

2025 Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical

Applications close Wednesday 8 May 2024.

Application
Guide

About the Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical

Background

The Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical was negotiated as one of the professional learning provisions for teachers as part of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement (STCA).

What is this award?

The purpose of a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical is to provide a sustained period of time in a teacher's career to engage in a balance of professional activities, reflection and rejuvenation.

The school receives relief funding, in accordance with the STCA, while the teacher is on a sabbatical.

What does the sabbatical provide?

The Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical provides ten school weeks paid leave at the teacher's normal salary in any term of the year following a successful application. 'Normal salary' includes all permanent salary units and allowances.

Where fixed-term salary units and allowances are held, the teacher should clarify with their principal whether these will continue to be paid.

The leave counts as service for most purposes.

Any salary increases or increments due during the sabbatical still apply, according to the provisions of the STCA.

The sabbatical does not include any additional expenses associated with the leave.

The purpose of the Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical is to:

Directly:

- improve overall retention rates of experienced, effective secondary teachers
- improve knowledge, skills and practice through engagement in professional learning
- enhance teachers' enthusiasm for teaching.

Indirectly:

- enhance the learning experience of secondary students
- enhance the professional learning cultures in secondary schools.

How many sabbaticals are available each year?

There are 50 Secondary Teachers' Sabbaticals available each year.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for the 40 Secondary Teachers' Sabbaticals based on service, you must:

- be employed under the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement or applicable Individual Employment Agreement (IEA)
- be a full-time certificated teacher, with a total of at least 20 years' teaching service in New Zealand state or state-integrated schools
- have a period of at least seven years of most recent unbroken service

- not be currently under review for competence and/or conduct and discipline (as per clauses 3.3 and 3.4 of the STCA)
- have not received a sabbatical in the last 10 years.

To be eligible to apply for the remaining ten Secondary Teachers' Sabbaticals, you must:

- be employed under the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement or applicable Individual Employment Agreement (IEA)
- be a full-time teacher with at least five years teaching service in New Zealand state or state-integrated schools
- not be currently under review for competence and/or conduct and discipline (as per clauses 3.3 and 3.4 of the STCA)
- have not received a sabbatical in the last ten years.

If you are a senior manager, you can apply for both a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical and a Secondary Senior Managers' Sabbatical, if you meet the eligibility criteria but you can only accept one sabbatical. Please note that to be eligible for a Secondary Senior Managers' Sabbatical, you must not have been granted a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical within the last five years.

How is my application assessed?

First, we will check that your application meets all the eligibility criteria. A selection panel, made up of representatives from the Ministry of Education, the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) and the Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA), will assess your application. The first 40 successful applications will be assessed on the following:

- Your proposal shows that the professional learning you're planning to complete during the sabbatical is in one or more of the approved fields (see 'Approved professional learning activities' below).
- Your application is clear and complete.
- Previous Ministry funded leave.
- The selection panel will then consider:
 - firstly, the length of most recent unbroken service
 - secondly, if necessary, the total teaching service
 - thirdly, if the first two steps do not clearly indicate a number of teachers equivalent to the number of sabbaticals available, teachers with equal ranking after the first two steps will enter a ballot to allocate the remaining sabbaticals.

If your application is unsuccessful against the above criteria, ten more sabbaticals will be allocated based on the following selection factors:

- The quality of the proposal for professional learning.
- The focus of the learning in one or more of the approved fields.
- The contribution it makes to the profession.
- The intentions to share and report on the sabbatical.

Note: The service criteria of having a total of at least 20 years' teaching service in New Zealand state or state-integrated schools does NOT apply to the additional ten sabbaticals.

The selection panel's role is to ensure that the selection process is open, fair, consistent and impartial, and that it provides for equal opportunity and non-discrimination.

Approved professional learning activities

The professional learning activity you're planning to complete during your sabbatical should be in one or more of the following approved fields:

1. Literature reviews in relevant pedagogical curriculum knowledge.

2. Assessment and its impact on student outcomes.
3. Personal study of adult learning and teacher efficacy.
4. Investigation of other teaching and learning systems.
5. Investigation into the relationship between pedagogical style and student learning.
6. Personal research of subject content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge or educational theory.
7. Investigation of the learning needs of diverse students.
8. Investigation of the learning needs of Māori and Pasifika students.
9. Investigation into student development or student behaviour.
10. Action research into specific aspects of student learning.
11. Curriculum design.

Approval of sabbatical

Teachers who are granted a sabbatical will be given leave by their principal and school board/employer. On the application form you are asked to provide evidence that your principal and the school board/employer supports your application.

The timing of the sabbatical is to be agreed by the teacher and the principal, taking into account the needs of the school and the teacher.

If you have not yet received support from your principal and the school board/employer, your application will still be considered. If you cannot, provide this information by two weeks after the closing date, explain why you have not included written confirmation from your principal and the school board/employer with your application.

Expectations if awarded a sabbatical

If you are selected for a sabbatical, you must:

- Notify TeachNZ of any changes to information included on the application form (e.g. Your employment status, your contact details, your proposal, or if you take up a new position).
- Undertake the professional learning activities as stated in your proposal.
- Produce a report from your professional learning, which can be placed online as a resource for other teachers, within three months of completing your sabbatical.

If you are successful and then decline the offer, you can re-apply with no prejudice in a subsequent year.

A sabbatical cannot be postponed to the next year. However, under exceptional personal circumstances, or where the principal can demonstrate the school is unable to obtain a reliever for the teacher during the year for which the sabbatical is awarded, the principal and school board/employer may postpone the sabbatical to the first or second term of the following year, subject to notification and agreement form to TeachNZ.

Timetable

WEDNESDAY 8 MAY 2024

Application closing date

WEDNESDAY 15 MAY 2024

Closing date for submitting additional information

JULY 2024

Selection process

WEDNESDAY 17 JULY 2024

Teachers are notified of results

2025 Secondary School Teachers' Sabbatical

Frequently asked questions

Frequently asked questions

General

When will I find out the outcome of my application?

You will be notified by Wednesday 17 July 2024.

Are all the sabbaticals allocated each year?

Yes, there are only 50 sabbaticals available each year and the selection process is always competitive. Please note that a key factor in the ranking of teachers is the length of unbroken service.

How long is the sabbatical?

A sabbatical is for 10 school weeks only. If you choose to take your sabbatical in a term that is nine weeks in duration, you can choose to take the tenth week of sabbatical leave either in the last week of the term before or the first week of the term after, in agreement with your school.

What does a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical provide?

A Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical provides you with paid leave from school for 10 school weeks. TeachNZ (Ministry of Education) covers the relief costs to replace you while you are on leave, including any holiday pay due to a relief teacher. Please note that there is no contribution to any additional expenses.

How is my application assessed?

For the first 40 successful applications, there are two parts to this assessment:

Part one: Does the application meet the following requirements?

- Is the professional learning activity proposed within one or more of the approved fields? (See page 2 for a list of approved professional learning activities).
- Is the application clear and complete? (i.e. clarity of purpose and benefits to self, students and school, and how this will be achieved within the timeframe).
- Has the applicant had any previous Ministry-funded leave?

Part two: (and note that most applicants meet the requirements of Part one):

- Applicants are ranked according to the length of most recent unbroken service.

- Then, if necessary, they are ranked by the total teaching service.
- If the first two steps do not clearly indicate a number of applicants equivalent to the number of sabbaticals available, applicants with equal ranking after the first two steps will enter a ballot to allocate the remaining sabbaticals.

Note that your years of most recent unbroken service and total teaching service are key factors in ranking applications. Periods of relief and part-time teaching count as service.

If your application is unsuccessful against the above criteria, ten more sabbaticals will be allocated based on the following selection factors:

- The quality of the proposal for professional learning
- The focus of the learning in one or more of the approved fields
- The contribution it makes to the profession.

How many years unbroken service do I need to be successful?

One of the key factors in ranking applications for the first 40 sabbaticals is your years of most recent unbroken service. The minimum number of years needed to be successful varies from year to year depending on the applications received.

When can I take my sabbatical?

You can choose which term to take your sabbatical in as long your school is in agreement. Please make sure you notify TeachNZ of the dates you plan to take your sabbatical.

What do I need to do to confirm the term for my sabbatical? Can I change the term of my Sabbatical? Please indicate on the application form the term that you are planning on taking the sabbatical. If you are successful you will be asked to confirm the dates. If you wish to change these dates, please note that your school must agree to the dates. Please notify TeachNZ if these dates change.

What will happen if I have applied for the wrong award?

Your application will only be assessed for the award you have applied for. It's important you check the application information to ensure that you are applying for the correct award.

Can I apply for more than one award?

Yes, but you can only accept one award. If you're successful in more than one application, you'll be asked to choose which award you would like to accept. Please note that to be eligible for a Secondary Senior Managers' Sabbatical you must not have been granted a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical in the last five years.

Can I submit more than one application for the same award?

No, you can only submit one application for each award you apply for.

Do I need to return to the same school after completing my sabbatical?

There is an expectation that you will return either to your previous role or a similar one.

What if I'm offered a position at a different school?

If you're offered a position at a different school you will need approval from the new schools board/ employer and principal. You would need to provide TeachNZ with written confirmation of support from that principal and school board/employer, so we can advise the correct school on how to charge teacher relief costs to TeachNZ (Ministry of Education).

Can I postpone my sabbatical until the next year?

You may request to postpone your sabbatical under exceptional circumstances to either Term 1 or 2 of the following year. You must have your principals and school board/employer's support to do this and provide written confirmation of this to TeachNZ with a short explanation of the reason for this change.

Can I withdraw from a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical?

If you choose to withdraw from the sabbatical, you can apply again in the future with no prejudice. You will need to let us know in writing that you would like to withdraw. We can accept this by email to teacher.studyawards@education.govt.nz.

Can I work while on a sabbatical?

No, the purpose of the Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical is to provide a sustained period of time in a teacher's career to engage in a balance of professional learning activities, reflection and rejuvenation. You cannot work at your school, or another school while on sabbatical.

Eligibility

If I'm a secondary trained teacher working in an area or primary school, can I apply for a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical?

The sabbatical which you are eligible to apply for depends on which collective agreement you are employed under.

You can apply for a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical if you are covered by the terms and conditions of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement and meet all eligibility criteria.

If you are covered by the terms and conditions of the Primary or Area School Teachers' Collective Agreements, you may be eligible to apply for a Primary or Area School Teachers' Sabbatical. Please visit www.TeachNZ.govt.nz/studyawards to find out more.

I am a Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTL) who works in secondary schools, but my lead school is a primary or area school. Which sabbatical can I apply for?

The sabbatical you are eligible to apply for depends on which collective agreement you are employed under.

You can apply for a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical if you are covered by the terms and conditions of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement.

Although you are working in secondary schools, if your lead school is a primary or area school you may be employed under the terms and conditions of the Primary Teachers' Collective Agreement or the Area Teachers' Collective Agreement.

If you are covered by the terms and conditions of the Primary or Area Teachers' Collective Agreements, you may be eligible to apply for a Primary or Area School Teachers' Sabbatical. Please visit www.TeachNZ.govt.nz/studyawards to find out more.

I am a part-time teacher. Can I apply for a Secondary School Teachers' Sabbatical?

No, you must be a full-time teacher to be eligible to apply.

I am on a fixed-term contract or long term reliever. Can I apply for a Secondary Teachers' Sabbatical?

Yes, if you are employed as a full-time teacher, but you will need to be employed by a school during the sabbatical, as TeachNZ (Ministry of Education) provides relief funding to your school while you are on sabbatical.

My certification is currently Tiwhikete Whakaakoranga Pūmau | Full Practising Certificate (Category Two). Can I apply?

Yes, but only if you will receive Tiwhikete Whakaakoranga Tūturu | Full Practising Certificate (Category One) by December 2024.

Please notify TeachNZ if your certification status changes during the application or selection process.

Can I apply if I have previously had a study award or sabbatical?

Yes but one of the key factors considered when assessing applications is the length of most recent unbroken service. You need to provide details of any leave of more than one term's duration. Please see the application form for more details.

Can I apply if I'm not a member of a teachers' union?

Yes, the awards are open to all teachers in New Zealand state or state-integrated secondary schools who meet the eligibility criteria.

If I am appointed to the Community of Schools Teacher (within school) role, am I able to take teachers sabbatical leave?

Yes, apply as usual.

I am appointed to the Community of Schools Teacher (across community) role, am I able to take teachers sabbatical leave?

Yes, a teacher in receipt of the allowance for the Community of Schools Teacher (across community) role may apply for sabbatical leave to be taken while

they hold that role provided that any application has the support of their employing board which shall consider the needs of the wider Community of Schools.

Which sabbatical should I apply for if I am a teaching principal?

Which sabbatical you are eligible to apply for depends on which collective agreement you are employed under.

As a teaching principal, you will be covered by an employment agreement as a secondary principal. You can apply for Secondary Principals' Sabbatical if you meet the eligibility criteria.

Completing your application form

What is considered a break in service?

A break in service is any break or leave you have had from teaching 10 weeks or longer. Please see the application form for information on what counts as service and what breaks service.

Does parental leave break my service?

Parental leave of up to four years does not count as a break in service, any parental leave exceeding 4 years will be considered as a break in service.

How do I work out my years of continuous service?

Count back from the end of 2023 until there is a point that breaks service. See the application form for information on what is considered a break in service.

Approved professional learning activities

Can I change my sabbatical project after submitting an application?

Yes, but not substantially. Please notify TeachNZ of proposed changes in writing, and provide details of this and an explanation of the reason for this change as this will need to be approved.

Sabbatical proposal requirements

How should I present my proposal?

Please see section 6 of the application form and complete your sabbatical proposal in the requested format. This makes it easier for the selection panel to assess applications consistently.

Can I submit more than one sabbatical proposal with my application?

You can only submit one sabbatical proposal with your application.

Can I put in a joint sabbatical application with another teacher?

You can put in a joint application for a sabbatical, but each application will be assessed separately by the selection panel. As the key selection criterion is your length of continuous service, it is likely that your applications will be ranked differently.

Principal and school board/employer support

What can I provide as evidence that my principal supports my application?

We can accept one of the following as support:

- A signed letter of support from your school principal.
- An email sent directly from your school principal to TeachNZ.

Principal support, in one of the formats outlined above, must be submitted by **two weeks after the closing date**.

Please note that support from the principal is a selection factor.

Who can support my application if my principal is away?

The acting principal is the only person who can support your application on behalf of your principal. Please make sure it is clear that the signature is from the person acting in the role of the principal.

Who can support my application if I am acting principal?

The principal should support your application. If your principal is unable to provide support in one of the approved formats please provide an explanation in the box provided.

What can I provide as evidence that my school board supports my application?

We can accept one of the following as support:

- A copy of relevant school board motion confirming support for your application. Please do not provide the full Board minutes, just the signed Board motion.
- A signed letter of support from the boards presiding member
- An email sent directly from the boards presiding member to TeachNZ

School board support, in one of the formats outlined above, must be submitted by **two weeks after the closing date**.

Please note that support from the school board is a selection factor.

Who has the authority to support my application on behalf of the boards presiding member?

The deputy presiding member or another trustee who has delegated authority in the absence of the boards presiding member or their deputy.

Who can support my application if the school board has been disestablished?

Please ask the commissioner acting in place of the school board to confirm support for your application.

Please ensure it's clear the signature is that of the commissioner.

Who can support my application if my school has a limited statutory manager employed?

If the limited statutory manager is acting in place of the school board for employment matters, ask the limited statutory manager to confirm support for your application, otherwise the boards presiding member should sign. Please ensure it's clear that the signature is that of the limited statutory manager.

What if I can't provide confirmation of principal and school board/employer support when I submit my application?

If you have not yet received support from the principal and school board/employer you may still apply, but please send this in by **Tuesday 4 July 2023**. Please provide an explanation in the box provided on the application form as to why the support of the principal and/or school board/employer is not included with your application.

I am a Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTL) and work in a number of schools. Which principal and school board/employer should I ask to support my application?

RTLs are employed by the cluster lead school's school board/employer. The schools where RTLs are located, but not employed, are called host (or satellite) schools.

Please ask the principal and school board/employer from your lead school to support your application.

Sending my application

Can I email you my application?

No, we can only accept applications submitted online.

Can I apply online?

Yes, just complete and submit your application form online at www.teachnz.govt.nz/studyawards before the closing date.

What happens if my application is late?

Late applications will not be considered.

How will I know you have received my application? You will receive an email to confirm that your application has arrived. Please contact us if you have not heard from us by the closing date.

What happens if my application is incomplete?

It's important to ensure you've submitted all the required information. If your application is incomplete, or is not in the correct format, the selection panel may not be able to assess it fully.

Can I send in additional information after submitting my application?

You may submit additional information for your application up to two weeks after the closing date, otherwise this cannot be considered with your application.