



**Briefing Note: Recent media reports of concerning staffing and resourcing practices in secondary schools**

<b>To:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	25 March 2019	<b>Priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1182930
<b>Drafter:</b>	Mark Williamson	<b>DDI:</b>	s 9(2)(a)
<b>Authorised By:</b>	Ellen MacGregor-Reid	<b>DDI:</b>	[Redacted]
<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	Yes	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

**Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this paper is for you to:

- **Note** the actions taken to examine claims made in the media by Jack Boyle, President, PPTA, on 10 February 2019.
- **Agree** that this Briefing will be proactively released.

*Agree / Disagree*

**Summary**

- On Sunday 10 February 2019 claims were made in the media by PPTA President, Jack Boyle, regarding unacceptable staffing practices in secondary schools, that he attributed to a shortage in teachers.
- You requested that the Ministry of Education look into these claims. We have done so and a copy of our findings is attached as Annex 1.

*[Signature]*  
Ellen MacGregor-Reid  
**Deputy Secretary**  
**Early Learning and Student Achievement**

*[Signature]*  
Hon Chris Hipkins  
**Minister of Education**

25/03/19

5/4/19

## Background

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1. On Sunday 10 February 2019 claims were made in the media regarding unacceptable staffing practices in secondary schools as a result of a shortage of teachers. These were reported as:

*Union president Jack Boyle knew of one school - which he would not name - where a Year 13 student was brought in to look after a junior class. He also knew of senior classes where there were no available teachers, meaning the classes just looked after themselves. The shortage of teachers meant the pool of relievers had largely been brought into teaching full-time, which meant there were very few relievers available.*

2. You requested that the Ministry of Education look into these claims.

## Approach

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3. We are aware that, regardless of teacher supply, decisions in secondary schools around timetabling, subject choice, roll management and teacher allocation to classes are complex. In order to build our understanding of how schools respond to various circumstances we engaged Peter Gall, of Education Solutions Ltd, to provide background information on timetabling and resourcing practices in secondary schools. Mr Gall is an experienced educationalist who served for 20 years as principal of Papatoetoe High School and has held other senior education sector roles.
4. The Secretary of Education corresponded with Mr Boyle seeking detail of the situations that he had commented on. Mr Boyle responded on 13 February and indicated that he would not identify the school where he was aware these practices have occurred. Instead Mr Boyle provided a copy of an anonymous survey of 449 teachers conducted by the PPTA in August 2018 where a small number of teachers indicated that schools had combined classes, used students for relief cover, sent some students home, or taken another action due to a lack of relieving teaching staff.
5. Our Regional Directors have followed up with state and state-integrated secondary school principals to gauge the extent of the use of the practices referred to by Mr Boyle, and the reasons for this. There are 349 state and state-integrated secondary schools employing about 29,000 teachers. Each of the Ministry's regional offices has contacted the secondary schools in their region to confirm if the school has:
  - a. *Asked students to supervise classes because of a vacancy they cannot fill or find a reliever to cover (in this case exclude instances of them doing this for leadership or other reasons).*
  - b. *Left any classes unsupervised because of a vacancy they can't fill or find a reliever to cover.*
  - c. *Cancelled classes or combined/increased class size because of a vacancy they cannot fill or find a reliever to cover.*

## Findings

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6. As part of their self-management processes, secondary school principals have discretion to manage how their allocated staffing resource is deployed to best meet their students' needs. Most schools construct their timetables based on student choice and consequently the options which must be staffed can differ widely from year to year.

This is feature of the New Zealand system which differs from many other systems, where a more limited range of student choices makes staff planning and recruitment simpler.

7. Staffing arrangements in our secondary schools are complex. In many schools there will be a timetable team of two or three staff, possibly including Senior Leadership, who will work fulltime on the timetable process for six to eight weeks. The team is continually trying to balance student choice with staffing availability and teachers' conditions of employment, including hours of work.
8. In total 52 individual secondary schools reported occasions where these practices have occurred. The following table summarises secondary school's responses to our enquiries. Please note that schools were asked about recent and current staffing pressures and have therefore provided point in time information.

Area of enquiry	Secondary Schools reporting this has occurred	Comment
<b>Asked students to supervise classes because of a vacancy they can't fill or find a reliever to cover (in this case exclude instances of them doing this for leadership or other reasons)</b>	5 (1.4% of state and state-integrated secondary schools)	This was a very infrequent practice with only 5 secondary schools reporting this had occurred. Where this occurred most schools advised this was due to historical practices and was not expected to re-occur in 2019, or occurred for only short periods of time (5 – 10 minutes).
<b>Left any classes unsupervised because of a vacancy they cannot fill or find a reliever to cover</b>	11 (3.15% of state and state-integrated secondary schools)	This was a very infrequent practice with only a small number secondary schools reporting this had occurred. Where this has occurred most schools commented that only year 13 classes were left unsupervised, most often due to difficulty in finding a relieving teacher.
<b>Cancelled classes or combined/increased class size because of a vacancy they cannot fill or find a reliever to cover</b>	45 (12.89% of state and state-integrated secondary schools)	Schools have provided insight into the circumstances where this is occurring. This echoed the complexity associated with staffing decisions which have been put forward by Mr Gall. Schools described making decisions based around numbers of students, demand for subjects, and challenges in finding teaching staff, particularly for subjects where there have been long standing supply issues (i.e. maths, technology, and Te Reo Māori), as well as in rural areas.

9. We have previously provided advice regarding the Ministry's Teacher Demand and Supply Planning Tool and the progress of initiatives in the expanded Teacher Supply package (METIS 1176661 refers).
10. The table below shows how these current initiatives offset our Demand and Supply projections for secondary schooling for the 2019 year, as at 17 March 2019:

Teacher Supply Planning Tool Projection	Secondary PROJECTED SUPPLY GAP	Initiative	Secondary ESTIMATED INCREASE TO SUPPLY WITHIN YEAR
2019	Additional 170 teachers required	Teach First	45
		National Beginner Teacher	75
		Overseas Teachers recruited	106

Subtotal  
Projection Difference

226  
+56

11. We anticipate that supply of secondary teachers will be further improved by the uptake of subsidised places on Teacher Education Refresh programmes and New Zealanders who have returned home to teach without contacting our overseas recruiters.
12. It is important to note that Demand and Supply Planning tool provides projections for primary and secondary teachers at a national level, and for Auckland. However, it does not provide projections at a more granular level, for example: it does not tell us if we need a mathematics teacher in the Auckland Region.
13. When responding to this inquiry, schools have reported a mixed situation across all regions. Many schools commented that they do not have difficulty filling vacancies and have quality applicants to choose from. In the Auckland region these schools are evenly spread across decile and across geographic location (i.e. urban/rural).
14. Several schools reported difficulty in finding relieving staff. This conforms to the data we have, indicating a decrease in the proportion of secondary teachers working in relief roles and an increase in the proportion in permanent employment in the current environment.
15. Schools reported a range of responses as they look to continue to offer subjects where they are encountering staffing pressures. This includes asking teachers to teach outside of their core subject expertise and the use of staff with Limited Authority to Teach.

### Next Steps

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16. Twenty-two of the 52 schools which reported staffing pressures have made use of one or more of the supports available through the currently available teacher supply package. We will contact the schools which have not yet made use of these supports to discuss how these initiatives can help recruit and engage teaching staff.
17. Our Demand and Supply Planning Tool projections will be revised during April/May 2019, to take into account more recent payroll data and development work to keep improving our projections. This will inform our view of whether the long-term supply-demand balance has improved.
18. We are undertaking an initial analysis of secondary school timetable subject data, obtained through a pilot exercise with a number of volunteer schools. This pilot explores the analytical value of school level timetabling with a view to informing our understanding and decision making around the supply of secondary school teachers by subject area.

### Proactive Release

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19. We recommend that this Briefing is proactively released as per your expectation that information be released as soon as possible. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

### Annexes

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**To:** Iona Holsted, Secretary for Education  
**From:** Ellen MacGregor-Reid, Deputy Secretary, Early Learning and Student Achievement  
Mark Williamson, Senior Manager, Education Workforce  
**Cc:** Katrina Casey, Deputy Secretary, Sector Enablement and Support  
John McKeefry, Associate Deputy Secretary, Education Workforce  
**Date:** 21 March 2019  
**Subject:** Examination of issues raised by Jack Boyle on 10 February 2019

**Purpose:**

1. This memorandum outlines the actions taken to examine issues reported to be raised by Jack Boyle, President, PPTA on 10 February 2019.
2. The findings of our examination are also detailed.

**Concerns raised:**

3. On Sunday 10 February 2019 Mr Boyle was reported as claiming that:

*Union president Jack Boyle knew of one school - which he would not name - where a Year 13 student was brought in to look after a junior class. He also knew of senior classes where there were no available teachers, meaning the classes just looked after themselves. The shortage of teachers meant the pool of relievers had largely been brought into teaching full-time, which meant there were very few relievers available. The lack of trainee teachers dated back to 2009.*

(Annex 1 refers)

4. The Minister of Education requested that the Ministry look into this matter, indicating that these claims of big and cancelled classes were concerning, if true, and should not be happening unless there is a very good reason.

**Context:**

5. We are aware that, regardless of teacher supply, decisions in secondary schools around timetabling, subject choice, roll management and teacher allocation to classes are complex. In order to build our understanding of how schools respond to various circumstances we engaged Peter Gall, of Education Solutions Ltd to provide background information on timetabling and resourcing practices.
6. Mr Gall is an experienced educationalist who served for 20 years as principal of Papatoetoe High School, a large multicultural secondary school. He also served a three year term as President of the Secondary Principals' Association of New Zealand (SPANZ) and contributed to a number of national and regional reviews and reference groups including property, schools' resourcing, PB4L, He Kākano, initial teacher education and school leadership.

## Background information (provided by Peter Gall):

7. As part of their self-management processes, secondary school principals have discretion to manage how their allocated staffing resource is deployed to best meet their students' needs. Most schools construct their timetables based on student choice and consequently the options which must be staffed can differ widely from year to year. This is a feature of the New Zealand system which differs from many other systems, where a more limited range of student choices makes staff planning and recruitment simpler.
8. Staffing arrangements in our secondary schools are complex. In many schools there will be a timetable team of two or three staff, possibly including Senior Leadership, who will work fulltime on the timetable process for six to eight weeks. The team is continually trying to balance student choice with staffing availability and teachers' conditions of employment. It is common for this type of work to be continuing right through to the final timetable being produced at the start of the following year.
9. To complicate issues there are often staff resignations and consequent new appointments occurring during this time. It is very difficult in many situations, regardless of levels of teacher supply, to replace any given teacher with a direct replacement. Sometimes it may be an advantage if, for example, there is staffing surplus in a subject area, but in many situations staff changes and variable recruitment success requires further negotiations and reshuffling.
10. Where teachers cannot be found it can be very disruptive to schools. Where subjects cannot be offered, or student numbers, and/or subject choice change dramatically, schools may be required to re-timetable and re-organise their staffing allocations.
11. Decisions have to be made taking into account the availability of specialist staff and also keeping in mind the number of specialist rooms. Examples of the types of decisions are provided by Mr Gall:

*If there are 88 students who have chosen their level 2 course this does not mean that there will be 22 in each class as they would be spread over several option lines depending on other subjects the students are taking. There could be 29 in one class and 13 in another and this might have to remain. Subjects that have smaller numbers will only appear in one option line and this can be limiting for final student choices being able to be realised if there are 2 such courses that end up in the same line. This is very common in smaller schools and teachers sometimes allow individual students to study a subject within a different class.*

12. Secondary schools use a range of solutions to enable them to manage their staffing and learning provision. These include:
  - Employing staff above entitlement through the use of locally raised funds or the operational grant.
  - Use of LATs where specialist teachers are unavailable.
  - Use of non-specialists to cover some classes.
  - Collapsing some option courses/subjects.
  - Having multi-level classes. This is quite common in languages and small schools.
  - Splitting classes – usually in years 9 or 10. This would mean that a class may have 2 English teachers perhaps sharing the class for 2 periods each per week or a 3/1 split depending on how many hours contact is required for each teacher.
  - Creation of an independent learning option line (for students on correspondence courses or VLN), supervised by staff to bring their numbers up to required hours. More common in small schools.

- Having a semester system – particularly in the senior school. This allows for more flexibility and is becoming common in smaller schools.
- Having a non-supervised study option for year 13 students.
- Creating an option line “0” with classes before school or at lunchtime.
- Sending year 13 students home early one day per week.
- Removing form class duties from teachers who are a period over code.
- Use of part-time teachers.
- Combine classes with a neighbouring school.
- Balancing teacher loads over the year – over code for term 1 & 2, under for term 3 & 4.

13. Mr Gall has provided a background paper expanding on this, attached as Annex 4.

### Findings:

14. Upon learning of the concerns raised by Mr Boyle you immediately wrote to him seeking detail of the situations that he had commented on (refer Annex 2a). You also wrote to Lorraine Kerr, President, NZSTA (Annex 2b).
15. Mr Boyle responded on 13 February and indicated that he would not identify the school where he was aware these practices have occurred. Rather he referred to an anonymous survey of 449 teachers conducted by the PPTA in August 2018 where a small number of teachers indicated that schools had combined classes, used students for relief cover, sent some students home, or taken other action due to a lack of relieving teaching staff (refer Annex 3A – page 7 of the PPTA survey report).
16. You then responded to Mr Boyle to correct some errors of fact in his letter of 13 February (refer annex 3B).
17. Our regional Directors of Education have followed up with state and state-integrated secondary school principals to gauge the extent of the use of the practices referred to by Mr Boyle, and the reasons for this. There are 349 state and state-integrated secondary schools employing about 29,000 teachers. Each of the Ministry’s regional offices has contacted the secondary schools in their region to confirm if the school has:
  - *Asked students to supervise classes because of a vacancy they can’t fill or find a reliever to cover (in this case exclude instances of them doing this for leadership or other reasons).*
  - *Left any classes unsupervised because of a vacancy they can’t fill or find a reliever to cover.*
  - *Cancelled classes or combined/increased class size because of a vacancy they can’t fill or find a reliever to cover.*
18. In total 52 individual secondary schools reported occasions where these practices have occurred. The following table summarises secondary school’s responses on this issue. Please note that schools were asked about recent and current staffing pressures and have therefore provided point in time information.

*Summary of school responses:*

Area of enquiry	Secondary Schools reporting this has occurred	Comment
Asked students to supervise classes because of a vacancy they can't fill or find a reliever to cover (in this case exclude instances of them doing this for leadership or other reasons)	5 (1.4% of state and state-integrated secondary schools)	This was a very infrequent practice with only 5 secondary schools reporting this had occurred. Where this occurred most schools advised this was due to historical practices and was not expected to re-occur in 2019, or occurred for only short periods of time (5 – 10 minutes).
Left any classes unsupervised because of a vacancy they can't fill or find a reliever to cover	11 (3.15% of state and state-integrated secondary schools)	This was a very infrequent practice with only a small number secondary schools reporting this had occurred. Where this has occurred most schools commented that only year 13 classes were left unsupervised, most often due to difficulty in finding a relieving teacher.
Cancelled classes or combined/increased class size because of a vacancy they can't fill or find a reliever to cover	45 (12.89% of state and state-integrated secondary schools)	Schools have provided insight into the circumstances where this is occurring. This echoed the complexity associated with staffing decisions which have been put forward by Mr Gall. Schools described making decisions based around numbers of students, demand for subjects, and challenges in finding teaching staff, particularly for subjects where there have been long standing supply issues (i.e. maths, technology, and Te Reo Māori), as well as in rural areas.

19. Refer Annex 5 for fuller detail of responses by region.

*Further comment*

20. In 2018 we developed a new Teacher Demand and Supply Planning Tool. In simple terms, the tool calculates the number of teachers we expect to need in the future (demand) and compares this to the number of teachers we expect to have in the future (supply). It estimates these by looking at trends in our data – such as in the number of students in our schools and how many teachers are entering and exiting the workforce – and makes assumptions on how these trends will continue into the future.

21. Teacher demand and supply are both complex to predict. Demand for teachers is mainly driven by the number of teachers required to meet teacher-student staffing ratios, as well as individual employment decisions by schools to staff above these ratios, as described by Mr Gall. Likewise, supply is driven by a complex mix of economic conditions and individual employment decisions by current and prospective teachers.

22. The table below shows how our current initiatives offset the tool projections for 2019 for secondary schooling.

Teacher Supply Planning Tool Projection	Secondary PROJECTED SUPPLY GAP	Initiative	Secondary ESTIMATED INCREASE TO SUPPLY WITHIN YEAR
2019	Additional 170 teachers required	Teach First	45
		National Beginner Teacher	75
		Overseas Teachers recruited	106
		Subtotal	226
		Projection Difference	+56

23. We anticipate that supply of secondary teachers will be further improved by the uptake of subsidised places on Teacher Education Refresh programmes and New Zealanders who have returned home to teach without contacting our overseas recruiters.

24. It is important to note that Demand and Supply Planning tool provides projections for primary and secondary teachers at a national level, and for Auckland. However, it does not provide projections at a more granular level, for example: it does not tell us if we need a mathematics teacher in the Auckland Region.

25. When responding to this enquiry schools have reported a mixed situation across all regions. Many schools commented that they do not have difficulty filling vacancies and have quality applicants to choose from. In the Auckland region these schools are evenly spread across decile and across geographic location (i.e. urban/rural).

26. Teacher supply in rural settings has been a long standing issue and rural schools in Te Tai Tokerau, Bay of Plenty/Wairariki, and Wellington reported difficulty in recruiting staff.

27. Several schools reported difficulty in finding relieving staff. This conforms to the data we have indicating a relatively high conversion of relieving staff to permanent employment in the current environment.

28. Schools reported a range of responses as they look to continue to offer subjects where they are encountering staffing pressures. These include asking teachers to teach outside of their core subject expertise and the use of staff with Limited Authority to Teach.

For example:

- A. *We are shuffling teachers to subjects they haven't taught before; it's not ideal but is one solution rather than cancelling classes. Some areas are harder to staff than others.*
- B. *We appointed a teacher/chef for L3 Hosp/Cookery and he left after T1 as it was not to his liking. We advertised for the same position this year and had one teacher qualified applicant who turned down our employment offer. We have appointed a chef who is not a qualified teacher subject to LAT.*

29. Many schools reported recruiting teachers from overseas. Some issues were raised around the wait time for teachers to relocate to New Zealand:
- A. *Applicants for these positions are few and all from overseas. No NZ-trained teachers have applied. One teacher engaged from England in November 2018 is not able to start until term 2 2019. Wait time is problematic for the overseas recruitment.*
  - B. *We started 2018 fully staffed but recruited to 37 positions during the year. All vacancies were filled in a timely manner and the school did not have to use any cancelling/combining. We did use relievers while waiting for overseas teachers to arrive in NZ.*
30. Twenty-two of the 52 schools which reported staffing pressures have made use of one or more of the supports available through the currently available teacher supply package. We will contact the schools which have not yet made use of these supports to discuss how these initiatives can help recruit and engage teaching staff.
31. Our Demand and Supply Planning Tool projections will be revised during April/May 2019, to take into account more recent payroll data and development work to keep improving our projections. This will inform our view of whether the long-term supply-demand balance has improved.
32. We are undertaking an initial analysis of secondary school timetable subject data, obtained through a pilot exercise with a number of volunteer schools. This pilot explores the analytical value of school level timetabling with a view to informing our understanding and decision making around the supply of secondary school teachers by subject area.

# Investigation ordered into claims of packed and cancelled classes

Tom Hunt 18:28, Feb 10 2019

A Year 13 student was brought in to look after a class as New Zealand's "unprecedented" teacher deficit worsens, a teachers' union claims.

The New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA) is campaigning for the problem to be urgently addressed with warnings it will only worsen if action was not taken.

It comes as claims of big or cancelled classes has led the Government to order the Ministry of Education to investigate.

The Education Gazette on Sunday had 21 teaching vacancies in Wellington secondary schools and 172 nationwide.

The union argued there were specialised classes being taught by unqualified teachers, multi-level NCEA classes being taught in single lessons, and there were fewer trainee teachers signing up - and that was just in Wellington.

Nationwide, one-in-five teachers was older than 60 and planned to retire soon, there were 40 per cent less trainee teachers than eight years ago, 40 per cent of new teachers left within five years, and principals admitted to employing staff they would not normally hire. But the Ministry has cast doubt on some of the union

"These factors are why we are now dealing with an unprecedented teacher shortage and they will cause the shortages to worsen if we do not adequately address this now," PPTA Wellington chairman Ahmad Osama said.

The union is currently amid collective negotiations and, while better pay rates were one aspect needed to attract more teachers, other factors such as work conditions and class sizes played a part, Osama said.

Union president Jack Boyle knew of one school - which he would not name - where a Year 13 student was brought in to look after a junior class. He also knew of senior classes where there were no available teachers, meaning the classes just looked after themselves.

The shortage of teachers meant the pool of relievers had largely been brought into teaching full-time, which meant there were very few relievers available. The lack of trainee teachers dated back to 2009.

"Our demographics are shifting to the point we are just facing disaster."

While vacancies were down on the same time in 2018, this was largely because schools were ditching specialised subjects, Boyle said.

"They are giving up, they are changing their offerings in the school, not teaching particular subjects."

Education Minister Chris Hipkins said claims of big and cancelled classrooms were "concerning if true".

"I will ask the Ministry to investigate. It should not be happening."

Trainee teachers dropped by 40 per cent while wages stalled and workloads increased under the previous, National government. "The coalition Government can't correct that overnight - it takes at least three years to train a teacher," Hipkins said.

National's education spokesperson Nikki Kaye said teachers were looking for evidence that the Government is taking their concerns seriously.

Continuing to blame the previous administration was not what teachers want, Kaye said.

Hipkins rejects that argument and said the Government had offered teachers a good settlement in collective negotiations, and investing \$40 million in encouraging former teachers back and getting teachers from "like-minded" countries.

The Government was also working with teachers and principals on reforms including improving planning and teacher forecasts. The number of trainees was already increasing, he said.

Ministry of Education's Ellen MacGregor-Reid said Year 13 students should not be looking after classes and, if PPTA notified the Ministry, it would investigate. The Ministry could also help recruit.

"Significant investment has been made to increase the supply of qualified teachers for schools as the employers of teachers to hire. The supply is there to meet demand."

Early, anecdotal reports showed an increase in new trainees, she said.

MacGregor-Reid argued retention rates of new teachers was far better than the union's claims and was not aware of so many principals having to make compromises in new appointments.

**Annex 2A: Correspondence from the Secretary for Education to Jack Boyle, President,  
PPTA – 11 Feb 2019**



12 February 2019

Jack Boyle  
President  
PPTA  
JBoyle@ppta.org.nz

Kia ora Jack

I am writing in response to your comments about teacher supply that were recently reported in the media (*Stuff: Investigation ordered into claims of packed and cancelled classes 10.02.19*). In this you said you were aware of a year 13 student being used to look after a junior class, with the clear inference being that this was due to no teacher being available for the class. You also stated that you knew of instances where there was no teacher available for senior classes, and that these classes consequently "just looked after themselves".

The situations you have described are very serious, and I am considering what independent investigation into this may be required.

I would appreciate your urgent assistance to identify the school(s) where these situations occurred. As you know our highest priority is ensuring quality teaching and learning for children and young people, and we are here to help any schools that need assistance to fill staffing vacancies.

The Ministry has worked at length to ensure that, in considering their recruitment needs, Principals and Boards are well aware of the support available to them, through the Government's \$40 million investment to expand teacher supply initiatives.

We agree that a recognised supply issue in secondary has been in the area of STM. The support available includes the ability to recruit, at effectively no cost, qualified overseas teachers with speciality subjects when there is no one available in New Zealand for the role. It is worth noting that of the overseas trained teachers recruited so far, 94 are secondary and 56 are STM.

The *Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession* sets out how educators are required to show the value of Pono (Integrity) by acting in ways that are fair, honest, ethical and just. The Code also sets out the professional responsibility of a commitment to the teaching profession.

This is described as "I will maintain public trust and confidence in the teaching profession", and includes "demonstrating a high standard of professional behaviour and integrity." As a teaching professional, I would expect you to work with the Ministry to help ensure that schools in need of assistance are able to receive that assistance.

To effectively support schools that have vacancies we need information about their requirements. If you or other members, are aware of schools that have a need for help please either refer them to us or let us know so we can approach the schools directly.

I look forward to receiving your response as a matter of urgency.

Nāku noa nā



Iona Holsted  
Secretary for Education

**Annex 2B: Correspondence from the Secretary for Education to Lorraine Kerr,  
President, NZSTA – 13 Feb 2019**



14 February 2018

Lorraine Kerr  
NZSTA  
lkerr@nzsta.org.nz

Kia ora Lorraine

I am writing in relation to comments by the PPTA about teacher supply that were recently reported in the media (*Stuff: Investigation ordered into claims of packed and cancelled classes 10.02.19*). In this coverage the PPTA suggested that a Year 13 student was being used to teach classes due to teacher supply issues. It also included claims of instances where there was no teacher available for senior classes, and that these classes consequently looked after themselves.

I attach a copy of the article for your information.

We are taking this very seriously, and have actions underway to examine the situations described in the story. This will include contacting secondary school principals.

As you know our priority is student learning and we are here to help any schools that needs assistance to fill staffing vacancies, where this is the root cause of practices that are of concern to Boards of Trustees.

The Ministry has worked hard to ensure that, in considering their recruitments needs, Principals and Boards are well aware of the support available to them, through the Government's \$40 million investment to expand teacher supply initiatives.

To effectively support schools that have vacancies we need information about their requirements. If you or your members, are aware of schools that have a need for help please encourage them to contact our recruiters. Their details are available here: <https://www.teachnz.govt.nz/finding-a-teaching-job/recruitment-agencies/>

Nāku noa, nā

Iona Holsted  
Secretary for Education

**Annex 3A: Correspondence Jack Boyle, President, PPTA to the Secretary of Education  
– 13 Feb 2019**

**PPTA**  
NEW ZEALAND POST PRIMARY  
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION  
TE WEHENGARUA  
www.ppta.org.nz

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ER 7/1

13 February 2019

Iona Holsted  
Secretary for Education  
Ministry of Education  
P O Box 1666  
**WELLINGTON 6140**

Kia ora Iona

Your letter of 12 February is right to characterise the situation that I discussed in the media this week as serious and I am glad to be able to shed further light on it.

The role of PPTA means that teachers and school leaders often talk to us about issues of concern in their schools, sometimes to seek help, sometimes to unburden, and sometimes because they want us to advocate on their behalf.

Some of the time teachers and school leaders feel unsafe telling government agencies about the challenges that they are facing, particularly if the situations they are in force them into compromises that they know are less than ideal, or even breach their legal obligations. Unfortunately, too often they are in these situations due to factors out of their control – in particular, in this instance, the chronic and severe shortage of appropriately trained and qualified secondary teachers. In these cases it's PPTA's role to identify the general issue and advocate to those with the power to solve it.

Highlighting the impact of these shortages in order to gain the political will to seriously address them, by making secondary teaching a desirable and sustainable career, is exactly the purpose of the comments I made to the media. This is a clear demonstration of the Code's '*commitment to the teaching profession*'.

As you know, PPTA shares the data we gather from surveys, feedback from members and particular instances of issues that schools constantly with the Ministry. The majority of the individual issues we raise on behalf of members with the Ministry never make the media, and most are resolved without any fuss, or troubling your desk.

For some background to this particular instance, by mid last year we had been hearing a number of stories from school leaders and teachers about the challenges they were facing getting relief cover, and the impact of this on other teachers in terms of workload, and students in terms of having appropriate teaching and

supervision. We ran an anonymous survey of members with a few questions to test this in August.

The survey confirmed a lot of our concerns, with respondents indicating the problems you mentioned – students being sent home when relievers weren't available, senior students covering classes and many teachers using their non-contact time to cover for colleagues and so forth. It's my recollection that the survey was shared with the Ministry at the time, and it was also in the media, both our own magazine the PPTA News (which the Ministry receives) and on RNZ. Therefore, it's surprising to me that, suddenly, months later, this issue leads to you write, reminding me of my duties under the Code, and asking me to identify schools that I couldn't even do if I wanted to, which I do not.

It seems that the Ministry believes that the 94 overseas teachers who have come to teach in Aotearoa since the government's \$40 million investment in recruitment initiatives, mean that the situation in 2019 is better than what it was in 2018. I have to say I doubt this. The surveys we have conducted since 1998 ask principals how many overseas teachers they have recruited, and from this we can extrapolate an estimate of the total. 100 teachers a year from overseas is the lowest number since we began surveying; most years the number is over double that.

Further to this, members continue to share the impact of teacher shortages with us, and their worries about the impact this is having on students. If they ask for assistance, or don't appear to be aware of the support that the Ministry can offer, we will certainly pass on your details. However, unless our members specifically ask us to pass on their schools' situation, maintaining their confidence means that I will not be sending their names through to the Ministry.

I hope this clarifies the situation. The survey discussed is **attached**.

Naku noa, na



**Jack Boyle**  
**PRESIDENT**

# **NZPPTA**

## **Use of secondary teachers for day relief**

### ***Impacts of secondary teacher shortages on day relief in secondary schools***

**A report**

**3 September 2018**

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## Introduction

In response to hearing increasingly from secondary teachers that they were being called on to fill in for gaps in the secondary teacher relief teacher pool and from principals who were concerned that their own schools were struggling to find day relievers PPTA undertook a survey of a sample of its members to find out how widespread the problem is.

1100 teachers were selected at random from the PPTA's membership data base and emailed a link to a survey monkey questionnaire. The questionnaire asked four questions to determine:

1. The number of hours of relief cover teachers were asked to do in the first four weeks of term 3 this year.
2. How this compared to the same period in 2017.
3. The mechanisms schools were using to respond when there was insufficient relief cover available.
4. The extent to which teachers were being compensated for the extra contact time they were providing to assist with the relief teacher shortage.

## Executive summary

1. 449 teachers responded, a response rate of 41%. This makes for a margin of error of 4% at a confidence level of 95%.
2. The survey revealed that more than half had covered relief classes because of a shortage of secondary relief teachers. The average amount of additional contact time spent for all secondary teachers covering classes in that four week period was 1.8 hours. Amongst the teacher who did cover additional classes, the average time they spent doing it was 3.8 hours above their usual timetabled contact time.
3. Overall this is an increase on the same period in 2017
4. While a few schools had to send students home or close, the most common effects of a lack of relief cover during that four week period were:
  - combined classes for supervision,
  - use of untrained day relievers or support staff supervision and
  - leaving senior classes unsupervised.
5. It is estimated that teachers undertook \$2.5 million worth of unrecompensed additional supervision during those four weeks.
6. School sampling suggests that more than 200 secondary teachers deferred their retirement and continued in regular teaching roles this year because the secondary teacher shortage meant that their schools could not replace them – reducing a normal additional component of the relief pool available to secondary schools.

## Findings of the survey

### 1 The amount of day relief cover undertaken

Question: To the nearest hour, how much relief cover have you done in the first 4 weeks of this term because the school has not been able to find day relievers?

- 53% had to cover emergency day relief,
- 41% had not had to cover emergency day relief,
- 6% were uncertain why they had been asked to cover relief.

**Average hours spend providing relief cover because no external relievers were available:**

The average number of hours spent relieving because there were no external relievers available by the 94% who did not do relief or who knew why they were relieving was 1.8 hours per person over the four week period.

The average number of hours spent relieving by the 53% who did relief because there were no external relievers available was 3.2 hours per person over the four week period.

**Table 1** Hours of relief cover provided

Hours of teacher shortage day relief	Responses (%)
0	41
1	15
2	17
3	7
4	6
5	3
6	2
7	<0.5
8	1
9	<0.5
10	1
More than 10	3
Asked to do relief – but don't know why	6

## 2 Similarity to 2017

Question: How does this compare with the relief cover you were asked to in the same period in term 3 last year because the school was not able to find day relievers?

A net 12% of respondents reported an increased use of their hours to cover for an absence of day relief teachers compared to the same period in the previous year.

108 responses were that the teachers could not remember or did not know why they were asked to do day relief in the same period in the previous year.

Of the remaining 332:

- for 61% it was about the same,
- for 25% it was more or much more this year, and
- for 13% it was less.

**Table 2** Hours of relief cover compared to same period 2017

Comparison of day relief cover to 2017	Responses (%)
Much less this year	7
Less this year	6
About the same	61
More this year	17
Much more this year	8

### 3 The impacts on students

Question: Which of the following actions do you know your school has taken because it cannot find day relievers?

When insufficient numbers of day relievers are unavailable and internal relief cover cannot be provided the most common responses reported are to:

- combine classes for supervision,
- use untrained day relievers or support staff supervision or
- leave senior classes unsupervised.

A small number indicated their school had to send students home or close for the day.

**Table 3** *Actions taken by schools because of relief teacher shortage*

Action	Respondents identifying action (%)
Combined classes for supervision	40
Used untrained relievers or support staff for relief cover	15
Unsupervised senior classes	3
Used students for relief cover	2
Sent some students home	1
Combined classes for teaching	1
Unsupervised classes (level not specified)	1
Closed the school for a day	<0.5

## 4 The impact of the lack of day relievers on teachers

Question: Are teachers receiving compensation for exceeding their maximum teaching hours to provide relief cover related to staffing shortages?

448 teachers responded to this question, indicating through their responses that many teachers are uncompensated for exceeding their contractual maximum contact hours when providing relief due to the secondary teacher shortage.

We estimate \$2.5 million dollars is the value of uncompensated extra time provided by secondary teachers as internal relief cover to fill gaps in the secondary teacher relief pool over that 4 week period based. This is based upon:

- 22,000 secondary teachers
- the average number of hours of relief cover per teacher over the four weeks
- the frequency with which teachers are being compensated for teaching beyond their maximum contact hours to cover the shortfall in the relievers available
- the value of an hours relief cover based on the day relief teacher rate

**Table 4 Compensation mechanisms for teachers providing relief cover**

Receive compensatory mechanism for relief	Responses (%)	Responses (%)
Not applicable	20	-
Don't know	2	-
Always	19	25
Usually	6	8
Sometimes	8	10
Never/did not know I could ask for it/ difficult to ask for	23	26
I don't ask for it	21	27
Other	1	1

## 5 Deferring retirement - effect on relief pool

Recent retirees from teaching are one source of day relievers for schools.

In a separate exercise to the relief use survey PPTA asked a sample of 23 secondary schools from around the country how many of the teachers they were employing in regular teaching roles this year had been encouraged to defer their retirement because of the teacher shortage.

Across the 23 schools were employed 16 'deferred retirees'.

That would suggest 223 deferments nationally because the current teacher shortage meant schools could not replace teachers wishing to retire.

The most common subject specialism of the people deferring retirement in because they could not be replaced was maths (five of the sixteen), followed by English and technology (two each).

Three impacts of deferment of retirement would be to:

- 1) lower the loss rate reported for this group of secondary teachers by about 1% point and the overall loss rate of secondary teachers by 0.1% points.
- 2) reduce the number of day relievers available to schools this year.
- 3) intensify the difficulty in finding specialist day relievers, particularly in mathematics.

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## Annex 3B: Correspondence Secretary of Education to Jack Boyle, President PPTA



14 February 2018

Jack Boyle  
President  
PPTA  
[JBoyle@ppta.org.nz](mailto:JBoyle@ppta.org.nz)

Kia ora Jack

I am writing to acknowledge your letter of 13 February, relating to your comments to the media. It is unfortunate that you are unable to provide the details of the specific situations as I requested.

In your letter there are a number of comments which I have noted, however on this occasion it is the reference to the number of teachers coming to New Zealand I am responding to, to clarify your understanding.

The ongoing overseas teacher supply recruitment campaign has received over 9,100 expressions of interest. From this we have had over 1,000 qualified overseas teachers screened and made available to schools for interviews, over half of which are secondary teachers. There are sufficient candidates to be considered for the 131 remaining lodged secondary roles with our recruiters. Within the overall 239 teaching roles currently accepted - 94 of these are secondary and 56 are STEM roles.

To be clear our recruiters are actively working to fill the remaining 131 secondary roles that principals have lodged through our campaign and support their recruitment decisions. Principals are able to choose where they lodge their vacancies, and we have been reminding them of the Ministry's support package.

I hope this information is helpful.

Nāku noa, nā

Iona Holsted  
Secretary for Education

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## An overview of the management of staffing and learning provision by NZ secondary schools

s 9(2)(a)

**Objective** – To provide a general outline of the ways that secondary schools manage their staffing and learning provision within the parameters of their staffing allocation and the relevant Collective Agreement requirements.

### Introduction

As part of their self-management principals of NZ secondary schools have license to manage how their allocated staffing resource is deployed to best meet their students' needs. There are constraints imposed in terms of their school's staffing entitlement and also the allowable teacher contact hours and average class sizes as described in the Post Primary Teachers' Collective Agreement. This paper is written based on personal experience as principal of a large secondary school for 20 years and from discussions with principals and timetable staff from a selection of schools that our company currently works with.

Constructing the school's timetable in the New Zealand secondary schooling context is complex – far more so than in some other countries that I have visited (Singapore, UK). A key reason is that most schools construct their timetables based on student choice and consequently the option line structures can differ widely from year to year. An issue is the variety that exists in terms of the philosophy of schools on the way they design and deliver their curriculum. There is a continuum from the very traditional through to “open” or integrated learning models and this will then impact directly on how a timetable is constructed. Basically the principal, senior leaders and BOT will agree on the curriculum philosophy and structure for their school and then hand it over to the timetabler to make it work. The timetable process typically starts in term 3 and continues through to the start of the New Year. Schools normally have a small team of staff, often including a senior leader, to carry out this work and the process involves a lot of negotiating, decision-making and compromises at various points. Key decisions usually reside with the principal.

Many schools in overseas jurisdictions have their timetables virtually set from one year to the next with pre-determined option lines and pathways. This used to happen in NZ quite some time ago – you were placed in the “professional” stream or commerce or trades etc. This does make timetabling much easier because it is based on the teacher resource available but does so at the expense of pigeonholing students at an early age and not catering for their special interests, talents or abilities. In some cases (UK for example) certain schools have a particular curriculum focus, the Arts or Science/Technology, and that further restricts the available options. Overseas schools that offer high levels of flexibility in their curriculum offerings tend to do so by having a very open structure based on discovery type learning. The big difference in NZ is that typically we place students' individual needs and wishes at the forefront and work from there. We are also “self-managing” and consequently there is huge variety into how the problem is solved. Some of the new schools in NZ have very innovative approaches to their curriculum and timetable design but the jury is still out on them!

There are many other variables within our system that impact on the timetable process – size of school, type of school (Area School, year 7-13, year 9-13, senior college etc.) and the ability for each school to arrive at a timetable structure that they believe best suits their needs. Schools that are next door neighbours often have quite different timetable structures with variable period lengths being one example. The most common arrangement is for 5 one hour periods per day but there are examples of 6 x 50 minutes, 7 x 40 minutes, 4 x 75 minutes and others with combinations of period lengths. There are also variations in the number of days per cycle – 5 day (most common) but many examples of 6 day or 10 day cycles.

Notwithstanding all of these variations there are some commonalities – the need to ensure delivery of the NZC, to work within the staffing level available (entitlement and non-entitlement) and the parameters of the Collective Agreement. Principals are also very united in their view that the current staffing formula is insufficient to allow them to offer their ideal curriculum without having to source funds to provide over entitlement staffing. Very large schools seem to be at a particular disadvantage. This paper will consider the process by which a “typical” secondary school goes through to construct their timetable with commentary on key decision points, the variety of solutions schools use to solve the range of issues and particular issues faced by schools of different size.

## The timetable process

The following is an indication only of the various steps and timeframe that a school may follow in the construction of the timetable.

### 1. Early phases – (late term 3/early term 4)

1.1 - Principal starts gathering information on staff intentions for the following year.

1.2 - Year 9 enrolments occur and principal considers possibilities of roll growth/decline, likelihood of CAPNA, out of zone possibilities etc.

1.3- Students from years 9 to 12 indicate their intentions for following year and make their option choices. These choices are now mostly done on-line, have the option of parental involvement/approval and follow lots of guidance/education to students by the likes of deans, academic mentors, careers advisors and HODs to ensure that the choices are viable, realistic and aligned to each student's chosen pathway. These choices are provisional and usually won't be finalised until after NCEA results are known at the start of the next year. Some schools get students to list their choices in a priority order and have 1 or 2 more choices than they require – to assist if the student fails to meet a pre-requisite or a subject is not offered.

1.4 - Allowing students who are moving into the senior school open choice with options comes with some risk. Students could pick a set of subjects that are dis-jointed and not aligned to a coherent pathway. They might do that for a variety of reasons – wanting to be with their mates, escaping certain teachers, wanting to study at a higher level therefore choosing subjects with no pre-requisites or simply not being aware of what the subject is really about. Schools have mitigated against these poor subject choices through a sound programme of educating, guiding and supporting students through the likes of academic mentoring programmes. Students typically receive individual assistance with their choices and align them to a chosen pathway. The vocational pathways information and on-line careers information available is very comprehensive. School SMSs such as Kamar provide useful tools for students and teachers in this process. Those who wish to go to university need good guidance to ensure that their course of study will allow them to meet the UE threshold. The Starpath programme run via the University of Auckland was a major player in establishing good practice in this area and has been adopted in principle by many schools throughout the country.

### 2. Mid-phase –(term 4)

2.1 - Timetable team or timetabler produce summary data to indicate the numbers in each subject at each level based on students' initial choices.

2.2 - Principal determines the total staffing resource that is available for the following year. More experienced principals will not consider the GMFS very strongly (if at all) and will base predictions on their data and historical enrolment patterns at the school. Negotiation with the board as to how many (if any) above entitlement positions will be budgeted for in the following year occurs in relation to the budgeting process. Many schools, particularly larger or low decile, are using locally raised funds or operational grant funds to supplement their staffing entitlement and allow them to offer a suitable range of subject choices. Small schools typically work closely to the GMFS.

2.3 – Principal or their delegate determine the number of classes that will operate in core subjects in the junior school. The number of core classes that will run at year 9 is based on actual/predicted enrolments, information from contributing schools and historical trends. Once this number is set it

is very difficult to alter at the start of the year because if the numbers have grown significantly to hire another teacher then you actually need a variety of people to cover the range of courses. It could lead to a complete re-timetable of the school being required and there are examples of this happening. If the numbers don't show up then schools are usually protected by the GMFS and they will operate with smaller class sizes.

2.4 – Principal or their delegate will determine the number of option classes that will occur in the junior school and the number of classes in each subject at each level in the senior school based on student choices. Decisions have to be made taking into account the availability of specialist staff and also keeping in mind the number of specialist rooms. Examples of the types of the types of decisions are – 88 students have chosen a level 2 subject that requires a specialist room – is this 3 or 4 classes? What is the chance that if we make it 4 that some will not make the pre-requisite requirements? Or if we make it 3, what prospect is there of some late enrolments wanting to be added to this subject? If only 7 students have chosen a level 2 subject do we collapse the class altogether (and risk losing some students from the school) or do we run a multi-level option (a common solution). HODs will often be consulted on decisions affecting these senior class numbers or whether a subject will run or not.

2.5 - Multi-level classes typically run in the senior school and involve 2 and sometimes 3 levels of the same subject being taught at the same time. Common examples are with languages – e.g. level 2 and 3 French being combined or level 1,2 and 3 Te Reo combined etc. Other subjects that are often combined like this include economics, accounting, music and some technology courses. The driving influence is the numbers who have chosen the subject at each level and if there are for example 8 at level 2 and 5 at level 3 then it would be too much of a strain on teaching resources to offer and staff separate classes. Teachers are not generally in favour of combined or multi-level classes but prefer them to the options of collapsing the subject or correspondence. The argument for supporting multi-level classes is that it is an example of running a differentiated programme and the total class number is still generally quite small. It can also provide opportunities for some to move to the higher level more easily. Multi-level classes operate in many schools irrespective of size but are more common in smaller schools across a greater range of subjects.

2.6 – HODs consult with their staff to get their thoughts on the subjects and levels they want to teach. They will also then consider the allocation of their staff to the various classes based on the information provided. This step is sometimes performed by a DP who has a timetable oversight. Consideration needs to be given to having a balanced programme for teachers, the total teaching hours generated for each of them and whether all subjects within their area can be covered. If there is no specialist teacher available for a course or courses then negotiations will occur, usually with the principal, to arrive at a solution. Reasons for insufficient specialists include that there are no applicants for jobs in that area or the subject is growing in popularity in the school and is outstripping the available teaching resource. Outcomes could be that the course(s) is/are collapsed and students would therefore have to make new choices. There might be the option of approaching people from other departments who are under their required contact hours and see if they are prepared to do some training and pick up the class. If there are 3 or 4 classes in a subject area that are not able to be covered the principal could look to employing another teacher either within entitlement staffing or using locally raised funds if approved by the board. There is also the option to consider use of a LAT, either within entitlement staffing or not, if specialist teachers can't be sourced.

### 3. Timetable construction phase - (term 4 usually when seniors are on exam leave)

3.1 - KAMAR is the most commonly used SMS in secondary schools and it has a comprehensive timetable package. Not all timetablers use the full package however as many will do the preliminary work on whatever they have traditionally used and then simply transfer to KAMAR towards the end of the process. This would normally involve specially developed spreadsheets to take each school's individual circumstance into account. Others will use Kamar right throughout. KAMAR run an annual

conference and the timetable sessions provide a good networking opportunity for those who use the package irrespective of the level of involvement

3.2 - The timetable team enter the number of classes and teacher allocations into the timetable programme. Option lines are created and because these go back to student choice they will be different from one year to the next. A number of problems will occur that require negotiation and compromise in order to arrive a final timetable. Problems will include timetable clashes for teachers, students and specialist rooms. If teachers appear twice in the same option line then a re-allocation of classes is the usual fix. For students there may be some balancing of numbers available if the subject appears in more than one line otherwise they will have to make another subject choice or consider Correspondence School or VLN options. Specialist room availability is strongly considered in the final option line structure but if rooms are not available then it may be that some classes are taught in non-specialist areas. (Examples of specialist rooms for this purpose are Art, Photography, Music, Hard Materials Technology, Food Technology, and Digital Technology). The introduction of secondary/tertiary pathways also has timetable implications as these students have the prospect of missing a significant amount of their school-based subject time. Some schools place these students into a single class (es) and organise an "off-line" timetable for them.

3.3 – A provisional timetable is produced – usually towards the end of term 4. There is ongoing work to balance numbers in option lines and to consider class sizes across all courses. If there are 88 students who have chosen their level 2 course this does not mean that there will be 22 in each class as they would be spread over several option lines depending on other subjects the students are taking. There could be 29 in one class and 13 in another and this might have to remain. Subjects that have smaller numbers will only appear in one option line and this can be limiting for final student choices being able to be realised if there are 2 such courses that end up in the same line. This is very common in smaller schools and teachers sometimes allow individual students to study a subject within a different class.

3.4 – It can't be understated just how involved and complex this phase is. In many schools there will be a timetable team of 2 or 3 staff, possibly including a DP, who will be working fulltime on this process for 6 – 8 weeks. The team is continually trying to balance student choice with staffing availability and CA requirements. It is common for this type of work to be continuing right through to the final timetable being produced at the start of the following year.

3.5 – To complicate issues there are often staff resignations and consequent new appointments occurring during this time. It is very difficult in many situations to replace like with like and often there are timetable re-shuffles required to take account of this. If a beginning teacher is appointed to replace an experienced person then their 0.2 allowance needs to be considered. Sometimes it may be an advantage if for example there is staffing surplus in a subject area but in many situations it requires further negotiations and reshuffling.

#### 4. Start of Year

4.1– The start of year is particularly busy for the timetable team, senior staff and deans as they consider a whole raft of changes based on student's NCEA achievement and possible changes of mind regarding their original choice(s). There will also most likely be further staffing changes. In some situations schools have gone back to square one at this stage and do a complete re-table albeit with the original student subject choice. Common reasons for this drastic step would be an unexpected influx of new enrolments or significant staff changes that require some option subjects to be collapsed.

4.2 - A big issue for many schools especially in urban areas is the lateness of many families in enrolling their children into secondary school. Reasons might be that they are waiting for out of zone decisions, general tardiness or being transient (a major issue in lower socio-economic areas). Anything that the ministry could do to ensure that the vast majority of year 8 students are accepted and enrolled in a secondary school before the end of the year would be beneficial. It could start with a national advertising process. A review of aspects of the enrolment scheme legislation is probably overdue – last done in 2000. When extra students turn up at the start of the year in the junior school it can cause major timetable issues – as mentioned some schools have had to go back to square one. Likewise if numbers are significantly down it means that class sizes would be small possibly at the expense of senior options. It is just as difficult to collapse a junior class as it is to add one.

## 5. General

5.1 – Secondary schools use a range of solutions to enable them to manage their staffing and learning provision. These include –

- Employing staff above entitlement through the use of locally raised funds or the operational grant (very common)
- Use of LATs where specialist teachers are unavailable
- Use of non-specialists to cover some classes
- Collapsing some option courses/subjects
- Having multi-level classes. This is quite common in languages and small schools.
- Splitting classes – usually in years 9 or 10. This would mean that a class may have 2 English teachers perhaps sharing the class for 2 periods each per week or a 3/1 split depending on how many hours contact is required for each teacher. This option is generally not well received by teachers, students or parents.
- Creation of an independent learning option line (for students on correspondence courses or VLN), supervised by staff to bring their numbers up to required hours. More common in small schools
- Having a semester system – particularly in the senior school. This allows for more flexibility and is becoming common in smaller schools.
- Creating an option line “0” with classes before school or at lunchtime.
- Sending year 13 students home early one day per week
- Removing form class duties from teachers who are a period over code
- Use of part-time teachers
- Combine classes with a neighbouring school
- Balancing teacher loads over the year – over for term 1 & 2, under for term 3 & 4

5.2 – The skills of the timetabler can't be underestimated.

5.3 – There is usually a lot of goodwill shown by teachers, many of whom will overlook the Collective Agreement limits and accept higher teaching loads. They do this because they want the best for their students, are passionate about their subject area and want to promote it. Teachers also extend goodwill by taking on new challenges to teach in areas that they are not a specialist in or have trained in.

5.4 – On the other hand however there are some teachers who only look at the school's timetable from their perspective rather than trying to grasp the big picture. These people are often involved in difficult conversations with the Timetablers, HODs, deans, senior staff and the principal as they attempt to gain their wishes.

5.5 – It is interesting to note that many experienced secondary principals pay little or no attention to the GMFS.

5.6 – Principals are in agreement that the staffing formula doesn't work well for them – especially in very large schools.

5.7 – Employing beginning teachers when the roll is static can cause issues in following years as the 0.2 and the 0.1 allowance has to be absorbed.

Appendix. The following is a timetable policy (Papatoetoe High School) and it is interesting to compare it with the PPTA version.

### Timetable Policy

#### Rationale

A school timetable is developed annually to reflect how the school offers the curriculum, the learning needs and academic pathways of students and available staffing resources. The secondary teachers' collective agreement (STCA) sets out particular requirements for non-contact hours and average class sizes that are to be incorporated into the timetabling process.

#### Purposes

- To ensure the needs of students is the first and key priority in the timetable development.
- To ensure fairness and transparency in the timetabling process.
- To comply with the conditions of the STCA.

#### Guidelines

1. The principal determines the allocation of staffing for the school annually using the GMFS (*guaranteed minimum formula staffing*) and any board of trustee staffing contribution as a basis.
2. The principal determines the number of classes that will operate at each level and in each subject using student enrolment data and subject choice information gathered from students.
3. HODs, in consultation with their staff, other HODs and the principal, allocate classes to staff.
4. A timetable team constructs a timetable in readiness for the start of the New Year that meets the needs of the school and is based on the allocations made by HODs and the principal.
5. The timetable team consults with HODs and the principal should changes have to be made with allocations originally given.
6. The non-contact requirements are provided as described in the STCA for full-time teachers, part-time teachers and those with permanent MUs.
7. The school will provide extra non-contact time for HODs/mentors responsible for beginning teachers as described in the STCA and will endeavour to provide one additional hour per MU for each permanent MU above the third (for those with more than three MUs)
8. In special circumstances and where a genuine reason exists, teachers may be asked to temporarily forego their minimum entitlement to non-contacts. These would be in times of emergency when no day reliever can be found and teachers holding more than the minimum non-contacts are unavailable. Situations where teachers volunteer to cover for their colleagues whilst on leave for "non-contract" reasons are not included.

9. Where teachers are requested to work hours in excess of those described in the contract, every attempt will be made to redress the situation at another point in the school year.
10. In allocating classes to teachers, the principal will use reasonable endeavour to achieve, for each teacher who has two or more classes, an average class size of 26 students.
11. To allow for a settling down period, to cater for new student enrolments and student option changes, the average class size for teachers will initially be based on 1st March numbers.
12. Where a teacher has an average class size that exceeds the 26 student threshold, then an agreed (between the teacher and principal) compensatory mechanism will be provided that may include provision of extra non-contact time or reduction of other duties.

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

date approved:

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## Annex 5: Collated responses from secondary schools (by region):

Region	Asked students to supervise classes because of a vacancy they can't fill or find a reliever to cover (in this case exclude instances of them doing this for leadership or other reasons)	Left any classes unsupervised because of a vacancy they can't fill or find a reliever to cover	Cancelled classes or combined/increased class size because of a vacancy they can't fill or find a reliever to cover
Te Tai Tokerau	No schools reported they made use this practice	All schools said no classes have been unsupervised due to staff vacancies. At times staff have been away sick but have been covered by relief staff.	All schools confirmed that they have not cancelled classes due to staff vacancies in 2018 and 2019 to date.  Classes have been combined when staff have been away on sick leave
Auckland	No schools indicated that students have asked to supervise classes.	No schools indicated classes have been left unsupervised.	The majority of classes at risk were covered by relievers or other teaching arrangements, of those which were not there were: 6 instances of cancelled classes 4 instances of combined classes 4 instances of increased class sizes
Waikato	2 schools indicated they have made use of this practice in the past on an occasional basis but not for 2019.	3 schools indicated they have left classes unsupervised - year 13 classes only where a reliever was not available.	3 schools indicated they have increased or combined classes in subjects where they have had difficulty in finding teachers.
Bay of Plenty/Wairariki	1 school reported: Students are sometimes asked to supervise but this is minimal. E.g. student having to supervise for 5-10 minutes max.	No schools indicated classes have been left unsupervised.	7 schools reported they have increased or combined classes due to difficulty in recruiting staff in some subjects.
Hawkes Bay/Tairarwhiti	No schools indicated that students have been asked to supervise classes.	No schools indicated classes have been left unsupervised.	2 schools indicated they have combined classes due to lack of suitable teacher. The instance in one school was minor, ie for only 1 teaching period.
Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatu	No schools indicated that students have been asked to supervise classes	1 school indicated classes have been left unsupervised when a reliever was unavailable (yr 13 classes only).	6 schools indicated they have combined classes due to lack of suitable teacher.

Wellington	2 schools indicated that students have been asked to supervise classes. One school reported this happening in the past but not in 2019. We are following up with the other school.	7 schools indicated classes have been left unsupervised when a reliever was unavailable (yr 13 classes only).	10 schools indicated they have cancelled classes which would have been offered if staffing was available, or increased class sizes due to challenges recruiting teachers in hard to staff subjects.
Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast	No schools indicated that students have asked to supervise classes.	No schools indicated classes have been left unsupervised.	1 school indicated is had combined a class for 2019 due to lack of suitable teacher.
Canterbury	No schools indicated that students have asked to supervise classes.	No schools indicated classes have been left unsupervised.	2 schools indicated they have combined classes due to lack of suitable teachers.
Otago, Southland	No schools indicated that students have asked to supervise classes.	No schools indicated that students have asked to supervise classes.	No schools indicated that students have asked to supervise classes.