

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 12 SEPTEMBER 2006

SCOTTISH SCHOOL (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT) ACT – IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING IN 2006/07

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To inform Members of the Education Committee of progress on the implementation of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act and development plans within East Ayrshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Committee discussed the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Bill on 31 January and 21 March and a seminar was held for members after the latter meeting. The main aim of the Bill is to improve parental involvement and engagement in Education. The Bill received Royal Assent recently and correspondence from the Scottish Executive has confirmed that the implementation date is August 2007.
- 2.2** The Act will lead to the end of School Boards. All parents/carers will automatically be a member of the Parent Forum within each school. Each school will also develop a Parent Council from within the Forum. Other aspects of the Act are intended to further engage parents/carers directly in education.
- 2.3** There has been a range of consultation documents over the previous 18 months. Officers of the Council have been involved in local consultation with parents and other interested parties. A national conference to launch the new strategy will take place on 12 September 2006.

3. ACTION IN 2006/07

- 3.1** All authorities are charged with developing a strategy to further enhance parental involvement and engagement. This strategy must be submitted to the Scottish Executive in due course. It should clearly highlight the means of engaging further with parents and include details of Parent Forums and Parent Councils. The authority intends to engage parents/carers as fully as possible in this process, including through the Parents Steering Group (formerly the School Boards Steering Group).
- 3.2** A Strategy Group will be formed through the Parents Steering Group and will be representative of all interested parties. The main tasks of the Steering Group will be to:
- Devise the strategy for parental involvement within the authority

- Provide guidance to parents on enhanced engagement and involvement
- Devise guidelines for each educational establishment on the Parent Forum
- Devise guidelines for each educational establishment on the Parent Council
- Devise training as appropriate for staff and parents/carers

3.3 The Scottish Executive will provide national guidance on a number of the issues outlined in section 3.2. The authority intends to make use of the national guidance and tailor this to meet the needs of East Ayrshire.

4. FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Scottish Executive is providing ring-fenced funding of £18,500 through the National Priorities Action Fund for financial year 2006/07. This funding is to support the development work of enhancing parental involvement in education, including briefings and training for staff and pupils.

5. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

5.1 These activities contribute directly to the themes of “Promoting Community Learning” and Improving Opportunities”.

6. FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There will require to be changes to a number of documents, including Standard Circulars which refer to School Boards and their members. This work will be overtaken as part of the development work during 2006/07.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) note the creation of a Strategy Group to take forward the developments in parental involvement and engagement;
- (ii) note the additional funding provided to support this work; and
- (iii) otherwise note the content of this report.

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

JMcC/JW
25 August 2006

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Progress Report on Parental Involvement Bill – Education Committee, 31 January 2006
2. Parental Involvement – Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher Appointment Procedures: A Consultation Document, November 2005
3. Response to Parental Involvement – Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher Appointment Procedures: A Consultation Document - Education Committee, 21 March 2006

Members wishing further information should contact John McCarney, Head of Service Schools Support, Tel: (01563) 576126 or Muriel Reid, Quality Improvement Officer Tel: (01563) 555650.

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