

## Scottish Government update to COALA – 24 October 2014

- I would like to talk briefly about the Curriculum budget for next year; the work going on around the Language Assistants' Programme; a brief GLOW update and lastly on the Strategic Implementation Group.
- Firstly the overall draft Scottish budget for 2015-16 was presented before the recess to the Parliament by Mr Swinney. The overall budget line for all curriculum policy developments is broadly similar to this year. Our Cabinet Secretary is going before the Education Committee in early November. We are hopeful that funding of 1+2 will continue at at least a similar level next year.
- At our last meeting in June Tim Simons, the Head of SG Curriculum Unit, set out for this audience the issues relating to the Language Assistants' Programme. To recap (briefly): in the last 7 years there has been a drop of 75% in the number of Assistants welcomed to Scotland. Ministers see it in the national interest to redress the balance because:
  - We must restore the balance or risk that our partners limit the number of places for UK assistants to their countries.
  - It gives Scottish schools and LA a source of native speakers who can help build the capacity/develop resource, develop language skill and develop confidence
  - We need a supply of language teachers for the future. All our language teachers have to spend time overseas.
- We consulted widely as to what were the most effective options in order to encourage greater numbers of MLAs. You submitted your views to the Chair Janey Mauchline, which she has shared with us. We are grateful to you for your views. But you will understand that your views are not the only ones.
- In the period since June British Council Scotland (BCS), who are funded in Scotland to manage and promote this programme, have told us that the final figures for this year have increased by 45% – to 86 (stripping out the independent schools – who take 22).

- This is a fantastic increase and we are heartened to see this. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for increasing your MLA numbers and also to those of you have taken on MLAs for first time.
- You will all agree I am sure that 86 is still not enough. To match the numbers being placed from Scotland for 14-15, we will need approx. 290 next year. [BCS tell me that 290 are now settling into their schools overseas]
- As a result of this we will be discussing the possible options with Ministers in the light of the budget and other political developments.
- There is also work to do to ensure the MLA resource is used as effectively as possible and that the best examples of use of MLA are shared with you all.
- BCS is funded by SG to maximise the number of MLAs and the number of LA who take MLAs. They will work closely with the Scotland's National Centre for Languages (SCILT) and Education Scotland to maximise this number and to maximise the learning and dissemination of good practice across the education sectors in Scotland.
- I commend to you their work and the work of Hannah Doughty and the team at SCILT who support the programme by developing the training provided to language assistants. I commend to you also the work of the Cultural Organisations who host language specific inductions.

#### New Glow Service

- The Glow service was successfully transitioned to a new, flexible, cloud-based arrangement over the weekend of 3-6 October.
- The new service arrangement includes a range of core applications and services such as blogs and broadcasting (Glow Meet/Glow TV).
- A wiki service is also being developed and will be in place in the near future.
- All pupils and teachers have access to the O365 tenancy which provides:
  - Collaboration and sharing tools through SharePoint;
  - 1TB of online storage space per user through One Drive;
  - A Glow email account through Outlook; and

- Access to the online Office - Word, Excel, PowerPoint.
- Users also have the option to add a range of educational app 'tiles' to their Glow Launchpad. Apps are available in the App Library and are categorised by curricular area (mixture of free and paid for content). Tiles can also be customised to link to specific web pages.
- Glow can be accessed anytime from most web-enabled devices, including most smartphone and tablets.

## SIG

- The SIG meets next week and it will include presentations on your Local Authority strategies, on the COSLA costing exercise. As you would expect each of the members will update us on their work. We are also looking to table a discussion around what are the essential conditions to ensure implementation of the policy, we believe these include:
  - Attitudes to and perceptions about learning a language need to change in society as a whole
  - There is a shared commitment to the policy by all stakeholders and especially Local Authorities - and a determination to deliver it.
  - **Everyone affected by this policy is aware of it** and understands what it means for them, their children, their colleagues and other partners. They know when the requirements of the policy should be in place and why it matters.
  - There is **strong leadership at all levels** to support and deliver the policy.
  - **Teachers are capable of delivering the required language learning experiences.**
- Thank you for your time and good luck with all the work. I urge you not to give up 'For you are here to do great things' ;Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence - is the key to unlocking our potential.

Toria Fraser  
 Language Policy Manager  
 Scottish Government  
 0131 244 0270