

NUT General Secretary Election 2004 elect MARTIN POWELL-DAVIES

National action needed to cut workload



More broken promises

Despite all the promises from the Government and the signatories of the "Workforce Agreement", teachers are spending as much time as ever in the evenings, weekends and holidays planning, preparing and assessing.

But it is not enough just to complain at Ministers or blame other unions. NUT Conference 2003 rightly warned that the workload "deal" would solve little. But it also instructed the Executive to initiate an action strategy to reduce teacher workload. Nothing has come of it.

Relentless pressure on teachers

Without such a campaign, the relentless pressure of working in our underfunded schools continues to bear down on every teacher. Long hours combined with OFSTED inspections and management bullying all contribute to pressures that put teaching at the top of the Health and Safety Executive's stress "league tables".

Time to call a halt

We have to put a stop to this. The list of tasks and targets for teachers to meet only seems to get longer. NUT members cannot afford to let another year go by without the Union taking effective action to cut this excessive workload.

The Elect Martin Campaign believes teachers should call the Government's bluff and take national action on workload. Ministers claim we're now all entitled to a "work/life balance". The Union must give members the power and confidence to collectively enforce it.

Enforce a real "work-life balance"

"I would strengthen our workload action so that NUT members can refuse to carry out excessive planning, assessment and other demands on their time outside the school day"

Martin Powell-Davies

As General Secretary, Martin would make reducing workload a key priority. Apart from allowing teachers to limit the number of staff meetings a week, the Union's existing "Beating back bureaucracy" guidelines do little to give NUT members the protection they need.

Martin would support a national ballot to introduce firm action guidelines and would back this up with visits to school groups and associations to encourage them to refuse to submit to demands such as :

- excessive marking requirements
- unreasonable report deadlines
- excessive planning demands

That's the kind of change that would really start to make a difference for teachers and education.

elect martin campaign NUT conference meeting saturday 10 april

7.45 pm, The Moat House Hotel

(next door to the Conference Centre)

Come and hear from Martin Powell-Davies and discuss our campaign to win a leadership that will be prepared to organise a serious campaign to defend teachers and education.

To find out more about Martin's campaign:

<http://elect-martin.tripod.com> email: martinpd_uk@yahoo.co.uk tel: 07946 445488



Vote for Change

Vote Martin Powell-Davies

unity in action needed to defeat “teaching on the cheap”

Teachers' jobs under threat

The notorious “Blue Skies” paper exposed exactly what this Government has in mind for the future of education. Its vision of “reducing overall teacher numbers” sums up their aim to drive down the cost of education at the expense of both school students and school staff.

Supply teachers are the first group under attack. Already a minority of schools are using “cover supervisors” to take the place of qualified supply staff. But the Union must warn all teachers that if schools feel they can get by without qualified staff for short-term absences, it won't be long before cheaper, less qualified staff are used to fill long-term vacancies as well.

A strategy to defend education

The NUT has rightly refused to sign the “Workforce Agreement” which opens the door to “teaching-on-the-cheap”. But, up to now, Ministers feel under no pressure to change course. We need to match our words with a strategy that can force them to reconsider.

The NUT needs to step up its campaign to warn parents and the public why the Government's plans are a threat to comprehensive education. As well as parents, school support staff

can be a key ally in our campaign. Few want to be bullied into taking on teachers' work. Like us, they just want to be properly paid for the valuable work they already do. By electing Martin Powell-Davies as NUT General Secretary, NUT members will have a leader determined to bring about unity in action against these threats.

No retreat on “cover supervisors”

At each significant battle over the last few years, the NUT leadership has marched teachers up the hill, only to retreat and leave teachers facing the consequences. That must not be allowed to happen over our opposition to “teaching on the cheap”.

In February, a Union circular on “cover” was issued – endorsed by John Bangs and Steve Sinnott – that weakened our opposition to the use of cover supervisors. The Executive unanimously withdrew it.

Of course no teacher likes to do cover. But if we retreat on this issue, Ministers will be emboldened to push further ahead. Martin Powell-Davies argues that isolated action limited to the refusal to set work for classes taught by unqualified staff has proven an ineffective strategy. The recent LEA-wide UNISON/NUT strike action in Croydon shows the way forward.

Persuade all unions to withdraw from the “Workforce Agreement”

“I would support strike action to oppose unqualified staff taking teaching posts and campaign for all TUC Unions – teaching and non-teaching – to withdraw from the agreement”

Martin Powell-Davies

As NUT General Secretary, Martin Powell-Davies would appeal to the members of unions like UNISON and GMB - as well as colleagues in the ATL and NASUWT - at both a local and national level, to join our campaign to oppose the “Workforce Agreement”, and win a new deal that gives decent pay and conditions to all school staff.

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