Lorimer Russell-Hayes

Nomination for election for the North West region

Personal Statement

My professional career includes three main phases. The first consists of 20 years of teaching, which developed into specialisms including pastoral support and special needs. My second phase of 17 years consisted of advising schools as Consultant for Behaviour and Attendance. During this time, I also developed my passion for school governance (which began in 2003) and this formed the basis of the third phase of my career. I supported many tens of schools from 2014 to 2021 in my role as National Leader of Governance, including a secondment of 18 months working with schools involved in the National Challenge project. Since my part-retirement from full-time work, I have been able to fully engross myself in the third phase, through continuing to deliver support for governing boards, creating and delivering training and bespoke consultancy. Also, within this period, I was elected to and spent 5 years as vice-chair of the local NGA association, previously known as LASGB, now Lancashire Governance Association (LGA.)

I believe that my experience, skills and knowledge, some of which I describe above, gives me many of the elements of the role you are looking for. I am passionate about the influence that the NGA has and devolves through its members and partners. I have myself been on the receiving end of the campaigns and conferences and they have often given me the courage to develop myself, my boards and my sphere of influence in new ways. After attending your recent conferences, for example, I was inspired by your environmental speakers, one, St Christopher's Academy being already known to me, to develop this area in my own schools; I now provide a practical governor session for the Blackburn Environmental Sustainability Conference annually with Wendy Litherland.

More recently, a session regarding AI sparked the further development of guidance to my schools on how we align and report our governor visits to our school improvement priorities. While most of my experience has been in maintained schools within Lancashire, as they are in the majority, I have also supported many other types of schools including academies and federations. I believe that the skills you seek are common to all those involved in school governance. I live by our three core principles, abide by our code of conduct that includes the Nolan principles and accept and adhere to our legal duties and responsibilities. Through work with a variety of settings and people, I hold a strong belief in equality of opportunity and the strength in diversity in all its forms.

Whilst I have developed many areas in creating governor training packages relating to environmental awareness, strategic finance and managing complaints, I have had to increase my own learning in these areas along the way. Whilst being both satisfying and challenging, developing my own understanding in order to inspire and develop that in others is a key driver for me. The end goal is always the same – wanting the best outcomes for all our children in all our school settings.