

## EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

### EDUCATION COMMITTEE : 5 FEBRUARY 2002

#### SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY – EXAMINATION RESULTS 2001

##### Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to inform Elected Members of the performance of secondary schools in East Ayrshire in the National Qualification examinations and to provide benchmarking data from neighbouring authorities and nationally.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each year the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) publishes a report summarising the examination results of all Scottish Schools in the form of a set of Standard Tables. These tables contain information on results in Standard Grade, Higher Grade, Advanced Higher/Certificate of Sixth Year Studies and for the first time this year, Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2.
- 2.2 The Standard tables are produced on behalf of the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) by the Information, Analysis and Communications Division (IACD) using data supplied by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

The information is sent directly to schools for inclusion in school handbooks as part of the Scottish Executive's commitment to provide, publicly, more and better information about standards and quality in schools.

- 2.3 As part of its commitment to service monitoring and improvement the Department of Educational and Social Services commissioned a detailed analysis of the 2001 SQA results. This analysis covered all secondary schools, all subjects and all levels and the information produced formed the focus for School Senior Management in-service training. This form of analysis is highly valued by schools as a way of supporting their continuing drive for further improvement in learning and teaching.
- 2.4 The results for the individual schools and the summary information to the authority allows comparisons to be made of the performance of schools in East Ayrshire, nationally and with other local authorities.
- 2.5 A new framework for reporting attainment has been introduced. This framework brings together the existing qualifications with the new qualifications under the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

Table 1 matches the reported level to the qualification at that level

Table 1

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

<u>Reported Level</u>	<u>Qualifications Included</u>	
7	Advanced Higher @ A-C	CSYS @ A-C
6	Higher @ A-C	SCE Higher @ A-C
5	Intermediate 2 @ A-C	Standard Grade @ 1-2
4	Intermediate 1 @ A-C	Standard Grade @ 3-4
3	Access 3 cluster	Standard Grade @ 5-6

- 2.6** The statistics presented by the SEED report covering the three school years 1998-99 to 2000-2001 for East Ayrshire schools and for all schools nationally is attached as Appendix 1.

### **3. CONSIDERATIONS**

#### General

- 3.1** Members would wish to be aware that in the data contained in appendix 1, the 2001 data is pre-appeal while the data for the two preceding sessions is after appeals have been granted. The 2001 data will eventually show some increase once the outcome of the appeals process has been taken into account.

#### Standard Grade (Reported Levels 3,4 and 5 in Table 1 above)

- 3.2** The fourth year roll in East Ayrshire schools rose sharply in session 2000-2001 from just over 1300 to well over 1500 (+18%). This increase is not mirrored nationally (+4%) nor by the neighbouring authorities where the roll has either remained stable or has decreased.
- 3.3** The actual number of awards at level 5 (Standard Grade – Credit 1 or 2) or better, rose from 425 to 448 but due to the sizeable increase in the fourth year roll across East Ayrshire the percentage at this level shows a slight decrease to 29%. The national figure was static at 32%.
- 3.4** The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at level 4 (Standard Grade – General 3 or 4) or better, remained constant at 75%. The national position also remained stable at 77%.
- 3.5** The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at level 3 (Standard Grade – Foundation 5 or 6) or better, increased by 2% from 90% to 92%. The national position remained constant at 91%.

### Higher Grade in Fifth Year (Level 6)

- 3.6** The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at level 6 (Higher Grade A to C) rose by 1% from 6% to 7%. There was a corresponding 1% rise nationally to 9%.
- 3.7** The percentage of pupils achieving 3 or more awards at level 6 (Higher Grade A to C) rose from 17% to 20%. Nationally this measure showed a 1% decrease to 22%.
- 3.8** The percentage of pupils achieving 1 or more awards at level 6 (Higher Grade A to C) rose from 32% to 38%. Nationally this measure showed a 2% decrease to 39%.
- 3.9** It is encouraging to note that in 5 of the 6 aspects shown in appendix 1, East Ayrshire schools have either maintained earlier improvement or further enhanced their performance from the preceding session.
- 3.10** The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 placed a statutory duty on authorities to seek to secure improvement in the quality of school education. The Act requires authorities to set improvement objectives in respect of each of the national priorities (including attainment) and in particular authorities must state the measure to be taken to raise standards.

The Department of Educational and Social Services has

- held seminars for senior staff to provide guidance in the analysis of examination results.
- commissioned the services of nationally recognised consultants to undertake an in depth analysis of the results of all secondary schools and to further advise headteachers on strategies for improvement.
- published information to parents on the progress of the target setting exercise.
- provided a range of relevant in-service and staff development courses for teachers.

As in previous years it is anticipated that school senior management, in partnership with the Quality Development Team, their School Board and their staff, will use all data and corresponding analysis as part of their programme of self-evaluation, monitoring and review, and also as a basis for open professional discussion.

#### **4. LEGAL/POLICY/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1** It is recommended that Members of the Education Committee:

- i) support schools in the use of examination analysis as part of their strategies for systematic review and evaluation of performance.
- ii) support the use of such data and analysis as a basis for professional discussions within schools, with parents and with the department.
- iii) otherwise note the content of the report.

John Mulgrew  
Director of Educational and Social Services

DM/MR  
7 January 2002

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- i) Scottish Executive Education Department Standard Tables

Members wishing further information should contact Graham Short, Head of Schools, Tel: (01563) 576192

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER : GRAHAM SHORT**

**AGENDA**