

National Governors' Association

BULLETIN BOARD

BB 3/09

1 March 2009

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

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.***

FOR ACTION: NGA DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Regional Meetings:

London: Saturday, 7.03.09; NCVO, Regent's Wharf, London; 10.30–1.00

Yorkshire & Humberside: Wednesday, 11.03.09; Holiday Inn, Wakefield; 7.00–9.00

South West: Saturday, 14.03.09; Holiday Inn, Taunton; 10.30–12.30

East Midlands: Monday, 23.03.09; venue tbc; 11.00–3.00

North West: Tuesday, 24.03.09; Swallow Hotel, Preston; 6.30–8.30

West Midlands: Wednesday, 25.03.09; NGA Office, Birmingham; 6.30–8.30

East: Tuesday, 28.04.09; Priory Hotel, Bury St Edmunds;

Full details and all relevant papers for the meetings are on the website at: www.nga.org.uk

National Events:

NGA Spring Conference: Saturday, 9 May 2009, Leeds (Hilton-Leeds City). (See item 4)

NGA Annual General Meeting: Saturday, 7 November 2009, Birmingham (Venue tbc)

FOR INFORMATION

1 NGA News

NGA website: The members' area: **please note we are still lacking details of the executive members of some associations. Please remember to contact the NGA office with names, addresses and email addresses of your association's committee** so that they will be able to log into the members' area and receive copies of the NGA magazine *Matters Arising*.

NGA Newsletter: Don't forget to look at the Newsletter on the NGA website for information, as well as reading the Bulletin Board. The Bulletin Board and Newsletter can both be found in the Briefing section of the website: www.nga.org.uk/newsletterandbulletin.aspx

2 NGA Awards for Governance and Outstanding Clerks

The judging process for the regional winners of the Outstanding Clerk of the Year has been completed. The winners are: North West – Annie Millard (Blackpool); North East – Tracy Young (North Tyneside); Yorkshire and Humberside – Ann Harrop (Hull); West Midlands – Dave Wallis (Coventry); East Midlands – Sandra Turland (Northamptonshire); East of England – Lorraine Barr (Cambridgeshire); London – Liz Parry (Croydon); South West – Mandy Cole (Wiltshire); South East – Joy Redfern (Hampshire). The standards were higher than ever this year, which is excellent. Many congratulations go to all the Regional Winners, who proved how important a clerk is to the effectiveness of a governing body.

The Awards Ceremony, at which the National Winner will be announced (as well as the Governing Body of the Year) and all presentations made, will be held on Saturday, 21 March 2009.

3 Celebrating Governance**

As members will know, there were more awards to governors in the New Year Honours List and NGA is establishing its award for Governance this year. However, we should like information on how governance is celebrated at local level. If your local authority has long service awards or any other way of raising the profile of governors, NGA would welcome details.

Please email Gillian Windass: Gillian.windass@nga.org.uk

4 The NGA Spring Conference – 9 May 2009 in Leeds (Hilton Leeds City)

The Conference will have a series of workshops on the following issues: recruitment and retention, special needs staff, staying within the law in regard to the Workforce Agreement and disability legislation, the importance of CPD for staff and developing effective relationships with parents. The programme for the event and a booking form can be found on the Events section of the NGA website www.nga.org.uk, or obtained from the NGA Office (Tel: 0121-643-5787) or by email at: governorhq@nga.org.uk

The conference is free to attend and is open to all governors – please circulate to your association members.

(The Hilton Leeds City is a short walk from Leeds Train Station.)

5 Meetings Digest

Ministerial Working Group on Governance: There is a possibility that there will be two more meetings of the Group, but there is still no date. The Group's Report still requires to be finalised. Its publication should be followed by the promised consultation. Despite the DCSF's seeming lack of urgency now about this whole matter, ***please respond to the consultation.***

NUT/NAHT Conference – The Future of Assessment (11.02.09): This conference was addressed by Professor Sir Tim Brighouse (member of the DCSF Expert Group on Assessment Arrangements), Barry Sheerman MP (Chair of the CS&F Select Committee), Warwick Mansell (journalist and author of *The Tyranny of Testing*), Mick Brookes (NAHT General Secretary), Christine Blower (Acting General Secretary of NUT) and Dr Christine Merrell (Acting Director Primary Director, Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring, University of Durham). NGA represented governors on a panel, taking questions and presenting views. NAHT presented the results of its parents' survey, which showed that more than 85% of parents wish to see an end to the current testing regime and to League Tables. All speakers gave evidence of the strength of feeling in favour of replacing KS2 SATs and abandoning League Tables. An Early Day Motion (685 – Assessment and Testing in Schools) is now in the House of Commons and all who support the view that the current regime needs to be replaced are encouraged to contact local MPs and request that they sign the EDM (<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDM/EDMList.aspx>). A lobby of Parliament is also planned.

Ministerial Stakeholder Group on Behaviour and Attendance (12.02.09): The meeting discussed the regrettable tendency of the media to concentrate on examples of bad behaviour in schools and ways of improving perceptions of behaviour in schools, though with scant success. It was confirmed to the meeting that PRUs are to be renamed 'short stay schools'. There will be a minimum curriculum requirement and information 'passports' to ensure the required information follows the child. A consultation is due out imminently.

New Relationships with Schools Well-Being Sub Group (19.02.09): The Group discussed Pupil Voice, School Level Indicators – responses to consultation and next steps to be taken and '21st Century Schools: Accountability: Partnerships aspects and the role of the SIP'. It looked at what was valid for pupils to be consulted upon: this included the timings of the school day, school meals, equalities, health and safety, curriculum, additional activities and the provision of sex and drugs education. Consultation with pupils would have to be meaningful but the governing body would not

have to act on findings. (A full consultation will be published in March.) Regarding Well-being Indicators, there was a general view that the starting point for all schools must be self evaluation and identifying where the well-being work needed to happen and how this could be melded into the School Report Card. Finally, discussion of 21st Century Schools focussed on the role of the SIP and the fact that SIP and Ofsted judgements could differ. If the School Report Card added yet another view, then the landscape would be totally confused. And, of course, all these judgements were made on the basis of schools working alone and so did not encourage partnership working – more work is being done on this.

Other February events or meetings attended by NGA representatives (or for which NGA provided chairs or speakers) included: Training and Development Agency, Capita Conference on Effective Leadership for School Improvement, British Association for Adoption and Fostering Reception, BSEC (BSF) Annual Exhibition and Conference, Lamb Enquiry Reference Group, DCSF Recording Incidents of Bullying, Bracknell Forest Governors' Conference, Lancashire Link Governors' Conference.

6 Small, Rural Primary School Federation Conferences 2009

The Department for Children, Schools and Families is hosting a series of events, which offer an opportunity to learn more about the benefits of both hard and soft federations and to hear about new policy developments relating to collaboration. The events, which are workshop based, will also feature plenary sessions led by officials from the DCSF and NCSL. The conferences, which are free, are aimed at head teachers and governors of small, rural primary schools, and are being held in four regional areas. *The Bristol event was attended by a number of NGA members and was a useful day. The remaining events are: Newcastle (19.03.09), London (1.04.09) and Birmingham (23.04.09).* For more information on the events and to register please visit: www.lewislive.co.uk/federationsconference.

7 The NGA First Certificate in Governance

This distance-learning programme is suitable for both new governors and existing governors who require a refresher or update. It consists 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 Programme is administered and run by EduCare, experts in distance learning. *The cost of the pack of four modules has now risen to £15 + VAT (£17.63). **To purchase the package with external external assessment, feedback and a Certificate the price is £36.75 +VAT.** A link to the EduCare website can be found under Resources on the NGA website. Alternatively, email the office for a hard copy of the form – governorhq@nga.org.uk.*

8 Teachers' TV

If you visit the Teachers' TV website and type in *Just for Governors* you can view a programme which looks at the merits of face-to-face, distance learning and online Governing Training, with input from the past Chair of NGA.

Programme information can be found by visiting the home page at: www.teachers.tv and clicking on *Full TV Guide* at the foot of the page.

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

9 NSCL/DCSF consultation – National Standards for School Leadership

This consultation concerns the revised National Standards for School Leadership. It is posted on the

National College for School Leadership website at www.ncsl.org.uk. Click on National Standards for School Leadership on the Home Page or use this link: <http://www.ncsl.org.uk/publications-national-standards-consultation>.

There is hardly any mention of governors although it refers to strategic aspects of school leadership so there is a need for as many governors as possible to respond.

NCSL/DCSF deadline 3 March 2009. There is just time to respond – please copy to NGA

10 21st Century Schools: A World-Class Education for Every Child / A School Report Card

In *The Children's Plan*, the DCSF out its ambition to make England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up. It has now produced two linked documents that set out further information and invite feedback. The first describes how the entire school system will need to change, and how individual schools will need to look beyond traditional boundaries, be outward facing and work in close partnership with young people, parents, other schools, colleges, universities and with other children's services. The second document is about School Report Cards, and seeks input on the principles that should govern the new report cards. Views are sought on both documents.

The consultation can be found at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/

Responses may be made online to: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/ or sent by email to: 21centuryschools.consultation@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk. Written responses should be sent to: Consultation Unit, DCSF, Ground Floor, Area GB, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

DCSF deadline 3 March 2009. Another last chance to respond – please copy to NGA

Also see 2020 Children's and Young People's Workforce Strategy. The strategy describes how Government will work with partners to ensure that all in the workforce receive support and development needed to obtain the best outcomes for children and young people. The consultation is aimed primarily at parents and members of the workforce, but governors may have views to share and observations to submit. Details are given at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/. Closing date: 10 March 2009.

And Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Data Arrangements. This concerns local authorities' collection of data and support for individual child level information for non-funded early years providers. Details are given at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/. Closing date: 8 May 2009.

11 Publications available from NGA

Items available include:

- ◆ *What governing bodies should expect from schools leaders and what school leaders should expect from governing bodies.* The NGA has signed a national agreement with the Association of School and College Leaders and the National Association of Headteachers setting out how these important groups should work together. The agreement establishes ground rules for the relationship between headteachers and governing bodies. The document can be downloaded from the Guidance section of the NGA website: www.nga.org.uk
- ◆ *Welcome to Governance 2008-09 Edition.* 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: £8.00.

For other NGA publications, visit both the Publications and Guidance sections of the NGA website www.nga.org.uk.

12 Other useful publications.

Recruiting Headteachers and Senior Leaders: 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 downloaded free from the NCSL website:

www.ncsl.org.uk/publications

School Improvement Planning Framework: (New Edition October 2008) To find out more about this useful tool visit the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) website. The framework can be downloaded or ordered in hard copy.

http://www.tda.gov.uk/leaders/schoolimprovement_framework.aspx

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)