



Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association

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## NEWSLETTER OF THE SCOTTISH SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

# REPORT OF CONGRESS 2015 - CRIEFF 8 MAY 2015

### Motions Passed at Congress

The following motions were passed at Congress:



### SQA - Pupil Self Harming

Given the evidence that rising numbers of pupils are being identified as self harming – usually a physical manifestation of underlying mental health/welfare issues – Congress is concerned that assessment burdens may be contributing to pupil stress and damaging pupil welfare.

Congress therefore calls on the SQA to review its current assessment requirements with the view to radically reducing the frequency and intensity of assessments that may be required to achieve course passes.

*Kevin Madill, Aberdeenshire*

### SQA - Dissatisfaction

Congress expresses alarm that a survey conducted recently by this Association regarding the implementation of New Higher Qualifications revealed there was a high level of dissatisfaction with the support received from Education Scotland and the SQA. The continued lack of accessible

high quality assessment materials leads us to believe that these bodies have not taken adequate steps to address the concerns raised by teachers and other stakeholders following the introduction of previous National Qualifications. Congress calls for a survey to gather members' views on assessment processes and procedures to seek to improve the structure of and support for National Qualifications assessment.

*Catherine Nicol, Ayrshire*



### Support for Young Carers

Conservative estimates place the number of young carers in Scotland as between 80000 and 120000. Recent research (August 2014) commissioned by the Scottish Youth Parliament highlights the fact that young carers face largely hidden but very significant challenges - not least financially and educationally - as the responsibilities they shoulder understandably take priority. In particular there is a need for greater

co-ordinated supports - financial, emotional and educational - to be identified and organised in order to ensure that this vulnerable group have as a minimum the same life chances as their peers.

Congress instructs Executive to highlight the difficulties faced by young carers; to lobby the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Government and COSLA in relation to the needs of these young carers and to support members in taking steps which will address the difficulties they face.

*Ward McCormick, Executive Committee*

### Democratic Local Authorities

Congress wishes to see the retention of a state education sector in Scotland that is in the hands of democratically elected local authorities. This Association will oppose attempts by such local authorities to remove their education service to trusts or other arms length bodies.

*Ward McCormick, Executive Committee*

### Tackling Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is recognised as an increasing contributor to workload. This Association calls on the Scottish Government to report on the success in reducing Bureaucracy since the introduction of its document "Curriculum for Excellence Working Group on Tackling Bureaucracy".

*Paul Cochrane, Renfrew*



### Supported Study Payment

It has come to light that the payment made to teachers for participating in “Supported Study” is inconsistent across the Local Authorities of Scotland.

This Association calls on SNCT, to acknowledge that “Supported Study” is a useful tool in raising attainment, and that payment for teachers be consistent and appropriate across all Local Authorities in recognition for the time spent with the pupils and the time required for preparation.

*John Guidi, Renfrew*

### School improvement Plans and WTA

Congress calls on local authorities to remind school leaders that, when preparing School Improvement

Plans, each plan should be evaluated and shown to be demonstrably achievable within the school’s Working Time Agreement.

*Euan Duncan, Ayrshire*

### ‘Named Person’ Support

The SSTA acknowledges the principles underpinning the “Named Person’s” role. However in order to protect our most vulnerable children, the SSTA insists that adequate training and preparation time must be provided for those teachers who will be expected to undertake this important role.

*Anne O’Kane, ASN Panel*

### Opposition to cuts in ASN

The SSTA recognises the importance of the essential work undertaken specifically by those staff working in the field of Additional Support Needs, and as a consequence instructs the General Secretary to contact the cabinet secretary, GTCS, individual local authority employers and individual independent schools to seek assurances that they too

share our recognition of this and that there will be no further reduction in the number of staff who work in this important field.

*Peter Donnelly, ASN Panel*

### Towards an Inclusive SSTA

In the interest of furthering the inclusive nature of the SSTA, Congress calls on the General Secretary to investigate and then provide a report to Council on the ways in which this Association can widen access to all members, particularly those who have an incapacity or who have responsibilities as carers.

*Catherine Nicol, Equalities Panel*

## ACTING PRESIDENTS ADDRESS - Elaine Henderson, Aberdeenshire



Well it’s over, all the hype, controversy and arguments, the votes counted and result known.

I am sure that there were many waking up this morning declaring “I knew this would be the result” others surprised, elated or disappointed. But of course this is just the beginning. We will all have to wait to see what lies ahead for all of us.

What is important is that the SSTA is at the heart of the Education Agenda in Scotland working with our fellow trade unions to ensure that young people in Scotland get a first class education regardless of which party is in office in Westminster or Holyrood.

Unity is the thread that springs to mind. To achieve the best for all our members will involve working with the Government, Cosla, the EIS and together as an Association. We need to work together with the Scottish Government, SQA and Education Scotland to make sure that development of the curriculum provides maximum benefit for learners without teachers paying the price through excessive bureaucracy and ever increasing workloads. Cutting bureaucracy and the assessment demands of qualifications is not only about

making teacher's working lives easier and lessening the marking workload it's about better learning for pupils.

Teachers are facing many challenges at this time:

- workload issues – this continues to cause concern, with many members reporting that they regularly work in excess of 50 hours a week. Some of you may be horrified by this, but ask yourself why? The answer is found in classrooms the length and breadth of the country – pupils. We all want to provide the best learning conditions for our pupils and so spend hours preparing lessons, assessments following this up with marking to prepare them for what lies ahead
- lack of supply cover to allow attendance at staff development opportunities
- disappearance/reduction of adviser or QIO posts at a time of changing curriculum
- reduction in admin staff
- cuts in support staff

All of these making the teacher's job more difficult and indeed leading to a poorer learning experience for our pupils.

We need to continue to work with our fellow teacher unions, work which has developed over the past year, as we enter the critical run up to pay negotiations. We have endured several years with no pay increase, followed by minimal increases of 1% with no prospect of that improving. Place this against a background of an increase in National Insurance contributions and swingeing increases in pension contributions (with more to come). A teacher's lot is not a happy one. The cost of living in parts of the country alongside the lack of pay

increases is contributing to staff availability most particularly in the North East. Ask any of the delegates from that area and they will confirm that recruiting staff on a long term basis is becoming harder to achieve.

SSTA has always recognised that Supply Teachers are an important and essential part of the education service. Schools are unable to function without an experienced and professional group of teachers. The changes to supply teacher pay following the 2011 agreement has led to the current shortages in supply across the country and we need to work with Cosla and the Scottish Government to seek a long-term solution.

All teacher release from school is dependent upon the provision of supply teachers. Access to Professional development, changes in school qualifications, changes in curriculum, school visits and the internal school development priorities are not possible without supply teachers. This is without the normal staff absences such as long and short term sickness cover, maternity and paternity leave, public responsibilities/duties.

The supply teacher should be a valued member of the school community and not just the poor relation for whom nobody wants to take responsibility. Supply teachers have an entitlement to proper contracts of employment and salary that reflects the importance of the role.

However, that highlights the issue of the four breakaway authorities from Cosla. Without unity there is the potential for problems in any dialogue regarding pay and conditions. As an Association we would urge them to re-join Cosla.

For some of us, the issue of pensions is in the forefront of minds as the end of our careers draws ever nearer. But spare a thought, or several, for the younger members of our profession, we need to work together to support them as they face a triple whammy in pensions:

- pay more
- pay for 7 or 8 years longer
- get much less out at the end

The Association has continued to offer excellent support to individual members who make contact with the SSTA either directly with Head Office or through District Secretaries or School Reps. We have extended the Secretariat to make sure we can continue this level of service in supporting members.

Our members need the Association to deal with the real everyday concerns of teachers - like workload, salaries, pensions, conditions of service. To do this effectively we ALL need to remain focussed in our dealings with the Scottish Government and Cosla and indeed the other teaching unions. We need to work together for the benefit of all our members and to keep these critical issues on the education agenda.

HEAR AND SEE CONGRESS  
2015 ON SSTA Website  
[www.ssta.org.uk](http://www.ssta.org.uk)

includes  
Guest Speaker, Ashley Cameron,  
Careleavers Ambassador, Who  
Cares? Scotland  
and  
Question & Answer Session from  
Dr Janet Brown and  
Ronnie Summers, SQA

## REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY - Seamus Searson



Good afternoon Acting President and Congress,

It is an honour and a privilege to be standing here and addressing you for the first time. In the short number of months I have been here in Scotland I have watched, listened, and hopefully learnt a great deal about the Scottish Education system.

What I have learnt is the important role the SSTA has in the future of Scottish Education.

As you may have noticed that other election is now over but the 'real' election now begins.

The Scottish Government election in 2016 is the 'real' election in terms of shaping the future of Education in Scotland. Our Association must be part of that future and must be prepared to engage and convince all those who care about education of the future shape of Education in Scotland.

We in Scotland have a very good education system (and I can say that without fear of contradiction having worked in recent times in Northern Ireland and England).

However, we need to work to maintain and develop our system.

Northern Ireland is also in a good place but I am sad to say that education in England is in a sorry state. I am also sad to say that it is unlikely to improve in the very near future. It goes without saying, if you want to see what can happen if you get complacent, unions take their 'eye off the ball' and government is allowed to seek change for changes sake then look no further than south of the border.

In England they have an education system that

- Gives an advantage to those who can afford to pay
- Educational Underachievement is not a priority
- No National Curriculum
- A narrow and restrictive curriculum that only suits the more academically able
- An examination system that creates failure for most
- An unqualified teacher workforce with low levels of pay for all
- No GTC to protect qualified teacher status
- Local Authorities that have a responsibility for education but who do not have the powers to control schools.
- A public education system starved of money
- More than 400 private supply teacher agencies who charge schools more than £200 a day and where some teachers only receive £50 for a day's work
- Schools and educational services that have been outsourced to private companies that only exist for profit
- A Teaching Profession that

has seen its national pay and conditions washed away. Where teachers do not receive the annual pay rise unless they are prepared to jump through increasingly higher hoops.

- And a teacher workforce that is demoralised by government, the Inspection service, competition between schools, Headteacher bullying and ever increasing accountability and workload.

If England wishes to improve its education system it needs not look any further but north of the border.

The Scottish education system must be defended but it must be prepared to adapt and change and the SSTA needs to part of that change.

There are still areas of the education system in Scotland that need to be addressed. SSTA needs to have a clear vision and a commitment to address these areas. The future government of Scotland needs to see teachers as part of the solution, and not part of the problem. The teacher in the classroom needs to be listened to and trusted to deliver the education system of the future.

### Child Poverty

We need to be prepared to tackle Child Poverty and educational underachievement. Every child needs to see education as the way forward and teachers need to lead and be given the support in meeting the needs of their young people in their schools.

The announcement of a £100m over 4 years in Early years is welcome. But

as we said to the Cabinet Secretary back in February there are pupils in Secondary Schools now who need help. Government must be committed to provide funds to meet the need of these young people to meet their full potential. Further cuts in ASN and those remaining ASN teachers being deployed to cover teacher vacancies will not help these young people.

It is necessary that all groups of young people that have barriers to accessing education are identified and supported through the education system. I am particularly proud that the SSTA has identified 'young carers' as a group of young people in need of support. Not only is there a motion here today but also at the Scottish Trade Union Congress that gained unanimous support.

### **Curriculum**

We need a wide vision of learning and achievement and the Curriculum for Excellence is moving us in the right direction but it needs to be broad, balanced, flexible and inclusive. It needs to meet the aspirations of all our young people.

The government's programme of 'Developing the Workforce' is part of this process and it will impact on schools and the work of teachers. Unfortunately, the cuts in education and the shortage of teachers has created and will continue to create a narrowing of the curriculum. This will lead to some of our young people disengaging with education as a consequence and the problems that will create.

### **Qualifications**

The successful introduction of the new qualifications was only

achieved by the commitment and determination of teachers such as SSTA members in schools. SSTA members have always wanted to do the best for the young people in their classes and have gone above and beyond to ensure they didn't lose out. It would be wrong of government to rely upon this commitment in any of its future initiatives. The Government must be prepared to listen and work with teachers and in particular the SSTA in all its future plans.

However, I do have concerns about National 4. If we have qualifications they must be of value but we have heard of undue pressure being applied in some schools to achieve National 4 for all young people in their classes. Should the system demand all students reach National 4 then the qualification and all the effort would be to no avail. The qualifications need to fit the teaching and learning and not the other way round. Teacher's professional judgement must be respected and not tested at every opportunity.

The recent drop in Literacy figures could have been envisaged with everything else that teachers are expected to do in the past few years. However, the government needs to be pragmatic, realistic in its analysis and be prepared to prioritise its objectives in the coming years.

### **Qualified Teachers**

All children need Qualified Teachers and I reinforce the commitment of the GTCS to ensure only recognised qualified teachers teach in schools in Scotland. But the government must ensure that teachers have regular, meaningful and continuing entitlement to

professional development. This must not be only to meet the needs of the schools, but the development of subject area but more importantly the teacher's professional and long term career development. The funds for professional development must be protected for all teachers at all levels, including supply teachers, if we want to deliver a professional and adaptable teaching workforce for the 21st Century.

### **Local Authorities**

There is a need for a sustainable education system to support schools with local authorities entrusted and responsible for schools. I fear that the recent decision by four local authorities to leave COSLA could open the door to outside agencies or trusts being given responsibility for schools. These bodies would not be under local democratic authority control and could threaten the whole education system in Scotland. I urge the four authorities not to play politics with education and return to COSLA and maintain a national education system with national pay and conditions. If they believe COSLA is not working properly then reform it from within instead of trying to score political points from the side lines. We also need to consider the future should the current system fail to work for teachers and possible reorganisation with central education authority locally administered for Scotland.

Added to this the new Education Bill will establish the role of Chief Education Officer in every local authority accountable for closing the attainment gap.

Could this development put more

pressure on an already stretched school system or could it be the centralising of education?

### **Invest in Education**

Government says Education is the centre of government policy. It needs increased funding to end the downward spiral of education funding. It must expand the school building programme to allow the best facilities for our teachers and young people in an attempt to meet the future needs of the country.

We also need to reinforce the fundamental principle of Education being a public service and not to be run for private companies to make a profit. We need to resist the further privatisation of education as has happened in other parts of the UK. We need to resist the introduction of private supply agencies to meet the teacher shortage problem and any other attempts to outsource educational services.

### **Teaching Profession**

We need to make teaching an attractive profession to encourage the retention of the high quality teachers we have and recruit the highest quality people in to the profession. Unfortunately, the damage over the last few years needs to be undone and a number of areas still need to be addressed to deliver a high quality profession.

**Pensions** - The possibility of teachers retiring at the age of 68 will not retain or attract teachers. This, added to the new increasing tax on pensions by increased contributions will only lead teachers to work longer and receive less benefit through their pension which will not retain or recruit teachers.

Maintaining a **National Pay and Conditions** structure is threatened by the local authorities leaving COSLA. But COSLA and the government needs to address the cuts in teachers' pay over the last few years and needs to show a commitment and reward teachers for the work already done and the challenges ahead. This must mean a substantial increase in pay in the coming years to retain and attract teachers.

### **Supply Teachers**

The SSTA has always recognised that Supply Teachers are an important and essential part of the education service. Schools are unable to function without this experienced and professional group of teachers. Therefore, to retain and recruit supply teachers SSTA seeks

- a restoration of supply teacher pay levels,
- a national coordinated register of qualified supply teachers that are GTCS registered
- a single police check for all supply teachers
- an entitlement to Continuing Professional Development.

**Workload** – teachers need more time for teaching – not more tests

However, the recent joint report by government, employers and teacher unions can potentially open the door for teacher's professionalism to be restored and tackle teacher workload.

**The Curriculum for Excellence Working Group on Tackling Bureaucracy Follow-up Report published in March 2015** gives guidance to schools. Assessment should be based on professional

judgement. Tracking pupil progress and moderation is important; however there is no need for large folios of evidence to support it.

**Forward Planning** should be proportionate; there is NO need to plan, assess, record or report every experience and outcome. Planning should support professional dialogue rather than fulfil an audit function.

**Monitoring and Reporting** – ICT planning and reporting systems should be used with CAUTION. Just because such systems can support very detailed planning and reporting, does not mean they should be used in that way.

**Self Evaluation and Planning** – over-reliance on audit “tick box” distracts from quality teaching and learning.

Teachers need to be allowed to focus on teaching and learning and any activity that distracts from that must be severely questioned. Therefore, we need to use this document to support the professional judgement of the teacher and cut the relentless administration.

**As I said earlier you may have noticed that the other election is now over but the ‘real’ election now begins. That discussion is real and happening now.**

**The SSTA will be there and making the voice of secondary teachers heard.**

## GUEST SPEAKER



The Guest Speaker at Congress was Ashley Cameron. Ashley gave an informative and inspiring speech about her life in care and since. Ashley's speech can be found on the SSTA website [www.ssta.org.uk/congress2015](http://www.ssta.org.uk/congress2015)

## REPORTS

Reports were heard from the following:

- Education Committee
- SNCT
- Salaries and Conditions of Service Committee
- Professional Update
- Additional Support Needs Panel
- Equalities Panel
- The Scottish Advisory Group for Relationships and Behaviour in Schools
- Health & Safety Panel
- Senior Managers' Advisory Panel
- Transferred Schools
- Scottish Teachers' Pension Scheme Negotiating Group
- STUC Committee
- Scottish Joint Committee on religious and Moral Education
- International Links



## FINANCIAL INFORMATION YEAR 2014

In accordance with section 32A of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, please find below the Association's financial statement to members for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014.

### 1. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

#### INCOME

|                          |             |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Membership Subscriptions | £ 1,047,726 |
| Other income             | £ 146,539   |
|                          | £ 1,194,265 |

#### EXPENDITURE

|                                  |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| *Annual Operating Costs          | £ 1,148,534 |
| Appropriations SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) | £ 45,731    |

\*including:

| In respect of                    | Act. General Secretary,<br>Alan McKenzie | General Secretary,<br>Sheila Mechan | Act. General Secretary,<br>Fiona Dalziel |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| Salary                           | £62,244                                  | £5,200                              | £34,173                                  |
| Superannuation and NIC           | £21,258                                  | £626                                | £9,656                                   |
| Employee's Superannuation        | £0                                       | £0                                  | £3361                                    |
| Key Person's Life policy premium | £0                                       | £0                                  | £492                                     |
| Essential user's car allowance   | £1400                                    | £0                                  | £1,400                                   |

#### Honoraria to elected Office Bearers:

|                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| General Treasurer | £ 5,712  |
| Minutes Secretary | £ 5,712  |
| President         | £ 2,472  |
|                   | £ 13,896 |

The Association does not maintain a political fund.

### 2. STATEMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH s32A(6A) OF THE ACT OF TULR(C)A 1992

“A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring, or have occurred, in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and, if necessary, securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with: the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he may apply for material assistance from the Commissioner for the Rights of Trade Union Members and should, in any case, consider obtaining independent legal advice.”

A copy of the full financial report has been issued to each school representative and will be available for inspection. Any member wishing an additional copy should write to the General Secretary.

## **Independent auditors' report**

to the members of SCOTTISH SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

We have audited the accounts of Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association for the year ended 31 December 2014 which comprise the Cash Flow Statement, Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

### Respective responsibilities of the Finance Committee and Auditors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Finance Committee's Responsibilities, the Finance Committee members are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. We have been appointed under the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1992 and report in accordance with regulations made under this Act. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the accounts in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's (APB's) Ethical Standards for Auditors.

### Scope of audit of accounts

A description of the scope of an audit of accounts is provided on the APB's website at [www.frc.org.uk/apb/scope/private.cfm](http://www.frc.org.uk/apb/scope/private.cfm).

### Opinion on the accounts

As described in note 5, the association has not fully disclosed the effects on the financial statements of an employment dispute. In our opinion, except for this matter, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the association's affairs as at 31 December 2014 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992; and
- the information given in the Finance Committee's Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements.

### Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1992 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the association has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Stephen Grant, Senior Statutory Auditor

for and on behalf of Tindell, Grant & Co, Statutory Auditors 6 Munro Road, Springkerse  
Stirling FK7 7UU

Tindell, Grant & Co. is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

## SUPPLY TEACHERS - Euan Duncan



The critical shortage of supply teachers in schools continues to be a matter of concern. The SSTA believes

that there are two aspects to this critical shortage. On the one hand, there is the aspect that teacher unemployment is at a very low level, on the other hand has been the employers' decision to reduce supply pay rates. The consequence is that frequently schools are unable to find cover for CPD opportunities, extra-curricular activities, union duties, sickness absence and parental leave. This has a knock-on effect of adding to teachers' workload at a time when secondary teachers are working hard to develop new courses and prepare for the introduction of new exams. The SSTA believes that the very low rates on offer to short term supply teachers represent a false economy; with staffing in schools cut to the bone it is often the case that teachers in promoted positions, on much higher salary scales than short term supply teachers, are shouldering the burden of class supervision instead of being able to use their leadership time strategically. It is hard to understand why, when there is a labour shortage, employers continue to believe that it is acceptable to pay short term supply teachers less than other classroom teachers.

Last year the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers established a review group to consider issues related to the management and availability of supply and to identify practical answers to common issues with the availability of supply teachers. The SSTA had membership of, and contributed to, the review group. The key themes that emerged from the discussion sessions were not surprising: all authorities face difficulties in recruiting and retaining supply teachers, there are significant shortages in particular subjects and geographic areas, local authorities face significant difficulties in identifying what supply teachers are available, there is little coordination across local authority boundaries leading to supply teachers facing multiple recruitment processes and disclosure checks if they wanted to be a supply teacher in more than one authority, and, positively, some local authorities are taking a proactive approach to look at better use of existing resources and internal solutions. Excluded from the deliberations of the review group was the issue of supply teachers' pay. The Supply Teachers Review Group report included the following recommendations:

- Local authorities to consider the use of permanent supply options and the use of alternative staffing complements
- Development of a supply teachers 'booking out' internet based system.
- Options to address the need for supply teachers to have multiple PVGs should be

identified. This would require discussions with Disclosure Scotland and local authorities.

- Development of a recruitment framework. Currently there are wide variances in approach to recruiting teachers onto supply lists.
- Local authorities to keep supply opportunities open throughout the year (for those subjects, sectors and geographical areas that are experiencing shortages)
- Local authorities to consider other opportunities to work across boundaries.
- Liaise with the GTCS in relation to better administration
- Local authorities to support teachers who are about to retire and wish to do supply work to join their supply list and remove any unnecessary barriers.
- Approaches should be made to training providers to develop dual qualification programme options for current teachers. This should be done on a multi authority basis if appropriate.
- A coordinated approach should take place to encourage those who have left the profession to return.

The SSTA is optimistic that one of the review group's recommendations, the development of some sort of national register of supply teachers, including simplified application and PVG procedures, will make it much easier and cheaper for teachers who are available for supply work to find employment across a range of authorities. COSLA and the Government also hope that it will contribute to

solving the present critical supply shortage but continue to deny that pay is a significant factor. Although there is no proposal at the current time to restore rates of pay and conditions of service for short term supply teachers, the SSTA has been continuing to work with colleagues in other unions to press for increased numbers of teachers and better rates of pay for short term supply teachers.

## SCHOOL REP TRAINING

The Association will hold a training day for both School and District Representatives on Friday 28 August from 9:30 am – 3.30pm and the venue will be the Stirling Court Hotel.

It is hoped that as many participants as possible will attend.

Can you please email [info@ssta.org.uk](mailto:info@ssta.org.uk) to let the Association know if you are available to attend.

## Pension Update

### Meet the General Secretary

Seamus Searson the General Secretary would like to meet with SSTA members to discuss the issues that face secondary teachers and how we protect and improve conditions for members. This is your opportunity to have your say. A list of dates are below, venues are to be confirmed. Please contact the SSTA office to confirm your place.

At this meeting there will be an important update on the new Scottish Teachers 2015 Pension Scheme and how it could impact on your future plans. Please see the report on Pensions to the right.

### The Scottish Teachers' 2015 Pension Scheme

Following the launch of the new Scottish Teachers' 2015 Pension scheme, on 1 April 2015, we have seen an increase in the number of people seeking guidance. The main focus has been on how the scheme will operate and what actions can be taken to help secure retirement at a reasonable age.

The new scheme has members that have 'no protection', 'tapered protection' and 'protected status' all dependent upon the teachers' age on the 1 April 2015. In addition, there are various schemes to

top-up your pension. However, there is a new arrangement called Early Retirement Reduction Buy Out (ERRBO). This option lets you pay extra contributions to reduce or remove the early retirement reduction if you retire before normal pension age. The ERRBO option is only available for 6 months after joining the new scheme. The clock started ticking for some members on the 1 April 2015. Do attend the 'Meet the General Secretary' meetings to get more information.

| Location  | Date             | Time          |
|-----------|------------------|---------------|
| Aberdeen  | 25 August 2015   | 17:00 - 18:00 |
|           |                  | 19:00 - 20:00 |
| Inverness | 26 August 2015   | 17:00 - 18:00 |
|           |                  | 19:00 - 20:00 |
| Glasgow   | 2 September 2015 | 17:00 - 18:00 |
|           |                  | 19:00 - 20:00 |
| Perth     | 3 September 2015 | 17:00 - 18:00 |
|           |                  | 19:00 - 20:00 |
| Stirling  | 8 September 2015 | 17:00 - 18:00 |
|           |                  | 19:00 - 20:00 |
| Edinburgh | 9 September 2015 | 17:00 - 18:00 |
|           |                  | 19:00 - 20:00 |

If you are able to attend can you please express your interest by contacting SSTA head office on 0131 313 7300 or email us on [info@ssta.org.uk](mailto:info@ssta.org.uk).



We know how hard you work. In your profession, you have to. So it's only fair that you're rewarded. We offer great value home insurance so you can relax outside of work. With prices from £135 – that's all 10% of our customers paid\* – plus a £25 Amazon.co.uk Gift Certificate\*\* when you take out a new combined buildings and contents policy online, we look after our customers. We share our customer reviews on our website too. So now you can see for yourself before you buy.

Plus, you could save up to 20% online – 45% of customers are expected to receive maximum saving\*\*\*.

**Get a quote online in six minutes<sup>^</sup> at [fromyourassociation.co.uk/ssta](http://fromyourassociation.co.uk/ssta) and quote **sstahome** when you buy to claim your Amazon.co.uk Gift Certificate\*\*.**

**Full terms and conditions at [www.fromyourassociation.co.uk/ssta](http://www.fromyourassociation.co.uk/ssta)**

\*10% of all customers buying buildings and contents insurance with us from November 2014 to January 2015 paid £135 or less. The price you pay will depend upon individual circumstances, cover chosen and payment method selected.

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