

ACCS

Newsletter Nuachtiris

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

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This newsletter is a private and confidential document for circulation only to Boards of Management and Principals.
Please circulate to Board Members.



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Changes on the Educational Horizon

We are very happy to see that Budget 2016 has signalled the first significant increase in funding in post-primary education, other than for demographic reasons, in recent years. We are particularly pleased that the first step in realising the Management Bodies proposal for Management Structures for Post-Primary Schools has been taken. Approximately forty of our schools with less than 500 students will be given an additional time allocation from the beginning of the academic year 2016/2017 to support them in coping with their management and leadership roles. We will continue to engage with the Department of Education and Skills to extend the provision at Deputy Principal level to larger schools the following year and to ultimately realise all the structural changes to middle management proposed by ACCS, JMB and ETBI.

Another welcome development is the acknowledgement that guidance in schools needs to be supported. With the reduction in the Pupil/Teacher ratio of 0.3 for 2016/2017, school management will be enabled to deploy additional guidance where the need is greatest in their schools.

The re-introduction of the Summer Works Scheme for 2016 and 2017, amounting to €80million over the two years, increased funding for the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, Book Rental Scheme, Junior Cycle Reform and increased Broadband Provision are all very welcome to support our schools in meeting student needs.

Unfortunately, at the opposite end of the spectrum, we have continued industrial unrest in second level education. The acceptance of the TUI and the rejection of the ASTI of the Junior Cycle Reform proposals in recent ballots is the worst case scenario for our schools with dual-union membership. The Junior Cycle for Teacher (JCT) team is rolling out its programme of CPD in the ETB sector schools for School

Leaders, English Teachers and Whole-School CPD. The JCT Team are holding off commencing the CPD programme in Community & Comprehensive Schools and Voluntary



Ms. Eileen Salmon,
General Secretary, ACCS

Secondary Schools. It is still a 'wait and see' approach in our schools while the ASTI and the Department of Education and Skills engage in a clarification exercise. The most immediate concerns in our schools are around the teaching and assessment of the English curriculum and what next year's programme for incoming First Years will look like.

The rejection of the Lansdowne Road Agreement and the ASTI decision to 'not undertake any unpaid POR duties' will have negative repercussions in our schools. The nature and extent of the actions by the two post-primary teacher unions to the rejection of the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013 – 2018 (Lansdowne Road Agreement) is still unknown but another period of industrial unrest seems inevitable.

It is unfortunate that at a time when our economy and our education system is emerging from difficult recessionary times, we are unable to grasp the opportunities now available and move on with our vision for an innovative, relevant and robust education system for our students.

ACCS will continue to support our schools through in-service events, Information Bulletins and personal communication. We look forward to meeting our Principals and Deputy Principals in the Lyrath Estate Hotel in Kilkenny at the end of November to discuss 'Sustaining the Team'.

Workplace Relations Act 2015

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The Workplace Relations Act 2015 came into effect on 1st October 2015 with the objective of simplifying and streamlining workplace disputes procedures and bodies. It should make it less complicated for employees to bring claims and for employers to respond to them.

The National Employment Rights Authority, the Labour Relations Commission, Employment Appeals Tribunal and the Equality Tribunal will now be amalgamated into a single body called the **Workplace Relations Commission**.

- From now on all employment disputes, including unfair dismissals, discrimination claims, work time issues, pay claims and any industrial relations issues, will be referred to the newly established **Workplace Relations Commission** in the first instance.
- In cases where an individual chooses to appeal a particular decision it will be to the Labour Court.

Mediation

The Act encourages mediation and the early resolution of disputes as close to the workplace as possible and without the need for parties to have to resort to formal adjudication where possible. If the mediation is successfully concluded, it will result in a legally binding and enforceable agreement. If not, the matter can then be referred to an Adjudication Officer.

Adjudication

Disputes will be heard in private by an Adjudication Officer. Appeals of a decision made by the Adjudication Officer will be heard by the Labour Court. The Act also provides for disputes to be dealt with by written submission alone without any oral hearing if all parties agree.

Timeframes

Limitation periods for referrals of disputes are now standardised to six months, which can be extended to twelve months where 'reasonable cause' can be shown.



Compliance Measures

The Act provides that an Inspector can issue an employer with a Compliance Notice where they are satisfied that an employer has breached specified sections of employment legislation – for example, the Payment of Wages Act. An Inspector can also issue a 'fixed payment notice' requiring an employer to pay a fine (maximum of €2,000) where the Inspector reasonably believes the employer has committed an offence under the relevant legislation.

It is hoped that these reforms will be able to reduce the waiting times for hearing dates with a target of three months from the time of complaint to the hearing. It is also hoped that they will make the process less legalistic and encourage early resolution of disputes as close to the workplace as possible, which is in everyone's interest.

Recent DES Circulars since our last Newsletter

0042/2015	Implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (2011-2020)
0043/2015	HSE Post-Primary School Vaccination Programme 2015/2016
0045/2015	Travel Pass Scheme 2016
0047/2015	Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme for the Education Sector
0048/2015	Revised guidelines on access to PLC for certain participants in the asylum process for the 2015/2016 academic year
0051/2015	Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Post-Primary schools
0053/2015	Sick Leave Scheme for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post-Primary Schools
0054/2015	Sick Leave Scheme for Special Needs Assistants in Recognised Primary and Post-Primary Schools
0055/2015	Summer Works Scheme 2016/2017
0056/2015	Use of Central Procurement Arrangements put in place by the Office of Government Procurement

Cosán, the Draft National Framework for Teachers' Learning

The Teaching Council are currently running a consultation process on Cosán, the Draft National Framework for Teachers' Learning. The process is live at the moment, with a deadline of 1 December, and they are seeking teachers' engagement.

The Teaching Council are inviting teachers to provide feedback through attendance at workshops in the coming weeks. Please note the dates and venues for these sessions below.

- Monday, 2 November 7-9pm Cork Education and Support Centre
- Thursday, 12 November 7-9pm Donegal Education Centre
- Monday, 16 November 7-9pm Drumcondra Education Centre
- Tuesday, 17 November 7-9pm Dublin West Education Centre
- Monday, 23 November 7-9pm Kilkenny Education Centre
- Thursday, 26 November 7-9pm Limerick Education Centre

The workshops will be facilitated by teachers who are currently on secondment to the Teaching Council. Participants should register with their preferred education centre directly and will be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred while attending.

Alternatively, schools may wish to discuss the document as part of a staff meeting or other staff activity, or organise cluster meetings with neighbouring schools. The Teaching Council has developed a feedback form for schools, with prompts to aid staff reflection and discussion. It has also established a dedicated email address for feedback, Cosan@teachingcouncil.ie

There is also an online feedback form for individual feedback, for those who prefer that option.

Further details are available on the Teaching Council website www.teachingcouncil.ie.



ACCS Poster Design Competition *My school, My community*

ACCS (The Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools) is the national representative association and management body for the 95 post-primary Community and Comprehensive Schools nationwide.

ACCS is undergoing a redesign of its identity and as part of the creative process, invites entries to a poster design competition. The competition is open to students of all ages within the 95 post-primary Community and Comprehensive Schools nationwide.

The theme of the art competition is "My school, My community". The competition encourages the entrants to express this using their creativity and imagination using a wide variety of media. The poster design should incorporate "ACCS" and the slogan "My school, My community". After that, the entrant is free to use his or her imagination!

Schools will receive details on this exciting competition, which is being generously sponsored by Microsoft Ireland, over the coming days so ready, steady, paint!!!

Sponsored by



ACCS Convention 2016



The 34th ACCS Convention will take place on the 3rd, 4th & 5th March, 2016 in The Slieve Russell Golf & Country Club, Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan.

Dates to remember

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| 3rd December, 2015 | Nominations for Presidency and motions for Convention to be submitted. |
| 3rd January, 2016 | 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. |
| 3rd February, 2016 | Latest date for receipt of amendments to the motions. |
| 18th February, 2016 | A final agenda will be issued to Member Boards. |

News & Events from the Community & Comprehensive School Sector

St. Columba's Comprehensive School, Glenties 'My Adopted Soldier'

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St. Columba's Comprehensive School, Glenties, will feature prominently in a Nationwide Programme which will air on RTÉ1 on the 9th November and focus on a national project, My Adopted Soldier. This project has a community, county and national dimension but is based in Glenties. Gerry Moore, a teacher of History in St. Columba's Comprehensive School, Glenties, is the Director of this project.

Thirty two students adopted and carried out research on a soldier from his/her native county who died in the First World War. All this research is available to view on www.myadoptedsoldier.ie. This site is a must visit for all students of History.

The students also travelled to the Somme last summer and



were involved in a wreath laying ceremony at the "Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme". The project and trip will feature on RTÉ television on 11th November.



The project group from 'Adopt My Soldier' a national project led by St. Columba's Comprehensive School, Glenties.

The Great Irish Bake Off



A sixth year student, Natasha Dawson, of St Columba's Comprehensive School, Glenties, at age 17 is the youngest contestant in the Great Irish Bake Off to date. At the time of publishing Natasha has already made her way through the first round on the TV3 show. She has used her love of baking to support many charity events to date. We wish Natasha every success.

Natasha Dawson, St. Columba's Comprehensive School, Glenties, a contestant on the Great Irish Bake Off.

Celebrating 30 Years of St. Caimin's Community School

As part of the 30 Year celebrations of St. Caimin's Community School pupils and teachers climbed to the roof of Ireland, Carrauntoohil, Ireland's highest peak at 3,406 feet. Here we see the group proudly displaying the St. Caimin's flag at the summit around the cross which was first erected in 1976.



News & Events from the Community & Comprehensive School Sector

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20 year celebration *Ashbourne Community School*

A large group attended the 20 year celebration of Ashbourne Community School on Thursday evening, 23rd October. The celebration was organised to mark the opening of the school 20 years ago when Ashbourne CS was the only post-primary school in the area. Invited guests included the original members of APA (Ashbourne Parents Association) the group who campaigned for the school from the late 1970's. On the night the Bishop of Meath, the Reverend Michael Smith spoke about "a school which has fulfilled its potential" and reminded all present to be conscious that each has so much to contribute to the wellbeing of society. There followed a blessing of the new sports hall and a launch of a commemorative volume to mark the history of the school.



Photo shows all Deputies and Principals of Ashbourne with Chairperson Mr. Liam Murphy most longstanding member of the Board (since 1993, Bishop's trustee).

L-R: Mr. Ciaran Stewart (Deputy Principal), Ms. Patricia Fitzsimons (former Deputy Principal), Mr. Liam Murphy (Chairperson BOM), Ms. Áine O'Sullivan (Principal), Ms. Susan Duffy (Deputy Principal), Mr. Ciarán Flynn (former Principal) and Mr. Chris Purcell (former Deputy Principal).



Áine, Antoinette and Ciarán.



Saoirse Leddy (Head Girl) and Dylan Browning (Head Boy) presenting "Scéal na Scoile" - commemorative volume to Bishop Michael Smith, Trustee of the school.

Opening of Celbridge Community School

Celbridge Community School opened its doors to its first group of 1st Year students on Monday 31st August, 2015. Principal, Gerard O'Leary welcomed all to this historic event. He paid particular attention to the most important guests, the new students. He called on them to set the standard for all future generations of students. Antoinette Nic Gearailt, President of ACCS, echoed this message encouraging all students present to make the most of all the opportunities that will be available to them. Antoinette committed the support of all in ACCS for this the newest Community School and wished everyone involved every success.



Front L-R: Giordano Marsella, Beatrice Cornea & Adam Murray, students of Celbridge Community School.

Back L-R: Amy Mulvihill, Chairperson BOM, Patricia O'Brien, Kildare Wicklow ETB, Cllr Brendan Weld, Paul Rowe, CEO Educate Together, Gerard O'Leary, Principal Celbridge Community School, Sean Ashe, CEO Kildare Wicklow ETB, Antoinette Nic Gearailt, President ACCS.

News & Events from the Community & Comprehensive School Sector

An Cheathrú Rua, oscailte ag reált peile na Gaillimhe



Uachtarán Cumann Scoileanna Pobail is Cuimsitheacha, Antoinette Nic Gearailt, ag cur crainn agus í á thimpeallú ag Coiste Tuismitheoirí Scoil Chuimsitheach Chiaráin, An Cheathrú Rua, ag oscailt oifigiúil pháirc spóirt nua na scoile. Pic: Seán Ó Mainnín.

Tháinig slua mór go dtí oscailt oifigiúil páirc spóirt nua de chuid Scoil Chuimsitheach Chiaráin, An Cheathrú Rua, le déanaí. Ba é captaen foireann sinsear na Gaillimhe, Pól Ó Conaire, a ghearr an ribín. Níos luaithe sa lá, ardaíodh bratach na hÉireann a bhronn an tUachtarán ar an scoil.

Top literary award for Gorey Community School

A teacher at Gorey Community School has been announced as the winner of the RTÉ Radio 1 Francis MacManus Short Story Competition. Eleanor O'Reilly, who teaches English and classical studies, won the €3,000 prize for her short story 'Stoppin' the Silence.' All in ACCS congratulate Ms. O'Reilly on such a significant award.



Eleanor O'Reilly.

Digital Strategy for Schools Scoil Mhuire, Clane



Harry McCann, a 5th Year student of Scoil Mhuire, Clane, who addressed the gathering at the recent launch of the Digital Strategy for Schools hosted by Minister Jan O'Sullivan TD.

Top Junior Certificate in the country 2015

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Mr. Jim Long, Principal, Douglas Community School congratulates student Cian Deasy, who was awarded 12 As, an A in each subject he sat in the Junior Certificate 2015 thus achieving the top place in the country.

The Great Loreto Bake Off

Loreto Community School, Milford



Margaret O'Connor, Principal, Loreto Community School, Blathnaid Colhoun, Loreto Education Centre, Ian Orr, Brown's Restaurant, Ben Folan, Star Baker, Loreto Community School, Alison Stoddart and Linda Morrow, both H. Ec Teachers, Loreto Community School, Milford.

Loreto Community School, Milford was the venue for the national final of 'The Great Loreto Bake Off', a new competition in its second year having being initially introduced by the Home Economics Department there last year.

The Junior winner was Lucy Daly from Loreto, Swords with Aisling Murray from Loreto Beaufort in Dublin being awarded Star Baker in that section.

The Senior section was won by Eimear Mc Loughlin representing Beaufort. The only male participant of the competition, Loreto, Milford's own Ben Folan received the Star Baker award for his divine lemon and poppy top tier and carrot cake bottom tier.