

Banking Staffing Update May 2012 (Amended)

Maximising Staffing For Next Year – Primary, Contributing, Intermediate and Area Schools.

If your staffing improved following the 1 March Confirmation process, or if you are already applying for roll growth staffing or will be applying for roll growth staffing before 10 October this year then this article is essential reading for you! (But all schools should take a moment to check their current predicting processes against the suggestions below. . .)

Area, Primary and Contributing Schools are staffed for predicted Year one rolls at 10 October each year, but a botched response to Question 9 in the 1 July return will seriously affect your staffing **for next year.**

To avoid any chance of error ...

1. **The golden rule:** Use M3 and J3 to predict next year's roll numbers, not your in-house year levels.
2. Roll over **all** pupils from the J3 Headcount table at each year level. Don't deduct any you think might leave. Be an optimistic predictor!
3. Copy the M3 1 March Yr 1 roll into the Question 9.1 box for next year's year 1 roll and, **most importantly for your New Entrant Adjustment**, put the same year 1 roll from M3 in the box asking for your predicted 1 March to 10 October roll as well. (Box 9.3 on the Primary return)
4. If a contributing school, **put a year 7 prediction** in the year 7 box. (But don't then change the year 6 prediction as some think they should!) Typically, about a quarter to a third of a cohort will provide for those April May June children who you classify as year one in their second calendar year of school. They are your year sevens further down the track.
5. If a full primary school, **roll over all of your year 6 and year 7 pupils.** Be an optimist! Far better to get the staffing in September than pray for a miracle in the March recalculation next year.
6. Intermediate Schools. A suggestion. Why risk understating the year 7 and Year 8 predictions by spending lots of time working out last year's percentages coming from each of your contributing schools and applying those percentages to the numbers you think are coming next year at year 7? Much safer to **overstate your year 7 prediction by a healthy margin and let MOE staff you on the lesser of their prediction and your prediction.** Likewise with your year 8 prediction. Forget the maths, just **roll the year 7 actuals over and add a few if you expect some "outside" year 8s** to arrive next year. Again, MOE will do the calculations regarding the 1 March to 1 March Year 8 progression rates. The likely outcome of my suggestion is that you will no longer find you get "catch up" staffing in March next year - the provisional Staffing notice in September will be as good as you can hope for and you will have the information in September this year – very important given the new staffing environment.
7. For schools with new entrants there is a short guide at www.bankingstaffing.co.nz to ensure you put the right numbers in the right places. (Area Schools can adapt it easily for their purposes too)
8. Remember that this is a prediction process and you need to be an optimist to give yourself a chance to be staffed properly for next year.
9. Primary and Contributing schools need to realise that the March Recalculation, because it has no New Entrant Adjustment for staffing, will not rescue them from a bad prediction process this July. Other school types get a second bite at the cherry. For instance, if an Area School has more New Entrants on 1 March next year than they had on 1 March this year they will find in March next year that they have been staffed on the actual year ones plus a new entrant adjustment of 11/12ths is added on for staffing purposes! (Time for the rest of you to become area schools perhaps?)

10. New Principals – **No, you don't get staffing taken off you next year if your Provisional September Staffing seems too high.** And nobody will growl at you for your optimism. MOE has a process that staffs you on the lesser of your prediction and their prediction at each year level. The process I am advocating is about making sure you don't understate any year level and then suffer the consequences next year. In March next year, when the March actual roll is less than what you are given this September, you keep the staffing for the whole of next year – right up to pp 22. The reason your March staffing comes out at a lower figure is because there is no Year 1 Adjustment on the March recalculation if you are a Primary or Contributing school. And your funding does not take a big hit either, as **MOE does add a new entrant adjustment to your actual March figures for funding purposes.** On the other hand, primary and contributing schools who routinely find that their March recalculation gives them better staffing backdated to the beginning of the year need to take a long hard look at their July prediction processes, as should schools who have already reached their grading roll (the roll you are staffed on).
11. How should you interpret September Initial funding figures if September Provisional Staffing roll is looking too optimistic? Calculate your likely 1 March actual and add a yr 1 adjustment of 11/12ths. If the March plus the Y1 adjustment is less than the provisional, multiply the predicted difference in pupil numbers by about \$1000-\$1200 per pupil and subtract that figure from the net entitlement you are given initially in September. Base your budget decisions on that reduced amount.
12. Finally, contact me for any clarification/help with this process. A few minutes worth of emails back and forth might reap worthwhile benefits in avoiding staffing losses next year and in the future.

Gavin Price
NZPF Life Member
gavin.price@xtra.co.nz