

Chair's introduction

Welcome to our third newsletter and the first of this new academic year. I hope that the return to school has been a smooth one. Despite the challenges we are all now familiar with, it has been fantastic to see pupils back in school again.

The work of Hackney Schools Group Board continues this year, with our three panels: Belonging, Reading for all, and Curriculum. As ever, we are keen for Headteachers and their schools to be involved in this important work. The Board plays an important role in providing strategic direction for Hackney's education, and so your voices are vital and valuable.

All three panels have made progress over the last few months in establishing a future programme of work. The panel chairs provide more information on this below.

The Board is also recruiting for **three new members**, so please do think about whether this is something which interests you. More information on this is included below.

Eleanor Schooling, CBE Chair of HSGB

HSGB FORWARD PLAN FOR 2021/22: Headteachers, Principals and Heads of settings are welcome to attend the forthcoming HSG Board and panel meetings taking place on the following dates (Contact John Davies, john.davies@hackney.gov.uk);

- Belonging panel - 4 November 2021, 16.00-17.30
- Reading for all Panel - 18 November 2021, 16.00-16.45
- Curriculum panel - 23 November, 14.00 - 14.45
- Board- 27 January 2021, 16.00-17.30

Belonging

Talking to Parents about Race

As many of you will know, last year the Belonging panel carried out its 'Talking to Parents about Race' programme. This valuable work engaged parents on issues that they may not have had the opportunity to raise before, and provided a forum for honest and meaningful conversations. The schools involved were able to take away valuable lessons on how to ensure everyone feels a sense of belonging in the school community.

Building on this, the panel's work this year will include another programme of these sessions with six new schools. Each school will have one session, lasting an hour. Sessions will be taking place on 22 and 23 November. The sessions will include a facilitator from the panel, as well as school leaders and parents.

Our report on last year's Talking to Parents about Race sessions can be found [here](#). It will give you an idea of the types of conversations that took place and the insights both we and schools gained from the sessions.

To sign up for these sessions, please contact John Davies, john.davies@hackney.gov.uk.

Creating the Conditions for School Belonging

We are also excited to introduce a new programme of research happening under the Belonging panel. Kathryn Riley, Professor of Urban Education at UCL's Institute of Education, will be running a programme that will give teachers and pupils from 20 schools the skills to carry out research about belonging in the classroom. There will be accompanying podcasts that will include dialogue with experts in their field. At the end of the six sessions schools will have the tools to continue to evaluate how belonging impacts on pupils and their achievements.

There will be six sessions, each for 90 minutes, with the first held on 24 November. All dates and sessions are listed below:

- Making sense of the bigger picture - 24 November 2021
- Look afresh at schools - through the 'Prism of Place and Belonging'. - 19 January 2022
- Understanding the rules of the Game - Wednesday - 23 February 2022
- What's the Learning? - 20 April 2022
- Identifying the intentional actions that matter - 18 May 2022

More information on the programme is available will be provided at the Headteachers' Briefing on 21 October. To sign up for these sessions, please contact John Davies, john.davies@hackney.gov.uk.

Marisa Childs and Andrea Powell, Panel Chairs

Reading for all

Reading remains a priority for the Board this year. Last year, with so much of pupils' education taking place online and at home, schools made a huge effort to ensure that pupils continued to engage with reading throughout this period. However, we know that attainment in reading has suffered to a greater degree than maths, for example, and so we feel now is the time to redouble our efforts to support schools in engaging pupils.

This year the Reading for all panel will be focussing on the two priorities below:

- Developing practitioners' knowledge about literature
- Enhancing reading for pleasure for all age groups

So far, we have partnered with Hackney Education in hosting an event for Hackney teachers with Joseph Coehlo, the performance poet and playwright, where attendees were able to develop their understanding of children's literature. Thank you to Kathleen O'Connor and Rosie Condon at Hackney Education for organising this event.

We are also partnering with Hackney Education in hosting CPD sessions with the Open Univeristy and UKLA, focussed on improving knowledge of children's literature and encouraging pupils' reading for pleasure. EYFS and Primary staff are welcome to join.

To book a place, please contact Rosie Condon, at rosie.condon@hackney.gov.uk or use this [googleform](#).

If you have any questions or ideas about the Reading panel, please do get in touch with me (BHasan@wentworth.hackney.sch.uk) or John Davies (john.davies@hackney.gov.uk).

Ben Hasan, Panel Chair

Curriculum

This year the panel has agreed the following key themes:

- What should all schools consider to have a successful transition from year 6 to 7
- 10 things all Hackney kids should experience by age 11 and age 16
- Curriculum theory and intent

Working with Hackney Education and schools, we will be:

- Developing a cross-phased definition of curriculum.
- Taking forward work on curriculum theory and intent, with primary and secondary schools involved in the 2020/21 curriculum pilot sessions.
- Facilitating the sharing of best practice in curriculum, between primary and secondary schools in Hackney.

We are of course always keen to hear feedback and ideas from schools, so please do get in touch with me as chair of the panel, (Inichols@kingsmead.hackney.sch.uk) or Chenelle Blake (chenelle.blake@hackney.gov.uk).

Louise Nichols, Panel Chair

Board recruitment

Hackney Schools Group Board is looking to recruit three headteachers or senior leaders. Two of these will join the Board, with the other joining the Curriculum panel.

You will be committed to using your professional experience and insights as a school leader in Hackney to support the leadership of an exceptional local education system.

To apply for or discuss the role, please send a CV and cover letter, setting out your experience and skills relevant to the role, to john.davies@hackney.gov.uk. The closing date is Monday 25 November.

Hackney Schools Group Board