

Prue Car

Deputy Premier of New South Wales
Minister for Education and Early Learning
Minister for Western Sydney



Media Release

After hours digital policy to support teacher wellbeing

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Teachers will be able to switch off their devices after school and enjoy uninterrupted personal time under a new policy to restrict non-emergency communication outside school operating hours from Term 1, 2024.

Parents and carers will still be able to contact their school at a time that suits them best and can expect a response within two school days under normal circumstances.

Under a new Expectations for Digital Communications policy, the NSW Department of Education, principals and other executive leaders will not send emails, messages or contact staff outside regular school operating hours unless it's an emergency.

Principals will also communicate the change to their school communities.

The change will be rolled out gradually over the current term with each principal encouraged to find a way that works for their school.

The NSW Department of Education has been developing this plan in consultation with the NSW Teachers Federation since October. The NSW P&C Federation have provided invaluable feedback to the plan making it workable for school communities.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning Prue Car said:

"The digital technologies that were key to our success during lockdowns and continue to provide amazing learning opportunities have made it hard for teachers to establish boundaries.

"I have heard from teachers during my many visits to schools last year the impact digital communications have had on what was previously personal time.

"Giving them the green light to switch off from emails and messages out of school operating hours is just a small way we can support and retain teachers, address burnout and lift the attractiveness of teaching as a profession.

"This follows last year's increase to teachers' salaries, the largest in NSW in almost three decades."

Amber Flohm, Deputy President NSW Teachers Federation said:

"Addressing the fundamental causes of burnout through workload is critical. A properly rested and recharged teacher is better for our schools and better for our students. Policies such as this will ultimately help plug the teacher shortage in NSW and address the ongoing attraction and retention of our teachers."

"This is a victory for teachers, but an even bigger victory for public education in New South Wales. Too many teachers are leaving the profession as a result of burnout from their unsustainable workload. This measure will help address the teacher shortage and attraction and retention of teachers.

Yvonne Hilsz, P&C Federation President, said:

"Today's announcement by the Deputy Premier is a great result for public education. The NSW P&C Federation supports teachers being empowered to switch off, understanding that parents and carers still have the ability to contact their teachers at a time that suits them."

"We know that parent, teacher communication is vitally important for student outcomes."

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