

Department for Education withdraws EBP Grant

The Department for Education has decided to withdraw the Education Business Partnership Service Grant from the end of the 2010/11 financial year, ie 31.3.11, with no transitional funding. We only heard about this decision on 29.3.11 which is doubly disappointing.

The decision has been made by the Secretary of State in the context of the DFE spending review settlement. Ministers have made it clear that the priority for education expenditure will be front line services as substantial savings are needed.

The EBP Service Grant made up some 50% of the EBP's budget for the 2010/11 financial year so this is a significant loss. It enabled the EBP to provide schools, colleges and other education providers with a comprehensive range of subsidised Employer Engagement activities including Work Experience and Enterprise & Work Related Learning. We've also seen a number of organisations which have previously funded us for various activities themselves subject to budget cuts which has further reduced our income streams.

We're pursuing other grant applications, looking at our fee structure for schools, colleges and other education providers and examining cost savings to address this.

An emergency meeting of the EBP Strategic Board was held on 6.4.11 where we looked at options for the future. Employers remain committed to working with the EBP in partnership with education and we're exploring how their corporate responsibility budgets could help address the shortfall in funding.

We remain optimistic that we can continue to provide services to schools, colleges and other education providers at a fair and affordable cost. We're consulting with colleagues on the way forward.

We're fully committed to our mission of raising the aspirations and achievements of young people through work related learning and helping them prepare for adult and working life. The next few months, I'm sure you'll appreciate, are going to be challenging. However, we remain optimistic about our long term future.

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