

National Governors' Association

BULLETIN BOARD

BB 11/07

1 November 2007

2nd Floor, SBQ1, 29 Smallbrook Queensway, Birmingham B5 4HG

Tel: 0121 643 5787 Fax: 0121 633 7141

E-mail: governorhq@nga.org.uk

Website: www.nga.org.uk

Bulletin Board contains dates for your diary, details of consultations and other papers in and out of the NGA office, for information and action, and a digest of some of the activities of NGA on current issues. Circulation currently is to NGA Member Associations and the NGA Board. Distribution is by e-mail and post. Please share this information widely, through your email contacts and at local meetings, to keep governing bodies better informed of, and more involved in, current activities and national issues.

ACTION: NGA DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

NGA Annual General Meeting: Sat. 17 November 2007: BAFTA, London.

NGA/NCSL Conference on Leadership Recruitment: Sat. 26 January 2008, Thistle Hotel, Marble Arch, London (*see website for further details and a booking form*)

FOR INFORMATION

1 NGA News

NGA website: The new website is now live. The public site is growing fast, with information on publications, events and activities. If your association hasn't its own website, there is the opportunity to have an easy to manage microsite within the NGA site. There is much still to develop but governors should find in it an informative, easily navigable website that will provide support and the opportunity to contribute to debate. The Members' area will be live in the new year.

NGA AGM: The first AGM mailing issued on 17 August 2007. The second mailing was delayed to allow for the extended nomination period for Association Directors (following the postal strike). That mailing will issue today, 1 November 2007 including the agenda, minutes of the AGM 2006 and the candidates' statements for election as Association Directors. Nominations are now closed for the various categories of directors. Voting for Individual and General Directors will close at 2pm on 15 November, so if you are an individual member or your governing body is a member you still have time to vote. Ballot papers and candidates' statements can be found on the website. Elections for Regional Directors have been held and the Directors will begin their term of office following the AGM on 17 November 2007. The vote for Association Directors will take place at the AGM as usual. There are two vacancies for Association Directors and candidates' statements can be found on the website. All AGM documents will be posted on the website.

2 DCSF News

Extended Schools Toolkit for Governors: This can be downloaded from TeacherNet or ordered online from the Training and Development Agency at: publications@tda.gov.uk or by telephone on 0845 6060 323. (Reference no: TDA279/05.07/BEL/158)

Note also: *Governors' Policy Briefing – Planning and Funding Extended Schools, June 2007*, at http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/g/governors_policy_briefing_june.pdf

Sustainable Schools: *A Governors' Guide to Sustainable Schools* can be found on TeacherNet at: <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=downloadoptions&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DFES-00445-2007&>

3 Meetings Digest

Meeting with Jim Knight, Minister of State for Schools (17.10.07): The issues raised by NGA were the clawback of school budgets, governor training and community cohesion. NGA argued for mandatory induction training for governors. This view had been supported widely among governors, and headteachers, but previous Schools' Ministers had held that, as governors were volunteers, to demand compulsory training was impossible. The counter argument, long advanced, that magistrates, C.A.B. advisers and many others must receive training for their roles, was stated once more. This time the Minister said there might be a case for considering NGA's view if there was evidence that governors across the country supported the proposition. (We shall be seeking members' views on this.) In discussing community cohesion, NGA pointed out that an important aid to community cohesion was the stakeholder model of governance, which has found itself under threat by the introduction of academies and the trust school model where the trust appoints the majority of the governing body. On the issue of clawback of school budgets, NGA, in making its case, used much of the evidence provided by members on nga-assocs (our thanks for this). We gained the impression that some re-thinking was going on in Government.

Update: as we now know, the impression mentioned above was well founded! On 30.10.07, it was announced that the Government had abandoned the current plans for clawing back budget surpluses.

Advisory Group on Governance (17.10.07): The autumn term's AGOG meeting included an interesting discussion about the nature of governance, during which it became clear that the DCSF was undertaking a review of the form it might take in future. As well as arguing for the continuance of the stakeholder model the NGA was able to feed in the opinions expressed in the Symposium it hosted in September. We also heard about a forthcoming consultation on safeguarding children and how to carry out checks on those working with them. We were assured that criminal checks would take no more than five working days. The procedure for checking governors is still undecided. Finally, under the re-organisation consequent on replacing the DfES with the DCSF, the school governance unit has now become part of the school leadership team – a welcome move to its rightful place.

Other October events or meetings attended by NGA representatives (or for which NGA provided chairs or speakers) included: Westminster Education Forum Seminar (on Assessment), NCOGS Annual Conference, NPQH Re-design Advisory Group, Meeting with NAHT on policy issues, Ministerial Stakeholder Group on Behaviour and Attendance, NAHT Commission of Inquiry on Assessment and League Tables (third session), NCSL Advisory Group on Succession Planning, 4th Annual Catering Conference.

4 The NGA First Certificate in Governance

This distance-learning programme has been very well received. It is suitable for both new governors and existing governors, who require a refresher or update. It consists of a pack of four modules with accompanying questionnaires. The questionnaires may be submitted for assessment and a score of 70% on each questionnaire is rewarded with a certificate to evidence the achievement. The pack can act as an introduction to governance for a new governor and give the confidence to attend training courses to further develop knowledge. *The pack of four modules is really good value at £9.50 + VAT (£11.16). Details and order form are posted on the NGA website.*

5 *Recruiting Headteachers and Senior Leaders –a useful publication from NCSL*

This publication outlines a seven-stage process, which provides a governing body with the practical guidance needed to find success in recruiting a headteacher. The publication can be ordered in hard copy from NGA (£7.50) and can be downloaded free from the NCSL website: (www.ncsl.org.uk/publications)

6 *The Teaching Awards 2007 – Governor of the Year*

The Teaching Awards National Ceremony took place on Sunday, 21 October. Among the eleven categories was *Governor of the Year*. This is the second year of this award and the standard of the nominees was very high.

The thirteen regional winners were: North West – Angela Blenkinship; North East and Cumbria – Jackie Murray; North – Lynette Kirk; West Midlands – Val Hayward; East Midlands – Richard Taylor; London – John Lock; West – Rob Wilson; East – Joan Binder; South West – Ivan Godfrey; South East – Ann Bolt; South – Lynda Miller; Northern Ireland – Lucinda McKee; Wales – Phil Carpenter.

... **And the national winner was Lynette Kirk.** Lynette, a governor for 18 years, has been Chair of Governors for five years at Belle Vue Girls' School in Bradford.

7 *Teachers' TV*

Governors who become Teachers' TV Associates can watch online previews of future programmes. Teachers' TV Associates are the channel's first point of contact at schools. By helping to promote the channel they get access to free previews, online discussion forums and invitations to special events, among other benefits. To learn more, go to www.teachers.tv/associates. Associates can access the previews through this web link.

Programme information can be found at: www.teachers.tv/programmeguide.

TTV can be found on Sky Guide 880, ntl 240, Telewest 240, Home choice 845 and Freeview 88. Freeview viewing time has changed; it is now from 11.00am until 1.00pm

CONSULTATIONS: NEWS and ACTION

Since the re-launch of *Bulletin Board* in August 2003, there has never been a month with no relevant consultations to bring to members' attention – but that day has arrived. No doubt by next month, matters will have returned to normal and your views will be sought by DCSF and by NGA.

8 *Publications*

Items available include:

- ◆ *Welcome to Governance*: New edition now available. This popular guide for new governors provides an overview of, and introduction to, the role and responsibilities of a governing body, with sections on meetings, school budgets, policies, development planning, visiting the school and much more. Price: Single copies – £4.00 to members, £6.00 to non-members. Discounts for multiple copies: 10% for 2–5, 15% for 6–20, 20% for 21–100 and 25% for 100+.
- ◆ *Food Policy in Schools – A Strategic Policy Framework for Governing Bodies*. The revised publication was launched in September to take account of the new standards for school food. Available free from NGA.
- ◆ *Extended Schools – a Guide for Governors I* is available free from NGA.
- ◆ *Papers*: The papers cover a wide range of topics providing detailed guidance and information on aspects of governance. Two new papers were published in February: *Governors and the Curriculum* and *Governors and the Role of Inspection*. *The New Governor* has been updated. Price for all Papers: £3 to members and £4 to non-members.
- ◆ *School improvement through ICT – guidance for governors*. Hard copies of this guidance are available from NGA. It is also downloadable free from the NGA website.