

**SSTA Rejects the COSLA Pay Offer**

The SSTA is negotiating through the SNCT in progressing the 2018 pay claim. The Teachers' Side submitted a pay claim of 10% for teachers at all grades to the SNCT on 8 February. COSLA (the employers) responded on 27 March by making a pay offer of 2% for those above £36,500 and 3% for those below (see attached/website link) The Teacher Side negotiators (SSTA and EIS) rejected the offer and the proposal for a differentiated pay deal. The Teachers' Side was disappointed that a differentiated pay deal was offered despite a complete rejection of the proposal during the 2017 pay negotiations.

The employer's offer made reference to 'parity' across all four of its bargaining groups and as a consequence fails to address the current teacher retention and recruitment crisis. It was equally disappointing that the COSLA offer was termed as its 'best and final offer'. This would result in no scope for negotiation.

However, the SNCT awaits the response from the Scottish Government on the situation at its next meeting on 19 April. At this point it would be premature to seek the views of members on the employers offer as the negotiating process has yet to reach its conclusion. The SSTA is committed to try and reach a negotiated pay agreement and seek a package that retains the current teacher workforce and a process of restoration of teacher salaries.

**SNCT Panel on Career Pathways**

The SNCT has agreed to establish an independent panel that will consider the design and development of career pathway models and report its recommendations to SNCT by the end of September 2018. The panel will include representatives of the teacher associations, the employers, Scottish Government and an Independent Chair. The panel will engage with the teaching profession in Scotland in order to develop a range of models of career pathways to enable the development of different careers in teaching. The new pathways will provide opportunities for teachers to diversify their career and act to support high quality teaching and learning. Please note: the work of the Headteacher Recruitment Working Group will operate to the same timescale.

**New National 5 and 'Fallback'**

The SSTA has informed the SQA that it will conduct a survey of members after the Easter break on the changes made at National 5 and the impact they have had on pupils and teachers. The SSTA has met with SQA and raised members concerns on this issue at National 5 in different subjects and the need for schools to allocate sufficient time to prepare materials and pupils for the examinations.

Unfortunately, the Ministers decision to retain 'fallback' has resulted in 90,000 unit entries taking place at National 5. It is worth noting that 'fallback' had been intended to be used only in exceptional circumstances. This information shows that pressure has been placed on pupils and teachers to complete more work than is necessary to achieve national qualifications. This has underlined SSTA fears that the teacher workload would be increased rather than decreased as a consequence of the changes.

## New Highers

The SQA has assured the SSTA that all information required for the new Higher Qualification in all subjects will be available to schools by the end of April. It is also anticipated that Advance Higher materials will be produced in a similar way and completed by the end of April 2019.

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