

# National Governors' Association

## BULLETIN BOARD

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*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/NCSL Conference on Leadership Recruitment:** Sat. 26 January 2008, Thistle Hotel, Marble Arch, London – please note the Conference is now full – members are of course welcome to attend the EGM, which will follow the Conference.

### FOR INFORMATION

#### 1 NGA News

**NGA website:** The public site contains information on publications, events and activities. Don't forget, 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 it to be 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.

**EGM:** As announced at the AGM there will be an EGM held on 26 January, immediately following the Conference, to address changes in the Articles of Association. Details of the changes proposed, and explanations of the reasoning behind the proposals, can be found on the website. Go to 'Events', then 'EGM 26 January 2008'. Click on 'here' after the outline list of changes for full details.

**Governance issues:** In addition to the debate on nga-assocs regarding governance, the NGA Board has also discussed views on the future of governance and models of governance, in the light of changes in the role of school leaders and in the structure of schools. NGA also held a Symposium in September (*see Bulletin Board 10.07 for details*) and has held discussions with the DCSF on two occasions and with ASCL and NAHT. The topic even surfaced while NGA was presenting oral evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) – in discussing school leaders' responsibilities, and a head's accountability to the Governing Body, the members of STRB were very interested to learn that NGA was exploring governance issues.

***The DCSF will be launching a consultation about governance in the Spring. Watch out for it – make sure your views are submitted.***

#### 2 DCSF News

**Education and Skills Bill:** This Bill was presented to the House of Commons on 28 November but without any debate. As the Bill includes the raising of the school leaving age, it should be one to

keep an eye on. To find out the Bill's timetable and see the details of the Bill go to <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2007-08/educationandskills.htm>.

**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](mailto: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](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 ASCL, NAHT and ADCS (Association of Directors of Children's Services)** (13.12.07): NGA invited the members of the HEG group (Heads, Children's Services Officers and Governors) to look at governance issues. In the event, ADCS could not attend, although it did send comments. Despite the absence of ADCS, it was a useful meeting. Both ASCL and NAHT agreed the importance of the governing body in the strategic leadership of a school and concurred with many of NGA's views on the governing body's role, including the value of the stakeholder model.

**Meeting with Richard Brooks, Senior Policy Adviser to Secretary of State Ed Balls** (14.12.07): NGA was invited to meet Richard Brooks in part for some discussion of the Children's Plan, but more significantly to seek NGA's views about governance. As with a meeting with other DCSF officials in November, the aim was to ask NGA its view *before* launching the consultation referred to in item 2. It is an interesting departure to seek views before issuing a consultation.

**Ministerial Stakeholder Group on Behaviour and Attendance** (10.12.07): This group, chaired by Kevin Brennan MP, Minister of State for Children, has been involved in discussions concerning the recommendations of the 2005 Steer Report on Behaviour, some of which became part of the 2006 Education and Inspections Act. Much of the debate at this meeting centred in the perceptions of behaviour in schools and the media's appetite for stories of discipline problems in schools. In a survey carried out by DCSF most teachers asserted that their own school had few real issues but that in general behaviour had become worse in schools. In the same survey, parents did not mention that they had any part to play in their own children's behaviour – a rather worrying finding. All members of the group were asked, as individuals and through their organisations, to give positive messages about behaviour and discipline – or resist the temptation to make much of issues – in the hope of starving the media of information.

Other December events or meetings attended by NGA representatives (or for which NGA provided chairs or speakers) included: SFIG, School Teachers' Review Body (STRB), meeting with NASUWT, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), DCSF Third Sector Forum, launch of NAHT's publication which records the proceedings of the three sessions of its Commission of Inquiry into Assessment and League Tables, including presentations and additional articles on the topic.

### 4 New Year Honours

Five governors received awards in the Honours List:

**OBE:** Roy Harrison, Thomas Telford School and Sandwell Academy, West Midlands

**MBE:** John Allen, Bury CoE High School, Lancashire

Malcolm Broad, Patchway Community College and Portway Community School, Bristol

Richard Sams, Mallings School and Holmesdale Technology College Federation, Kent

David Wadkin, Oakwood Technology College, Rotherham

***It's good that governors are recognised for their considerable contribution to education, but the numbers should be greater. Do you know someone who deserves recognition? If so, go to the Cabinet Office website, click on New Year Honours List 2008/How to nominate.***

## **5 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.*

## **6 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](http://www.ncsl.org.uk/publications))

## **7 Teachers' TV**

Don't forget that 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](http://www.teachers.tv/associates). Associates can access the previews through this web link.

Programme information can be found at: [www.teachers.tv/programmeguide](http://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**

### **8 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006: Independent Safeguarding Authority Scheme Consultation**

The implementation of the Independent Safeguarding Authority scheme, under the terms of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 will introduce the most stringent vetting and barring service yet. The scheme will protect both children and vulnerable adults by preventing those who are known to pose a risk of harm accessing these groups through their work. The consultation seeks views on a wide range of policy issues that will ensure the successful implementation of the Act. This consultation is jointly published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, the Home Office, and the Department of Health.

The consultation can be found at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/)

Responses may be made online to: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/) or sent by email to: [SVGAct-Policy.CONULTATION@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SVGAct-Policy.CONULTATION@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk). Written responses should be sent to: Consultation Unit, Area 1A, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2GJ.

**DCSF deadline 20 February 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 1 February 2008.**

### **9 Confidence in Standards: Regulating and developing qualifications and assessment**

In September, Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, announced that the Government would establish an independent regulator of qualifications and tests in England.

*Confidence in Standards: Regulating and developing qualifications and assessment* sets out the detail of these proposals.

The Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator will be the guardian of standards across the tests and qualifications systems, building on the regulatory work of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The QCA will grow into a development agency for curriculum, assessment and qualifications. DCSF invites views on its proposals.

The consultation can be found at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/)

Responses may be made online to: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/) or sent by email to: [confidence.instandards@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:confidence.instandards@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk). Written responses should be sent to: Consultation Unit (Confidence in Standards), Area 1A, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2GJ.

**DCSF deadline 10 March 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 21 February 2008.**

## 10 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 revised papers were published in December 2007: *Governors who they are and what they do* and *Governors and Staffing*. *Governors and the Curriculum* and *Governors and the Role of Inspection* (revised February 2007) are also available. The other NGA papers are currently undergoing revision and will be available in 2008. Watch the website for more information. 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.