

Academies Conference 2020

Session Outlines

SESSION ROUND 1

The MAT Capacity Improvement Framework

Katherine Cowell, Regional Schools Commissioner

A discussion on the published framework and how trusts can use it as a self-assessment tool to look into their capacity.

Developing and implementing your MAT central services offer

Carole Barclay and Diane Houghton, Avec Partnership

This session will explore key considerations for Trusts in terms of forming a new Trust or restructuring within an existing Trust. The session will provide tips on how to establish a central MAT infrastructure that balances the need to ensure that the Trust is fully compliant whilst also providing a clearly articulated, quality central service that is cost effective and aligned to annual KPIs. We will cover issues such as the pros and cons of centralisation, key issues for decision makers, and practical advice on how to ensure central MAT contributions are transparent and shared across the MAT appropriately.

Establishing SEND provision across a MAT

Simon Tanner, Director of SEND, Bohunt Education Trust

Simon will discuss his role as director of SEND for Bohunt Education Trust; focusing on the framework he created across the trust to best support SEND and looking at how they have established coordinators for the broad areas of need. He will also explain how they have incorporated their vision within SEND and how they have ensured that the trust are ambitious for all.

SESSION ROUND 2

How to scale culture across your schools in an expanding MAT

Mark Williams, Director of Education, CO-OP Trust

In this session, Mark will be discussing the Co-Op Academies Trust values, and the process for how they roll them out across the MAT as they scale from 3-7-20-30 schools.

GAG Pooling: Should you dive in?

Julie Cordiner, Education Funding Specialist

Lord Agnew has described the ability to pool and redistribute GAG as one of the greatest freedoms available to multi-academy trusts. But relatively few trusts have taken advantage of the flexibility. What is GAG pooling, and how does it differ from top slicing? What are the benefits and challenges, what objections might be raised, and how can you implement it successfully?

In this session, Education Funding Specialist Julie Cordiner will explore all these aspects and more, to help you consider whether GAG pooling might be worth considering as part of your strategy for financial sustainability and educational improvement across the Trust.

Head Swap – Developing leaders across a trust

Claire-Marie Cuthbert, CEO and Carl Atkin, Director of School Improvement, Evolve Trust

Imagine walking into a meeting of Trust Headteachers and CEO one day and that during that meeting it was suggested you should all swap jobs in a cross phase MAT! Why wouldn't we all leap at the chance? After all, we all work for the same Trust with the same vision and the same values.

Naturally, there was a tumbleweed moment whilst all around the table considered the benefits and possible risks. One head asked, "What would happen to my school"? But, whose school was it? Another head had been in their home school for a decade. Why would they leave it now? Since the appointment of the CEO in 2016, the focus at Evolve has been on culture and with Headteachers working in isolation, a ceiling had been hit on what could be done to improve both the schools and the culture further.

In this session, Claire Marie-Cuthbert (CEO) and Carl Atkin (Director of School Improvement) will explore how this strategy creates better heads so they can apply the practice they have learned to a range of contexts but also how this influences the culture of a multi-academy Trust. Hear the exciting benefits as well as the hurdles that have been overcome. Also, what the future holds for this innovative professional learning strategy moving forward!

SESSION ROUND 3

Collective cultural commitment to Trust wide school improvement

Helen Rowland CEO, Focus Trust & Victoria Saville, Principal, Fieldhead Primary Academy

In this session, Helen and one of her Principals, Victoria Saville (Fieldhead Primary Academy) will explain how their strong values and shared commitment to collective efficacy, enabled them to create a Trust wide school improvement model that is having a positive impact on all fifteen primary academies and the children, staff, governors and communities within them. Fieldhead went from Special Measures to Good within two years www.fieldheadprimaryacademy.co.uk

Embedding Vision and Curriculum across a large MAT

Dr Tim Coulson, Chief Executive of Unity Schools Partnership

In this session, Tim Coulson will explore managing a large MAT of 25 schools across a wide geography, focusing on how vision has been embedded across the trust and the MAT's curriculum model in light of the new Ofsted Inspection Framework. Tim will also discuss how effectiveness is monitored across the MAT.

Legal, financial and HR update for Academies

Graham Vials, Ward Hadaway Law Firm & Chris Beaumont, Clive Owen Accountants

This session will update academy leaders about what they need to know around recent changes to the ESFA handbook, HR processes and key issues around financial and legal issues.