

ACCS

Newsletter Nuachtiris

Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail is Cuimsitheacha Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools

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Beannachtaí na Nollag

ACCS wishes all our schools a Happy Christmas.



In keeping with the spirit of Christmas, ACCS will make a donation to Focus Ireland instead of sending Christmas Cards.



ACCS In-School Management Conference 2014

Theme: Sustaining the Leaders



Left to Right: Marie Céline Clegg IBVM, Mr. Malachy Molloy, President, ACCS, Ms. Eileen Salmon, General Secretary, ACCS and Mr. Denis Ring, Chairperson ACCS In-School Management Committee.

Our In-School Management Conference this year took place in the warmth and comfort of the Lyrath Hotel in Kilkenny. The venue was perfect for the theme of this year's Conference, "Sustaining the Leaders". The In-School Management (ISM) Committee, chaired by Mr. Denis Ring, planned a Conference that would support our Principals and Deputy Principals in managing the considerable stresses that they face every day in school, both mentally and practically.

Our keynote speaker was Marie Céline Clegg, IBVM, a great friend and adviser to ACCS. Her presentation focused on current leadership theory and styles and the very real importance of a work-life balance. Marie Céline, with the help of the ISM Committee, involved delegates in completing profiling questionnaires which identified each person's style of leadership. This first presentation was an excellent start to the Conference and set a reflective tone for the two days.

We had two workshops which were very practical and relevant to current school practice. One focused on how School Management might conduct a review of Posts of Responsibility in the school, while the other demonstrated how a school

could use Google Apps for Education to help with conducting research for School Self-Evaluation.

Regional Meetings followed where issues of concern to schools were discussed. The Middle Management deficit continues to be of grave concern to schools, a lack of support for students with behavioural and emotional problems was highlighted, administrative problems with P-Pod and difficulties with the new sick leave arrangements were all adding to the stress levels in schools.

That evening delegates enjoyed a lovely meal and congratulated all their recently retired colleagues who were presented with the well-known Galway Lamp. Ms. Mary Mullarkey, retired Principal from Castlerea Community School spoke on behalf of all the retirees and gave a wonderful account of the history and purpose of our Community and Comprehensive Schools.

The following morning delegates were given an outline of the Proposals for Management Structures for Post-Primary Schools. ACCS is working with the two other management bodies, the JMB and ETBI, to bring a joint proposal for a renewed and reformed middle management structure to the DES.

Visit our website at
www.accs.ie



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Please circulate to Board Members.



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Our second speaker at the Conference was Mr. Declan Coyle of “The Green Platform” fame. Declan described his approach to life to delegates. His message of positivity inspired us all to understand that the way to happiness is best achieved through contributing positively and making someone else’s life better. “Your work is going to fill a large part of your life and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work”.

ACCS launched its revamped website to delegates and encouraged everyone to contribute to the News section on the front page of the site by sending in good news of achievements in our schools.



Mr. Tom Cash, Deputy Principal, Coláiste Chiaráin, Leixlip.

Following an open forum on issues of concern to our delegates, Mr. Malachy Molloy, President of ACCS, thanked all for attending and hoped that our Principals and Deputy Principals felt supported and renewed heading into the last few weeks of the term. The ISM Committee were delighted with the large number of Principals and Deputy Principals who attended the Conference and with their very positive feedback. Even more importantly, in the weeks following the Conference, in the midst of their concerns, some Principals have remarked that they have followed the advice given at Conference and felt that they were better able to manage the daily stresses facing them. Long may it last!!



Ms. Antoinette Nic Gearailt, Vice President, ACCS and Ms. Mary Mullarkey former Principal of Castlereagh Community School.

Sustaining the Leaders, Marie Céline Clegg, IBVM

Mr. Denis Ring, Chairperson of the In-School Management Committee, introduced our keynote speaker Marie Céline Clegg, IBVM. The content of her presentation was very apt given the pressures currently being experienced by school management teams. Marie Céline’s experience and involvement in leadership development as well as being a former President of ACCS, gives her a unique insight into the role of a leader in a Community or Comprehensive School. Marie Céline Clegg opened her presentation by asking delegates to place in context the reality of senior management in schools at present. It is accepted in all circles that school leaders face the challenge of overload and, therefore, “how we are in ourselves as we approach the task of leadership is going to determine, to a large extent, how the exercise of leadership will impact on both ourselves and others”. Leaders must therefore identify what supports and sustains them.

In developing the conversation, the focus turned to the qualities that will strengthen leadership. Three key areas were explored:

1. Warmth/competence
2. The ‘myth’ of the complete leader
3. What does it mean to be authentic

The combination of warmth and competence engender confidence and admiration for a leader. A deficiency in either can be damaging. High warmth but low competency can lead to a feeling of pity toward the leader. Lack of warmth but high competence can lead to active harm and envy. The skilled leader will have high warmth and high competence.

Marie Céline described how the Principal down the road always appeared to be perfect in every way. However, she pointed to an emerging view from research which is encouraging:

“Hundreds of people have struggled under the weight and

the myth of the ‘complete’ leader! It is now becoming clear that an ‘incomplete leader’ who is authentic is likely to be more effective”. (Ancona, Malone and Senge, ‘In Praise of the Incomplete Leader’, 2011)

The authentic leader is described as one who can demonstrate a passion for their purpose, practice their values consistently and lead with ‘hearts’ as well as ‘heads’. At this juncture participants engaged in a Self-Assessment Questionnaire involving the four key components of an authentic leader: self-awareness, internal moral perspective, balanced processing and relational transparency.

Marie Céline then asked delegates to focus on opportunities. “Everyone is tested by life but only a few extract strength and wisdom from their most trying experiences. They’re the ones we call leaders”. Marie Céline asked all to reflect on “all the potential for leadership development in any given day!”

The importance of work – life balance was stressed. We all need time to “kick the leaves” and have our “Sunshine Coast” - the place where you get away from it all and can totally relax. She left all present to reflect on the powerful quote:

“Leading adaptive change in the times we are in requires taking care of yourself. Taking care of yourself is not self-indulgence. The world needs you to be at the top of your game. And you cannot be at the top of your game if you have not had a good night’s sleep, eaten well, had some exercise and, yes, received love and affection of family and friends to feel like a whole person. **If you care about education ___ take care of yourself___**”

(Leading and Managing Schools, 2011 edited by O’Sullivan, H and West-Burnham, J).

Marie Céline’s presentation resonated very powerfully with all the delegates and started a process of self-reflection that was central to the theme of the Conference.

The Green Platform, Mr. Declan Coyle

The second speaker at our In School Management Conference was Mr. Declan Coyle, author of The Green Platform. He was introduced by Ms. Siobhán McCarthy, incoming Principal of Mountrath Community School where Declan had previously addressed the staff. His message provides a blueprint for living life to the fullest, accepting it for what it is and taking positive action to improve life every day.

For him it began when trekking through Taroko Gorge in Taiwan and being challenged that **'you are missing the gorge'**. Initially he did not understand this comment but when he reflected he realised he was totally focused on the destination and not living in the present and enjoying the journey. His message is that we must be fully alive and fully present here now. We do not live in the past or the future but in the present.

Declan went on to ask, **what is the great purpose of life?** He produced the statistic from the prosperity index that people are now three times richer than they were in the 50's but not a jot happier. Therefore we can conclude that financial wealth itself is not the answer. The purpose of life is to be happy and make a valuable contribution which improves the lot of others.

He turned his attention to **the purpose of our work**. "Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work". He looked at the Gallop 2013 State of the Workplace Survey published in the Harvard Business Review in May 2013 which concluded:

- 30% do a good job. (Not a great job!)
- 50% put time in.
- 20% are counter-productive.

This small percentage of people who feel they do a good job implies a significant cost to employers. The challenge for all leaders is to provide meaning and worth to the work being undertaken by people they lead.

He is a great believer that **'decisions shape your destiny, the choices you make shape you'**. The power to make positive choices dictates the life you live. The empowered person will choose, 'if it is to be it is up to me', taking control of their destiny. The disempowered will blame, complain, become the victim. Declan very much believes we



Mr. Declan Coyle, Director Andec Communications.

must accept that 'it is as it is'. There can be very challenging times in life and yes we must honour these fully and feel the emotion but then take 'positive action now'. Here again making positive choices and controlling our destiny. We must learn from our experiences and grow. This very much ties in with Marie Céline's view of the Authentic Leader.

The focus turned then to the subconscious mind. The messages you process have an immense effect. Once you have set a goal it is important all thoughts should be toward achieving this goal. Only put into your imagination what you want to manifest, think everything that could go right. You must create a positive self-image. **"The you you see is the you you'll be"**. Again linking with Marie Céline's presentation, "how we are in ourselves ____ will impact both on ourselves and others". Declan, with the use of excellent visuals, returned time and again to the importance of choosing positive empowering actions and being placed on the 'green platform'.

When dealing with staff it is essential to be positive. Always show appreciation, praise must be immediate and specific, **'shine a light on what is right'**. Know where you are going but always live in the present. Mother Theresa stated, "Kindness is a language we all understand, even the blind can see it and the deaf can hear it". Declan concluded his positive and inspirational presentation with a focus on the benefits of meditation.

Retired Principals and Deputy Principals 2014



Back Row Left to Right: Mr. John Cleary, Ms. Joan Sheehan, Mr. John Fennell, Ms. Margaret Skehan, Mr. Ger O'Sullivan, Ms. Anne Cryan, Mr. Jim Twohig, Ms. Mary Scriven, Mr. Anto McCormack, Mr. Jim Allen.
Front Row Left to Right: Mr. John Irwin, Assistant General Secretary, ACCS, Ms. Eileen Salmon, General Secretary, ACCS, Mr. Malachy Molloy, President, ACCS, Ms. Mary Mullarkey and Ms. Antoinette Nic Gearailt, Vice President, ACCS.

News & Events from the Community & Comprehensive School Sector

In this section we aim to highlight news and events in Community and Comprehensive Schools. We welcome submissions from schools which can be forwarded to office@accs.ie

All Island Choir 2014 - Moate Community School



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Moate Community School won the grand final of the All Island School Choir Competition. This is the sixth year of the competition, sponsored by Co-operation Ireland, and Moate C.S. is the first Community School to win the award. Four schools battled for the coveted title in the grand final which was screened live on RTE Television. Ms. Jan O'Sullivan, Minister for Education and Skills was joined by Northern Assembly Education Minister John O'Dowd in presenting the trophy.

Congratulations to the students of the choir, their Choir Director Ms. Lorna Duignan, Principal Mr. Tom Lowry and all in Moate Community School.

JP McManus 2014 All Ireland Scholarship Winners

JP McManus established the scholarship programme in 2008 to help young people throughout Ireland avail of third-level education. This year sees the awarding of 125 All Ireland Scholarships from the 32 counties, 25 of which went to community and comprehensive school students. The guest speaker in 2014 was Mr. Martin O'Neill, Republic of Ireland Soccer Manager. See below photos of a selection of recipients who were recently awarded a JP McManus 2014 All Ireland Scholarship by the Minister for Education and Skills Ms. Jan O'Sullivan T.D., and Mr. JP McManus.



Left to Right: Ryan P. O'Sullivan, Ms. Mary O'Sullivan Principal and Grace O'Neill from Scoil Phobail Bhéara in Castletownbere. Ryan is currently studying Law (clinical) at University College Cork. Grace is currently studying Radiography in University College Dublin.



Left to Right: Mr. JP McManus, Niamh Ní Chaiside from St. Wolstan's Community School, Ms. Jan O'Sullivan T.D., Minister for Education and Skills and Mr. Dan Healy. Niamh is pursuing a course in Veterinary Studies next year.



Left to Right: Mr. JP McManus, Aoiheann Margalit from St. Wolstan's Community School, Ms. Jan O'Sullivan T.D., Minister for Education and Skills and Mr. Dan Healy. Aoiheann is currently studying Theoretical Physics in Trinity College, Dublin.



Left to Right: Mr. Paul Fiorentini Principal, Sinéad Farren from Carndonagh Community School and her parents Danny and Janet. Sinéad is currently studying for a BSc Honours International Business with Spanish at Queen's University Belfast.



Left to Right: Wilmore Chiminga, Narcisa Boariu from Hartstown Community School and Judith Chiminga. Narcisa is currently studying Nursing in Trinity College, Dublin.

Leinster Junior Golf Champions



Ashbourne Community School were crowned Leinster Champions and now go on to the National Finals in April 2015.
Left to Right: Mr. Martin McIvor, Teacher, Simon Purcell, Mr. John Ferriter of Leinster Golf, Sean Yourell, Stephen Campbell and Mr. Eamonn Cunningham, Vice-Captain of Newbridge Golf Club.

Connacht Senior Schools Golf Matchplay Winners 2014



Ballinrobe Community School Senior Golf Team,
Back Row Left to Right: Dara Jennings, Ryan Jennings, Cillian Burke, Rory Jennings
Front Row Left to Right: Sean Ryan, Ms. Angela Gill, teacher in charge, Mathew Burke.

Mr. Tony Buzan visits Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine, Kenmare

Mr. Tony Buzan, the inventor of Mind Map, described as one of the most powerful thinking tools of our time, made a surprise visit to Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine recently.

The visit was organised by Mr. Bosco Mc Gearailt who is a parent of a student in the school. Bosco has studied under the great man in Mind Mapping and had invited Tony to Kerry for a lecture and visits to schools in the area.

Tony Buzan addressed the whole school in the area of how to develop your mind. The 480 students and 40 staff were captivated by his talk. After the talk Tony toured the school and visited the library and further engaged with students who were playing chess at the time.

It was a great occasion and our library now has a dedicated area on how to improve your mind!!



Ballinteer Community School (BCS) 40th Anniversary Reunion

On Friday 28th November BCS hosted a Reunion of current and former staff and past pupils. The numerous former staff present is testament to the strong ties of friendship forged through the years. Past pupils represented the five decades of the school. Mr. Dave O'Connell, Principal addressed the guests and emphasised the central role of the school in the local community and the confidence with which BCS faces the next decade.

Minister Alex White, Minister for Communication, Energy and Natural Resources attended the function and was enthusiastic in his praise of the school. The late Mr. Aidan J McGovern, first Principal of BCS, was remembered for his vision and leadership. Mr. Paddy Byrne, first VP, spoke of the early days when numbers rose to 1000! Dr. Austen Corcoran, second Principal spoke of the philosophy of the community schools and the project undertaken to establish the new BCS and the partnership with Ballinteer, St John's.

The fact that BCS spans five decades and only three Principals is indeed a testament to the stable and attractive learning environment in the school. Many past pupils paid tribute to the very positive influence of their teachers and remembered with fondness the years spent in BCS. Former staff commented on the amazing friendly atmosphere in the school.

Berry Catering provided tasty food and wine and as the Party ended plans were already being made for the 50th, though the current Committee will hand over the baton!



Left to Right: Dr. Austen Corcoran former Principal, Ms. Áine Gaughan, Renunion Co-ordinator and former Deputy Principal Mr. Danny Cussens.



Left to Right: Mr. Dave O'Connell, Principal welcomes former Assistant General Secretary Mr. Liam Ryder and former General Secretary of ACCS, Mr. Seán McCann to the 40th Anniversary Reunion of Ballinteer Community School.

NACED Celebrating 40 Years 1974 - 2014

For 40 years Community and Comprehensive Schools have introduced, maintained and promoted adult education in communities all over Ireland. This contribution to Lifelong learning was celebrated at the recent NACED conference.



Left to Right: Mr. Robbie Harrold, Chairperson NACED, Mr. Ciarán Flynn, former General Secretary of ACCS & Ms. Jacqueline Connolly, NACED Treasurer.

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Technical Working Group on Teacher Supply

Our schools have ongoing problems in relation to teacher supply, especially in particular subject areas. We have been asking for a solution to these problems for many years. The Minister for Education and Skills has recognized the need to “ensure an appropriate supply of high-quality teachers covering geographical areas, education sectors and curriculum specialisms”.

Minister O’Sullivan has asked the Teaching Council to develop a forecasting model based on the needs of the system.

As part of this process, the Teaching Council has set up a Technical Working Group on Teacher Supply chaired by Mr. Ciarán Flynn, our retired General Secretary. This group is currently engaged in seeking the views of the education

partners on the issue of teacher supply. To progress this research a Consultative Forum under the chairmanship of Dr. Áine Hyland took place on 4th December 2014. ACCS was invited to participate in the Forum and Ms. Eileen Salmon (General Secretary) and Ms. Antoinette Nic Gearailt (Vice President) attended to represent the views of our schools.

The Technical Working Group will finish its deliberations within one year of the first meeting and advise the Minister on the issue. We wish Ciarán and the Working Group every success in their deliberations and hope that they can deliver a sustainable model that ensures a sufficient supply of suitably qualified teachers to meet the demand in our schools.

ACCS Convention 2015

The 33rd ACCS Convention will take place on the 19th, 20th & 21st March, 2015 in The Galway Bay Hotel, The Promenade, Salthill, Galway.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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| 19th December 2014 | Nominations for Presidency and motions for Convention to be submitted. |
| 19th January 2015 | Draft agenda of business and nominations for Presidency and motions to be issued to Member Boards and Executive Members. Member Boards will be invited to submit amendments to the motions. |
| 19th February 2015 | Latest date for receipt of amendments to the motions. |
| 5th March 2015 | A final agenda will be issued to Member Boards. |

Recent DES Circular

Since our last Newsletter the following Department Circular has been issued:

0073/2014 Work Stoppage by ASTI and TUI Members

