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From: Mailer-Daemon@scotland.gov.uk [mailto:Mailer-Daemon@scotland.gov.uk]

Sent: 03 June 2005 21:22

To: Parental Involvement Bill

Subject: 504

Response from the Parentzone - Parental Involvement questionnaire

Name: IVAN CARNEGIE

Responding as: An individual

Individual: Yes

Confidentially: Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

Behalf of groups:

Sharing responses / future engagement: Yes

Question 1: No:cannot understand the reasons why the Executive wish to scrap School Boards which,in many cases, have worked well. A major difficulty has always been the reluctance of parents to get involved either as Board members or in responding to Board initiatives; setting up parent forums is not the answer,the same problem will still exist.

Question 2: In principle, but see comments in 1 above.I remain to be convinced that a Strategy document in itself will persuade parents to become involved, particularly if the forums end up with less powers than current School Boards.

What opportunity will parent forums have to be involved in the preparation of this document?

Question 3: Only if these reflect the views expressed by Parent Forums in their area.

Question 4: No:why is this change thought to be necessary? What is meant by "more flexible system"? Sounds like a recipe for chaos!!

Question 5: Exactly how are parents to decide on appointments? Without some form of voting system run by an independent monitor there is a real danger that disputes over the fairness of the selection system will arise. Who will sort this out? The present voting system run by the Education Department should be retained.

Question 6: I strongly believe that School Boards should be retained with enhanced powers. However if parent forums are to be set up they should,as a minimum,have the powers presently enjoyed by School Boards.

Question 7: Yes

Question 8: Yes: but Education nominees should demit office ASAP afterwards.

Question 9: There should be a model constitution which forums should adopt,with such modifications as individual forums my deem appropriate.

Question 10: Parent forums should have the power to co-opt. Parents should always be in the majority. For Catholic schools the Church should retain the power to appoint a church representative.

Question 11: No

Question 12: Yes

Question 13: The present requirement that the Headteacher should attend School Board meetings should be retained. It should not just be a right but a duty. Other non-members should attend only by invitation.

Question 14:

Question 15: Should be limited to matters relating directly to the School or its pupils or staff.

Question 16: No: why should they be designated as "agents"? In what circumstances will they be acting on behalf of Education Authorities?

Insurance cover seems irrelevant; what risks are parents to be exposed to?

Question 17:

Question 18: Yes provided that they are adequate for performance of duties placed on parent forums. Guidelines as to minimum support should be issued to avoid the present unsatisfactory position where there is no consistency in the funding provided by different Education Authorities; some are generous, others are niggardly.

Question 19: No: this information should come from pupil's headteacher (but without a specific legal duty to do so). He/she is in the best position to address parents' concerns.

Question 20: Would agree only if the present powers of the parent reps on School Boards are retained and not diminished

Question 21:

Question 22: Yes: they must be more accountable to parents for actions that may adversely affect individual schools.

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