

**A Letter of Agreement between**  
**Niagara University's College of Education and**  
**the Toronto Catholic District School Board**

Niagara University and the Toronto Catholic District School Board have established a partnership to enhance the preparation and professional development of teachers and educational administrators. Niagara University's College of Education and the Toronto Catholic District School Board will collaborate to offer both coursework and supervised practica within the School Board for the M.S. Ed. degree in Educational Administration, the Bachelor of Professional Studies Degree in Education in Teacher Education and Additional Qualifications courses.

The collaboration between representatives of Niagara University and the Toronto Catholic District School Board offers a unique opportunity to expand the mission of both educational institutions. Not only is there the potential to enhance the preparation of teachers and educational administrators, there is an added benefit to expand job-embedded support to practicing teachers through the involvement of faculty in the professional learning community. Opportunities to address key issues and challenges facing teachers and administrators through the university-school partnership will be explored (e.g., working with school councils, using system-wide assessment evidence to inform school improvement planning).

**ENROLLMENT**

It is anticipated that 25 students will participate in the educational administration program in Ontario, 95 students will participate in the teacher education program at the Primary/Junior level, and 70 students will participate in the teacher education program at the Intermediate/Senior level of preparation at our Ontario sites. The Educational Administration program (M.S. Ed.) has operated in the Ontario School Boards since 1984 and is pending continued Ministerial Consent. The Ontario teacher education program (B.P.S.) is newly established, beginning in January 2007 but Niagara University has had a long tradition of partnerships with Ontario School Boards through its placement of student teachers from the Lewiston main campus across the province. As of June 2009, Niagara University is also in the process of becoming a service provider for delivery of additional qualifications courses.

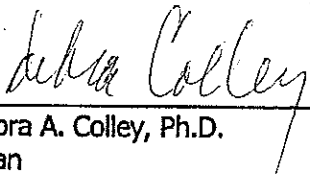
**Initiatives and Responsibilities**

The Partnership Agreement between Niagara University's College of Education and the Toronto Catholic District School Board includes the following components:

1. **Classroom space.** Courses will be offered within the School Board for educational administration and/or teacher education, subject to scheduling and space availability during the academic semester of the course offering. Space will be available for Niagara University in the Catholic Education Center and/or through professional learning centers in the district. Classrooms are state of the art instructional settings, with opportunities for break-outs, small group and large group instruction. The fiscal implications and cost recovery for the district will be determined and finalized prior to the initiation of specific courses.
2. **Curriculum materials.** Niagara University students will have access to curriculum materials specific to grade levels and to the student library collection within classrooms in the district (e.g., student teacher placements). In addition, the Toronto Catholic District School Board maintains a professional library with resources for teachers and administrators that would be available for student use and reference. These include access to ministry regulations and board policy that are made available to district faculty and staff.
3. **Instructional technology.** Instructional technology resources will be available through the District and the University.
  - Niagara University and Toronto Catholic District School Board will discuss opportunities for videoconferencing, as needed.
  - Computer labs are available in the administration center and in schools throughout the district. The technology facilities will be scheduled so that they are available for professors if needed.
  - Niagara University will provide a mobile cart of laptops computers (30) for methods and curriculum courses (technology integration for Ontario learning standards) for professors and students at any Ontario site. The mobile cart and digital equipment will be maintained by Ontario program coordinator. In addition, LCD projectors for faculty/student presentations and instruction will be available through professors for use at any Ontario site.
4. **Faculty contributions.** Faculty in the College of Education will work with the School Board in district related planning, assessment and development. The partnership will encourage the participation of faculty in researching best practices; professional development for staff, teachers, administrators, and parents; and other district initiatives.
5. **Practica opportunities.** Niagara University students will have opportunities to complete supervised field experiences and internship requirements within the School Board as follows:
  - Educational administration candidates complete a required internship.
  - Teacher education candidates complete field experiences each semester, leading to a full-time student teaching experience.
  - These field components are supervised by university supervisors. There is an honorarium for associate teachers (teacher education) for the practice teaching component of field experience.

6. **University library resources.** Niagara University students studying at Ontario will have electronic access to full range of library resources through Niagara University. All enrolled students will obtain an E-mail account that provides access to professors, news, university records (grades, schedules).

- **Electronic Reserve.** Course readings are digitized and made available via the World Wide Web.
- **Remote Access to Library Databases.** The Library provides remote access to approximately 7,500 electronic journal titles. Several hundred of these titles support education research. Remote access is also available for tens of thousands of ERIC documents. Approximately 80 percent of the ERIC documents published since 1996 are available online in full text. In addition, 15,000 electronic books, of which over 500 are on education-related topics will be available to students.
- **24 Hour Virtual Reference Service.** Students can receive research assistance by calling the reference desk, emailing us, or using our new virtual reference service. The Library participates in a nationwide program that provides "chat" reference services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **Document Delivery.** For titles not available through full-text databases, the Library makes photocopies of articles or obtains copies from other libraries and sends them to students electronically (or if the student prefers, via fax or postal service).
- **Information Literacy Training.** A librarian visits Ontario-based sites and provides training to students in the use of Library resources (orientation sessions and professor-directed invitation).
- **Library Liaison Program.** A Library liaison is assigned to each academic department at Niagara University. The liaison acts as a kind of customer service representative whom students can contact when they have a special need or wish to talk to a subject specialist. Starting in the fall of 2004, all students in the Ontario program will receive a Library handbook, which will inform them who their liaison is, describe the services and information resources available to off-campus students, and provide a list of the passwords that are needed to connect to Library databases remotely.



Debra A. Colley, Ph.D.  
Dean  
College of Education



Ann Perron  
Director of Education  
Toronto Catholic District School Board

May 2009