

Warrnambool Network – Enrolment Protocols

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure students have access to their designated neighbourhood Government school and the freedom to choose other schools subject to facility limitations and equitable, consistent, transparent and accountable application of placement criteria.

DET Student Placement Policy

Eligible children have the right to be placed in their designated neighbourhood school.

A child may enrol at a Government school that is not their designated Government school if there is sufficient accommodation for the child at that school.

The Regional Director has the authority to effect placement of students by altering an enrolment boundary due to pressure on enrolment capacity.

Designated neighbourhood school

The designated neighbourhood school is the school that is nearest the student's permanent residence, unless the Regional Director:

- needs to restrict new enrolments at a school due to pressure on enrolment capacity; and therefore
- has designated the neighbourhood zone for the school

The measure of the nearest school (not withstanding if a neighbourhood zone has been put in place) is determined as follows:

- If the student resides in the metropolitan region, Ballarat, Bendigo or Geelong, then the nearest school is measured by a straight line from the student's residence.
- For any other area it is the shortest practicable route.

Priority order of placement

When the number of enrolment applications exceeds the number of places available and enrolment capacity has been reached, as agreed with the DET, students are enrolled in the following priority order:

1. Students for whom the school is the designated neighbourhood Government school.
2. Students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time.
3. Students seeking enrolment on specific curriculum grounds (only applies to senior secondary programs, language continuity and other select entry schools only).
4. Where the Regional Director has restricted the enrolment, students who reside nearest the school.
5. All other students in order of closeness of their home to the school.

In exceptional circumstances, students who can demonstrate compassionate grounds may be enrolled upon agreement of the principal.

Appeals

Any appeals by parents/guardians against a school's decision not to provide a Year 7 placement are:

- Considered by the principal at the preferred school; and
- Escalated to the Regional Director when it cannot be resolved by the preferred school.

Appeals are considered based on the priority order of placement.

Warrnambool Network agreed protocols in relation to student enrolments

When an inquiry regarding transfer is made from one government school to another, the Principal receiving the inquiry is to make contact with the school that the student/s are currently enrolled at. No enrolment forms should be given to the parents until both Principals have agreed to this. Parents making the inquiry are to be informed of the DET policy in relation to the approval of transfers:

- the transfer is sought at the commencement of the school year or term 3 (**unless compelling compassionate grounds exist and are accepted**).
- transfer is requested by a parent/guardian and the principal of each school involved supports the request

When both Principals are discussing the inquiry about a transfer they need to deliberate and consider:

- parent reasons stated to both Principals in relation to why the transfer is being requested
- is the transfer from one school to the other in the best interests of the student?
- is the transfer from one school to the other in the best interests of both of the schools? What are the likely implications on both schools?
- the behaviour of the student and the impact this has/will have on each of the schools
- in the circumstance where a student presents with severe behaviour, both Principals should conduct a risk assessment and the impact this will have on each school
- the academic performance of the student/s and the impact this has/will have on each of the schools
- the wellbeing of the student/s and the impact that this has/will have on each of the schools
- is disability and impairment funding linked to the student? Is this likely to cause a deficit in a school?
- is the request substantial or is it based on a local issue where the parent has become disgruntled?

Taking in the above considerations, both Principals need to make a decision if a transfer will occur or not and when it will occur. In the event that both Principals cannot come to an agreement, then the matter should be referred to the Senior Leader and Area Executive Director for resolution.

DET Student Transfer Policy

Parents/guardians are entitled to request a transfer between schools.

Schools must:

- provide transfer notes for all students transferring out
- receive transfer documentation for all students transferring in

Schools must avoid practices that:

- force students to transfer or withdraw from school; except when the student is expelled
- restrict entry to eligible students

Approval

School principals approve transfers when:

- the student residence changes and is now closer to a different Government school (where requested)
- transfer is sought from an Australian school outside the State system
- the transfer is sought at the commencement of the school year or term 3 and in secondary schools the student can be accommodated mid-year without the reorganisation of the existing school program

- transfer is requested (other than in those instances cited above) by a parent/guardian and the principal of each school supports the request
- a student is expelled from a school (for students of compulsory school age, the principal of the school from which the student has been expelled is responsible for ensuring enrolment in another school or registered training organisation; in consultation with the Region)

For all other transfers where the parent appeals against the Principal's decision to not enrol:

- the transferring principal makes recommendations to the Area Executive Director
- the Area Executive Director determines approval

Additionally, schools should note that they cannot enrol international students wishing to transfer from another school (prior to the student completing six months of the principal course of study) without a release letter issued by the Department's International Education Division, see: ISP Quality Standards and School Resources, under Department resources