

From: [Redact]
Sent: 10 March 2018 09:06:36
To: scottish.ministers@gov.scot
Subject: [Redacted] to cut workload to tackle teacher shortage - BBC News

Mr Swinney, as the same pressures and problems exist north of the border can you let me know what you plan to do about it please? To reply with some party political verbiage, rather than take the issue seriously, only confirms in my mind that our politicians are not serious about dealing with the issue.

The issue of excessive workload is unacceptable to both teachers and pupils and has to be dealt with once and for all. I'm sure you know teachers who spend hours every evening and weekend preparing lesson plans and marking outside of school. It has went on for far too long and needs decisive political action.

Many thanks, [Redacted]

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-43345857>

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SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN ANSWER

14 February 2018

Index Heading: Education, Communities and Justice

[Redacted **(South Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party)**: To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to reported comments by the EIS that the proposed Head Teachers' Charter could create "additional bureaucratic and managerial tasks on top of an already severe workload burden".

S5W-14293

John Swinney: We are reforming the education system to empower schools and headteachers to make decisions that most affect learning and teaching. The reforms will empower headteachers to become leaders of learning and not chief administrators of their schools. We want to give headteachers the freedom to select and manage the teachers and staff in their school. Local authorities will continue to be responsible for providing high quality education support services to schools.

Through our Education Bill consultation we specifically sought views on the support headteachers would need to be able to take forward their Charter functions, as we want headteachers to be properly supported as well as empowered. The consultation closed on 30 January and responses will be fully considered.

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 22 May 2018 14:02:25
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: Use of Supply Teachers in Schools

For MACCS please

[Redacted] | Assistant Private Secretary (Correspondence) to John Swinney
MSP | Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary Education and Skills | Scottish
Government | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | Ext 0131 244 7050

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From: [Redacted]
Sent: 21 May 2018 08:52
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Subject: Use of Supply Teachers in Schools

Dear John,
I have worked as a supply teacher on and off for about 20 years in Fife.
I am more and more called on to cover teachers who are in school but attending meetings.
I have said in the schools that I think this is unacceptable and unfair on the pupils to which everyone agrees but the practice continues.
I don't know if this is a practice in other regions but if we are trying to improve Scottish Education then one big step would be for teacher's first responsibility to be in their classroom with their class.
I know nothing is straightforward but this is a relatively new thing but not good for staff or pupils.
thank you
[Redacted]

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From: [Redacted]
Sent: 26 June 2018 11:00:16
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: Fwd from a Teacher

For MACCS please

[Redacted] | Assistant Private Secretary (Correspondence) to John Swinney
MSP | Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary Education and Skills | Scottish
Government | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | Ext 0131 244 7050

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From: [Redacted]
Sent: 23 June 2018 16:03
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Subject: Fwd from a Teacher

Many thanks for what you wrote supporting us in the workplace, it gave needed hope. It gave us a short boost. We thought we were being heard. We thought you had made a great effort to ask us.

Thank you.

However

Please be aware that increasing the number of QIO posts and QIM does nothing to raise attainment. Re-writing of benchmarks and other documents in local authorities, which has happened all over, is a waste of money.

Having head teachers as managers and not leaders and supporters of teachers is detrimental. They used to say no and speak for us.

Head teachers appear now to be conduits for work to stress themselves and teachers further. They are not heard. Corridors are scattered with documents extolling the curriculum principles instead of high quality children's work as it used to be. Mission statements are not learning.

Teachers know how to work without help, honestly. I think you do know and appreciate this.

Tying up teachers in curriculum speak, expectations beyond the possible, drives young teachers away. They drive themselves into the ground and then go part time or leave if they can.

If you only speak to managers you are not hearing what is happening.

Still being asked to assess individual e's and o's , benchmarks etc.

Still working ten hour days.

MCrone time often lost and not paid back, this is contractual.

Still having paperwork overload.

Still having support cut for vulnerable children, while money is badly spent.

We are not teaching two languages by the way, not in most schools. We barely manage to teach the basics due to cuts. How does it feel? Utterly depressing.

PSA hours cut again when support needs have increased. Our school has not lost any support needs and has more children coming from Nursery that have need but hours are being cut?

PSA staff are often kicked, sworn and spat at but do invaluable work, support attainment and cost little by comparison to some of the spending that occurs. They also keep teachers teaching, this does raise attainment. Please do not say there is no money, lots is spent on documents, reports, buildings and expensive upper management.

PSA's, they are all we need ... cut the rest. You will not of course hear this except from teachers. Management is rarely seen in School. We were told QIO's would be in School 4/5 days two years ago. This does not happen. They have no idea how teachers are and don't wish to know.

If every person in education was cut from head teacher and above and money used at the chalk face for PSA 's attainment will be raised. Radical yes, unrealistic yes. Value for return , enormous. Parent satisfaction, through the roof.

However, spending is in the hands of managers not teachers. They will not recommend job cuts for themselves! Indeed they have increased in number. Head teachers have been told new money cannot be used for PSA's, are you aware of this? Shiny new resources are no use when you have 2,3,4 children with specific needs in your class and no help. These children can use up 40% or more of your time. Who speaks for the other children, they all have needs too.

I do not need another resource, or management tier. I need a PSA . I cannot be inclusive as I wish and raise attainment without one. GIRFEC is not the reality. Less support is less learning.

Cut everything, managers, resources but give us PSA's and we will raise attainment I promise.

Glow alone has cost a ridiculous amount, a national scandal, most of what is there is available free on line. Try using glow, I dare you. See how long it takes to upload a piece of work from a class of 30. Really check, spend time, try and find something on it using the search.....is it value added? I pay tax too.

Please also stop allowing private companies, of which there are more each year, coming to schools to deliver 'fabulous workshops' ..., sometimes this is true . This is money schools now need for PSA's to support basic learning. Teachers are also tax payers and voters.

It really is simple, it needs no extra paper work or workload, just good head teachers. Teachers enabled to do their job along with PSA's . Learning solved. Attainment raised, behavioural support solved, staff retained.

All the evidence points to high quality teachers, working hard, improving each day making the difference.

As Dylan Wiliam says

? fail better every day?

Double the number of Smart boards in London Boroughs for example, no increase in attainment...odd you may think, but true.

PLEASE watch Dylan Wiliam, guru of formative assessment, educational giant, on u tube, the clip from the Schools Network Annual Conference. Superb, should be watched by every teacher and head.

All the research is there.

Please when you visit schools in the future, speak to teachers, not in the presence of managers, ask them to be honest and hear what they know and can do for you. Ask if they feel supported, probe for answers. Ask if they feel they are heard. Ask them if management is a productive force for them, ask them what would help.

I do not wish to be contacted, identified or this information to be passed on. There is a culture of silence and ramifications for those who speak. This is why good teachers if they can, leave.

I do not claim to be anything other than someone strongly interested in Scottish Education and it's delivery. It is utterly demoralising to have a brain and see what is happening.

I'm sure tomorrow will be a better day, it has to be, try to at least pass this to Mr Swinney.

Please excuse any frustration it takes a long, long time to get here. I'm sure I could have put it all better but I am tired.

Kind regards

A desperately frustrated teacher who loves switching on little light bulbs each day.

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03 SEP 2018
Ref: [Redacted]

eis

The Educational
Institute of Scotland

Mr John Swinney
Deputy First Minister / Cabinet Secretary for Education
and Skills
The Scottish Government
St. Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Ref: AB/LM
27 August 2018
[Redacted]

Dear Mr Swinney

I write on behalf of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), in particular our Secondary members, who have waited expectantly since at least last term, and thus far in vain, for an announcement from you on the future of RPA.

At the end of August, when two full months of learning and teaching within National 5 qualifications are now almost complete, the absence of any announcement points to the de facto continuance of RPA, billed in March 2017 as a temporary arrangement only and to be applied as a rare exception.

As you are aware, SQA data indicates that the use of RPA last session was far in excess of exceptional, in some schools it being the universal approach. In hundreds, into the thousands of cases, therefore, neither the burden of teacher workload nor of student assessment, was alleviated as promised following the agreement around the removal of mandatory internal assessment within National 5 courses. The EIS warned that this would happen.

This session, without a clear decision having been made, or at least communicated to the profession, this poor picture will inevitably be replicated. Schools have already placed students onto N5 courses, some with the intention of using RPA, having drawn the conclusion that no news from the DFM on RPA must mean no change. The right decision to revoke RPA, if made now, would therefore come at entirely the wrong time for schools and their N5 students.



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General Secretary · [Redacted]

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In light of this, the frustration of our members is two-fold: at being kept in the dark about an arrangement perceived to be critical to presentation decisions, until beyond the last minute; and at the reality of another year ahead of excessive workload and over-assessment for large numbers of teachers and students of National 5 courses.

Of further concern to the EIS is that the continuance of RPA acts as a blockage in the system. It discourages movement away from unnecessary annual presentations in favour of greater diversification of progression pathways and the creation of curriculum architecture in the senior phase that could enrich the learning of the young people who undertake the courses.

To address this issue and to salve the deep frustration of our members, the removal of RPA is an absolute necessity for next session and must be communicated to schools without further delay.

I trust that you will give serious consideration to the matter and act swiftly and fittingly to prevent uncertainty at best on the future of RPA next session, at worst yet another year of detriment to students and teachers of National 5 courses.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]



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From: [Redacted]
Sent: 02 July 2018 12:27:32
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Equitrac Scan-to-Me

Attachments: u440357_02-07-2018_12-27-10.pdf



The Educational
Institute of Scotland

John Swinney MSP
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for
Education and Skills
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Ref: AT/KN
27 June 2018

Dear Mr Swinney

Today the EIS has delivered to you over 25,000 signatures in support of our 10% pay claim. This is a significant response, primarily from teachers but including parents and members of the public also, which we hope you will take heed of.

On the post cards we cite the various "Ten for 10" reasons why we believe our claim is justified and why we believe that as the Cabinet Secretary for Education you need to show that you value Scotland's teachers in the same manner that your Government's rhetoric asserts its valuing of Scottish Education.

Morale is low amongst the profession. A decade of austerity driven budget cuts, public sector pay restraint, and an ever-increasing workload driven by reforms and changes which teachers feel they have no control over, have all served to sap the energy and joy from the profession.

You are aware of the significant recruitment and retention challenge we face in our schools; pay and excessive workload lie behind the developing crisis.

If these issues are to be addressed effectively, it is time for the Scottish Government to show that it really does value its teachers.

The EIS looks forward to a positive response from you.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]



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General Secretary · Larry Flanagan



From: [Redacted]
Sent: 04 April 2018 15:34:46
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: National 5 / National 4 suggestion

For MACCS please.

DFM has requested that officials prepare a considered reply with SQA input.

Thanks

[Redacted]

[Redacted] | Assistant Private Secretary (Correspondence) to John Swinney
MSP | Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary Education and Skills | Scottish
Government | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | Ext 0131 244 7050

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-----Original Message-----

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 31 March 2018 21:45
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Subject: National 5 / National 4 suggestion

Dear Mr. Swinney,

I am a secondary teacher and love my job but like every other teacher I know I am frustrated by the admin and the bureaucracy of the qualifications system. It just seems unnecessarily complicated.

Last year you announced that unit assessments would be scrapped for all National 5 courses which initially was welcomed by the majority of my colleagues. The reality is very different. This year I have two National 5 Physics classes to prepare for their final exam in May and I have loved every minute of this journey with them. I'm not sure they have loved it as much as me. A total of 37 pupils, I have taught, will be presented for exam in May but in my professional opinion there are a few who will not make the grade and will be presented for both National 5 and the lesser award of National 4. The pupils know that National 4 is not a qualification that has any value in the real world.

To achieve National 4, unit assessments still have to be completed. Given that I, and many of my colleagues, can identify children who are struggling within the first few weeks of a National 5 course we coax and encourage as much as we possibly can but we are ever mindful that we will need to administer unit assessments as a 'safety net' in case the child does not pass the National 5 course and final exam. The issue arises over labelling, identifying and handpicking a minority of children as 'failures' or National 4 candidates. Teachers don't like it, parents don't like it and it is unfair,

demotivating and potentially cruel and damaging to children. Sometimes teachers are wrong and these children do pass National 5. This is a win of the best kind.

In order that potential National 4 pupils leave with a certificate for their efforts (or lack of) we administer the unit assessments required for National 4 to ALL pupils. This way no one feels singled out, of lesser ability, demotivated or labelled. This isn't doing much to reduce teacher workload and we lose valuable teaching time to, in most cases, irrelevant assessments.

English, Maths and other subjects with larger pupil numbers and more teachers may well be in a position to offer separate National 4 and National 5 classes but In the STEM subjects lack of teachers and lack of uptake by pupils very often means that bi (and sometimes tri) level teaching is the reality.

The common perception of National 4 qualifications by pupils, teachers, university admissions staff and industry professionals is that they are largely worthless.

I suggest that we award a National 4 qualification to anyone who achieves below grade 8 in National 5, this would recognise positive achievement, maintain the integrity of our exam system, really, properly and actually reduce teacher workload and provide the pupils with some aspiration, knowing that the 'safety net' is gone.

Perhaps the National 4 qualification would be viewed with a little more credibility as it would have an exam at the end of it. The current situation with resit after resit, targeted teaching and a very pupil specific and focussed approach means it is almost impossible to fail National 4 through the recognising positive achievement approach. It does however mean a massive amount of additional work for class teachers.

I hope you don't think I am being contentious. To me, it looks to be an obvious and common sense approach and a win win for all concerned. One course, one assignment, lots of outcomes to be achieved and ultimately one exam. Quite frankly if a pupil achieves below 40% in a subject I would question whether they should receive any award but, at present, National 4 is awarded for far less.

I would welcome your thoughts and if you would like clarification or more information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

[Redacted]

Sent from my iPad

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