

GBA News - February 2020



GBA Annual General Meeting 2020

The GBA Annual General Meeting will be held on **24th March 2020 @ Riddel Hall, Queen's University Belfast**, starting with **lunch at 12 noon**. The AGM proceedings will begin at **12.30pm promptly**.

We are delighted to inform you that Education Minister, Mr Peter Weir MLA, has accepted our invitation to speak at the AGM.

Mr. Weir will be outlining his priorities for the remainder of his term in office.

We are also delighted to be joined by our special guest, Professor Siobhan O'Neill, from the University of Ulster. Professor O'Neill will be presenting on the topic of mental health and well-being in schools.

Finally, a practical session on "Communications During Critical Incidents" for schools will be added to the agenda.

You will have received an invitation via email, however, if you didn't receive this please click on the link below.

[AGM Invitation letter](#)

If you wish to attend the AGM or nominate to the GBA Executive, please email Helen@gbani.org

Northern Ireland Assembly - Education Update

In the January financial monitoring round, the Department Of Finance reallocated £41 million of funds, including:

- £19 million to the Education Authority - this funding will cover existing contractual pay costs and is unrelated to the ongoing teachers' pay dispute.
- £10 million to the SEN sector to help address the backlog of assessments and diagnoses for children with additional educational needs.

Regarding funding, Education Minister Peter Weir stated that "there are many challenges ahead" and estimated that Education in Northern Ireland requires up to £400 million more per year than it currently receives. Regarding teachers' pay, Mr Weir said that a Business Case has been put forward to the

Department of Finance to settle the dispute. It is expected that Finance Minister Conor Murphy will announce a budget in late February. The Ministerial statement is available [here](#).

The Education Minister answered Assembly Members' questions on 10th February. A number of issues were raised, including capital development plans, academic selection and teacher pay. You can watch the full session [here](#).

The Education Committee, at time of writing, has held two February meetings:

- 5th February: the Education Authority briefed the Committee. Areas covered included finance, Area Planning, and Special Educational Needs.
- 12th February: the Department of Education, Department of Health and the Public Health Agency briefed the Committee regarding mental health and well-being. Matters raised included referral pathways, counselling services (in particular, following critical incidents), well-being indicators, digital resilience and, mental health and well-being in the NI Curriculum. A briefing was also provided regarding a nutrition consultation (see below).

You can watch the full Education Committee sessions [here](#).

Consultation - Nutritional Standards for School Food

The Department of Education is currently consulting on proposed changes to the nutritional standards for lunches and other food and drinks in schools.

The current Nutritional Standards were developed over 12 years ago and in that time the evidence and research regarding healthy eating has changed. The Department has developed, with the assistance of health and education catering partners, draft updated standards and is seeking your opinion on these proposed changes.

You can view the consultation documents and provide a response, either electronically or by post, via the following link:

Nutritional Standards Consultation

The closing date for responses is 5pm Friday 27th March 2020.



Area Planning - Review of Strategic Area Plan

The Strategic Investment Board (SIB) is conducting a review on behalf on the Education Authority. The scope of the project is specifically to review:

1. The Strategic Area Plan 2017-2021, *Providing Pathways*, and the process used to develop it - identifying areas that worked well and areas for improvement.
2. The process used to develop the Annual Action Plans - identifying areas that worked well and areas for improvement.
3. What has been delivered against what was intended in the Strategic Area Plan and the supporting Annual Action Plans.

The SIB will conclude their information gathering on **28th February 2020**. If you would like to provide any feedback, please email Helen@gbani.org

Music Provision - Review of Services

The Education Authority is currently conducting a review of Music provision in schools. The purpose of the review is to prepare options for the future of the music service. A number of schools have provided feedback to date and we would like to provide a further opportunity for this.

If you would like to give your view on EA's music provision, please direct comments to Helen@gbani.org.

If you would like more information on the review in general, please contact Darren.Canmore@eani.org.uk

GBA Executive

The next GBA Executive meeting will be held on 26th February 2020 at Strathearn School. If you would like any items to be added to the agenda for discussion at the meeting, please contact: Administrator@gbani.org

Advertising a Teaching/Non-Teaching Vacancy

The GBA have added a new link to our website on the Education Authority Job Opportunities page to increase the exposure of your job posts.

We can host teaching and non-teaching vacancies on our website www.gbani.org and the information is also shared on our Twitter account.

This service is free of charge for all member schools

Details of vacancies should be sent to Administrator@gbani.org.

Please allow one working day for the vacancy to be updated and include full

time/ part time status, length of contract, and any external web links to the vacancy.

Website and Twitter

Please visit the Governing Bodies Association website on the following [link](#).

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