Teacher Education Policy in Canada: Beyond Professionalization and Deregulation

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Abstract

This paper empirically investigates Grimmett's (2008, 2009) thesis that recent Canadian teacher education policy is best characterized by dual forces of deregulation and professionalization resulting from a neoliberal policy environment. Specifically, we examine teacher education governance, policy reform, and political context from 2000 to 2010, across four Canadian provinces: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Ontario. Our paper highlights the presence of deregulation and professionalization in Canadian teacher education policy while also revealing additional opposing force. We provide an overview of the policy context in US teacher education as a point of reference.

Keywords: Teacher education, policy, deregulation, professionalization

Précis

Cet article fait un examen empirique de la thèse de Grimmett qui soutient que la récente politique canadienne de la formation des enseignants est particulièrement marquée par la déréglementation et la professionnalisation résultant d'un environnement politique néolibérale. De façon plus particulière, nous examinons la gouvernance de la formation des enseignants, la réforme des politiques et le contexte politique de 2000 to 2010 qui existent dans quatre provinces canadiennes : l'Alberta, la Colombie-Britannique, le Manitoba et l'Ontario. Notre document met en lumière les aspects de la politique canadienne de la formation des enseignants qui sont teintés par la déréglementation et la professionnalisation, tout en révélant d'autres forces opposées. À titre de point de référence, nous offrons un aperçu du contexte politique de la formation des enseignants aux États-Unis.

Introduction

In Canada, teacher education policy has by and large failed to capture the attention of politicians, journalists, and many academics. In the United States, in contrast, debates on teacher education quality regularly dominate the media, and teacher education has become a target for policy reform in the war against a declared educational crisis (e.g., Darling-Hammond, Wei, Miller, & Camburn, 2009; Luzer, 2011; Medina, 2009). Presently at least, there is no comparable declared "educational crisis" in Canada.[1] For the most part, Canada has an admirable K–12 public education system: Alberta is often held up as an educational model to be emulated; school children in China can undertake a British Columbian high school education; and, on average, Canadian children perform comparatively well in international assessment tests, such as the *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA).[2] Conversely, there is a persistent dissatisfaction from citizens towards public education in the United States, which has spilled over into teacher education (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Differences between state education systems and individual schools are vast in US public education; to address the long identified "splintered-vision" (Schmidt, McKnight, & Raizen, 1997) curricular problem (i.e., the unfocused nature of teaching practices, textbooks, and curricular goals), a majority of states are banding together to establish a common-core curricular system.[3] While individual states continue to regulate public education in the United States, the federal Department of Education has taken a more central role with the creation of initiatives such as No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top. In contrast, although education is almost entirely a provincial responsibility in Canada, there are great similarities across Canada, as professional organizations engage in dialogue and joint research to identify best practices and priorities. Despite the differences between the United States and Canada in incentives (or lack thereof) to examine teacher education, Fullan's (1998; 2010) question—"Do relevant, inspiring, clear policy frameworks exist in the main domains essential for serious reform of the education system?" (p. 1)—is still relevant to Canada and to the domain of teacher education.

1 This is not to say that educational crises have been entirely absent. Indeed, the Harris era (1995–2002) is known for the enactment of educational policy in response to a declared crisis in Ontario's schools.

2 See www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2005-2009/2007EDU0173-001572-Attachment1.htm

3 See www.corestandards.org

In this paper, we call attention to the importance of the policy dimension in Canadian teacher education and to the shifts in governance across the country. In examining teacher education policy, we draw on the work of American and Canadian scholars (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 2001; Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2002; Fenstermacher, 2002; Grimmett, 2008, 2009; Grimmett, Young, & Lesard, 2012) who have observed a distinct trend in teacher education policy over the past two decades toward *professionalization* and *deregulation*. We take up Grimmett's (2008, 2009) thesis regarding recent Canadian teacher education policy as the starting point for our study to answer the following question: How is Canadian teacher education policy from 2000 to 2010 characterized by dual processes of professionalization and deregulation? The aim of this paper is to examine the policy landscape of teacher education in Canada through Grimmett's lens of professionalization and deregulation. We also seek to explore the ways in which the policy context may go beyond a professionalization–deregulation divide. We adopt a cross-provincial approach by focusing on Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Ontario in our examination of legislation, institutional programs, and government documents.

Teacher Education Policy in Canada: A Brief Overview

In the words of Sorenson, Young, and Mandzuk (2005), teacher education in Canada has generally been a "policy backwater" for most of its existence. Wideen and Grimmett (1995) reflected, "teacher education [has been] largely seen as an irrelevant or hopeless player in educational reform" (p. 89). Furthermore, Fullan has argued that "from a policy point of view, teacher education remains politically unattractive. Across the country there are the barest of structural requirements addressed in policy" (1998; 2010, p. 4). It appears that there is still a lack of capacity-building policies, incentives, and support from government for teacher education. Scholars attribute this lack of policy in part to a highly decentralized federal system and a lack of communication across provinces (Falkenberg, 2007; Tuijman, 1995).

Not surprisingly, we have found very few articles or studies on Canadian teacher education policy. In this journal, for example, among articles published in the past decade, we found only one written specifically on teacher education policy: "Closing the Gap at

the Peril of Widening the Void: Implications of the Ontario Ministry of Education's Policy for Aboriginal Education," in which Cherubini, Hodson, Manley-Casimir, and Muir (2010) evaluate the content and potential impact of a recent policy initiative in Aboriginal education issued by Ontario's Ministry of Education. There exist articles exploring teacher education policy in individual provinces, or sometimes in two provinces (e.g., Aitken, Webber, Lupart, Scott, & Runté, 2011; Grimmett & D'Amico, 2008; Naqvi & Coburn, 2008; Young & Boyd, 2010; Young, Halb, & Clarke, 2007). However, the only substantive cross-comparative study we located on teacher education programs in Canada presents a partial overview of teacher education in certain provinces (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008);[4] noticeably absent from this report is any discussion of teacher education *policy*.

Notwithstanding the (apparent) dearth of policy and analysis of policy, Canadian teacher education has undergone a number of radical changes over the past 60 years or so. Similar to what occurred elsewhere, in the middle of the 20th century teacher education in Canada moved from its location in normal schools to universities. This shift brought with it increasing challenges for teacher education programs to strike a balance between the theoretical and practical, and for faculties of education to establish academic respectability at the university and beyond (Sorenson et al., 2005; Young et al., 2007). While these struggles have been ongoing since the 1960s, there have been more major shifts since then.

Peter Grimmett is one of the few researchers to provide a conceptual understanding of the changes that have occurred more broadly in the country. He claims that teacher education underwent two distinct transformations after being housed at universities (Grimmett, 2008, 2009):

1. **1960–1980:** Teacher education was considered "training" and subjected to benign government control.
2. **1980–2000:** In the 1980s, teacher education penetrated government consciousness as concerns about education quality, brought to light through the publication of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (Gardner et al., 1983) in the United States, spread north across Canadian borders. During this period, teacher

4 Note that Grimmett et al.'s (2012) recent book does go into some detail on teacher education policy in Canada; however, unlike Crocker & Dibbon's book, it doesn't lay out the specifics of all programs and certification requirements to provide a cross-country analysis.

education metamorphosed from its previous designation as "training" into a form of professional "learning"; this era also saw growth in institutional governance, as faculties of education gained more power.

3. **1990–2010:** From around 1990, teacher education started to be treated as policy and, hence, as a policy problem that could be "fixed" through government intervention. This coincided with the rising trend of professionalization and deregulation and with the start of mass retirements of teachers hired to teach baby boomers in the 1950s and 1960s (Sorenson et al., 2005).

Teacher Education Policy in the United States

In our era of globalization, there has been some international convergence of educational trends. For this reason, it is useful to explore what has occurred in Canadian teacher education policy in comparison to what has happened elsewhere. We look to what has occurred in the United States, as it highlights key differences in the direction teacher education policy has taken and can provide an illustration of what could happen here in Canada. Young and Boyd (2010) recently claimed, "Canada has not to date followed other jurisdictions such as the UK and many US states down the road of 'competitive certification' in developing and encouraging other service providers" (p. 5). However, as Grimmet (e.g., 2009) argues, there have been some overlapping trends, which caution us to pay attention to what is, and has been, happening in other places, especially in the United States.

Two main themes in US teacher education policy reform emerge from recent literature: standardization and diversification. On the one hand, the United States is being "pushed" towards (competitive) standardization by calls for higher levels of achievement along standardized lines. One example is the development of standardized "teacher tests." According to Cochran-Smith (2001), such tests are becoming pervasive and are evidence of treating professional performance as outcome. Greater standardization is occurring in the United States in large part thanks to an increased involvement of both federal and state governments (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2002; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005, 2009). In addition, governments have been increasingly pressured by national bodies. For example, Johnson, Johnson, Farenga, and Ness (2005) highlight the unique role of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in shaping teacher education across the United States.

On the other hand, policy is being "pulled" towards (competitive) diversification, as more and more institutions adopt alternative routes to teacher certification and adapt admissions requirements for candidates. Institutions and states are moving away from a one-size-fits-all model of teacher certification in an effort to draw in more academically minded students (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005), and in response to disputes over which, if any, elements in teacher education make for a good teacher (Darling-Hammond et al., 2006; Roth & Pipho, 1990).

In our research, we sought to explore teacher education policy in the Canadian context, in consideration of the trends noted above. We attempt to further elucidate teacher education policy trends, drivers, reforms, and characteristics, and to address the paucity of cross-provincial Canadian studies on teacher education policy reform (Falkenburg, 2007).

Theoretical Framework

We explore the recent policy context of Canadian teacher education through the theoretical lens of *professionalization* and *deregulation*.

In the beginning of the 2000s, Cochran-Smith and Fries (2002) captured the professionalization–deregulation divide (or debate) in an article published in *Educational Researcher.* According to these authors and others (e.g., Fenstermacher, 2002), US educational reformists (including academics, politicians, and practitioners) could be placed in one of two camps, one group advocating for the professionalization of teachers and the second group advocating looser regulations so other, more competent, providers could start offering teacher education certification programs. Shortly after the release of Cochran-Smith and Fries' (2002) article, Fenstermacher issued a response (2002) in which he claimed that both deregulationists and professionalizationists attempt to embody "their agenda in the laws and regulations of federal and state governments" (2002, p. 22). Each side, he argued, seemed to be pushing for a certain amount of "over-regulation" of teacher education. What was needed instead, according to Fenstermacher, was for teachers to reclaim professional identity.

Later in the decade, Grimmett (e.g., 2008) also began to identify the professionalization–deregulation trend in Canada. Grimmett reflected, like Fenstermacher, that both trends were occurring simultaneously. Grimmett (e.g., 2008, 2009) claims that the

policy context of teacher education in Canada from 1990 to 2010 was driven by dual, and sometimes competing, forces of professionalization and deregulation. As Grimmett (2009; Grimmett et al., 2012) puts it, recent Canadian teacher education is characterized by professionalization (consisting of self-regulation and a regime of accountability/standards/competency-based professionalization) and by deregulation. According to Grimmett, starting in the 1990s, Canadian teacher education institutions saw their professional autonomy undermined, while "choice" and "competition" pervaded the school system. Professionalization, Grimmett explains, was the response to deregulation, and is witnessed in increases in both self-regulation (through self-regulating professional bodies) and government regulation of teacher education. Tensions arise, Grimmett argues, in the attempt to balance professional control and institutional autonomy, and to implement reforms that would further professionalization and deregulation (in their various manifestations). Grimmett observes that these forces have manifested themselves in different ways in different provinces and at different times. Like Fenstermacher (2002), Grimmett (2009) believes teachers' professional identity is under threat from the broader neoliberal policy context in which these competing trends are occurring.

We take Grimmett's (e.g., 2008, 2009) thesis as the starting point for our study as we seek answers to the question: "How is Canadian teacher education policy from 2000 to 2010 characterized by dual processes of professionalization and deregulation?"

Method of Inquiry

This study is part of a broader examination of the opportunities available for Canadian science teachers to engage in learning to teach sciences. Those participating institutions in the full study are mostly situated in Alberta (AB), British Columbia (BC), Manitoba (MB), and Ontario (ON). The full SSHRC-funded study contains three components: how science teachers teach sciences, how institutional structural and curricular components are in place to support the teaching of sciences, and what teacher education policy exists in the provinces in which the institutions are located. This paper emerged in response to the third component of the larger study.

Policy Analysis

This paper presents a policy analysis. For purposes of clarity and transparency, we adopt Dye's definition of policy as "anything a government chooses to do or not to do" (Dye, 1994, p. 4). We characterize our approach as a "descriptive" and "interpretive" policy analysis, adopting these terms from Yanow (2000). According to Yanow, a descriptive approach to analysis entails asking questions such as "When were the policies created? What do they say they want to do?" while an interpretive approach requires delving deeper into the policy context by asking questions like "What does a policy mean? How do different political parties and interest groups frame particular issues? How is an issue framed? What are the symbolic acts in policy?" In this paper, we both describe and interpret the policy context of teacher education in AB, BC, MB, and ON. More specifically, to examine the policy context, we apply the "3 As of analysis" (with their associated questions), adapted from Walker (2011) "5 As":[5]

Table 1: Analytical lens to describe and interpret teacher education policy.

Assumptions	a. What are the assumptions concerning teacher education in terms of i. its regulation? ii. professionalization? b. What is the overall orientation toward professionalization and deregulation, as evident in the policies?
Arena	a. What is the overall arena of teacher education in each province? b. What is the political arena in which policies were developed?
Agenda	a. What conclusions can we draw about the provincial and national agendas for teacher education?

5 These five As were used to examine adult literacy policy and included: (i) Articulation (of policy issue); (ii) Approaches (put forward to address policy issue); (iii) Aims (stated aims of adult literacy and of policy); (iv) Assertions (made about adult literacy); and (v) Assumptions (about adult literacy and policy).

Data

We apply these three As of analysis to data from three different sources in the four provinces:

1. interprovincial and provincial laws and regulations (certification requirements, quality assurance, program requirements, etc.);
2. government policy texts (on teacher education, teacher education reform);
3. institutional program information for all teacher education programs in each province.

We focus on the period from 2000 to 2010, a subset of the period identified by Grimmett as tending toward a professionalization–deregulation dichotomy.

Rosen (2009) describes a policy analyst as a "facilitator of broad-based reflection and ongoing discussion on the meaning and consequences of particular policy decisions" (p. 280). This reflects our mission in conducting policy analysis.

Mapping the Policy Landscape of Four Key Provinces: 2000–2010

Canada contains many systems in one. Each province has had a diverse political trajectory that has built on reforms developed (especially) during the mid to late 20th century. In this section, we draw on our own analysis as well as on existing literature to highlight some of the key reforms and historical events in Canadian teacher education policy from 2000 to 2010 in four provinces. Following this review, we provide a more substantive mapping of teacher education policy in the form of two descriptive tables.

Manitoba

The Manitoban government appears to have taken a "hands-off" approach to teacher education; the few times the government has intervened have generally been in response to concerns regarding Aboriginal student achievement (Young et al., 2007). However, in 2003, the province instituted a requirement that new teachers have: (i) a minimum of 150 credit hours of post-secondary coursework, of which at least 60 credit hours are

in educational studies; (ii) two degrees, including a Bachelor of Education, arrived at either sequentially or concurrently; (iii) a minimum of 30 credit hours or 24 weeks of supervised in-school experience; and (iv) at least 30 credit hours of successful study in a major teachable area and 18 credit hours in a minor teachable area. Notwithstanding this new demonstration of government action, the universities managed to retain control of the content of teacher education programs; furthermore, the new certification requirements and policies did *not* "provide a mechanism through which the government could effectively initiate substantial reforms of teacher education in the absence of university support" (Young et al., 2007, p. 89). Indeed, as Sorenson et al. (2005) reflected, the Manitoban government has "shown less interest in re-asserting direct involvement in, or control of, teacher preparation and [has] allowed individual universities considerable autonomy in the structure and delivery of programs" (p. 391).

Alberta

In contrast to Manitoba, Alberta's government has been much more hands-on. Key reforms have centred on teacher standards, or the Knowledge, Skills, and Attributes (KSAs) created in 1997. Since 2000, there has been a renewed focus on K–12 student assessment and standardized testing, which affects what and how a teacher must teach in the schools. As in Manitoba, 2003 was an important year for educational reform in Alberta, with the passage of the Alberta *School Act*, which included the stipulation that "[T]he Minister may establish tests, examinations or other methods for determining the ability, achievement or development of individuals, including but not limited to provincial achievement tests, diploma examinations and provincially administered national and international tests" (cited in Aitken et al., 2011, p. 193).

Another pivotal policy that has affected recent teacher education is the change made to Alberta's language policy in 2006, which mandated that every Grade 4 student enroll in a second language class. This has so far resulted in changes to the training of teachers throughout the province and was documented in at least one teacher education program (Naqvi & Coburn, 2008).

British Columbia

Unlike Manitoba and Alberta, British Columbia has a professional body—the BC College of Teachers (BCCT)—that defines criteria for requirements for teacher certification.[6] Teacher education institutions must demonstrate to the BCCT that their programs prepare students to meet the eight standards developed by the College. The BCCT undertakes internal university reviews, conducts surveys on graduating teachers, and oversees all professional misconduct and disciplinary hearings.

The year 2003 also marked a turning point for BC, with the introduction of the *Teaching Profession Amendment Act* (2003), which reaffirmed the authority of the College to set standards for teacher certification but not to approve how teacher education programs were to be administered or taught. This amendment arose in response to two important court cases in which the BCCT was involved: one with the evangelical Christian Trinity Western University (TWU) and the other with the University of British Columbia (UBC). In effect, the BCCT had refused TWU's application to develop a teacher education program. They argued that the anti-homosexuality stance of TWU might affect graduating teachers' ability to uphold the standards of inclusion of sexual minority students in the public school system. In the case with UBC, the university had submitted a request to create a new teacher education program, to which the BCCT gave conditions for acceptance. UBC refused to meet those conditions. In both cases, the universities won against the BCCT (on the grounds of respect for institutional autonomy), resulting in the *Teaching Profession Amendment Act*.

Ontario

Like BC, Ontario also has a professional association that governs teacher education, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), which was established in 1994. The OCT, like the BCCT, develops "ethical standards for the teaching profession" and subjects new teacher education programs to accreditation reviews. Ontario is the only province in Canada to have a quality assurance board in higher education—the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO). The HEQCO was created through the *Higher Education*

6 The BCCT was in operation from 1998–2012. We use the present tense here as our focus was on policies operational from 2000–2010. We address the dismantling of the BCCT in the Discussion section.

Quality Council of Ontario Act (2005) as an arm's-length agency of the Ontario government to evaluate and enhance the access, quality, and accountability of higher education institutions, and to provide policy recommendations in post-secondary education. Teacher education programs receive scrutiny through this body, and institutions receive funding for evidence-based research.

Interprovincial

Up until the 2000s, each province acted almost entirely independently of the others in terms of educational reform. This began to change; in 2006, Alberta and British Columbia entered into a bilateral *Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement* (TILMA), which allowed for interprovincial recognition of teacher credentials and, consequently, greater teacher mobility across the two provinces. In addition, a more pan-Canadian initiative was developed in the form of the Deans' *Accord on Initial Teacher Education* (ACDE, 2006) and in amendments to the existing *Agreement on Internal Trade* (AIT). Although created in 1995, the AIT was amended in 2009 to help resolve labour mobility challenges that continued to face certain occupations, including teaching. The AIT is considered the driving force behind interprovincial communication and credential recognition. As stated in the AIT, trade and labour mobility agreements supersede any attempt by local jurisdictions to establish professional standards. Henley and Young (2009) fear a significant surrender of provincial jurisdiction in teacher education policy, given the lack of inclusion of a cross-section of educational stakeholders and the lack of debate. Nonetheless, provincial diversity and jurisdiction appear, so far, to be relatively intact.

Below we include two tables that provide further details on the context of teacher education policy in Canada in four provinces. In Table 2, we (i) review certification requirements in each province; (ii) show how teachers' professionalization is governed—either by the government or by self-regulating bodies; (iii) provide an overview of the institutions offering teacher education; and (iv) indicate the "standards" deemed necessary before a candidate can be granted certification.

Table 2: Teacher education policy in AB, BC, MB, and ON.

	Province			
	AB	**BC**	**MB**	**ON**
Professional Regulation	**Government regulation**	**Self-regulation** BC College of Teachers (BCCT) Created 1987	**Minimal government regulation** (Greater institutional governance)	**Self-regulation** Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) Created 1994
Certification Requirements[7]	**Permanent teacher certification** • Granted after 2 years of teaching in AB • Granted after 2 years of additional study (amended 2003) in AB	**Regular certificate issued by BCCT**[8] • Granted after graduation from BEd in BC • Required for teaching in public schools • Recommendation needed by approved teacher education institution along with transcript and degree verification • Character reference required	**Permanent teacher certification** • Granted after graduation from BEd in MB	**General Certificate of Qualification and Registration** • Upon graduation • Valid usually for one of: Primary/Junior (K–6); Junior/Intermediate (4–10); Intermediate/Senior (7–12)
	Interim certificate • Granted for the first two years of teaching in AB • Or for externally trained teachers • Valid 2 years	**Basic certification** (January 2010) • For those who do not meet BC's academic requirements but who have a current, valid, unrestricted teaching certificate in another Canadian province or territory • Doesn't expire	**Provisional certification**[9] • Granted to teachers trained in other Canadian jurisdictions • Valid for 3 years and one 3-year renewal	**Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration** • If graduated from a different program or missing prerequisites for teaching a particular subject or grade level • Valid up to 6 years

7 There is also a Canadian Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education.

8 Independent school teachers require BCCT certificate or Teaching Qualification issued by Inspector of Independent Schools.

9 Other certification: Vocational Industrial for teachers of woodwork, music, etc.

	Province			
	AB	**BC**	**MB**	**ON**
Teacher Standards	• 17 required for interim certificate • 11 required for permanent certificate[10] • Standards called Knowledge, Skills, and Attributes (KSAs) • Created 1997	• 8 standards teachers must demonstrate before graduating from any program[11] • Created 2004	• None—institutionally based	• 4 ethical standards • 5 standards of practice • Commitment to professional learning[12]
Teacher Ed. Institutions	**5 institutions** • Concurrent and consecutive • 12- and 24-month programs (consecutive) • French-only campus • 1 satellite campus for U of Alberta • 2 religious institutions • Specific math and science institution	**8 institutions** • Concurrent and consecutive programs • 12-, 16-, 18-, and 24-month programs (consecutive) • 60–75% GPA required • Indigenous, French programs; 1 religious program	**4 institutions** • Concurrent and consecutive • 12-, 24-month programs (consecutive) • French-only program • Includes alternative teacher education program for non-traditional students to teach at non-traditional schools	**18 institutions** • Concurrent and consecutive • 12-, 16-, 18-, and 24-month programs (consecutive) • Includes 1 US and 1 Australian satellite campus[13]

We see in Table 2 that there are generally three different approaches to the governance of teacher education: *self-regulation* in British Columbia and Ontario, whereby teachers are granted access to the profession by a self-regulating professional body and certification is contingent on demonstrating specific standards; (strong) *government regulation* in Alberta, where government heavily regulates the profession, offering a two-year interim certificate after graduation and requiring teachers to demonstrate a number of different standards; and weak or *minimal government regulation* in Manitoba, where the four accredited institutions have the right to set standards and certification requirements and candidates merely apply to the government for licenses. With greater government regulation, we see greater oversight. For example, Albertan teachers are only

10 Beginning teachers are asked to "understand the importance" of the standards without being specifically obliged to enact them; see http://education.alberta.ca/department/policy/standards/teachqual.aspx

granted full certification after two years of teaching, whereas the other three provinces provide permanent certification upon graduation. Alberta also places greater emphasis on teacher standards. Indeed, teachers are required to demonstrate a large number of KSAs, which change depending on whether the teacher has a permanent or interim certificate. Manitoba, with the weakest government regulation, has no provincial standards, and the institutions have more autonomy over which attributes their teacher candidates must demonstrate before graduating. Despite the different approaches to governance, teacher education programs are as diverse across institutions as they are across provinces, with 24- and 12-month programs existing in the same province and different institutions offering various lengths of teaching practicums.

Table 2 indicates trends toward and away from regulation and professionalization. The table does not convey how professionalization and deregulation have influenced specific teacher education programs. However, below we highlight two cases, one from BC and the other from AB, that can be used to exemplify the influence of professionalization on teacher education programming. Since our paper is limited to exploring teacher education *policy*, detailed evidence of programmatic shifts in line with professionalization and deregulation is a topic for another paper.

At the University of British Columbia, the introduction of the BCCT's Standards for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators in BC[11] led to the requirement that teacher education candidates create e-portfolios containing artifacts that demonstrate they meet each of the eight standards. Students finalize their e-portfolios during a three-week Inquiry Seminar course, which takes place at the end of their program. Each portfolio is evaluated against a checklist to ensure that all standards are demonstrated across the student's artifacts;[12] artifacts may include a teaching philosophy statement, scanned copies of assignments, specific details from candidates' teaching practicums, etc.

In Alberta, provincial testing continues to play an important role in regulating K–12 education. This has had implications for how teacher preparation candidates are educated. Wang (2005) described, for example, how O'Reilly's (2002, cited in Wang, 2005) survey findings on graduates of Alberta's teacher education programs led to the provincial government seeking responses from each of the teacher preparation programs

11 www.bcteacherregulation.ca/Standards/StandardsDevelopment.aspx

12 http://teach.educ.ubc.ca/resources/pdfs/eportfolios/eportfolio-artifacts-checklist-2012.pdf

to investigate how teacher candidates are prepared to demonstrate "assessment literacy." Each of the five teacher preparation programs in Alberta in 2004 submitted a written report to the Ministry of Education. Analyzing these reports, Wang (2005) detailed how one specific professionalization policy was "interpreted" by all programs in the form of specific programmatic decisions and descriptions.

While Table 2 provides descriptions of policies, regulations, and requirements across the four provinces, Table 3 details the political context of teacher education policy to help make sense of policy reform.

In Table 3, we first see the political leaning of the government in power in each province over the decade. Below this are examples of how the party's ideology has been translated into policy. Conservative governments have tended to implement policies of educational choice—such as those instituted under Mike Harris' government of the early 2000s in Ontario, and policies allowing the creation of charter schools in Alberta. More right-leaning governments have attempted to weaken teacher unions and collective bargaining rights (as seen in Alberta and BC in the early and middle parts of the decade). Standardized tests have also been more common in places with more conservative governments (compare, for example, Alberta with Manitoba). The record of more progressive parties has been a mixed bag and has been dependent on the nature of teacher education governance in the province, as we explore below.

Table 3: The political context of teacher education policy in AB, BC, MB, and ON: 2000–2010.

	Province			
	AB	**BC**	**MB**	**ON**
Political Party in Power	**2000–2010** **Conservatives (right)** • Known for investment in and focus on education • Natural ruling party of Alberta	**2000–2001** **NDP (social democrat)** • Criticized for financial mismanagement at end of term **2001–2010** **BC Liberal (centre-right)** • Criticized for fiscal austerity during first term, especially until 2005	**2000–2010** **NDP (social democrat)** • Came in 1999 • More recent government seen as more centrist than previous NDP governments	**2000–2003** **Progressive Conservatives (right)** • Known for neoliberal reforms **2003–2010** **Liberal (centre-left)** • Attempted to correct neoliberal reforms of previous administration
Policy Reforms and Laws in Teacher Education	**School Act (2000)–** Establishment of appeal committee to recommend suspension or cancellation of teaching certificate; option of new teachers to not join the union (ATA) • administers powers to make new cert. requirements; greater power	**Teaching Profession Amendment Act, 2003–**BCCT required to develop standards of practice as then seen to be in the hands of the union, BCTF (see also Grimmett & D'Amico, 2008) **Oath of Office for BCCT (2004)–**Oath required for members of BCCT[16]	**Education Administration Act–** New provision for recognition of foreign credentials **Teachers Society Act (2004)–** Laws governing membership of limited certification; membership not mandatory	**Post-Secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000–**Establishment of new universities and flexibility in creating new programs (including in teacher education)

13 An oath to do one's duties to the best of one's ability; act in accordance with the law, the college as a whole, and the public interest; act honestly, declaring any private interests and resolving conflicts so as to protect the public interest; ensure that other memberships, directorships, and other positions and affiliations remain "distinct from work undertaken in course of performing my duty as a Council member" (see www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/11_239_2004).

	Province			
	AB	**BC**	**MB**	**ON**
Broader Educational Context: *Examples of Policy Change*	Bill 12, *Education Services Settlement Act* (2002) removed right to strike, teacher–pupil ratios, teachers' hours of work, and classroom size from current and future collective agreements between union (ATA) and school boards (Section 23) • Enforced compulsory arbitration • Teacher protest against the act resulted in creation of Commission on Learning • Creation of charter schools	Policies[17] gave school boards flexibility in governance (power to determine class size, staffing, class composition) • Made education an essential service, taking away union's ability to strike • Class-size limits eased • BCCT took UBC to court over insistence on standards and lost	• Amalgamated school divisions • Investments more in public education[18] • Public Schools Modernization Act (2002) • "Education Agenda for Student Success" (2002) sets priorities for education system: improved outcomes, connections, evidence-based policy	• Tax credit for sending students to private schools • "Progress Report 2004: Getting Results for Ontario": a focus on reducing dropout, increasing post-secondary participation • "Reaching Higher" education reform to address "education deficit" investment • Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act (2009) requires school boards to develop and evaluate effectiveness of policies on education programs, promote achievement, and ensure effective stewardship of resources
School Context: *Standardized Tests*	• Grades 3, 6, and 9 in Math, Science, Language, and Social Studies • Grade 12 in core subjects (50% of final marks)	• Grades 4, 7, and 10 in Reading, Writing, and Numeracy • Grade 12 in most subjects (40% of final marks)	• Grade 12 in Language and Math (30% of final marks) • Standardized tests in Grades 3, 6, and 9 were made optional in 1999	• Grades 3 and 6 in Math, Reading, and Writing • Grade 9 in Math • Grade 10 in English/Literacy (2001)

14 *Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act* (2002), *Education Services Collective Agreement Act* (2001), *Skill Development and Labour Statutes Amendment Act* (2001), *College and Institute Act* (2001).

15 See Hurst (2008).

Discussion

In 1993, Gideonse classified teacher education governance as being *political*, *institutional*, or *professional*. *Political* is where governance lies primarily with government bodies (such as a ministry of education); *institutional* is where institutions have the most power in determining how and what pre-service teachers are taught and who gets to be a teacher; and, in *professional* governance, professional bodies govern the formation and oversight of teachers and teacher education. Each model, Hoyle and John (1995) argue, conceptualizes the role of teachers differently:

1. *Political*: Teacher is considered a *public servant*
2. *Institutional*: Teacher is considered a *public intellectual*
3. *Professional*: Teacher is considered a *skilled practitioner*

In Young, et al. (2007) analysis of teacher education policy in BC and MB, they concluded that governance in Manitoba was best characterized as *institutional* and in British Columbia as *professional*. In applying this model to Ontario and Alberta, we characterize Ontario as *professional* and Alberta as *political*.

We extend our interpretation of teacher education policy beyond Gideonse's (1993) model. In our interpretation, we aim to characterize (coarsely) each province's approach to teacher education from 2000 to 2010:

- AB: *Accountability*—The province has taken a *CFO*[16] role to teacher education. It demands many and high standards, and numerous standardized tests for school students. Union membership is now optional; conservatives have a natural hold on the province, allowing for longer-term policy making.
- BC: *Negotiation*—The province has taken a *politician* role, negotiating many different factions and agendas, such as between a strong union (BCTF) and the BCCT and other bodies (such as universities and school boards).
- MB: *Laissez-faire*—Manitoba represents a *donor* approach to teacher education governance. It has made standardized tests optional, invested more in education, and focused on *promoting* change rather than *instituting* policy reform.

16 Chief Financial Officer.

- ON: *Management*—Ontario's approach to teacher education is that of a CEO, bringing the country back under control after the neoliberal Harris era[17] and managing diverse bodies and reforms. It supports professional governance, as well as greater diversity in institutions and private grade schools.

The Push–Pull of Canadian Teacher Education

There are both converging forces in teacher education and trends specific to the character and context of each province. We discern a definitive push–pull dynamic occurring in teacher education policy across Canada.

Table 4: The push–pull of teacher education policy in Canada.

Standardization	⟷	De-standardization (Diversification)
Centralization	⟷	Decentralization
Professionalization	⟷	De-professionalization
Regulation	⟷	Deregulation

Standardization is taking place due to the powerful mandates of governments such as those of Alberta, and also due to the AIT, which enables greater teacher mobility across provinces. We see centralization in the self-regulating professional bodies that act as centralized gatekeepers to the profession. In addition, we observe decentralizing and diversifying practices in the vast diversity of institutional programs; this is particularly evident in Manitoba, where institutions are given almost complete autonomy to regulate teacher education. Professionalization is apparent in greater government emphasis on accountability and in the professional bodies (BCCT and OCT). De-professionalization is also visible, due to the growth of private and independent grade schools that do not require teaching certificates. Finally, regulation is increasing through governments and

17 Under former Conservative Premier Mike Harris.

professional bodies. However, in Manitoba, regulation has decreased since the educational reforms of the 1990s.

Beyond 2010: A Focus on the BCCT and OCT

In our research, we limited our analysis to the 10-year period between 2000 and 2010, in part because Grimmett considered this period as having been subjected to an ongoing struggle between professionalization and deregulation. Additionally, the larger study mentioned in the Method of Inquiry section was conducted during this period. However, there have been two important changes since this time—especially in British Columbia and, more recently, in Ontario—regarding the professional colleges. In essence, the push–pull continues.

In 2012, Bill 12 was passed in BC, and with it the *Teachers Act* was created, the *Teaching Profession Act* replaced, and the BCCT dissolved.[18] According to Grimmett[19]—a key witness in the Avison report (2010) that led to the dissolution of the BCCT—self-regulating professional bodies such as the OCT and BCCT have always been in a precarious position and have lacked real independence. However, while the dismantling of the BCCT could have led to the emergence of an independent quality assurance body with real power, governance effectively reverted back to the Ministry of Education. With this change, governance in BC shifted from *professional* to *political*.

In Ontario, a similar questioning of the province's self-regulating body has occurred. A recent review of the disciplinary system of the OCT was undertaken due to a concern that misconduct cases weren't being adequately investigated, and that disciplinary investigations were lacking transparency (CBC News, 2012).

Underlying the shift from professional to political governance in BC—and potentially in Ontario—are calls for greater regulation. A discourse of parental "choice" and "rights" is one of the principal drivers in calls for greater scrutiny and oversight of teachers' practice. As a recent article on the review of the OCT stated, "parents deserve to know about teacher discipline" (CBC News, 2012). There is ample evidence of a public desire for greater teacher regulation; however, the transition from professional to political governance

18 See, e.g., http://blogs.vancouversun.com/2012/01/09/b-c-college-of-teachers-is-no-more

19 Personal correspondence.

does not necessarily mean greater disciplining of teachers or regulation of teacher conduct. Indeed, within a four-year period, the BCCT cancelled or suspended the teaching licenses of almost 100 teachers, while Alberta, with a similar sized teaching force, disciplined fewer than 20; Manitoba's record during this time was zero (Steffenhagen, 2011).

Conclusions

In this paper, we extended Peter Grimmett's ideas to further reveal the political context of recent teacher education policy in Canada in the case of four provinces. We sought to understand how professionalization and deregulation were manifest in teacher education policy and expanded upon this framework to better capture recent trends in the political context of Canadian teacher education. Our analysis of existing literature and of recent policy reform reveals a discernible trend in teacher education in the past 20 years or so, resulting from a struggle between an increasingly neoliberal conceptualization of education—illustrated by an emphasis on student and parental choice, individual freedoms, competition, and accountability—and a push from teacher education institutions and the profession itself for more autonomy and respect, with a desire for greater professionalization and self-regulation.

Grimmett (2009) fears that trends occurring elsewhere, such as in the United Kingdom and the United States, could come to Canada. In reflecting on the British case, Grimmett laments that in England, "a policy emphasis on deregulation has turned into an insidious mix of over-regulation alongside rhetoric about professionalization" (2009, p. 10). Grimmett (2009) hopes that writing about policy trends in teacher education in Canada will help prevent a dismantling of professional preparation and the subsequent consignment of teacher education to schools. We share Grimmett's concern and believe strongly in the need to both respect the professional judgment of teachers and approach teacher education as professional formation. Furthermore, we concur with Young and Boyd (2010) when they write, "the public interest is served by the profession, which protects the public from incompetent and unethical teacher behaviour by establishing high entry standards and participating in, or accrediting the provision of, pre-service preparation" (p. 11).

From our observations, there are many problems plaguing teaching in Canada: oversupply—and un(der)employment—of teachers in urban areas (especially in Vancouver

and Toronto); high attrition in the teaching field; low status of the profession; low position of faculties of education within universities; continuing issues with teacher mobility and certification, and so on and so forth. Teacher education policy can help to address these issues. It can be, as Fullan (2010) reflected, "the best solution." In providing a basic overview of teacher education policy, we have sought to continue conversations started by Grimmett and others, and to contribute to a better understanding of the policy context of teacher education in Canada. As Cochran-Smith and Fries (2002) attempted 10 years ago in the United States, we hope we have been similarly successful in "extending the [Canadian] dialogue on the discourse of reform in teacher education" (p. 527).

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