



PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION
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Newsletter Welcome



Stephen Goulding - PRESIDENT

Colleagues Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter. It is a great privilege for me to communicate with you in my role as President of the Principals and Deputy Principals' Association.

Over the past year, the Association has worked tirelessly to represent the interests of all Principals and Deputy Principals in the sector on many forums. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome new Principals & Deputy Principals appointed over the last year to the organisation. We trust the PDA will be both a network of support and advice.

Our Annual Conference in November 2018 had the theme 'A Reflective voice for Educational leaders & learners'. The speakers chosen reflected the current climate and the demands on school management. All delegates felt the quality of speakers and the networking potential made the conference most worthwhile and enjoyable. In 2019 the Annual Conference is being held by Principals and Deputy Principals from Cork ETB & Kerry ETB, at the Strand Hotel in Co. Limerick from November 13th to 15th. The organising team are in the process of arranging speakers to meet the needs of both Post Primary and Further Education. I urge all Principals & Deputy Principals to take time from your busy schedules to attend conference.

It is essential that all Principals and Deputy Principals make their voices heard. We need constant feedback from our members to ensure our National Executive is well informed in all its discussions with both the TUI and the Department of Education and Skills. PDA have worked with our union to raise issues that affect us daily in our role and in 2019 we will further develop this partnership for the mutual benefit of all in the Teachers Union of Ireland.

PDA has a number of support personnel available to members who need advice and support on any issue that may arise. I strongly encourage all members to use this facility.

Best wishes for the remainder of the school year.

Stephen Goulding
PRESIDENT

Please visit our website for updates and information at www.PDA.ie

Can't find what you're looking for? Simply email your suggestion to one of our PDA Officers.



PDA Support Personnel

Three former Principals who have each served as President of PDA have been selected by the Executive to provide advice and support to members on issues arising from their role as school leaders. They may be contacted directly for advice if required. In addition they attend meetings of the Executive in an advisory role and provide support at local and national level on matters such as the organisation of Annual Conference.

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Betty McLoughlin
Betty is a native of County Limerick, Guidance Counsellor, Author and publisher of many articles on Personal, Educational and Vocational



Guidance Counselling, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Parent, and Educationalist. Regular contributor to National and Local TV and Radio on topical educational and vocational issues. A former president of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors she has extensive experience teaching at second level. She has also worked as a Mentor and Supervisor in University of Limerick with post graduate students.

Mary Nihill
Mary was appointed Principal in St Paul's Secondary School Oughterard Galway in 1993. In 2005 she was



seconded as Assistant National Coordinator to the Leadership Development for Schools (LDS) team and coordinated programmes such as Misneach-the programme for newly appointed Principals and Forbairt—a development programme for established Principals and Deputy Principals. She is currently seconded as National Director of The Centre for School Leadership from her role as Principal of Calasanctius College Oranmore Galway where she has been Principal since 2010. Mary was elected as President of The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals in October 2014.

Anthony Kilcoyne.
Anthony was seconded to the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) in 2011 and is currently the Deputy Director for Digital Technologies.



Previous to this appointment he was the Team Leader (National Coordinator) for School Leadership from 2013-2017. He coordinates the suite of supports that are available to schools from PDST and PDST Technology in Education to embrace further the opportunities afforded by the use of digital technology.

Paddy Lavelle
Paddy Lavelle is Chief Executive of the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board. The board covers three counties of Fingal, South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown. There are 40 schools with 22,500 day students and a Further Education and

Training section that engages 28,000 learners annually. Prior to his current role he was CEO in County Waterford Vocational Education Committee from 2001. President of Chief Executive and Education Officers Association from 2012-16. Involved in leading change in the Education and Training domains in Ireland throughout career. Working with colleagues in ETBI to improve ETB functions and coherence.



Prof. Laura Lundy
Laura Lundy is Co-Director of the Centre for Children's Rights and a Professor in the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work at Queen's University, Belfast. She is co-Editor in Chief of the International Journal of Children's Rights. Her expertise is in children's right to participate in decision-making and education rights. Her 2007 paper, "Voice is not enough" is one of the most highly cited academic papers on children's rights and the model of children's participation it proposes (based on four key concepts Space, Voice, Audience and Influence) issued extensively in scholarship and practice. The 'Lundy Model' of child participation is core to the Irish National Children's Participation Strategy (2015) and has been adopted by international organisations such as the European Commission.



Dr. David Frost
David is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Herts Cam Network and an Emeritus Fellow at Wolfson College, Cambridge. As a member of the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education from 1996-2016, David devoted his research and development activity to supporting teacher leadership. Since the last 1980s he has developed strategies that enable teachers to become more effective agents of change. Over 15 years ago, David founded the Herts Cam Network which provides programmes for teachers and schools in England and, through its International Teacher Leadership initiative, works with partners to establish teacher leadership programmes in other countries. He has often collaborated with Education International and was a speaker at their recent school leadership conference in Johannesburg. He has edited books which showcase teachers' leadership: Empowering teachers as agents of change: a non-positional approach to teacher leadership (2017), Transforming education through teacher leadership (2014) and Teachers as Agents.



Dr. Paula Flynn
Dr. Paula Flynn is an Assistant Professor of Inclusive Education at DCU Institute of Education. Prior to embarking on research with students identified with emotional and behavioural difficulties in 2008 she taught English and Music at post primary level. Her research and teaching interests include: student/learner voice; inclusive education; and leadership for learning. Paula was the primary investigator on a study funded by the NCCA between 2014 and 2017, which involved a consultative process with students at post-primary level in the development of opportunities for curricular development. A significant objective of this study was to determine how to include student voice in planning such that there is a sustainable strategy and response for listening to students. Currently she is involved in a number of projects including research with colleagues from DCU that investigates 'Transition from primary to secondary school in the Dublin1 area-an.



Ger Power
Ger Power is a Senior Inspector with the Department of Education and Skills. He is currently assigned to the Inspectorate's Evaluation, Support and Research Unit (ESRU) with responsibilities in the areas of Inspection planning · inspection model development · STEM Prior to his appointment as an inspector in 2007, Ger taught Technical Graphics and Engineering in CBS Tramore County Waterford for almost ten years.

Diarmuid Mooney
Diarmuid Mooney is currently a second ed Education Officer at the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) primarily working on the development of the new junior cycle technology subjects. A graduate of the University of Limerick, Diarmuid worked as an Engineering and Design and Communication Graphics teacher in Coláiste Chathail Naofa (now Dungarvan College) in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford under the auspices of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board. While teaching here, he taught in the post primary and further education colleges and held the post of acting Director of Adult Education. In 2015, Diarmuid established the first PLC Engineering programmes in the Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board that awarded its graduates a qualification.



Subject roll out timeline...

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
2014	2016	2017	2018	2019
English	Science	Irish	Maths	Technology
	Business	Art	Home Ec.	Subjects
	Studies	French	Geography	Religion
		Wellbeing	Music	
			History	

Why Join PDA

School leadership is frequently challenging and demanding and PDA at regional and national level is there to offer you advice and support if required. We encourage you to attend regional meetings and annual National Conference. In doing so you will build valuable contacts right across the ETB sector and discover that there are common problems and issues. The opportunity to build networks and discuss and share ideas will greatly support your work in school leadership.

The National Executive is composed of representatives from all ETBs and issues of concern are considered at each Executive meeting. The national officers of PDA hold regular meetings with TUI and with other relevant bodies from time to time. This access allows PDA to bring our policies and concerns to a national stage. Not all issues are easily resolved but we have a track record over time of making considerable progress on matters that impact in a major way on Principals and Deputies throughout our sector.

Our Annual Conference held in mid November each year is the policy making forum and members have the opportunity to contribute to debates on matters of concern submitted as resolutions from each region. The



Conference Organising Committee Left to Right: Noel Kelly, Tom Hughes, Ada Broderick, Austin Fennessy, Mick Daly and Mattie Kilroy

Conference has a very strong educational and professional development focus with workshops and presentations from speakers with expertise in key areas directly related to teaching, learning and educational leadership.

Exhibitors at the conference include suppliers and agencies ranging from the education support services to providers of initial teacher education. The schedule also includes a social dimension with extensive opportunities for networking.

Attendance at all the professional development sessions at Conference

and the Conference banquet is open to Principals/ Deputy Principals who are not members of PDA.

Some short business sessions are exclusive to PDA members. Further information on attendance at Conference is available from any of the contact numbers in this newsletter.

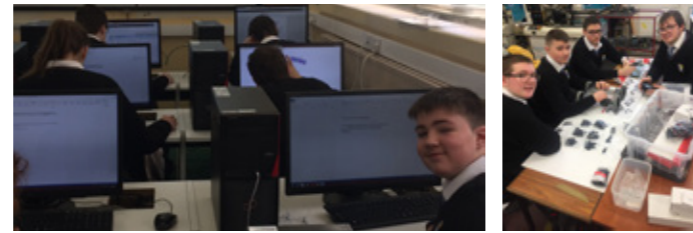
PDA offers formal and informal support to members and towards this end names and contact details of support officers are included on page 20 of this newsletter. Where necessary a support officer will travel to your region to meet with you to discuss an issue of concern and provide advice and support.

Colaiste na Ríochta Listowel-A pilot School for Leaving Certificate Computer Science

We were delighted to have been chosen as one of the forty pilot schools, the only school in Kerry, to offer Leaving Certificate Computer Science to our students. We were very eager to offer the subject to our senior cycle students as we knew it would give them a huge advantage when progressing with their education while also recognising that the transferable skills, they would gain from it, such as computational thinking and problem-solving, would also benefit their other subjects.

In the school year 2017-2018 we significantly enhanced the IT infrastructure within our school, the school was WiFi enabled, our computer room was up-graded and our students and staff gained access to Microsoft 365 accounts. We believe that these changes significantly enhanced our application to pilot the subject. Thankfully now with the necessary infrastructure in place, all the money from the pilot grant can be spent on purchasing hardware such as Micro Bits, Raspberry PI's and accessories. The online resources, CPD workshops and support that our Computer Science teacher is receiving from the PDST is excellent and very welcome. The teacher has also completed Python and Computer Science online courses that were recommended by the PDST which she thoroughly enjoyed and would recommend to others considering offering the subject.

Our 5th year Computer Science students are thoroughly enjoying the subject to date. They are especially interested and opinionated on the impact technology is having on society and the environment. The students are finding the Python terminology and learning process challenging as they are required to understand and build on existing code. The fact that our students have all completed 3 years of Digital Literacy at Junior Cycle has assisted them in their understanding and application of Computer Science as a Leaving Certificate subject. Currently the students are working on a project where they are creating a home security system using Micro Bits. This project involves coding the Micro Bits using Python as well as submitting a detailed report. They are enjoying the process especially creating and coding the prototypes using the Micro Bits. We are very much looking forward to seeing the fruits of their labour, maybe they can save us all a fortune!!



Seamus Lahart President of TUI



Dear Members of the PDA
It is great to see the continuing relationship between you, the PDA, who represent the managerial tier within our schools and centres and the TUI. Your

constant engagement and commitment to the values of our trade union assists all of us as members.

Thanks to all of you who took part in our recent survey on the extent and effects of the recruitment and retention crisis within our schools. The data gained by your responses gave a much-needed insight into the difficulties you as school managers are facing every day as you continue to ensure fully qualified teachers teach all classes. The media response to the survey was significant in highlighting the issue of teacher supply. It is vital that you the school managers and TUI continue to work together to ensure that the difficulties in attracting and recruiting graduates to teaching are addressed.

In 2016 when TUI negotiated the Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation pertaining specifically to junior cycle reform, we were conscious of restricting the additional workload that would fall on teachers and school managers. The TUI

has a clear agreement with the Department that the inputting of information/ detail/ comments regarding Other Areas of Learning (OALs) will eventually become the responsibility of the relevant teachers but not until enhanced technology to support data entry for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) production is in place. The technology required for this process is not yet in place; it is still under development. As such, the TUI instructed all of its members not to input the necessary information for completion of the JCPA. Since then the TUI has through discussions with the DES negotiated an interim arrangement whereby a fee is provided which enables a member of staff possibly a part-time member to complete the JCPA. We remain cognisant and reactive to all issues as they arise and will raise all matters directly through the JC Implementation Committee.

We continue to lobby vigorously for the full restoration of the middle management posts of responsibility to your schools because we are more than aware of the difficulties you are facing trying to run schools on a daily basis. In 2009 approximately one in every two teachers could expect to have a promotional post during their career. Regrettably today that figure is one in four, and this is having a serious effect on the entire school community.

A review of senior cycle is now underway. It is vital that all of us in TUI monitor and publicly comment so that realistic and workable options are discussed and debated. Talk of continuous assessment, individual project work, short courses, freedom of choice within the curriculum etc. etc. is all wonderful; it will also require extra resources. As you well know, school is already a very busy place, and the imposition of extra workload and bureaucracy as a result of an alternative style of senior cycle could not work.

The need for schools to offer PME students placement opportunities is growing. This, coupled with the demands of the Droichead programme for new entrant teachers is placing a considerable burden on the school community. TUI has always been active to demand that such programmes are resourced properly both from the perspective of current staff and prospective members.

Finally, I want to thank the officers of the PDA for the work they do on behalf of their members and for the Teachers' Union of Ireland. We look forward to continuing our close cooperation with the PDA and its membership.

Seamus Lahart,
President
Teachers' Union of Ireland



ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF P.D.A



Mr. Stephen Goulding
ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018
Johnstown Estate Hotel
AREA 1 & 7

(Dublin & Dún Laoighaire PDA)

Introduction

This year's conference was organised by Dublin & Dún Laoighaire branch of the PDA. The central theme of this year's speech will be Principal & Deputy Principal workload. All the areas I will cover in today's speech, Junior cycle rollout, Droichead, new inspection models, school building capacity, administration shortages, the implications of GDPR & the Children first legislation have led to an ever-increasing workload on us all. Principals & Deputy Principals complain that they are being snowed under with paperwork and an endless number of competing demands. The Minister has recognised this initiative overload. Nonetheless, recognising the problem is only the first step in addressing it and a solution will require the support of the TUI as our trade union and we trust that the Union will address the concerns I will set out today.

There has been a rapid increase in the volume of directives and circulars from the Department of Education in recent years, much of which places school leadership in danger of being strangled by red tape. The tasks that we face as Principals and Deputies are now so wide-ranging that we are not in a position to address all of them as comprehensively as we would wish – let alone as comprehensively as the Department might wish. The amount of paper that floats onto our desk every day is extraordinary. There are layers after layers of new initiatives, but the ability to implement them is continuously compromised. To be truly engaged as reflective practitioners we need time to embed these initiatives and ensure that the

change management, that has become such a valued measure of progress, has long term resonance.

Budget 2019

There were some welcome developments in Budget 2019 but overall again it failed to address how our education system is funded in comparison to our European Neighbours. We have made no significant dent in reversing a decade of draconian cuts. The €196 million increase in capital spending for new school buildings and the repair and refurbishment of our existing schools is long overdue and now badly needed but again it's not enough.

The increase of 5% to the capitation grant is only an incremental step in reversing a decline of over 10% during the recession. Increased capitation is essential to the day-to-day running of our schools and in delivering education to a high standard however it has not kept pace with the spiralling costs of essential. This step however makes no principal or deputy principals day to day juggling of budget significantly easier. Inadequate funding impacts permeates all aspects of our school community – from light & heat, Repairs and maintenance to essential equipment, field trips and other activities. DEIS schools in particular are finding it difficult to balance books as parent contributions to school book schemes, day to day expenses are lower. The additional 1300 teaching posts across the education system are welcome but is nothing more than keeping pace with the continuing rise in student numbers. The increase to Back to School allowance of €25 is a support for parents. However, the best usage of this would be to bolster schools' capacity to reduce costs directly on parents. The recruitment of an additional 10 psychologists to the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), while welcome, will not meet the additional demands generated by an increasingly challenging societal environment for students. The PDA, through the Teachers Union of Ireland, calls for increased lobbying of the DES to significantly increase the percentage of GDP spent on our education system. To sustain progress ringfencing investment over the next decade is the only way we can match the departments vision to be the best education system in Europe.

New Junior Cycle

This September marked the introduction of the new Junior Cycle specifications for Mathematics, Home Economics, History, Music and Geography, as part of the Framework for Junior Cycle. For school leaders this is the equivalent of a snow-ball picking up speed on its way down a hill – the pace and size of the implementation is ever-increasing while, conversely and perversely, the support for implementation is reducing.

Reduction of management hours

Colleagues we are now dealing with clashing CBAs; a current lack of exemplars for CBA 2 in Business; and our teachers of English are questioning the worth/merit of the Assessment Task? The introduction of the first of the common level papers this year is also causing concern as we deal directly with parents within this implementation phase. The concerns that parents are expressing, which are coming directly to schools rather than JCT, includes a lack of distinctions in JC English, and the broad banding of merit which is challenging our ambitious students who wish to distinguish themselves within this band.

Included in the challenges for Principals and Deputies are the administrative hassles, exacerbated by the Department's failure to engage successfully with Fórsa in relation to the administration grant to ensure that the inputting of JCPA data is not simply added to the role of leadership in schools.

Also, the challenge for principals and deputies in releasing teachers for JCT CPD and the amount of staff actually on secondment to JCT is causing significant difficulty for school leadership.

We must also acknowledge that some schools are not allowing house exams to be replaced by CBAs. From a managerial level, we are under pressure from both parents and, in many cases, teachers to retain house examinations and it is our onerous responsibility to implement the relevant circulars and ensure the cancellation of these examinations as CBAs are introduced. However, it is fair to say that not every individual stakeholder immediately welcomes or takes on board the intentions outlined in

the Circulars providing for rationalisation of school based assessments and examinations. The PDA calls on the JCT to issue information booklets for parents that would assist us in clarifying such implementation concerns for these cohorts and redirecting the frustration of parents and concerned teachers to the JCT and Department, where it belongs. It simply undermines the rationale of entire system if we don't acknowledge the worth of the CBAs both from the teachers' perspective, and from a parent perspective.

Posts of Responsibility

It remains both disappointing, and frustrating, that the lifting of the moratorium on the Posts of responsibility required to properly resource the management of our schools remains as limited as it does. The Minister has accepted the initiative overload and, in the context of the variety of both new initiatives and new responsibilities for leadership in schools, a continuing limiting of resources, with no apparent limit on requirements and initiatives is untenable. The dam will burst, and the consequences could be dire. In this regard, I am publicly stating, on behalf of the PDA nationally, that we need not just a restoration of Posts of Responsibility, but an expansion of the management structures in schools to match the administrative and initiative burdens coming from the Department. Otherwise we will, as responsible managers, have to continue to prioritise and we will seek relevant directives from our Union to suppress new initiatives until such time as the required resources are put in place.

Growing student numbers will pose significant challenges to the education system. Already, schools regularly advertise posts that often fail to attract suitably qualified applicants, and in some cases, there may not be any applications at all for posts in particular subject areas.

With student numbers at second level projected to grow from 364,000 to over 400,000 between 2018 and 2024, around 2,000 additional teachers will be needed to maintain the current pupil-teacher ratio.

However, leaving aside the recruitment drive required as a result of these demographic changes, schools are already experiencing severe difficulties in the recruitment and retention of teachers across the full breadth of subjects.

There has been a fall of over 50% in the numbers applying for places on the PME

postgraduate teacher education courses between 2011 and 2018.

There is no doubt that teacher recruitment problems inflict severe damage on the education system. Students miss out on subject choices and experience a fractured service as a result of having several different teachers in particular subject areas. In an effort to maintain provision, students taking a subject at different levels or students from different year groups are sometimes taught together in the same class periods.

There can be no greater investment in our education system than making the teaching profession attractive to the best and brightest graduates now and in the years ahead. Currently, a teacher trains for six years, incurring significant debt and commencing employment at an average age of 26, only to be paid at a different rate for doing the same job as an existing colleague. Continuation of this regime will undoubtedly deter graduates from pursuing the profession, to the detriment of teaching and to the benefit of other forms of employment.

Progress has been made on reversing the cuts to pay of new and recent entrants to the profession, most recently with the removal of two points from salary scale which will allow recent entrants to progress up the scale more quickly.

However, a roadmap and timeframe that outlines the resolution of this process is urgently required if the education system is not to lose out to other jurisdictions and other forms of employment.

School leadership The PDA acknowledges the positive role both the Misneach, Tainaiste and Forbairt programmes have had for our members. The PDA recognises the importance of ongoing supports and development opportunities for school leaders recently announced. The Minister's commitment to invest further in school leadership over the coming school year, with the expansion of the School Excellence Fund and an expansion of the coaching service available to school leaders, is very welcome. Schools will shortly be invited to apply to form part of a cluster to work together on innovative projects to enhance their schools in a range of important areas over the next 2 years. There will be scope for up to 42 clusters nationwide in the initial phase with each cluster containing between a minimum of three and a maximum of six schools. Priority will be given to applicant

clusters containing at least one DEIS school.

In addition, the extension of funding to extend the coaching service currently available to school principals, to the deputy and assistant principals on their leadership teams is long overdue and necessary. The service to date has been one to one coaching for Principals only. DEIS schools will be prioritised for the extension of the coaching service to incorporate team coaching for the Principal and their leadership team, with up to four sessions being offered to 100 DEIS schools in the first instance. These measures are in addition to the other supports recently introduced through the Centre for School Leadership including mentoring and a new postgraduate diploma in school leadership.

One of the key functions in our role is that of financial management, yet the level of training in this area leaves significant room for improvement. A comprehensive programme of financial training for new and existing Principals must be implemented in all sectors. On your behalf, the PDA, with the assistance of the assigned TUI Official, has engaged with ETBI to design such a programme.

New inspection Model

The Inspectorate is developing a new evaluation model entitled the Evaluation of Provision for Students with Additional and Special Educational Needs in Post Primary Schools (SEN-PP). The main reason for this development is to ensure consistency and coherence between the evaluation of provision for students with additional and special educational needs and the resource allocation model for schools which was introduced in September 2017. The SEN-PP model will also reflect the publication of Looking at Our School 2016: A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools, which was published by the Department in September 2016.

While this is welcome, the PDA have a few concerns. The first cycle of resource allocation under this model has yet to be completed. Principals & Deputy Principals are only beginning to get to grips with how resources are allocated on the ground. Most Principals & Deputy Principals do not come from an SEN background and in many cases our SEN teachers are non-post holders. I would strongly encourage the Inspectorate to provide advisory sessions to all schools and

Motions carried at Conference 2018

- The PDA requests that the TUI discuss with the DES the inputting of CBAs onto PPOD to ensure 'no additional work' for our members in light of the fact that Impact have instructed their members not to do this work.
- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with the DES/NCSE to put in place a broad and comprehensive range of training/CPD for SNAs, and to issue clear instructions on the role of SNAs in June.
- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with the DES to take action in relation to the recognition of teachers teaching experience abroad from both a pay scale and for reckoning of service in Post of Responsibility interviews point of view when they return.
- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with the DES to take measures to address the issue of Teacher supply for both full time and substitute positions.
- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with the ETBi/DES to put in place comprehensive training for Principals & Deputy Principals in the area of financial management.
- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with DES and the Inspectorate to ensure advisory visits are made to all schools which outlines the success criteria in advance of the rollout of the new SEN Inspection model.
- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with the DES to immediately make an allocation available to cover substitution for teachers going on CPD from PLC Colleges.
- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with the DES to immediately make

funding available to PLC Colleges for emergency works, summer works schemes and capital budgets.

- The broad range of initiatives and associated additional work introduced into schools is having a grave impact on the wellbeing of school leaders. In this context, the PDA requests that the TUI engage with the DES to provide/restore additional PORs to alleviate the huge burden currently facing school leaders.
- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with the DES to reinstate the 'Secretary to the Board of Management allowance' to all Principals and to positively review the ratio of remuneration of Principals and Deputy Principals allowance to each other in the range of school sizes. At a minimum, regardless of school size, a Deputy Principal should never be paid a smaller allowance than an AP1 post holder.
- The PDA welcomes the restoration of posts, however, in light of the huge amount of issues facing DEIS schools

on a daily basis, an AP1 post holder teaching 18 hours a week, is not in a position to give these issues the time required. Therefore, the PDA requests the TUI to engage with the Department of Education as a matter of urgency to sanction a second Deputy Principal for all DEIS schools regardless of school size.

- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with the DES to include SNAs as staff when calculating the Principal and Deputy Principal Allowances.
- The PDA requests that the TUI engage with the DES to review the necessity for all redacted details of Child Protection incidents be presented to the Board of Management.
- The PDA requests that the TUI lobby the Government to introduce relevant legislation to allow schools to continue to communicate with the parents of all students for the full duration of their post primary education.



The Teaching Council is the statutory professional standards body for teaching, and we are charged in law with promoting and regulating the teaching profession in Ireland.

What does this mean?

All teachers have had that moment where we said for the first time – I want to be a teacher. The Council is responsible for each of the steps a person goes through after that point to become and remain a teacher.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) – Induction – Teachers' learning / CPD

We advise the Minister for Education and Skills on the standards of entry for programmes of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) which prepare teachers to enter the profession. We also review, and accredit as appropriate, all programmes of ITE. We administer vetting for all registered teachers. We set the standards for the induction of Newly Qualified Teachers, as experienced in the Droichead programme. We set the standards for teachers' learning (CPD), as set out in Cosán, the first national framework for teachers' learning. We oversee complaints on serious matters against registered teachers through the Fitness to Teach process.

Research

We promote engagement with and in research by all teachers through our CROÍ Research Series (Collaboration and Research for Ongoing Innovation). As part of this series, we have a large library of webinars which can be accessed free of charge by any teacher or school for use at a discussion group / staff meeting or as part of a research project.

FÉILTE

Each year we host the largest cross-sectoral gathering of teachers in Ireland to mark World Teachers' Day – FÉILTE – the Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching Excellence. This event celebrates and acknowledges all the great innovation led by teachers and shares it with a wide audience of teachers, parents and students. This year it will take place on 27 and 28 September in NUI Galway.

Fully Qualified, Registered Teaching Profession

The commencement of Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act in January 2014 marked the achievement of a fully qualified, registered teaching profession. The quality of our education system is held in high regard both nationally and internationally.

We have all worked hard to secure this, and we continue to work hard to maintain it. It reflects the deeply rooted regard we have for education as a catalyst for social and economic progress, as well as an important endeavour in its own right.

Teacher Supply

In our current Strategic Plan, one of our priority goals is the matter of teacher supply. We are responsible in the Teaching Council Act for advising the Minister on this matter. Our wider remit to promote and regulate the profession means that we have a significant interest in this area. We are keen to work with the Department of Education and Skills, as well as all stakeholders, in ensuring that we have a sufficient supply of teachers to meet the identified needs of the system.

We are aware from our Consultative Forum on Teacher Supply, as well as ongoing engagement with stakeholders, of the significant challenges that schools are facing in this space. Both primary and post-primary are experiencing difficulties in the area of substitution. Post-primary has the further challenge of meeting the needs of an additional 100,000 pupils who will enter their sector up to 2025.

In March 2018 the Department of Education and Skills established a Teaching Supply Steering Group to consider and address emerging issues in relation to teacher supply. The Department's Action Plan on teacher supply was published by the Minister of Education and Skills in November 2018.

As part of the agreed actions, the Department, in partnership with the Teaching Council, is engaged in a consultation process with key stakeholders on the action plan. The purpose of the consultations is to ensure that all stakeholders are kept aware of the measures being considered and implemented and to facilitate their input and feedback.

A Consultative Forum on Teacher Supply was held with a range of stakeholders in early November in Dublin. There have also been five focus group meetings on teacher supply held with principals, teachers and parents, the first in Cork and most recently in Galway, Dublin, Kilkenny and Letterkenny. Feedback from these focus groups has been honest, positive and constructive. Attendees have provided plenty of ideas and food for thought to both the Department and the Council. We would like to thank them all for giving of their time to engage with us on this priority issue.

One of the most pressing issues for focus group attendees is substitution and a number of ideas have been put forward for consideration as practical solutions. All of these ideas and feedback on the action plan will be fed to the Steering Group.

This issue of teacher supply will not be resolved overnight. We will need this level of engagement by all stakeholders over the next few years. We in the Council look forward to working closely with teachers, principals, parents, students, the Department and all stakeholders in ensuring that we have a sufficient supply of teachers to meet the identified needs of the system.



PDA website

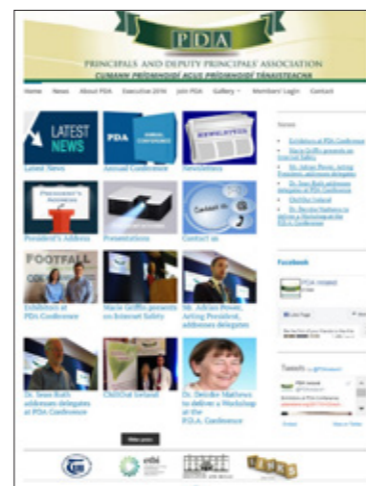
Please visit our website for updates and information at

www.PDA.ie

Can't find what you're looking for?

Simply email your suggestion to one of our PDA Officers

(Contact details for the officers are on the front page of this newsletter)



delay until September 2019 the full rollout. It would be a benefit to schools having this opportunity to review and seek advice about decisions made.

The Department has also developed a range of oversight measures to monitor schools' compliance with their obligations under the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017. The Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection (CPSI) model is one element of these oversight measures. The CPSI model will monitor the extent to which the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2017) are implemented in schools. PDA would welcome further information for schools on what exactly is involved and what exactly this inspection entails and detailed information on the protocol for an inspection.

School Buildings

The PDA believes that one of the most pressing challenges for education policy at present is the need to improve the quality of school accommodation – and that is without even addressing the Western Buildings crisis that some of our members are barely coping with at this point. In this regard, and in light of being hosted by the Dublin Dún Laoghaire branch, on your behalf delegates, I wish to offer a word of support to our colleagues in Ardgillan Community College. I would mention also particular difficulties for colleagues arising from the collapse of Sammon construction with part completed extensions posing appalling challenges for those involved.

Aside, entirely from this crisis, many schools do not have access to sufficient (or in some cases any) PE hall, science laboratories, home economics kitchens, woodwork/ engineering rooms etc. This has become an urgent issue with the revised Junior Cycle rolling out at such a pace. Its emphasis on experiential learning requires adequate facilities for such learning to take place. Recent, and upcoming, changes in Senior Cycle will also create a buildings facilities issue. For example, new exam subjects such as Computer Science and PE have been warmly welcomed by the PDA. However, it is important that appropriately resourced rooms be available for those subjects to reach their potential. At present some schools are struggling to provide any room, never mind an appropriately resourced one. This also applies to curricular programmes

such as LCA, LCVP and Transition Year. Each of those programmes requires students to have access to rooms which facilitate group activities. Sports halls and canteen facilities should be available by default in all new builds irrespective of size and the Summer Works Scheme should be extended with a ring-fenced budget to retro fit schools with gym and eating facilities (hot kitchen etc). School principals have highlighted over-crowded classrooms; inadequate number of science laboratories; lack of rooms for resource teaching and other forms of personalised learning support & non-existent social and circulating space for students. These ongoing stresses on school accommodation have frequently resulted in school libraries assembly hall/social spaces being converted to classrooms.

In relation to ICT in particular, the PDA notes the current debate on mobile ICT devices and the DES Digital Strategy. However, there is an issue which does arise in relation to buildings and ICT. It is important that an adequately resourced system of hardware, software and ICT infrastructure be provided in all school buildings. In relation to hardware, tablets have their uses but are often not suitable for quality project work as required for Junior Cycle. Furthermore, the ICT grant issuing each year, while very welcome, is barely enough to renew existing outdated and worn out hardware.

Further Education (FE)

The FE sector often has very particular needs both due to the increased specialisation for the programmes provided, the numbers of students present and the older age profile of those students. It is vital that adequate funding is required for FE capital projects. This need for capital investment is as acute in PLC Colleges as it is in our secondary schools and SOLAS must also recognise this fact.

The PDA wishes to join with the TUI in condemning SOLAS's ongoing failure to recognise the voice of the managers and practitioners by failing to appoint TUI nominees to the board of SOLAS and, in particular, the Programme Implementation Advisory Group which has arisen from the PLC review.

We understand that there is a requirement, a social responsibility, to develop the provision within PLC in line with Labour Market and Societal demands. Nonetheless, SOLAS

consistently refuses to recognise that our input will be required to introduce and manage appropriate change. In the absence of proper consultation, industrial dis-harmony is inevitable.

Let us, for one minute, look at what SOLAS believe is appropriate management. A review is announced; a coalition of certain representative bodies is formed; a review absent of sincere consultation is undertaken and a comprehensive report issues that demonstrates little understanding of our role as key stakeholders. Following the report, yet another coalition is formed to pay lip-service to consultation and we are expected to simply await implementation – on top of us. In this regard, the PDA is seeking the intervention of the TUI to secure a real and respectful engagement between the PDA's PLC Principals and Deputies and SOLAS. Our voices must be heard.

Conclusion

In conclusion I would like to say that it has been an honour and a privilege for me to serve as President to this association over the past two years. I have been well supported by a very hard-working National Executive and I would like to thank them for the very dedicated way they have represented your concerns at national level. I would like to pay tribute to the Officer Board, Past President Brian O Maoilchiaráin, Vice-President Adrian Power, Secretary Roger Gregan and Treasurer Michael Murphy for their availability, insight, hard work and support at all times. We are very fortunate to have the expertise of a number of past presidents on the Executive in an advisory capacity – Tom Hughes, Mick Daly and Mattie Kilroy, who continue to give excellent service to this organisation. I would like to thank all TUI Head Office staff for their generous help and support and availability for meetings especially the President – Seamus Lahart, General Secretary – John McGabhann, our Liaison Officer Liz Farrell and Colm Kelly, our assigned official.

I would like to thank the Conference Organising Committee for their choice of venue, choice of guest speakers, making all the necessary arrangements in addition to a full work schedule in their schools and colleges. I would like to thank our guest speakers for their informing and thought-provoking presentations – Míle Buíochas



Adrian Power, Minister Joe McHugh & Seamus Lahart



Betty McLaughlin, Minister Joe McHugh, Maire Ni Bhroite & Austin Fennessy



Minister Joe McHugh & Dr. David Frost



Roger Geaghan, Adrian Power, Minister Joe McHugh, Ashley Whelan & Michael Murphy



Front Row: Michael Lenihan, Noel Coleran & Jack Flynn
Clare Wallace, M O Connor, Minister Joe McHugh, Clodagh Kelly, Mathew carr & Denis Quinn



Caroline Toole, Minister Joe McHugh & Mary Cullen



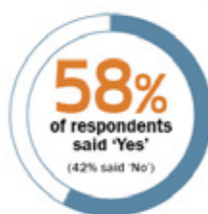
TUI PDA Teacher Recruitment and Retention survey

November/December 2018

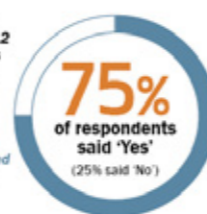
Q Has your school experienced teacher recruitment difficulties over the last twelve months?



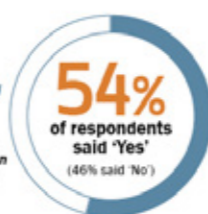
Q Has your school experienced teacher retention difficulties over the last twelve months?



Q In the past 12 months, has there been a situation where no teacher applied for an advertised post in your school?



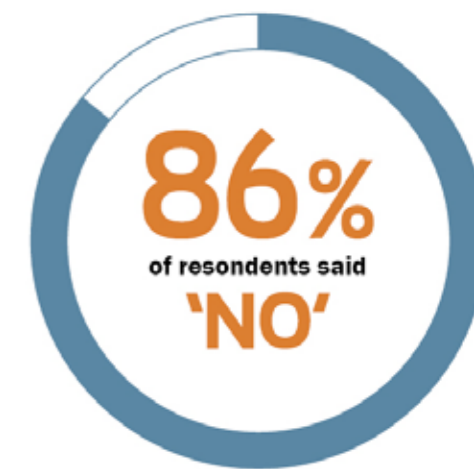
Q Does your school currently have unfilled vacancies due to recruitment and retention difficulties?



TUI PDA Teacher Recruitment and Retention survey

November/December 2018

Q Do you believe that the Department of Education and Skills appreciates the extent of teacher recruitment and retention difficulties being experienced by schools?



Do you agree with the following statement?:

'Teacher recruitment and retention difficulties have had a negative effect on the service offered to students in my school.'

91% of respondents agreed with the statement

Do you agree with the following statement: 'My school has been unable to offer some subjects as a result of teacher recruitment and retention issues.'

37% of respondents agreed with the statement

Do you agree with the following statement: 'Some subjects in my school are being taught by teachers not qualified in the subject as a result of teacher recruitment and retention difficulties.'

66% of respondents agreed with the statement

Do you agree with the following statement: 'As a result of teacher recruitment and retention issues, my school groups students from different year groups in the same class.'

18% of respondents agreed with the statement

Do you believe that the Department of Education and Skills appreciates the extent of teacher recruitment and retention difficulties being experienced by schools?

86% of respondents said 'No'

**Respondents ranked 'More attractive options for new graduates in other employments', 'Discriminatory pay rates' and 'Unavailability of contracts of full hours on appointment' as the top three causes of teacher recruitment and retention difficulties.

In addition, respondents outlined some additional factors, a selection of which are set out below:

Increasing workload of teachers. The length of time it takes to become qualified and the expense of it.

Dublin is an additional disadvantage. We have lost a few teachers to transfers to other counties for a better living standard. Geographically, we are rural school 25 minutes from the nearest large town so the length of time spent travelling to our school's isolated location may deter potential teachers from applying for teaching posts in our school.

Remote location and teaching through the medium of Irish allowance for new teachers being removed. Teachers wanting to travel and availability of teaching jobs outside the country. We are a Gaeltacht school and teachers tend not to apply due to language constraints. More and more, we hire people without Irish to ensure that we have teachers!

Primary reason in my experience is salary, if graduates were paid more, the

profession would attract the best graduates. Secondly, clear progression and promotion opportunities would attract graduates. Lower pay for new entrants is simply an extension of the reasons I have mentioned. Another factor is the perceived difficulty working in a DEIS school. Attraction of teaching abroad to save for a deposit on a house.

In the greater Dublin area a lot of choice for teachers of key subjects. They can choose where they work. Lack of promotional posts if only starting out. Very few graduates because of the two-year PME seems to be what is putting off most from pursuing a teaching qualification. Also the cost of living in Dublin a huge factor for Dublin schools.

TUI PDA Teacher Recruitment and Retention survey

November/December 2018

Q What do you think is the primary cause of teacher recruitment and retention difficulties?

TOP THREE RESPONSES



TUI PDA Survey findings

The online survey was completed in late November/early December 2018 by 150 second level Principals and Deputy Principals who are members of the Principals and Deputy Principals' Association (PDA) of the Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI). Survey highlights teacher recruitment and retention crisis in second level schools (Full survey findings at end of statement) A new survey of second level principals and deputy principals confirms a widespread crisis in the recruitment and retention of teachers.

TUI PDA Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey
November/December 2018



In the survey:

- 99% of respondents identified their school as experiencing teacher recruitment difficulties while 58% identified their school as experiencing teacher retention difficulties in the previous twelve months
- 75% of respondents said there had been a situation where there were no applications for a position in the previous twelve months, while 54% said their school had unfilled vacancies
- 91% believe that recruitment and retention difficulties have impacted negatively on the service to students
- Irish, Maths, French, Home Economics, Spanish and Physics were among the subject areas which in which the most severe recruitment/retention difficulties were experienced

Speaking today, TUI President Seamus Lahart said:

'As a result of the pay discrimination inflicted on those who commenced employment after 2011, the teaching profession can no longer compete with employment options in the private sector.

These alarming findings outline the clear damage that has been inflicted on the profession and the education system, with schools experiencing severe difficulties in both the recruitment and retention of teachers. The findings are consistent with the fall of over 50 percent in the numbers

applying for places on the Professional Master of Education (PME) postgraduate teacher education courses between 2011 and 2018.

Progress has been made on reversing the cuts to pay of new and recent entrants to the profession. However, there can be no such thing as partial equality. With changing demographics requiring an additional 2,000 second level teachers in the system in the next six years, these problems will greatly worsen unless the right actions are taken. An ending of this blatant discrimination is required if the education system is not to continue lose out to other jurisdictions and other forms of employment.'

PDA President Stephen Goulding said: 'We remain completely unimpressed by the piecemeal, 'sticking plaster' measures so far put forward as solutions to this crisis by the Department of Education and Skills. A teacher trains for six years, incurring significant debt and commencing employment at an average age of 26, only to be paid at a different rate for doing the same job as an existing colleague. Continuation of this regime will undoubtedly deter graduates from pursuing the profession, to the detriment of teaching and to the benefit of other forms of employment.

There is no doubt that teacher recruitment and retention problems inflict severe damage on the education system. Students miss out on subject choices and experience a fractured service as a result of having several different teachers in particular subject areas.

There can be no greater investment in our education system than making the teaching profession attractive to the best and brightest graduates now and in the years ahead.'

What remains to be achieved in campaign for pay equality?

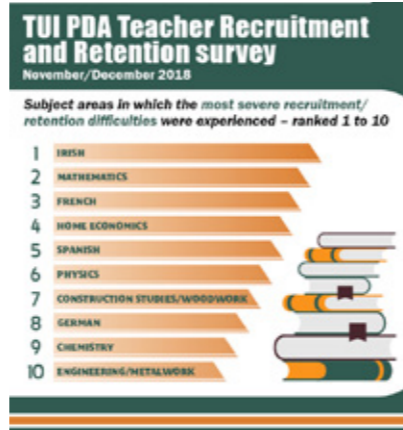
- Elimination of the remaining differences in the early points of scale
- Restoration of the HDip/PME allowance (formerly payable to holders of the Professional Master of Education (PME) qualification
- Restoration of commencement on point 3 of scale in recognition of six-year (primary degree and PME) training period

Has your school experienced teacher recruitment difficulties over the last twelve months?

99% of respondents said 'Yes', 1% of respondents said 'No'.

Has your school experienced teacher retention difficulties over the last twelve months?

58% of respondents said 'Yes', 42% of respondents said 'No'.



Subject areas in which most severe recruitment/retention difficulties were experienced – ranked from 1 to 10.

1. Irish
2. Mathematics
3. French
4. Home Economics
5. Spanish
6. Physics
7. Construction Studies/Woodwork
8. German
9. Chemistry
10. Engineering/Metalwork

In the past twelve months, has there been a situation where no teacher applied for an advertised teaching post in your school?
75% of respondents said 'Yes', 25% said 'No'.

Does your school currently have unfilled vacancies due to recruitment and retention difficulties?
54% of respondents said 'Yes', 46% said 'No'.

What do you think is the primary cause of teacher recruitment and retention difficulties? (Respondents were asked to rank from five choices – results set out below)

1. More attractive options for new graduates in other employments
2. Discriminatory pay rates affecting new and recent entrants to teaching
3. The unavailability of contracts of full hours upon appointment
4. A specific factor not listed (Some examples set out at end of the findings) **
5. Accommodation costs in the vicinity of the school



Sandra O'Toole, Minister Joe McHugh, Adrian Power, Denise Lennon Hennessy & Jay Murphy



Marie Lee & Anne Marie Egan



John MacGabhann, Minister Joe McHugh, Seamus Lahart, Colm Kelly, Michael Gillespie & David Duffy



Joe Horta, Anne Marie Egan, Minister Joe McHugh, Jim O'Sullivan & Marie Lee



Paul Murphy, Minister Joe McHugh, Ger O'Sullivan, Denis Healy & Jim O'Sullivan



David Ruddy, Kieran Golden, Minister Joe McHugh & Pádraig Kirk



Ruairi O'Conneide, Iseult Glynn, Minister Joe McHugh, Jennifer Barry & Cathal Fitzgerald



Paddy lavelle, Prof. Laura Lundy, Stephen Goulding, Mary Nihill & Anthony Kilcoyne



Caroline Toole, Kathy Jones, Sandra Irwan & Pádraig Conaty



Minister Joe McHugh makes his address



Seamus Lahart & Paddy Lavelle



Conference in session



Clodagh Kelly, Minister Joe McHugh & Clare Wallace



Colin Manning & Paul Murphy



John Mac Gabhann, Minister Joe McHugh, Seamus Lahart & Adrian Power



Ger O'Sullivan & Mary Nihill



Adrian Power, Yvonne Keating & Clive Byrne



Michael Murphy & Frank Colohan



Noel Kelly, Adrian Power, Austin Fennessy, Minister Joe McHugh & Seamus Lahart



Clodagh Kelly & Clare Wallace



Noel Kelly



Mairin Ni Cheileachair

'Leaders contribute to good or bad cultures through their willingness to self-reflect'. As I see it one can manage a school and do so quite successfully but without reflection you cannot lead it. Harris also provides an admirable summation of the principal's role. 'Leadership is not a job, it's a privilege. Through our leadership we influence others to the best they can be. It is tough, demanding and emotional work but nothing changes without leadership and nothing improves.'

Biographical Note

Brian Fleming is a retired teacher. He spent twenty-five years of his career as Principal of Collinstown Park Community College in Clondalkin. He also served on the Boards of various schools, as a member of a Vocational Education Committee, as a member of the State Examinations Commission and on various representative educational bodies at national level. In retirement he completed a course of doctoral studies at the School of Education in UCD. The focus of his dissertation was educational disadvantage. Currently he is working as an independent researcher and engaged on a pro-bono basis in

educational consultancy with schools and with a number of national organisations which are tackling the issue of educational disadvantage. He contributes articles to newspapers, journals, and websites on topics relating to education, mostly regarding disadvantage and deprivation and uses social media to raise the profile of similar issues

Brian's publications include, *The Vatican Pimpernel: the wartime exploits of Monsignor Hugh O' Flaherty* (Collins Press, 2008 & 2012), *County Dublin VEC, 1930-2013: Responding to Need*, (commissioned and published by DDLETB, 2014), *Irish Education, 1922-2007, Cherishing All the Children?* (Mynchen's Field Press, 2016). His most recent book *Irish Education and Catholic Emancipation, 1791-1831: The Campaigns of Bishop Doyle and Daniel O'Connell* (Peter Lang) was published in 2017. He has also co-written (with Prof Judith Harford) a chapter entitled *Agency and Advocacy: The Key Actors behind the Free Education Initiative*. It is contained in the *Education for All? : The Legacy of Free Post-Primary Education in Ireland*, edited by Judith Harford (Peter Lang, 2018) which was launched recently by the Minister for Education.

Nessa Doyle



In May 2018, following a competitive recruitment process, I was honoured to be appointed as General Secretary of ETBI. With over 16 years' experience across the education and health sector having previously worked with Co. Wexford VEC and the HSE, I have an extensive knowledge of the broader public sector. There are many significant challenges that lie ahead in our educational system, one of the most significant is maintaining confidence in this critical period of reform and change.

The ETB sector is continuously growing, building upon the existing reputation and the role ETB schools play in local communities, catering for both parents and students alike across the country. However, I am also extremely conscious of the many changes and initiatives that have introduced in our schools in recent years, and the resultant increased workload placed on Principals and Deputy Principals.

I take the opportunity to listen to those at the forefront, and those who understand the challenges around implementation of policy most. To be aware of both the developments in schools and the concerns that you face on a day to day basis is something I place huge value and importance on. ETBI is committed to engaging with all education partners on the key issues

to ensure that the school voice remains strong and central in all policy making. The communication structures for ETBI in this regard are the Directors of Schools Forum, the Principals Network and the FET Principals Network.

Many of the issues raised through these forums and through engagement and consultation at school level have been raised by ETBI some of which include the Leadership and Management at school level, the Junior Cycle Reform Process, the DEIS Review, work on Senior Cycle and supports for our Gaelcholáistí. As part of the ETBI budget submission we emphasised the need to progress the situation regarding school support in administration, caretaking, cleaning and the continuation to seek an increase in school capitation. The aforementioned issues also align with points raised by PDA with ETBI in relation to supports at school level in implementing changes which included financial training for principals, non-pay budgets, teacher shortage, Junior Cycle Review and GDPR.

As we enter a new stage in the development of the ETB sector, I aspire to continuously support our member ETBs and I look forward to working collaboratively and effectively with stakeholders to create strategic alliances that will have a positive impact across the ETB sector and work towards reaching the potential of our sector.

A big thank you to all our conference 2018 exhibitors

ExamCraft Group	Schools	TUI Credit Union	Drink Aware
Lettertec	The School Food Company	Bottletop Media	Smartschools
Microsoft Ireland	FOOTFALL.IE	Education Research	Hibernia
MIT Education Solutions	Wriggle	Centre (ERC)	Ivertec
Cornmarket	Komeer	Athlone IT	Vsware
First Aid Supplies	CJ Fallon	Health and Fitness Ireland	Advanced Learning
Get Fresh Catering For	EMS Copiers	Outside the Box	



Brian Flemming Retired Principal

When you think about it, the whole process of becoming a school leader is strange. You qualify to teach children and young people and you do it reasonably successfully. As the years go by you display a commitment to enhancing the work of the school in various ways as a result of which you are promoted to a principal/deputy principalship. This means that the amount of teaching you do, which after all is your original calling, is reduced if not terminated, and you take up a role for which no formal training was available until recent years. On top of all that leading a group of professionals is a difficult task. It is hardly surprising that some appointed prove to be unsuited. A real issue is the reluctance of the authorities to intervene in such cases, and rarely if ever do so, notwithstanding the serious implications for the students involved. Of course the vast majority do a fine job, often in challenging circumstances, and happily help is at hand.

Enter a term like 'leadership in educational settings' in the database of a reasonably sized university library and you will generate a list of about 200,000 books and journals on the topic. More recently social media has become an additional useful and accessible arena of much comment on the issue. Clearly it's a complex role if it generates so much effort on the part of so many to discover the secret of success. So, there's no excuse for not keeping up with the latest insights. Many authors extol the virtues of what they see as a particular pre-eminent approach to leadership. I lived through the emergence of a wide range of recommended styles including moral, ethical, collegial, dispersed, transformational, instructional, strategic, systematic, character based, charismatic, culturally responsive, and sustainable. The question is what to do with such an array of riches generated by hundreds if not thousands of researchers?

Certainly it is very important to identify a handful of experts and keep in touch with their thinking. Mind you, no book, journal, public lecture or training course can tell you how to run your school. This is because all publications/lectures inevitably incline very much to the theoretical and tend to describe a one size fits all approach. In particular they cannot really take into account the contextual factors. In the case of any particular school these include its

history, ethos, culture, climate, catchment area, stage of development, leadership trajectory, resources both human and material, and external factors such as accountability systems, the local education 'market', national policies, trends in education, societal factors, 'league tables' in whatever guise, and the support available from patronage and managerial bodies. Beyond that there are the individual characteristics of the members of the leadership group, their life experiences, values, strengths and weaknesses and to what extent the members of the team complement each other. It is commonplace to say that each school is unique. Indeed it's so trite that we often ignore that fundamental fact and there is a tendency to look on schools in categories, single sex, coed, religious run, state, multi-denominational etc. Within categories, and across the system as a whole, there are marked differences which impact on the experiences of all involved, pupils, parents, teachers and school leaders.

While all schools are unique there is ample international evidence that highlights the important role played by the management team, especially the principal, in the effectiveness of any particular school. It is important, of course, to recognise that leadership is a function which can be provided on a specific issue by any member of staff. In my own case I was fortunate to serve with three absolutely excellent deputy principals in succession, a fine teaching staff including some exceptional individuals, and a very strong administrative team led by an outstanding school secretary. I wasn't surprised that well over a dozen of my colleagues ended up in school leadership positions. Eventually, however, the buck stops on the principal's desk. She/he is central to a complex web of interactive variables many of which are in a state of regular change. School leadership is a lived experience in which the principal impacts on the context but is, to a certain extent, shaped by it. For me the comment of one group of American researchers makes sense. 'One cannot separate leadership from the context any more than one can separate flavour from food'.

In recent years the sources of support for school leaders has expanded in very welcome directions. Preparatory courses for those aspiring to such positions are now generally available and the establishment of the Centre for School Leadership has resulted in mentoring and coaching initiatives. These

have great potential to narrow the gap between the generic theories of leadership and the day-to-day site specific realities of life, particularly for new recruits. In the final analysis, however, the principal has to develop her/his own style. So, it's a question of adopting leadership traits which are consistent with one's personal values, predispositions and talents, and ensuring that they are context responsive and remain so as circumstances change.

What happens in the classroom is the most important process in school life and the teacher's role is crucial. The principal is in the key position to influence classroom performance because of her/his interaction with colleagues. She/he can have infinitely more impact than time-limited occasional visits from inspectors or sporadic CPD courses, for example. It is simultaneously both a serious responsibility and wonderful opportunity. At a basic level part of it is management, that is to ensure that the school 'works' effectively as an administrative process as bad organisation can undermine staff morale quite quickly. More significantly it is about leading a group of professionals and, it seems to me that central to that are two over-riding objectives. One is to cultivate a shared vision and culture. This requires fairly constant review to ensure that the vision is not just a theoretical statement but is implemented consistently, particularly by the principal, as the underlying culture of the school. In my case that was straightforward enough as I took up duty in a greenfield situation. I recognise that in other circumstances, where vision has been absent and the culture is not positive, the task can be extremely challenging. The second is to develop people which, in my experience, is a fruitful and rewarding task as most respond very positively.

All this requires a principal to reflect with great regularity on the challenges facing the school and how these are being met. Included in this must be an honest evaluation of one's own role and performance. It is hugely important to make time for such reflection. In my case, a large school in a disadvantaged setting, and a staff complement of about 90, this inevitably occurred outside the ordinary school day. Books, articles, seminars, mentors, and chats with colleagues can all assist with this process by prompting your thinking but eventually it's down to yourself. Engaging in such thinking is the difference between managing and leading a school so I'm glad to see reflection is the theme of this year's PDA conference. One of my favourite writers Prof Alma Harris puts it succinctly.



New Leaving Certificate Physical Education course - an enjoyable experience for all.

Schools reflect on the usual hectic schedule of the first term. It has been an even more momentous time for staff and 22 students at the Abbey Community College in Boyle Co. Roscommon as the school became one of the 63 schools to roll out the new Physical Education programme for the Leaving Certificate.

Teachers Aaron O'Connor and Barry Greaney have been busy planning for the new subject where students will be assessed on a Physical Activity Project (20%), a Performance Assessment (30%) and a written examination (50%). There is a huge emphasis on the use of IT throughout the student's learning and the school has received funding for tablets which are necessary for the recording of the student's Projects and Performances.

Students will study a broad range of topics including learning and improving skill, physical and psychological demands on performance, structures and strategies of coaching and performance, planning for optimum performance and inclusion and media in sport. So far in Abbey College the 5th year class has covered subjects such as Principles of training, Sports Nutrition, Skill acquisition and fitness testing. Students have enjoyed the lessons so far. Leo Layden, one of the class members who enrolled at the school this year because of the chance of taking the new subject mentions 'the enjoyment of learning new relevant information that helps his Rugby' as a huge positive.

Being one of the first schools to deliver the subject has its obvious challenges. The upskilling required for both staff and students regarding new technology such as new Apps and the pressures of conforming to the new GDPR legislation are two that come to mind. However, it has been a very rewarding experience for all involved and it is great to know that finally, students with Athletic potential can be rewarded academically for their talents. If you would like further information on this course please contact the school on info.abbey@gretb.ie

YEAR PLANNER 2019



	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Wednesday					1							
Thursday					2			1				
Friday		1	1		3			2			1	
Saturday		2	2		4	1		3			2	
Sunday		3	3		5	2		4	1		3	1
Monday		4	4	1	6	3	1	5	2		4	2
Tuesday	1	5	5	2	7	4	2	6	3	1	5	3
Wednesday	2	6	6	3	8	5 JC & LC Begin	3	7	4	2	6	4
Thursday	3	7	7	4	9	6	4	8	5	3	7	5
Friday	4	8	8	5	10	7	5	9	6	4	8	6
Saturday	5	9	9	6	11	8	6	10	7	5	9	7
Sunday	6	10	10	7	12	9	7	11	8	6	10	8
Monday	7	11	11	8	13	10	8	12	9	7	11	9
Tuesday	8	12	12	9	14	11	9	LC Results Issue	10	8	12	10
Wednesday	9	13	13	10	15	12	10	14	11	9	13 Conference	11
Thursday	10	14	14	11	16	13	11	15	12	10	14 Conference	12
Friday	11	15	15	12	17	14	12	16	13	11	15 Conference	13
Saturday	12	16	16	13	18	15	13	17	14	12	16	14
Sunday	13	17	17	14	19	16	14	18	15	13	17	15
Monday	14	18	18	15	20	17	15	19	16	14	18	16
Tuesday	15	19	19	16	21	18	16	20 Viewing Scripts	17	15	19	17
Wednesday	16	20	20	17	22	19	17	21 Viewing Scripts	18	16	20	18
Thursday	17	21	21	18	23	20	18	22	19	17	21	19
Friday	18	22	22	19	24	21	19	23	20	18	22	20
Saturday	19	23	23	20	25	22	20	24	21	19	23	21
Sunday	20	24	24	21	26	23	21	25	22	20	24	22
Monday	21	25	25	22	27	24	22	26	23	21	25	23
Tuesday	22	26	26	23	28	25	23	27	24	22	26	24
Wednesday	23	27	27	24	29	26	24	28	25	23	27	25
Thursday	24	28	28	25	30	27	25	29	26	24	28	26
Friday	25		29	26	31	28	26	30	27	25	29	27
Saturday	26		30	27		29	27	31	28	26	30	28
Sunday	27		31	28		30	28		29	27		29
Monday	28			29			29		30	28		30
Tuesday	29			30			30			29		31
Wednesday	30						31			30		
Thursday	31									31		

Useful Numbers: _____

Limerick Strand Hotel
 Ennis Road, Limerick.
 PDA CONFERENCE 2019 November
 13, 14 & 15