

Duty

A paper to the 2008 Annual Conference prepared by the Executive

1 Background

1.1 The 2003 Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) report on the workload of secondary teachers highlighted the heavy workload carried by secondary teachers.

1.2 In New Zealand moves in recent times to address workload pressure have focused on:

- providing guaranteed maximum teaching hours for classroom teachers and time for middle managers
- establishing average class size controls
- working to increase the administration and management staffing allocations to schools to ease loads on senior management staff
- working to increase staffing for curriculum to ease pressures on middle heads of department and classroom teachers
- working to press for improved operational funding to allow higher levels of employment of ancillary staff to reduce non-teaching workloads on all staff
- securing a time allowance for heads of department who are responsible for the curriculum development of beginning teachers.

1.3 We continue to press for improvements in a number of these areas. Non-timetabled duties may be one of the as-yet unaddressed areas where changes may be possible that will assist in managing workloads.

1.4 The 2002, 2004 and 2007 settlements provided for compensatory mechanisms to reduce workload in some areas when, for genuine reasons, teachers were to be asked to forgo guaranteed timetabled non-teaching time. This provision also applies when teachers with more than one class exceed an average of 26 students per class. One of the options open for agreement as a compensatory mechanism is a reduction in duties outside timetabled class hours.

1.5 Schools are also required to develop a timetable policy, in consultation with their teaching staff. That policy must include references to duties outside timetabled hours.

1.6 These two requirements have raised questions and requests for guidance from members about what constitutes normal duty for teachers. There is no current PPTA policy on duty, nor is there up-to-date data on what constitutes normal duties across the country.

2 Work to be done?

2.1 These gaps in our information and policy position are highly likely to require filling before the next STCA round begins. These are the sorts of questions we may require answers to:

- To what degree is 'duty' a workload issue?
- How might it be addressed, if it is one?
- To what degree are there health and safety issues relating to duty and how are these addressed?
- What are the resourcing implications of any changes that might be made?
- Are there other implications of any possible changes?
- What are current practices with respect to duty?
- How do practices vary by school size and school type?
- What policies exist about duty?
- How much time is spent on non-teaching duties?
- Are there good practice models operating in schools already? If so, what are they?
- What happens overseas with respect to non-teaching duties?

2.2 Currently we have anecdotal information on these questions, and some historic comparisons. But we have no systematic analysis of what is currently happening in schools.

2.3 The answers to the questions above will allow us to develop policy for consideration by the next Annual Conference. However, if branch and regional discussions of this paper in the lead-up to the 2008 Conference indicate that duty is not a significant issue across the membership, then the recommendations 2, 3 and 4 below should be rejected by conference delegates.

2.4 This paper proposes that the 2008 Annual Conference approves the establishment of a short-life taskforce that will work to address the questions listed above and present a paper, with findings and any proposals, to the 2009 Annual Conference.

Recommendations

1. That the report be received.
2. That a paper be prepared for the 2009 PPTA Annual Conference on the issues around duties undertaken by teachers outside timetabled time, and that this paper cover:
 - a. current practices in NZ and overseas
 - b. health and safety implications of duty
 - c. workload implications of duty
 - d. possible claims for changes to duties for the 2010 industrial negotiations
 - e. the resourcing and other implications of these possible changes
 - f. policy advice on duty to members.
3. That the paper for the 2009 Annual conference be prepared by a taskforce that includes two members of the Association's Staffing Committee, two members of the Executive's Condition Advisory Committee, a member of the Senior Positions' Advisory Committee, a member of the PPTA Principals' Council, a representative from Te Huarahi and four regional nominees who are selected to ensure that a representative sample of school types is covered by the taskforce.
4. That in the preparation of the 2009 paper, current practices with respect to the allocation of duties outside timetabled class hours are reviewed through:
 - a. a sample survey of New Zealand secondary and area school members
 - b. a survey of New Zealand secondary and area branch chairpersons
 - c. a request to school principals for their policy statements on duty
 - d. web-based research of any relevant overseas practices, and any other relevant available research.