

F40 notes of Collaboration Meeting held Tuesday 3 July 2018

(These notes were taken by Doug Allan to supplement the official note of the meeting recorded by Jules White)

1. Introductions (see attendance list). Great turnout and enormous amount of knowledge and expertise in the room.
2. Principle aim was to find ways that all organisations involved in school funding campaigns might collaborate and share information.
 - **Fair Funding for all Schools** – key issues: funding, historic imbalances, impact of cuts and mobilisation of parent power.
 - **Save Our Schools (West Sussex)** – key issues: funding and fairness of allocation, momentum of parent power through awareness, local events (where possible as part of national approach).
 - **Save Our Schools (Brighton & Hove)** – in the end everything about schools comes down to funding; parent and headteacher involvement/ campaigns; interesting events and quality publicity and communication.
 - **National Education Union** – key issues: quantum of funding, schools and high needs blocks, School Cuts website, teacher's pay review (will it be properly funded), longer-term school budget planning and in immediate future, deficits crisis in many schools.
 - **NAHT** – key issues: all of above, but mainly quantum of funding, review of the newly introduced NFF, Special Needs and Early Years. Problem is that many MPs see the NFF as having fixed school funding.
 - **WorthLess?** – key issues: quantum of funding; feeling/fear that NFF may be a political fix; collaboration and communication.
 - **F40** – key issues: fairness of allocation, balance between blocks, locked in inequalities; maintenance of its existing campaign position; collaboration where possible.
 - **ASCL** – key issues: NFF improvements, sufficiency, removing uncertainty, settlement cycle, transition period, baselining of £1.3billion, extra cash from the Treasury (not from within Education budget), distribution methodology, MFL ok but must be linked to basic pupil amount, High Needs facing crisis and post-16.
3. Collaboration could be potentially very powerful and may assist with progress. Participating organisations may cooperate wherever possible but keep their individualism and own identities. We are looking for common ground on some basic principles/issues/messages. Must keep it short and simple. Maybe three or four concepts. Beyond that individual groups maintain their own tactics.

Collaborative effort:

- Sharing of expertise and Information
- Agreeing key messages which all groups can utilise
- Funding; Fairness; Schools Block; High Needs and AEN; Recruitment & retention;
- Organisation/support of national/local events involving MPs, headteachers, governors and parents.

Discussion/Comments

Making waves and having some impact in advance of CSR is the main aim. We must ensure that the DfE puts strong arguments to Treasury for additional cash - identify amount/outcomes/efficiency. Having individuals like Cllr James McInnes onboard is an advantage.

F40's briefing Paper is an excellent document but the information is targeted at experts and goes over the heads of parents. A distilled version would be welcomed.

The term "efficiencies" has been replaced by DfE by Effective Resource Management. Schools have made all the efficiencies that they can. It's inappropriate for the DfE to call for more.

Save our Schools (Brighton & Hove) has produced a document entitled "Catalogue of Cuts" featuring case studies supplied by headteachers. The idea is being copied elsewhere now.

There are other voices not present today which might wish to participate e.g. the Catholic Schools Education Service and MATs.

We must manage messages around teacher recruitment and retention. The forthcoming pay award must be fully funded.

The media are interested in human stories and High Needs provides us with some excellent opportunities for publicity.

The retreat of social care and health services in our schools is a major issue.

The announcement of £20billion for the NHS means it will be so much harder to achieve extra for schools, but we must try.

We require a Memorandum of Understanding so that we are clear where we are heading and how we will get there. Jules White to present to next meeting.

Organisations here today should work together. Kevin Courtney asked if f40 would work more closely with his union to try and establish the shortfall that we should be asking for. F40 explained that it hopes to gain access to DfE datasets this month that will be the starting point for number crunching. Happy to work together.

Andrew Baisley said he had calculated that there is a £700million shortfall in High Needs. F40 asked how that figure had been arrived at (based on 2015-16) and agreed to look at the calculation to see if it is accurate and useable.

Ideally, we need a few key numbers that everyone can agree on and all can use in their individual campaigns. Then sort out the human stories behind those statistics. Keep it simple!

- Shortfall on Schools Block
- Cost of STRB and NJC
- Shortfall on High Needs Block
- Amount spent on each pupil now compared with earlier – say 2015
- Assessment of total cash withdrawn from schools budgets 2015 to present

These statistics to be worked on as quickly as possible (within 4 weeks hopefully). Andrew Baisley to lead and share with all.

Jules White suggested a range of key publicity events are required: he is planning a gathering of 1,000 headteachers at Parliament on 28 September 2018. He is confident that he can attract that sort of number, but he would welcome any support in reaching heads across the country. More information to be circulated.

Around the same time (October?) it would be good to see similar gatherings (local and national) of parents and governors. Maybe under banner of Wish You Were Hearing.

ASCL will be arranging some regional school funding seminars in September and October.

There was a discussion about a briefing for Members of Parliament. Doug Allan explained that f40 regularly organises such briefings and aims to have the next one after the summer recess. F40 is asked to consider widening the scope of its briefing to include other organisations involved in collaboration. Doug said he would raise the idea at the f40 Executive Committee on 18 July, but he also suggested that it is possible that Exec members might prefer to maintain this as an f40 event. There was recognition and understanding of this possibility. (NOTE: the date of the MP's briefing is now provisionally set as Monday 15 October 2108 at 5pm. F40 Vice Chair Gary Streeter is our sponsoring MP).

F40 will continue its working relationship with the DfE – this is seen as extremely useful.

F40 is undertaking some work to create a league table showing the funding positions of the 150 local authorities. This is made difficult by the existence of 4 blocks. It will be shared when completed.

F40 endeavours to be open and accountable: it publishes on its website much information that should be of interest to everyone here today. Many present already receive regular communications, but anyone else wishing to be added to contact databases should get in touch with Doug Allan (doug@dtw.co.uk).

Next Meeting to be organised in September by Jules White.