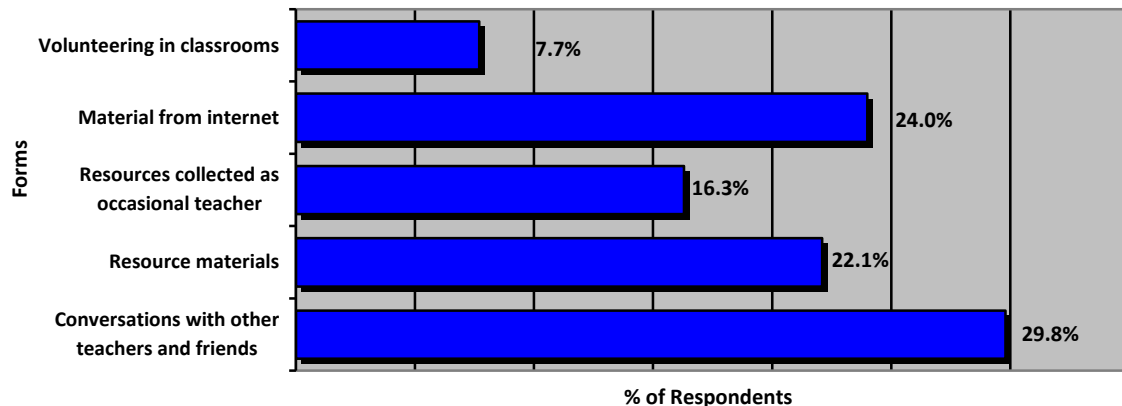
## **INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Informal professional learning for this study was defined as any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, playing a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

### *Most prevalent*

Retirees as a group demonstrated similar ways of engaging in informal learning as the general population. The only difference is that they might rely slightly less on collecting resources while working as an occasional teacher. This is not surprising because most retired teachers already have a substantial supply of resources that they collected over their years of full-time teaching.

**Retiree Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning**



**Figure 46. Retiree Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning.**

### *Mentoring*

Not surprisingly, the majority of retirees indicated that they were not mentored. However, there were 6 who indicated that they did engage in informal mentoring around the areas of classroom management, instructional strategies, understanding school culture, how to secure more work and subject/discipline.

### *Online sources*

Almost 80% of retirees responded that they use online sources. While the general population of occasional teachers tend to use a variety of online sources, retirees responding to this study tend to rely on websites (41%) and emails (32%); a small percentage also use online journals (9%). Retirees indicated that much of their online use centred mainly on subjects/disciplines (65%) and instructional strategies (15%). It is interesting to note that retirees do little searching for information on classroom management.

### *Virtual learning community*

Seventy-seven percent of retirees indicated that they would participate in a virtual learning community for occasional teachers. But a poor response rate made it impossible to determine what support would need to be in place for retirees to participate in the virtual learning community.

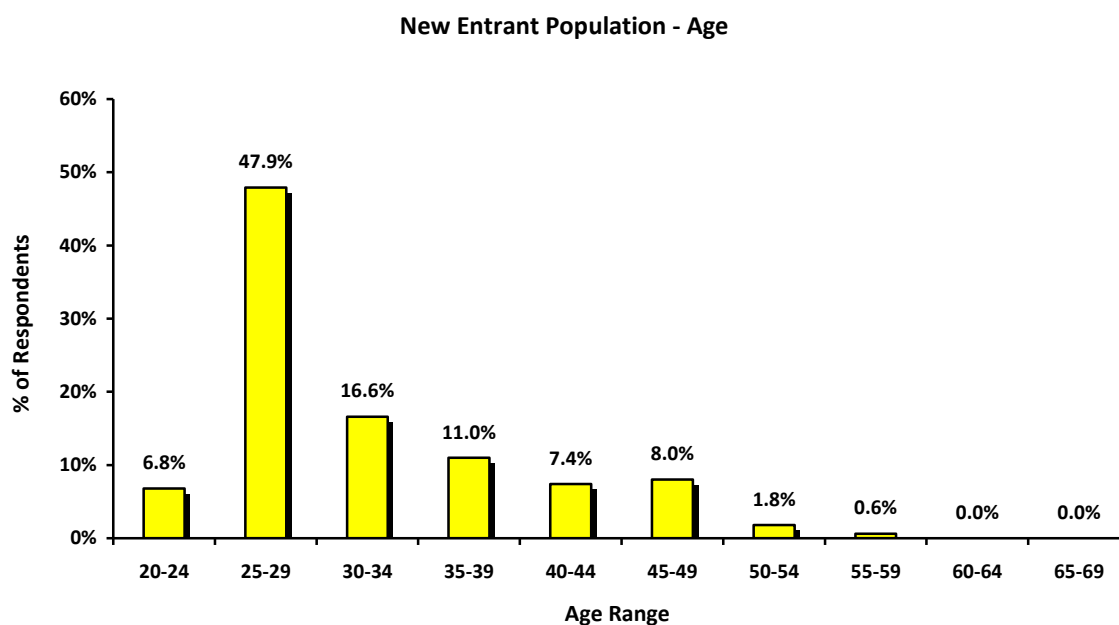
## NEW ENTRANTS

New entrants in this study are people who just completed their teacher education program and have not had any prior experience teaching: they are new to the teaching profession. With regard to the online survey, new entrants were determined by graduation year and could not have held a teaching position within Canada (another province or in a private school/system) or outside of Canada. Because of the current labour market for teachers, only teachers who graduated within the past 5 years were chosen. Out of the survey responses, 165 people were identified as new entrants: almost half (45%) the survey responses came from new entrants. As a group new entrants had the highest completion rate for the online survey questions, meaning they answered almost all of the questions asked.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### *Age*

While the age range reflects the general occasional teacher population, 55% of new entrants were under 30 years of age, and 83% were under 40 years of age.



**Figure 47. New Entrant Population - Age.**

### *Gender*

All 165 people indicated their gender: 10% male and 90% female. These percentages reflect the general occasional teacher population ratio of 1:9, males to females.

## Heritage

When asked about heritage, 36% of new entrants indicated that they identified with the British Isles (England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales), 23% identified with Western European (France, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain and Greece) and 20% indicated they were Canadian.

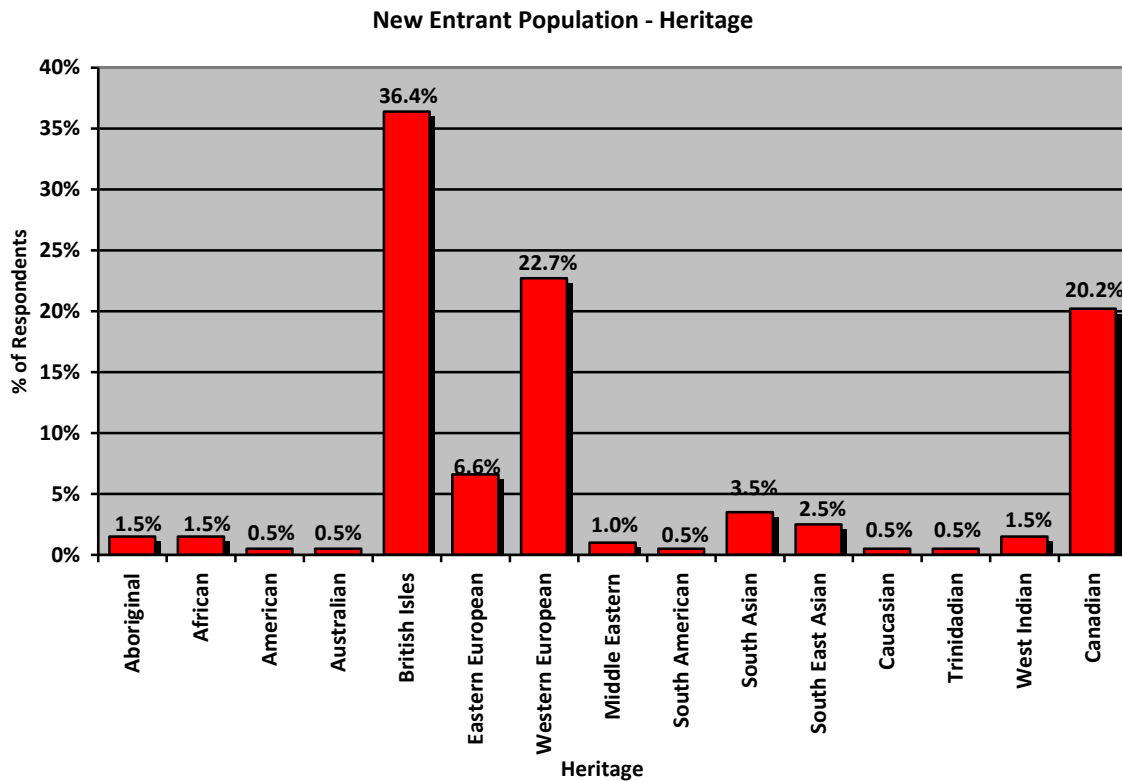


Figure 48. New Entrant Population - Heritage.

## Language

Ninety-two percent of all new entrants indicated their first language with English. The other 8% is made up of marginal representation of other languages such as Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Dutch, Farsi, French, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, and Punjabi.

## EDUCATION

### *Year degree granted*

About 50% of new entrants received their education degree in years 2007 and 2008. Not surprising, new entrants because of their very nature of being new to the profession would have graduated within the past few years.

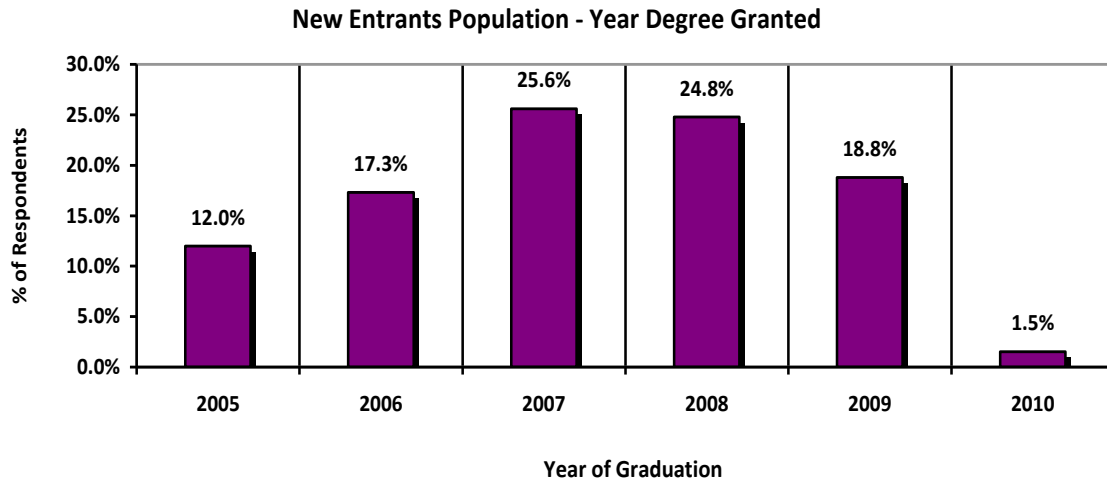


Figure 49. New Entrants Population - Year Degree Granted.

### *Place degree was granted*

All new entrants responded to questions around their education background. Eighty-one percent pointed out that they had received their degree in Canada. Of those who received their degree in Canada, 94% did so in Ontario. Of those who did not receive their degree in Canada, many indicated they received their degree mainly from the United States (81%) and Australia (19%).

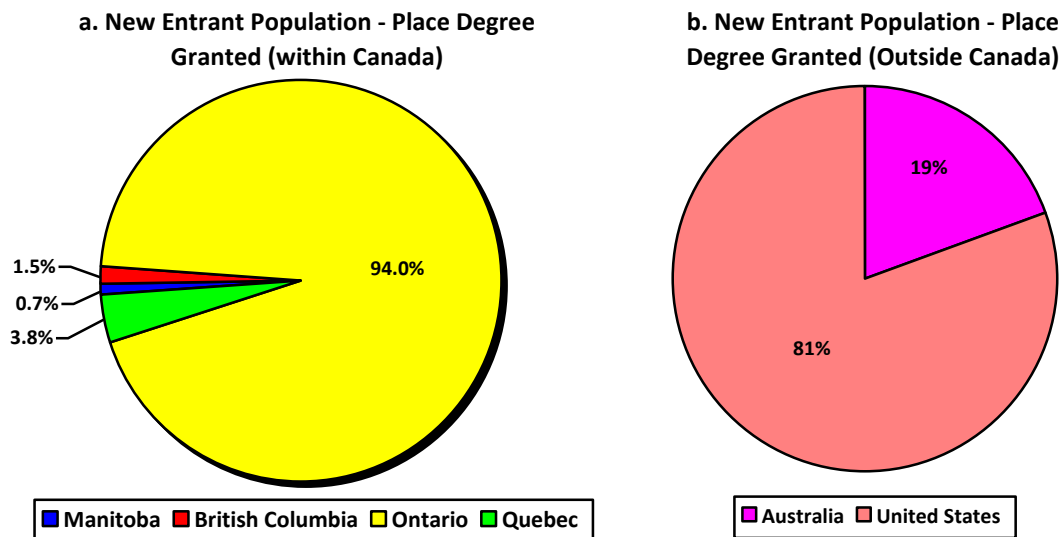


Figure 50a and b. New Entrant Population - Place Degree Granted.

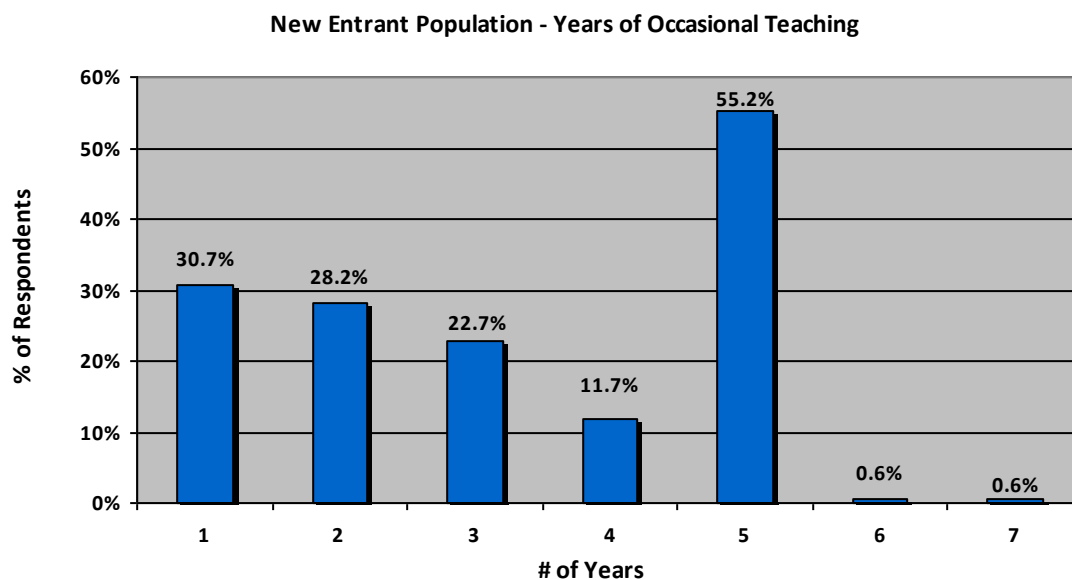
### *Language of instruction*

The language of instruction for new entrants responding to this question on the online survey was almost one hundred percent (99%) English.

## **WORK**

### *Years of occasional teaching*

The majority (82%) of new entrants indicated they have three or less years of experience as an occasional teacher. This reflects what the Ontario Ministry of Education has stated and the Ontario College of Teachers has reported: teachers new to the professional will most likely teach occasionally before many of them will secure a full-time permanent teaching position (McIntyre 2006).



**Figure 51. New Entrant Population - Years of Occasional Teaching.**

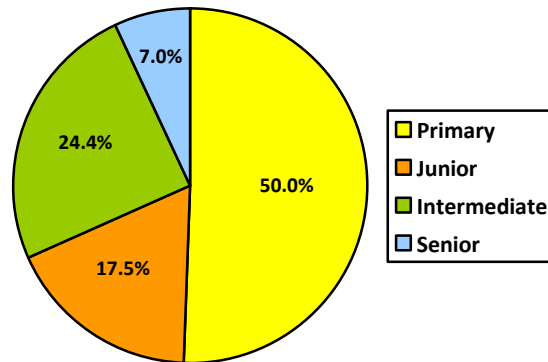
### *Current employment status*

Of those new entrants who responded, sixty-four percent currently work on a day-to-day basis while 29% were working in an LTO at the time of the data collection. Few (6%) held both types of working arrangements.

### *Area certified to teach*

The areas new entrants reported certified to teach reflected that of the general occasional teacher population. Again this may be in part because the targeted population were members of ETFO that by definition of their membership are teachers teaching at the primary and junior level.

**New Entrant Population - Area Certified to Teach**

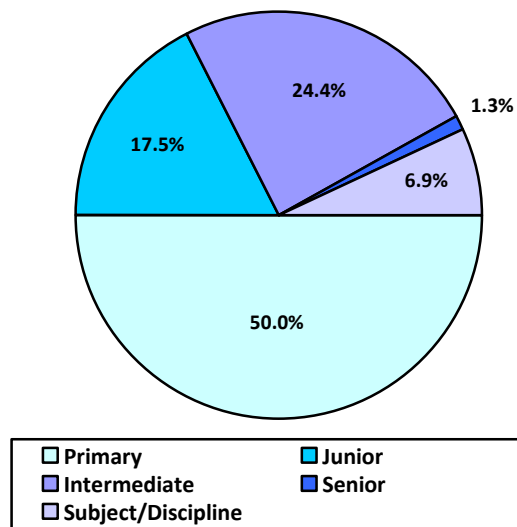


**Figure 52. New Entrant Population - Area Certified to Teach.**

### *Areas new entrants taught the most last year*

New entrants mainly identified with the division they taught within the past 12 months (93%), few indicated the subject or discipline (7%).

**Divisions New Entrants Taught the Most Last Year**



**Figure 53. Divisions and Subject/Discipline New Entrants Taught the Most Last Year.**



### Teaching in areas not certified to teach

Twenty-seven percent of new entrants indicated that they did *not* teach in an area that they were not certified to teach; this reflects the same percentage as the general occasional teacher population. In terms of subject area or discipline, 18% indicated that they had taught French.

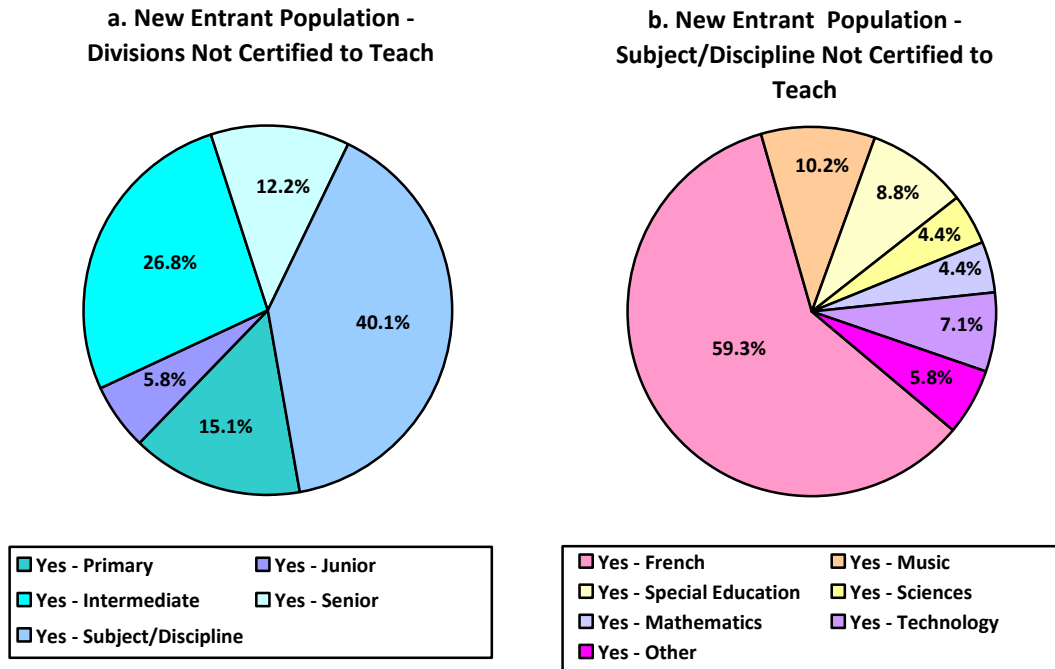


Figure 54a and b. New Entrant Population -Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach.

### Number of school boards

Almost 80% of new entrants taught for only one school district. Sixteen percent taught for two and a mere 4% worked in three or more school boards last year. This is reflective of the general occasional teacher population.

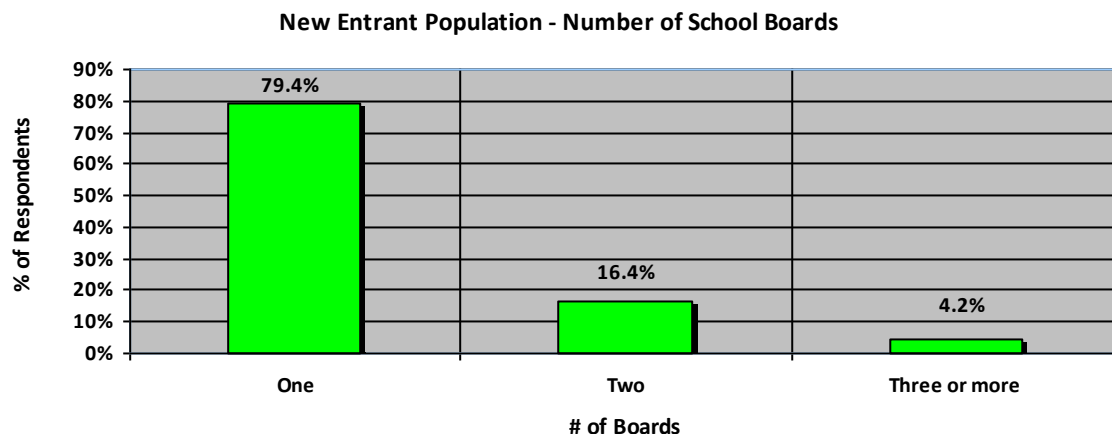


Figure 55. New Entrant Population - Number of School Boards.

## FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

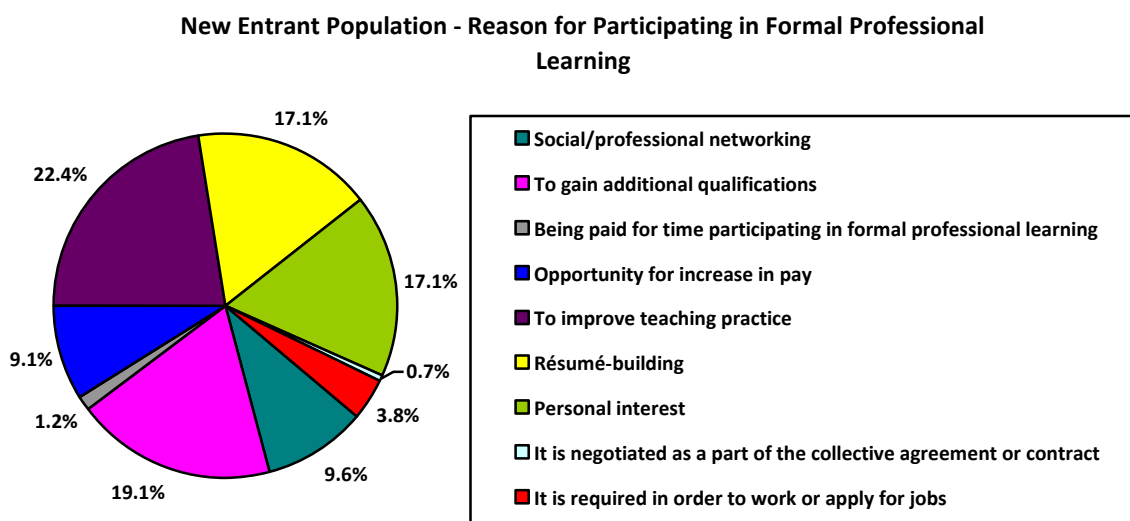
New entrants engaged in slightly (87% as opposed to 81% for the general occasional teacher population) more formal professional learning. This finding is consistent with the findings from the focus groups where many new entrants described how they tried to engage in substantial formal professional learning for a variety of reasons. Thirteen percent indicated that they had not participated in any type of professional learning last year.

### *No professional learning*

Only 22 new entrants indicated that they had not participated in any form of formal professional learning within the last school year. Of those who responded, seven pointed out that they had difficulty accessing information about formal professional learning for occasional teachers, one new entrant claimed to be new to occasional teaching, three did not have time, seven pointed to cost as a factor, two did not find any of the present professional learning helpful for occasional teaching, another two people indicated that they had taken all of the formal professional learning available to them and nothing new has been offered.

### *Reason for participating in formal professional learning*

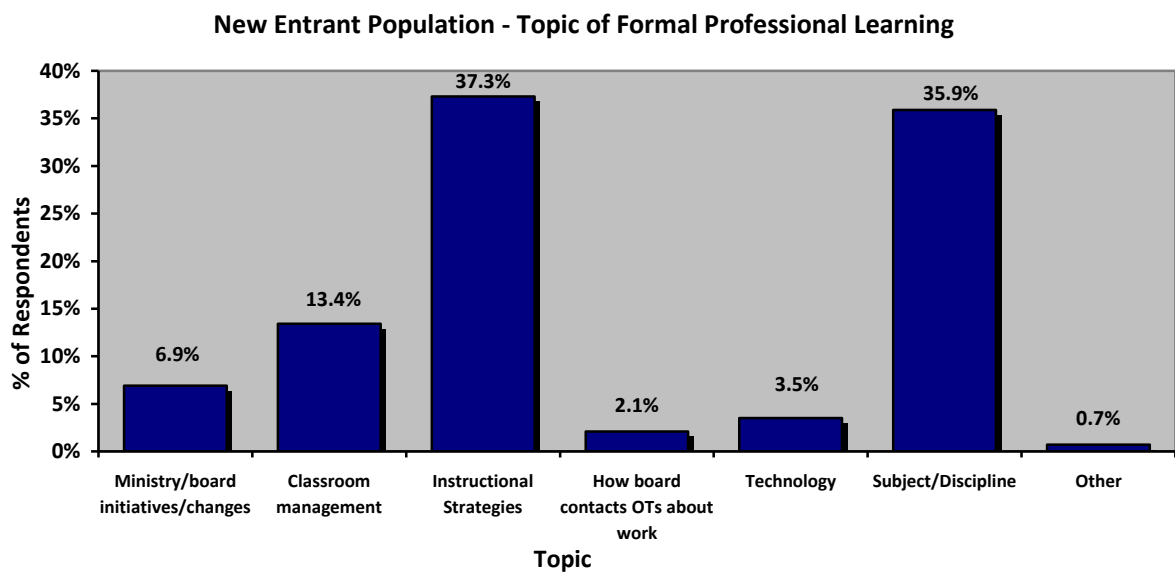
Improving teaching practice (22%) was one of the more prevalent responses for why new entrants engaged in formal professional learning. But new entrants also indicated that gaining additional qualifications (19%), résumé building (17%), and personal interest (17%) were also reasons why they participate in formal professional learning. None of the new entrants who participated in the online survey participate in any professional development around new ministry initiatives or programs. This is not surprising, as many would have received some information or experience through their teacher education program and teacher practicum.



**Figure 56. New Entrant Population - Reason for Participating in Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Topic of the formal professional learning*

Of the 145 responses, new entrants indicated that the formal professional learning they attended focused on: instructional strategies (37%), subject /discipline (36%), classroom management (13%), ministry/board implemented policies/program initiatives and changes (7%) and technology (3%). While new entrants indicated that ministry/board implemented policies/program initiatives were not a reason for taking specific professional learning, they did however engage in professional learning that was of this nature. It can only be assumed that they did so not because of the professional learning content but for other reasons such as networking and résumé building.



**Figure 57. New Entrant Population - Topic of Formal Professional Learning.**

### Further formal professional learning

Similar to the general occasional teacher population, new entrants who provided information about what would motivate them to participate in further formal professional learning pointed out that having preferential access to teaching jobs (17%) would be a substantial motivator, followed by free or low-cost fees for enrolment (16%), eligibility for pay increase (16%), and being paid for the time spent in formal professional learning opportunities (15%). To a lesser degree, more relevant /interesting topics (9%), and more convenient locations (5%) and times (4%) were also indicated.

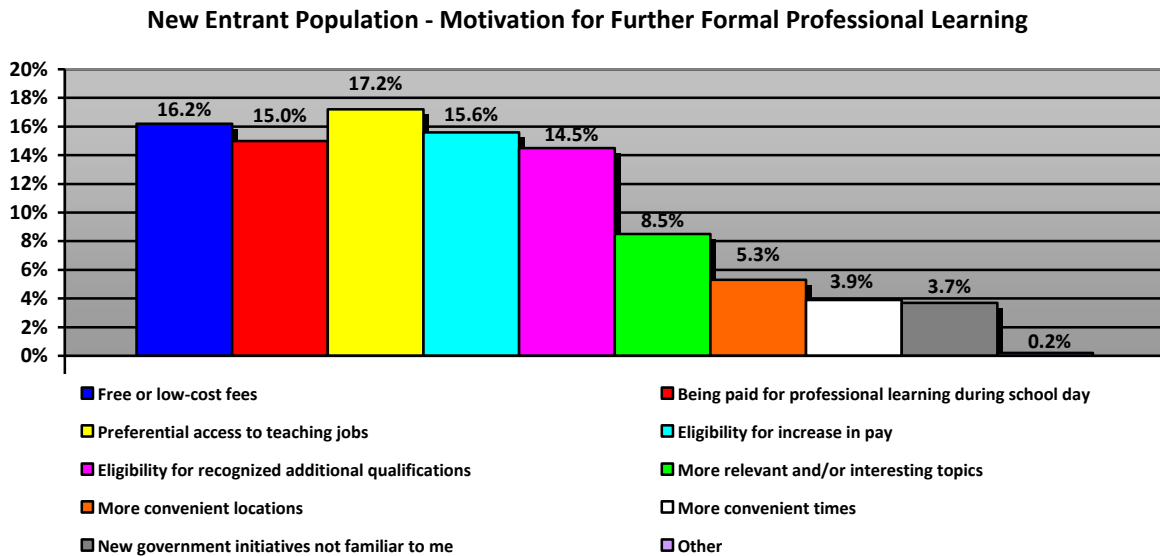


Figure 58. New Entrant Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning.

### Funding for formal professional learning

While retirees appeared to be the group who paid for little formal professional learning out of their own pocket, new entrants seem to be the group that paid for most of their formal professional learning (60%). The school board (19%) and local union (17%) also appear to have sponsored some of the formal professional learning that new entrants attended.

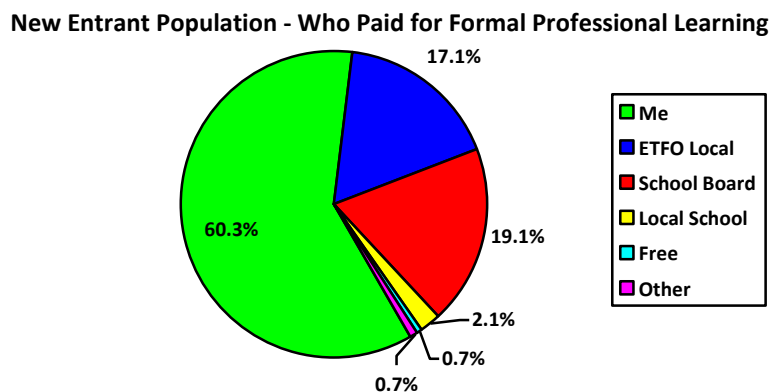
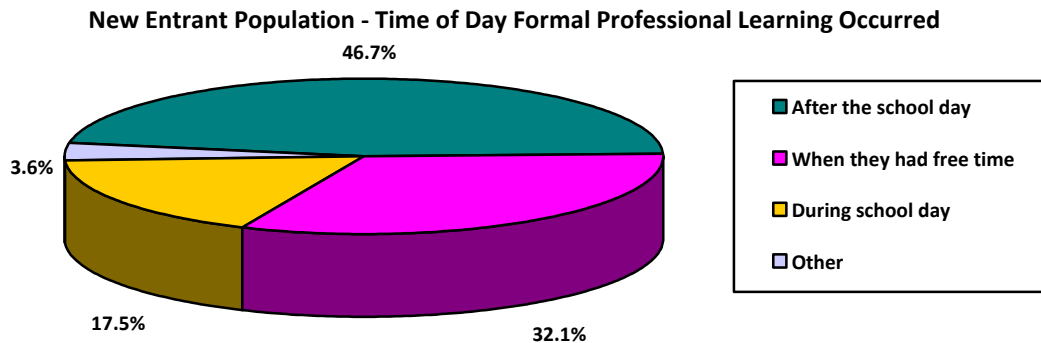


Figure 59. New Entrant Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning.

### *Time of day*

Forty-seven percent of new entrants indicated that they engaged in formal professional learning after the school day, while 32% indicated when they had free time. Of the 144 responses, 87% of new entrants indicated that the following times were convenient for them.



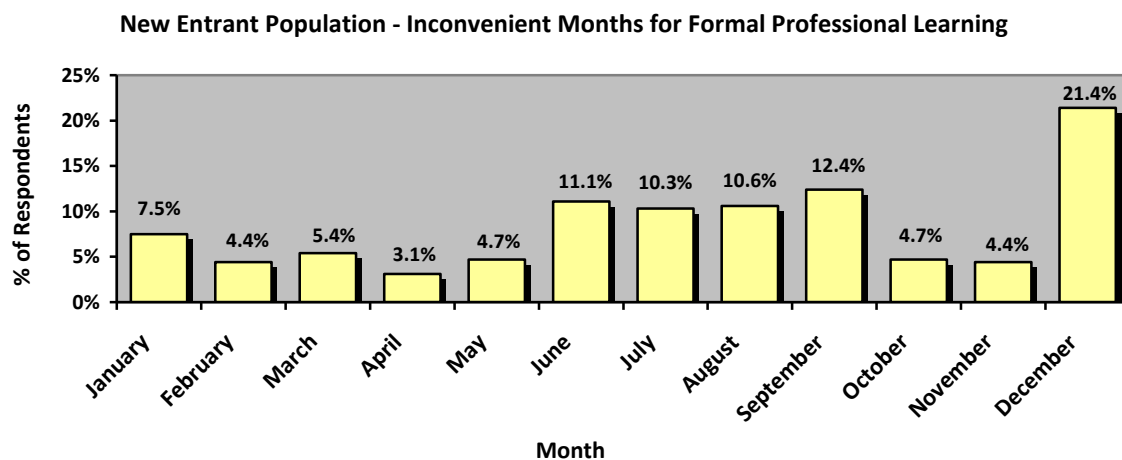
**Figure 60. New Entrant Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred.**

### *Convenient timing*

Only 20 new entrants responded to why these times were not convenient. Some of the reasons cited included: conflicted with paid work; conflicted with family responsibilities; and not enough time to travel to location of session.

### *What month*

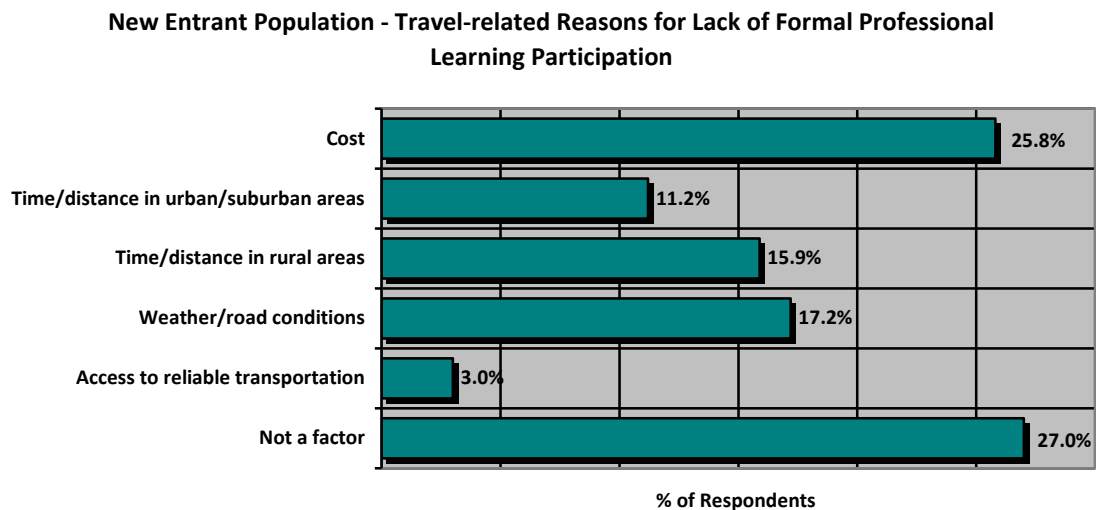
New entrants reported slightly different responses concerning what months of the year are not convenient to participate in formal professional learning. In this online survey new entrants indicated that December (21%), June (11%), July (10%), and September (12%) were not suitable months for formal professional learning. April again seemed to be the most appropriate month to hold formal professional learning for new entrants.



**Figure 61. New Entrant Population - Inconvenient Months for Formal Professional Learning.**

## Travel

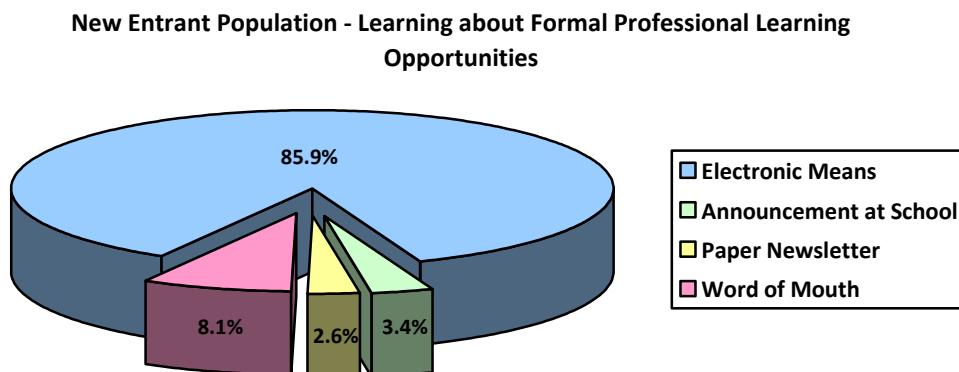
Of the 150 new entrants who responded to whether or not there were reasons related to travelling that prevented them from participating in formal professional learning, 27% indicated that there were no reasons related to travel that prevented them from participating in formal professional learning. The other 73% indicated a number of reasons: cost played a large factor (26%).



**Figure 62. New Entrant Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation.**

## Learning about formal professional learning opportunities

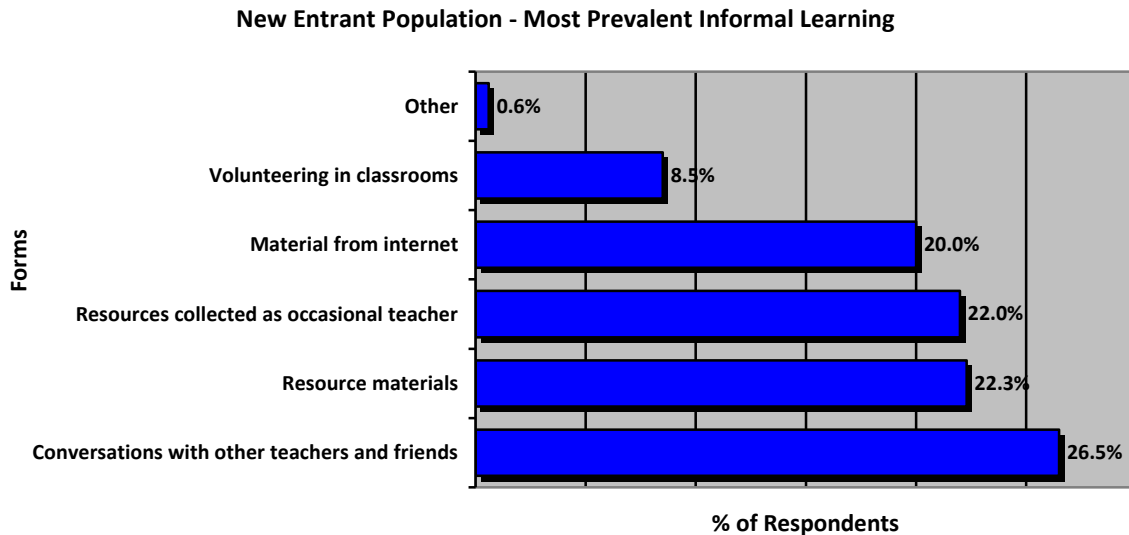
The majority of new entrants learned about formal learning opportunities via electronic means (86%). This is consistent with the general occasional teacher population.



**Figure 63. New Entrant Population - Learning about Formal Professional Learning Opportunities.**

## INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

New entrants identified a number of ways they engage in informal professional learning. Some of these included: Conversations with other teachers and friends (26%), gathering resource material from books, professional journals and academic journals (22%), pulling together material from the internet (20%), collecting resources while working as an occasional teacher (22%) and volunteering in a classroom (9%). These responses reflect that of the general occasional teacher population.



**Figure 64. New Entrant Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning.**

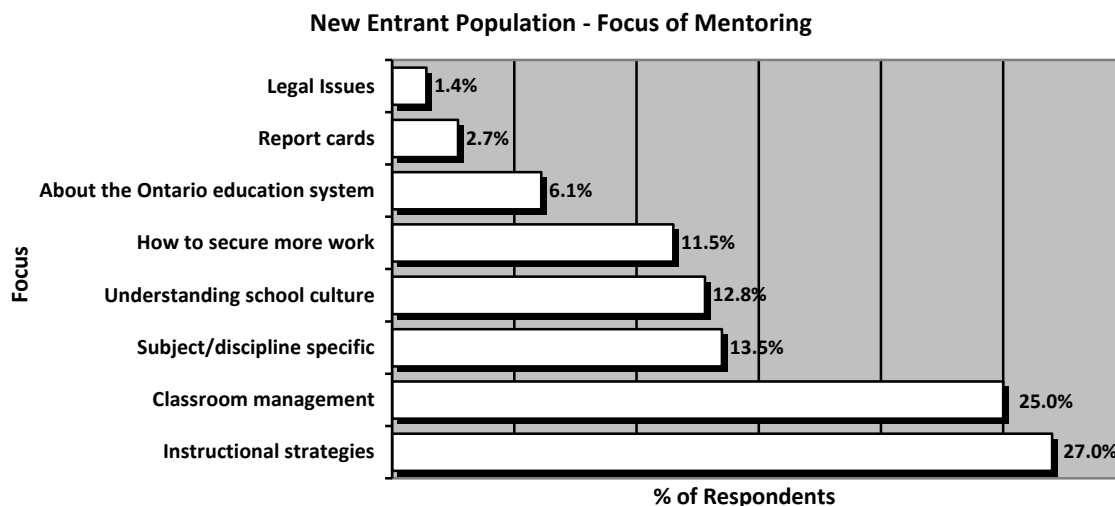
### *Mentoring*

All new entrants responded to whether or not they have been mentored. Only 38% of new entrants indicated that they were mentored either formally or informally. This low percentage is surprising as the general occasional teacher population indicated 70% that they did receive some type of mentoring. This statistic is interesting because the Ontario Ministry of Education has launched the New Teach Induction Program (NTIP) which is supposed to include new teachers who are occasional teachers teaching in an LTO position for 97 or more consecutive days. Of all the sub-groups of occasional teachers (retirees, career occasional teachers, teachers in the north, internationally educated occasional teachers, and new entrants), new entrants as a group have greater access to formal mentoring than any other group. It would seem that many of the new entrants have not had an opportunity to participate in the NTIP program. On the other hand, only 24% of the entire population that indicated they had been mentored stated that it was formal, concluding that the majority of the mentoring occurred informally. It could be argued that retirees, career occasional teachers, teachers in the north somehow either because of their prior work experience or living situation have the ability to create and maintain informal networks that include informal mentoring to help them succeed at their work whereas teachers new to the system have few prior professional networks to

fall back on and are just beginning to establish these supports. New entrants might not seek out mentoring formally or informally because of some beliefs, attitudes and understandings around occasional teaching that might dissuade new entrants from seeking mentoring. For example, new entrants are new to the profession; they, as a group, have not established any kind of professional history and are in the process of proving themselves among other teaching colleagues. They are also in a vulnerable position where some action or inaction could cost them future work with a particular school or school district. For this reason, many new entrants are hesitant to admit they might need some professional assistance as it could be perceived as a sign of weakness. Lastly, school administrations tend to favour occasional teachers who are able to do their job with the least amount of disruption or additional work (Pollock, 2008). This means that occasional teachers who request time from either administrators or other teachers are not always highly favoured but rather can be perceived as a burden to an already heavy workload.

### *Focus of mentoring*

Reflective of the general occasional teacher population, new entrants indicated that their main focus of the mentoring was on instructional strategies (27%), classroom management (25%), and subject/discipline (14%).

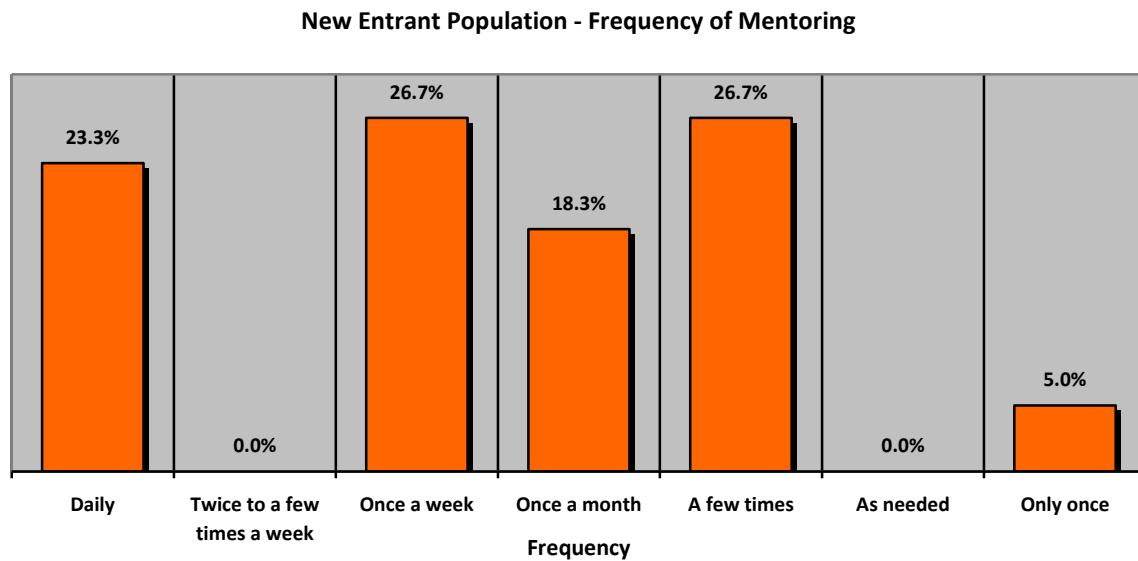


**Figure 65. New Entrant Population - Focus of Mentoring.**



### *Frequency of mentoring*

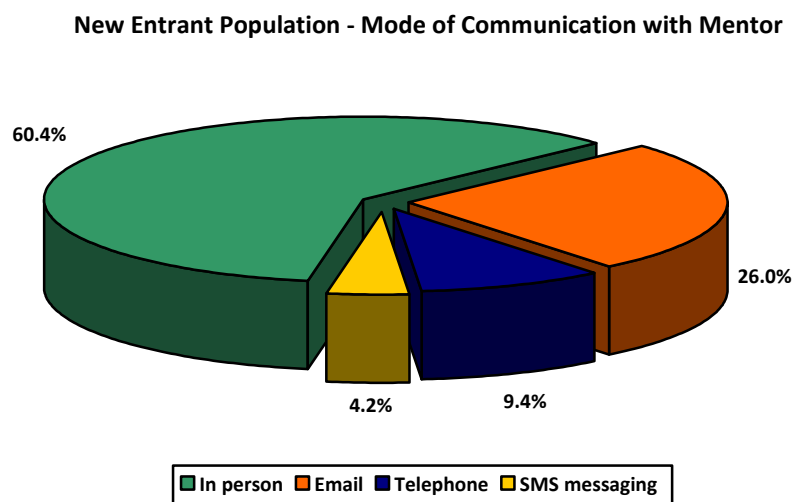
Of those new entrants who are receiving mentoring (formally or informally), they do so more frequently than the general occasional teacher population. For example, new entrants receive more daily mentoring (23%) and weekly mentoring (26%).



**Figure 66. New Entrant Population - Frequency of Mentoring.**

### *Mode of communication with mentor*

New entrants that are mentored appear to communicate in similar ways than the general occasional teacher population. The only slight differences are a decrease in phone conversations and a slight increase in texting and in personal contact.



**Figure 67. New Entrant Population - Mode of Communication with Mentor.**

### Online sources

All new entrants responded to the question: Do you consult online sources? Eighty-seven percent replied yes and 13% replied no they did not consult online sources.

### Types of online sources

For the most part it appears that new entrants engage in the various types of online sources at a slightly higher rate than the general occasional teacher population, but it is statistically insignificant.

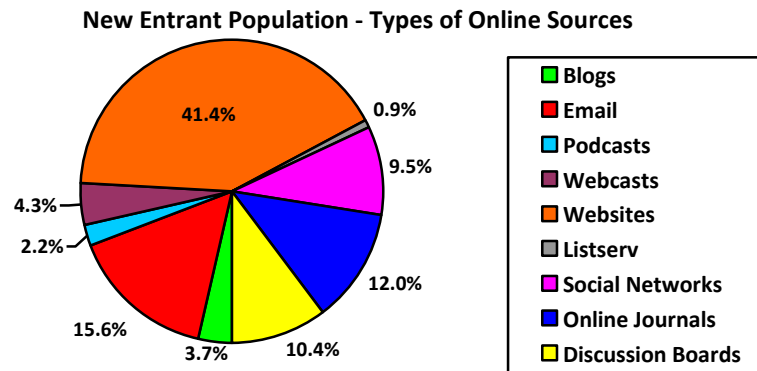


Figure 68. New Entrant Population - Types of Online Sources.

### Content of online sources

New entrants appeared to be very specific about what information they searched for online. Specifically, they were interested in subject/discipline information (59%), instructional strategies (29%) and classroom management strategies (11%). While the general occasional teacher population appears to use online sources mainly for instructional strategies (70%), new entrants do not. New entrants appear to seek fewer resources about classroom management. This could be because current education programs might better prepare new entrants for occasional teaching or new entrants feel more confident because of their recent training or they may have been educated on the most up-to-date practices in the education field. New entrants seemed to concentrate more on subject and/or discipline (59%) and this could be attributed to the fact that new entrants tend to be non-discriminant about the daily work they accept and for this reason find themselves teaching in subjects and disciplines that they have little expert knowledge, understanding or skill.

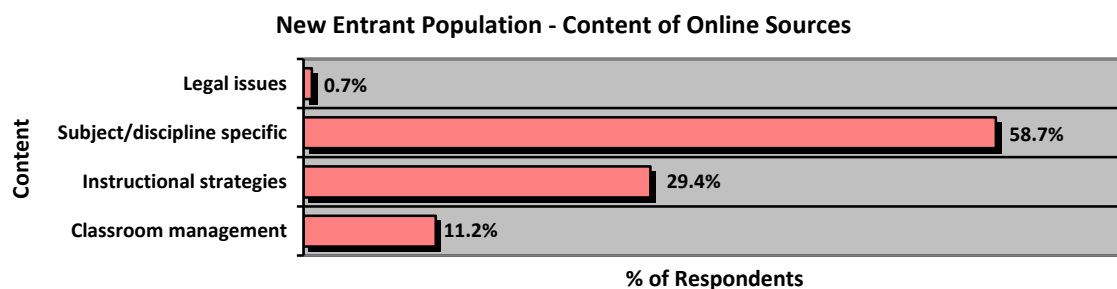
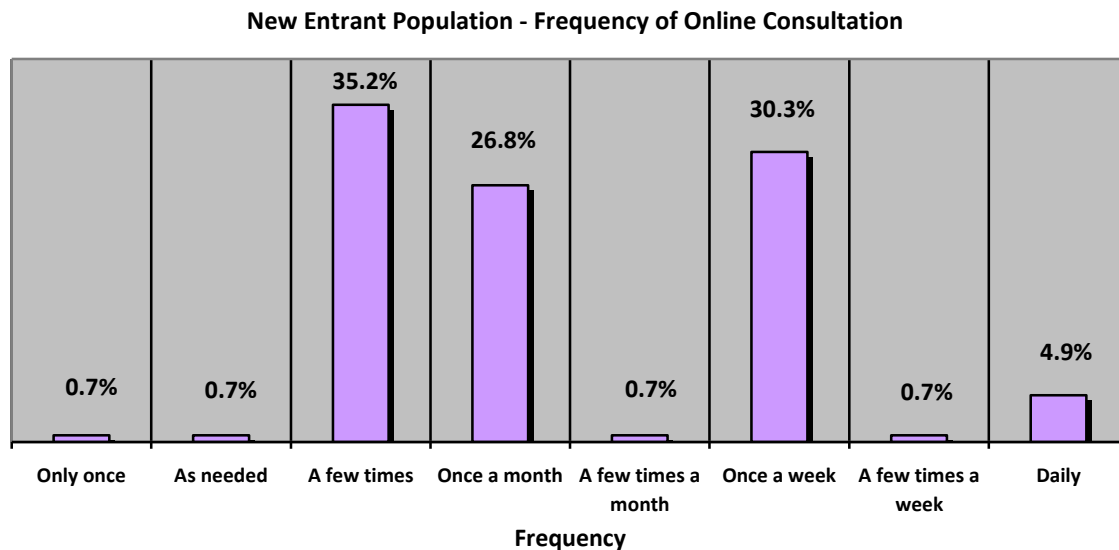


Figure 69. New Entrant Population - Content of Online Sources.

### *Frequency of consultation*

New entrants appear to consult online sources slightly more frequently than the general occasional teacher population.



**Figure 70. New Entrant Population - Frequency of Online Consultation.**

### *Virtual learning community*

Many new entrants indicated that they would support virtual learning communities for occasional teachers (87%).

#### *Support for virtual learning community*

A low number of responses came from new entrants when they were asked what needed to be in place to consider participating in a virtual learning community (37%). The low response rate may have occurred because 87% indicated that they would participate in a virtual learning community for occasional teachers and felt that there did not have to be anything in place for them to participate. Of the 17 new entrants who did respond, they also reflected some of the same motivators that the general population pointed out with regard to participating in a virtual learning community. For instance, new entrants in this study highlighted that the content of the virtual learning community would have to be relevant to occasional teaching (21%), the responses would have to be credible (18%) and that the information be current (16%).

## ***CAREER OCCASIONAL TEACHERS***

Defining career occasional teachers for this study was rather complex as the category was meant to capture a group of experienced teachers who have decided to *not* pursue a full-time permanent teaching position and perceived their occasional teaching as (their) career. Those who considered occasional teaching as an entry point into the teaching profession with hopes of securing a full-time teaching position (such as many new entrants and internationally educated occasional teachers) were not included in this category. For example, those teachers who are recently graduated (within the past five years), and are seeking full-time permanent teaching were excluded from this category. Teachers with this work history fall under the new entrant category. Even teachers who fall under this category (five years or less of occasional teaching) and were not seeking full-time employment were excluded as well because it is assumed they were still new to the profession as opposed to other teachers who have been working for a longer time. Generally, experienced career occasional teachers who have been working in the occasional work arrangement for a while have established some sets of work routines, a reputation, and relatively consistent employment within a number of schools. These experienced career occasional teachers are thought to have specific professional learning needs that are somewhat different from those of new entrants, retirees and internationally educated teachers.

There is, however, a small group of teachers who have taught occasionally for a decade or more and still hope to enter the teacher workforce full-time. These teachers were excluded from this category because their desire for full-time teaching is an additional motivation to participate in particular kinds of professional learning similar to new entrants.

Those teachers who perceive occasional teaching as part of a transitioning process out of the profession such as that experienced by some retired teachers were also excluded. For example, any participants who indicated they were retired were removed because retired teachers (who had held full-time position or had taught their entire career occasionally) have different motivations for participating in professional learning and also have different employment arrangements (such as only a limited number of allowable teaching days and in some boards not being able to hold long-term occasional positions).

After sorting, this category included those occasional teachers who are not new entrants or retirees and who indicated that they were not seeking full-time teaching employment. Participants who fell into this category had two general career trajectories: one group held a full-time position at some point and had taught for at least six years occasionally and were *not* seeking full-time employment within the next five years. The second group were teachers who had had no experience teaching full-time but had six years or more teaching occasionally and were not seeking full-time teaching within the next five years.

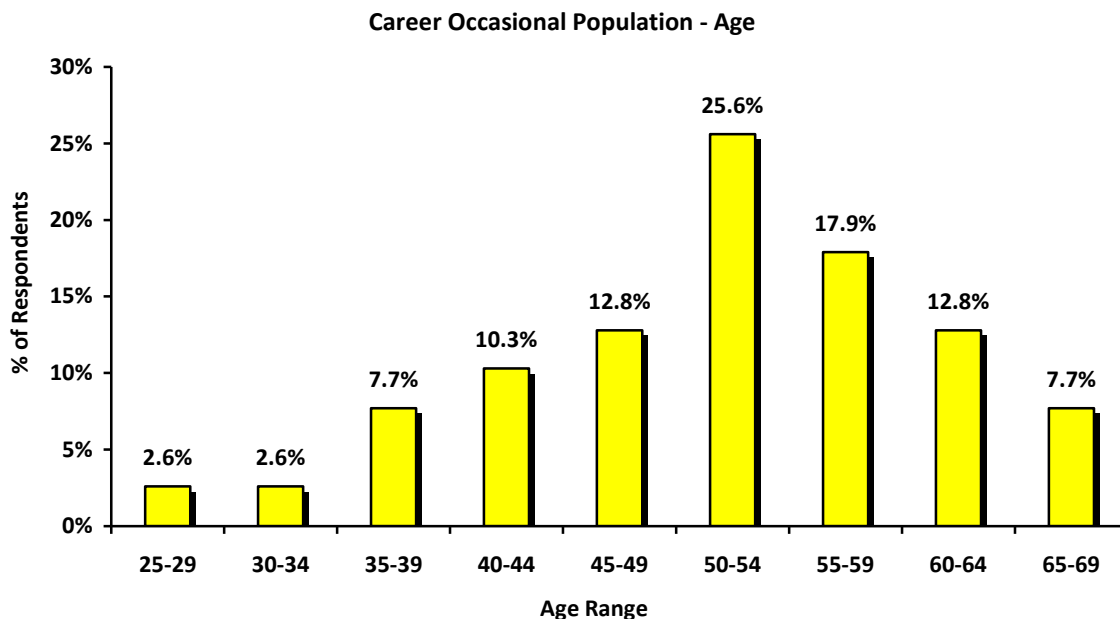
Because the online survey was structured in such a way as to allow individuals to skip questions, some participants chose to not answer all the questions on the survey.

For this reason some career occasional teachers may have been omitted from this category because they did not provide enough information to be included. The reverse is also possible; a few occasional teachers included in this category might have given the impression of being a career occasional teacher and were included within this category when they may have been better suited for another category. Regardless, enough respondents qualified for this category to provide a general picture of this group's particular professional learning needs.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### *Age*

Ninety-five of those considered career occasional teachers provided their age. The majority of the career occasional teachers fell between 40 - 59 years of age (61%) for a fifteen year spread.



**Figure 71. Career Occasional Population - Age.**

### *Gender*

Only one identified career occasional teacher did not include his/her gender in the survey. Of those that responded, 13% identified as male and 87% identified as female. This proportion closely represents the 1:9 ratio of men to women in the general occasional teacher population.

## Heritage

Career occasional teachers predominantly chose the British Isles (England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales) (64%) as the heritage they identified with the most. Surprisingly, few (4%) career occasional teachers identified with Western European heritage (France, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain and Greece) where as 18% of the general occasional teacher population did identify with Western European heritage. Twenty-two percent also identified with being Canadian (22%).

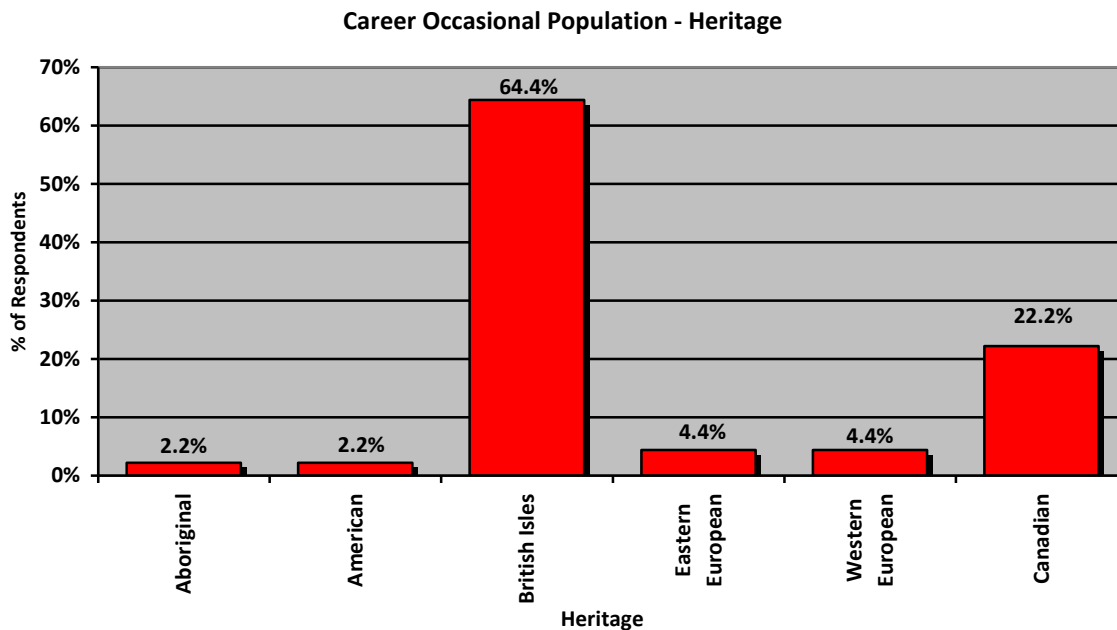


Figure 72. Career Occasional Population - Heritage.

## Language

Ninety percent of career occasional teachers indicated that English was their first language. The other 10% spoke languages such as Arabic, French, Hindi, and Ukrainian.

## EDUCATION

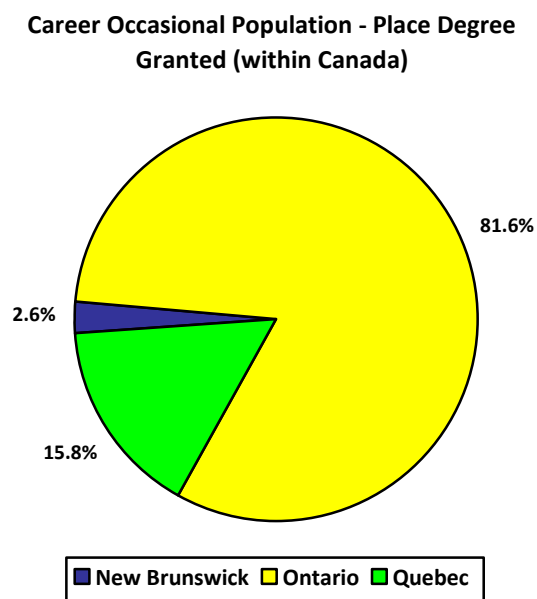
### *Year degree granted*

Fifty-two identified career occasional teachers responded to the question, “what year did you graduate with your teacher education degree”. It appears that the range in years for degree granted for career occasional teachers in this study is spread over 47 years (1961-2008), so broad (with no significant mean, mode or average) that it really has no meaning.

### *Place degree was granted*

Of the 62 identified career occasional teachers, 84% indicated that they received their teacher education degree within Canada; 16% indicated outside of Canada. Of the respondents who indicated that they received their degree in Canada, 81% indicated that they received their degree in Ontario. Sixteen percent received their degree in Quebec with 2% in New Brunswick.

Of those career occasional teachers who received their teaching degree outside of Canada, five did so in the United States and four in the United Kingdom.



**Figure 73. Career Occasional Population - Place Degree Granted.**

### *Language of instruction*

Of the 52 career occasional teachers that responded, 92% indicated that English was the language of instruction for their teacher education degree and 8% indicated French.

## WORK

### *Years of occasional teaching*

Career occasional teachers had to have taught for more than five years of occasional teaching and not plan to teach full-time within the next five years. Forty-two percent of the career occasional teachers have taught for 10 years or less. More surprising is that 73% have taught for 15 years or less.

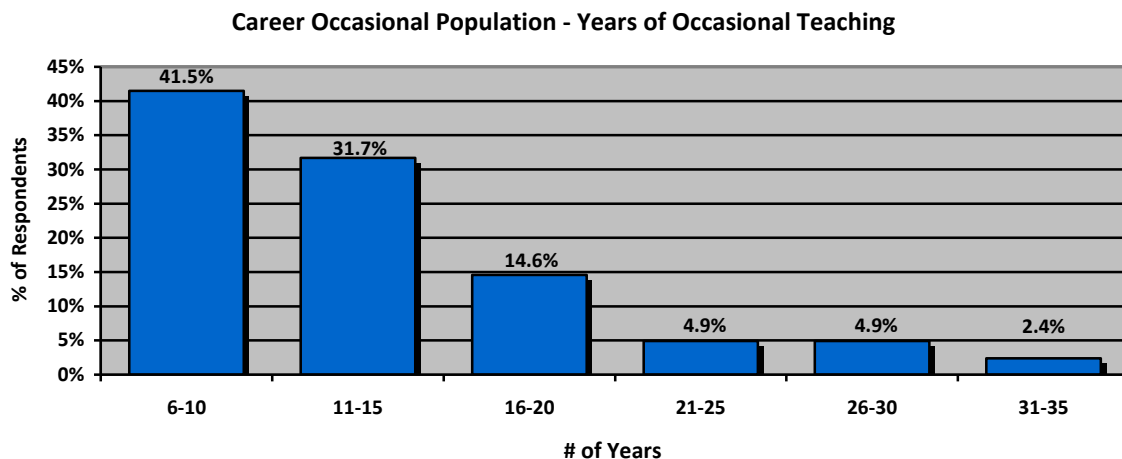


Figure 74. Career Occasional Population - Years of Occasional Teaching.

### *Current employment status*

An overwhelming majority (81%) of identified career occasional teachers work on a day-to-day basis as an occasional teacher. The career occasional teachers identified in this data appear to have the highest percentage of individuals working on a day-to-day basis compared to the entire occasional teacher population (71%), new entrants (64%) and Western IETs (64%). Seven percent of career occasional teachers worked in an LTO position and 7% were on federation release. None of the career occasional teachers were on maternity leave or were currently holding a permanent part-time teaching position.

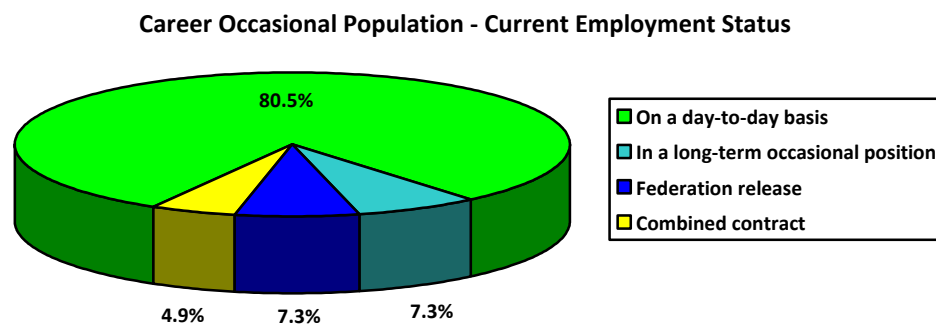


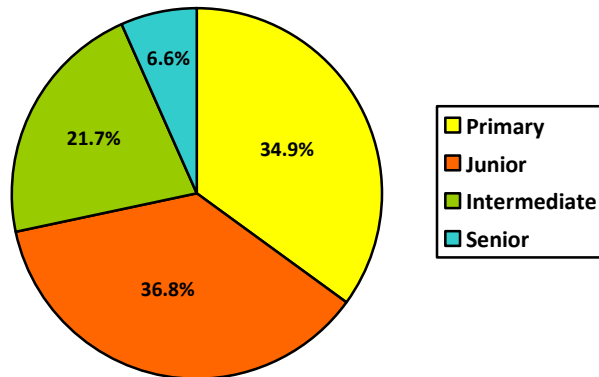
Figure 75. Career Occasional Population - Current Employment Status.



### *Area certified to teach*

As a group, the majority of the career occasional teachers held certification to teach in Junior (37%), Primary (35%), and Intermediate (22%), with a small group teaching Senior division (7%).

**Career Occasional Population - Area Certified to Teach**

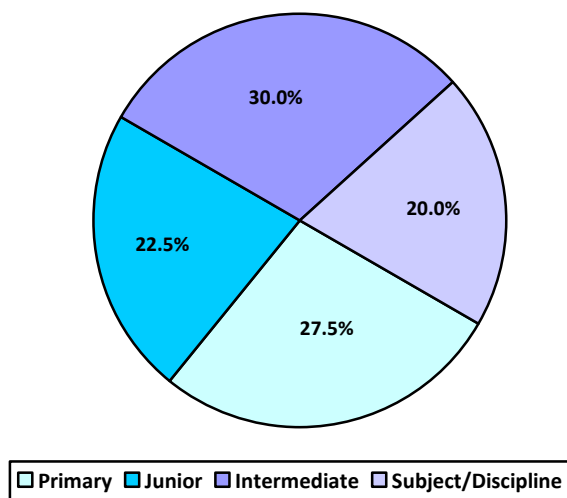


**Figure 76. Career Occasional Population - Area Certified to Teach.**

### *Areas career occasional teachers taught the most last year*

None of the identified career occasional teachers taught at the senior level last year. More than half (57%) taught at the primary/junior division with a quarter (25%) at the intermediate. Compared to the general occasional teacher population and retirees, it appears that career occasional teachers teach slightly more at the junior division.

**Divisions Career Occasionals Taught the Most Last Year**



**Figure 77. Areas Career Occasionals Taught the Most Last Year.**

### Teaching in areas not certified to teach

Almost a third (29%) of identified career occasional teachers indicated that they had *not* taught in areas that they were not certified. Of those that did teach in an area for which they were not certified, almost a quarter (20%) pointed out that they taught in the intermediate division. Some taught in the primary (7%), while others taught in the junior (6%), or senior (4%). In terms of subject or discipline, 20% indicated that they taught French even though they were not qualified to do so. Some taught in other subject or discipline areas such as: Special education (7%) and Mathematics (2%).

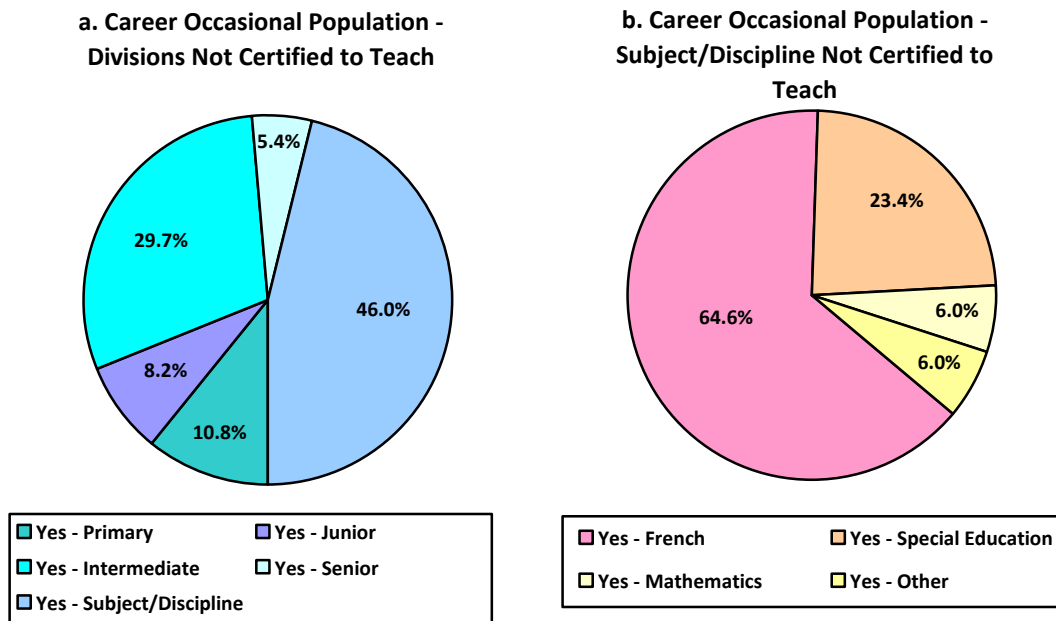


Figure 78a and b. Career Occasional Population - Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach.

### Number of school boards

The career occasional teachers in this study indicated that they mainly (88%) taught in only one school district last year. A few taught in two school districts (7%) and in three or more (5%).

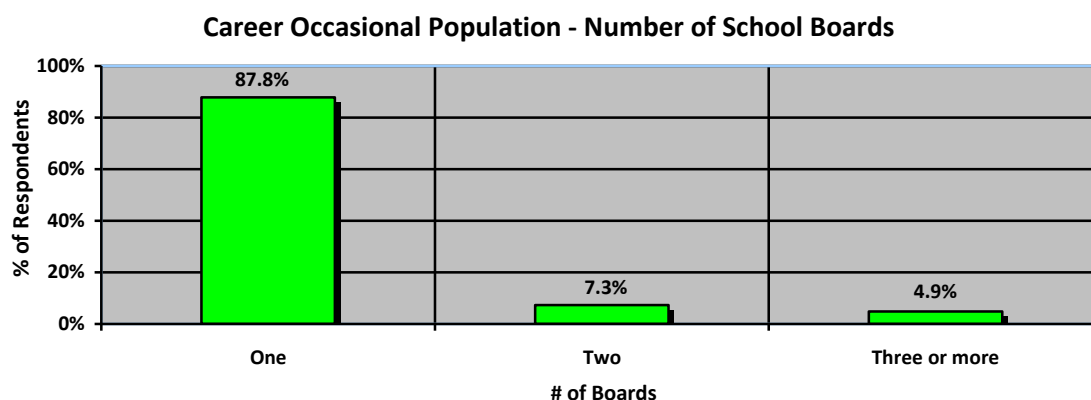
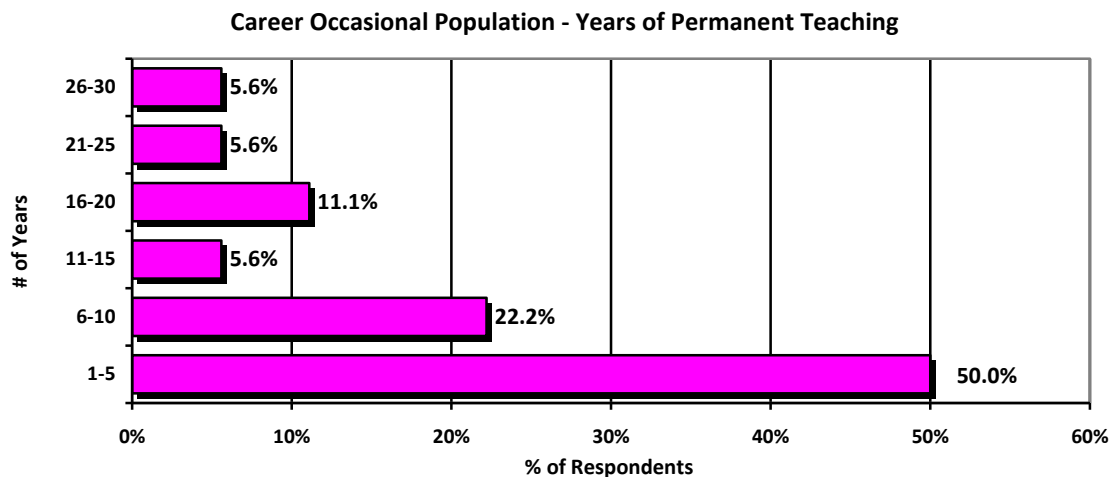


Figure 79. Career Occasional Population - Number of School Boards.

### *Permanent teaching contract*

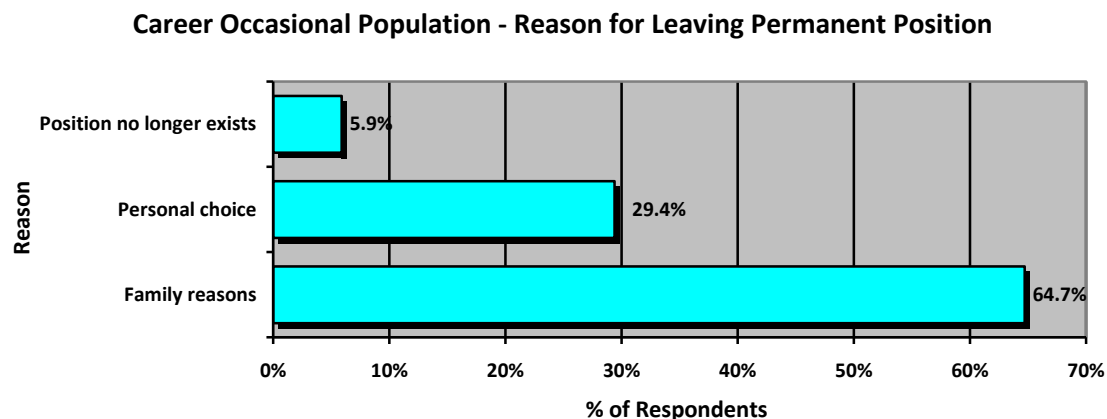
Of the 62 identified career occasional teachers 45% held a full-time teaching position previously while 55% did not. Of those that held the full-time positions 95% did so in Canada, mainly in Ontario (88%) with a few in Quebec (12%). Approximately (50%) held a permanent teaching position for less than five years.



**Figure 80. Career Occasional Population - Years of Permanent Teaching.**

### *Reason for leaving*

Seventeen career occasional teachers provided reasons for leaving their full-time teaching position. Out of these responses, 65% of career occasional teachers indicated family reasons, 29% indicated personal choice and 6% indicated that the teaching position no longer existed.



**Figure 81. Career Occasional Population - Reason for Leaving Permanent Position.**

### *Children*

Sixty-two percent indicated that they do not have children living at home. Thirty-eight percent of the identified career occasional teachers indicated that they do have children under 18 years of age living at home. Seventy-six percent of the identified career occasional teachers indicated that being a caregiver for a child is a major factor in their decision to work occasionally.

### *Care provider*

When asked if they were a primary caregiver to an adult 89% responded 'no' while 11% indicated 'yes'. When asked if being a caregiver for an adult is a major factor in their decision to work occasionally, six participants responded. Of the six, five said 'yes' while one indicated 'no'.

### *Intent in five years*

All identified career occasional teachers indicated 'no' as this was one of the required criteria for this category.

## **FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Formal professional learning for this study was defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualifications (AQ) courses).

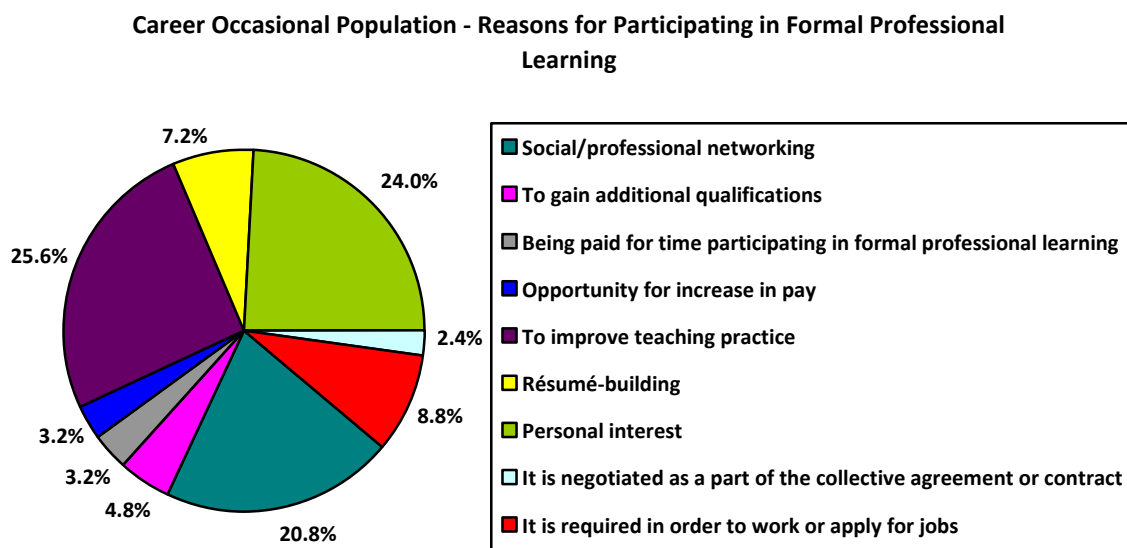
The identified career occasional teachers were asked if they have participated in any formal professional learning within the past 12 months, 76% indicated that they had participated in some type of formal professional learning.

### *No professional learning*

Of those who responded, 24% that indicated they had not participated in any formal professional learning within the past 12 months.

### *Reason for participating in formal professional learning*

The career occasional teachers in this study appeared to have slightly more interest in participating in formal professional learning to improve their teaching practice (26%) compared to the general occasional teacher population (23%), retirees (23%), and new entrants (22%). Career occasional teachers selected personal interest at (24%) as the second most frequent response with social/professional networking to follow at 21%. This group of occasional teachers were not interested in additional qualification courses (5%) or résumé building (7%), nor did they see participating in professional learning as an opportunity for an increase in pay (3%). The pattern of responses, low interest in those strategies used to secure full-time work (i.e. résumé building, gaining additional qualifications, etc.,) and higher responses for improving their teaching in the classroom and networking are reflective of findings from two prior preliminary studies. The prior studies indicated that career occasional teachers rely on their prior teaching experience, and/or years of tacit learning on the job as an occasional teacher, and the fact that they were still teaching, and that they had already taken advantage of many of the repeated professional learn opportunities available to them meant that they were very particular about the formal professional learning they engaged in; many only engaged in formal professional learning that they found interesting. This is reflected in the next section.



**Figure 82. Career Occasional Population - Reasons for Participating in Formal Professional Learning.**

### Topic of the formal professional learning

Career occasional teachers participated in formal professional learning mainly for instructional strategies (29%), classroom management strategies (16%), ministry/board initiatives (16%) and technology (16%).

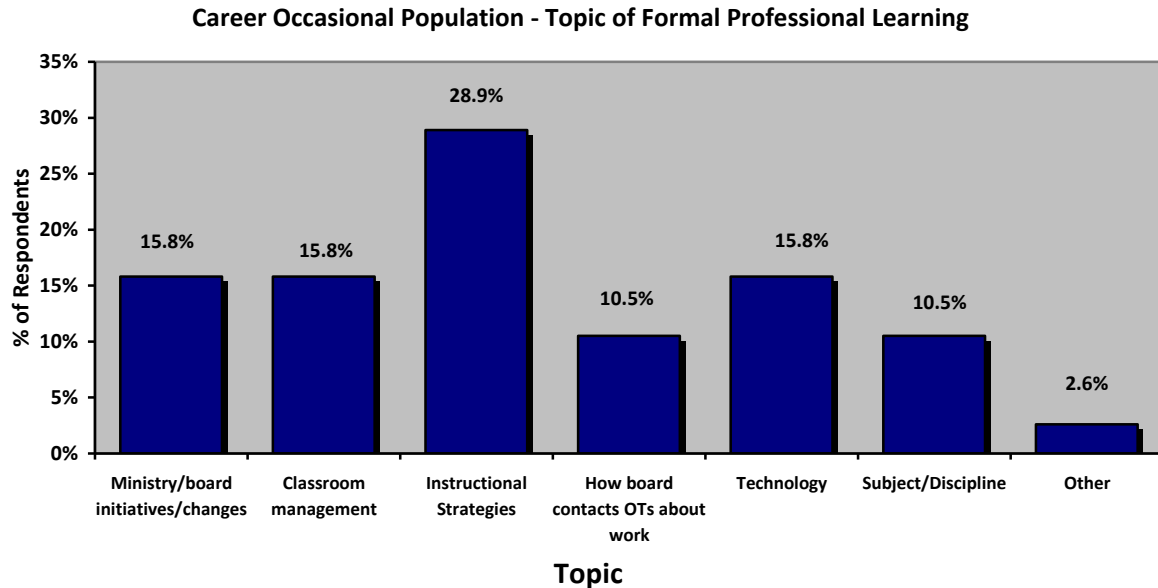


Figure 83. Career Occasional Population - Topic of Formal Professional Learning.

### Further formal professional learning

Career occasional teachers indicated more convenient locations (20%), free or low cost professional development (16%) and eligibility for an increase in pay (15%) as being helpful in motivating them to participate in further formal professional learning.

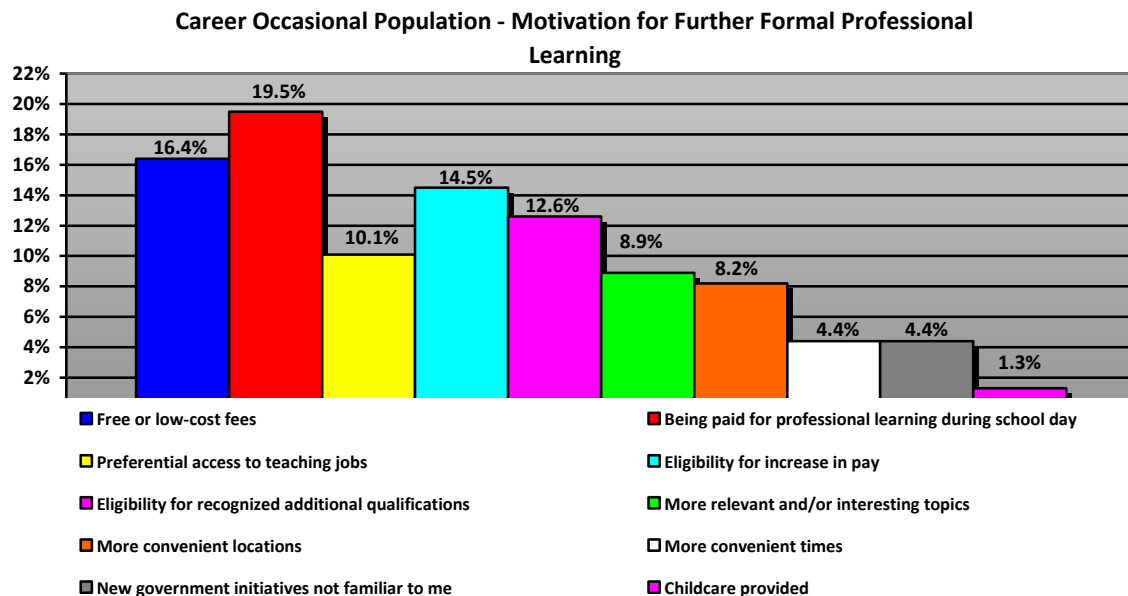
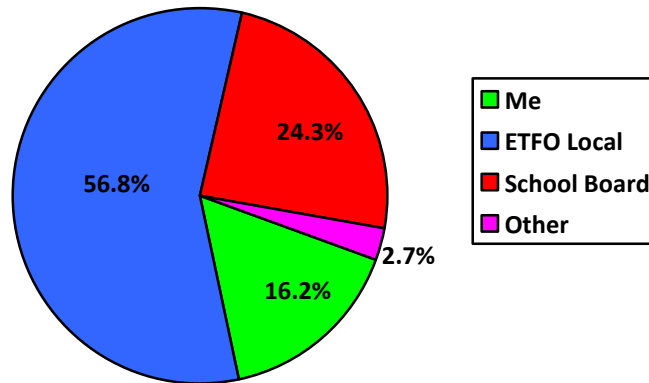


Figure 84. Career Occasional Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning.

### *Funding for formal professional learning*

Similar to retirees, career occasional teachers did not pay for much of their formal professional learning (16%) but rather engaged in sessions that were supported mainly by ETFO locals (57%) and school boards (24%).

**Career Occasional Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning**

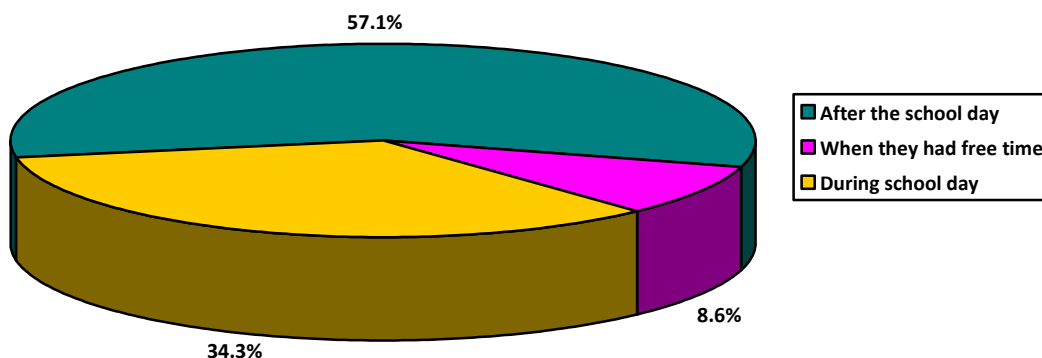


**Figure 85. Career Occasional Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Time of day*

It appears that career occasional teachers seem to have participated in slightly more professional learning after the school day (57%) and during the school day (34%) and less when they had free time (9%) compared to the general occasional teacher population.

**Career Occasional Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred**



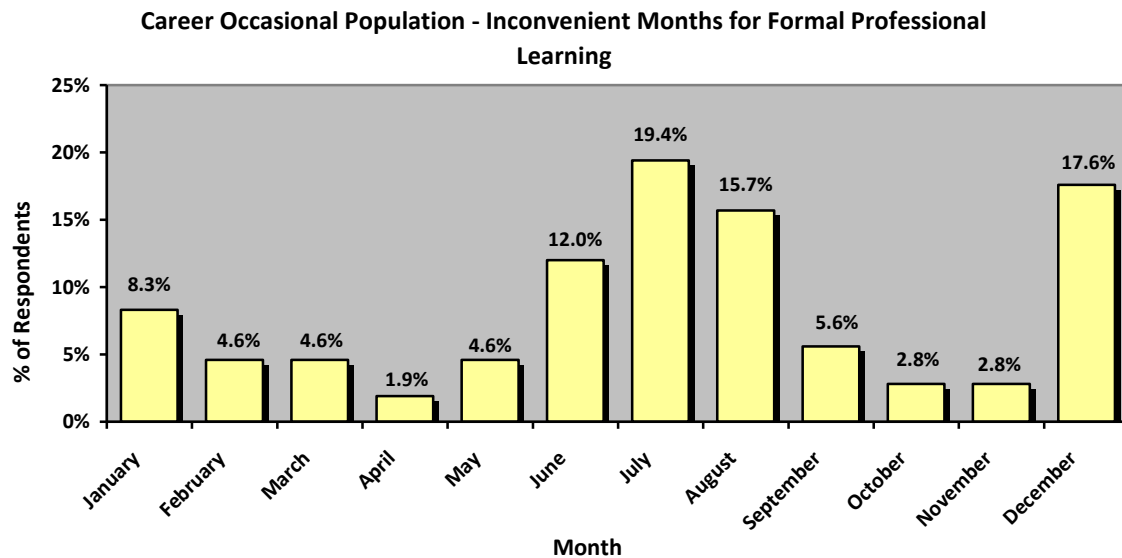
**Figure 86. Career Occasional Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred.**

### *Convenient Timing*

Participants were asked what was the most convenient time for them to participate in formal professional learning. Eighty percent responded, and of those who did, 86% indicated that these times were convenient for them. A small number of career occasional teachers provided reasons for why the times were not convenient. The main reasons were that it conflicted with family responsibilities, other paid work, and conflicted with actual school teaching.

### *What month*

Career occasional teachers indicated June (12%), July (19%), August (16%) and December (18%) as months that were not appropriate for formal professional learning. The month of April appears to be the best month for professional learning for career occasional teachers as well as the months of May, October and November.

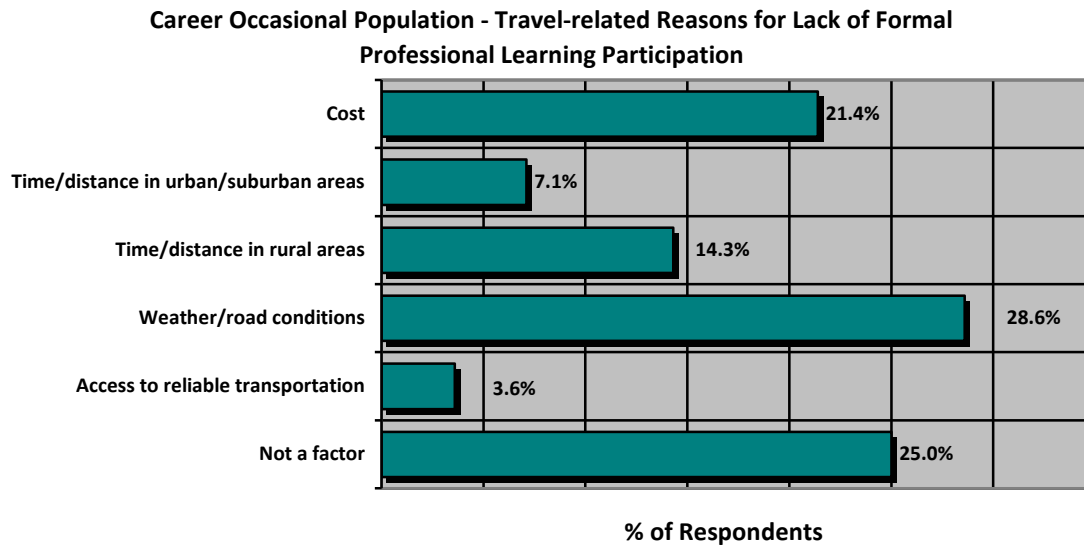


**Figure 87.**Career Occasional Population - Inconvenient Months for Formal Professional Learning.



## Travel

Of the 56 career occasional teachers who responded, 25% indicated that there were no reasons related to travelling that prevented them from participating in any formal professional learning. For the rest of the respondents who indicated that travel was an issue, weather/road conditions (29%) and cost (i.e. accommodations, meals, travel) (21%) appeared to be the most prominent reasons.



**Figure 88. Career Occasional Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation.**

## *Learning about formal professional learning opportunities*

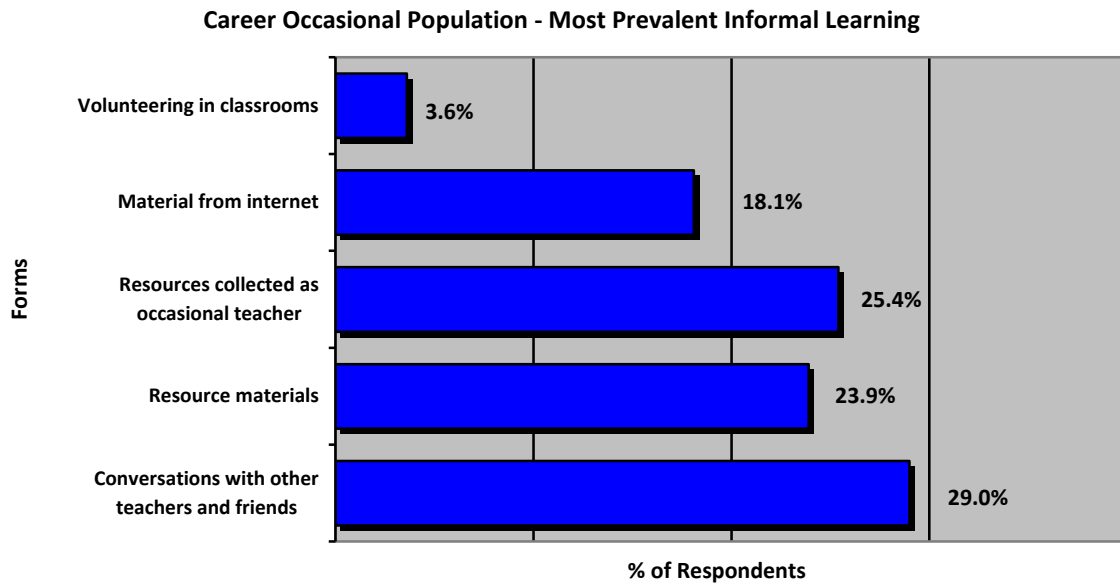
Similar to the general occasional teacher responses, 79% of career occasional teachers pointed out that they learn about formal professional learning opportunities through some electronic communication such as email, e-newsletters, and websites.

## **INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Informal professional learning for this study was defined as any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, playing a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

### *Most prevalent*

Responses from the identified career occasional teachers were similar to the general occasional teacher population and new entrants in the sense that career occasional teachers also rely on conversations with other teachers and friends (29%), collect resource material such as books, professional journals and academic journals (24%) and gather material from the Internet (18%) as a way to informally learn more about their work and profession. Career occasional relied slightly less on volunteering in the classroom (4%) as a way to learn informally about their work.



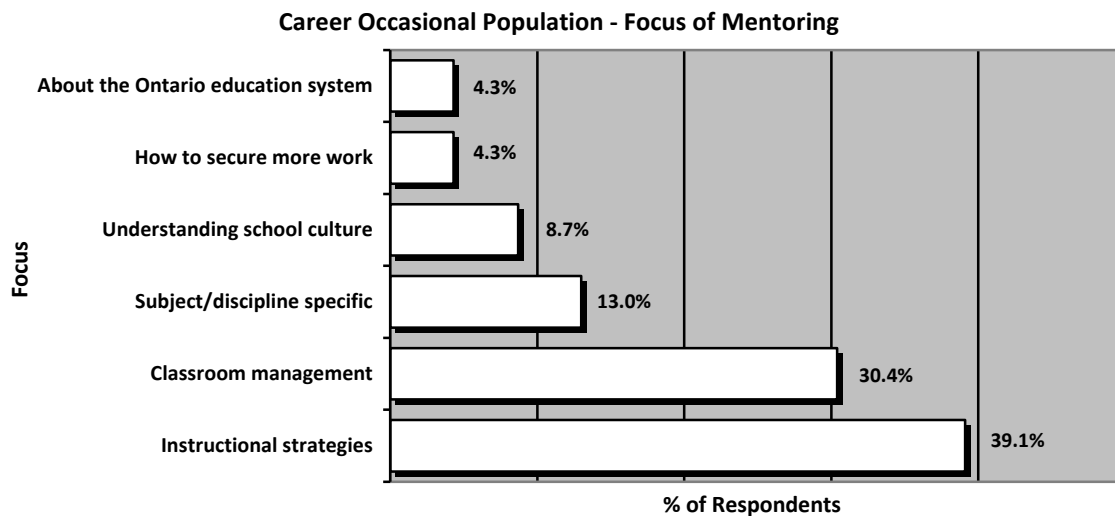
**Figure 89. Career Occasional Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning.**

### *Mentoring*

Some career occasional teachers (19%) participated in mentoring. This is less than the general occasional teacher population and about half that of new entrants yet more than retirees. Of those that indicated they were mentored, only one indicated that it was part of a formal mentorship program (a program organized through a neighbourhood centre) the remainder of career occasional teachers who were mentored indicated that the mentoring was informal. This is not surprising as most formal mentorship programs such as the NTIP program are geared to teachers new to the Ontario public funded education system, which means many career occasional teachers would not be eligible to participate.

### *Focus of mentoring*

There was a slight variation in emphasis on the mentoring focus for career occasional teachers. It appears that career occasional teachers are more focused on their actual work and concentrated on instructional strategies (39%) and classroom management (30%) rather than subject/discipline content (13%), school culture (9%), learning about the Ontario education system (4%) or how to access more work (4%). This pattern is understandable as most career occasional teachers who continue working in this specific work arrangement have most likely figured out how to secure daily work, understand the Ontario education system and have probably built up a good working rapport with a few schools that continually call them back. For this reason they have probably also figured out the school cultures of the schools where they do repeated work.



**Figure 90. Career Occasional Population - Focus of Mentoring.**

### *Mode of communication with mentor*

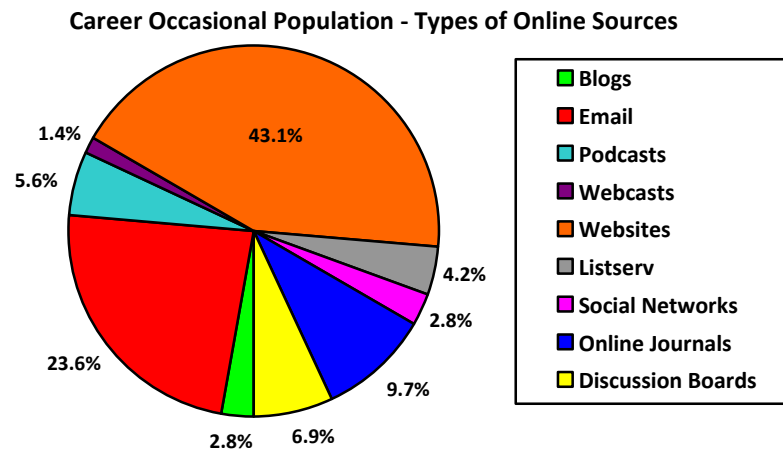
A small number of career occasional teachers indicated how they communicated with their mentor. The overall responses from those career occasional teachers reflected that of the general trends in the general occasional teacher population. Career occasional teachers who responded communicated with their mentor mainly in person. To a lesser degree by email and a few communicated with their mentor by phone.

### *Online resources*

In terms of using online sources for their informal professional learning, 86% indicated that they did indeed use online resources. This again reflects the general occasional teacher population response (81%), new entrants (87%) and retirees (80%).

### *Types of online sources*

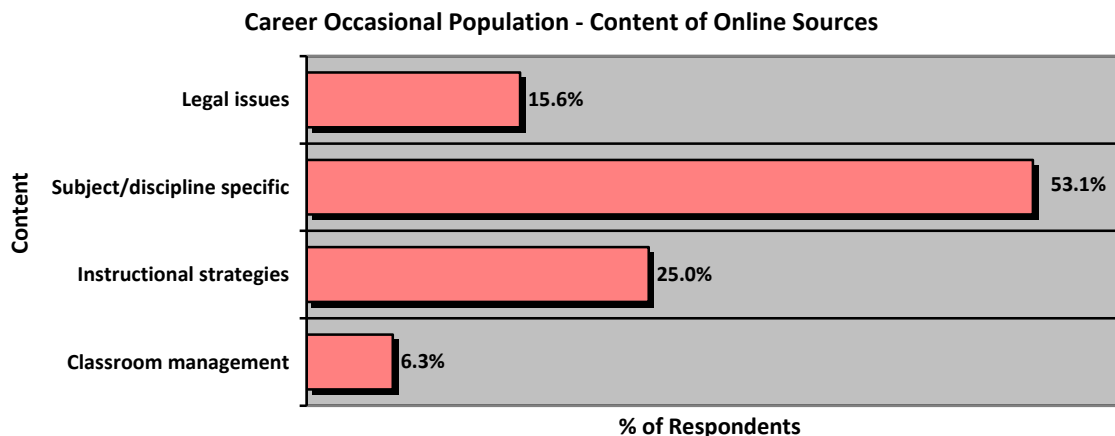
When asked which online sources career occasional teachers used, 43% indicated that websites were the most popular while email was the second most popular at 24%. These percentages are slightly higher than the general occasional teacher population, which were 40% and 18% respectively.



**Figure 91. Career Occasional Population - Types of Online Sources.**

### *Content of online source*

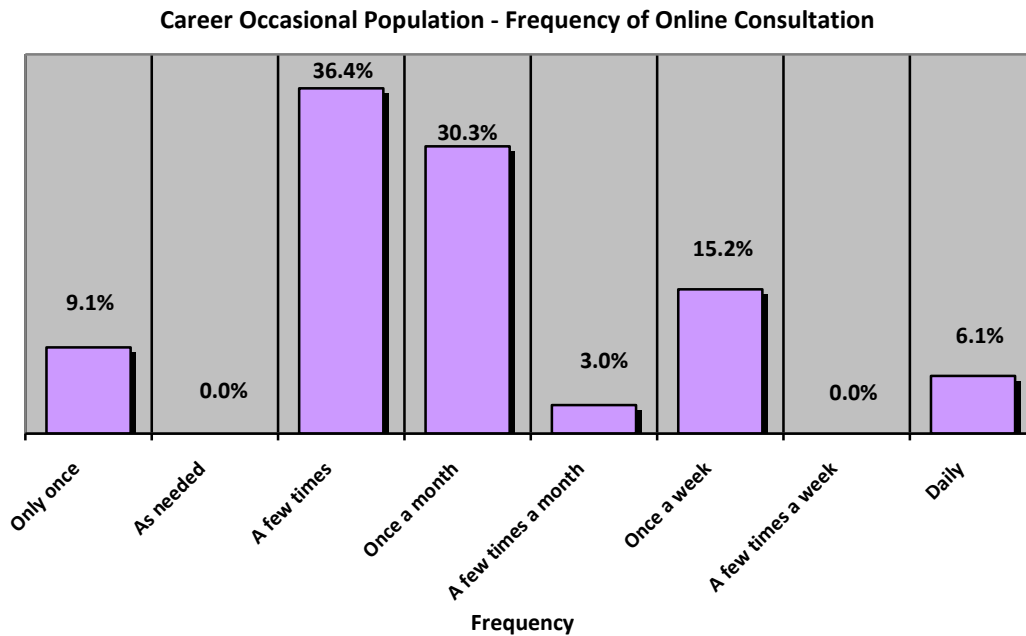
Career occasional teachers were specific about what they were looking for with regard to the online sources they were using. Half (53%) of career occasional teachers were seeking information that was subject or discipline specific. To a lesser degree career occasional teachers were searching for information on instructional strategies (25%) and classroom management (6%).



**Figure 92. Career Occasional Population - Content of Online Sources.**

### *Frequency of consultation*

While career occasional teachers indicated that they consult online sources it appears that they do so at a rate lower than the general occasional teacher population or new entrants. They appear to still consult resources a few times (36%) or once a month (30%) but less frequently. For example, only 15% indicated that they consulted online sources once a week as opposed to the general occasional teacher population that as a group tend to consult weekly at 26%.



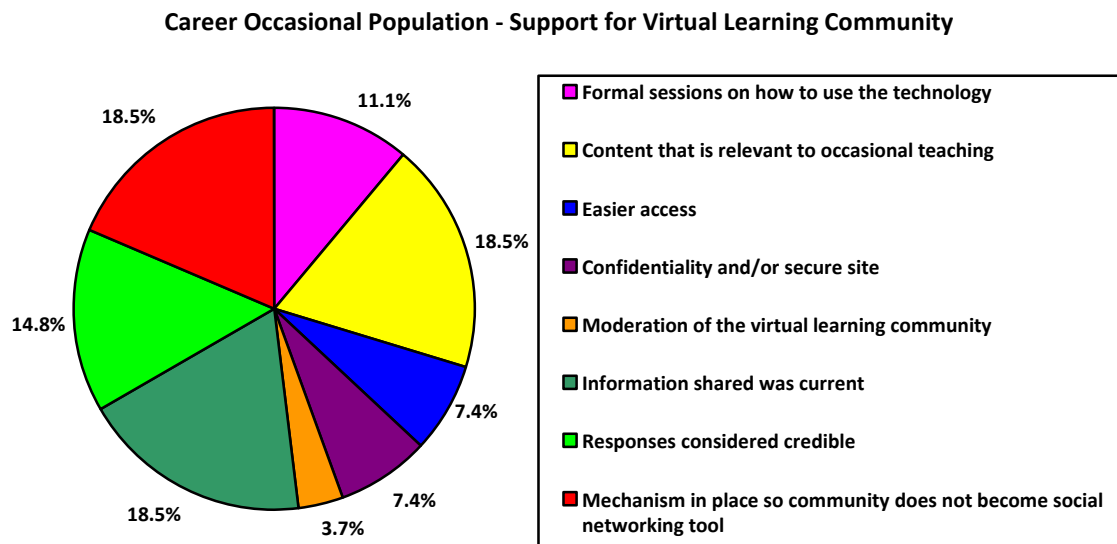
**Figure 93. Career Occasional Population - Frequency of Online Consultation.**

### *Virtual learning community*

Career occasional teachers were less inclined to support a virtual learning community for occasional teachers (77%) as opposed to the general occasional teacher population (83%) or new entrants (87%).

### *Support for a virtual learning community*

Of those who did respond to what would need to be in place for them to participate in a virtual learning community, there was no emphasis on one reason but rather a number of requirements: relevant content (19%), current information (19%), mechanism in place so that the virtual learning community does become a 'social networking' tool (19%), responses considered credible (15%), and some session on how to use the technology (11%).



**Figure 94. Career Occasional Population - Support for Virtual Learning Community.**

## ***INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED OCCASIONAL TEACHERS***

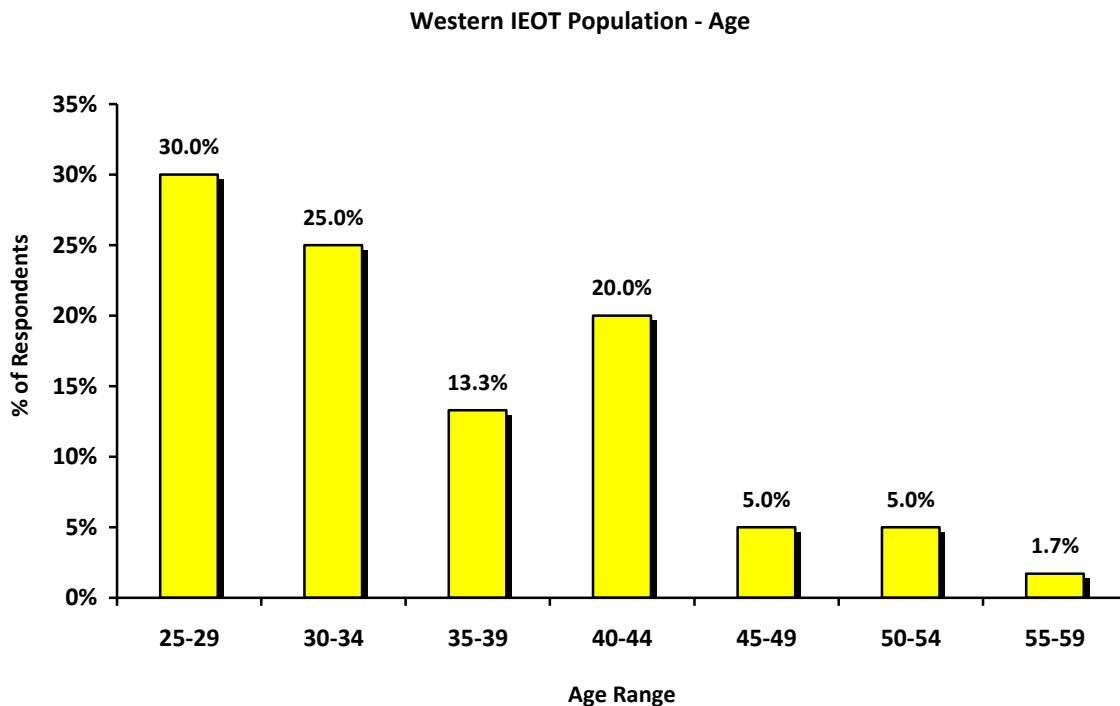
The category, Internationally Educated Occasional Teachers (IEOTs), is broadly defined as teachers who received their teacher education degree outside of Canada. Because of this very broad categorization, two groups of IEOTs emerged: those who received their teacher education from a recognized university situated in what is considered a Western country (for example, the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom) and those who received their teacher education from a recognized university in what could be considered a non-Western country (for example, India, Pakistan, Korea). Both groups are quite different and it was believed that to represent both groups as an entire category would mean that experiences specific to each sub-group may go unrecognized. Therefore this section reports on both groups: IEOTs (Western) and IEOTS (Non-Western). IEOTs made up approximately 21% (79 responses) of the overall survey responses. Sixteen percent (61 respondents) were categorized as receiving their teacher education degree in a Western country. Five percent (18 respondents) indicated they received their degree from a non-Western country. Because so few IEOTs (non-Western) self-identified on the survey, more emphasis was placed on the feedback from the focus group sessions rather than the online survey responses.

# ***INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED OCCASIONAL TEACHERS - WESTERN COUNTRIES***

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

### *Age*

The age range for IEOTs (Western) was from twenty-five to fifty-nine years of age. Eighty percent of those identified as IEOTs (Western) were between 25-44 years of age.



**Figure 95. Western IEOT Population - Age.**

### *Gender*

All IEOTs (Western) responded to the online survey question that asked their gender. Eighteen percent indicated they were male and 82% indicated they were female. The ratio of males to females in this group is 1:4 with an increased presence of men.



## Heritage

Even though 76% of IEOTs (Western) indicated they received their teacher education degree from the United States, only 3% identified with being American. Surprisingly, 39% of IEOTs (Western) identified with being British (England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales), 14% identified with Western European (France, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain and Greece), and 23% identified themselves as Canadian. It would appear that many IEOTs (Western) are Canadians who went to the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom to receive their teacher education and then returned to Canada for teaching work.

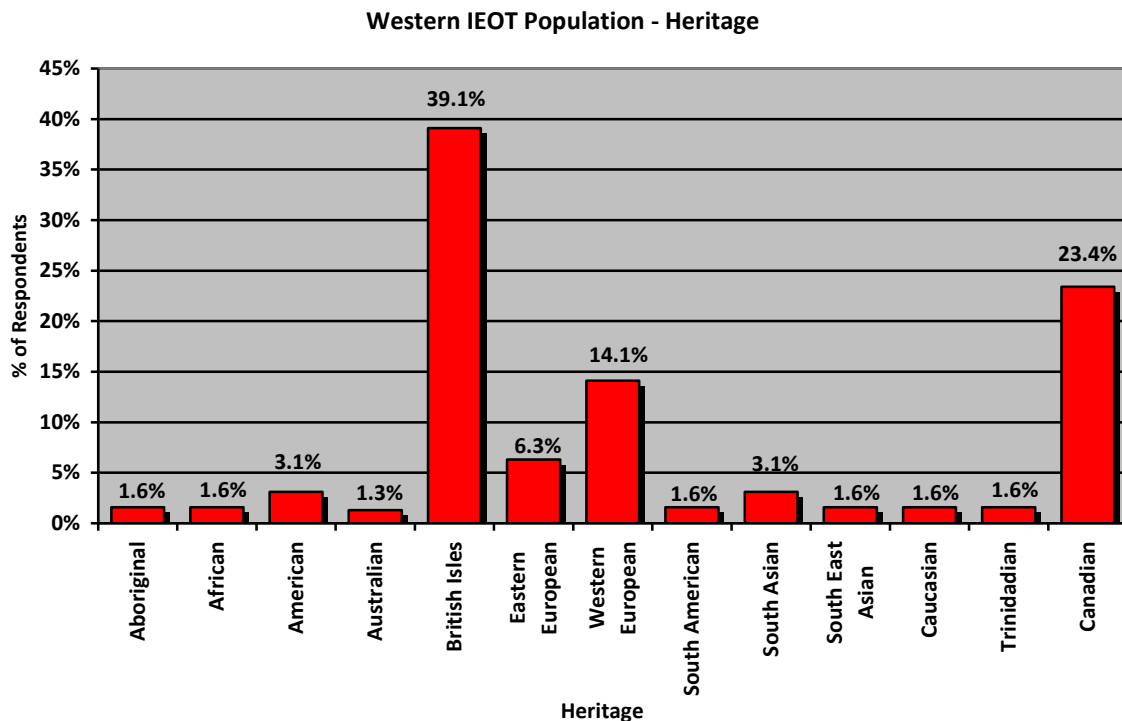


Figure 96. Western IEOT Population - Heritage.

## Language

Not surprising, IEOTs (Western) almost exclusively spoke English (97%) as their first language.

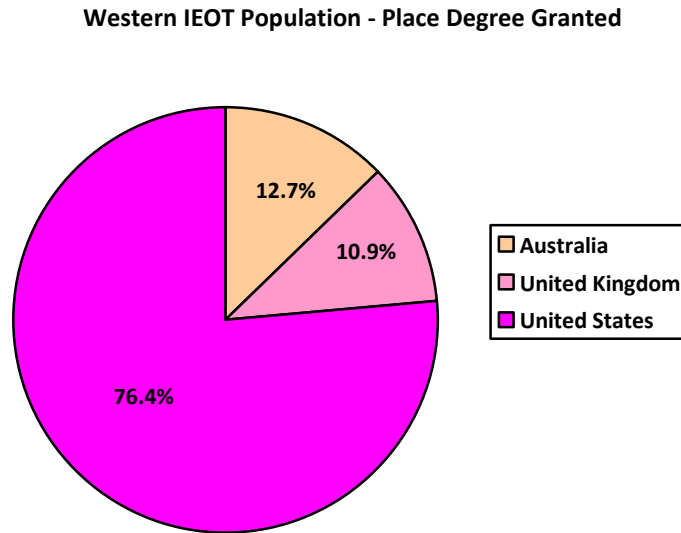
## EDUCATION

### *Year degree granted*

*A poor response rate made it impossible to determine a meaningful range for the year IEOTs received their teacher education degree.*

### *Place degree was granted*

The majority of the IEOTs (Western) (76%) received their teacher education degree from the United States. Others received their degrees in Australia (13%) and the United Kingdom (11%).



**Figure 97. Western IEOT Population - Place Degree Granted.**

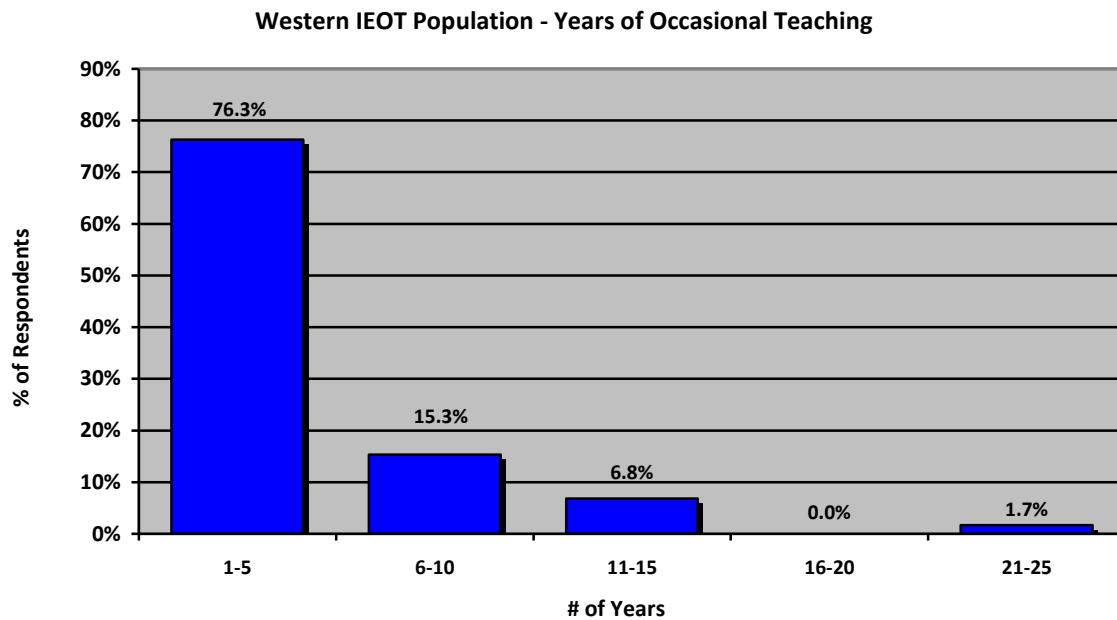
### *Language of instruction*

Too few respondents answered this question on the survey therefore there is no way to determine the dominant language of instruction from the data. However, since the majority of IEOTS (Western) in this study indicated that their teacher education degree was from the United States, the United Kingdom or Australia it can be assumed that the language of instruction would have been English.

## WORK

### *Years of occasional teaching*

Three fourths (76%) of IEOTs (Western) have been teaching occasionally for less than five years. Ninety-two percent have been teaching for ten years or less. This trend is an obvious outcome of the changes in government policy when there was a teacher shortage a decade ago.



**Figure 98. Western IEOT Population - Years of Occasional Teaching.**

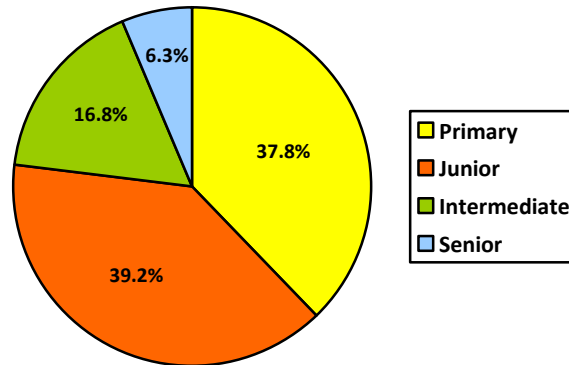
### *Current employment status*

The majority of the IEOTs (Western) (64%) were teaching on a day-to-day basis at the time of the online survey. Twenty-six percent indicated they were in a long-term occasional position. It appears that new entrants and IEOTs from Western countries are holding more LTO positions than retirees or career occasional teachers.

### *Area certified to teach*

It appears that IEOT (Western) certification is slightly more concentrated at the primary (38%) and junior (39%) divisions compared to that of the general occasional teacher population at 23% and 37% respectively. There were considerably fewer IEOTs (Western) certified to teach intermediate (17%), compared to the general occasional teacher population (23%).

**Western IEOT Population - Area Certified to Teach**

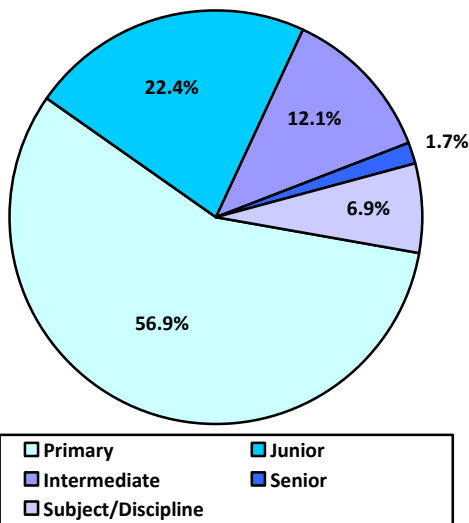


**Figure 99. Western IEOT Population - Area Certified to Teach.**

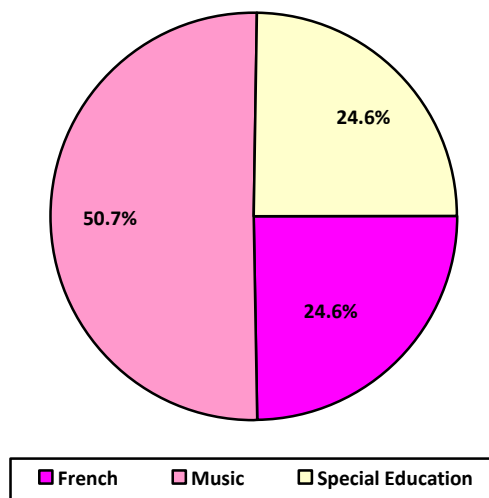
### *Areas IEOTs (Western) taught the most last year*

Even though 38% of IEOTs (Western) were certified to teach in primary division, 57% of IEOTs (Western) taught in the primary division. These occasional teachers also appeared to teach in the junior division as well at 22%.

**a. Divisions Western IEOTs Taught the Most Last Year**



**b. Subject/Discipline Western IEOTs Taught the Most Last Year**



**Figure 100a and b. Divisions and Subject/Discipline Western IEOTs Taught the Most Last Year.**

### Teaching in areas not certified to teach

Forty-four percent of IEOTs (Western) taught at the intermediate level even though they were not certified to teach in this division. Another 37% taught in a subject/discipline that they were not certified to teach. Almost two thirds (61%) of the IEOTs (Western) taught French.

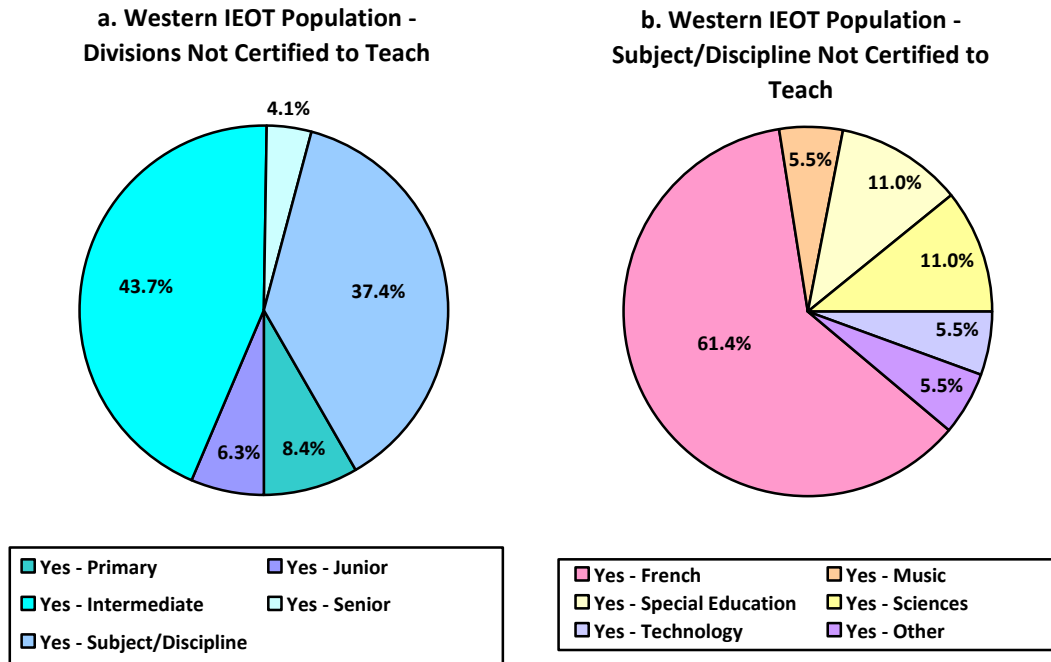


Figure 101a and b. Western IEOT Population - Divisions and Subject/Discipline Not Certified to Teach.

### Number of school boards

Four fifths (82%) of IEOTs (Western) taught in only one school district while 13% had taught in two and 5% had taught in three or more within the past 12 months.

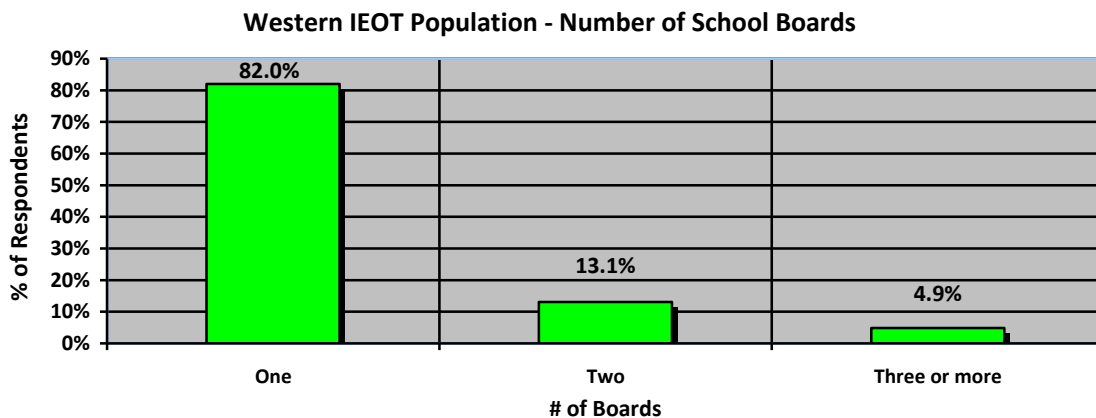


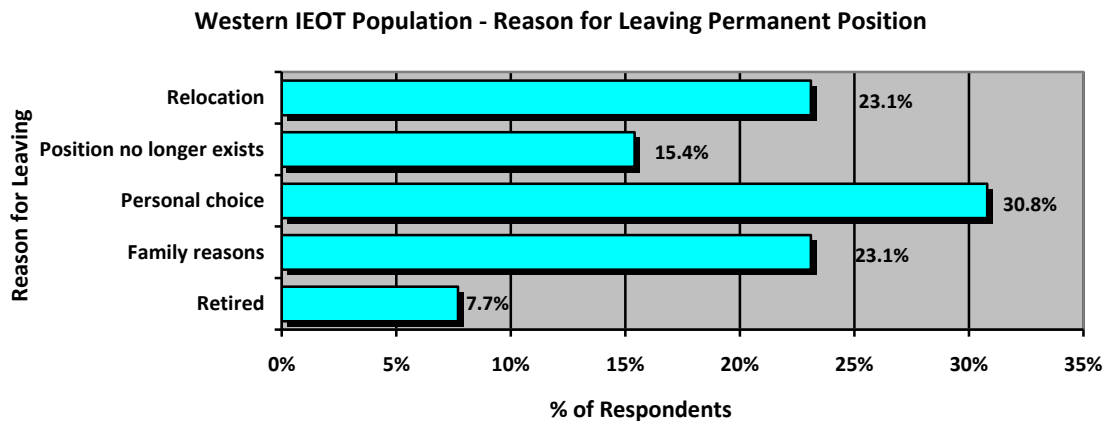
Figure 102. Western IEOT Population - Number of School Boards.

### *Permanent teaching contract*

All IEOTs (Western) responded to the question of whether or not they had held a permanent teaching position previously. Almost three-fourths (74%) indicated that they had not held a permanent teaching position previously. Of the 16 that did, nine were in Canada (7 in Ontario and 2 in British Columbia), while the other 7 were outside of Canada in the countries of India, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Venezuela. Nine taught in a permanent teaching position for five or less years with another four teaching between 6 and 15 years.

### *Reason for leaving*

When asked why they left their permanent teaching position, 31% IEOTS (Western) pointed out that it was a personal choice while others indicated family reasons (23%) and relocation (23%).



**Figure 103. Western IEOT Population - Reason for Leaving Permanent Position.**

### *Children*

Forty-one percent of the identified IEOTs (Western) indicated that they do have children under 18 years of age living at home, 59% indicated that they did not have children under 18 years of age living at home. Few (3 respondents) indicated that being a caregiver for a child was a major factor in their decision to work occasionally.

### *Care provider*

Out of the 61 IEOTs (Western) only one indicated that they were a care provider for an adult.

### *Intent in five years*

Eighty percent of IEOTs (Western) hope to find a full-time teaching position within the next five years.

## FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning for this study was defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualifications (AQ) courses).

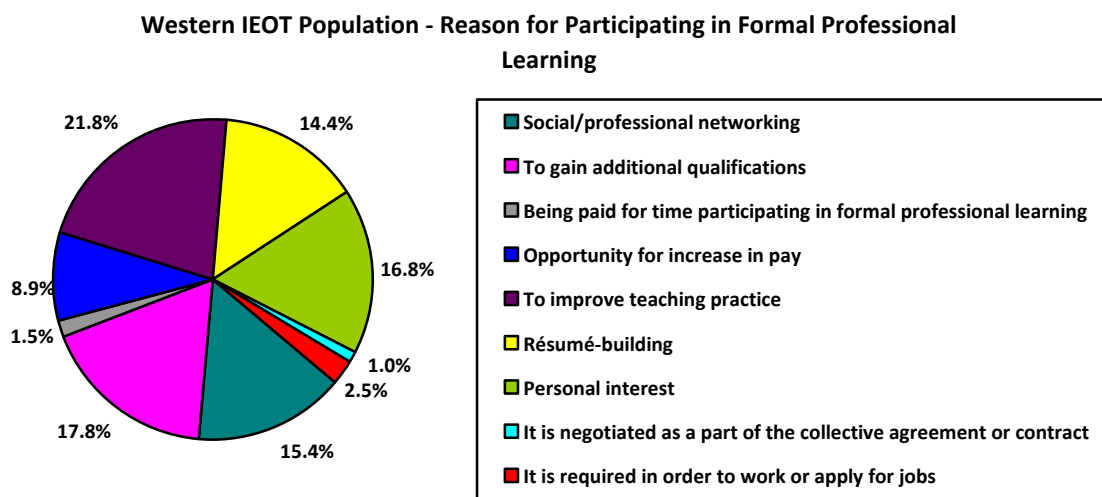
Respondents were asked if they had participated in any formal professional learning within the past 12 months, 82% of IEOTs (Western) indicated that they had participated in some type of formal professional learning within the past 12 months.

### *No professional learning*

Of the 18% of IEOTs (Western) that indicated that they had not participated in any type of formal professional learning within the past 12 months, some did not see the need to participate in any type of formal professional learning, others did not find past formal professional learning to be helpful, while a few indicated that they had difficulty accessing information about when formal professional learning was being held.

### *Reason for participating in formal professional learning*

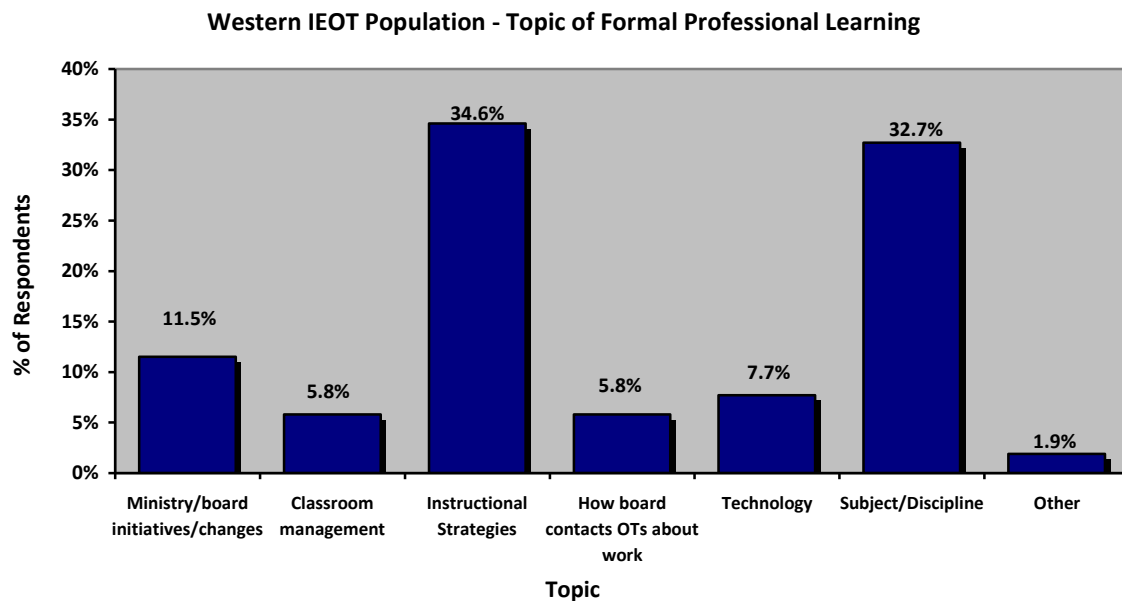
Similar to the general occasional teacher population and retirees, new entrants and career occasional teachers, IEOTs (Western) participated in formal professional learning mainly to improve their teaching practice (22%). They also participate in formal professional learning to gain additional qualifications (18%). This response rate is similar to new entrants probably because members in both groups are attempting to enter the Ontario education and secure a full-time, permanent teaching position.



**Figure 104. Western IEOT Population - Reason for Participating in Formal Professional Learning.**

### *Topic of the formal professional learning*

IEOTs (Western) indicated that they attended formal professional learning that focused on instructional strategies (35%) and subject/discipline topics (33%). These percentages are similar to those of new entrants (37% and 35% respectively). Most surprising is that only 6% of IEOTs (Western) attended formal professional learning that focused on classroom management. It is not possible to determine from the online survey whether or not participants did not have the opportunity to participate in formal professional development that focused on classroom management or whether or not IEOTs (Western) as a group believe that they have the necessary classroom management skills and chose to concentrate on learning more about instructional strategies and/or a particular subject/discipline.



**Figure 105. Western IEOT Population - Topic of Formal Professional Learning.**



### Further formal professional learning

The responses from IEOTs (Western) about what would motivate them to participate in further formal professional learning were similar to that of the general occasional teacher population.

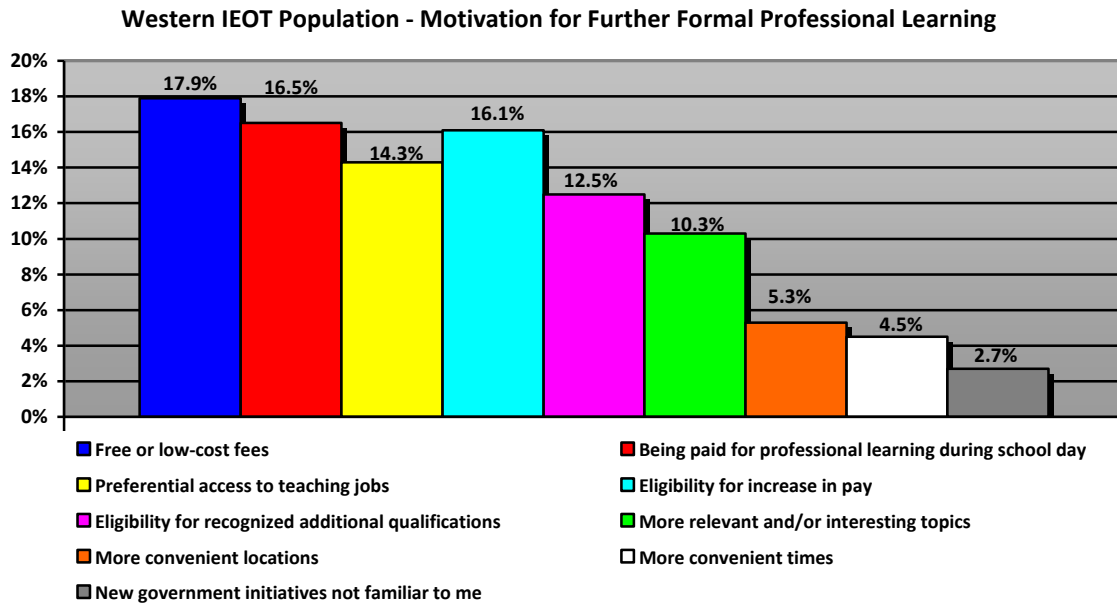


Figure 106. Western IEOT Population - Motivation for Further Formal Professional Learning.

### Funding for formal professional learning

Approximately half the IEOTs (Western) (51%) paid for their own formal professional learning, a quarter (26%) of the fees were paid by the school board, while the local ETFO union covered 20%. Next to new entrants (61%) it appears that IEOTs (Western) pay for more of their formal professional learning than any of the other groups of occasional teachers.

**Western IEOT Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning**

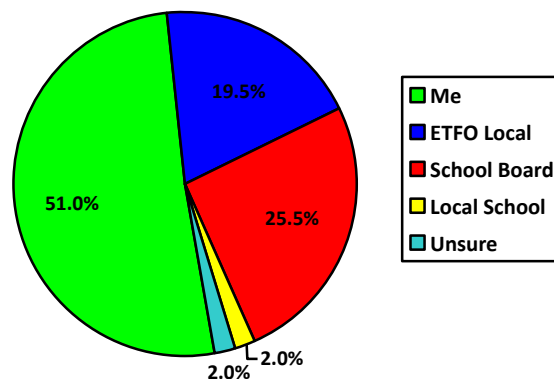
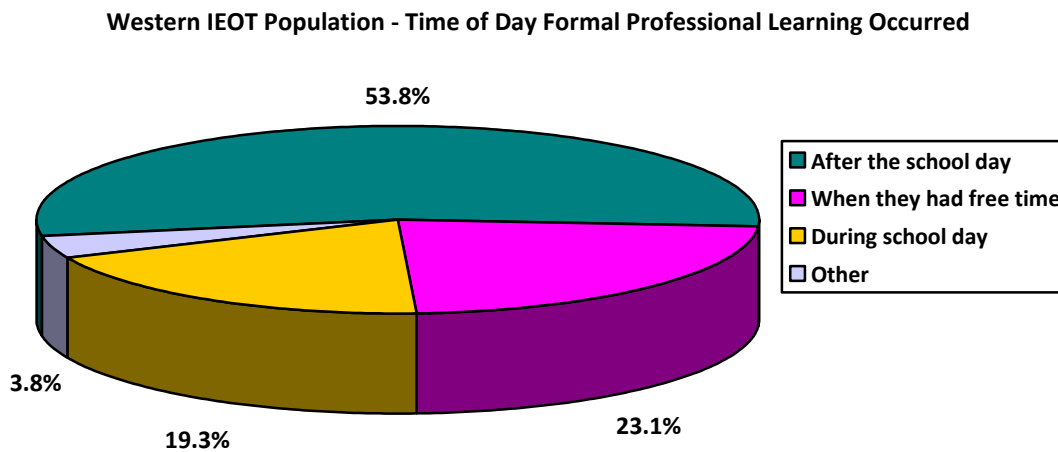


Figure 107. Western IEOT Population - Who Paid for Formal Professional Learning.

### *Time of day*

Almost half (54%) of IEOTs (Western) indicated that they participated in formal professional learning after the school day. Nineteen percent pointed out that most of their formal professional learning occurred during the school day and 23% responded that they engaged in formal professional learning when they had free time.



**Figure 108. Western IEOT Population - Time of Day Formal Professional Learning Occurred.**

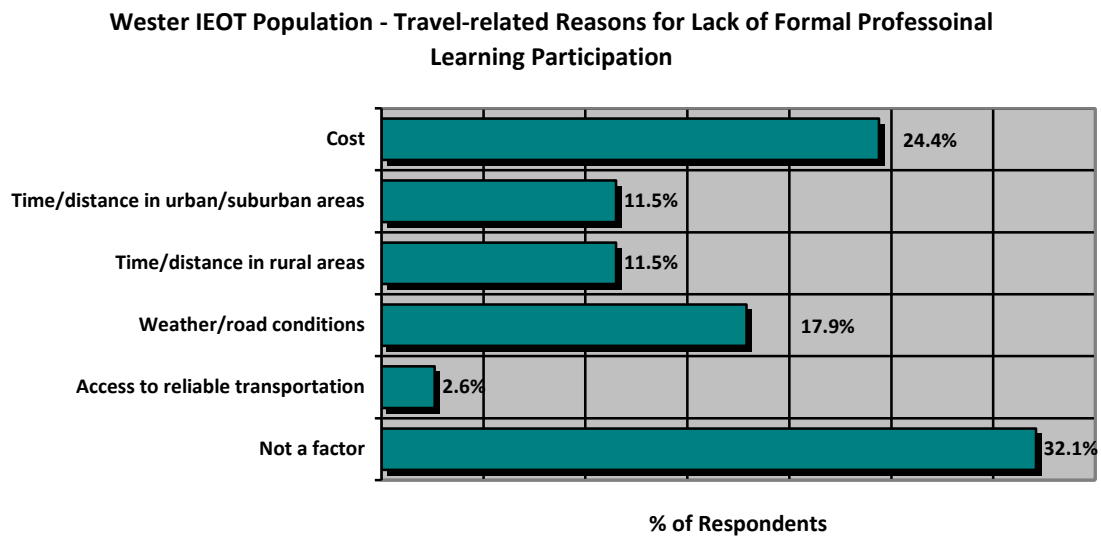
When asked if these times above were convenient for attending formal professional learning opportunities, 92% of IEOTs (Western) indicated yes.

### *What month*

In terms of the time of year to hold formal professional learning, IEOTs (Western) indicated as a group that December (29%), June (13%), July (13%) and August (11%) were not good months to hold formal professional learning. Reflective of the general occasional teacher population, the months of April (most favoured), February and March were thought to be the best months to hold formal professional learning.

## Travel

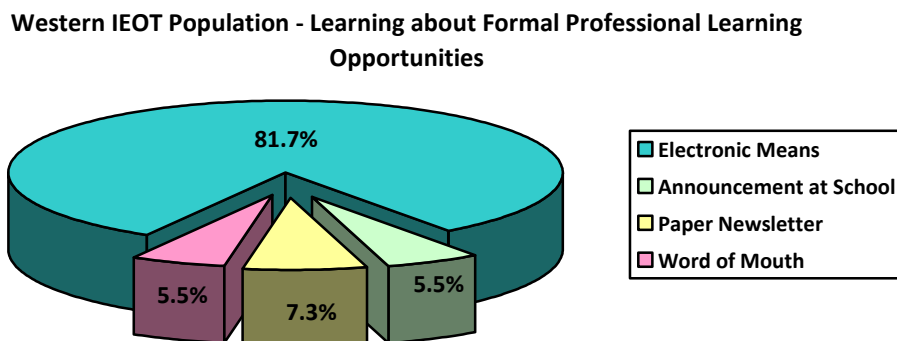
Thirty-two percent of IEOTs (Western) indicated that there were no reasons related to travelling that prevented them from participating in formal professional learning. For those who did indicate that there were reasons related to travel, 24% indicated cost in relation to accommodations, meals and travel, while another 18% indicated weather and road conditions.



**Figure 109. Western IEOT Population - Travel-related Reasons for Lack of Formal Professional Learning Participation.**

## Learn about formal professional learning opportunities

Not surprising, 82% of IEOTs (Western) indicated that they learned about the formal professional learning through some sort of electronic media (electronic flyer, e-newsletter, email, websites).



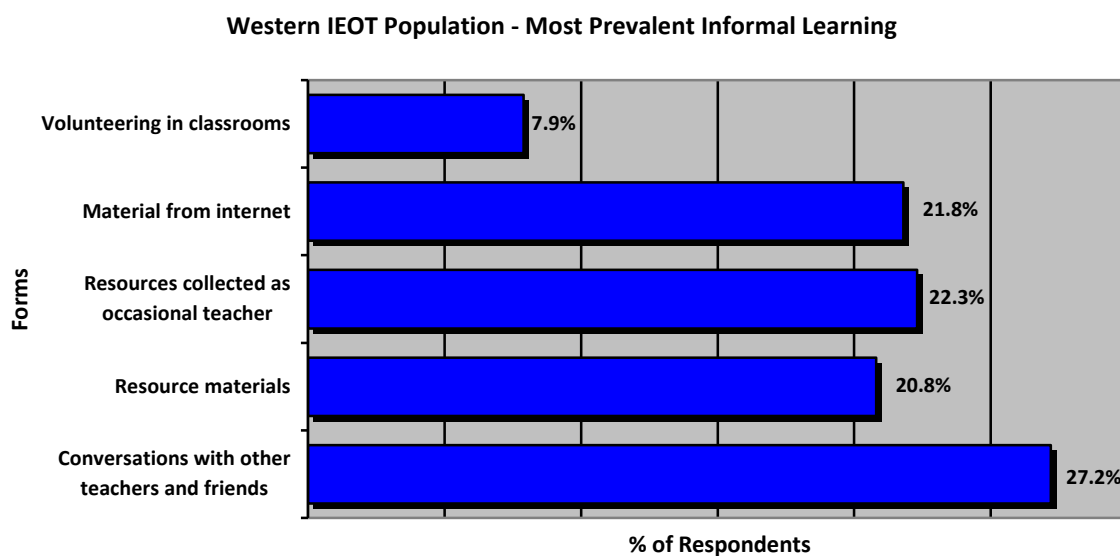
**Figure 110. Western IEOT Population - Learning about Formal Professional Learning Opportunities.**

## INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Informal professional learning for this study was defined as any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, playing a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

### *Most prevalent*

When asked the types of informal learning they engaged in, IEOTs' (Western) responses reflected that of the general occasional teacher workforce.



**Figure 111. Western IEOT Population - Most Prevalent Informal Learning.**

### *Mentoring*

All the IEOTs (Western) identified in this study responded to the question of whether or not they were mentored within the 12-month period. Thirty-four percent indicated they were mentored either formally or informally. Of those who indicated they were mentored formally, eight responded 'yes'. Of these eight, four were mentored through the NTIP Ministry initiative, two through a school, one through the local school and another with a local community agency. It was impossible to determine if the two school board and one school mentor were part of the NTIP program or not.

### *Focus of mentoring*

Twenty-one IEOTs (Western) indicated the focus of their mentoring. Most of the mentoring focused on instructional strategies (28%) and classroom management (27%).

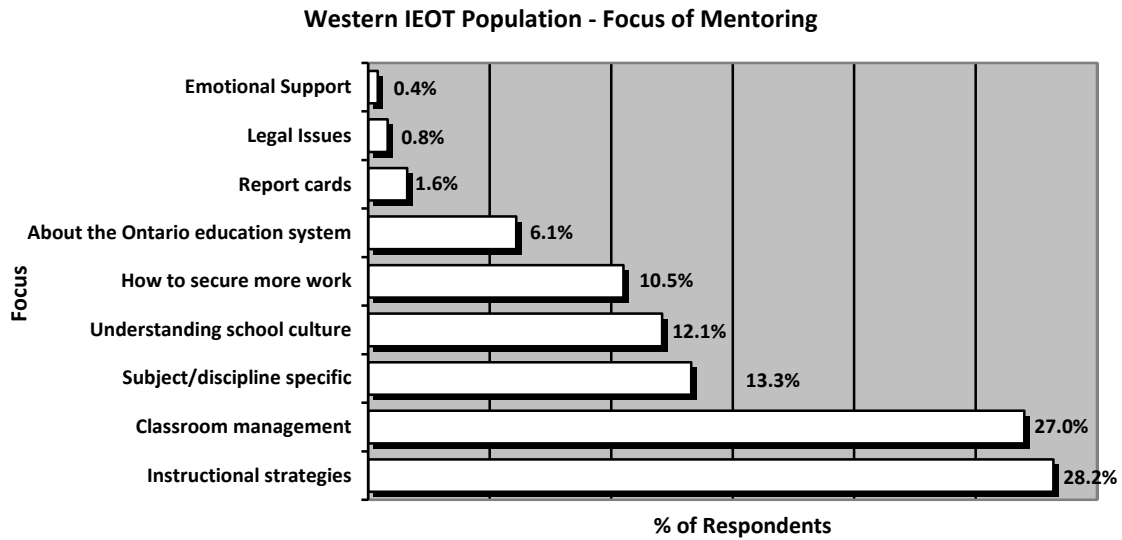


Figure 112. Western IEOT Population - Focus of Mentoring.

### *Frequency of mentoring*

Only 19 IEOTs (Western) responded to how frequently they contact their mentor.

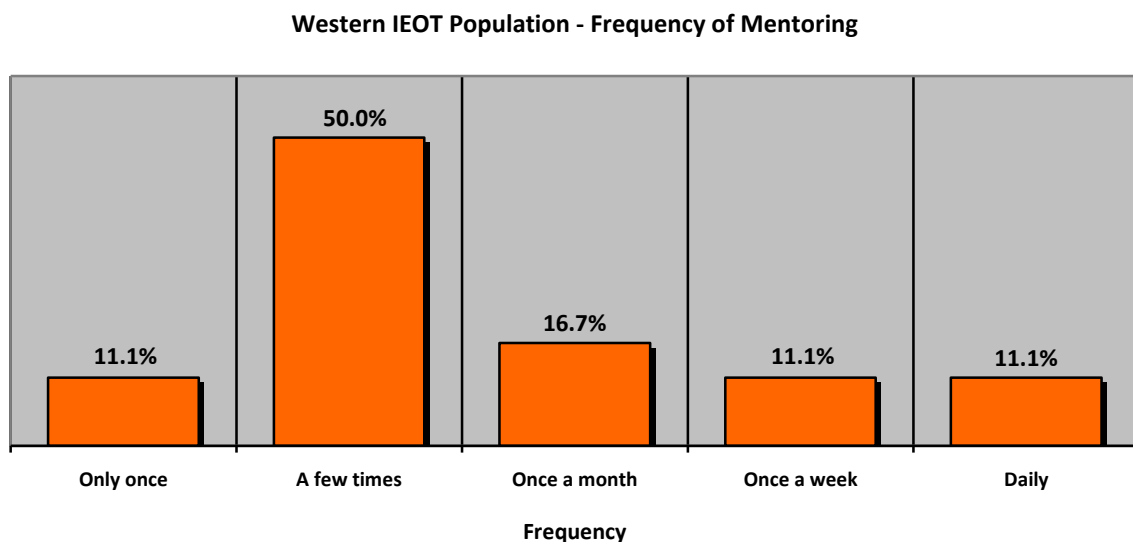
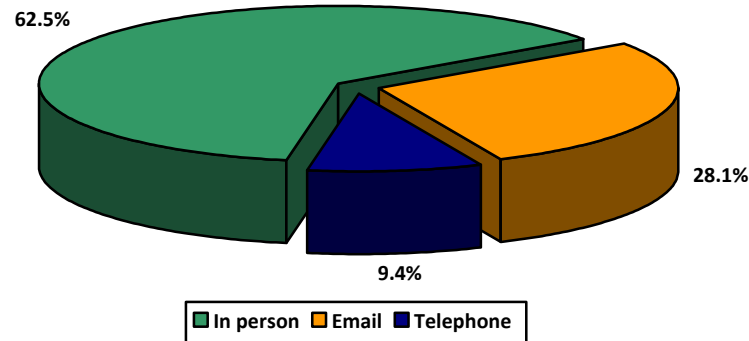


Figure 113. Western IEOT Population - Frequency of Mentoring.

### *Mode of communication*

In terms of how IEOTs (Western) communicated with their mentor, they communicated in person (63%) slightly more than the general occasional teacher population (56%), about the same in terms of email communication (28% IEOTs (Western), 29% general occasional teacher population) and slightly less by phone (9%) compared to the general occasional teacher population (13%).

**Western IEOT Population - Mode of Communication with Mentor**



**Figure 114. Western IEOT Population - Mode of Communication with Mentor.**

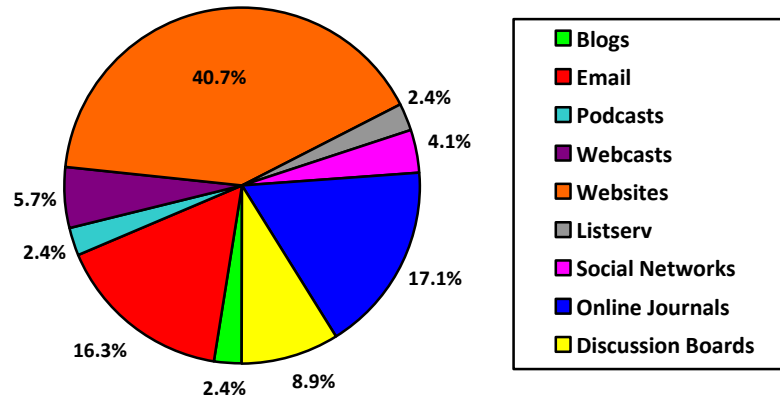
### *Online resources*

Of the 61 responses, 85% indicated that they consult online sources for their professional learning.

### *Types of online sources*

Websites (41%) were reported at the most prevalent online source that IEOTs (Western) use for informal professional learning. Other online sources were also utilized to a lesser degree.

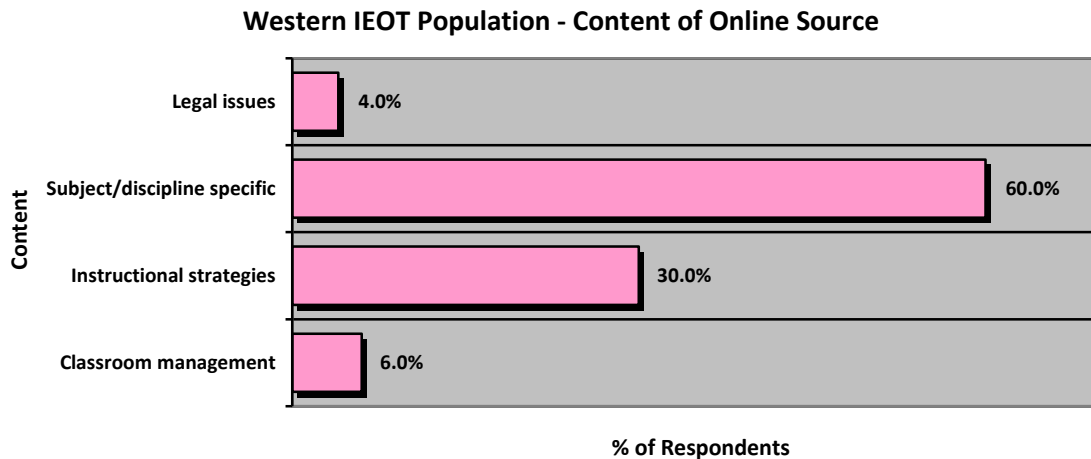
**Western IEOT Population - Types of Online Sources**



**Figure 115. Western IEOT Population - Types of Online Sources.**

### *Content of online source*

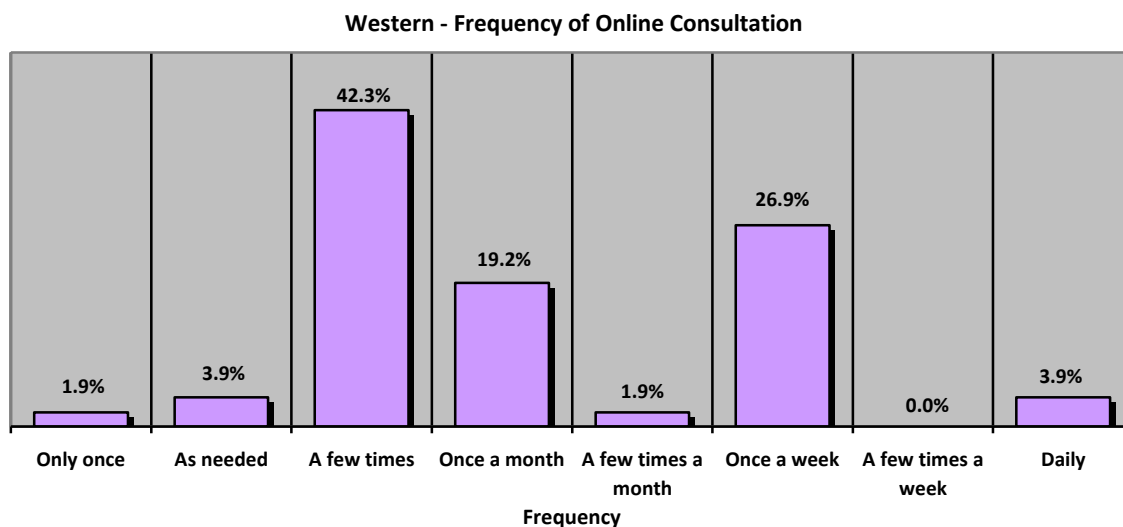
For IEOTs (Western) it appears that learning about a subject or discipline (60%) was the main focus for using the online sources. The general occasional teacher workforce identified instructional strategies (70%) as the leading reason for using online sources whereas for IEOTs (Western) instructional strategies were only reported for 30% of this group. The emphasis on subject/discipline for this group could be attributed to the fact that many of these occasional teachers might not be familiar with the Ontario curriculum because their teacher education program was outside of Ontario.



**Figure 116. Western IEOT Population - Content of Online Source.**

### *Frequency of consultation*

Fifty-two IEOTs (Western) responded to the question of how often they consult online sources. Of those that responded, 42% indicated that they did so a few times, with 27% indicating once a week.



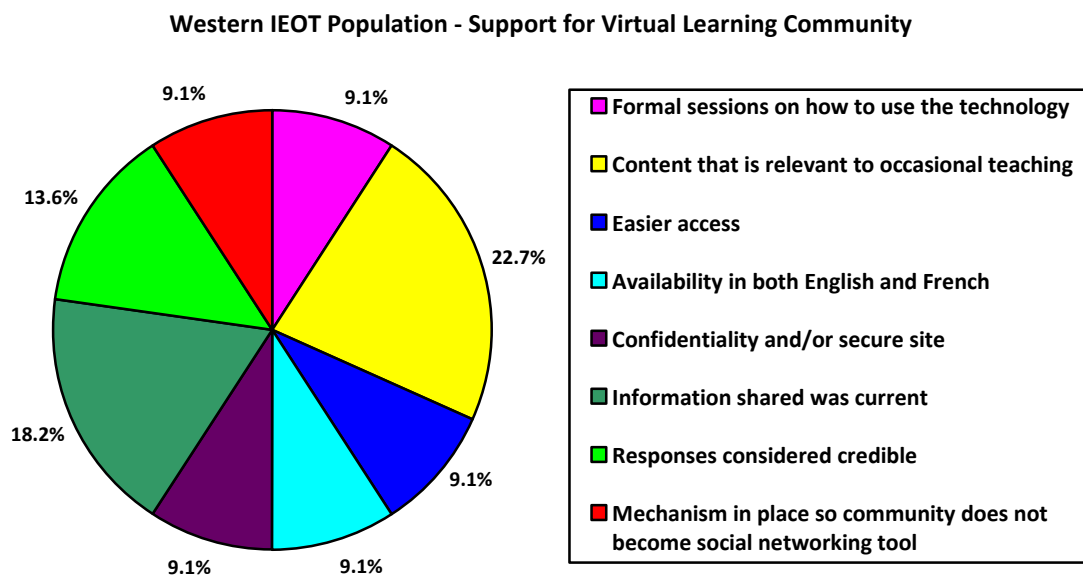
**Figure 117. Western - Frequency of Online Consultation.**

### *Virtual learning community*

Eighty percent of IEOTs (Western) indicated that they would participate in a virtual learning community for occasional teachers if it were offered.

### *Support for a virtual learning community*

Less than 30 IEOTs (Western) responded to this question. Of those that did, five indicated that the content would have to be relevant to occasional teaching; four indicated that the information shared had to be current; three pointed out that the responses have to be credible.



**Figure 118. Western IEOT Population - Support for Virtual Learning Community.**



## ***INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED OCCASIONAL TEACHERS – NON-WESTERN***

Internationally educated occasional teachers (non-Western) are occasional teachers who indicated that they received their teacher education degree outside of Canada in a country considered non-western such as India, China or Brazil. There were only 18 people (5% of the people who responded to the online survey) who fell into this category. There may have been more but the respondents did not provide enough information to be included in the category. This was a disappointing response rate for this group as it is well documented that internationally educated teachers from non-Western countries make up a substantially large portion of the occasional teacher workforce. According to McIntyre (2006), in 2005 IEOTs (non-Western) made up 48% of the occasional teacher workforce.

Similar to the section for Teachers of the North, this section will rely on responses from a focus group session attended by international educated occasional teachers from non-Western countries (IEOTs (non-Western)). These findings are not meant to be generalizable to the entire non-western IEOT group of teachers but the responses do reflect findings from previous studies (Pollock, 2008, 2009, 2010).

### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

The researcher tried to hold two focus groups for IEOTs (non-Western) at two different regions of the province but was only successful in securing one session. Six internationally educated occasional teachers (non-Western) (two male and four female) attended the focus group. The majority had prior teaching experience in a country other than Canada. Some have been occasional teachers for more than 10 years. Because there was only one focus group session the details are recorded in general terms in an attempt to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of those participants.

### **FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Focus group participants' conversations around formal professional learning were similar to the findings found with almost all other groups. Many of the IEOTs (non-Western) participate in formal professional learning such as the Additional Qualification (AQ) courses and a few attend formal professional learning offered by the ETFO locals and school boards. Some of this professional learning focuses on classroom management and teaching and learning strategies.

## INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

All of the focus group participants indicated that they participated in some form of informal professional learning. The fact that they do so is not surprising, as do almost all other occasional teachers. However, the motivation for learning and what IEOTs (non-Western) seek to learn is substantially different from that of the other groups of occasional teachers. All IEOTs (non-Western) described the cultural differences they experienced and how they were trying to figure out the local cultural nuances found in the Ontario English-speaking public elementary schools; much of which western IEOTs take for granted. As one IEOT (non-Western) pointed out “the classroom management is so different from where we’re coming from”. Another commented:

I was trained in India...some of the techniques are pretty different. For example, you have teaching assistants in the classroom that was something new. You have special needs student in the class room and that is something new and I have never been exposed to this as a teacher in India and how the TA and the classroom teacher coordinate to help a special needs student to stay in a class and it not affect the general class as such.

It was not just classroom management or how actual difference in the structure of schooling that was different but also difference in relation to language and language use. One IEOT (non-Western) stated: “It’s just those terminologies that the teachers use. You can be fluent in the language but just getting to the point, getting them to understand this is exactly what you mean”.

Participants in the focus described how spending time in schools has helped them learn more about how schools are run in Ontario. As one person put it: “I learn from the atmosphere of the school”. While in schools, the IEOTs (non-Western) spoke about networking with others and observing. For example, one IOET (non-Western) commented:

on my planning time if I have nothing to do I ask the principal if I can sit in on a class and if I can be just a fly on the wall and just learn from the teachers. Sometimes I am encouraged to do that and sometimes I am not.

In terms of observation, another teacher stated:

I would watch what words they are using, what language they are using, how they are talking, what tone they are using, because I realize if I have a handle on the class, if they are behaving properly, they are listening, only then can I understand them.

## ***TEACHERS OF THE NORTH***

For purposes of this online survey, teachers of the north are occasional teachers who identified themselves as working for one or more of the Northern Ontario Public Districts School Boards as identified by the Ontario Ministry of Education's current Ontario School District, Public School Maps (Map and list of school districts in appendices). Of the sixteen school districts identified as being 'northern', only 22 individuals identified themselves as teaching in any of these school districts. This is only 6% of the people who responded to the online survey. Unfortunately, statistically, it is impossible for 22 people (6%) to be a representative sample of the occasional teacher population who teach in Ontario's north. Rather than provide statistical analysis, this section concentrates on responses from two focus group sessions conducted in two different northern locations. These responses reflect the participants' experiences and cannot be generalized to the occasional teacher population that teach in northern Ontario. It can however, provide an opportunity to learn about the experiences of some occasional teachers who teach in northern Ontario locations.

### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

In total one man and ten women participated in the two focus groups. The age span was from mid-twenties to late fifties. Some had just recently graduated with a teacher education degree, the majority were career occasional teachers that had held a full-time permanent teaching position previously but because of relocation and/or family reasons had chosen to teach occasionally, and a few were retirees. All participants interacted in English throughout the focus group sessions.

### **REASON FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Similar to the statistical findings for the general occasional teacher workforce, teachers in the north who participated in the focus group sessions indicated that one of the reasons that they engaged in formal professional learning was that they needed to keep up with what is going on in the practice of teaching. One occasional teacher explained:

...even if you're only in there for the day, you've got a day plan that's talking about guided reading and this and that. As they bring these new things in, unless somebody tells us what they are, how are we supposed to know? But somehow, they had a really hard time understanding that, that we weren't just there babysitting children, we have to carry on the curriculum, because it has to keep on going, there's no time to have nothing going on for that day.

Some occasional teachers in the north participated in formal professional learning as a way to build their résumé with hopes that they might have better access to a full-time permanent teaching position. Another occasional teacher commented:

...with our board, that's a big thing with the résumés, when they're doing permanent hiring, they want to know what professional learning you've been doing over a period of time...If you haven't done any professional learning in like five years or so, that is a strike against you.

One focus group mentioned the need for training in technology. A northern teacher explained, "We have Smart Boards going up in all the schools, so all the schools have them,...we're expected to know how to use them, but we have no training".

## **FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

It was clear that the ETFO local unions were trying to provide occasional teachers in the north with formal professional development. One ETFO local executive member pointed out: "we [union local] try to have professional learning for our members when we can organize it". Another stated that, "we have done literacy, numeracy, differentiated learning and classroom management (we've done that twice). They've been well-received....". An occasional from northern Ontario however indicated "the majority of [his] professional learning has come on [his] own in taking AQ courses in the summer".

## **INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

The conversation in both focus groups tended to focus more on the informal professional learning that occasional teachers in the north engaged in rather than the formal professional learning. More specifically, they discussed informal learning in terms of independent reading, networking, mentoring, and using websites to learn.

### *Independent reading*

People from each focus group commented that they do some type of reading around their work. One respondent stated, "usually I just do some reading", and another "we have books and that, a little bit of reading here and there". One occasional teacher went into some detail to explain what she does with the information she gathers from reading.

They [the board] have key books that they use for that particular year, so I'll go through and read through that, what's the same, what's different, and I'll see, usually if they're doing something new in this board, there's usually chart paper or whatever and I'll try to make the connections between what's up on the chart paper and what the kids are doing.

### *Networking*

Within the two focus groups, teachers of the north spent considerable time explaining how networking with secretaries, principals, and other teachers was one of the most prevalent practices of informal learning. For example, secretaries were pointed out as being important in helping occasional teachers understand the running of local schools. One new entrant pointed out that she thought secretaries were important for networking because they know “where the attendance is...they can tell you where to find the attendance, if it needs to be dropped off, if it is hot dog day”. In terms of knowing what is happening in the larger education system, one retiree mentioned that she approaches the principal: “I’ll just go in and I’ll talk to the principal on a planning time or something and say ‘okay’ what’s new?’...where are we going with numeracy, or whatever”. A number of occasional teachers mentioned connecting to full-time teachers already working in the education system. A new entrant mentioned that he would “a few times we have coffee with a couple of other teachers that are permanent, so kind of find out from them what’s going on and what kind of politics have been hitting the roof...”. Another mentioned that while in an LTO, “I used to go and visit other schools, like the grade I was teaching, so I would come to [community] and visit a few other teachers that had the same grade, to see what they were going in their classrooms”. Another way of learning about their work was to network in the staff room; particularly listening and joining conversations in the staff room. As one career occasional teacher from the north pointed out:

...sometimes in the staff room, is where we can get our information too. Like you hear all these acronyms and say hey what’s a PLC? Then you find that out, okay, what do you guys do? ...and sometimes a teacher will be around, will give you information here and there, or they kind of tell you what it is, and what it’s about and what’s the new initiative.

### *Mentoring*

In addition to networking, many teachers in the focus groups also indicated that they also seek a mentor. As one participant explained: “...You have to find that special approachable person that can be your mentor, and that’s hard when you’re going to a different school every day”.

### *Using websites*

The use of online sources such as websites was also mentioned within the focus group sessions. One occasional teacher pointed out that when she was seeking advice from an administrator he “directed [her] to a website where [she] could find everything [she] needed”. A number of occasional teachers in the north also talked about the ETFO website for occasional teachers. For the most part, participants were very positive about the website, as one person stated:

I think the whole online thing, even just links to websites would be helpful because there is a while pile of information out there but unless I know where to go to access it, it's not helpful to me, so having one location where things will be able to be placed, will help us very much in the future.

### *Virtual learning community*

Participants in both focus groups indicated that they were interested in participating in a virtual learning community but they also expressed concerns. One occasional teacher pondered who should be included in the virtual learning community: just occasional teachers or full-time teachers as well as occasional teachers. "I get most of my information from full-time teachers, not other occasional teachers. So if you have just occasional teachers, then you're all going to be talking about the same thing".

One of the ETFO local executive representatives expressed some apprehension about what information might be shared.

One concern I would have is with occasional teachers sharing information, if somebody's misinformed and then that information goes out there, I can picture me having to put out all these fires. That's the only thing about the online thing that would worry me to make sure that everybody's getting authentic information that they can use.

## **CHALLENGES**

A number of challenges were described between the two focus group sessions. These challenges included: negotiating professional learning with the local school board, the structure of the formal professional learning, access to formal professional learning (in terms of time, cost and advertising). In terms of working with local boards in the north two items were brought up: negotiating formal professional learning with the boards and being limited by school board policy. One retiree pointed out

...we did negotiate three thousand dollars. So the first meeting I had with someone at the board, it was like ok what can we plan? Is this going to pay for release time for the teachers? And I looked at him, and said "how far do you think that three thousand dollars will go?" oh well, we can provide twenty-five teacher some. Well, that's not going to reach everyone, so that's a huge issue. It has to be after school, and even if we did hold things during the day, people need to be available to work. So workshops is one way of doing it, but it's not going to work for everybody.

A career occasional teacher described his frustration with the 'no win' situation with one of the local school boards. He stated, "you need the courses to get the job, but they [the board] only offer the courses if you have a [permanent or LTO] job".

A number of issues came up when teachers of the north discussed the structure of current formal professional learning: a theory to practice issue, school specific professional learning and grade specific formal professional learning. For example, one new entrant explained:

Sometimes when the courses are offered, part of the course is implementing it in your classroom. If you don't have a classroom, how do you practice? How do you do an assignment when you don't have the kids to do it with? Like Math part 2, you basically need your own classroom.

No occasional teacher working on a day-to-day basis has his or her own classroom. As this above quote indicates, occasional teachers have less control over their work arrangement compared to their full-time permanent teachers.

In terms of school based formal professional learning, another occasional teacher explained:

In the school PD sessions or the PLCs that we supply for, those are school specific. They are based on the literacy scores or the numeracy scores of that particular school. So even if we could get into those, it wouldn't make any sense to you.

Even when formal professional learning is not school specific it can still be too narrow to be meaningful to accommodate the work of occasional teachers. A career occasional teacher described it this way:

The other problem is that for a classroom teacher, if they're teaching grade five or whatever, so they will take a course and that will help them in grade five. For us (k to 8) how do we decide which courses to take, is that course ever going to be really useful for us as well as laying out this money, it's kind of a gamble that you're ever going to be able to use it. So that is a big issue.

As indicated by the previous comments, meaningful formal professional learning for occasional teachers has some specific structural requirements. Formal professional learning that requires: a practical component; is school specific; or grade specific can be limiting for teachers who teach occasionally.

Occasional teachers described a number of concerns around access to formal professional learning such as time, cost, and advertising. Issues around time were described in two ways: the time of day when the formal professional learning was being held and the length of the formal professional learning activity or session. As one ETFO local executive commented: "We've tried to do some different literacy and numeracy workshops after school, which we don't always get a large attendance to that, just

because of it being after school”. The time of day and length of the sessions appeared to be significant to occasional teachers in the north because of the large geographical area the boards cover. For many occasional teachers to attend face-to-face formal professional learning opportunities they have to travel across large distances (and often in unfavourable weather conditions). Therefore, attending after school PD sessions that are often only a few hours in length was not possible. The sparse population distributed throughout the board meant that many teachers had to travel long distances for formal professional learning requiring more time for travel and more cost being incurred because of the travel (such as having to fly and/or staying overnight and pay for more meals away from home).

Also in terms of the length of the formal professional learning a focus group participant stated:

...you know workshops are really great, but they’re only an hour and a half and when I took the math training. I was lead math. It took three years of training, and it was once a month, and it was all day. So that’s really hard to get across.

Cost of the formal professional learning has always been a major concern for occasional teachers in general as indicated from the online survey. As one occasional teacher put it: “They [occasional teachers] just don’t have a thousand dollars to take the course that they need”. But for teachers in the north, additional costs are incurred from the extra cost to travel from more remote areas, accommodations and meals.

Awareness of when and where formal professional learning is to occur was an issue both for individual occasional teachers and ETFO locals. As a few occasional teachers pointed out “the advertising is sometimes very hard to find, very difficult to kind of figure out when it is and how to sign up unless you’re actively involved in the schools, and know the right people to call”. Again, unless there is a systematic method of communicating with occasional teachers, it seems that it is difficult for occasional teachers in more remote areas to find out when and where formal professional learning sessions are taking place. From a professional development delivery standpoint, an occasional teacher commented to the group “we have had difficulty reaching the [union] membership. If we do not have their emails, we cannot reach them”.

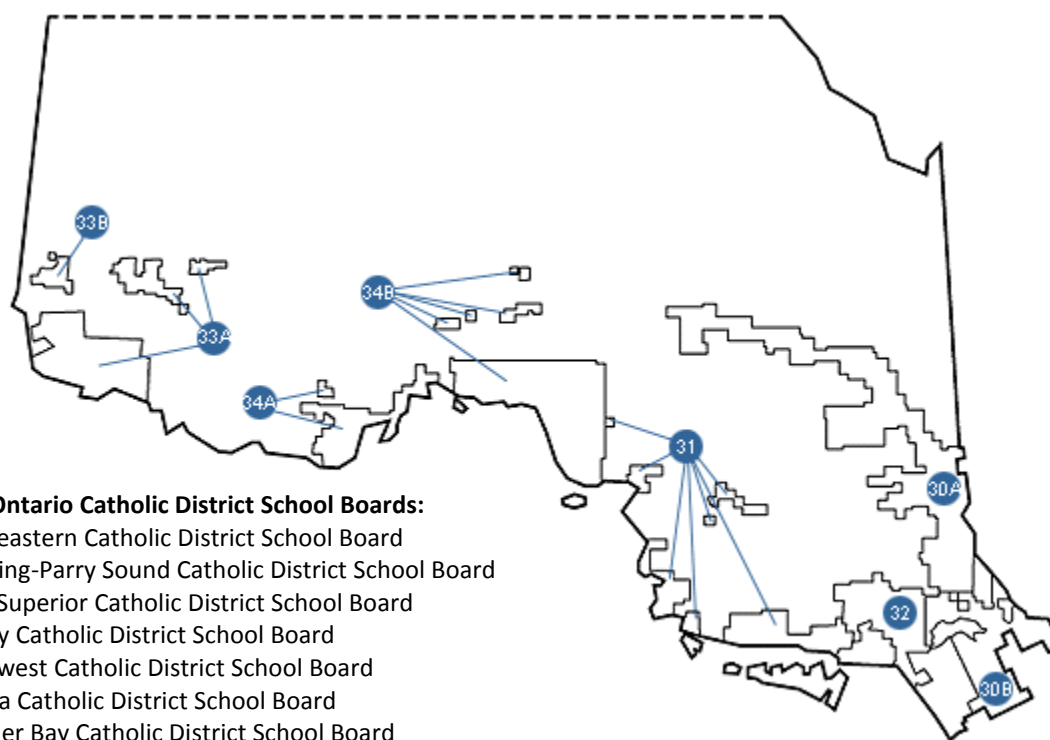
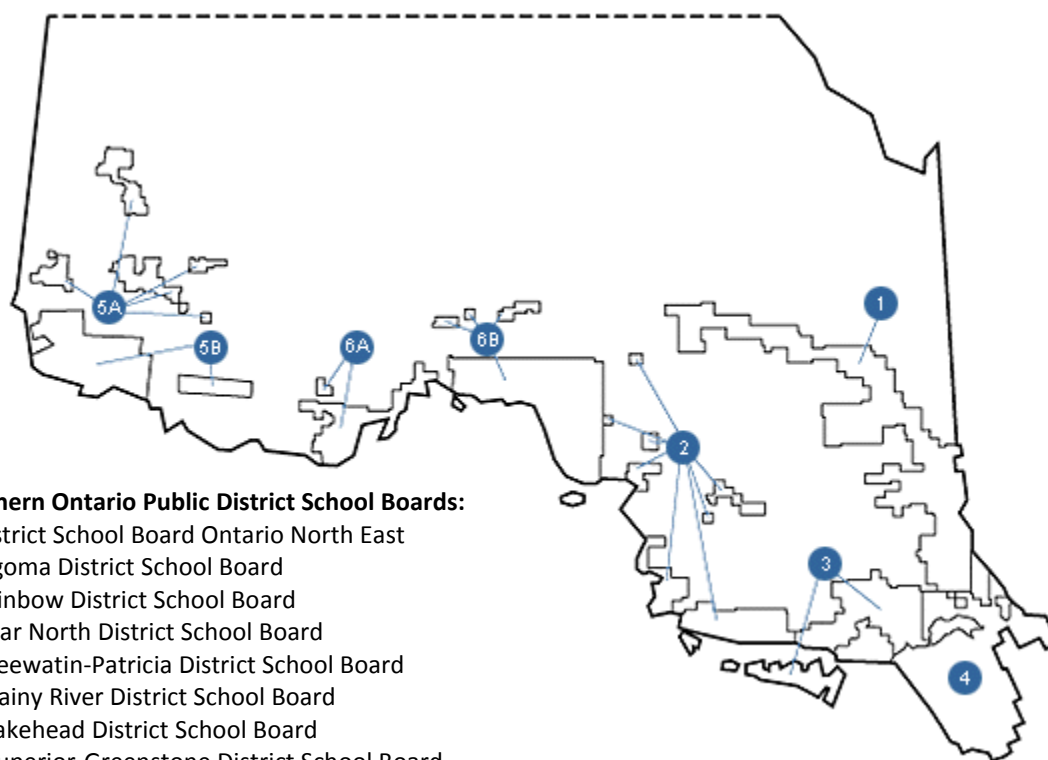
One suggestion for how to structure formal professional learning for occasional teachers was provided. A number of teachers pointed out that to attend professional learning during the school day was not possible both from their perspective and from the boards. Formal professional learning organized during the school day generates work for occasional teachers as full-time teachers are released to attend and the occasional teachers provide cover for the teachers attending the formal professional learning. If an occasional teacher attends the same workshop he or she would lose out on daily work and if numerous occasional teachers were allowed to attend there would be a shortage of occasional teachers to cover for the full-time teachers who are also attending. While



there might be a surplus of occasional teachers in total in Ontario, it is not evenly distributed and some northern regions have a limited number of occasional teachers. One occasional teacher suggested:

If they had a workshop in the morning for the full-time teachers and in the afternoon for the occasional teacher, if they could do that or something like that, then you take the same course. You go in at lunch time or the next day at the school, you can talk to the teachers about the same workshop ... that would be neat.

## **APPENDIX A: NORTHERN ONTARIO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD MAPS**



## **APPENDIX B: OCCASIONAL TEACHER ACCESS TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SURVEY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

My name is Dr. Katina Pollock and I am an assistant professor at the Faculty of Education at The University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into how occasional teachers engage in professional learning and would like to invite you to participate in this study.

The aim of this study is to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the professional learning needs of occasional teachers.

If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to complete an on-line survey that focuses on occasional teachers' professional learning. It should take no more than 15 minutes of your time to complete.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only. No information which could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential.

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the on-line survey at any time with no penalty or no repercussions.

Welcome to the survey. Please click the "I agree" button to begin!

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Manager, Office of Research Ethics, The University of Western Ontario at [ethics@uwo.ca](mailto:ethics@uwo.ca). If you have any questions about this study, please contact Dr. Katina Pollock at 519-661-2111 ext. 82855 or email: [kpolloc7@uwo.ca](mailto:kpolloc7@uwo.ca)

#### **\* 1. By clicking below...**

☐ I Agree

### **2. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

#### **2. Have you participated in any formal professional learning within the past 12 months?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

### 3. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

#### 3. Please indicate the primary reason why you have not participated in any formal professional learning within the past 12 months.

- ☐ I do not see the need to participate in any kind of formal professional learning
- ☐ I do not have the time
- ☐ There is no formal professional learning available for occasional teachers in my area
- ☐ I do not find any of the present professional learning helpful for occasional teaching
- ☐ Cost is a factor
- ☐ I am recently retired and do not feel the need
- ☐ I have difficulty accessing information about formal professional learning for occasional teachers
- ☐ Other (please specify)

### 4. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

#### 4. Were there any opportunities for formal professional learning that you were unable to pursue, but would have liked to?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## 5. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 5. Please indicate the primary reason that you were unable to pursue the formal professional learning.

- ☐ I did not have enough time
- ☐ The formal professional learning was not geographically convenient
- ☐ cost is a factor
- ☐ child care is a factor
- ☐ the formal professional learning did not have available room when I went to register
- ☐ I did not learn about the formal professional learning opportunity until it was too late to register or it was over

Other (please specify)

## 6. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 6. What would motivate you to participate in future formal professional learning (can choose up to five):

- ☐ Being paid for the time spent in formal professional learning
- ☐ Eligibility for increase in pay
- ☐ Eligibility for improved qualifications/formal recognition
- ☐ Preferential access to jobs
- ☐ Childcare provided
- ☐ Free or low-cost fees
- ☐ More convenient locations
- ☐ More convenient times
- ☐ More relevant/interesting topics
- ☐ New government initiatives not familiar to me
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 7. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 7. What type of formal professional learning did you do in the last 12 months (check all that apply):

- ☐ Professional learning sponsored by the Board
- ☐ ETFO Local professional learning
- ☐ Additional Qualification (AQ) course(s)
- ☐ New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)
- ☐ Professional teacher conference
- ☐ School sponsored professional learning
- ☐ ETFO provincial conference
- ☐ Learning for personal interest (e.g. learning to speak a language, arts, crafts)
- ☐ Graduate level courses
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 8. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 8. What would motivate you to participate in further formal professional learning (can choose up to five):

- ☐ Being paid for the time spent in formal professional learning
- ☐ Eligibility for increase in pay
- ☐ Eligibility for improved qualifications/formal recognition
- ☐ Preferential access to jobs
- ☐ Childcare provided
- ☐ Free or low-cost fees
- ☐ More convenient locations
- ☐ More convenient times
- ☐ More relevant/interesting topics
- ☐ New government initiatives not familiar to me
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 9. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 9. What are your reasons for participating in formal professional learning in the last 12 months (check all that apply):

- ☐ Social/professional networking
- ☐ To gain additional qualifications
- ☐ Being paid for time participating in formal professional learning
- ☐ Opportunity for increase in pay
- ☐ To improve teaching practice
- ☐ Resume-building
- ☐ Personal interest
- ☐ It is negotiated as a part of the collective agreement or contract
- ☐ It is required in order to work or apply for jobs
- ☐ Other (please specify)



## 10. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 10. What was the main focus of the formal professional learning in the last 12 months?

Was it to learn more about:

- ☐ Instructional strategies
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Classroom management
- ☐ Subject/discipline
- ☐ Legal issues
- ☐ How the local board contacts occasional teachers for daily work
- ☐ How to secure more work
- ☐ Ministry/board implemented policies/program initiative and changes
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 11. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 11. Who paid for or sponsored the majority of the formal professional learning in the last 12 months?

- ☐ Me
- ☐ Local union
- ☐ School board
- ☐ School
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 12. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 12. Typically, what time of the day did your professional development take place?

- ☐ During the regular school day
- ☐ During in-school PD Days
- ☐ Before the school day
- ☐ After the school day
- ☐ On weekends
- ☐ Whenever I have free time (e.g. on-line or by correspondence)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

### 13. Were these times convenient to you?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## 13. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 14. Why was the time of formal professional learning not convenient?

- ☐ Conflicted with other paid work
- ☐ Conflicted with family responsibilities
- ☐ Not enough time to travel to location
- ☐ Conflicted with school teaching
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 14. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 15. What is the most convenient time for you to participate in formal professional learning?

- ☐ During the regular school day
- ☐ During in-school PD Days
- ☐ Before the school day
- ☐ After the school day
- ☐ On weekends
- ☐ At no particular time of the day (e.g. on-line or by correspondence)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 15. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

### 16. What months of the year are not convenient for you to participate in formal professional learning? (Please choose up to four)

- ☐ January
- ☐ February
- ☐ March
- ☐ April
- ☐ May
- ☐ June
- ☐ July
- ☐ August
- ☐ September
- ☐ October
- ☐ November
- ☐ December

## 16. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

**\* 17. Are there reasons related to travelling that prevent you from participating in formal professional learning? (Choose all that apply)**

- ☐ Yes – access to reliable means of transportation
- ☐ Yes – weather/road conditions
- ☐ Yes – time/distance in rural areas
- ☐ Yes – time/distance in urban/suburban areas
- ☐ Yes – Cost (accommodations, meals, travel, etc.,)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 17. FORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Formal professional learning is defined as learning that occurs in the presence of, or with the assistance of, a teacher, facilitator, and/or expert who is in a position of authority to deliver curriculum or knowledge that has been taken from a pre-established body of knowledge and has been designated as required (i.e. workshops, additional qualification (AQ) courses).

**18. How do you find out about formal professional learning? Please choose the main mode of communication.**

- ☐ Electronic (choose flyer, newsletter, email, went to ETFO local website or Provincial website or board website)
- ☐ Word of mouth (another OT or full-time teacher/principal)
- ☐ Announcement at school (i.e. bulletin board)
- ☐ Paper newsletter, mailing, community calendar
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 18. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

**19. Please indicate the types of informal professional learning you have engaged in over the past 12 months. (check all that apply)**

- ☐ Conversations with other teachers, friends
- ☐ Resource material such as books, professional journals, academic journals
- ☐ Volunteering in a classroom
- ☐ Material from the internet
- ☐ Resources collected while working as an occasional teacher
- ☐ I have not engaged in any informal professional learning
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 19. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - MENTORING

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

**20. Has someone mentored you, either formally or informally, with regard to occasional teaching?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## 20. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - MENTORING

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

**21. Was this part of a formal mentor program?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## 21. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - MENTORING

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

### 22. Who organized the formal mentoring? Choose one.

- ☐ Ontario College of Teachers
- ☐ Ministry of Education
- ☐ Part of the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)
- ☐ ETFO local
- ☐ School board
- ☐ School
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 22. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - MENTORING

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

### 23. What was the focus of most of your mentoring? (choose up to three)

- ☐ How to secure more work
- ☐ Learning about the Ontario education system
- ☐ Understanding school culture
- ☐ Instructional strategies
- ☐ Classroom management
- ☐ Subject/discipline specific
- ☐ Legal issues
- ☐ Other (please specify)

### 23. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - MENTORING

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

#### 24. How often did you make contact with your mentor in the last 12 months?

- ☐ Only once
- ☐ A few times
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Other (please specify)

### 24. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - MENTORING

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

#### 25. How did you communicate with your mentor?

- ☐ In person
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Texting (SMS messaging including Facebook, etc)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

### 25. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - ONLINE

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

#### 26. Do you consult online sources?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## 26. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - ONLINE

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

### 27. Which online sources do you use for informal learning?

- ☐ Blogs
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Podcasts
- ☐ Webcasts
- ☐ Websites
- ☐ Listserv
- ☐ Social networks (i.e., twitter, facebook, my space)
- ☐ Online journals
- ☐ Discussion boards
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## 27. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - ONLINE

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

### 28. What information do you seek using online sources?

- ☐ Classroom management
- ☐ Legal issues
- ☐ Instructional strategies
- ☐ Subject/discipline specific
- ☐ Other (please specify)



## 28. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - ONLINE

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

**29. Would you say the majority of these resources are Canadian?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

## 29. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - ONLINE

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

**30. How often have you consulted these online sources in the last 12 months?**

- ☐ Only once
- ☐ A few times
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Daily

Other (please specify)

## 30. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - ONLINE

Informal learning is any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of institutions providing educational programs, courses or workshops (i.e. learning to speak a language, play a musical instrument, arts or crafts).

**31. If there was a virtual learning community (an online community that exists to share and support one another in relation to occasional teaching and teacher professional learning) for occasional teachers would you use it?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### 31. INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - ONLINE

**32. What would need to be in place for you to consider participating in a virtual learning community? (Choose all that apply)**

- ☐ Formal sessions on how to use the technology
- ☐ The content would have to be relevant to occasional teaching
- ☐ Easier access (e.g. website that are easy to upload through dial-up)
- ☐ Availability in both English and French
- ☐ Availability in a language other than English or French
- ☐ Confidentiality and/or a secure site
- ☐ Moderation of the virtual learning community
- ☐ Information shared was current
- ☐ Responses considered credible
- ☐ Mechanism in place so that the virtual learning community does not become another "social networking" tool
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other (please specify)

### 32. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**33. Do you have two teacher education degrees? (for example, a teaching degree from another country, and from Canada)**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### 33. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**34. Did you complete your second teacher education degree in Canada?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

#### 34. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

35. What province did you complete your second teacher education degree in?

36. What year did you graduate with your second teacher education degree?

37. What was the language of instruction for your second teacher education degree?

☐ English

☐ French

☐ Other (please specify)

#### 35. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

38. In what country did you complete your second teacher education degree?

39. What year did you graduate with your second teacher education degree?

40. What was the language of instruction for your second teacher education degree?

☐ English

☐ French

☐ Other (please specify)

#### 36. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

41. Did you complete your first (or only) teacher education degree in Canada?

☐ Yes

☐ No

### 37. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

42. In what province did you complete your first (or only) teacher education degree?

43. What year did you complete your first (or only) teacher education degree?

44. What was the language of instruction for your first (or only) teacher education degree?

☐ English

☐ French

☐ Other (please specify)

### 38. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

45. In what country did you complete your first (or only) teacher education degree?

46. In what year did you graduate with your first (or only) teaching degree?

47. What was the language of instruction for your first (or only) teacher education degree?

☐ English

☐ French

☐ Other (please specify)

### 39. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

48. What is your first language?

49. How many years have you taught as an occasional teacher (daily and Long-Term Occasional (LTO) contract) in total?

50. Did you hold a permanent teaching position (not a Long-Term Occasional (LTO) contract) previously (including Canada and/or other countries in private or public school systems)?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

### 40. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

51. Was your permanent teaching position in Canada?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

### 41. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

52. What province was your permanent teaching job in?

### 42. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

53. In what country was your permanent teaching job?

### 43. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

54. How many years of permanent teaching do you have in total?

#### 44. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**55. What was the main reason for leaving your last position?**

- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Deemed surplus
- ☐ Position eliminated by school or board
- ☐ Dissatisfied by permanent teaching
- ☐ Personal choice
- ☐ To accommodate partner or other family members
- ☐ Other (please specify)

#### 45. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**56. Do you intend to pursue a full-time teaching position within the next 5 years?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

#### 46. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**57. Do you have any children under 18 years of age living in your household?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

#### 47. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**58. Would you say that being a caregiver for a child is a major factor in your decision to work occasionally?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

#### 48. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**59. Are you a primary caregiver for an adult?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

#### 49. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**60. Would you say that being a caregiver for an adult is a major factor in your decision to work occasionally?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

#### 50. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**61. What divisions are you certified to teach? (check all that apply).**

- ☐ Primary  
☐ Junior  
☐ Intermediate  
☐ Senior

#### 51. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**62. At what school level or subject area (i.e. French, Special Education) did you do most of your occasional teaching in the past 12 months?**

- ☐ Primary  
☐ Junior  
☐ Intermediate  
☐ Senior  
☐ Subject area (please specify)

#### 52. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

**63. Did you teach in a division or subject area (i.e. French, Special Education) in which you were not certified?**

- ☐ No  
☐ Yes - Primary  
☐ Yes - Junior  
☐ Yes - Intermediate  
☐ Yes - Senior  
☐ Yes - Subject area (please specify)

### 53. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

64. How many school boards have you worked for within the last 12 months as an occasional teacher?

### 54. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

65. In which school board do you do most of your occasional teaching?

### 55. TEACHER WORK EXPERIENCE

66. Are you currently working as an occasional teacher:

- ☐ On a day-to-day basis
- ☐ In a long-term occasional (LTO) position
- ☐ Both
- ☐ Other (please specify)

### 56. DEMOGRAPHICS

67. What is your age?

### 57. DEMOGRAPHICS

68. How do you self identify?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other



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