

**eis**

The Educational  
Institute of Scotland

[www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

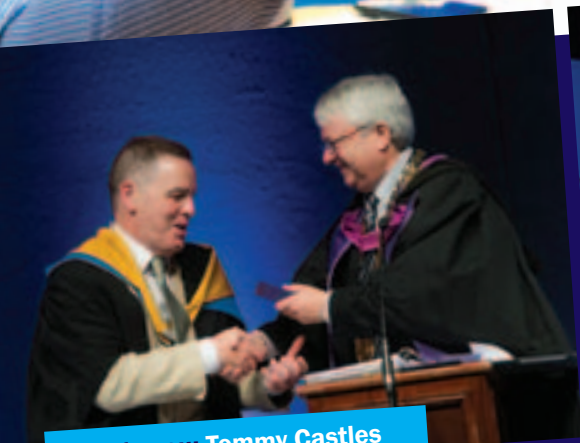
The Scottish  
Educational  
Journal

June 2015  
Vol. 99  
Issue no. 04

**SEJ**

**AGM**

2015 | Perth  
4-6 June



**Over to you: Tommy Castles hands over to new President Pat Flanagan**



**AGM Sights & Sounds: Talented pupils to the fore**



**New Fellows honoured: EIS bestows Fellowship awards for services to education**

# WORKLOAD CONCERNS DOMINATE AGM BUSINESS



As delegates gathered in Perth for the 169th EIS Annual General Meeting, one issue dominated much of the discussion and debate: Workload. The growing pressure on the teaching profession owing to issues such as curricular change, cuts in staff numbers, rising class sizes, excessive assessment and new qualifications, budget cuts and the scarcity of resources, and cumbersome planning and reporting systems have all combined to push

teachers to the brink. As this year's AGM highlighted, EIS members are now saying that enough is enough, and that action needs to be taken – and quickly – to deliver the cuts to bureaucracy and reductions in workload that have already been promised. A number of Motions calling for ballots on industrial action, in relation to workload, pay and education cuts, have sent a very clear message that the Scottish Government, local authorities and education bodies simply cannot ignore.

## Motions

A total of 70 Motions were on the agenda at this years AGM. 62 passed, 5 fell and 3 were withdrawn. Full details at [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

### Boycott of SQA and Unit Assessments



**"We need to take control of this issue to achieve reform of these unit assessments in order to reduce workload,"**

Alison MacDonald

In a Motion that sparked considerable media interest, Alison MacDonald (Highland) was successful in a call for a potential industrial action ballot in relation to the workload burden created by SQA assessment procedures. The Motion further called for a potential boycott of co-operation with the SQA, including the marking of unit assessments at National 5 and National 6, until such time as the workload burden is reduced and internal assessment procedures are reformed.

"We need to take control of this issue to achieve reform of these unit assessments in order to reduce workload," said Ms MacDonald. She added, "We are all

aware of the massive workload imposition by the SQA – an organisation that isn't even our employer. With the greatest reluctance, we now propose to draw a line in the sand and ballot for industrial action. This is about reducing workload, tackling bureaucracy and improving pupils' educational experience."

Michael Dolan (West Dunbartonshire) speaking in support added, "The SQA have dropped entire sections of the school community from their assessment processes and dumped the workload onto teachers."

Graham Boyd (East Ayrshire) said "There are massive amounts of documentation from the SQA that is often pointless. I've seen pupils who have been bombarded with assessment becoming ill due to stress. We need to think about the welfare of our pupils."

He added, "The SQA has become a bureaucratic monster that needs to be slayed."

AGM delegates backed the Motion overwhelmingly.

But Alan Gardiner, summing up, said "This is a starting point to allow us to address the issues. Something must be done – we need to protect teachers and reduce excessive workload."

### Cutting Assessment Workload & Bureaucracy

John Inglis (East Lothian) moved and Thomas Munro (East Lothian) seconded a successful Motion that called on the EIS to campaign for the reduction of workload and bureaucracy involved in testing, retesting and marking of internal SQA assessments and the production of approved assessments by SQA as a means to reduce teacher workload.

Adam Sutcliffe (Aberdeenshire), speaking in support, said "Many of the SQA produced assessments we are given are, quite frankly, not fit for purpose. We need to ensure that they are."

### Workload Implications of 1+2 Languages



**"1 plus 2. Or, as we in Aberdeenshire would call it...three."**

John Black

Sue Burns (Midlothian) was successful in calling for guidelines to be issued to schools relating to the implementation of 1+2 languages.

She said, "I recognise the value of 1+2 but it has major implications for workload. There is also the issue of fitting this into the over-crowded primary curriculum. If 1+2 is to be of value, then it needs to be properly planned, prepared for and resourced."

### Workload & Employers' Duty of Care



**"I have never seen colleagues as worn down by workload as they are at the moment,"**

Alan Gardiner

Alan Gardiner (North Lanarkshire) successfully moved a composite Motion - relating to local authority duty of care and the need to cut workload - on behalf of Dumfries & Galloway, North Lanarkshire, Scottish Borders and East Renfrewshire Local Associations.

"I have never seen colleagues as worn down by workload as they are at the moment," said Mr Gardiner. The Motion was seconded by Eilidh Porrelli. (Scottish Borders)

The Motion, which was backed overwhelmingly by delegates, calls on the EIS to ensure that all Local Authorities meet their legal duty of care to protect their teacher employees from excessive workload demands which damage health and wellbeing.

John Dennis (Dumfries & Galloway) raised concerns that the Motion "Does not go far enough. The intent is fine, but it does not have enough teeth."



The debate also featured a welcome return for Aberdeenshire Delegate John “Jocky” Black’s AGM tradition of delivering a speech in Doric. In a highly amusing speech (helpfully translated by the SEJ for non-Doric speakers), he asked “Who thought it was a good idea to name a languages programme...after a sum?”

“1 plus 2. Or, as we in Aberdeenshire would call it...three.”

Hugh Donnelly (Glasgow), who represented the EIS on the Scottish Government’s languages working group, said “The aims of the programme are ambitious, and there are significant challenges in terms of resourcing, training and curricular space.”

## Can we talk about SEEMIS?

Eilidh Porrelli (Scottish Borders) successfully called for the EIS to investigate issues arising from the use of SEEMIS or other electronic systems with regard to advice issued in the Tackling Bureaucracy Report.

Moving the Motion, Ms Porrelli said, “It is reporting time in school. You have prepared, you have set aside time. You try to log into SEEMIS. You try again to log into SEEMIS. SEEMIS is down. Again.”

She later added, “The process of using SEEMIS is soul-destroying. I am not opposed to an online system, but it has to be fit for purpose. I object to SEEMIS allocating a set number of characters for my reporting. This is meant to be a report on pupils’ progress...not a Tweet.”

Seconding the Motion, Des Kenny (Glasgow) said, “Electronic systems are meant to be there to help us do our work. They are not supposed to impose more work upon us.”

## Bi-level and Multi-level Classes

David Munro (Inverclyde) successfully proposed that the EIS should investigate issues related to workload and stress in relation to the use of bi-level and multi-level classes in schools.

“It is pupils who ultimately suffer in this type of situation,” said Mr Munro.

Speaking in support, Graham Boyd (East Ayrshire) said, “Bi-level or tri-level teaching has massive workload and assessment implications. It is often practically impossible.”

## Faculty Structures and Workload

West Dunbartonshire and Orkney Local Associations successfully moved that the EIS should investigate on the impact of faculty structures on teacher workload and stress.

Michael Dolan (West Dunbartonshire),

highlighted that pressure on some subject teachers was growing, in part, due to “Local authorities moving away from subject specialist Principal Teachers to a new faculty PT role of management only.”

## Profiling, Transition and Workload

Chris Johnston (Orkney) was successful in his call for the EIS to investigate the workload implications of P7 and S3 profiles, and to explore the extent to which profiles are beneficial in supporting transitions.

## The Equality Impact of CfE



Julie Ferguson (Orkney) successfully called for the EIS to seek information on Equalities Impact Assessments relating to the impact of CfE workload.

Moving the Motion, Ms Ferguson said, “The changeover to CfE is having an impact on all of us. There are massive workload implications - I have no social life left any more. I asked my employing authority if they have carried out an equality impact assessment regarding the introduction of CfE. The answer was No.”

Ms Ferguson, who told AGM she has a long-time visual impairment and has recently been registered as blind, went on to ask “How many teachers across Scotland are facing difficulties because no-one has thought about the implications of CfE?”

She added, “I refuse to be pushed out of doing a job I love just because the introduction of CfE has been so poorly planned and badly implemented.”

## Pupil Teacher Ratios, Class Sizes and Attainment

AGM delegates unanimously rejected COSLA’s assertion that teacher: pupil ratios and attainment are not linked and called on Council to reinvigorate the campaign to reduce class sizes.

“If we need to get the time, we cannot continually increase class sizes. We must reduce class sizes in every sector,” said Harry Kilgour (South Lanarkshire).

Seconding the Motion, John Tonner (Renfrewshire) observed: “When you raise class size, you actually do harm.” Tom Tracey (Inverclyde) said “We have been talking about reducing class sizes for 25 years. We can’t wait another 25 years to see improvements.” Celia Connolly (Glasgow) reminded delegates that while

the average class size was 26, many classes sit at the maximum size of 33 and Ken Brown (East Dunbartonshire) insisted that “Large classes are a cost cutting exercise.” Rounding off the debate, Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) asked “Why must our children pay?” in reference to the EIS 2010 campaign against budget cuts.

In a separate debate, a majority of AGM delegates voted to campaign for a reduction in the maximum class contact time to 20 hours per week. John Inglis (East Lothian) moved the Motion and called for an allocation of appropriate time for teaching and learning. He reminded Conference that according to figures from the OECD, Scottish teachers ranked the fifth highest in terms of annual teaching hours. “Teaching time should be reduced and teachers’ lives rebalanced,” he said. Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) urged delegates to think very hard about what was achievable. She said: “We have to be responsible at the AGM. Do we want to raise hopes that we can deliver this policy? We cannot achieve this in the short term. The focus of the EIS should be on achieving an overall reduction in class sizes.”

Elsewhere at the AGM, delegates resolved to resist any attempts by local authorities to increase class contact time. Moving the Motion, which was passed by an overwhelming majority, David Thomson (Renfrewshire) said that any increase in class contact time was “A low cost option for Councils,” adding: “Teachers are at breaking point and cannot take on any additional hours.”

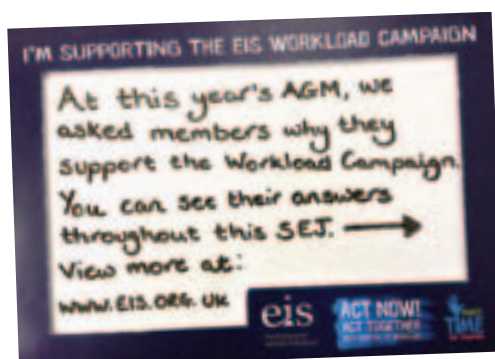
## Teacher Shortages and Recruitment



An investigation on the impact of teacher shortages across Scotland was the subject of a successful Motion from Midlothian and Aberdeen Local Associations.

Moving, Mark Ireland (Midlothian) said, “Teaching has become a troubled profession – we are overworked, underpaid, underappreciated and expected to solve all of society’s problems.”

The Motion, which was seconded by Mary Matheson (Aberdeen), was passed overwhelmingly.



## Restorative Pay Claim



**"We need to go out of here and speak to our members and say to them that strike action on pay is a possibility"**

Tom Tracey

The first strike action over pay in Scottish schools for nearly 30 years moved a step closer when delegates unanimously backed a Motion calling for a restorative pay deal. The EIS is currently demanding a pay increase of 5% to redress a decline in salary levels over the past few years. Councils have offered 1% for 2015 or 2.5% split over two years instead, both of which have been rejected. If progress is not made, members will be balloted for industrial action up to and including strike action.

Moving the Motion, David Baxter (Dundee) pointed out that statistics from the ONS (Office of National Statistics) showed teachers and other public sector workers had lost out in the age of austerity, some by as much as 30%. "We need our purchasing powers back," he said. He added, "Professional workers should be paid professional wages. We are working harder but are being paid less. Teachers have had enough. A campaign in the run-up to the Scottish Parliament elections in 2016 is key and will give this issue the attention it deserves."

A recent survey by the EIS indicates the average teacher worked 46.5 hours a week, which is 11.5 hours over their contracted 35-hour week. Mr Baxter added, "That's 64 days each year of unpaid overtime that teachers are doing

to keep education afloat. It is clear that teachers are working harder, getting paid less and being under-valued."

Seconding the Motion, Mike Callaghan (Angus) said, "We did not enter the profession to strike but, as professionals, we must be paid the appropriate amount." Tom Tracey (Inverclyde), Convener of the EIS Salaries Committee, said: "We need to go out of here and speak to our members and say to them that strike action on pay is a possibility."

EIS members took part in strike action in 2011 as part of a wider public sector protest over changes to pensions. The last time the sector held a strike on pay was in 1986.

## Performance Related Pay



**"Market economics do not draw up standards. We must vigorously defend Scottish Education and oppose the Academy Model"**

Angela Howie

Resulting from a successful Motion moved by Kenny Fella (Renfrewshire), The EIS will seek assurances from the Scottish Government that there will be no element of performance related pay in relation to those schools participating in the Attainment Scotland Fund Scheme. Mr Fella said, "The additional funding of £100 million for schools participating in the Attainment Scotland Fund Scheme is welcome. However, the money from this fund should be used to support all teachers. The Scottish Government is looking at all options. The evidence [for performance related pay] is not convincing." Angela Howie (Renfrewshire) seconded the Motion and warned delegates, "Market economics do not draw up standards. We must vigorously defend Scottish Education and oppose the Academy Model."

## Increased Pension Age

Des Morris (East Renfrewshire) successfully moved a Motion instructing Council to set a deadline of the end of October 2015 for a satisfactory outcome to the present negotiations on early retirement for those whose normal pension age (NPA) has increased from NPA 60 to NPA 65-68. He told delegates that swathes of teachers were affected

by this change and that the issue has to be addressed now. Seconding the Motion, Sharon Kelly (East Renfrewshire) reminded the AGM that few teachers had planned to work for an additional five years. If no satisfactory outcome is forthcoming, Council was instructed to ballot members for industrial action up to and including strike action.

## Practical Class Sizes Debate

Council will seek to negotiate, at the SNCT, a re-evaluation of practical/non practical subject status as a result of a successful Motion moved by Steve Davidson (Shetland). Mr Davidson argued, "Given the practical nature of most subjects and given the changes to courses brought in under Curriculum for Excellence, the time was right to look at subject definitions. He concluded, "COSLA is following a 'cuts agenda'. The future of youngsters is being compromised by short term savings." Tom Tracey (Inverclyde) supported the Motion and said, "This Motion does not mention any specific subjects. We won't get class sizes of 20 tomorrow but support this Motion as a first step for your SNCT negotiators."

The AGM's decision on this Motion made it more difficult for speakers to persuade delegates to focus on specific subject areas. Martin Bayliss (Aberdeenshire) made the case for music to be deemed a practical subject with a class size limit of 20 in the next Motion. He argued that music teachers faced "incessant noise," adding, "Cutting class sizes in music cuts noise." He urged delegates to "...see the reality of this practical subject. Demanding one class size for all is no way to proceed." Delegates

from Fife made a similar plea for Computing Science to be included in the list of practical classes in the SNCT Handbook. Derek Ross (Aberdeenshire) countered that the EIS had always called for a reduction in all class sizes. Susan Quinn (Glasgow and the Convener of the EIS Education Committee) agreed adding, "That is what we should push for." In both debates, the Motions were defeated.

## National Staffing Standard

The EIS will pursue a National Staffing Standard to take account of each category of teaching post and school size as part of the development of the Standard following the success of a Motion from Midlothian and Dumfries and Galloway Local Associations.

## Teacher Workforce Planning

"Teacher workforce planning is in chaos where there is overprovision in some subjects and under provision in Home Economics, Computing, Physics and Business Education." That was the message to delegates from Ricky Cullen (North Lanarkshire) who moved a Motion instructing Council to demand from the Scottish Government and local authorities firm commitments to effective teacher workforce planning mechanisms at national and local levels.

## Supply Teacher Shortages



**"The lack of supply teachers is a major issue."**

Sue Burns



John Inglis (East Lothian) moved a Motion which called on the SNCT to recognise the damage being done to Scottish Education by the shortage of supply teachers. He warned delegates of “the peril of the shortage of supply teachers.” He said, “Schools have found it difficult to bring in supply teachers and cuts to education budgets mean that permanent supply pools are being disbanded.” The Motion also called for a campaign to reinstate the full pre-2011 terms and conditions for short term supply teachers.

In a separate Motion, Sue Burns (Midlothian) successfully called on Council to investigate and report on the impact of the lack of supply teachers on promoted teachers, support for learning teachers, visiting specialists, and class teachers. She said, “The lack of supply teachers is a major issue. Therefore, the EIS must investigate and report on the impact of this across the sectors.” She added, “Shortages of supply teachers has an impact on permanent staff who often attend school when they should be signed off ill. It also involves HTs and DHTs covering classes. This has an impact across the school.”

## In-service days and CfE

Ken Brown (East Dunbartonshire) successfully moved a Motion calling on Council to campaign for two additional in-service days in session 2015-16 for continued CfE development in the Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Special sectors. Mr Brown asserted that “Curriculum for Excellence is a long way from being secure” and that there is much still to be done to embed the radical changes to the curriculum and system of qualifications. “Each teacher is already giving our employer over 400 hours extra a year - more than 11 weeks,” so we cannot give any more additional time to “develop and consolidate our courses.” The point was reiterated by Kevin O’Brien (East Dunbartonshire) who said that the job of developing the curriculum is not yet complete in early years, primary or secondary. Tom Britton (Edinburgh) gave further support to the Motion saying, “These are the kind of days that we feel we need more of, where our professionalism is enhanced and our judgement supported.” Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire) also supported the Motion though issued caution, “If we secure those inset days, the content of those in-service days has to be negotiated at local level...There is no point in having two inset days dictated by the local authority or school management.” The Motion received unanimous support from delegates voting in favour.

## National Collective Bargaining



“use all appropriate means, up to and including industrial action, to defend National Collective Bargaining”

Bill Ramsay

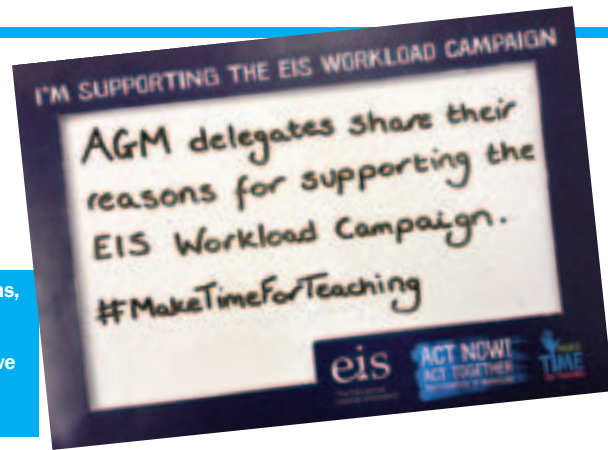
Bill Ramsay (South Lanarkshire) successfully moved a Motion instructing Council to use all appropriate means, up to and including industrial action, to defend National Collective Bargaining. This Motion restated existing EIS policy but it was also directed at the Scottish Local Government Partnership which comprises Aberdeen, Glasgow, South Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire councils. These councils left COSLA, the umbrella body for councils, in March 2015 in a dispute over where the power lies within COSLA, how funding to local authorities is distributed and the overall effectiveness of the organisation.

## Management Structures and Job-Sizing

Council will investigate and report on management structures throughout Scotland following the success of a Motion moved by Susan Quinn (Glasgow). The investigation will also consider how the job-sizing toolkit is used in each local authority as part of their management staffing formula and how this reflects on the actual remits of individuals. She said, “Management structures vary hugely and the job-sizing toolkit is erratic. With changes in management structures, workload is passed to other members of staff. Cuts to Council budgets mean that management structures are revisited with remits extending.

## Promoted Post Staffing Structure in Primary

Jim Lawson (Orkney) successfully moved a Motion instructing Council to investigate the staffing structure in primary schools with regard to promoted posts. He reminded delegates that the agreement *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* had introduced Principal Teacher promoted posts in the Primary Sector. However, over time these posts have been reduced and where they do exist in Orkney, most are at scale point 1. He said: “This is not just an issue for Orkney which is why we are calling for an investigation where we can share good practice.”



## Tackling Zero-Hours Contracts



“Zero-hours is not an appropriate structure for workers”

Maggie Chapman

Nick Cimini (EIS-ULA) successfully called for the EIS to campaign against the growing use of zero-hours contracts in education, to report on the use of such contracts, and to lobby the Scottish Government and COSLA for the abolition of zero-hours contracts in Scottish education.

Mr Cimini said, “Low pay and insecurity leads many workers on zero-hours contracts to struggle to pay their rent or their mortgage or to put food on the table.”

Seconding the Motion, Maggie Chapman (EIS-ULA) said, “Zero-hours workers can suffer low self-esteem at work, with an impact on them as individuals and also their colleagues and students. Zero-hours is not an appropriate structure for workers – particularly for workers with children or other caring commitments.”

Speaking in support, Paula Dixon (EIS-FELA) added, “Zero - hours are also very much alive and kicking, and on the increase, in Further Education.”



# President Warns on Workload & Political Interference in Education



EIS President Tommy Castles delivers his AGM address

It has been quite a year for me and quite a journey, a journey which began in this hall, in June last year.

This journey has allowed me to engage with members across Scotland, to represent the EIS at meetings with the Cabinet Secretary, and at fringe meetings at the Scottish political party conferences. It has enabled me to take forward issues of concern to our members. It has indeed been an honour and a privilege.

But what has not been an honour or a privilege is to have been President of the EIS in the fifth year of this unnecessary Austerity Budget, which has done so much harm to our communities,

to our standard of life and has inflicted savage cuts to all areas of the public sector with consequences for the quality of the Education we can provide.

If you hoped that the General Election result of the 7th May would create an opportunity to end this wanton destruction then be afraid, be very afraid.

As the world's fourth wealthiest country it is obscene that increasing numbers of families are forced to live in poverty, the majority of whom are in work. The Child Poverty Action Group tells us that one in five, and that's about 220,000 children, are officially recognised as living in poverty in Scotland.

In 2012, there was one Trussell Trust food bank in Scotland. As of November 2014, there were 48 in 27 Scottish Local Authorities. 30% of those relying on emergency food parcels are children.

A key challenge for Education is closing the attainment gap. There is a wealth of evidence showing that children from poorer backgrounds do less well academically than children from more privileged backgrounds.

We expressed our concerns over the issue of social and economic deprivation in a Motion at the STUC Conference this

year. The Scottish Government has begun a new initiative to close the attainment gap and help those from poorer backgrounds achieve greater academic success.

Of course we support the aims of raising attainment, but it has to be recognised that there are no easy solutions and it is a huge challenge.

I will quote Professor Sir Harry Burns from Strathclyde University speaking to Scottish Parliament Health and Sport Committee on Early Years Health Inequalities; "We still think in terms of a machine metaphor - the idea that pulling a lever here will make everything all right

over there - but society ain't like that. The system is complex and we need different ways of dealing with it."

Pulling the levers in Education and blaming teachers will not solve the deep endemic problems caused by poverty. Education cannot solve the problems on its own. We must not lose sight that the prime objective in

a wealthy country like ours should be to eradicate poverty.

What has definitely been both an honour and a privilege has been the opportunity to visit members in schools across Scotland and witness first hand the tireless dedication, commitment and professionalism of my colleagues in producing the best educational opportunities for their pupils, in the face of those budget cuts.

I have many pleasant memories of those visits. I would also like to thank all my colleagues who made me so welcome on my visits to schools and Local Associations.

These visits across Scotland reminded me that each school tailors the learning environment to meet its own unique challenges. From rural to inner city, from areas of deprivation to the more affluent

catchment areas, each school has its own specific challenges to meet and has staff committed to meeting those challenges.

Our campaign, Make Time for Teaching, continues and workload is still a major issue. Last year saw the release of the report on Tackling Bureaucracy from the CfE Working Group. Do not underestimate how significant a step that was in our campaign.

All the signatories to that report recognised a crisis in workload that was reducing Time to Teach. It was signed by all the Teacher Trade Unions, by The Directors of Education in Scotland, The Association of Heads and Deputies in Scotland, The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Education Scotland, The National Parent Forum of Scotland, The Scottish Government, School Leaders Scotland and The Scottish Qualifications Authority.

This is now the first year of the implementation of the recommendations of that report. This is the hard part. Recognising the problem is one thing, dealing with it is something else.

If the Scottish Government wants to narrow the attainment gap then give us Time to Teach. Some time ago I was asked how we could measure the success of the Tackling Bureaucracy Campaign and the answer quite simply is by seeing an actual reduction in bureaucracy. To achieve this, the signatories need to engage in steps to reduce the workload.

Take the example of Forward Plans in Primary Schools. For years now across Scotland - and this was due partly to confusion as to what a Forward Plan was for and to a misplaced perception that it had to choke a horse - forward plans have been a cause of huge unnecessary workload.

We could work with Education Scotland to identify good practice in this area. This could be disseminated to schools through the LNCTs. Agreements like this would both eliminate unnecessary excessive planning and give schools the confidence that in eliminating this bureaucracy they had the backing of Education Scotland and their

Local Authority.

The Curriculum for Excellence itself is still one of our main drivers of workload and I will stay on Primaries just now. It should have brought about a decluttering of the Primary Curriculum and it has not. If you want to see the deep learning the CfE promised then declutter the curriculum. If you want more time spent on 'the basics', declutter the curriculum.

In secondary schools the main workload driver is the National Qualifications. Was it the Daleks or the SQA who drove fear into people by shouting? "Exemplification! Verification! Extermination!?"

It was clear that last year the process was a nightmare for all involved and that includes teachers, pupils and parents. We met with the SQA and changes were made this year.



However, from the Motions on the table at this AGM and in my discussions with members, issues have not been resolved and that is both in terms of workload and concerns over attitudes being formed by, and about, pupils to some of those assessments. The decisions on the Motions will inform EIS policy for our next meetings with the SQA.

Most importantly in tackling workload we have to ensure our members themselves develop the confidence to challenge the bureaucracy they face and to negotiate time to teach. This means all the signatories where they have the authority should be working to ensure that, finally, a collegiate structure is in place in all establishments where all colleagues views are welcomed, valued and considered in the decision making process.

Our members need to develop a confidence and a willingness to challenge bureaucracy.

We have seen CPD events such as those on Working Time Arrangements and the use of School Development Plans which have helped members in this process.

As for the CfE in general, I'll quote Sinatra, "...flying high in April shot down in May..." We spend up to ten years

implementing CfE and then after a half hour speech made by a politician to a group of academics it is open season on us and the CfE.

Where does this assumption come from that seemingly all assessment stopped on day one of CfE?

Schools continue to assess and in part do this by testing. Proper assessment should be relevant, manageable and inform the learning process.

We cannot go back to the testing regime of 5-14 which did not inform the learning process but created a target driven culture which judged schools on their academic outcomes and corrupted the learning process.

We recognise that budgets are tight in every Local Authority but we have to ensure there is Additional Support Needs

provision in all our schools.

This is an issue of equality, equality of opportunity for all to achieve their full potential.

Units providing support for children with behavioural needs should not be seen as an easy target for cuts.

In general with proposals to save money, the consequences for

education must not be ignored. Cutting teacher numbers, removing GTCS registered teachers from the Early Years team, cutting instrumental music tuition and removing two and half hours from the Primary pupil week all have a consequence in a reduction in the quality of education.

We continue to support the campaigns of our members in all sectors. Last month I spoke at a rally outside Holyrood, organised by FELA Executive as part of their campaign against the savage cuts which have been inflicted on the college sector.

FE has faced cuts of 20% since 2010 which has seen courses and teaching posts lost. Budgets need to be restored as FE plays an important role as a pathway to employment for so many young adults and gives them the life opportunities so many of us take for granted.

I also wish to congratulate the FELA Executive for negotiating the first moves towards a return to collective bargaining. In Higher Education the campaign continues for management boards which have elected principals and are representative of staff, students and senior management. They also have to be transparent in decision making, have a gender balance and places for the trade unions.

Events organised by the EIS across Scotland have shown the desire of our members for quality CPD activities. One of the main topics was the GTCS Professional Update. We have issues with aspects of the operation of The Council but its importance to us can be reflected in the fact that members of other trade unions, in the UK and other parts of Europe, are clear they would desire a GTC based on the Scottish model.

Our Equalities Committee also have to be congratulated on the high standard of the equality training courses they organised this year.

I want to draw attention to the important work done by the Employment Relations Committee in two main areas. The first is in the help given, from the Benevolence Fund, to those of our members who have fallen on hard times.

The second is in the support given to members who have become involved in disciplinary procedures. I have seen the work of our union in both these areas having a profound and positive effect on people's lives. Thank you to the officials and lay members of Employment Relations for the work you do.

Our campaigns on Pensions and Salaries, of course, continue.

We have met with the Scottish Government on Pensions. I have been impressed by the arguments and the suggestions for a resolution put forward by the Trade Union side led by our own Drew Morrice and Larry Flanagan. Negotiations will continue to resolve this problem.

On salaries, all of us have seen our standard of living fall over the last five years with pay freezes and low increases. Our aim is for a restorative pay rise. At the STUC conference this year, the EIS proposed a Motion for all public sector unions to campaign for this and we will continue to press for this in our negotiations at the SNCT.

Professor Harry Burns, whom I quoted earlier, told a story of how his father at fifteen was washing bottles in a lemonade factory. He was encouraged by a teacher to return to school and this was a life changing moment as he went on to graduate from University.

Every one of us in this room will have similar life changing stories to tell about our role in helping children and young adults to go on to achieve their full potential. Colleagues, it's time we celebrated our successes as we have made such a positive difference to so many lives.

And remember, as Derek Bok, former president of Harvard, once said "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance."



## Fringe Events

EIS General Secretary Larry Flanagan held an informal round-table session with members, including a significant number of first-time delegates, during the Friday lunchtime fringe sessions. Members from across Scotland shared their views on the key challenges facing the EIS, teachers and Scottish education.

## Pensions @ the Fringe

Over 60 AGM delegates and Council members attended a fringe meeting chaired by the incoming EIS President Pat Flanagan. Mr Flanagan introduced the EIS Pensions' Panel (Drew Morrice, EIS Assistant Secretary; Chris Bain, EIS Financial Services, and Ian Macaskill, EIS Administrator) who outlined the recent changes made to the Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme in 2015. Panel members then answered questions on a wide variety of topics including: phased retirements; winding down; the new CARE scheme; and the difference between final salary and pensionable salary.

## Equality Fringe

EIS Equality Committee Convener Bill Ramsay chaired the Equality Fringe celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Glasgow Girls' Campaign. The fringe featured external speakers Amal Azzudin, Agnesa Murselaj, Emma Clifford, Roza Salih and teacher Euan Girvan who were all heavily involved in the campaign from the beginning.

Amal began by explaining the campaign was established in response to the detention of one of their friends, Agnesa Murselaj. Publicity grew as the girls challenged the then First Minister Jack McConnell on the matter and publicly voiced their concerns as more children at their school were being dawn raided, detained and deported.

Emma Clifford spoke about the importance of the media in raising awareness of the campaign and how the media needs to be challenged in order to change public opinion about migrants and asylum seekers. "At the time of the campaign the Scottish media were extremely supportive but now the media, especially in England, is very negative. There is a demonisation of migrants in the media that seems to be acceptable. They are giving legitimacy to racist views."

Euan Girvan talked about the support he received from trade unionists, church groups and political parties and the importance of the campaign in creating hope for Agnesa and her family whilst they were in the detention centre. "If we had done nothing, there would have been no hope at all."

The fringe meeting ended with a question and answer session.



## Homophobia and Transphobia

Penny Gower (EIS-FELA) successfully moved a Motion committing the EIS to undertaking a survey of all EIS members regarding their experiences, direct or indirect, of homophobia and transphobia in education. Ms Gower said, "While lesbian and gay rights have made significant and welcome strides...prejudice is still rife."

## GTCS Registration

David Munro (Inverclyde) successfully moved a Motion resolving that only GTCS registered teachers can have responsibility of teaching classes and delivering course content to children under the age of 16. The Motion further instructed Council to investigate and report on the extent to which children under the age of 16 are currently being taught by non-GTCS registered teachers in schools and colleges.

## Health and Safety Survey...and Posters

During session 2015-2016, the EIS will conduct a survey regarding how satisfied EIS members in schools and colleges are on a range of Health and Safety issues. Moving the Motion, Carolyn Ritchie (Glasgow) argued, "Now is the right time to be surveying our members on Health and Safety issues and to find out their views on unsatisfactory working conditions."

Jayne Rowe (Glasgow) focussed on the second part of the Motion which called on the EIS to produce a series of EIS Health and Safety posters.

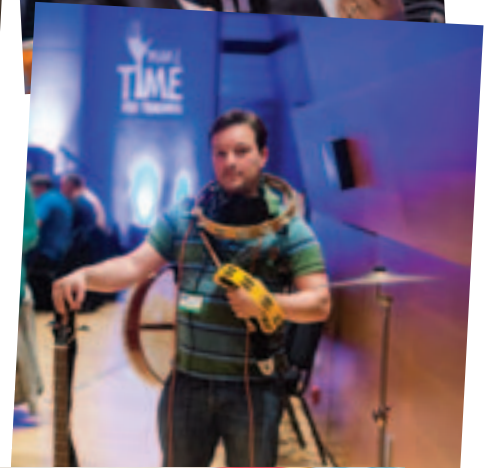
## Student Debt

John Inglis (East Lothian) highlighted the severe impact of student debt on many people across Scotland, and successfully called for the EIS to campaign for the cancellation of student loan debt and the replacement of Student Loans with a Student Grant Scheme.

"Students are facing an uphill struggle to keep their heads above water," said Mr Inglis.







**Guest speaker Christine Blower, NUT General Secretary** and current President of ETUCE, spoke of the major challenges in the English system - including the rise of the academies agenda and diminishing local authority responsibility for schools. She also highlighted some similar challenges facing education on both sides of the border, such as class sizes, pay & conditions, workload and the impact of “disgraceful cuts” to education as a result of the government’s austerity programme.

## New Fellows of the Institute honoured



**New Fellows of the Institute:** 1 Jean Miller, Headteacher, Smithycroft Secondary School 2 Susan Quinn, EIS Local Association Secretary  
 3 Kenneth Wimbor, EIS Assistant Secretary 4 Gerard Maguire, Retired, Life Member 5 Gavin Roberts, Teacher, Airdrie Academy  
 6 Teresa Verrecchia, Headteacher, St Dominic’s Primary School 7 Marian Kelly, Teacher, St Kenneth’s Primary School  
 8 Norma Anne Watson, Convener of the Board of Examiners 9 Larry Flanagan, EIS General Secretary 10 Tommy Castles, EIS President

## Support for LGBT Staff, Pupils and Students

Donny Gluckstein (EIS-FELA) secured the support of Conference for a Motion seeking further support of LGBT staff, pupils and students in Scottish schools and colleges. “There is a huge difference between formal equality and rights (as laid out within legislation) and people’s every day experiences,” argued Mr Gluckstein.

## Minimum of 4 Years in Secondary Education

Delegates were asked to consider a Motion proposed by Alan Stickle (Aberdeenshire), instructing Council to campaign to ensure that all pupils receive a minimum 4 years of secondary education and that the entitlement to leave school should be based on the completion of 4 years’ secondary education as opposed to date of birth. AGM delegates were in agreement and voted unanimously in favour of the Motion.

## The Marking of External Assessments

Aberdeenshire Local Association’s Alan Stickle successfully proposed a Motion instructing Council to investigate and report on the degree to which members currently mark externally assessable elements of the N5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses as part of their establishment based duties. Mr Stickle clarified that voluntary marking on behalf of the SQA was not the issue but rather that the range and quantity of unpaid marking now being carried out on behalf of the SQA was a cause for concern.

# Teachers Support Progress, but Workload Must Be Reduced

In his annual Report to the AGM, General Secretary Larry Flanagan hit back against recent political attacks on education and warned that workload burdens must be tackled.

**Looking back at previous speeches I seem to have begun them all with a reference to it having been a busy year – but then, is it ever anything else?**

With the Referendum and the recent UK election, political discourse and engagement has been running at a high level; in terms of the Referendum I think that the EIS, alongside the STUC, was a model of how participative debate can be encouraged and facilitated, without unnecessary division emerging – despite the very strong passion on both sides of the discussion, as a union and a professional voice we remained united.

And isn't it a depressing sign of things to come that in the first Queen's speech, the UK government set out plans to further curb the rights of trade unions.

Trade unions are one of the few civic voices able to speak out and to act in defence of working people, our members and our families. It is shameful that the UK Government is seeking to silence protest.

Here in Scotland, the EIS is the voice of the teaching profession, and we most certainly will continue to stand up for Scottish teachers and for Scottish education.

And if Scottish education didn't feature strongly in the UK election, it certainly will for Holyrood. The EIS will welcome that focus because we believe that education should be central to the debate about the type of Scotland we wish to live in. But it needs to be a measured debate, not one reduced to political point scoring or headline grabbing, where party advantage is seen as more important than constructive dialogue – that's destructive.

The EIS has had to respond robustly, recently, to defend teachers from misguided and unfair criticism, and opportunistic political attack such as the Tories' call for national testing. It's been interesting to read recently some right wing commentators having a specific go at the EIS, with one demanding that the First Minister should "take on the EIS" –

on what basis? The inference which might be drawn from these comments is that somehow the EIS is the block to 'progress', however that is defined - when the reality is, that as Scotland's teachers, we are the vehicle of progress.

It is Scotland's teachers who have delivered for the children and young people in our classrooms, for their families and careers beyond, Scottish teachers who have delivered and are delivering for the communities in which our schools, and indeed our colleges and universities, are sited.

No one is suggesting of course that everything in Scottish education is perfect – clearly it isn't. We are well aware of the attainment gap and we stand ready to continue to work with all partners on this issue – there can be no complacency. But

not being complacent is not the same as seeing crisis where it doesn't exist.

The recent Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy results are a case in point – it has become commonplace to hear politicians and journalists talking about standards dropping, in a lazy

ill-informed manner which does a disservice to the hard work and success of our schools and our pupils.

Frankly, some of the comments made recently have felt like a punch to the solar plexus, a low blow, for teachers who have worked flat out to deliver CfE in the most difficult of circumstances.

There was a headline drop in the figures, true, which is always disappointing and it was seized upon by the glass half empty brigade to say that all is doomed. In fact circa 80 % of pupils are performing well or better at P4 and P7; in the basic skill of reading nearly 90% of P7 pupils are performing well or very well.

That's a good news story – when you

link that to broader achievements this highlights we have a very successful education system. When you look at those areas where there has been a drop from two years ago, the survey actually highlights that this is mainly due to weaker performance from children who come from the poorest social economic backgrounds - the group of children whose families have suffered most from George Osborne's benefit cuts and from the austerity which has seen an exponential rise in the use of food banks.

In other words it tells you that austerity has its victims – poverty limits life chances. That's not an excuse it's an explanation. Schools will continue to tackle the impact of poverty but the real way to address the issue is to tackle poverty at its source. I heard the Cabinet Secretary's speech a few weeks ago and the thrust of it was a genuine commitment to tackling the impact of poverty and I have no doubt that the First Minister is absolutely genuine in her pledge to do the same.

In Secondaries, the headline figure also dropped. Is it a coincidence that over the same two year period that secondary teachers have worked until they almost dropped to deliver the new national qualifications against a timetable which was too short and where the SQA failed to provide the support which schools deserved? Now I agree that we need to respond to any evidence which reveals challenges still to be met. But there is a context for everything.

Here's a suggestion – give us back the 4,000 teachers we have lost; give us the smaller class sizes we were promised; give us the access to nursery teachers in pre-5 as the bedrock for future learning which is supposed to be government policy.

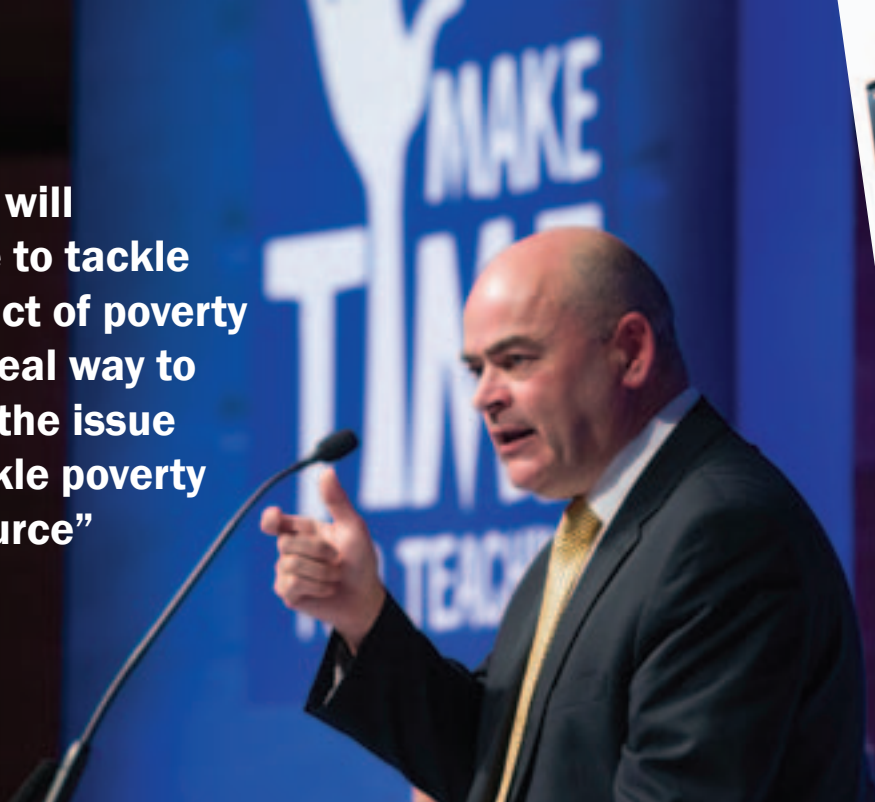
Give us the tools and we'll do the job. There has been a lot of discussion about evidence - here's a piece of evidence for

**“we believe that education should be central to the debate about the type of Scotland we wish to live in”**

**“Frankly, some of the comments made recently have felt like a punch to the solar plexus”**



**“Schools will continue to tackle the impact of poverty but the real way to address the issue is to tackle poverty at its source”**



COSLA and the Scottish Government to consider: in 2005 the pupil teacher ratio in Scotland was 14.9 compared to an OECD average of 16.1; by 2012 it had risen in Scotland by more than a third to 21.1 whilst the OECD figure had dropped to 15.2, with countries like Poland and Finland, PISA success stories, showing significant drops in that period also. The conclusion – pay attention COSLA – is that class size makes a difference; the number of teachers makes a difference.

On many fronts Scotland is doing well and CfE, despite the many issues that Scottish teachers have had to face, is highly regarded as a progressive educational reform. It stands in marked contrast to the hallmarks of the global educational reform movement which champions the type of agenda we see in England - a testing, high stakes, narrow curriculum which serves to lessen the impact of education.

If you consider the Tackling Bureaucracy Report and the Reflections Report on the qualifications there's certainly a full agenda there in making the adjustments required to make CfE work as it was intended. Mentioning these two reports links nicely on to the subject of the EIS Workload Campaign.

We've made a short video around the campaign which we are premiering at this AGM and which will be available on the EIS website. The key point to be made is that despite the recognition from all

parties about the workload burden, we still have a situation where our most recent survey, the Fortnight Focus on Workload taken by over 3,000 members, reveals that the average working week for teachers in Scotland is now 46.5 hours – representing a 10% increase since the evidence we submitted to the McCrone inquiry 15 years ago, which led to a contract which specifies that a teacher's duties should be capable of being overtaken in a 35 hours week!

The workload situation is unsustainable and as we saw in our Health and Wellbeing survey, it is leading to stress and burn out in the profession. It has to change, and we, the EIS need to be the agent of that change. That means that some things will have to be set aside – frankly, if everything is deemed a priority then nothing actually is. If teachers keep

trying to do everything then workload will not decrease. The EIS is demanding real progress on workload reduction in this forthcoming session and as we build towards the 2016 Scottish elections this will be one of our key demands.

The Executive Committee and Council will be discussing further, the elements of our manifesto but we have already signaled in our submission to the Education Bill some key elements, such as a protection around teacher numbers. We have argued, also, for a National staffing standard; protection of the pupil primary week; and statutory status for nursery.

Decisions of this AGM will feed into this process, also, but I would wish to highlight in particular the importance of political commitment in the FE sector. College management, despite the relocation of the sector into public education, are continuing to act as if they are a law unto themselves and – heading towards a national dispute – have offered a zero pay award. The Scottish Government needs to act. Indeed, our ULA section is about to consult on a 1% pay offer. And talks within the SNCT have failed to produce a settlement for this year's pay discussions for teachers – we are clear that COSLA's offer of 1% is not acceptable.

We clearly face some very real challenges in the year ahead. I would like to finish, however, on some less dramatic issues.

The President Elect referred in a speech earlier in the AGM to the training and support being developed and provided through EIS HQ. Last year we welcomed around 30 new delegates. I am very pleased to say that we have 50 new delegates with us at AGM this week – and all are very welcome.

Our Council has 135 members on it – there are only 54 still there from those who elected me but I'm very pleased to acknowledge the new wave of activists coming through. Training and support is being developed and provided through HQ. The current refurbishment of Moray Place will create a new training facility for members.

**The EIS will always stand up for and champion the cause of Scottish Education.**

**“If teachers keep trying to do everything then workload will not decrease”**

## Reviewing National Qualifications



**the design of the new qualifications is creating a system of “educational apartheid”**

Andy Harvey

Andy Harvey (South Lanarkshire) was successful in gaining the unanimous support of delegates for a Motion instructing Council to investigate and review the National Qualifications system to determine whether social and educational inequality has been created by its design, and, if so, to seek reform to the system. Mr Harvey cited education as being “intrinsic to the fight for social equality” but argued that the design of the new qualifications is creating a system of “educational apartheid.” He warned, “Increasingly teachers are becoming uneasy with the way that the senior phase is being implemented,” with the effect that a

significant number of young people being presented for mainly or exclusively National 4 level qualifications, are being excluded and disadvantaged by the current arrangements - left out of supported study and school assemblies focused on exam preparation, and denied study leave. Education Convener, Susan Quinn seconded the Motion saying, “At the heart of what we are focused on is the impact of poverty on our young people.” In light of this, she said, “it is time to reflect on and review the consequences of what has been developed,” some of which might conform with “the law of unintended consequences.” Giving further support to the Motion, Derek Ross (Aberdeenshire) echoed the view that the National Qualifications system is creating a core of pupils who are “second class citizens,” with there being no recognition for learners’ progress at National 4 level and below beyond a simple pass or fail award.

support, added “When Scottish education, quite rightly, opened the door to inclusive education we all knew it would have to be properly supported and resourced. Budget cuts and inclusive education simply doesn’t work – you can’t have inclusive education on the cheap.”

The Motion passed overwhelmingly.

## Fighting Cuts to EAL and ASN Provision



**“significant increase in the numbers of young people being identified as having additional support needs”**

Charlotte Ahmed

Glasgow delegate Charlotte Ahmed successfully moved a Motion instructing Council to campaign against cuts to EAL and ASN provision up to and including industrial action. Ms Ahmed highlighted the worrying situation whereby teachers “are unable to provide to the standard that we want and that our young people deserve.” She explained that while government statistics highlight a significant increase in the numbers of young people being identified as having additional support needs, services designed to meet their additional needs are reducing. In seconding the Motion, Neil Anderson (Glasgow), explained the inclusion of industrial action as part of the campaign as being the best way to attract media and public attention and to prevent “the reality of cuts and austerity being glossed over.” Paula Dixon (EIS-FELA) spoke in further support of the Motion drawing delegates’ attention to the impact of cuts to ESOL courses on refugees whose access to study of such courses is capped at 2 years.

## Workload and Internal Assessment



**“The amount of assessment is breaking teachers’ backs,”**

Susan O'Brien

Susan O'Brien (South Lanarkshire) introduced a Motion instructing EIS Council to seek a review and reform of the National Qualifications system based on increased workload for teachers created by internal assessment requirements, and the negative impact of these on pupils. “The amount of assessment is breaking teachers’ backs,” said Ms O'Brien. “Where is our thinking time? We have no time to think. It’s all go, go, go.” Seconding, Andy Harvey (South Lanarkshire) argued, that the system of qualifications had resulted in the “distortion of everyday learning as pupils are taught to the test.” Susan Talboys (Aberdeen City) gave further support to the Motion saying that there required to be “revolution, reform of assessment, release of teachers to teach rather than assess, in order to raise standards.” Jayne Rowe, (Glasgow) emphasised the damage that the new assessment system is doing to the health and wellbeing of young people: “We shouldn’t be putting young people

under constant pressure...It is making them sick.” Kenny Mitchell, (Glasgow) gave a unique insight into the issue from the perspective of a pupil who summed up the experience of the senior phase as “a tornado of unwanted responsibility.” Aileen Barrie (North Lanarkshire) said, “The burden of internal assessment on teachers and pupils is intolerable and teachers feel that no one is listening.” Following this series of vociferous contributions to the debate, the vote in favour of the Motion was unanimous.

## Condemning Cuts and impact on Additional Support

A major composite Motion from East Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, Fife and Midlothian Local Associations called on the EIS to condemn education budget cuts and to highlight the damaging impact on Support for Learning, English as an Additional Language, Additional Support Needs provision, Inclusive Policy and Practice and Pastoral Care.

Moving the Motion, Lynne Robertson (East Dunbartonshire) said, “Budget cuts are impacting on the learning of our most vulnerable pupils in the classroom. Let’s get it right for every child and ensure that all pupils get the education that they deserve.”

Martin Turnbull (Fife), speaking in

## Assessing Pupils with Potential Additional Support Needs



**“we now have increasing delays in supports being put in place”**

Alison Thornton

A Motion calling on Council to lobby the Scottish Government for legislation to guarantee maximum time limits for pupils who may have additional support needs to be assessed and, where necessary, to have a support plan agreed, was successfully moved by Alison Thornton (Edinburgh). Such a



Motion was necessary, Ms Thornton argued, because “Against the background of rising school rolls...we now have increasing delays in supports being put in place...which is an ever-growing source of frustration for pupils, parents and teachers alike.” Council member Phillip Pearce, seconding the Motion, stressed that the action being called for was “about securing the best outcomes for children in our care across Scotland.” Glasgow delegate, Gillian Carlin-Kulwicki, gave further support to the Motion saying, “Assessment is essential and there has to be a reasonable time frame to ensure that children with additional support needs are being supported and monitored.”

## Statutory Educational Entitlements and ASN



“Many of our children and young people are not getting the support that they need...this cannot possibly be getting it right for every child.”

Louise Glen

On behalf of North Lanarkshire Local Association Jim Slaven proposed a Motion demanding that the Scottish Government and local authorities ensure that the statutory educational entitlements of children and young people with additional support needs are met in full through the guaranteed provision of sufficient and appropriate resources and support. The Motion further demanded an immediate moratorium on and reversal of any cuts to the number of teachers working in areas of ASN provision. Mr Slaven stated that, as things currently stand, “children with additional support needs and their families are being short-changed by the service offered to them.” Seconding the Motion, Louise Glen, (North Lanarkshire), echoed the concerns of the previous speaker: “Many of our children and young people are not getting the support that they need...this cannot possibly be getting it right for every child.” She further highlighted the difficulty in meeting the needs of learners with additional support needs in the context of rising class sizes. “COSLA thinks it (rising class sizes) makes no difference; they obviously don’t live in the same world that we do.”

## Budget Cuts and Resources

A composite Motion from North Lanarkshire, Glasgow and South Lanarkshire Local Associations

successfully called for the EIS to highlight the impact of budget cuts on the availability of learning and teaching resources in the classroom and the negative impact on learners.

Moving the Motion, Ian Scott (North Lanarkshire) said, “More and more of our children are living in poverty, and this is impacting on their education.”

Seconding the Motion, Jayne Rowe (Glasgow) said, “There is a real shortage of essential resources in our schools which is having a serious impact on the educational experience of pupils in our classrooms.”

## Opposing Cuts to the School Week

The recent threats in some local authority areas to shorten the length of the primary school week as a financial cost-cutting measure were the subject of a major Motion from EIS Council and Glasgow Local Association. The Motion condemned the proposals and called for the Scottish Government to legislate to regulate the length of the pupil week in all Scottish schools.

Decrying some of the spurious arguments that had been put forward by local authorities considering cuts to the primary school week, Nicola Fisher (Glasgow) said, “To claim that we can just get rid of things like golden time or assemblies is not just naïve, it’s criminal. The reality is that we would be expected to fit 25 hours of learning into 22.5 hours. Another reality is that this would lead to the loss of teaching jobs.” Ms Fisher added, “We have to stand strong, and we need legislation on the length of the pupil week.”



“This cut would deny our children of around 100 hours of education a year”

Megan McCrossan

Megan McCrossan (North Lanarkshire) added, “This cut would deny our children of around 100 hours of education a year. How can we tackle the attainment gap by

cutting 10% from children’s learning?

First time AGM speaker, Neil Duncan (Aberdeen), added his support before Pippa McKean (Glasgow) got creative in support of the Motion, “I am a primary teacher, and it is the last term of the year. This can mean only one thing. It is Acrostic Poem time. But I am not going to tell you what the subject of my poem is until the end. That way, I expect to have you hanging on my every word.



Teaching And Rhyming Defending Infant Schooling

- Pippa McKean

**D** is for doing more with very little time.

**O** is for overcrowding a curriculum that was fine.

**C** is for cutting down the hours of teaching every week.

**T** is for trying to do our best, it’s what we always seek.

**O** this time is overworked; we all know that we are.

**R** is for reality check; this is a step too far.

**W** is for the week, 25 hours at present.

**H** is for hacking hours off, a notion most unpleasant.

**O** is for one last little point, for those still paying attention.

- Doctor Who is what we’ve spelled, the master of invention.

The Doctor is our hero, he is super-smart and keen.

And now, like him, to do our jobs, we’d need a time machine.”

Following warm applause from the hall for Ms McKean’s timely intervention, AGM delegates overwhelmingly voted in favour of the Motion.



## Encouraging Activism and Recruiting EIS Reps



**"We have a responsibility to ensure that our members truly know what being in a trade union is all about"**

Helen Connor

Helen Connor (North Lanarkshire), making a very welcome return to EIS business following a long battle with cancer, passionately called for the EIS to develop a new strategy for the recruitment and training of EIS Representatives and for this to include an ongoing training programme to encourage branch activism.

Moving the Motion, Ms Connor said "We cannot enact all the decisions we take here today unless we have Reps in our schools and branches. And we

cannot forget that the new Tory government very much has trade unions – the demise of trade unions – in their sights."

She continued, "We have a responsibility to ensure that our members truly know what being in a trade union is all about. We need Reps in all establishments so there is a direct point of contact with members."

Speaking in support, Susan Smith (Aberdeenshire) said, "We have a collegiate union, where we need to work together and fight together."

First time AGM speaker Martin Moonie (Edinburgh), a recently appointed EIS school Rep, added, "I strongly urge you to support this Motion and to support branch Reps."

AGM voted overwhelmingly in favour of the Motion.

teachers by pupils and parents. Kevin O'Brien (East Dunbartonshire) seconded the successful Motion.

## Reporting Procedures of the GTCS Fitness to Teach Panel



**highly critical of the level of detail contained in many of the reports**

Gavin Cunningham

Delegates called upon the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) to review its procedures in relation to the publication of matters overtaken by the GTCS Fitness to Teach Panel (FTTP). Gavin Cunningham (South Lanarkshire) moved the Motion and was highly critical of the level of detail contained in many of the reports. He cited examples where schools and individual members had been identified and complained that the news media were able simply to "copy and paste" reports from the FTTP for publication. The Convener of the EIS Employment Relations Committee, Mairi Raeburn told the AGM that representatives from the EIS had met with GTCS representatives to discuss this issue. The discussions to date had been constructive and a number of actions had been agreed to be taken forward in a future meeting.

## Workplace Bullying

Council will investigate and report on what guidelines, procedures and strategies local authorities and colleges currently have in place to deal with workplace bullying following the success of a Motion moved by Sue Graves (Orkney). She said "Workplace bullying causes increased stress. We must have strategies to deal with this important issue." As a result of this Motion, Council will now review and revise, as appropriate, EIS guidelines and advice regarding workplace bullying with particular reference to the role of EIS school and college representatives.

## Myths of Immigration

EIS-FELA delegate Penny Gower proposed a Motion calling for the production of a series of EIS booklets to be used as teacher resources, addressing the myths of immigration, tailored to different age groups. "We as educators and trade unionists have an enormous job to do to challenge the myths surrounding immigration." This, she argued, was particularly the case in light of the anti-immigration rhetoric which characterised the recent General Election campaigns - "a dangerous genie to let out of the bottle." The Motion was seconded by Glasgow delegate Charlotte Ahmed who echoed the need for EIS-produced resources to support teachers and lecturers in unravelling the often deliberate mis-representation of immigrants by politicians and the media.

## Competency Procedures



**"There are too many variations and the timescales for improvements are too short"**

Kenny Fella

"Teachers are being set up to fail. The GTCS Framework for Teacher Competence is meant to be there to provide support and to aid development." Those were the claims made by Kenny Fella (Renfrewshire) who successfully moved a Motion instructing Council to investigate and report on the support mechanisms adopted across local authorities and colleges to help teachers and lecturers who are subject to competency procedures. He warned, "There are too many variations and the timescales for improvements are too short. We need fair and consistent procedures not Headteachers continually identifying problems."

## Defamatory Allegations against Teachers

"False and malicious allegations against teachers are increasing. The EIS must develop comprehensive strategies to support teachers in responding to these allegations," said Ken Brown (East Dunbartonshire) who outlined to delegates the consequences for teachers who have been falsely accused. He also urged the EIS to outline strategies to combat unacceptable use of social media and other examples of "cyber bullying" of

## Violence against Teachers

The Convener of the EIS Education Committee, Susan Quinn (Glasgow), successfully moved a Motion instructing Council to campaign to ensure teachers are not subject to routine violence at the hands of any pupil. She said that teachers did not go to work to be bullied adding, "What impact does it have on pupils to see teachers being subject to violence by other pupils?" She highlighted the impact of such violence on other pupils in classes where violence occurred and urged the EIS to work with Parent Groups on this issue. Lynne Robertson (East Dunbartonshire) called for a "zero tolerance" approach to this issue and firm actions to back up the ideals expressed in the Motion.

## Cost of the School Day

Conference noted the work of the Glasgow based Cost of the School Day project being conducted by Child Poverty Action Group in partnership with Glasgow City Council and others, as highlighted in a Motion proposed by Bill Ramsay (South Lanarkshire). Giving its unanimous support for the Motion, AGM resolved to



consider the implications of the project's findings for the EIS 'Impact of Poverty in Education' Campaign. "Education is often described as a route out of poverty but living in a low income household can affect children's participation and experiences at school," Mr Ramsay said. "School costs which can't be met may mean missed opportunities, and the stigma surrounding poverty can mean that pupils feel different and isolated." In seconding the Motion, Glasgow delegate Nicola Fisher, highlighted a number of cost associated barriers to education that young people from low income families face - school clothing and shoes, lunches, participation in clubs and even transport to school.

## Tackling Poverty and the Impact of Austerity

On behalf of Renfrewshire Local Association, Kenny Fella successfully proposed a Motion calling on Council to promote the findings of Renfrewshire Council's Tackling Poverty Commission, particularly those relating to the impact of austerity on the educational outcomes of the most economically disadvantaged in our schools. Mr Fella highlighted the plight of families living in poverty for whom "heating is rationed, holidays are something other families talk about and Christmas is an annual worry." He suggested that politicians in Scotland, "instead of scapegoating teachers... should listen to the evidence given by families to the Commission...and keep their sights trained on the real culprits- the Westminster Government and its policy of austerity."

## The Financial Impact of School Dress Codes

David Farmer (Fife) was successful in proposing that the EIS should investigate and report on the financial implications of school dress codes on Scottish families.

"In some schools there is almost a demerit system for children who don't adhere to the dress code, in terms of less access to trips and other rewards," said Mr Farmer. The Motion was seconded by Martin Turnbull (Fife).

## Professional Update



"We have major concerns about the implementation of Professional Update"

Susan Quinn

Education Convener Susan Quinn (Glasgow) successfully moved a Motion on behalf of Dundee Local Association and Council instructing Council to investigate and report on the implementation of Professional Update across Scotland; to monitor any attempted inappropriate use by employers in relation to Professional Update processes; and to provide advice for members. Ms Quinn said, "We have major concerns about the implementation of Professional Update...what has become clear is that policy into practice is not all that it might be." She went on to highlight issues with regards to the preparedness of local authorities in terms of validation, lack of provision for supply teachers and the absence of LNCT agreements.

## Black and Minority Ethnic People in Teaching



"We need to encourage more BME people to go into the profession"

Samreen Shah

Equality Convener Bill Ramsay, proposed a Motion on behalf of EIS Council calling on Council to gather and analyse data on the numbers of black and minority ethnic people employed as teachers and lecturers, as well as the number of those holding promoted posts. The Motion also called for any issues regarding under-representation that arise to be raised with Scottish local government and Colleges Scotland. Mr Ramsay said, "With more black and minority ethnic teachers in promoted positions there is a far greater likelihood that the curriculum will be diverse. Black and ethnic minority parents are more likely to have a more positive attitude when they consider their relationship with the school. There is a greater likelihood of attitudinal change amongst the ethnic majority teacher workforce if amongst the workforce there are black and ethnic minority promoted colleagues." Glasgow delegate Samreen Shah gave support to the Motion saying, "We need to encourage more BME people to go into the profession. We need more (BME) role models challenging negative stereotypes." Conference concurred with the need to act and voted in favour of the Motion.

## Tackling the Attainment Gap

Council member Hugh Donnelly, spoke on behalf of Council to propose a Motion calling on the Scottish Government to ensure that measures aimed at reducing the attainment and achievement gaps

created by poverty are adequately resourced and staffed by allocating long term protected ring-fenced funding; that all measures introduced are properly focused on establishment level interventions that are evidence based; and that all measures introduced are supported by good quality training and support for staff. Mr Donnelly was emphatic in stressing that "Teachers need support from parents and government, not to be blamed for all the problems of society...If teachers become the scapegoats and are denied the resources to make a difference; if cuts lead to the undermining of conditions, teachers must be able to use their industrial strength." The Motion was seconded by Bill Ramsay who said, "The idea that this issue can be addressed in a resource free environment is fantasy and the Cabinet Secretary needs to understand that." AGM delegates voted in unanimous support of the Motion.

## Poverty and the Scotland Bill

A Motion calling for the Scottish Government to assess the impact on poverty of the forthcoming Scotland Bill using equality impact assessment methodology was successfully moved by Bill Ramsay on behalf of Council. Mr Ramsay stated, "We, the EIS intend to ask the Scottish Government some straightforward questions: what will these changes bring to the table in terms of making Scotland a more equal place; will they mean good news for public spending; will they make no difference at all; will they make things worse?"

Seconding the Motion, Nicola Fisher, (Glasgow) highlighted how 50% of educational inequality in the UK occurs "as a direct consequence of poverty." She was critical of past initiatives which have merely amounted to "tinkering round the edge of the issue" and which have been largely ineffectual."





