

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT STAFF SERVICES IN SCHOOLS PROPOSED OPERATIONAL MODEL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS TO SUPPORT THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

General

What is different in this model to the current one being used?

The biggest difference is that there is a policy, procedure and operational plan that clarifies the expectations, roles and responsibilities of all involved.

The model is based in networks using the Fairer Funding Model (FFM) formula to distribute available resources.

What is the Fairer Funding Model (FFM)?

Fairer Funding is a simpler model focused on students and their needs.

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Better-Schools-Tasmania-Funding-Model.pdf>

How will School Principals be informed of this information and model and when?

Learning Service General Managers and Principal Network Leaders have held consultation meetings with Principals around the network model on 4 December (South) and 7 December (North) as part of their planning for the 2016 school year.

When will Senior Professional Support Staff meet with Operations Managers and Principal Network Leaders to discuss this process?

General Managers, PNLs and OMs have held consultation meetings with Senior Professional Support Staff on 8 December to further discuss the model.

Is a Whole School Support Plan part of the School Improvement Plan?

Yes.

Will this model be reviewed?

The structure of this model will be scheduled to be reviewed towards the end of 2016.

The allocations based on the Fairer Funding Model (FFM) will be reviewed but resources are not expected to vary greatly from year to year i.e. ENI generally remains quite constant.

Allocation

Does this mean our permanent quota of Professional Support Staff has increased/decreased?

The quota of Professional Support Staff statewide has not changed – the allocations to the six networks may change as the Fairer Funding Model (FFM) formula is applied annually.

How is the Senior Professional Support Staff role allocation determined?

The Seniors role/task is outlined in the Operational Plan which explains the work and responsibilities they will undertake. The Senior allocation will be determined by the need within networks and negotiated by the Principals and Operation Managers.

What is the allocative process across networks for each discipline allocation?

The allocations for each discipline (school psychologists, speech and language pathologists and social workers) to each network has been made based on the FFM. Allocation to each school within each network is then negotiated based on school needs. This negotiation will occur through discussion with their Principal Network Leader, Operations Manager and Senior Professional Support Staff.

Which schools are not part of this model?

All schools (excluding colleges) are part of this model, however some programmes and services do not have their support allocated through the FFM model:

- Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) will receive support through their School Resource Package (SRP) allocation.
- Alternative Education programmes such as RADAR do not receive an allocation under this model, but students will access funding through the school in which they are enrolled.

How do senior secondary schools (colleges) receive professional support services?

Each senior secondary school (college) receives a 1.0 FTE allocation which they utilise to best meet the support needs as they determine – this continues in 2016.

What about schools that are moving to extending Years 11 and 12 in 2016?

They are part of this model. The FFM has been applied to the enrolments which includes the Years 11/12 numbers for extension schools.

Can allocations be moved from one network to another that has lost allocation?

The allocations to each network will not be altered for 2016. Any allocation issues will be managed through Learning Services.

Can Professional Senior Support Staff decide to quarantine some staffing across the whole Learning Service to support whole of service responsibilities e.g. portfolios such as staffing?

Seniors cannot quarantine staffing from networks for other tasks. Administrative or management tasks that Seniors are asked to undertake by the Operations Manager will be outlined within their Senior allocation.

How will Professional Senior Support Staff be allocated across networks?

The allocations will be made using the Fairer Funding Model formula and Seniors from each discipline will work in the network they are assigned, this will be negotiated by the Operations Manager, Principal Network Leaders and Principals.

How much flexibility is there in relation to phasing workers to a network model?

A consistent approach is important however phasing in is possible if agreed.

How do the allocation models account for disabilities/additional needs that are not related to socioeconomic status (e.g. mental health disorders, learning disabilities)?

The Fairer Funding Model (FFM) does account for the range of community and individual needs including disability, mental health and wellbeing, however the strength of the model is the correlation with incidents of disability.

We have an increased support staff allocation in our network, how do we apply for this?

Any staffing processes to fill increased allocations will be undertaken ASAP in-line with HR requirements e.g. eVEMs, expression of interest or fixed term contracts. All permanent staff will be utilised to fill any vacancies in the first instance.

Why has there not been more provision for speech and language services?

The model has been developed within the currently available resources.

What support/PL will be available for the Support Teachers in schools?

There will be a four day PL programme for support teachers facilitated by the PLI in 2016. There are also online modules (7 topics are available) through the *Disability Standards for Education* <http://dse.theeducationinstitute.edu.au/> (the registration key is **tas-det**).

Further PL and resources are available within the Inclusive Teaching Frontier room <http://casas.tas.edu.au/vle/main.phtml>

If a Professional Support Staff member is on leave, are they replaced?

Leave issues for Professional Support Staff are managed by the Learning Service.

Service Delivery

In the Operational Plan what role does the Principal need to play when understanding another schools needs and context?

Each Principal in the network will build knowledge of the needs of other schools by participating in discussions with their Principal colleagues and negotiating allocation based on needs. The PNL and Operations Manager also has an overview of the needs and context of all schools in their network to build understanding across all schools.

How will the role of the Support Teacher change under this new model?

The role of the Support Teacher will continue to be the same under this model, with Principals ensuring an appropriate staff member is nominated for this position. The Task Statement for Support Teachers is available from: <https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Support%20Teacher%20Task%20Statement.pdf>

Can staff work across networks?

Staff will be assigned to a network and may work across more than one school in the network. There may be occasions when the General Manager requires staff to work on specific tasks beyond their usual network e.g. a critical incident.

Where do the statewide support resources fit in this model i.e. hearing and vision impairment?

Statewide Support Services e.g. Deaf and Vision Services are low incident disabilities that cannot be distributed evenly within networks. These services will continue to be allocated centrally aligned and to the needs of individual students.

What about other Support Staff such as Autism Spectrum Consultants, Physical Impairment Coordinators, are they part of this model?

These staff are not allocated via the Fairer Funding Model (FFM) formula as the numbers are insufficient to ensure coverage across each network. The referral processes to access support from these staff remain the same as in 2015.

Where will staff be based?

Staff bases will be collocated where possible to support multi-disciplinary team approaches. Bases will be negotiated at the network meetings by Senior Professional Support Staff, PNLs, Operations Managers and Principals.

Line Management and Meetings

How will Performance Development Plans (PDPs) be administered under the new model?

PDPs will be undertaken by Senior Professional Support Staff with their teams as currently occurs. PDPs for Senior Professional Support Staff will continue to be undertaken by Operations Managers. Conversations with Principals of the schools in which professional staff work will be undertaken to ensure relevant input.

How often will there be statewide meetings?

Statewide meetings will occur with Senior Professional Support Staff, the Director Disability Programmes and Operations Managers each term.

What is the commitment for professional conferences annually?

Professional learning including conferences will continue to be facilitated by the PLI. Professional learning outside of this will be determined by the staff member's PDP goals and through negotiation with their line manager.

What is meant by Principals providing daily management of support staff?

It is the role of the Principal or the delegate to manage the work of support staff as related to the programmes undertaken in that school. The Principal also has the duty of care of all staff that are in attendance at their school each day. However, it is the role of the Senior Professional Support Staff to manage leave/HR processes for their staff.