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unclear - group / individual

852

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

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

Sent: 07 June 2005 13:45

To: Parental Involvement Bill

Subject: 852

Response from the Parentzone - Parental Involvement questionnaire

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Responding as: On behalf of a group or organisation

Individual: Yes

Confidentialiy: Yes, make my response, name and address all available

Behalf of groups:

Sharing responses / future engagement: Yes

Question 1: No - see the Finnish model - the less government interference in schools the better the education.

See National Debate on Education: When parents say they wish to be involved in their children's education, firstly this is the only acceptable response, hence dubious in its reliability and secondly, their main area of interest is in supporting their children's day to day learning. This draft Bill does not address ways of encouraging parents to pursue this interest.

Question 2: No. If the Exectutive wishes to develop this area, then guidelines should be issued to Authorities.

Question 3: Not an efficient way of informing parents! These documents are the domain of the educationalist. Perhaps an entry in the school handbook would reach a wider audience.

Has thought been given to developing electronic communication with parents?

Question 4: A evelopment and review of School Boards is overdue, but to ask parents to create their own system from scratch is unrealistic - too time-consuming, too open to hi-jack by a forceful minority, and impossoble to manage nationally.

The Executive needs to develop existing legislation to encompass change.

Question 5: See 4 Above. Parental forums should have a less formal selection procedure.

Question 6: Given the real problems several schools have encountered in establishing School Boards, guidelines should be agrred with the Authorities setting out the methods to be used to support this initiative. This will protect schools from unrealistic legislation.

Question 7: Yes, if the majority of parents in each school so wish.

Question 8: A development of the existing School Board strucrure would mean that most schools have an organisation to build on. If the Executive wishes a "clean slate", then they must consult with Authorities and then give clear guidelines on procedures to be followed.

Question 9: No. See 4 above

Question 10: The membership of Headteachers and teachers on such a body is essential for informed debate, and to foster parental feelings of involvement with the school. Perhaps senior pupils also have an input to make to this body. Councillors also should have a right to attend.

Question 11: Their carers dould have the status of parents. Thought needs to be given to the representation of children in children's homes.

Question 12: No. Given the close involvement of these people with children, a disclosure is needed.

Question 13: See 10 above.

Question 14: The optional functions give some cause for concern. Unless prefaced by "in agreement with the Headteacher...", these could give rise to conflict.  
Question 15: Guidance and training must be given on the methodology of "finding out", otherwise the bias of forum members could dictate the result.  
Question 16: No view  
Question 17: Yes  
Question 18: Financial support is needed, but should not make demands on existing Authority education budgets  
Question 19: Yes, as is existing normal practice.  
Question 20: A review of the system is long overdue, and, on balance, parents should continue to be involved.  
If parents are to continue to be part of a new selection procedure, then again, training is required. If parent members of an interviewing team are truly to represent the parent body and not just their own opinions, then a survey of all parents on the desired attributes of the appointee is required.  
Question 21: N/A  
Question 22: Yes

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