

Question on Notice
No. 691
Asked on 23 June 2022

MRS L GERBER ASKED MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND MINISTER FOR RACING (HON G GRACE)

QUESTION:

Will the Minister explain what is (a) the purpose of forced transfers for teachers, (b) the trigger for requiring forced transfers in a school and (c) the criteria for teachers to be placed in the pool for consideration for a forced transfer?

ANSWER:

The Department of Education's Teacher Mobility Program enables the movement of the teaching workforce. This provides opportunities for all school communities across the State to have access to experienced teachers, and supports the breadth of the capability and skills of our teachers.

As per section 7.5 of the *Department of Education State School Teachers' Certified Agreement 2019*, strong statewide service, including service in a range of locations, underpins the transfers and relocations system. It is a condition of permanent employment that an employee could be required to work at any school location within the State.

The department encourages teachers to consider working in a range of locations through voluntary transfers, relieving placements, internal staff appointments, or other staffing arrangements. Teachers are encouraged to explore these development opportunities during career discussions with their school leader and voluntarily pursue suitable teaching opportunities through applying for a transfer or new position, or negotiating a relieving placement.

Teachers who have not sought other teaching opportunities voluntarily may be considered for a required transfer. Required transfers are facilitated at the discretion of the principal and regional HR team, in consultation with the teacher.

School leaders work with their regional Human Resources (HR) team to recommend teachers for a required transfer to:

- offer teaching opportunities to teachers whose teaching practice would benefit from diverse experiences;
- provide professional development opportunities to teachers who would benefit from expanding their capabilities or areas of expertise;
- support school renewal, continuous improvement and innovation;
- generate vacancies for teachers seeking to transfer following rural and remote service;
- respond to a decrease in student enrolments that will impact school staffing allocations; and
- ensure that staffing needs across the entire State are met.

A required transfer can occur at any time of the year although movements of teachers are typically tied to a school year to minimise disruptions to schools. However, there is flexibility for an alternative commencement date that can be negotiated between the relevant parties in exceptional circumstances, to meet the needs of a particular school or staff member.

When identifying teachers for a required transfer, school leaders and HR teams take the following factors into consideration:

- breadth of teaching experience, including prior service in rural and remote locations or other high priority locations;
- length of service in current location;
- professional development activities undertaken in the last five years that either support the teacher in their current position or their longer-term career plans;
- the need to create vacancies for teachers seeking to transfer following rural and remote service;
- temporary organisational circumstances that preclude the teacher from moving from their current location; and
- personal circumstances that preclude a teacher from moving either from their current location or residence.

Teachers are expected to comply with a departmentally required transfer unless they can establish that reasonable grounds exist for the transfer not to occur.