



Secondary School Principals' Sabbatical Application Guide

About the Secondary School Principals' Sabbatical

The Secondary School Principals' Sabbatical provides either three, five, or ten weeks' paid leave to undertake professional development. Every year, the Ministry offers 40 sabbaticals to principals in state or state-integrated secondary schools.

A ten-week sabbatical may be taken, with the school board/employer's approval, in one or two blocks. The blocks must be whole weeks in duration, with the minimum block being three weeks. Three-week and five-week sabbaticals cannot be split except by a term break and must be taken as whole weeks.

Note that this may result in sabbaticals being awarded to more than 40 secondary principals during one school year.

Purpose of the award

The purpose of the sabbatical is to provide a sustained period of time in a principal's career to engage in a balance of professional learning activities, reflection and rejuvenation.

The sabbatical aims to:

- aid retention and possibly recruitment of principals.
- encourage and enable professional growth, by providing time for reflection and dedicated professional development.
- promote collaboration within the profession.

Eligibility

If you want to apply for a Secondary Principals' Sabbatical, you must:

- be employed under the Secondary Principals' Collective Agreement (SPCA) or applicable individual employment agreement (IEA)
- have at least 5 years' service as a secondary or area principal in a state or state-integrated school at the time of taking the sabbatical

- have the support of your school board or your employer, including any agreed costs
- intend to continue in a role in the education workforce

How to apply

Applications are made through the application form on our website. [Secondary Principals' Sabbatical | Education Workforce](#)

First, provide your personal details including your name, date of birth, and contact information.

Provide your current employment information as detailed below.

- Your teacher registration number. This can be found on the teaching council website. (<https://teachingcouncil.nz/find-a-registered-teacher/>)
- Your Ministry of Education employee number. This can be found on your payslip.

You will then be asked for information about your school, your employment history, and the period of leave sought on your sabbatical.

Late applications

We will give consideration to late applications where:

- you have experienced technical issues that could not be resolved before the closing date
- you have experienced an exceptional personal or family-related issue that resulted in missing the application period.

Sabbatical proposal

The core of the application is a written statement. We recommend writing your statement in a word document or other application and then copying it into the form to avoid data loss.

The statement is separated into six sections:

Purpose of the sabbatical (250 word limit)

State the purpose of your sabbatical and describe the professional learning (from the list below) you intend to undertake. Clearly state the work planned for this period, which should occupy at least 50% of your time over the period of leave sought.

Professional learning activities for this sabbatical:

- Relevant study or research
- Visiting schools
- Visiting other institutions
- Attending a course
- Attending a conference

Programme Outline (250 word limit)

Provide a programme outline for the period of the sabbatical. Where travel and visits are intended, please provide details of the location, personnel (where possible) and the purpose of the programme. You must ensure you give enough information for the selection panel to judge your proposal and ensure it is realistic and achievable within the period of leave.

Benefits of the sabbatical (250-word limit)

Outline the benefits of your sabbatical activities to yourself, your school, other teachers and the wider education sector, and how you intend to apply them.

The proposal should demonstrate links to:

- issues important to the school,
- the school's strategic or annual plan,
- your personal professional development,
- current secondary school sector priorities.

Costing Schedule for the Sabbatical (250-word limit)

If your school board covers some or all costs associated with your sabbatical, please provide a detailed costing schedule for your proposal.

Please note that reimbursement of any expenses you incur during the sabbatical must be agreed upon between yourself and the school board/employer and recorded in the school board motion. *You can apply for a reimbursement of sabbatical costs, to maximum of NZD\$5,000.* The cost must be based on actual and reasonable expenses. This is to ensure compliance with school reporting requirements and tax legislation.

Make sure to notify the school board/employer that when they are giving support for your application that they are also approving their contribution to the costs associated with your proposal.

Professional Isolation (250 word limit)

Identify how the sabbatical will help address any disadvantages you have experienced because of distance or professional isolation, the socio-economic status of the school or community, or specific requirements of the school.

Intent to share (250 word limit)

Describe how you intend to share your findings and who you intend to share them with, including your Board, colleagues in the wider education sector and the Ministry of Education.

You will also be asked about any previous study awards, sabbaticals, or supported leave you have taken in the past.

Support

Indicate the method by which you will supply your School Board support documents.

- A copy of relevant school board motion confirming support for your application
- A signed letter of support from the school board presiding member or employer
- An attached email from your school board presiding member or employer

You **must** upload your documents in this section of the form, or you will not be able to submit your application.

If you cannot supply evidence of your support with your application before the closing date, you must email teacher.studyawards@education.govt.nz to have your application considered as a

late application.

Applicant declaration

Finally, tick the boxes to declare that all your information is true and accurate. A privacy statement is provided at the bottom of the form.

How is my application assessed?

A selection panel will assess your application on the following:

- The professional learning you're planning to complete during the sabbatical is in one or more of the approved fields.
- The purpose of the sabbatical within the allocated timeframe is clearly described.
- The benefits of the sabbatical, and how these will be applied, for yourself, your students, and your area school are explained.

The selection panel will award the ten-week sabbaticals first. The five and three-week sabbaticals will then receive equal consideration. The selection panel may not award more than a total of 400 school weeks for sabbaticals in any school year.

For the five and three-week sabbaticals consideration will also be given to the reason a principal is applying for a shorter sabbatical, and this includes the circumstances of their school and the professional learning activities relating to priority learner groups.

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.

Expectations if awarded a sabbatical

If awarded a sabbatical, you must:

- notify the Ministry of Education if you are accepting or declining the sabbatical
- notify the Ministry of Education of any changes to information included on the application form, (for example your employment status, contact details, your proposal, or if you take up a new position)
- undertake the professional learning activities as stated in your proposal.

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

A sabbatical cannot be postponed to the following year, however, under exceptional circumstances the principal and school board/employer may agree to postpone the leave to the first or second term of the following year, subject to notifying the Ministry of Education.