

The purpose of this update to schools and staff is to provide further clarification on the arrangements for Summer 2023 related to the implementation of the Agreement on terms and conditions of grant funded school secretaries.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUMMER:

As part of the implementation of the agreement on school secretaries, and in continuance of the instruction issued on February 10th 2022, any grant-funded secretary who would normally be laid off for the summer period, and who is opting to have their salary annualised by the Department (i.e. do not wish to apply to DSP for benefits during layoff), should instead be paid their usual weekly wage for the summer closure. This pay is seen as covering any remaining paid annual leave entitlement.

This is the final interim measure to ensure that grant funded secretaries, who have indicated their acceptance to be paid via a payroll operated by the Department of Education and to be paid on an annualised basis, do not have to apply to the Department of Social Protection for benefits whilst arrangements for the implementation for the transfer to a Department payroll are being put in place.

The costs associated with this further interim measure are being managed retrospectively by the Department as part of the wider arrangements to cover requirements for back-pay arising from the official date of implementation of the agreement. It is intended by the DE that the arrears for this back-pay will be paid to schools in the coming weeks, to cover up to the period 31st August 2023. There may be delays in payment of these arrears to schools where the information requested by the Payroll Division has not been received by the DE.

All those secretaries who are joining the payroll but who do not wish to have their salaries annualised, and therefore wish to continue to apply to the DSP for payment, should not be paid for the period of school closure and should apply to DSP for their benefits for this summer, 2023. Any such secretaries who have paid leave entitlement remaining should use these days to reduce the period of layoff.

E.G. A secretary normally laid off for 5 weeks who has 5 days leave left should be paid 5 days' pay for the first week and then laid off for 4 weeks. The secretary can apply for benefits for the 4 weeks but not the week of paid leave.