

ESSEX SCHOOLS FORUM NETWORKING SEMINAR – Briefing Note

Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families

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1. Feedback

It was clear that will there were many similarities between the different forums represented, there were also significant differences.

2. Differences

- Hertfordshire's Forum appeared to be much more strategic in its approach as well as having a better grasp of some of the more complex funding issues.
- Most Forums have directly linked sub-groups which do much of the work.
- Have representatives from faith schools
- Have representatives from trade unions
- Use ACORN for measuring deprivation (links directly with Fisher Family Trust data which is trusted by schools)
- Consult schools on issues as they arise rather than an annual consultation.
- Have no political representation
- Have carried out an in depth review of the Funding Formula
- Have better food for meetings!

3. Similarities

- Communication with schools is poor
- Schools do not understand what the School Forum is
- Meet about the same number of times a year
- Membership is broadly similar
- Never get papers out early enough
- Facing similar funding issues
- Agenda is set by officers in most Forums.

4. The following issues were covered in the networking time:

- Targeting Funding at Deprivation
- School Balances
- Centrally Retained Budgets – Education Other Than At School

- Fees for Out County Pupils
- Formula Funding for Schools
- Using DSG for Every Child Matters Agenda
- Future Role of Schools Forum
- Special Educational Needs Costs
- School Reorganisation Issues
- FMSiS
- School Forum Relationships
- Efficiency Savings in Schools
- Linking Finance and Children and Young Peoples Plan
- Other - BSF, Academies, LSC funding, Diplomas, Early Years, Standards Funds, Schools in Defecit