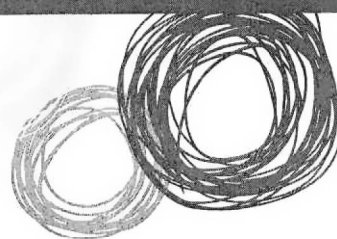


Education Queensland



Red tape reduction in Queensland state schools

Great state. Great opportunity.



Minister's foreword



Reducing red tape for our schools

The Newman Government is committed to cutting red tape by 20 per cent within the next five years to ease the burden on business and the community, and boost frontline services for Queenslanders.

As the Minister for Education, Training and Employment I've attended more than 30 principal forums across the state. The clear message I have received through these forums is that we need to reduce the number of hours that principals and teachers spend filling out unnecessary paperwork so they can concentrate on leading and teaching our students.

The Newman Government has a relentless focus on achieving better student outcomes which is why we have taken decisive action.

We have already removed regulatory burdens to give our principals stronger disciplinary powers. The Independent Public Schools initiative has also reduced red tape, providing schools with greater autonomy.

In addition to this, we have established an advisory council of principals to give advice on the best ways to cut red tape in schools.

Through this consultation, we've developed the *Red tape reduction in Queensland state schools* booklet, which sets out more than 30 actions we're taking to eliminate meaningless bureaucratic processes.

Many are simple, common-sense actions such as reducing the number of forms for various activities and no longer requiring documents to be completed in both paper and electronic forms.

It provides examples of how red tape is being reduced so that it's easier for school staff to do their jobs, as well as how we are making things easier for parents.

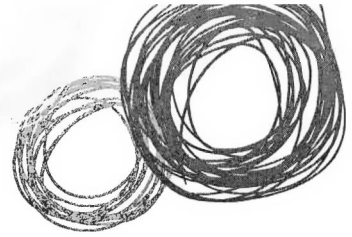
I would like to thank the hundreds of principals I've met with for their constructive feedback and I would particularly like to acknowledge the contribution of the members of the advisory council — their direct input has been invaluable.

Reducing red tape is an ongoing commitment and to stay focused, we will monitor and report on progress.

This work is vital to ensuring Queensland remains a great state, with great opportunity well into the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John-Paul Langbroek".

Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training
and Employment



Introduction

Over time, existing regulations or 'red tape' can become unnecessary. Other 'red tape' should not have been introduced in the first place.

The development of technology such as online software to improve student management, curriculum, finances and resource management has made many procedures redundant.

Excessive or poorly-designed regulations impose unnecessary time demands on principals and school staff — time that could be spent improving student outcomes in the classroom.

With this in mind, the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) has begun the process of reviewing school regulatory requirements guided by an advisory council of school principals to identify what unnecessary regulation can be reduced or removed.

This process of review is ongoing as the department continually strives to use its resources in the most effective ways. For this reason, one of the actions in this document is an email address where principals and teachers will be able to report possible excessive red tape on an ongoing basis. The Minister will receive updates on this feedback quarterly.

This action plan highlights the areas where the department has already made changes, or is working towards changes to allow principals to get on with their job of delivering a quality education to our students.

Your feedback is important to our red tape reduction review process.

Please submit your ideas to redtapereduction@dete.qld.gov.au.

Getting involved in the Council of Principals has helped give direct feedback to decision makers from a range of portfolio areas within the department about processes and policies that take principals away from the core business of teaching and learning. I have been pleased to see how supportive and responsive Education Queensland has been in reducing this "red tape".

Dion Coghtan, Principal, Capalaba State College

Red tape reduction actions

Audit

Audit paperwork

As part of regular audit processes, schools were previously asked to keep and produce paper copies of documents as well as electronic copies. Now, there is no requirement to provide a paper copy of a document where an electronic version already exists. The department's internal audit unit will also review the school audit program and pre-questionnaire to remove unnecessary or low risk requirements — reducing the time commitment for principals and their administration team.

Status: completed

Finance

Corporate card training

Some school staff were being asked to repeat corporate card training each time they transferred to a new school location. The department has clarified this requirement, meaning that staff who have already done corporate card training do not need to complete the training again when they move location.

Status: completed

BPoint — online payment of student invoices

BPoint, an online student invoice payment system, has been made available to all Queensland state schools to provide increased payment options for families. It will reduce the amount of time school staff spend on processing payments using EFTPOS, cash or cheque, as well as minimising financial risks associated with handling money. Invoices will be more accurately processed with lower costs than BPay.

Parents will also be able to use the BPoint consumer website to pay school invoices online via a secure Commonwealth Bank portal or by telephone — saving time for themselves and school staff.

Status: completed

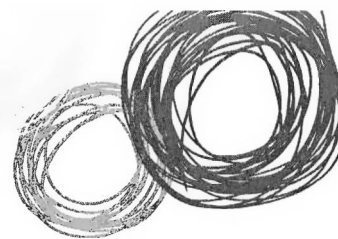
Student Resource Scheme

Principals have raised concerns that there are too many rules and regulations in relation to the Student Resource Scheme which enables students to hire a range of textbooks and resources from schools. The Finance Branch is investigating opportunities to clarify and streamline this process.

Status: underway

Reducing compliance content in the school excursion approval process, cutting the need to update student media consent records, increasing financial quotation thresholds and enabling bulk asset disposal are just a few of the red tape items that the Council of Principals has been working on. These changes will free principals and administration staff from many hours of unnecessary paperwork every week, giving them more time to focus on improving learning outcomes for students.

Dion Coghlan, Principal, Capalaba State College



Asset disposal

Currently, principals must individually approve the disposal of low cost assets. The Finance Branch is exploring a range of options to improve this process, including enabling a staff member (other than the principal) to approve the disposal of low cost assets (such as overhead projectors) and combining the disposal of a number of low cost assets into one approval process in OneSchool, a data management system for Queensland state schools. The functionality to enable bulk disposal of assets will be available from the beginning of Term 1, 2014. In addition, the ability to bulk approve workflow tasks has now been implemented.

Status: underway

Technology

Bandwidth

The department actively monitors network performance for OneSchool and other core learning applications and has taken a number of actions to improve network speed. DETE is continuously examining and trialling technical solutions that may contribute to improved network performance as the technology improves. As an example, in areas where fibre optic services are not available, DETE has provided additional 3G connections.

Status: ongoing

School planning

1School 1Plan

Principals have said there are too many different performance reviews and plans, and that the 1School 1Plan format has not helped streamline the school planning process. As a direct result of this feedback and in consultation with the Council of Principals, the 1School 1Plan template has been changed. It now has fewer screens, is more user-friendly and automatically populates priorities from each school's four-year plan into the annual implementation plan. The updated version of 1School 1Plan has been available to schools since 25 September 2013 and principals report it is saving time.

Status: underway

Human resources

Reporting for staffing decisions

Previously, schools had to complete the class size survey which principals saw as unnecessary because class size data is available in OneSchool. Completion of the class size survey is no longer required as information is taken from centrally-held data.

Status: completed

Toileting allowance

Teacher aides in special education facilities receive a toileting allowance where it is necessary for them to clean toilets. Previously, the toileting allowance of \$1 per day required two signatures. The requirement for the principal to approve this payment every week for each employee has now been removed. Principals can provide a 'one-off' notification for each employee that will allow for regular payment of the allowance without additional approval.

Status: completed

Rebanding process

Principals report that the rebanding process for schools is very time-consuming and requires schools to provide seemingly unnecessary information. Now, the rebanding form has been reworked and the department's Human Resources Branch is progressing the option of pre-populating forms with available information.

Status: underway

Staff contracts

The current process for completing contracts for temporary teachers is unnecessarily time-consuming for principals, particularly when forms are completed online but still need to be printed, signed and faxed for approval. Principals were also concerned that contracts could only be issued for a maximum of six months. The proposed rollout of the Teacher Relief and Contract Employment Register (TRACER) to all schools by mid-2014 will address this issue for temporary contracts and replacement teachers in schools. This rollout captures leave, casual payments and reporting in one transaction, reducing administrative time. The Human Resources Branch has changed the policy so that contracts can now be issued for 12 months.

Status: underway

Teacher transfer forms

The old teacher transfer form was 20 pages long — too long, according to many principals who said they couldn't even access much of the information about the teachers transferring into their schools. The introduction of an online solution via MyHR in 2010, the department's online human resources tool, meant teachers could complete and submit their application online and principals could view and endorse the application in the same way. A streamlined new online form is shorter and the department is currently investigating ways for staff to nominate a preferred location which will provide principals with more information about their teams.

Status: underway

TRS Safety Net

Principals report that the Teacher Relief Scheme (TRS) Safety Net forms and claims seem unnecessary as data is readily available from TRACER (for most schools) or the TRS tracking tool. In the past, schools provided explanations for the amount of sick leave taken by school staff as part of the application process. From 2014, a change will be made to the safety net process which removes the need for requests to be provided via a regional office. The requirement to provide detailed information about the amount of sick leave taken has now been removed. The process will be further reviewed using feedback from schools in 2014.

Status: underway

TRACER/TSS — teacher employment

Not all schools currently access TRACER and principals have only restricted access to information from The Solution Series (TSS) for human resource purposes. The rollout of TRACER to all schools by mid-2014 will provide greater access to information for schools about teachers seeking casual and short-term temporary employment at their location. Availability of employee information from TSS continues to be expanded via MyHR Corporate Reporting.

Status: underway

Health and safety

Asbestos audits

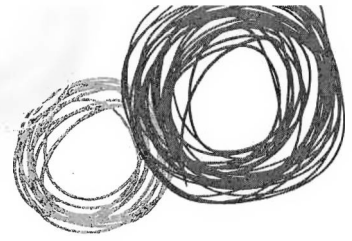
Principals have commented that there is excessive training about asbestos in schools where there is no asbestos, and that Work Area Access Permits (WAAPs) are required even when the work has nothing to do with asbestos. The Infrastructure Branch is conducting a review of asbestos training and management and a solution is being examined for schools with no asbestos in their facilities.

Status: underway

Incident and accident reports

The Workplace Health and Safety (WH&S) incident reporting system is time-consuming and has a slow screen loading time due partially to the security roles developed within the application. Technical options are currently being explored to help speed up the program.

Status: underway



Maintenance

Direct-to-market maintenance

The direct-to-market maintenance process which allows schools to tender out maintenance work resulted in additional administrative workload at schools participating in this option. Schools now have the ability to allocate up to five per cent of their maintenance allocation to hire support for administration and project management. These processes will be supported by streamlined procurement protocols.

Status: completed

In the past, unnecessary and detailed processes managed by principals have detracted their attention away from our students and the leadership of teaching and learning in our schools. One of the ways red tape is being reduced is through the direct-to-market maintenance changes which allows schools to hold back five per cent for administration costs. Maintaining and improving school assets and facilities is now managed at the local level, meaning it is carried out faster and cheaper.

Corrine McMillan, Principal, Glenala State High School

School operations

Student protection

Schools were recently given the ability to create student protection reports which do not concern employees in OneSchool. The new functionality provides higher levels of information security and confidentiality while reducing the workload on school staff, by enabling information to auto populate where relevant information about a student is already available within OneSchool.

Status: completed

Animal ethics

In the past there has been a significant workload for schools working with animals in science and agricultural programs because of strict animal ethics approval requirements. The department has worked with the Queensland Schools Animal Ethics Committee to develop a range of standard operating procedures for schools working with cattle, cane toads, horses, poultry, rats, mice, sheep, goats and pigs, that agree to operate in accordance with the stated standard practices. For those schools there is no need to complete the full five-page application form. They are simply required to complete a one-page activity notification form.

Status: completed

Managing non-attendance

The process for monitoring and encouraging student attendance and enrolment is time-consuming for administration officers and principals. Principals have suggested that contracts for students, linking attendance with achievement and support, should be made accessible to all principals via a standard document or template. As a result, the department will work with schools to develop templates that can be trialled and, if successful, offered to other Queensland state schools. The materials will also be added to the Every Day Counts website. The department has also developed a streamlined enforcement process with automatic generation of the two legislated notices and easier tracking of the different stages of the process in OneSchool, which has been available since the start of 2013. This has received positive feedback from school staff across the State.

Status: underway

Variation to school routine

Conducting school excursions currently require multiple people to approve the paperwork. This process has been redeveloped, meaning the process will be much shorter and simpler in the future. For example, in some cases where excursions are only during the day and there is no cost to parents, staff will only need to access three screens in preparing excursion documentation. Other screens have been simplified with pop-up information boxes rather than a checklist. This has been reduced from up to 14 screens in the past.

Status: underway

Our contributions over the previous months are coming to fruition with the Minister's recent announcement of actions to reduce principals' operational workload, and further reductions that are about to be released. What is yet to come is really exciting, with the imminent release of a very much reduced variation to school routine process. The intent of this process was always good but the volume of data entry made it overly laborious. In a school the size of North Lakes State College, this will literally mean more hours each week to focus on classroom learning.

Tracy Corbitt, Executive Principal, North Lakes State College

Discipline audits

Discipline audits have been conducted in Queensland state schools since July 2013. Following feedback from schools, the process has been refined. From 2014, the time taken to complete a stand-alone discipline audit will be halved to one day for schools in Bands 8 to 11 and half a day for Bands 5 to 7. Schools scheduled for a teaching and learning audit in 2014 will have both audits incorporated into a single one.

Status: underway

Curriculum activity risk assessments

Over the years, staff and principals have raised concerns about how long it takes to complete curriculum activity risk assessments (CARAs). As a result, this process has been significantly streamlined and a process has been built into OneSchool. Many of the guidelines have been reduced from an original size of more than 10 pages to less than two pages. The guidelines still provide school staff with valuable information about safety considerations; however the time taken to complete the process has been significantly reduced as there is no duplication of information. Further enhancements are being made to OneSchool to reduce the number of unnecessary low and medium risk CARAs being completed, and better support the process for district and regional sporting events. If an activity with low or medium risk is selected, the additional details section no longer needs to be completed.

Status: underway

Parent portal

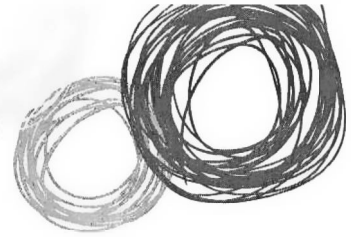
Schools have raised the need for parents to have online access to forms, update student details and to access timetables and reports. A pilot parent portal will be delivered to one high school and one primary school during Semester 1, 2014 and will inform further development of this system.

Status: underway

Student enrolment

Entering data from student enrolment forms into OneSchool places an administrative burden on school administration staff. The length of the enrolment form is an issue as well as the inability to use details already on file. Electronic enrolment forms have been suggested by schools — an idea being explored through the parent portal pilot. Pre-populated enrolment forms with student details are already available in OneSchool.

Status: underway



Religious instruction

Principals report that there are too many religious instruction forms. Reduced religious instruction policy forms will be released next year with one collection point of information (a student enrolment application form) instead of a number of parent consent and confirmation forms.

Status: underway

Education adjustment program

Principals have advised that the education adjustment program documents in special schools are required to be reviewed too frequently. This is considered unnecessary since the profiles of students at special schools tend to remain stable over time. A proposal is currently being considered that will remove this requirement.

Status: underway

Disability transport assistance

The current transport assistance process for students with a disability involves a significant amount of paperwork, such as the passenger attendance verification report required by the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR). A project to electronically verify data which would remove the need for any additional forms will be undertaken by TMR, with the project expected to be completed in 2014.

Status: underway

Sharing information across agencies

Principals have advised that sharing information across government agencies has become more difficult with an increase in the number of forms and processes required. To address this, the department has begun proactive information-sharing with other government departments, with ongoing monitoring to ensure the process is suitable and efficient.

Status: underway

Curriculum overlapping requirements

There needs to be clarity around different or overlapping curriculum requirements. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is working on a document that shows the alignment between subjects contained in the humanities learning area. The department's Curriculum into the Classroom project, which is supporting Queensland state schools to implement the Australian Curriculum, will address this issue once the remaining curriculum documents are available later in 2013.

Status: underway

School annual reports

There is further opportunity to streamline and eliminate unnecessary school reporting. The department will negotiate with the Australian Government to minimise the annual reporting requirements on schools. Work will also continue with ACARA to maximise the information reported on the national *MySchool* website so it can include all data required to be reported under the National Education Agreement.

Status: underway

OneSchool home page

The OneSchool home page is currently being redeveloped to make it more streamlined and user-friendly. Principals will be able to identify any notifications more easily and customise their home page to suit their needs.

Status: underway

Blue cards

Blue cards need to be renewed annually which is a burden on schools. The Queensland Government is considering recommendations of the Queensland Child Protection Commission Inquiry and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse which may have future impact on Blue card requirements and a potentially reduced administrative burden on schools.

Status: ongoing

Media and communication

Schools Update

The length of *Schools Update*, the electronic weekly update to school principals, was raised as an issue by principals who advised it needs to be succinct and easier to access. As a result, the publication has been significantly reduced in size with requests for items scrutinised and prioritised according to urgency.

Status: completed

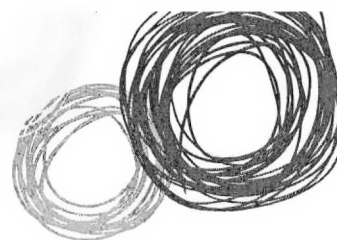
Student media consent

The student media consent form was lengthy with complex legal language, and a requirement to be completed annually — a time-consuming process for schools and parents. As a result of feedback from the Council of Principals, the requirement to obtain this consent each year has been removed. The form and procedure have been amended so that the permission can cover the duration of each student's enrolment.

Status: completed

I've found the discussions around the table to be quite invigorating. Working with my colleagues to develop strategies to improve the efficiency of our work has been rewarding with a real sense of achievement when we see the changes that will go towards reducing the workload of principals across the state.

Gail Armstrong, Principal, Alexandra Hills State High School



Status of red tape reduction programs

	Completed	Underway	On hold
Audit			
Audit paperwork	✓		
Finance			
Corporate card training	✓		
BPoint	✓		
Student resource scheme		✓	
Asset disposal		✓	
Technology			
Bandwidth			✓
School planning			
1School 1Plan		✓	
Human resources			
Reporting for staffing decisions	✓		
Toileting allowance	✓		
Rebanding process		✓	
Staff contracts		✓	
Teacher transfer forms		✓	
TRS Safety Net		✓	
Tracer/TSS – teacher employment		✓	
Health and safety			
Asbestos audits		✓	
Incident and accident reports		✓	
Maintenance			
Direct-to-market maintenance	✓		
School operations			
Student protection	✓		
Animal ethics	✓		
Managing non-attendance		✓	
Variation to school routine		✓	
Discipline audits		✓	
Curriculum activity risk assessments		✓	
Parent portal		✓	
Student enrolments		✓	
Religious instruction		✓	
Education adjustment program		✓	
Disability transport assistance		✓	
Sharing information across agencies		✓	
Curriculum overlapping requirements		✓	
School annual reports		✓	
OneSchool home page		✓	
Blue cards			✓
Media and communication			
Schools Update	✓		
Student media consent	✓		

The department's actions to reduce red tape and increase efficiencies in our schools are ongoing. This process is supported through the invaluable contribution of the Red Tape Reduction Council of Principals which meets regularly. The department seeks ongoing feedback from school staff and the general public on what has been achieved and proposed so far. New ideas in particular are eagerly sought. The Minister for Education, Training and Employment, the Hon John-Paul Langbroek, is taking a keen interest in the department's progress and receives a regular report on all submissions received. Your ideas and feedback can be submitted via redtapereduction@dete.qld.gov.au.

www.dete.qld.gov.au/redtape-reduction



Queensland Legislative Assembly

Number: 5825T1604

 **16 OCT 2025**

MP: Ms McMillan MP

Clerk's Signature: 

Tabled ☒
By Leave ☐