

Know Your Agreement

Consultative Committee

changes

Clauses 9, 16 and 40

Consultation is crucial to the operation of this Agreement, and the key vehicle for consultation in your school is the Consultative Committee.

Regular, productive meetings of your school's Consultative Committee ensure improved decision-making, greater engagement, better management of workload issues and higher morale. It allows staff to develop new ways of working and to actively participate in improving the culture of their school.

This Agreement strengthens the role of the Consultative Committee in several ways:

- A formal recommendation can be made by three members of a six-member Consultative Committee - and if it is rejected reasons for this must be provided to all staff in writing. This deals with the 'deadlock' situation in which the three employer representatives could effectively veto a position put forward by union & staff representatives. (Clause 16.3)
- Consultative Committees are now able to consider workload issues for all staff, not only teachers. This includes Education Support Staff, School Services Officers and Deputy Principals. (Clause 9)
- Consultative Committees play a key role in planning for Time in Lieu under the new teacher workload provisions. The calendar for the accrual and acquittal of Time in Lieu should be considered by the Consultative Committee at the end of

the previous year or the beginning of the school year. (Clause 59.3)

- Union and staff Consultative Committee Reps are now entitled to a day of paid leave each year to attend IEU training. (Clause 40)

Every school must have a Consultative Committee.

Not having one is a breach of the Agreement! Consultation is a workplace right, and the provisions of the Agreement are legally binding. If you don't have an effectively operating Consultative Committee at your school then please contact the IEU office for advice and support.

What is consultation?

The Agreement is explicit about the importance of consultation. In clause 16.1 it is defined as: "a serious attempt through a fair exchange of views... in order to reach an understanding and consensus".

The Agreement aims to "establish workplace consultative arrangements that ensure the principal's responsibility, as the Employer's representative, is to make school-based decisions carried out in a framework that enables staff to have input into decisions that affect their working life".

What does your Consultative Committee do?

Your Consultative Committee is a forum where recommendations can be made to the principal on matters including:

- **Teacher workloads**, including planning for Time in lieu, class sizes, the implementation of the '30 + 8 model', practical classes, duties, responsibilities, administrative tasks and anything else impacting on teacher workloads.
- **Workload issues for staff other than teachers**, including Education Support Staff, School Services Officers and Deputy Principals.
- **Positions of Leadership**, including the structure of positions, their nature and role, tenure of appointment, applicable allowance and the time allocated to perform the work that goes with each position.
- **Efficient use of staff meetings.**
- **Email and communication protocols**, both internal and external.

Who is on the Consultative Committee?

Unless there is agreement between the principal and the majority of staff the Committee should comprise:

- The Principal and two nominees
- Two nominees from the IEU sub-branch
- One staff nominee elected by and from the total staff (who may also be a member of the IEU sub-branch).

It's important to get the structure right. The consultative process should stand alone and not just be an 'add on' to another meeting. Opportunities to discuss issues at length and for IEU nominees to put the position of the sub-branch can be lost if the Consultative Committee is mixed in with other forums.

When does a Consultative Committee meet?

Meetings can be called at any time by the principal or by any three members of the Committee. Some Committees meet each term, others schedule meetings for critical decision-making times throughout the year.

The Agreement requires that the Consultative Committee meets in Term 4 to make recommendations for the arrangement and scheduling of teacher meetings in the following year, with a focus on maximising the efficient use of meeting times. It also requires that planning for TIL is undertaken via the Consultative Committee at the end of the previous year or at the beginning of the school year.

Dispute resolution

If a dispute continues after the principal has written to staff explaining a decision made by the Consultative Committee, there is a formal dispute resolution process to follow and the potential for a dispute to be dealt with by the Fair Work Commission (clause 22).

These measures mean employers and school leaders must take Consultative Committee discussions seriously.

Please refer to the Consultative Committees mini guide for more details.

