

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 24 MAY 2005

SUBMISSION FOR SCHOOLS OF AMBITION PROGRAMME

Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To inform Members of the Education Committee of the submission from the Doon Learning Partnership for the Schools of Ambition Programme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) are promoting a programme entitled Schools of Ambition. The purpose of this programme is to provide additional funding to schools which display ambition and enthusiasm to make significant improvements in the provision of education for young people. This programme will be rolled out over the next few years and an initial group of 20 schools will be involved from August 2005. Although initial media reports suggested that the schools would be "failing schools", SEED and the Minister for Education have stressed that this is not the case and the programme documentation has clearly indicated this. Submissions were invited from all education authorities and schools across Scotland.
- 2.2** After initial discussions within the authority, it was agreed that a submission be made from Doon Learning Partnership. This involves Doon Academy, Bellsbank Primary, Dalmellington Primary, Dalrymple Primary, Littlemill Primary and Patna Primary. Discussions with representatives from SEED indicated that they would welcome such a partnership submission.
- 2.3** A total of 42 bids have been submitted and only 2 are on a partnership/cluster basis. A final decision on the first group of 20 schools is expected before the end of June 2005.

3. DOON LEARNING PARTNERSHIP SUBMISSION

- 3.1** The main emphasis of the Doon LP submission is based on all establishments working together towards improving the quality of provision for the young people in the Doon Valley area. The main theme underpinning the submission is that of a vocational emphasis, both across the primary and secondary sectors.
- 3.2** The main features of the submission are;
- To introduce vocational education provision for S3 to S6 in Doon Academy (this would be in collaboration with Kilmarnock College).

- To enhance the provision in PE, Dance and Drama for all pupils in the partnership.
- To provide laptops for all P6 and P7 pupils in order to further enhance the ICT skills and capabilities of the pupils
- To provide a health education worker on a full time basis in order to contribute to the development of healthy lifestyles for the pupils and their parents within the community.

3.3 The submitted proposal has been the subject of further work in anticipation of detailed negotiations and discussion with representatives from SEED. Staff and School Boards have been kept informed and engaged with the submission process.

4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

4.1 The proposal, if successful, will be monitored in terms of the impact on pupils using indicators such as leavers' destinations, attainment in National Qualifications, Numeracy and Literacy attainment, attendance, exclusions and achievements.

5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Schools of Ambition programme indicates that additional funding of £100,000 per year for 3 years will be provided to successful schools. However, SEED representatives have indicated that a partnership/cluster submission will attract additional funding to that proposed, although an exact figure has not yet been agreed.

6.2 The funding for the Schools of Ambition Programme will be ring-fenced and then will be additional to the mainstream budgets allocated to the Schools.

7. OUTCOME

7.1 Further meetings with SEED representatives will take place over the next few weeks in order to further refine the proposal and negotiate the details of the proposed activities. We have been informed that a decision on the first group of 20 schools will be made before the end of June 2005 and we are hopeful that the Doon Learning Partnership proposal will be included within the first group.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) note the submission from Doon Learning Partnership for the Schools of Ambition Programme;
- (ii) ask the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services to report further on progress with the proposal; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

JMcC/JBS
5 May 2005

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members requiring further information should contact John McCarney, Head of Service: Schools Support (01563) 576126

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