

## Incentive restored for rural and remote schools

June 06, 2018

The ability for our hardest-to-staff schools to convert long-term temporary appointments into permanent positions above establishment has been restored.

The provision was introduced in 2014 under the Rural and Remote Education Strategy and after several meetings with the Department calling for improvements to attract temporary teachers to the most isolated parts of the state.

The incentive allowed schools to permanently appoint teachers after two years continuous temporary service, should a vacancy be available. Eight-point incentive transfer schools were differentiated from six-point schools, recognising their hardest-to-staff status, by allowing them to convert temporary teachers to above-establishment permanent status, without the requirement for a vacancy.

In a significant win, Federation negotiated the extension of this program, and reduction in service time required, to all four-, six- and eight-point incentive transfer schools under the Rural and Remote Education Strategy.

However, without notice or consultation with Federation, the Department unilaterally removed the provision to convert temporary teachers to above-establishment permanent status in eight-point schools. Consequently, this change removed the differentiation of eight-point schools from all other schools and diminished a significant incentive to attract and retain teachers to the hardest-to-staff schools.

Federation demanded the Department restore this provision explaining that the removal of this incentive diminished the capacity of these schools to attract and retain temporary teachers, and compromised the provision of quality public education for students in our most disadvantaged communities.

Federation has since received confirmation that the above-establishment mechanism will be reinstated to all eight-point incentive transfer schools.

Federation congratulates members in affected schools for putting on record their preparedness to take necessary action, should this matter have remained unresolved. This is a significant achievement for rural and remote public schools and for temporary teachers seeking permanent employment.

Federation will investigate the options available to provide legal and industrial protections for all rural and remote incentives, and provide advice to all members detailing the available incentives to attract and retain teachers in rural and remote public schools.

