

Rt Hon Justine Greening MP  
Secretary of State for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

28 July 2017

Annwyl Ysgrifennydd Gwladol / Dear Secretary of State,

### **School Teachers' Pay: STRB's 27<sup>th</sup> Report**

UCAC welcomes this opportunity to respond to the STRB's 27<sup>th</sup> Report. This letter sets out the union's response to the STRB's recommendations and other matters contained in the Report. We believe that the STRB's recommendations, the conclusions drawn and the comments about the way ahead signal very clearly the need to bring pay restraint to an end and to increase teachers' pay significantly.

We reiterate concerns that the Remit, which required the STRB to consider affordability and which emphasized that there would be no additional funding, meant that the STRB could only recommend a limited award. It is clear that the STRB has not been able to recommend the pay uplift that the profession needs to address recruitment and retention issues. However, after examining all available evidence, the STRB's conclusions are clear:

*"Teachers continue to be paid less on average than other graduate professions. This is true for early career teachers, both on joining and in their first few years, and for more experienced teachers. In a strong labour market, with increasing opportunities for graduates, this makes it a difficult environment in which to recruit and retain high quality graduates as teachers."*<sup>1</sup>

UCAC believes that the Government needs to address issues concerning recruitment, retention and career progression. Remuneration is a key factor which has a significant impact on these issues. Certainly, it is important to address workload and levels of accountability but addressing remuneration is a key factor.

### **STRB's Recommendations**

The STRB's report shows clearly that pay progression for teachers within the first 5-6 years of starting their teaching career remains vastly inferior to that of other graduate professions. We

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<sup>1</sup> STRB's 27th Report 2017, Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.8 (P58)

welcome the recommendation of a 2% increase to the minimum and maximum of the main pay range as “a *first step*”<sup>2</sup> in dealing with this issue. However, UCAC believes that the 2% increase must be applied to the salary of all teachers on the main pay range, regardless of pay progression, to begin to address the disparity between teachers’ pay and average graduate starting salaries and early career salaries.

Constrained by the terms of the Government’s Remit, the STRB recommends a 1% uplift for the minima and maxima of all other pay ranges and TLR and SEN allowance ranges. UCAC believes that this 1% pay uplift should be applied fully to all points on the other pay ranges and the TLR and SEN allowances.

UCAC agrees with the view expressed by NEOST in its oral evidence to the STRB: “*The STRB Remit of addressing recruitment and retention challenges within a 1% limit (is) not achievable.*”<sup>3</sup>

UCAC believes that every teacher should receive an above 2% pay uplift and notes that 1% -2% pay uplift is not sufficient to address concerns about career-wide pay and get to grips with the damaging impact of the stagnation that has been caused by public sector pay restraint.

The STRB Report refers to the AGR information / data which shows that employers are now strengthening their offer to attract graduates to their vacancies – with a broader rewards package than in the past<sup>4</sup>. UCAC believes that unless the Government addresses concerns about teachers’ pay, fewer graduates will be drawn to teaching as a career and more and more teachers who are currently in the system will be attracted to other graduate professions.

UCAC believes that it is crucial that all teachers receive an annual cost of living pay rise, regardless of pay progression. This is the only way to ensure that teachers pay does not fall even further behind the pay of other graduates in real terms.

We call on you for September 2017 to provide all teachers with an increase in line with the STRB recommendations for the relevant pay range and to ensure that this is included as a mandatory requirement within the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD).

We also call on you to set a 2017-18 Remit to look again at teachers’ pay with a view to addressing the shortfall in teachers’ pay which is so clearly affecting recruitment and retention. This Remit should not be constrained by matters of affordability. It would then be possible to consider what teachers’ pay should be and needs to be, what steps need to be taken to address the issues and the timetable for change.

## **School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document 2017**

UCAC believes that the Government needs to ensure that the 2017 version of the STPCD contains individual points on the pay ranges. UCAC believes that the removal of mandatory pay points and the later removal of the discretionary pay points from the pay framework have compromised access to pay progression. The restoration of individual points would help ensure transparency and fairness in the application of the pay framework. It would also help schools to plan more effectively for their future pay bill.

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<sup>2</sup> STRB’s 27<sup>th</sup> Report 2017, Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.28, P62

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in STRB’s 27<sup>th</sup> Report, Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.7, P6

<sup>4</sup> STRB’s 2<sup>th</sup> Report 2017, Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.22, P24

All teachers should receive an increase in September 2017 in line with the STRB recommendations for the relevant pay range and that details of this should be included as a mandatory requirement within the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) 2017.

### **Consultation Process**

Due to the late publication of the STRB's 27<sup>th</sup> Report it will not be possible for Employers to consult formally with teachers and their representatives before September. It will not be possible, therefore, to consult on changes to pay policies in time for the beginning of the school year and schools will face significant challenges preparing to implement any changes.

UCAC emphasizes the importance of ensuring, in future, a reasonable and realistic timetable for consultation at all stages in order to ensure that the process is robust, transparent and fair.

The late publication of the STRB Report and the draft version of the STPCD 2017 will now, most likely, have an impact on the publication of the Welsh version of the Document. We urge you to ensure that the Welsh version of the Document is available at the same time as the English version.

### **School Funding**

The years of pay restraint and pay freezes have seriously damaged recruitment and retention and the period of austerity, with cuts to public spending, have made it difficult for schools to successfully implement any pay uplift and retain a full complement of staff.

UCAC calls on the UK Government to fund fully the pay increases, including providing additional funding for the Welsh Government to implement the pay award in Wales. This should also be the case for further increases that are required. There needs to be an urgent financial investment in the future of the education workforce.

### **Data about Wales**

This year again UCAC is concerned and disappointed at the lack of relevant data presented by the UK Government concerning the profession in Wales. It is apparent that the UK Government, which currently has responsibility for the pay and conditions of teachers in Wales, does not collect relevant data about schools and teachers in Wales.

### **Conclusion**

The STRB acknowledges that there is clear evidence of a deterioration in teachers' pay and the relative position of teachers' earnings since 2011/12. In its 26<sup>th</sup> Report (July 2016) the STRB noted that "*there was a case for a higher than 1% uplift to the national pay framework*" based on evidence about recruitment and retention challenges alone.<sup>5</sup>

Yet, once again, in 2016-17, the Government issued a Remit limiting the award to a 1% average pay uplift, ignoring the previous advice of the STRB and undermining the freedom of the STRB to come to a considered, independent conclusion based on evidence. UCAC believes that the STRB's stark warning about the teaching workforce in this, its 27<sup>th</sup> Report, must be heeded as a matter of urgency: "*We are deeply concerned about the cumulative effect of these trends on teacher supply.*"

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<sup>5</sup> STRB's 27th Report, Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.23, P62

*We consider that this presents a substantial risk to the functioning of an effective education system.”*

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The STRB's conclusions are clear, as are ours and those of the vast majority of stakeholders. After examining all available evidence there can be no argument. Teachers' salaries have fallen behind significantly (in particular since 2011) and this poses a major threat to schools' ability to recruit and retain teachers. In UCAC's opinion, the Government must act now to address this serious issue which is already having a detrimental impact on children and young people's education.

Yours sincerely,

*Elaine Edwards.*

Elaine Edwards  
General Secretary

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<sup>6</sup> STRB's 27th Report, Chapter 5, Paragraph 5.23, P62