

Staffing Cooperation



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Staffing Cooperation

The administration of government schools continues to be based upon the principle of self-management but with scope for cooperation with other schools.

This commitment to the principle of self-management in Government schools enables a high degree of operational autonomy over human and financial resources at the school level. The accountability for the management of human and financial resources within a school rests with the principal within statewide legislative and policy guidelines.

Current staffing policy for Victorian government schools is designed to enable a school to more closely align its staffing profile to the educational needs of students. Schools are able to progressively build, or maintain, a staff team that can provide the best possible teaching and learning in the school. The key objective of staffing policy is to enable principals to select the best available staff to best meet the educational needs of students.

Employees who work in more than one school

OVERVIEW

Targeted funded initiatives at times result in an employee working in more than one school. Examples include MARC/MACC, visiting teacher and instrumental music programs. There are also times when employees are successful in obtaining part-time employment at more than one school, such as teachers of languages or teacher aides. It is recognised that these programs and employment opportunities are necessary and intrinsic to the educational program delivery to students in Victorian government schools.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The terms and conditions of employees who work in a number of locations are identical to the terms and conditions of employees who work in one location. In circumstances where an employee is employed in a number of schools, either as a result of a targeted funded initiative or the employment arrangements of a particular employee, it is essential that an administrative base school be identified for that employee.

The responsibility of the administrative base school principal is to ensure, in consultation with the other principals, that terms and conditions of employment of that employee are consistent with Departmental policy requirements and relevant legislative and industrial obligations. This would include oversight of the program of work across the schools to ensure, for example, that the work required is neither unreasonable nor excessive, that performance and development arrangements are in place, and arrangements for administrative matters such as leave and salary are understood.

While the terms and conditions are the same as for all employees, there are some areas that require particular consideration where an employee works in more than one school.

PART-TIME POSITIONS AT MORE THAN ONE SCHOOL

Where an ongoing employee employed part-time at one school is successful in obtaining an additional part-time position at another school, this is not to be regarded as a separate employment offer. In this instance the employee will have a temporary or permanent time fraction increase, depending on whether the additional position is for a fixed period or ongoing respectively. Where the additional part-time position results in a permanent time fraction increase the principals should review and agree which school will be the employee's base school. Where agreement cannot be reached the base school remains unchanged.

Where a fixed-term employee employed part-time at one school is successful in obtaining an additional ongoing part-time position at another school, the employee should be given a new offer of ongoing employment by the school with the ongoing position reflecting the ongoing part-time position and a temporary time fraction increase reflecting the original fixed-term position. In this case it would be usual for the school making the offer of ongoing employment to become the base school for that employee.

Where a fixed-term employee employed part-time at one school is successful in obtaining an additional fixed-term part-time position at another school, the employee should be given a new offer of employment by the base school reflecting the combined part-time positions. In this case the principals should review and agree on the appropriate base school. Where agreement cannot be reached the base school remains unchanged.

Schools Recruitment Unit will need to be contacted to give effect to any change to an employee's base school.

MEETINGS/PARENT–TEACHER REPORTING SESSIONS

A teacher employed full-time may be required to attend up to two hours of meetings per week and undertake one hour of other duties in addition to the minimum seven-hour attendance requirement, subject to prior consultation and mutual agreement as to the time, date and type of duties to be undertaken. The principal of the base school, in consultation with the other principals and the teacher, should determine the arrangements that are to apply. This may include varying arrangements to accommodate the different settings, for example, requiring the teacher to attend meetings at the different schools on a rotational basis.

It is recognised that a teacher may be required at parent-teacher reporting sessions at all schools. The *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2017* provides for time-in-lieu to compensate for any attendance requirements in excess of the 38-hour week. Time-in-lieu will be determined at the base school after consultation with the other principal(s).

LEAVE

The approval of discretionary leave (such as leave without pay or long service leave) by the base school principal is to be considered following consultation with the other principals having regard to the educational program delivery in each of the schools and the needs of the employee.

TRAVEL

Where an employee is required to travel between schools on any day, travel time needs to be factored into the required work.

An employee may be entitled to travel reimbursement where the distance from their home to a non-base school exceeds that which would normally occur when travelling from home to their base school.

EXCESS

Where it is identified that an employee who works in more than one school is potentially excess to requirements the base school is responsible for managing that situation in accordance with the Department's Management of Excess guidelines. The consultation and identification phases are to involve all the schools at which the employee works. That is, strategies to avoid the need to identify an employee as excess should be explored in all of the schools and volunteers to become excess should be sought from all of the schools.

Where the base school identifies an employee who works in more than one school as excess to requirements the person is excess for their full hours of work, not a proportion of their hours. All of the schools will continue, unless otherwise agreed, with the existing employment and salary charging arrangements for the person until the excess situation is resolved, be that reabsorption, redeployment or retrenchment.

Should retrenchment action be initiated and a volunteer invited to replace the employee who would otherwise be retrenched that invitation is to be issued to employees in all of the schools in which the excess employee works.

Multi School Staffing Model

In some circumstances improvement in education outcomes in particular schools is enhanced where two or more schools co-operatively manage the movement of staff between schools to better meet the curriculum and workforce needs of each school.

The *Multi School Staffing* model has been developed to enable the movement of staff between schools to enhance workforce capability and flexibility and provide greater opportunity to facilitate stated education provision objectives and other student learning outcome initiatives.

The objective of the *Multi School Staffing* model is improvement in education outcomes through increased workforce capability and flexibility. The *Multi School Staffing* model enables two or more schools to temporarily transfer staff between the schools on an annual basis to better meet the education program needs of each school having regard to the workforce requirements of the schools (including the management of potential excess without the need to formally identify excess staff), the professional learning needs of staff and the career aspirations of staff. The principles that underpin the model are:

- the education program needs of each school, including curriculum continuity for students, remain the key driver of workforce decisions;
- responsibility and accountability for all staffing decisions remains with the principal of each school;

- workforce decisions must be accommodated within each school's Student Resource Package and workforce plan.
- the movement of staff between schools is temporary and is facilitated using the administrative transfer powers without the need to advertise.

The key feature of the *Multi School Staffing* model is an annual joint workforce allocation process that allows the movement of staff to any of the participating schools for the following school year without the requirement to advertise vacancies. The joint workforce allocation process operates as part of the workforce planning processes in term 4 of each year and must be concluded no later than the end of term 4.

The joint workforce allocation procedures to be used by the participating schools will be determined using the consultative arrangements agreed at each school and must include the following elements:

- opportunity for staff to express interest in a location in the year following;
- allocation of staff to each school location for the following year having regard to the education program and workforce needs of each school (including the management of potential excess), the professional learning needs of staff and the preferences of staff; and
- a local grievance resolution process.

It should be noted that a staff member has the right to seek a review with the Merit Protection Boards of a staffing decision affecting them arising from the joint workforce allocation process. In respect of a request for review, a Merit Protection Board will inquire into the claims of the employee who lodged the request and may:

- if it is satisfied that the grounds for review have been established, make an order requiring the person or body which made the decision to reconsider the decision; or
- confirm the decision.

At all times, the principal of each participating school remains responsible for all decisions including workforce planning, staffing decisions, and the allocation of work affecting their school. Each participating school is free to advertise vacancies in accordance with normal recruitment policy at the conclusion of the joint workforce allocation process.

The base school of a staff member remains at all times the school to which the staff member was substantively appointed. The *Multi School Staffing* model does not enable the permanent transfer of staff between schools. Permanent transfer will continue to be in accordance with normal recruitment policy. In the event that a school ceases to participate in the *Multi School Staffing* arrangement all staff will return to their base school at the end of that school year.

APPROVAL

Schools wishing to participate in a *Multi School Staffing* arrangement may apply in writing to the Deputy Secretary, Regional Services Group. Applications will be considered having regard to the following:

- demonstrated need for a *Multi School Staffing* arrangement to assist the schools achieve stated educational outcomes;
- support of the principals, staff and school communities;
- commitment from the schools to participating in the *Multi School Staffing* arrangement for a minimum period of five years.

Further Assistance

Further information, advice or assistance on any matters related to working in more than one school is available by:

- accessing the A-Z topic list on [HRWeb](#),
- using the [related topics](#) list; or
- contacting the Schools Recruitment Unit on 1800 641 943.