

# ANNUAL POSTING EXERCISE (APEX) AND TRANSFER REQUESTS

There are two formal posting exercises annually – OPEN and CLOSED. Apart from this a teacher can ask for a transfer to another school at any time of the year if supported by exceptional reasons. Below are listed some of the reasons given by our members when applying for transfer:

- a) Surfacing of health problems that require shorter travelling time
- b) Distance (due to relocation of school or moving house)
- c) Filial obligations (elderly parents needing assurance that emergency assistance is nearby)
- d) Being available nearby for urgent care of young children
- e) Change of environment (signalling incompatible environment or the need for new learning exposure and career development)

## The OPEN Posting Exercise The MoE circular states:

Eligible serving Education Officers can apply through APEX for a posting to MOE HQ Divisions or another school or deployment to organisations outside MOE. Advertisements of vacancies in primary schools, secondary schools, JCs/CIs, HQ Divisions and other organisations will be posted on the MOE Intranet. Vacancies in schools comprise classroom teacher positions, key-personnel (SH/LH/HOD) positions, Lead and Senior Teacher positions. The staff officer positions in MOE HQ are open to both GEO and SEO officers.

## Members' experience with the OPEN posting exercise:

A key challenge is to ensure proper matching with expectation being met, especially with MOE as a major service with now about 30,000 teachers. Teachers would often need to be adequately prepared on fairly short notice for interview with the receiving schools. Some members are worried that receiving school may reject them due to their present school being unwilling to release them for many reasons arising. We advise members seeking transfer to also keep their current school adequately informed with a common understanding, such that mutually agreed outcome can be arranged by both parties.

## The CLOSED Posting Exercise The MoE circular states:

CLOSED Posting will be conducted at phase 2 of APEX after the OPEN Posting. Under the CLOSED posting

exercise, posting will be done centrally by Personnel Division (PED) in MOE HQ based on the overall staffing needs of schools.

## Cross Level Posting

For the CLOSED posting exercise, PED will not consider applications for posting from secondary schools to primary schools as the staffing needs are generally greater in secondary schools. However, they will consider applications from primary school teachers for posting to the secondary schools in these subject areas - English Language and Humanities subjects. Teachers who are interested for such cross level posting can indicate their preference when submitting their application. Successful candidates will undergo a one-week orientation programme conducted by Staff Training Branch so as to assist them to adjust to the new teaching level.

We would like to clarify that teachers who had participated in the earlier OPEN posting exercise can also submit their applications for CLOSED posting. However, applications for CLOSED posting will only be considered if the applicants are not successful in the OPEN posting exercise.

## Members' experience with the CLOSED posting exercise

While many members are generally satisfied with their new school and career development, there are some who may possibly have their expectation unmet. Members would need to be mindful that CLOSED posting may inadvertently result in them going to a school being not of their priority choice. It is also very important that schools should adopt proper succession plan and handover procedures in ensuring the smooth transition and release of the affected teachers.

## AD-HOC Posting Requests

Members sometimes face unexpected situations causing them to ask for a posting outside the two posting exercises. These could be due to a change in their home environment, health or the need to move house.

Sudden change in the home environment could be due to factors such as the need to be near elderly parents or young children in case there is an emergency, a change in health requiring shorter travelling time as in a backbone injury and upgrading or downgrading of residence that adds considerably to the distance travelled daily.

### Members' experience with ad-hoc posting requests

In general, the MOE Placement Unit would require posting requests to be made only during the official APEX window as a centralised exercise. Special appeal may be accepted by MOE only given extraordinary circumstances. Members need to be mindful that such special posting, applicable only for exceptional cases, would also need a reasonable notice period especially in the middle of the school term whereby it would inadvertently be more difficult for school to release their existing teachers.

### Improving the transfer process for genuine cases

We have now about 30,000 teachers. The bumper recruitment in recent years is an affirmation of the standing and attractiveness of the teaching profession. Towards this end as a tripartite partner, we also urge the MOE Personnel Division to continue their efforts in ensuring the work-life balance and well-being of our teachers. An emotionally satisfied teacher with work-life harmony will certainly be more ready and equipped to contribute greatly to education.

# The Journey of a BEGINNING TEACHER

(Forum on clearing your probation - the initial hurdle in your career)

**E**ach year hundreds of beginning teachers are posted to schools to begin their probation which normally lasts a year. Many are not aware of what it means to be on probation nor the peril of not being confirmed.

To be aware of the pitfalls is half the battle won. The rest is up to the resourcefulness of the beginning teacher. Also, one needs to learn fast the strategies required to fit into the new environment and the social etiquette practised therein.

In general, the probation period lasts for a year. Upon posting to a school, the beginning teacher is assigned a Reporting Officer (RO) who will be assessing him/her at six-monthly intervals using the Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS). And confirmation of employment is given at the end of the one-year



probation period if the beginning teacher's performance is exceeding the requirements of the basic recruitment grade which he/she is in.

Essentially, a beginning teacher needs to achieve a performance grade of C and above to qualify for confirmation. A performance grade of D means that the teacher is just meeting expectations while a performance grade of E reflects that the teacher is performing below expectations. Both the D and E grades are danger signals and unless the beginning teacher shows marked improvement; it will most certainly lead to an unfortunate outcome.

As part of our proactive Industrial Relations (IR) efforts, the union will be organizing a forum for beginning teachers to provide useful tips on how to clear the probation and to better understand some of the current issues relating to performance appraisal and promotion.

We look forward to confirming your participation soonest as seats are limited. Please refer to the event details below:

#### STU BEGINNING TEACHERS' FORUM (BTF)

**Date** : Saturday, 4 September 2010

**Time** : 9.15 am – 12.00 pm

**Venue** : Room 801 (Level 8), NTUC Centre  
One Marina Boulevard S(018989)

Closing Date: Monday, 30 August 2010

**Costs** : **Free of charge** (STU member)

S\$10 - (Non-STU member)

Please email your attendance registration form to [tanjik@stu.org.sg](mailto:tanjik@stu.org.sg) giving your name, IC Number and school attached to (the registration form can be downloaded from STU website: [www.stu.org.sg](http://www.stu.org.sg)). This session is for members as well as non-members who have yet to clear their probation. We urge you to encourage your colleagues in the same situation to attend and benefit from the forum.

**Book your place now!**