



Membership Data Report

2020–2021
Fiscal Year

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Introduction

The College of Early Childhood Educators (the “College”) was established under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (the “Act”) with the mandate to regulate the profession of early childhood educators in Ontario in the public interest. The College is one of the largest self-regulatory bodies and the first professional college for early childhood educators (ECEs) in Canada.

The Annual Membership Data Report provides a comprehensive review of the registration and membership trends throughout the College’s fiscal year (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021). The report examines incoming applications, membership trends and insights into the profession, as well as providing an understanding of the membership demographics and geographic distribution that make up the early childhood profession in Ontario.

The Continuation of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The 2020–2021 fiscal year saw the College continue to operate through unprecedented times as the COVID-19 pandemic continued. As Ontario entered its second wave of the pandemic in early October 2020, the provincial government made several announcements which affected registered early childhood educators (RECEs), including:

- **December 9, 2020:** Health Canada approved the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for use in Canada (Moderna followed approval on December 23, 2020 and AstraZeneca on February 26, 2021)
- **December 14, 2020:** Nation-wide distribution of COVID-19 vaccines began
- **December 26, 2020:** strict provincial lockdown took effect, closing all non-essential businesses across the province. The provincial government announced students will not be returning to in-person learning until at least January 11. In contrast to lockdowns in March 2020, child care programs were not closed
- **January 12, 2021:** due to surging new infections, a second declaration of emergency was issued with an additional stay at home order announced. School closures were extended while child care remained open
- **February 11, 2021:** the Ontario government announced that March Break would be postponed to the week of April 12
- **April 3, 2021:** third province-wide lockdown began. Child care remained open
- **April 12, 2021:** Premier Ford announced that all schools would close to in-person classes following the Spring Break
- **April 29, 2021:** All Ontario licensed childcare workers became eligible to book their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine
- **June 2, 2021:** the provincial government determined that in-person learning at schools would remain closed through the end of the school year, citing concerns over variants
- **June 11, 2021:** Ontario entered Step 1 of the Roadmap to Reopen plan, originally scheduled for June 14
- **June 30, 2021:** Ontario entered Step 2 of the provincial reopening plan, originally scheduled for July 2

Throughout this time, most licensed child care settings and other child care employers remained open, and many RECEs continued to serve essential workers and others who continued to require child care.

As the College works towards a return to more normal operations, several of the temporary measures introduced to support applicants and members through the pandemic began to wind down, which included:

- In September 2020, the College reinstated its notice of intention to suspend and membership suspensions for non-payment of fees
- As of March 2021, members were no longer eligible to request a deferral of their membership fees, without penalty

With the winding down of these temporary measures, the 2020–2021 fiscal year saw a return to more anticipated membership levels, indicating that the 2019–2020 fiscal year was anomalous in terms of applicant and membership data. In light of this, the 2019–2020 fiscal year was not included in the calculations for average volumes in this report.

Applications

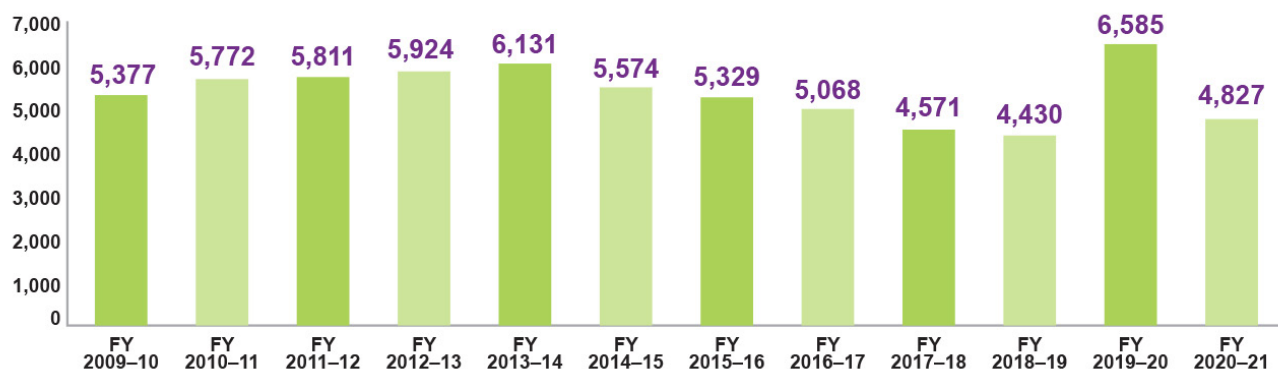
Assessed under the Registration Regulation of the *Act*, applicants to the College must successfully demonstrate they meet all requirements in order to be issued a Certificate of Registration with the College, enabling them to practise the profession.

Successful completion of the educational requirement for registration with the College can be met in a number of ways, including:

1. A Diploma in Early Childhood Education (ECE) from an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAAT);
2. A diploma or degree that is assessed by the College as equivalent to a Diploma in ECE offered by an OCAAT;
3. A letter-of-equivalency certificate or a recognition-of-equivalency certificate issued by the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario or the Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario;
4. A licence or certificate granted by a regulatory authority of another Canadian province or territory that is considered a match to the Certificate of Registration issued by the College for the purpose of the *Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)*; and,
5. A diploma or degree from a post-secondary institution or a combination of a diploma or degree from a post-secondary institution and experience which is equivalent to an Early Childhood Education diploma program from an OCAAT.

The volume of applications received by the College in the 2020–2021 fiscal year followed a similar trend to previous years. Although the volume of applications decreased by 26.7 per cent from the 2019–2020 fiscal year, it dropped by 3.3 per cent over the average volume.¹

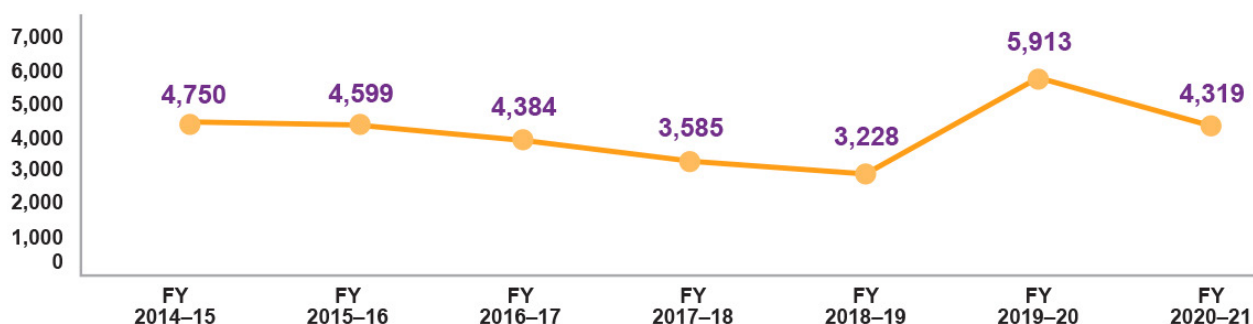
Total New Applications Per Fiscal Year



¹ This value was determined by calculating the average volume of applications received by the College between the 2014–2015 and 2018–2019 fiscal years, then conducting a percentage change between the 2020–2021 fiscal year and the average volume.

The College continues to receive the majority of applications (89.2 per cent) from graduates of an ECE diploma program delivered by an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAAT). This fiscal year saw a 26.9 per cent decrease in the number of OCAAT applications received compared to the previous year; however, this was a 5.1 per cent increase to the average volume of OCAAT applications received.² In absence of information from OCAATs regarding enrolment and graduation rates, the College is unable to draw any conclusions in relation to last fiscal year's increase. The College continues to monitor application volumes to determine if trends continue toward pre-pandemic levels.

Total Member Applications from OCAAT Diploma Programs

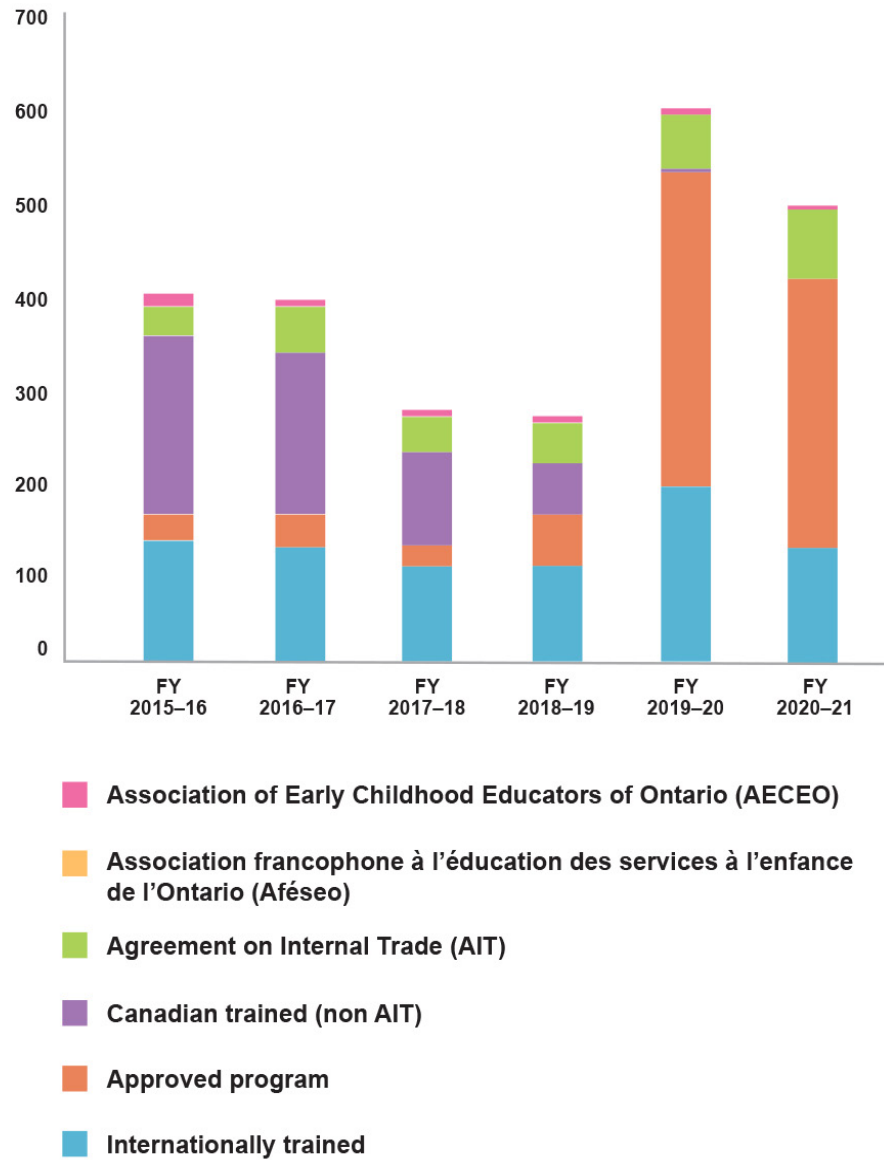


As noted earlier, applicants are able to meet the education requirement in several ways outside of obtaining an ECE diploma offered by an OCAAT. Applications from individuals with alternative educational qualifications continue to account for almost ten per cent of all applications received by the College. Similar to the overall application trends, the volume of applications from individuals with alternative educational qualifications declined by 21.6 per cent over the 2019–2020 fiscal year; however, the volume had still increased by more than 45 per cent over the average.³ Notably, the College continued to see the largest increase in the volume of applications received from graduates of approved programs.

² This value was determined by calculating the average volume of OCAAT applications received by the College between the 2014–2015 and 2018–2019 fiscal years, then calculating a percentage change between the 2020–2021 fiscal year and the average volume.

³ This value was determined by calculating the average volume of applications received from individuals with alternative educational qualifications between the 2014–2015 and 2018–2019 fiscal years, then calculating a percentage change between the 2020–2021 fiscal year and the average volume.

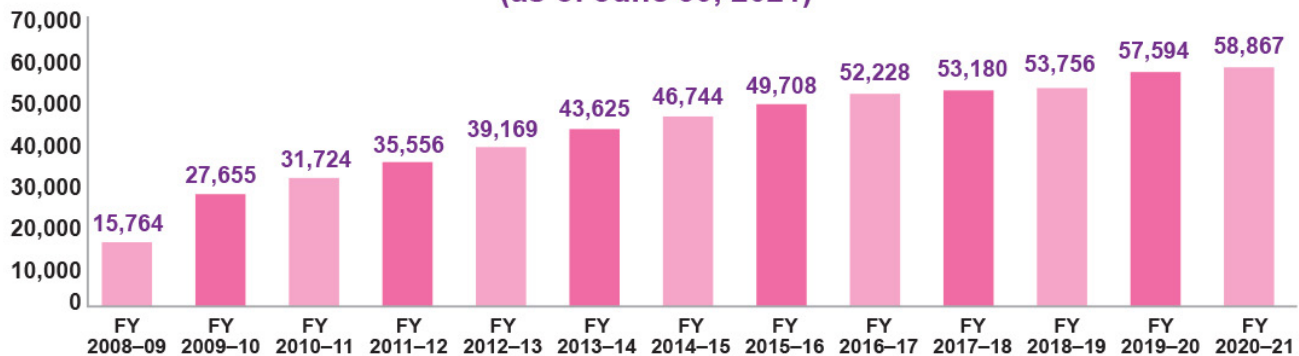
Total Member Applications with Alternative Educational Qualifications (excluding OCAAT Diploma Programs)



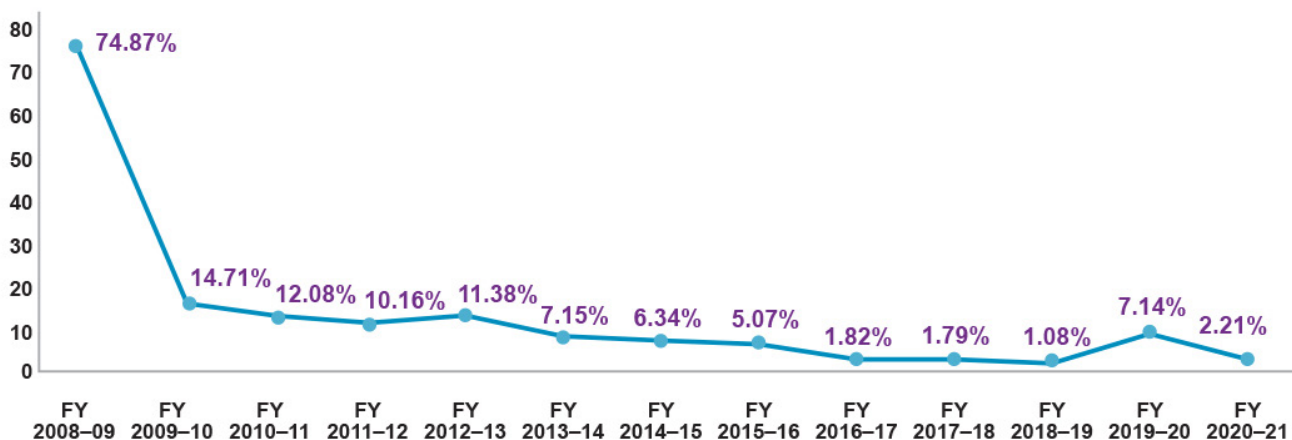
Membership

The College saw a slight growth in the total members in good standing, increasing to 58,867 at the end of the fiscal year. The overall membership growth rate dropped to a rate more in line with typical fiscal years, accounting for a 2.21 per cent net growth rate over the 2019–2020 fiscal year, in line with a maturing organization.

Total Membership
(as of June 30, 2021)



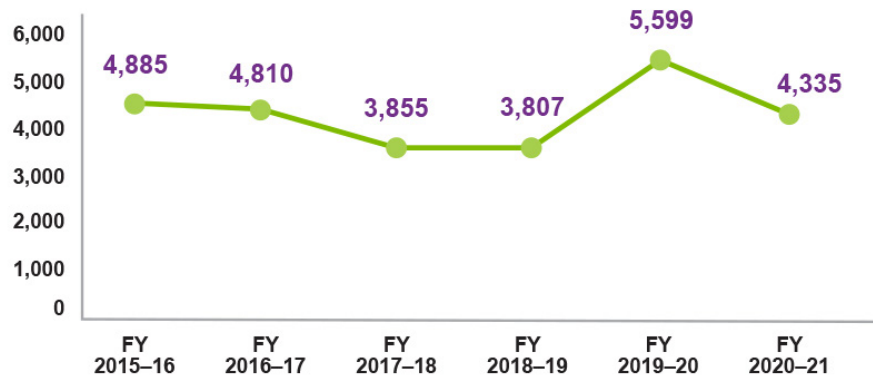
Net Growth Rate at End of Fiscal Year



New Membership

As noted in the decreased volume of applications, the College observed a decline in the number of new members. There was a 22.5 per cent decrease over the 2019–2020 fiscal year but only a 3.8 per cent decrease over the average fiscal year.⁴

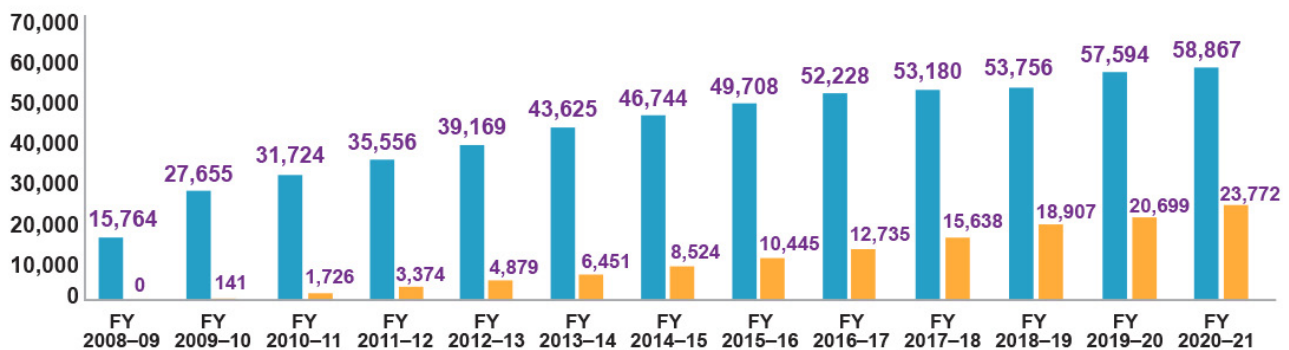
New Members Per Fiscal Year



Membership Attrition

Members are considered no longer in good standing when their Certificate of Registration has been suspended, resigned or revoked. Of the more than 80,000 Certificates of Registration issued by the College since its inception, 29 per cent belong to former members who are no longer in good standing, which is consistent with previous years.

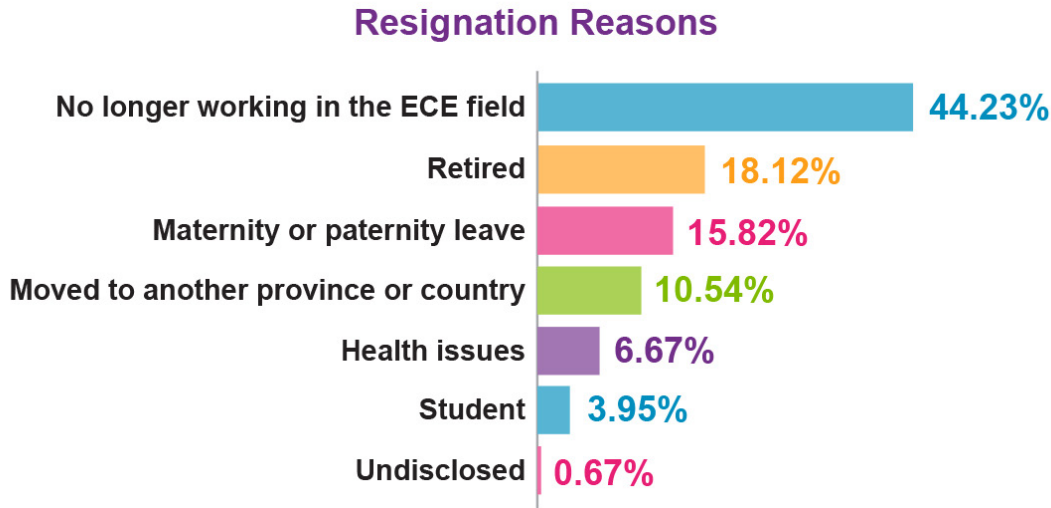
Membership in Good Standing vs. Those Not in Good Standing



⁴ This value was determined by calculating the average number of new members to the College between the 2014–2015 and 2018–2019 fiscal years, then calculating a percentage change between the 2020–2021 fiscal year and the average volume.

The College did not observe any significant changes in the overall number of membership resignations in this fiscal year (1,270), increasing by less than half of a per cent from the previous year. The reason for this change is unknown, however this may be correlated, in part, to the temporarily measures taken by the College in the previous fiscal year which extended into the start of this fiscal year, including the temporarily halt on member suspensions and suspension notices, which may have acted as a reminder to members to resign their membership prior to suspension.

Similar to previous years, the predominant reason provided by members for their resignation continued to be that they were no longer working in the ECE field, accounting for almost half of the resignations. This fiscal year saw a slight increase in the volume of members indicating that they were retiring which increased over maternity/paternity leave, previously the second most chosen reason for resignation. The largest cohort of members resigning fell in the 25-34 age range (39.7 per cent), with the median age of resignation being 36 years old. Members in the 18-24 age range were the least likely to resign, accounting for only 5.89 per cent of member resignations.



Members may have their Certificate of Registration suspended for a variety of reasons, including:

- Failing to provide payment for their annual membership renewal;
- Failing to provide information required by the College related to their annual membership renewal or Continuous Professional Learning portfolio; and,
- Conduct-related matters.

Of those members whose Certificate of Registration are no longer in good standing, approximately 27 per cent have been suspended. The College observed a significant increase in the volume of suspensions during the 2020–2021 fiscal year, increasing by 83.2 per cent (2,954 suspensions) over the previous year. This increase is due in part, to the winding down of temporarily measures the College undertook during the previous fiscal year in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning September 2020, the College restarted the suspension notification process, with membership suspensions beginning again in November. With the progressive return to regular operations, an increase in suspension volume was to be expected.

Former Members

Member who resign their membership or have been suspended are able to reinstate their membership once they provide the College with the requested information and/or payment. The College saw a decrease in the number of reinstatement requests received (-53 per cent) over the previous year, falling back to pre-pandemic levels observed by the College. This decline in reinstatements may be correlated to the temporary halt in suspensions, as the overwhelming majority of former members who chose to reinstate (over 90 per cent) did so after having their Certificate of Registration suspended for administrative reasons (i.e., failure to provide payment of fees). Fewer former members reinstated their membership from a resigned status, falling to less than 10 per cent during the fiscal year; those who did reinstate from a resigned status did so, on average, less than two years after resigning from the College.

When a member's Certificate of Registration remains suspended for three consecutive years without reinstating, it is administratively revoked as authorized in the Registration Regulation of the *Act*. The College continued to see an increase in the number of revocations, rising by almost 15 per cent during the 2020–2021 fiscal year (1,890 in total). This increase is in line with the volume of suspensions observed by the College in the 2017–2018 fiscal year.

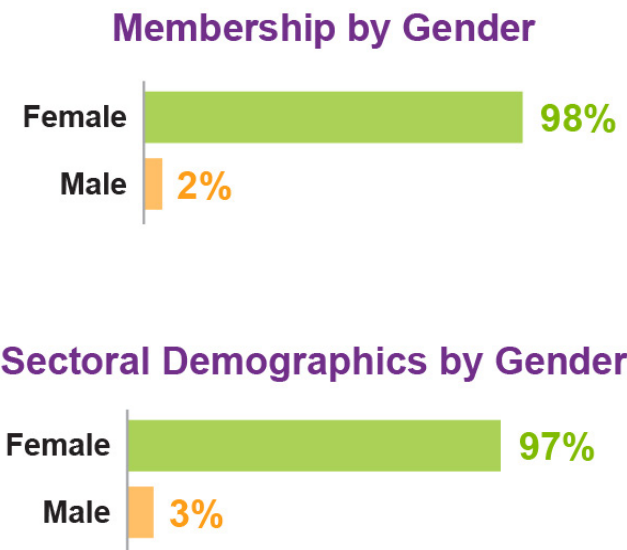
Once a former member's Certificate of Registration has been revoked, it can no longer be reinstated; former members must re-apply to the College if they wish to obtain a Certificate of Registration again. The College observed a slight increase of five per cent in the volume of re-applications to the College (189 in total).

Membership Demographics

The College did not observe any significant changes in the membership demographics compared to the previous fiscal years. The membership overall continues to identify as predominantly English-speaking females and continues to remain closely aligned with sectoral demographics.⁵

The provincial government's labour market reports provide insight into the sector, including demographic trends and industry data, with the goal of assisting individuals and organizations in assessing employment trends and identifying the skills, training and/or education needed for the current and future workforce.

The Ontario Labour Market information for the early years' sector is assessed under the National Occupational Code (NOC) 4214, which represents Early Childhood Educators and Early Childhood Assistants, as well as their supervisors. Due to this broad definition, the data represented includes sectoral workers who do not fall under the College's regulatory purview. The next section provides a comparison of the College's membership to the sectoral demographics reported in Ontario's labour market profiles.

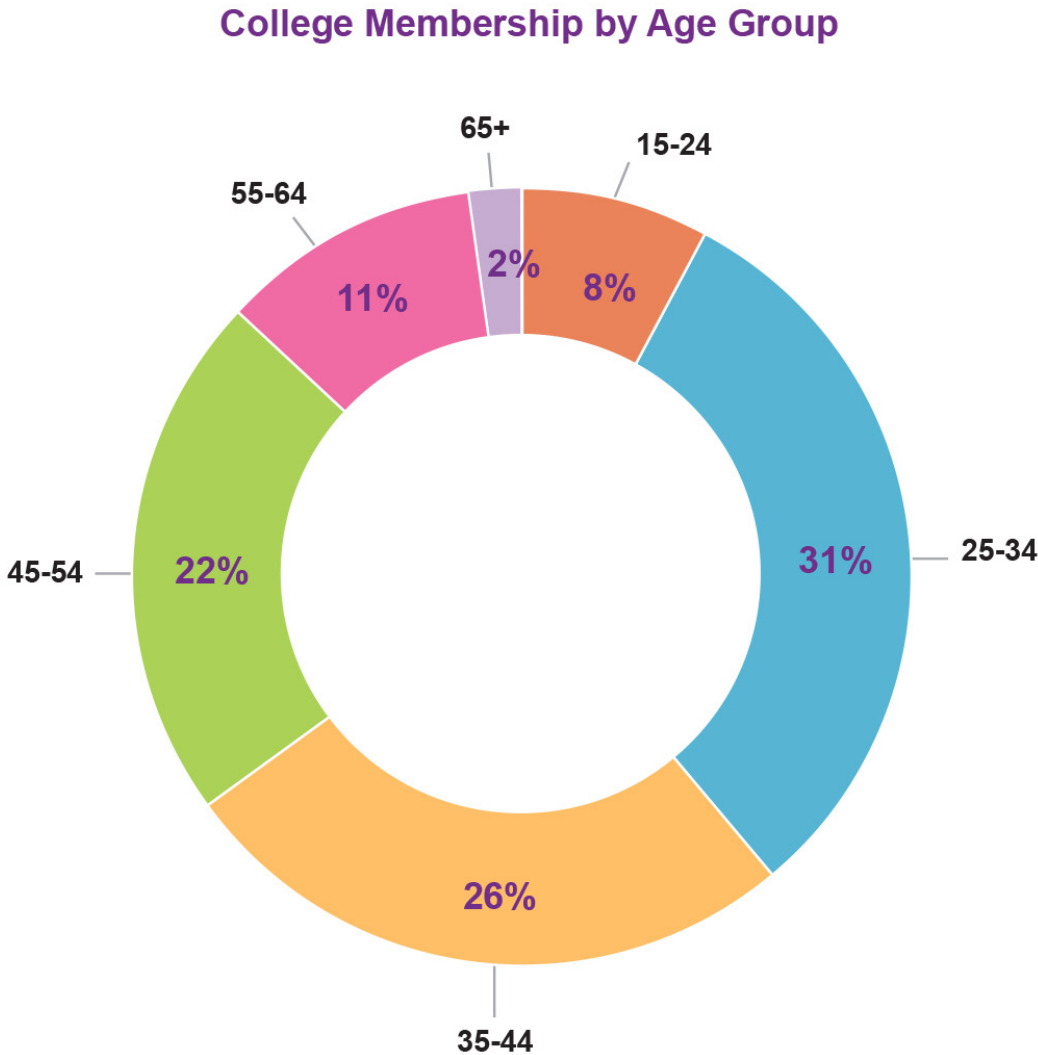


Similar to previous fiscal years, the College continued to see the gender distribution of members remain unchanged. The College provides members with the opportunity to identify as neither gender if they so choose; only 0.07 per cent of members chose to identify as neither gender.

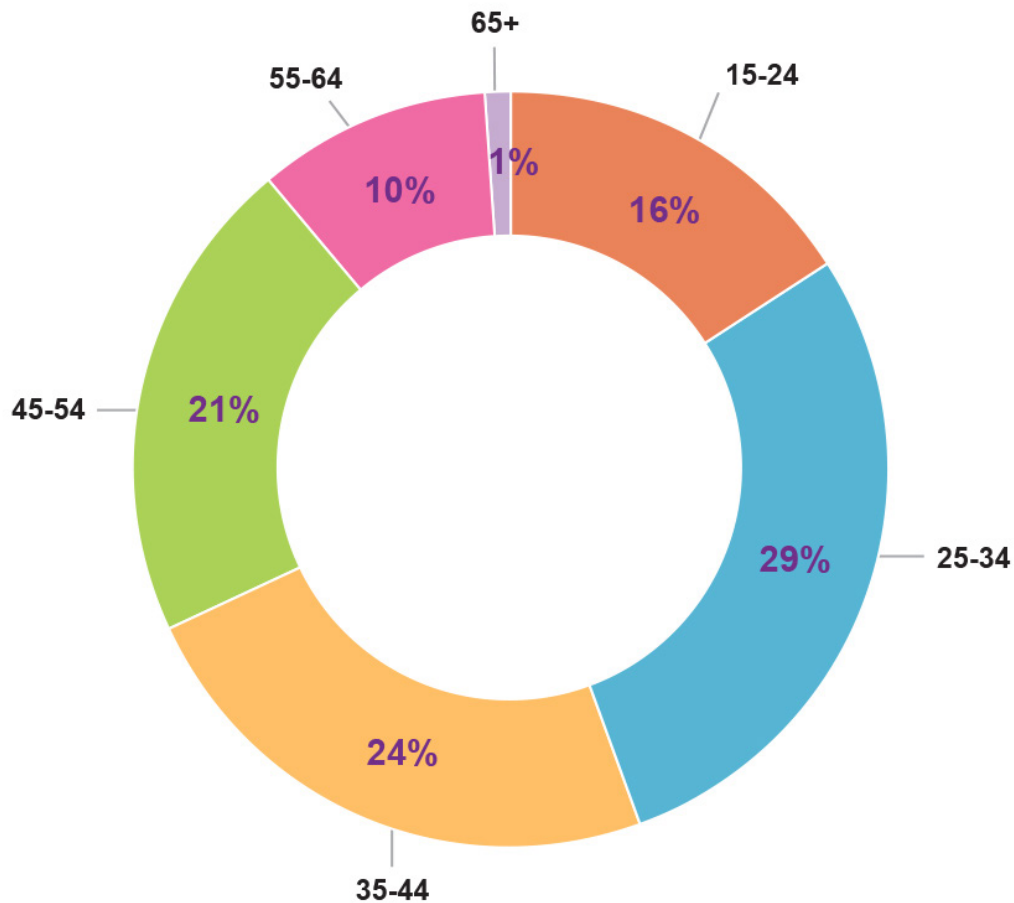
⁵ [Government of Ontario. "Early Childhood Educators and Assistants." Ontario's Labour Market Job Profiles. Accessed July 15, 2021.](#)

The 2020–2021 fiscal year saw nominal changes in the age of the College’s membership. The average age of a member increased to 41 years of age to the previous 39 years of age, while the median age decreased from 42 to 39 years of age. This fiscal year’s average and median age ranges closely resemble pre-pandemic levels, where the average age was 40 and median age of 38 years of age in the 2018–2019 fiscal year. Although the average and median can be close in range (or at times, the same), the median is often the preferred measure of age, as the average is susceptible to significant influence by statistical outliers, making it less representative of the population.

The age groupings of the College’s membership continued to remain closely aligned with sectoral trends, with the exception of those aged 15-24 years. This difference is likely caused by the College’s specific data focus on ECEs. As potential members must complete at minimum a two-year ECE diploma program from a post-secondary institution before they can be registered with the College; this would suggest that applicants to the College are, at minimum, 18 years of age.

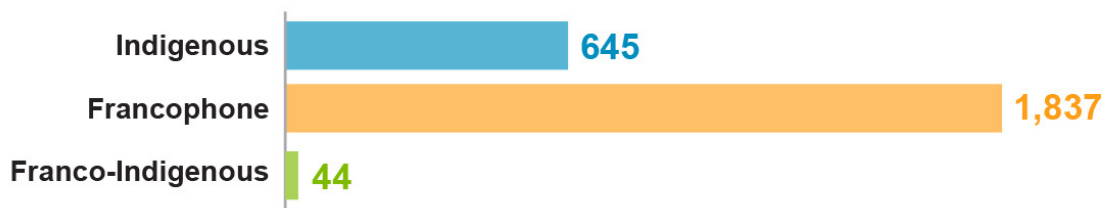


Sectoral Demographics by Age Group



The College provides members with the opportunity to self-identify as Francophone, Indigenous Heritage or both. In the 2020–2021 fiscal year, the College observed an almost nine per cent increase in the number of members who chose to self-identify, increasing to 4.3 per cent of members.

Self-Identification of Members



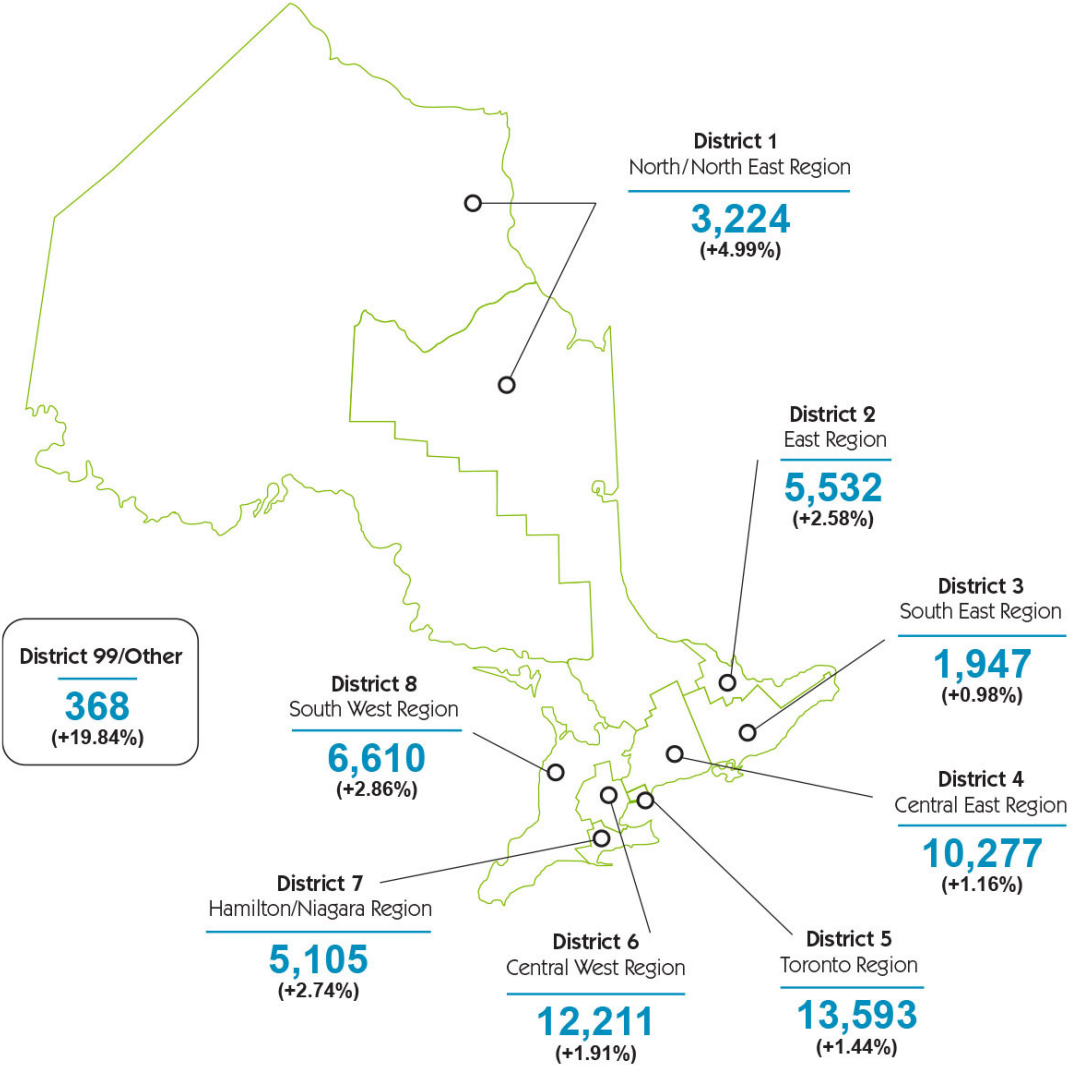
Geographical Distribution of Members

As anticipated with the increase in overall membership, each district experienced a marginal growth over the previous fiscal year. District 1 experienced the most notable increase, rising by 4.99 per cent over the previous year; although District 99 also experienced significant growth, it represents less than 1 per cent of the College’s overall membership due to the small population size of members living outside of Ontario.

The overall distribution of members remained unchanged, with District 5 maintaining the largest percentage of membership (23.09 per cent), followed by District 6 with 20.74 per cent, and District 4 with 17.64 per cent. The College did not observe any statistically significant changes among members moving between districts; members overwhelmingly remained in their district, regardless of changes in employment.

The map below shows the distribution of members by district as well as the growth in each district since the 2019–2020 fiscal year.

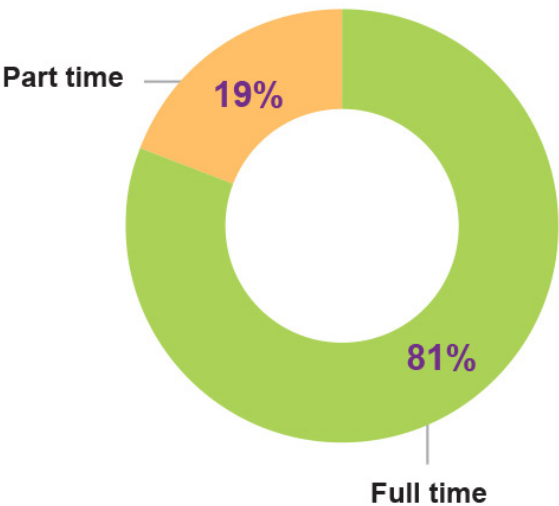
2020–2021 Fiscal Year Membership Statistics (Total Members in Good Standing: 58,867)



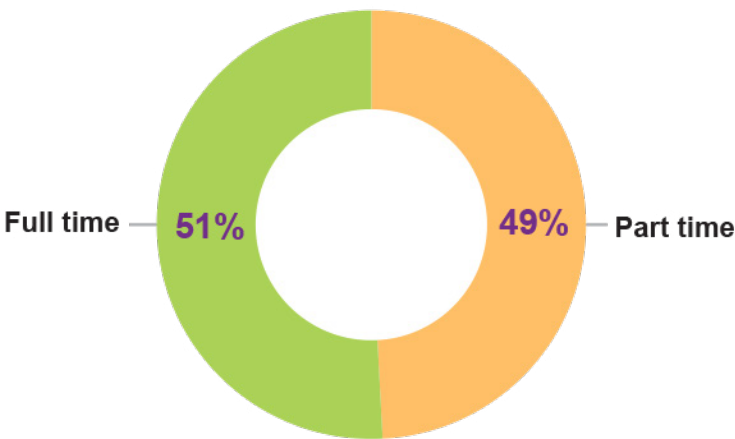
Membership Employment

College members continue to report significantly higher rates of full-time employment over sectoral trends, holding steady for another fiscal year with 81 per cent indicating they are employed on a full-time basis. The unemployment rate of members increased to pre-pandemic levels, rising to 8.1 percent. This rate stands higher than the sectoral rate of 4.2 per cent. This difference in unemployment rates may be attributed to various factors, such as casual/contract work and underemployment in the sector, data collection methods and differences in how the term ‘unemployed’ is defined.

Membership by Employment Status



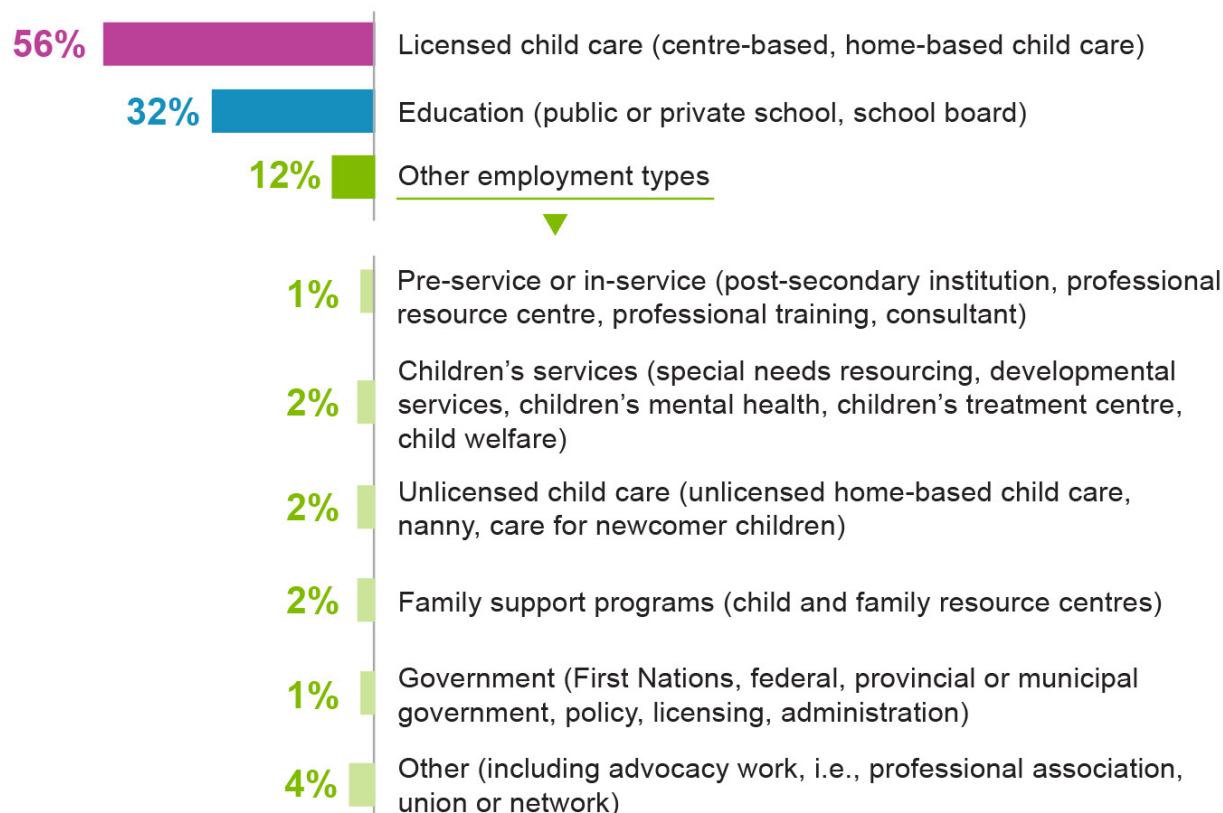
Sectoral Employment by Status



The College noted a fractional increase in the number of members indicating they were self-employed, rising from 1.8 per cent in the previous year to just 1.9 per cent in this fiscal period. This continues to be significantly lower than the sectoral trends noted in the Ontario Labour Market profile which stands at 6 percent self-employment.

The predominant employment settings among members continued to be licensed child care and the education sector, cumulatively accounting for 88 per cent of all members’ employment settings.

Membership by Employment Setting



When completing their annual membership renewal, members are asked to indicate their employment title. “Early Childhood Educator” continued to be the most frequently indicated employment title, accounting for 68.4 per cent, and approximately 10 per cent of members indicated they held management-level positions, such as Director. The number of members indicating they work as a Resource Teacher or Resource Consultant dropped to just 1.2 per cent of employed members this fiscal year.

Changes in Membership Employment

Just over six per cent of members reported changes to their employment throughout the fiscal year, including changes to their employment setting and status.

This fiscal year saw more members return to the licensed child care and education settings, with an almost six per cent increase for licensed child care and four per cent increase for the education sector over the previous year. The unlicensed child care setting saw the largest growth of all employment settings, increasing by 8.28 per cent over the previous fiscal year while members indicating “other” employment settings, include those outside the ECE field, fell significantly by more than 60 per cent.

Of the members indicating a change in their employment status, the largest shift was seen among members indicating that they were “not currently employed”, increasing by 24 per cent over the previous fiscal year.

Conclusion

The 2020–2021 fiscal year saw the return to more consistent and anticipated movement in the College's membership and registration trends, in line with previous years. The College wound down some of the temporary measures set in place to support members during unprecedented times, including a return to the membership suspension and suspension notice process.

The College continues to monitor the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on applicants and members, as well as the registration and membership data for future reporting.



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