

MICHAEL GOVE BACKS OUR MATHS CAMPAIGN

► **POLITICS**
By DAVID CROW

MICHAEL Gove, the education secretary, will today throw his weight behind our campaign to improve financial literacy by boosting the number of students who study further maths at A-Level.

In a speech at the Royal Society on the importance of maths in the curriculum, Gove will back our call for City workers and firms to donate to FMSP, a charitable project that supports the teaching of further maths in schools and colleges.

The Further Maths Support Programme (FMSP) trains teachers in state schools to deliver the advanced maths A-Level qualification and provides tuition directly to students.

Gove will say: "I strongly welcome City A.M.'s campaign for the City to donate to the Further Maths Support Programme."

"Their budget last year was a paltry £1.5m - small change for the City - but with this tiny budget they have

had enormous success."

Gove will call on City institutions to donate some of their profits to FMSP, making it financially secure and less "dependent of the temporary affection of politicians".

Since its launch in 2005, FMSP has managed to double the number of students studying further maths at A-Level from 5,627 to 11,312.

However, just one in seven students studying for a maths A-Level also picks further maths, even though it is often demanded by the top university mathematics departments such as Cambridge, Oxford, Warwick and Durham.

With more funds, the FMSP would be able to boost the number of opportunities for state school pupils to study A-Level further maths while training even more teachers to be able to deliver the qualification.

Charlie Stripp, chief executive of Mathematics in Education and Industry - the charity that runs FMSP

- said people with "highly developed maths skills" were essential to the success of the City, as well as Britain's manufacturing and technology industries.

Meanwhile, Gove will say that schools are not producing "anywhere near enough mathematically educated people for universities and businesses".

He will add: "Modern science and technology are built on a foundation of mathematically educated people. However, half of our children leave school without even a 'C' in GCSE maths, only one in ten does A-Level maths."

"We are almost unique among advanced countries in not expecting pupils to continue with maths between 16 and 18 - we must change path."

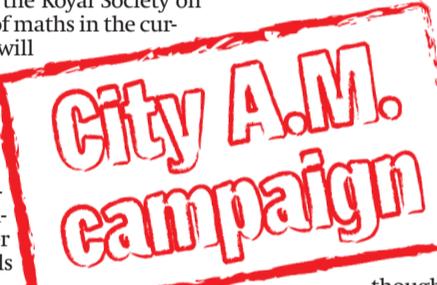
He will pledge to expand training for maths teachers and call on the maths and science communities to work with universities and businesses to develop a range of new non-A-Level courses that focus on statistics, probability and risk.

Gove will also argue that a lack of statistical skills meant most of society - including politicians - were unable to follow the debates around the causes of the 2008 financial crisis.

ALLISTER HEATH, MORE: P2



Michael Gove said £1.5m was "small change for the City" Pic: Micha Theiner/CITY A.M.



Lagarde confirmed as first female boss of IMF

► **POLITICS**

By JULIAN HARRIS

FRENCH finance minister Christine Lagarde was confirmed as the new head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) last night, the first woman to be appointed to the role.

Lagarde's success was effectively sealed earlier in the day when US Treasury secretary Timothy Geithner added the American government's support to her candidacy.

Geithner praised Lagarde's "exceptional talent and broad experience", opening the way for the official

announcement and a chorus of endorsements from global politicians.

The appointment is "good news for the global economy", echoed chancellor George Osborne.

French president Nicolas Sarkozy called the news "a victory for France".

Lagarde's first move last night was to

urge the Greek opposition party to support the government in pushing through a new austerity plan.

The IMF pushed ahead with her appointment despite an unresolved legal case in France looking at Lagarde's role in a 2008 arbitration payout to a French businessman.



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EDITOR'S LETTER
ALLISTER HEATH

BRITAIN faces a huge challenge. Innumeracy and financial illiteracy are rife in this country, in an appalling indictment of years of failed educational policies. Tragically, millions of people are unable to grasp fully even the most basic of financial products, such as mortgages or savings accounts. In an era when self-reliance and financial independence are essential, this is a catastrophe and means that many families don't have the basic tools to run their lives properly. Millions are unable to work out how much they need to save to retire; oth-

ers don't understand the consequences of using finance to buy cars or how much extra they would end up paying. Even the basics, such as the concept of compound interest, are a challenge. There is also a limited understanding of economics or of how to value assets, such as property, making bubbles much more likely. It is a shameful failure.

This lack of understanding – caused by defective state education, a media that is loose with numbers, and insufficient effort from the financial services industry – is one reason why there is so much distrust of the City. For the good of the public, the UK's future competitiveness and the reputation of financial firms, it is imperative that this disastrous situation be addressed. Encouragingly, Michael Gove, the education secretary, will today outline in an excellent speech ways to begin to tackle this by placing maths and statistics back at the heart of the curriculum. But government action isn't enough: the City must also step in

with extra money.

For a while now, I have been looking for charities for City A.M. to endorse as part of our campaign to bolster financial literacy. There can be no progress in the popular understanding of finance without improvements in mathematics skills, so to boost financial literacy means investing in better and more maths. I would therefore urge readers to support Mathematics in Education and Industry, a brilliant charity which operates the Further Maths Support Programme. This trains teachers in state schools to deliver the advanced maths A-Level qualification, provides tuition directly to students and offers a range of online learning methods. Run by Charlie Stripp (go to www.mei.org.uk and see profile below), it has done wonders with limited funding.

The aim ought to be to double its budget from £1.5m to £3m over the next year. This means raising an extra £1.5m in private donations – readers, please take out your credit cards. Gove

will today back our appeal to the City to raise funds for the FMSP. He protected the project in the Spending Review and won't cut its funding – but in these present austere times, the City must put its hands in its pockets to help it increase the good work it already does.

Financial institutions should see donations as a good way to help rebuild their reputation. In the short-term, donations would deflect from the populist anti-City rage. In the longer-term, better educated consumers would make better decisions, reducing mis-selling or mis-buying scandals; people would be more comfortable with financial products, and finance in general, and therefore less likely to view banks, funds and insurers as inherently evil or corrupt. Most important of all, however, building a more numerate and financially literate society would help millions of people regain control of their lives.

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BoI backs down on bonds

Bank of Ireland (BoI) ended a heavily discounted debt-for-equity offer on a junior bond yesterday, blaming administrative difficulties. The bond, originally sold by the Bristol & West Building Society and taken over by BoI in 1997, has a face value of £75m, representing just over three per cent of the junior bondholders the bank is trying to impose losses on. But most of the Bristol bond holders were yet to accept its offer of an 80 per cent loss of value ahead of a restructuring, compared to 74 per cent acceptance on its other bonds.

BoFA nears \$8.5bn mortgage deal

Bank of America is close to a deal to pay \$8.5bn (£5.3bn) to settle claims from a group of investors that lost money on mortgage-backed securities, a source familiar with the process said yesterday. The settlement would be the largest such sum in the banking industry to date. The largest US bank by assets has been fighting claims by a group of 22 investors, which includes BlackRock and Pimco, over the housing-related securities it packaged and sold before the financial crisis.

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The man with a passion for promoting maths

PROFILE
By DAVID CROW

IT might not be the most fashionable cause in the world, but Mathematics in Education and Industry (MEI) is a charity with a proven track record.

When Charlie Stripp, its chief executive, quit his teaching job in 2000 to join the charity, the death-knell had already been sounded for A-Level further maths. In 2003 just 5039 English students took the qualification.

Even the best universities were forced to drop the A-Level from their degree entry requirements – there simply weren't enough state schools giving students the chance to take it.

Cut forward to 2010, and 11,312 students took the qualification in England – twice as many as in 2005.

Much of that increase is down to the Further Maths Support Programme, the initiative that MEI developed, starting as a small pilot with the help of a grant from the Gatsby Foundation and latterly as a national scheme funded through the Department for Education.

Stripp and his colleagues have

helped to boost the number of further maths candidates by training existing teachers and, where necessary, arranging for specialists to give tutorials to students, either in school, at local universities, or online.

The charity aims to help students become independent learners rather than being "spoon fed". At the heart is the belief that mathematicians are essential for Britain to succeed in finance, engineering and science.

But for Stripp, it is as much about improving the lives of disadvantaged students. "The potential of these students must be realised," he says.

"Some of them come from a less advantaged home culture, but if

they're talented in maths they can transcend their background."

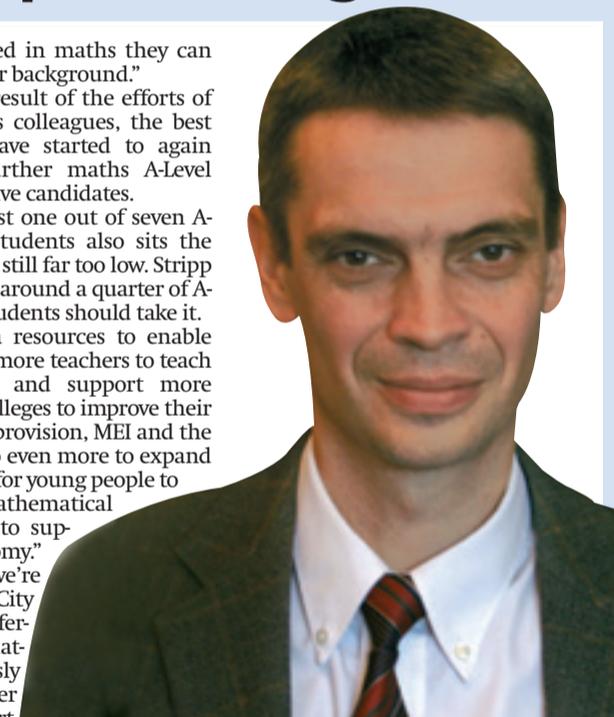
Partly as a result of the efforts of Stripp and his colleagues, the best universities have started to again demand a further maths A-Level from prospective candidates.

However, just one out of seven A-Level maths students also sits the harder exam – still far too low. Stripp estimates that around a quarter of A-Level maths students should take it.

"With extra resources to enable them to train more teachers to teach at this level, and support more schools and colleges to improve their mathematics provision, MEI and the FMSP could do even more to expand opportunities for young people to learn the mathematical skills needed to support our economy."

That's why we're calling on the City to make a difference, by donating generously to the Further Maths Support Programme.

To donate to the
**FURTHER MATHS
SUPPORT PROGRAMME,**
contact Charlie Stripp
charlie.stripp@mei.org.uk
www.mei.org.uk



CHARLIE STRIPP

WHAT THE OTHER PAPERS SAY THIS MORNING

FINANCIAL TIMES

DIRECTORS' PAY AND PENSIONS UNDER SCRUTINY

FTSE 100 directors have amassed final salary pension pots averaging £2.8m, according to research, while trade union bosses came under fire for their pay packages before Thursday's strike by up to 750,000 teachers and civil servants on pension reform. A survey of 137 directors by Incomes Data Services, the pay analyst, found such a pot could buy a pension annuity worth more than £170,000 a year.

FEARS RAISED OVER NORTHUMBRIAN WATER BID

An investment vehicle controlled by a leading Asian tycoon has been accused by an MP of keeping Northumbrian Water's 3,000 staff "in the dark" and urged to divulge any plans to launch a bid for the company. The comments from Kevan Jones MP came after Cheung Kong

Infrastructure disclosed that it was considering making a cash bid.

TORY DONORS IN FUNDING THREAT OVER HIGH SPEED 2

Several Conservative donors have warned the prime minister that they will withdraw funding from the party if the coalition presses ahead with its plans for a high-speed rail link, it emerged on Tuesday. David Begg, director of the Campaign for High-Speed Rail, admitted that the project was "not a done deal by any means", given the voluble resistance from some Tories living near the proposed route.

CHINA IN QUEST FOR SHALE GAS RESERVES

China's search for natural gas passed a landmark this week as the government launched its first tender offer for four shale gas blocks in southern China, underlining Beijing's determination to move forward with developing unconventional gas resources.

THE TIMES

GOLDMAN PREPARES TO SPREAD ROOTS CLOSE TO ST PAUL'S

Goldman Sachs has appointed a leading American developer to draw up plans for a one million sq ft "groundscraper" yards from its London headquarters. The investment bank has appointed Tishman Speyer, which developed its New York offices, The Times understands.

A MILLION TAXPAYERS WILL BE TOLD TO PAY MORE

The Government is set to claw back money from more than a million people who unwittingly paid too little in tax over the past year because they were given the wrong tax codes. HM Revenue & Customs revealed yesterday that 1.2m taxpayers owed the Government an average of £600. Any amount less than £50 will be written off. However, as many as 3.5m people could get a cheque through the door.

The Daily Telegraph

PRINCE OF WALES'S HOUSEHOLD GROWS AND SPENDING INCREASES

The Prince of Wales took on ten extra staff and increased his spending on travel by more than 50 per cent last year, his annual accounts show. Prince Charles employed the equivalent of 158.9 full-time staff at the end of the financial year, including 26 personal staff, compared with 149 the year before.

UK CITIES TO COMPETE TO ATTRACT NEW BUSINESS WITH LOWER TAXES

Britain's cities are to be encouraged to compete with one another to lower business rates and attract more firms to set up in their areas, under plans to be unveiled by ministers next month. Local authorities are set to be allowed to keep money raised from business rates and decide the tax's level themselves. A cap will be imposed by the Government.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

SIEMENS SEES SIGNS OF SLOWING GROWTH

German industrial conglomerate Siemens, a barometer of the world's manufacturing industry, said yesterday that although it expects sales and orders to rise in the fiscal third quarter, there are signs of slowing growth. "The tailwind from the economic recovery is likely over. Now, increased efforts are required for continued growth," Siemens chief financial officer Joe Kaeser told analysts.

ZYNGA PREPARING TO FILE IPO

Online social gaming company Zynga is preparing to file for an initial public offering as early as Wednesday and hopes to raise up to \$2bn, people familiar with the matter said. The maker of the popular FarmVille games has picked Morgan Stanley to lead the offering, with Goldman Sachs also a lead underwriter.