

## Email Chain 1

From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]  
<[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@gmail.com<mailto:[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@gmail.com>>  
Sent: 25 February 2019 12:48  
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
<DFMCSE@gov.scot<mailto:DFMCSE@gov.scot>>  
Subject: GIRFEC and Shanarri - Aspiration rather than Reality?

Dear Mr Swinney

I am writing to you primarily as a parent, but also as a teacher of more than 20 years. I would appreciate it if you could see your way to replying to me as a fellow parent, rather than a politician with spin and an agenda that does not concern me. My [Redact – 38(1)(b)] has returned from school to state that he cannot take the subjects he wishes to take next year in S3 due to staffing issues and timetabling constraints. My son is an aspiring engineer, and wishes to take 3 sciences, technical studies, graphic design and art. Doors are being shut to him through no fault of his own. How is this getting it right for every child? As a parent yourself, how would this make you feel? How would you see the state of Scottish education through my eyes and those of my son?

As a teacher myself I have sadly come to the decision that this will be my last year of teaching in Scotland. [Redact – 1 sentence 38(1)(b)] How is right or proper when teachers are shown such poor consideration, given massive PT workloads that they are not paid for in totally unrelated faculties? How is this getting it right for every child, when their teachers are leaving or off with stress? I admit I'd like a wage that does not leave me overdrawn at the end of the month, but I'd rather have an Education Secretary that listens and wants to change what has become a profession that I will no longer be in come the end of April.

I await your reply with interest.  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

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## Email Chain 2

From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)] <[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@parliament.scot>  
Sent: 23 April 2019 10:39  
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>  
Subject: FW: Subject Choices at [Redact – 38(1)(b)]  
From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

Sent: 23 April 2019 10:32

To: gillian

<renwick@eastdunbarton.gov.uk<mailto:renwick@eastdunbarton.gov.uk>>

Cc: Swinney J (John), MSP

<John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>>

Subject: Subject Choices at [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

Dear Gillian

I hope you had a happy and holy Easter - and enjoyed the good weather!

It has come to my attention that [Redact – 38(1)(b)] has removed German as a subject choice for second year pupils, apparently (as was the case last year for my daughter) there were pupils who had wanted to take German in their third year. I have checked the subject choice forms on the school's website and see that German does not exist as an option for second year pupils going into third year, and for fourth year pupils going into fifth year. Of course, we know the current third year pupils were denied access to German, and so, there still is no option for them to pick it up in fourth year. You will, of course, be aware that an additional language teacher was brought in at the start of this year (whom I understand may be qualified to deliver French and German), and of course, East Dunbartonshire Council benefits from funding from the German Government to promote German across the region.

Given you attend Parent Council meetings, was the decision to reduce subject choices ever discussed? I am interested in knowing because not only are parents like me making a decision to send their child to a particular school so they can access German, but I have it in writing from [Redact – 38(1)(b)] and [Redact – 38(1)(b)] that there may be the possibility of picking German up in the Senior Phase. I recently attended the Parent's Talk about subject choices at the school for S3 pupils (which quite frankly was geared more to promoting the school's manufactured statistics) and no mention was made of pupils being able to pick up subjects in the Senior Phase. At the Parent's Talk, the management, [Redact – 38(1)(b)], [Redact – 38(1)(b)] and [Redact – 38(1)(b)] were not even prepared to field general questions from the audience. Therefore, I can only assume I have been provided with false and misleading information by both East Dunbartonshire Council and teachers at [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

As you also know, it was suggested by another parent at the Parents Council meeting which I attended last year, that German could be provided as an after school club at [Redact – 38(1)(b)] - why has this not been delivered when clearly there is no cost argument, pupils in S2 are still expressing an interest in German and we are sending pupils to Pfullendorf on a school exchange programme without a word of German to their credit? Despite, the East Dunbartonshire Council's legal duty and teachers' professional duty to ensure all pupils realise their full potential, I note the only option [Redact – 38(1)(b)] was agreeable to was for me to PAY for German tutoring and for the school to allow my daughter to sit the exam at the school - statistics before pupils in

action! At that meeting, I also pointed out that employers regard German as the preferred modern language and this was supported recently by an article in The Times, where the number of vacancies requiring German outstripped those requiring French, Spanish or Mandarin. I have previously provided you with an article quoting the Regius Professor for German at St Andrew's University which also stated it would be a mistake not provide access to German simply because the numbers are lower than other languages classes, particularly when there is no minimum number for a class to run at secondary school.

I attach the article in this morning's Herald and The Times - it seems, despite whatever spin [Redact – 38(1)(b)] wants to put on statistics, [Redact – 38(1)(b)], being in a relatively affluent suburb of Glasgow, is actively widening the attainment gap and isolating students from the wider range of subjects which should be available in East Dunbartonshire Schools, particularly German when there is direct funding from the German Government and the Scottish Government promotes language learning under the One Plus Two Approach -

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/17589741.warning-as-subject-choice-atsecondary-school-continues-todecline/><

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.heraldscotland.com%2Fnews%2F17589741.warning-as-subject-choice-at-secondarieschool-continues-to-decline%2F&data=01%7C01%7CJohn.Swinney.msp%40parliament.scot%7C91652c8cb52744bf71d308d6c7ce8ecd%7Cd603c99ccfdd4292926800db0d0cf081%7C1&sdata=q5Z1TQpiZ9gcWIDoKM6C1vPiPDCAq7qbvvDRb1UAfUI%3D&reserved=0>>

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/scotland/high-schools-criticised-for-restrictingsubject-choicesz7mbpfk68><

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.thetimes.co.uk%2Fedition%2Fscotland%2Fhigh-schools-criticised-for-restricting-subject-choices-z7mbpfk68&data=01%7C01%7CJohn.Swinney.msp%40parliament.scot%7C91652c8cb52744bf71d308d6c7ce8ecd%7Cd603c99ccfdd4292926800db0d0cf081%7C1&sdata=bjwyhKk45acVNXHvGWODwXU0lyiDmmnFYzPjN5dQNQU%3D&reserved=0>>

Pupils are entitled to a personalised education both in terms of the Curriculum for Excellence and in terms of their statutory rights, but it seems East Dunbartonshire Council is ignoring this, and claiming cost as the reason - this is not a defence. In my opinion, it is an admission of poor management and a lack of talent and/or integrity in East Dunbartonshire Council's education department. I note the Scottish Government has been looking for evidence of local decision making which restricts access to subjects, hence why Mr Swinney is copied into this email. Parents have not been advised of the decision to remove German as a subject choice at this school.

As you are a member of the Education Committee, I would like an update from you on how German is going to be reinstated at this school, or how it is going to be delivered to pupils at [Redact – 38(1)(b)] taking account of the investment made by the German Government. Cost is not a defence.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards

[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

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**Email Chain 3**

From: Rachael Hamilton MSP

<[Rachael.Hamilton.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Rachael.Hamilton.msp@parliament.scot)<<mailto:Rachael.Hamilton.msp@parliament.scot>>>

Sent: 23 April 2019 14:59

To: Scottish Ministers

<[Scottish\\_Ministers@gov.scot](mailto:Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot)<[mailto:Scottish\\_Ministers@gov.scot](mailto:Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot)>>

Cc: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]@parliament.scot<[mailto:\[Redact – 38\(1\)\(b\)\]@parliament.scot](mailto:[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@parliament.scot)>

Subject: (Case Ref: RH382)

Please find attached a letter regarding Higher choices.

Kind regards,

[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

The Office of Rachael Hamilton MSP

7, Abbey Court, Kelso TD5 7JA

01573 224862

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Rachael Hamilton MSP  
Member of the Scottish Parliament for Ettrick, Roxburgh & Berwickshire constituency

Mr John Swinney MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills  
Education and Skills  
Scottish Government  
St. Andrews House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG  
Our Ref: RH0382 23 April 2019

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I am writing on behalf of a constituent, who is concerned that her daughter will not be able to take geography Higher at [Redact – 38(1)(b)] School, as the school have decided to limit their

Higher offering. She tells me that she is concerned about the lack of choice now being offered at Higher and Advanced Higher level in the school, and how that might affect her daughter's university application.

I would be grateful for your comments in order that I might pass them on to my constituent.

Yours sincerely,  
Rachael Hamilton MSP  
Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire

7 Abbey Court, Kelso, TD5 7JA  
Tel: 01573 224862 email: [rachael.hamilton.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:rachael.hamilton.msp@parliament.scot)

#### Email Chain 4

From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)] <[\[Redact – 38\(1\)\(b\)\]@gmail.com](mailto:[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@gmail.com)>  
Sent: 25 April 2019 15:36

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: School Subjects

Dear First Minister,

Following the article in the courier today, I have just found out that my options in [Redact – 38(1)(b)] School are very limited.

I am currently about to go in to sixth year where i was hoping to take, Advanced Higher English, Higher Modern Studies, Higher History and Higher Sociology. I am hoping to study Social Work at Dundee University which the minimum requirement of highers is four at A?s and B?s.

I have been told yesterday and today that Higher History and Higher Sociology will no longer be running due to the numbers of pupils. This has really shocked me as there are Higher classes this year running with only four pupils, my current Philisophy class only has about seven people as well. At first I was very upset, but I had two alternatives in mind which were Classical Studies and Higher Geography- neither of these are running either.

I am now stuck as I have been trying to speak to teachers about the limitations that I am having to deal with alone as a 16 year old. I am worried about the competition at Dundee University, this is very scary for me as Social Work is a career that I have been wanting to peruse since i was eleven years old.

This year I am sitting Higher English, Higher Psychology and Higher Philosophy which my targets grades are all A?s for. Next year I am now only able to do one other higher (Modern Studies) and advanced higher english. This leaves me with 4 Highers rather the six that i am able to do.

As of today, I have been given few options from [Redact – 38(1)(b)] which were to sit my Highers at other schools in [Redact – 38(1)(b)] which I think is a lot to ask for of a sixteen year old, baring in mind this could be across three or four different sites!

It is very disappointing for me as I am now trying to revise for my Highers with this in the back of my head which is starting to affect my mental health. [Redact – 1 sentence - 38(1)(b)] Thanks for reading this, I would greatly appreciate your advice as I am not sure what to do.

Yours sincerely,  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

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## Email Chain 5

From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]  
<[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@aol.com<mailto: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]@aol.com>>  
Sent: 20 March 2019 13:19  
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot<mailto:firstminister@gov.scot>>  
Subject: Fife

First Minister

I write further to my email of 24 September to which I have yet to receive a reply.

Last year, your Government stated: "Every pupil should have the best support throughout their education, which includes access to high-quality, up-to-date facilities that parents, staff and children can be proud of?. Also, ?We will keep up the momentum of improvements in education facilities throughout Scotland."

The reality here in Fife? Many Fife secondary schools are in very bad condition and certainly not up-to-date. Surely it?s time to put some money from the central budget to build new schools for our young people in this region? Why should our children and teachers be expected to attend schools with buckets collecting rain water coming through the roof and identified asbestos issues? Friends who work with schools in Malawi have made unfavourable comparisons.

Sadly, it?s not just the buildings either. Not one Fife secondary school features among top 50 State Schools in Scotland in 2018, nor the year before. Yet Fife Council blithely continues to cut funding for our secondary schools.

Fife Council?s recent budget cut the supply teacher budget by ?264,000 for this year with more savings planned for 2020-21 and 2021-22. In effect, this means our schools increasingly have to deploy ?babysitting? for classes. This will not help close the attainment gap.

Furthermore, Fife Council took away another ?500,000 from Devolved School Management budgets for secondary schools this year with savings of ?750,000 proposed for the following two years.

Headteachers at [Redact – 38(1)(b)]and [Redact – 38(1)(b)] are having to be in the classroom, teaching subject classes due to shortage of funds and teachers, whilst also working hard to find savings in the region of ?346k for each of their schools this year. Subject choice is narrowing from S3 onwards in Fife schools, to meet budget savings. We will soon find ourselves in a situation where there will be no engineers, doctors or lawyers coming from state schools in Scotland as they will not have access to a sufficient number of subjects or high enough grades to get into university to study these professions which is deplorable. As a parent, I watch powerless as this crisis in secondary education unfolds before me. When will the Scottish Government

recognise that state school children in Fife are having their future life chances capped in this way?

The Scottish Government cannot abrogate themselves of responsibility for education in Fife.

The funding coming to local government, un-ringfenced, is insufficient to meet the needs of our young people. Additional funding from the Scottish budget that is ringfenced, does not address the issues facing our secondary schools. I base my judgements on figures published by SPICE. The secondary school that my two older children attend has [Redact – 38(1)(b)] less to spend on educating [Redact – 38(1)(b)] this year which is more than disappointing.

I hope you will consider this email and hear my concerns. Fife Councillors are oblivious.

Yours sincerely  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

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## **Email Chain 6**

From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)] <[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@parliament.scot>  
Sent: 11 February 2019 16:37  
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>  
Subject: FW: Midlothian Council budget proposed savings, Impacts on Education and Health, [Redact – 38(1)(b)]  
From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)]  
Sent: 11 February 2019 16:27  
To: Grahame C (Christine), MSP  
<Christine.Grahame.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:Christine.Grahame.msp@parliament.scot>>; Beattie C (Colin), MSP  
<Colin.Beattie.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:Colin.Beattie.msp@parliament.scot>>; danielle.rowley.mp@parliament.uk<mailto:danielle.rowley.mp@parliament.uk>; Swinney J (John), MSP  
<John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>>  
Subject: Midlothian Council budget proposed savings, Impacts on Education and Health, [Redact – 38(1)(b)]School

Dear Ms. Grahame, Mr Beattie, Ms. Rowley and Mr. Swinney,

I write to you respectively as MSPs and MP in Midlothian and as the Scottish Education Secretary to represent [Redact – 38(1)(b)] School Parent Council in [Redact – 38(1)(b)]. We are deeply concerned by the proposed cuts to education and other budgets recently proposed by Midlothian Council and the impacts this will have on students at the school and more widely in Midlothian. In particular we feel the cuts will act to increase the attainment gap, to reduce social mobility and to denude curriculum choice and academic excellence. We also think that the proposed removal of the Active Schools project and the reduction of other physical activity programmes will have long term impacts on physical and mental health in the county. These fly in the face of the Council's own headline aims and government policy. I enclose the letter we have sent to Midlothian Council in this respect.

We have yet to be able to discuss these concerns directly with Councillors and we understand that there are disagreements about the causes of pressure on Midlothian's budget. However, we want you to be aware of our concerns and we ask that you consider what can be done across political divides to prevent harm being done.

Regards,

[Redact – 38(1)(b)],

[Redact – 38(1)(b)],

[Redact – 38(1)(b)] School Parent Council, [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

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[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

[Redact – 38(1)(b)] School Parent Council

To: Midlothian Council

11th February 2019

Dear Mr Milligan, Councillors and Officers,

RE: [Redact – 38(1)(b)] School Parent Council; Response to Midlothian Council 'Change Programme Addressing the Financial Challenge for 2019/20'

I write representing [Redact – 38(1)(b)] School Parent Council. We wish to respond to the programme of financial savings outlined in the recent Midlothian Council document 'Change Programme Addressing the Financial Challenge for 2019/20' in preparation for the Council's budget meeting on 12/02/19.

We fully appreciate the nature and severity of the financial pressures upon the Council but we are literally incredulous at some aspects of what is proposed and given that these directly oppose the underlying principles of the Council's own headline strategy, that is:

- Reducing the gap in learning outcomes
- Reducing the gap in health outcomes
- Reducing the gap in economic circumstances

We are seriously concerned by the profound impacts that some of these cuts will have on social mobility, reduction in the attainment gap across society, proactive improvement of physical and mental health, and the threat to future wealth generating potential and societal well-being. Naturally we are concerned about the specific impacts of these cuts on the young people at [Redact – 38(1)(b)] but our fears extend to the effects on the people of Midlothian and Scotland overall. [Redact – 38(1)(b)] School's students come from a wide diversity of

social backgrounds and the increase in disparity across the social spectrum that these cuts herald will be starkly visible within the school.

We deplore the overall diminution in the teaching allocation budgets, the cuts to library provision and the reduction to LLE provision. We also note with disquiet the proposed cuts to the cleaning budgets for schools. However, we wish to respond principally to three areas of the proposed savings in Learning Support, Active Schools and Exercise provision, and Creative Arts teaching.

Learning Support and Educational Psychology.

The Council's own risk appraisal of its proposed cuts in these areas is a litany of potential catastrophe in the education of those with the most substantial challenges:

- *'Support for behaviours in schools will be reduced. This may increase the number of exclusions and out of authority placements as advice and training around behaviour supports, mental health and Adverse Childhood Experiences are the biggest challenges for schools currently as indicated in the completed staff survey of November 2018'*
- *'As the fastest growing Local Authority we also have an increase in the number of pupils with additional needs'.*
- *'It is likely that pupil absences will increase in schools due to pupils feeling unsupported or parents refusing to send pupils to school as a result of the lack of support'*
- *'As learning assistants support a range of learners then Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels for numeracy and literacy, which have been on the rise in Midlothian, may reduce as teachers will spend more time on behaviour management issues. This may have an impact on exclusions and out of authority placements.'*

It is beyond belief that cuts leading to these potential impacts can be entertained by the Council whilst it is committed simultaneously to a narrowing of social division. Simply, those

that need the most educational support will have it withdrawn.

Active Schools, Healthy Lifestyle Development Team and Exercise opportunities.

It is hard to overstate the overall benefits of educating people in the lifelong habit of an active lifestyle. These not only improve individual quality-of-life but are cost effective in society by reducing health treatment costs and improving the effectiveness and productivity of individuals. The proposed removal of the Active Schools programme can only be seen as a profoundly retrograde step in this light, as well as directly affecting the well-being of students for learning and reducing the equality of access to sport and exercise.

We note from the Council's own statistics in 2018 that 33% of Midlothian school pupils were engaged in regular sport or physical activity sessions through Active Schools. The Council's appraisal of the impact of this area of proposed cuts lists at length the substantial and manifest benefits of the programme to the physical and mental well-being of participants, and the building of community. Nothing of substance is listed that proposes any mitigation to a failure to support the scheme. Equally, we note with regret other cuts in sports provision (such as the removal of free vacation swimming). Whilst these do not directly concern school curricula they impact on education overall and are largely iniquitous in their impacts.

Creative Arts Provision:

We strongly object to the proposed cuts in Creative Arts provision. Creative Arts, particularly music have been a recognised academic strength in Midlothian; [Redact – 38(1)(b)] shares

in that tradition. The benefits to community in providing and supporting creative arts are self-evident, alongside the clear benefits that derive to the Scottish economy from having a recurrent population of trained creative artists. The proposed cuts are made at a soft target because they are not covered by statutory provision. The removal of support for non-SQA examined music tuition would itself be socially divisive. The impact of this support would be far-reaching because musical instruments cannot largely be mastered to SQA standards in one or two years. Removing support prior to SQA assessment years would reduce the number of students who would realistically be in a position to attempt SQA assessment, thus limiting this option to pupils who are willing and able to pay privately. We further have deep reservations about the expectation that Schools themselves will incur a £700 financial cost for every student tutored for SQA exams. First, it impacts their overall budgets, and second, it effectively penalises them if they successfully promote music within school. We also deplore the impact this will have on the livelihood of music tutors.

In summary, the council's own words state that:

*'We aspire to deliver a world-class education system through equity and excellence'*

but in the light of the proposed cuts these words appear hollow; the proposals made are directly opposed to any such aspiration. Any of these cuts will be far from equitable. By contrast they will hit the poorest and most educationally needy the hardest. The reduction in overall teaching support and real curriculum choice, demonstrates no genuine commitment to excellence. The cuts to Active Schools and other exercise programmes undermine equally any meaningful dedication to health improvement.

'Change Programme Addressing the Financial Challenge for 2019/20' is remarkable in the way it self-appraises the likely impacts of the proposed cuts in reducing opportunity and support for the most disadvantaged with the associated prospective long-term impacts on social well-being and prosperity. In its very own self-assessments the Council appears to be actively planning to fail in the achievement of its stated high-level aims. In doing so it will also fail a whole generation of young people.

Your sincerely,  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

### **Email Chain 7**

From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]  
Sent: 07 February 2019 21:04:00  
To: Swinney J (John), MSP, Craig.Fraser.cllr@highland.gov.uk,  
[gordon.adam.cllr@highland.gov.uk](mailto:gordon.adam.cllr@highland.gov.uk), [Redact – 38(1)(b)]@lochaberrvoice.com,  
john.finlayson.cllr@highland.gov.uk, kate.stephen.cllr@highland.gov.uk, Kate Forbes  
Subject: Highland Education Cuts impact to [Redact – 38(1)(b)].

I am writing to ask you to oppose planned cuts to education in Highland.  
The cuts will mean the loss of two teachers at our local High school which will mean fewer National 5 and Higher classes and very limited Advanced Higher options.  
Children will not be able to study their first choice subjects in S4-6.

The school already has fewer teachers than other schools of similar size and a limited curriculum - with very little home economics, limited foreign languages, and no computer studies or drama. These planned cuts will now impact on "core" subjects.  
In common with other Highland schools, the [Redact – 38(1)(b)] already has problems attracting applicants for vacant posts and the message these cuts will send out will make that even harder.

Teachers will face more stress because reduced staffing will certainly lead to a greater workload for those remaining. This is at a time when major changes are underway (again) to the National 5 and Higher examinations.  
Head teachers have publicly stated the schools in our region are in crisis and that the planned cuts to staffing will break an already fragile system.  
Poor educational provision will make it harder for the region to recruit and retain key staff in services such as health, and certainly makes it less attractive for businesses to locate here. Parents with school-age children may choose to move away. Damaging schools damages the whole of the Highlands. Please protect education.

David Macfarlane  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)]Parent Council.\_

### **Email Chain 8**

From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

Sent: 07 February 2019 21:07:13

To: Swinney J (John), MSP

Subject: Budget and education

> Dear John,

>

> I am writing to ask you to oppose planned cuts to education in Highland.

>

> The cuts will mean the loss of two teachers at our school which will mean fewer National 5 and Higher classes and very limited Advanced Higher options. Children will not be able to study their first choice subjects in S4-6.

>

> The school already has fewer teachers than other schools of similar size and a limited curriculum - with very little home economics, limited foreign languages, and no computer studies or drama. These planned cuts will now impact on "core" subjects.

>

> In common with other Highland schools, the [Redact – 38(1)(b)] already has problems attracting applicants for vacant posts and the message these cuts will send out will make that even harder.

>

> Teachers will face more stress because reduced staffing will certainly lead to a greater workload for those remaining. This is at a time when major changes are underway (again) to the National 5 and Higher examinations.

>

> Head teachers have publicly stated the schools in our region are in crisis and that the planned cuts to staffing will break an already fragile system.

>

> Poor educational provision will make it harder for the region to recruit and retain key staff in services such as health, and certainly makes it less attractive for businesses to locate here. Parents with school-age children may choose to move away. Damaging schools damages the whole of the Highlands. Please protect education.

>

> Why is money being thrown at Chromebooks but not keeping teachers?

>

> Kind regards,

> [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

>

> Sent from my iPhone

From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

<[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@hotmail.co.uk<mailto:[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@hotmail.co.uk>>

Sent: 08 March 2019 19:43

To: Swinney J (John), MSP

<John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>>

Subject: School Cuts

Dear John

We are SNP voters. Please see the attached letter. Are you aware that our local school is cutting classes to meet their budget?

In summary.

Income Tax has risen,

In Midlothian we pay the highest council tax in Scotland

Midlothian Council Tax has risen 4.79%

We have just been hit with an additional tax to empty our "Brown Garden Waste Bin"

And now as parents we are being told that the local school will only offer 2 subjects at Advanced Higher

I am sorry but this is not acceptable and I genuinely believe that you would not think any different to my opinion.

Can you please investigate?

Between the Government and the Labour controlled council something is going very wrong.

Regards

[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

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**Email Chain 9**

5<sup>th</sup> March, 2019

Dear [redacted – s38(1)(b)] Parents and Supporters,

I write to you on behalf of the [redacted – s38(1)(b)] Parent Council concerning the cuts recently imposed on Schools by Midlothian Council. As a Parent Council we deplore the

impact these cuts will have on the educational opportunities of students at [redacted – s38(1)(b)] and across Midlothian but we recognise that they have been imposed on the school. We want to work supportively with the school in order to minimise the impact of the cuts whilst pressuring Midlothian Council and the Scottish Government to support education adequately. We believe that what is being proposed is putting Midlothian pupils at a disadvantage in relation to their future opportunity in Scotland, the UK and internationally.

The pace at which these cuts have been introduced is extremely rapid. A set of savings measures across many services were proposed by Midlothian Council on 1<sup>st</sup> February. These included cuts which threatened Learning Support and Educational Psychology provision, the Active Schools programme and Creative Arts teaching (Music and Drama). Along with others, we protested against cuts in these specific areas and you may have seen that Midlothian Council recently pulled back from them. However, Midlothian Council approved a cut of £1.3 million in the devolved School budgets, principally impact staffing, and which is outlined in the letter to you from [redacted – s38(1)(b)]. The cuts will hit all Midlothian schools; [redacted – s38(1)(b)] needs to absorb a funding cut equivalent to about 3.5 staff next year. Whilst we strongly object to these cuts, we believe [redacted – s38(1)(b)] and her team are doing their utmost to minimise their impact on teaching provision. However, we understand these measures will result in the removal of some classes, most notably at Advanced Higher level. We are working with the school to try and ensure that alternative provision for some classes can be available through other schools and educational providers in Midlothian, particularly for Advanced Higher.

We want to give you the opportunity to learn more about the cuts and what is being proposed by the school. To do this and to voice your opinion we invite you to attend a Parents' Forum in School on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March from 18:30-19:30. We would also value your written input and ask that you might provide that via a single question ('Please give us your views') on [redacted – s 38(1)(b)]:

[redacted – s 38(1)(b)]

If you have personal concerns about the level of education support in Midlothian we encourage you to raise these with your Councillor or MSP though we also aim to keep applying pressure on the Council and Scottish Government, mostly because we fear that cuts now might perpetuate into the future.

Regards,

[redacted – s 38(1)(b)]

## **Email Chain 10**

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5 February 2019

Mr John Swinney MSP

Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills

Scottish Government  
St. Andrews House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG  
Our Ref: BC1249

Dear Cabinet Secretary

## TEACHER SHORTAGES

I am writing to you on behalf of a constituent who recently contacted me regarding the lack of provision for Computing Science at [Redact – 38(1)(b)] School where her son is currently in S2.

My constituent has been in correspondence with the Headteacher and has been told that, despite advertising three times for a Computing Science teacher, she is not confident of being able to offer computing in next year's curriculum and so has removed it from the course choices.

My constituent says that she is very concerned that pupils could leave secondary education with no teaching in Computing Science and asks what the Scottish Government is doing to assist in filling these shortages.

I would be grateful for your comments on this issue.

I thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Kind regards,  
Bruce Crawford MSP

Bruce Crawford (SNP) MSP for Stirling constituency

Office 16, STEP, Stirling, FK7 7RP

Telephone 01786 471899

Email: [bruce.crawford.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:bruce.crawford.msp@parliament.scot)

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**Email Chain 11**

Subject: FW: Secondary Education in NE Scotland  
From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]<[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

com<mailto:[Redact – 38(1)(b)]>>  
Sent: 06 December 2018 14:09  
To: Swinney J (John), MSP  
<John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>>  
Subject: Secondary Education in NE Scotland  
Attn:- Mr John Swinney MSP - The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for  
Education and Skills

Please find attached letter for your attention.  
I would be obliged if you could acknowledge receipt of this letter and respond directly  
to [Redact – 38(1)(b)] <mailto:[Redact – 38(1)(b)]> or alternatively - [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

Regards  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)], Managing Director  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)]<mailto:[Redact – 38(1)(b)]>  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

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[Redact – 38(1)(b)]  
Our Ref:- CSR/CTP/0610-1 I  
6th December 2018  
i4.23  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 ISP

Attn:- Mr John Swinney MSP - The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

Dear Mr Swinney,

Secondary Education in NE Scotland

[Redact – 38(1)(b)] We are very active in the support of local schools and the nurturing of local youth, I am therefore very aware of the current state of our education system!

Our education system appears to be in freefall, pupils and teachers are paying for pencils and jotters and most

secondary schools have vacancies into double figures. Class discipline is non-existent and the hard working teachers

in post are feeling overwhelmed, undervalued and ultimately powerless. Core STEM subjects are at real risk with

mathematics and technical subjects (on hold) in some Aberdeenshire secondary schools due to a chronic teacher shortage.

I understand that your administration are attempting to address this however we see absolutely no credible action plans

in place north of Dundee! This is totally unacceptable.

Our once world class education system was the envy of the world, let us not forget that the First Minister once said she

would be judged on her record of education, if this is the case then surely you will accept this invitation and meet us at

the coal face?

I would be obliged if you could acknowledge receipt of this letter and respond directly to [Redact – 38(1)(b)]. or alternatively - [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

Yours sincerely

For [Redact – 38(1)(b)]

I would like to invite you to [Redact – 38(1)(b)] in the very near future to discuss these issues, we are very well placed to provide an employer's and educator's perspective, an employer with a 1st class record in training youth over a 30 year period.

[redacted – 38(1)(b)]

[redacted – 38(1)(b)]

## **Email Chain 12**

Your Reference:

[Redact – 38(1)(b)],

[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@sky.com

FAO Mr John Swinney MSP

Dear John,

Could you clearly explain (plain English) how my daughter will NOT be able to have Spanish as one of her chosen subjects at [Redact – 38(1)(b)] School when she starts there after the summer?

This used to be a subject choice.

She is already speaking basic Spanish and practices with her Nana.  
I look forward to your promote reply

Best Regards  
[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

From: [Redact – 38(1)(b)]@yahoo.com<mailto:[Redact – 38(1)(b)]@yahoo.com>>  
Sent: 14 March 2019 12:05  
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
<DFMCSE@gov.scot<mailto:DFMCSE@gov.scot>>  
Subject: Education

Dear Mr Swinney

I am writing to with concerns over my children's education. I have [Redact – 38(1)(b)] children all at school in [Redact – 38(1)(b)] My eldest daughter is in 5th year at [Redact – 38(1)(b)] School in [Redact – 38(1)(b)] She has just had her course choice meeting for next year and been told the subjects she wants and needs to take are no longer going to be available at her school because of budget cuts. She is a very intelligent, hard working girl who would like to study English, French and Biology at advanced higher level but apparently only English will be available. It has been suggested that she could do one subject at another school some miles away and another at college so three subjects across three different sites, miles apart and requiring transport between them. This is ridiculous!

She wants to study at an English university so needs advanced highers, we have looked at many courses in a variety of universities so we know this. Surely all children in Scotland should be on an even playing field when it comes to considering their future and applying to universities yet it seems here in Midlothian this will not be the case and our children will be at a significant disadvantage. I am absolutely appalled about this situation. My daughter is working so hard to achieve well in her highers, she gained 5 As in her prelims and is on track to do well. I am very concerned she is not going to be able to study the subjects she needs next year to pursue the future she wants. This situation is also causing her considerable stress which is not ideal. I am aware there is a problem with the budget here in Midlothian but I want to know what you and the rest of the Scottish government intend to do to ensure our children's education is protected? Why should our children suffer and have

to accept we now live in some post code lottery situation? I look forward to hearing your response.

Kind regards

[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

[Redact – 38(1)(b)]

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