

**POLICY: SPECIAL LEAVE FOR TEACHERS**

**Rationale**

The various kinds of Special Leave which the Board of Trustees may grant to teaching staff are outlined in Section 5, Secondary Teachers' Agreement. Teachers will, from time to time, apply to the Board for leave in terms of this section. In fulfilment of its good employment obligations as detailed in the State Sector Act and the School Charter, this policy statement sets out the criteria and procedures the Board will use in considering applications for leave.

**Purposes**

1. To provide teachers with information as to the criteria for granting leave and the procedures for applying for leave.
2. To provide the Board with a policy structure to enable it to make decisions on applications for leave which are fair to all teachers.
3. To ensure that the school continues to be staffed with sufficient teaching staff to meet its Charter obligations.

**Guidelines**

The Board will use the following criteria when considering applications for leave:

- no one application for leave is to be regarded as a precedent for any other application
- the Board will be guided by the wording of the Award in considering specific applications for leave

1. Service: This criterion particularly applies to leave applications for periods of one term or more.

The Board will take into account the length of teaching service and the length of teaching time at Rotorua Lakes High School. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, applicants for leave for periods of one year or more should have taught for at least four years at Rotorua Lakes High School.

2. Length of time since leave was last granted: The Board will take into consideration the period of time since special leave was last granted.

3. Purpose of leave: The granting of leave will be considered in terms of its value:

- in meeting the school's Charter Goals/Annual Targets
- to students and other teachers
- to the wider school community
- to the teacher, both personal and professional

4. Effect on Staffing within the school: The number of teachers on leave, especially the numbers within a subject department, must not be such as to impair the teaching programmes of that department, nor have a detrimental effect on the work load of colleagues.
5. Welfare of students: The interest and welfare of the students will be taken into consideration when leave is being granted.
6. Length of Leave: Requests for leave of more than one year, or an extension beyond one year, will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.
7. Timing of Leave: A year's leave should coincide with the school year: Leave for periods shorter than a year should coincide with the school term and/or begin or end with a holiday period.  
When application is made for leave for periods of less than one year, consideration will be given to the time of year, taking into account the school programme and availability of suitably qualified relieving staff.
8. Return to School: It must be the clear intention, in writing, of the teacher to return to the school following the period of leave.

**Procedures**

1. All applications for leave are to be made in writing.
2. Applications should state the period of leave being sought, the date for commencement of the leave, the date for conclusion of the leave and the purpose of the leave.
3.
  - a) For periods of up to 5 days' leave without pay, the Principal shall exercise discretionary powers on behalf of the Board. Leave granted is to be reported to the Board each month.
  - b) Leave sought with pay that is not in the contract, for more than two days, must be approved by the Board
4. Leave for periods of one year or greater - applications should be lodged with the Principal by June of the preceding year.
5. Applications for periods of leave up to one term or greater should be lodged with the Principal at least two months prior to the commencement of the leave period. Applications for shorter periods of leave should be presented with maximum notice.
6. The Board would welcome a written report on the teacher's return.

REVIEW: This policy will be reviewed according to the Board of Trustees' triennial Programme of self review (FEB 2022)

DATE CONFIRMED: 26 FEBRUARY 2019