

etbi

news

Education & Training Boards Ireland

SUMMER
2013

Facing the
ETB challenge:

change as the
only certainty

Religious diversity
in ETB Schools

Ministers welcome
a new era

with the establishment of
Education and Training Boards

Welcome

We are at a new beginning, defined by the establishment of ETBs as new statutory education and training authorities on 1 July 2013. ETBI is now the successor to IVEA (which in turn had succeeded ITIA and ITEA) and consists of the 16 member Education and Training Boards.

In the final edition of IVEA News, we marked the passing of the VECs, with their proud tradition of service over the decades of the 20th century. In this first edition of *ETBI News*, we look to the future with confidence that the Education and Training Boards will build on the work of both the VECs and the FÁS Training Centres as they take on new responsibilities, roles and functions in education and training delivery.

ETBI News will continue to reflect the evolution of the Education and Training Board sector in the years ahead. In the meantime, welcome to the first edition of *ETBI News*.

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The information contained in *ETBI News* is, to the best of our knowledge, accurate at the time of publication. The views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of ETBI.

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Establishment of Education and Training Boards (ETBs)

Michael Moriarty, ETBI General Secretary

On 1 July 2013, 16 new Education and Training Boards (ETBs) (see below) were statutorily established across Ireland, representing the most significant overhaul of the Irish educational infrastructure for many decades. The ETBs replace Ireland's 33 Vocational Education Committees (VECs), which had served the education and training needs of generations of Irish people for over eight decades since their establishment in 1930. Their passing into the pages of history closes the door on an educational infrastructure which was rooted in the local authority system. The VECs had replaced the Technical Instruction Committees which had been established in 1898 (Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act 1898). The VECs were established by the Vocational Education Act 1930. This Act and other related Acts (1930-2001)

were all repealed on July 1st by the new Education and Training Boards Act 2013.

ETBs have additional functions to those of the VECs and their remit will be considerably broadened. They will be statutory bodies with extensive responsibilities for the delivery of education and training in second-level schools, further education colleges, centres of education (literacy and adult education schemes), and also in primary education (community national schools). The vast majority of current FÁS training provision will also be the responsibility of the ETBs when the 16 FÁS Training Centres transfer to the ETBs towards the end of 2013 and early 2014.

ETBs establish and maintain schools and centres for education and will plan, provide, coordinate

and review the provision of education and training within their service areas. They will also be required (under direction from the Minister for Education and Skills) to provide support services to other education and training providers. Such supports may be in the context of capital projects and land, human resources, financial services, legal services, ICT and corporate governance.

Each of the 16 ETBs will be governed by a Board consisting of 21 elected members. Twelve members will be elected by the local authorities specified in Schedule 4 of the Act, two members elected by staff, two members elected by parents, five members with an interest in and knowledge of education and training. (Of these five persons, at least one must be nominated by a body representative of business, industry and employers, one nominated by a body representative of learners, and one nominated by a body representative of the interests of school management and leadership).

The executive staffing of each ETB is headed by the chief executive officer who was designated from the CEOs of the VECs which have now been statutorily abolished.

In respect of services and supports, each ETB will be required by the Act to prepare, adopt and publish a five-year Strategy Statement (priorities, objectives and strategies). An ETB will also be statutorily required to adopt and publish an annual Service Plan



"ETBs establish and maintain schools and centres for education and will plan, provide, coordinate and review the provision of education and training within their service areas."

(services proposed, with estimated income and expenditure) and an Annual Report (to report on the performance of its functions).

Of note also is that the FÁS Training Centres are to transfer to the ETBs during late 2013 and early 2014. ETBs will then be primarily accountable to SOLAS for the delivery a wide range of further education and training services (much currently provided by FÁS). Each ETB will be required to sign an annual Service Level Agreement (SLA) with SOLAS, setting out the further education and training targets and commitments to be achieved and the resources committed for this purpose. Further legislation – The Further Education and Training Bill 2013 – to give effect to this reform and to establish SOLAS is to be enacted this Summer.

These structural changes represent the most profound overhaul of education and training in Ireland for decades. The consolidation of training functions with educational functions in 16 new education and training authorities means that the ETBs will have significantly enhanced roles across the education and training sectors to meet the challenges of 21st century Ireland.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARDS IRELAND – ETBI

Also on 1 July 2013, the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) was renamed Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI). This body has now become the national representative association for its 16 member ETBs, representing their interests and recognised by the Minister for that purpose.

The ETB Act provides for Ministerial requests to ETBI (Section 10(5))

to assist member ETBs, to make representations in respect of an ETB's functions and to conduct surveys. ETBI may also be requested to assist ETBs which have been directed to provide support services or jointly perform any of their functions with an education and training provider (Section 22).

As the responsibilities of ETBs expand to include training functions in addition to educational and school governance and management, the representational role of ETBI will also expand to accommodate these new interests. ETBI will continue to negotiate with all stakeholders in both the education and training sectors (government departments, agencies, trade unions and statutory bodies). It will continue to devise, adopt and publish policy and will provide training support from

its new training centre based in its headquarters in Piper's Hill, Naas, Co Kildare.

The underpinning of this structural reform package by two Acts underlines the very significant structural overhaul of the education and training sectors in Ireland which was launched on July 1st. The full implementation of the reform programme will take some time to complete, but will re-align and refocus education and training provision to meet the needs of modern Ireland. This will be a significant challenge for the new ETBs as they set out to build on the proud service history of their predecessors, the VECs. The ETBs and their representative body, the ETBI, are currently building a common brand image which can become a symbol of quality. The future is full of challenges and opportunities to reform and change the profile of state education services, delivered through the ETBs over the decades ahead. Much done and much more to do.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARDS AND DESIGNATED CEOS AT 01 JULY 2013

City of Dublin ETB	Ms Jacinta Stewart
Cork ETB	Mr Ted Owens
Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB	Mr Paddy Lavelle
Limerick and Clare ETB	Mr Sean Burke
Donegal ETB	Mr Shaun Purcell
Kerry ETB	Mr Colm McEvoy
Tipperary ETB	Ms Fionnuala McGeever
Waterford and Wexford ETB	Ms Clare McMahon
Galway and Roscommon ETB	Mr David Leahy
Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB	Mr Seosamh Mac Donncha
Cavan and Monaghan ETB	Mr Martin G.O'Brien
Louth and Meath ETB	Mr Peter Kierans
Longford and Westmeath ETB	Dr Christy Duffy
Laois and Offaly ETB	Ms Anne O'Keeffe
Kildare and Wicklow ETB	Mr Sean Ashe
Kilkenny and Carlow ETB	Ms Cynthia Deane
General Secretary ETBI	Mr Michael Moriarty

A Time of Change

Cllr Noel O'Connor, President, ETBI

This is a time of enormous change for the newly established ETBs and for ETBI. Over the coming months, ETBs will be coming to grips with their new and increased responsibilities, from overseeing the entire provision of further education and training in our newly enlarged areas of operation, to preparing to provide IT or building or HR supports to other educational bodies and schools, to configuring and building a whole new set of relationships with SOLAS. And there's the upcoming transfer of the FÁS training centres to the ETBs as well!

Any one of these changes will take planning and coordination and time and people. When the changes come, as these have, more or less all at the same time, I am

reminded of the quotation from Hamlet about difficulties coming "not single spies, but in battalions"! That quotation concerned poor Ophelia and all the sorrows that were heaped upon her, all at the same time. However, unlike Ophelia, we are not facing these issues as individuals. To be prosaic, we are all in this together.

The changes we are undertaking may present challenges, but they will also offer opportunities. It is through working together that we will resolve whatever issues that arise from these changes and discover whatever opportunities that may materialise because the changes are taking place simultaneously. Together, we can examine, propose and implement the adjustments that will be necessary to make everything work. Together, we

can look towards, and manage, these transformations.

I congratulate everyone involved in what has been, so far, a pretty seamless changeover from VECs to ETBs. With the shared determination, cooperation and goodwill of everyone that has characterised this process, all the other transformations will be achieved as successfully. As Hamlet also said, "the readiness is all."



Education & Training Boards: A new chapter in a long history

Ruairi Quinn TD, Minister for Education & Skills

As the new Education and Training Boards (ETBs) come into being, it is timely to reflect on the important role the vocational education sector has played over the last eight decades. The proud tradition of state-run, community-focused education provision is now an established fact of life in our education system. It was not always so, particularly during the 1930s when the Vocational Education Committees were established on condition that they would not pose a threat to the control of education provision by the Church.

The founding purpose of VECs under the Vocational Education Act 1930 was to focus on the delivery of technical and continuing education. Over time however, the role of VECs grew. They were instrumental in the development of free second-level education during the 1960s and 1970s. Without the expansion and investment into VEC Community and Comprehensive schools, Ireland could not have delivered on comprehensive secondary education for all its citizens. This marked a huge leap forward for our education system and

for our society. It is still remembered as the most significant change in Irish education policy since 1922 for very good reason: it heralded the start of Ireland's ambition to become a more meritocratic, pluralist and tolerant society by offering all its young people a chance to access free education.

The VECs successfully managed to bring together the traditional academic teaching of the mostly Catholic



voluntary schools and the practically orientated programme of the vocational schools under the roof of a single institution. In this way, students were able to experience both a practical and liberal education in a broad general curriculum appropriate to their needs, abilities and interests. This is a philosophy which I personally share and strongly support.

The other admirable principle of VEC education - that state-funded educational facilities should be available to all parts of the community, particularly during evenings and weekends is one that I also fully share. The VECs, have been considered leaders in the delivery of further education, adult education and second-chance programmes like Youthreach and VTOS and this is a role I would like the ETBs to continue to develop.

In the same way that VECs were tasked fifty years ago with combining the provision of academic and vocational education at second level, I am now asking them to confront a new challenge in 2013. We need them to take the next leap forward – to deliver education and training services for those who have lost their job, left school early or need to retrain for work in a new industry. It is a big challenge, but one in which I believe only the reconfigured ETBs can succeed at.

As Ireland strives to restore its economic well-being, it is crucial that we ensure the €900 million investment we are making in further education and training is relevant to people's needs and helps assist our economic recovery. Unlike the view expressed by many in the 1930s – the last time we faced an economic depression on this scale - I believe the state has a fundamental role in resolving this State challenge.

The establishment of the 16 new ETBs will enable the sector to build upon its tradition of public service for all sections of the community. Their role is now

considerably wider than the original concepts of vocational and technical education which were set out in the 1930 legislation.

For example, ETBs may be able to help schools and education providers in areas such as capital projects, human resources, IT support, financial and legal services. In many ways and the ETBs will at last represent the middle-tier of regional education provision that was talked about for so long during the debates on the White Paper on Education in the 1990s.

The new ETBs will soon be responsible for the delivery of local education and training on a much larger scale than ever before when they assume control of the 16 FÁS Training Centres around the country later this year and during 2014.

I have ensured that the involvement of democratically elected local representatives continues to remain a feature of ETB governance. I have also allowed for the voices of learners, the business sector, teaching staff, other education stakeholders and community representatives to be heard in the delivery of education and training services at local level. This is an important feature of the ETB legislation which received a lot of attention in the Oireachtas and I am pleased that we have achieved a broad political consensus on this issue.

Separately, I am advancing the legislation for the establishment of SOLAS and the dissolution of FÁS. The Further Education and Training Bill 2013, which will provide for the establishment of SOLAS, will be enacted by the end of July. It is envisaged that SOLAS will be formally established before the end of this year and will provide a national strategy for the wider further education and training sector, including those services delivered by the ETBs.

SOLAS will be tasked with promoting the value of further education and

training at local level. It will also give a renewed focus to improving adult literacy and numeracy, as well as the promotion of equality of opportunity in further education. This will ensure that the issue of quality services for learners receives as much attention as the cost and delivery of courses – a key aspect of any evaluation in education.

Reform of this scale requires significant support from the centre. My Department recently established the ETB/SOLAS Programme Board which is chaired by the Secretary General, Seán Ó Foghlú. It is composed of a number of the senior management team in the Department and it is intended that its membership will be widened to include representation for FÁS and ETBs. The role of the Programme Board is to enable the sector to manage the transition from VECs to ETBs and the taking on of the provision of training currently delivered through FÁS.

A Programme Office has been established which reports to that Board. Dalton Tattan has been appointed as project manager and the work of that office is already underway. The Programme office will not substitute for the work of CEOs in managing the transition but will assist in putting in places the necessary structures and processes to assist in delivering on this significant change agenda.

July 2013 marked the end of an era for 33 Vocational Education Committees and the start of a new one for 16 ETBs. The role these ETBs will play has never been more important. From humble beginnings, the sector has moved from being a peripheral part of the Irish education system to a vital and necessary provider of services in every part of the community. Given the impressive track record VECs have had in managing the development of second level education, I have every confidence that the ETB sector will rise to the challenges now being asked of it by Government and by wider Irish society.

Education & Training Boards

– coming to the end of the beginning

Ciarán Cannon, TD, Minister for Training & Skills



There is a certain satisfaction experienced when the picture within a complicated jigsaw finally begins to emerge and one senses that you are well on the way to completion. We are now at that stage in the development of our new Education and Training Boards. The relevant legislation has come into being, our ETBs are now up and running and the future looks bright. Together we have achieved much in terms of consolidation for strength and efficiency. We now have a better model for the delivery of high quality further education that will serve our learners well for decades to come. However the picture is not quite yet complete and we must continue solving the jigsaw. In particular, this involves the integration of the individual FÁS training centres with local ETBs.

We are fortunate to be in a position to bring together the experience and the expertise accumulated over decades in both the further education and training sectors. That potent combination will empower ETBs to deliver a diverse range of further education and training programmes that are responsive to the needs of jobseekers and other learners, as well as those of enterprise and society. Jobseekers will be equipped with the range of skills needed for new jobs in Ireland's 21st century labour market. Minister Pat Rabbitte's National Digital Strategy launched last week indicates that by 2015, across the EU, only 1 job in 10 will not require a digital skill. That prediction challenges us to reassess our curricula and course

design to ensure that all participants can acquire these new skills.

The next steps in our journey will involve the dissolution of FÁS as a national training authority and the creation of SOLAS. This will happen in the Autumn and will enable the integration of individual Training Centres with their local ETB, thus enhancing the opportunities available locally and regionally for upskilling and reskilling. It is intended that at least six training centres will already be under ETB responsibility by the end of 2013, and the remainder will transfer during the course of 2014. Through the SOLAS Implementation Group a considerable amount of very valuable work has been underway for some time now to identify issues to be resolved in the amalgamation process and this work will now continue under the auspices of SOLAS.

The training centres are strategically located nationwide, but have evolved in different regional groupings to the footprints of ETBs. In addition, individual centres may have specialist capacities in a specific sector, as for example the biopharmaceutical training facility in Carrigaline. Accordingly, while individual ETBs will be responsible for their local training centre, flexibility for provision of services in other areas is already built into the legislation.

In terms of programmes that ETBs will now have under their remit, FÁS has for many years been working to ensure that these are fit for purpose and aligned with changing labour market needs.

This evolution has been supported by a ground-up, hands-on approach where each training centre and region has used its knowledge and experience with learners to contribute to the development of the FÁS annual service plan. In the future this experience will feed into the preparation by individual ETBs of education and training plans.

Over many years VECs have developed further education provision with a commitment to best meeting the needs of learners and taking account of employment and education progression opportunities for them. Given the scale of our unemployment problem, maintaining and enhancing the relevance of further education and training provision will be an increasingly important challenge for ETBs

The mergers will involve not just programmes and property. ETBs will also have to integrate the former FÁS administrative and training staff into their expanded education role. This is a big change for all concerned, and will demand proactive teamwork and flexibility. I have every confidence that the Further Education sector will rise to the challenges that lie ahead with flair, patience, good humour, and the professionalism for which it is known. Thanks to the dedication and commitment of those involved, we can have every confidence that this new phase in the evolution of education and training in Ireland will be an exciting and rewarding one.

Welcome from FÁS for Education and Training Boards Ireland

Paul O'Toole, Director General – FÁS

On behalf of the Board, Management and Staff of FÁS, I would like to offer our congratulations on the establishment of the new Education and Training Boards. You are already key stakeholders in the development and delivery of further education and training, and this relationship will be deepened as SOLAS is established and the formal process to transfer responsibility for training delivery to the Education and Training Boards gets underway.

The management and staff of FÁS, who will ultimately transfer to the Education and Training Boards, will bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the

new organisations. They will also bring a deep commitment to improving the skills and lives of learners. In turn, they will benefit from the experience and knowledge gained from over eighty years of service by the Vocational Educational Committees to the State.

I would also like to express our good wishes and appreciation to Education and Training Boards Ireland and wish it well in its work to support the sector.

We now have the opportunity to develop and participate in a new future. This will see the further education and training sector assume its rightful place as a recognised resource for all learners who seek to advance their personal development and opportunities for employment



through the wealth of high quality programmes which will be offered.

First Annual ETBI Congress | 109th Annual Congress

Congress Theme:

Education and Training Boards: Opportunities in the New Era

Congress 2013 takes place in the Killashee House Hotel, Kilcullen Road, Naas, Co Kildare, on 18th and 19th September 2013.

This Congress will be the first educational congress of the new school year and accordingly it will be a significant barometer of the reaction of education providers/school managers to the events that have recently impacted on the Irish education sector.

The Ministerial and Presidential addresses are the highlight of Congress and there will also be a wide variety of eminent speakers on both days.



Facing the ETB challenge: change as the only certainty

Paddy Lavelle CEO, Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB, and President CEEOA

Education and Training Boards (ETBs) are new organisations springing from the well-formed roots of VECs. They contain all the characteristics of their predecessors along with the potential for a whole lot more. Expectations are high that the ETBs will be able to deliver more in a better way to the ultimate beneficiaries who are learners and the wider public.

The establishment of ETBs, which has been awaited now for some considerable time, has arrived. Reconfiguring existing services is ongoing and a huge amount of practical steps have been taken. As anticipated, there are still many things we would like to have in place at this stage that are not.

Those in charge of making it happen, the Boards and staff, have to focus on the important things in this in-between phase. It is no harm to identify some of the things that will need to be kept in mind.

In his book on Sustainable Leadership, Andy Hargreaves and Dean Fink, both well-known educationalists write that:

"The challenge for educational leadership and change is not to be dismissive of practices in the business world but to learn from those that are most successful and sustainable. Public education should not be treated as a temporary business that is looking to produce quick returns and never-ending profits even if that requires creative accounting in regards to test

results. Instead, as a near universal process that shapes the generations of the future, education should be treated as one of the most long-lasting enterprises of all.¹"

In this article, I propose to glean from some research on business mergers lessons that may be helpful at this time in the formation of the new boards from the old committees. The intention is to assist us in becoming more successful and sustainable in our endeavours through reflection and analysis of where we are and where we are going.

Everyone involved will now be experiencing 'stressful destabilisation'. The task for us as leaders and enablers of change is to recognise and deal with the effects. Expressions of anger, disappointment and withdrawal are likely to be manifestations of strong feelings of loss in the face of the huge change that is facing staff.

There is a tendency at times like these for organisations to tighten control in order to effect change. Leaders need to take care about placing greater than normal constraints on individuals within ETBs doing their daily jobs and to realise that, although it may seem the best course of action, it needs to be tempered by a realisation that such constraints may hold back normal operations. The leader's tasks may include a need to identify the current culture of merging organisations. Where merging VECs have significantly different ways of working, the potential for conflict



may arise more quickly than in merging VECs with aligned cultures. Leaders will do well to develop an awareness of varying tendencies and to form a plan to nurture re-alignment of cultures where that is necessary. Where they identify a need to introduce new constraints, those leading the merger will have to analyse the benefits. Significant autonomy may rest with various principals and co-ordinators. Changing levels of autonomy may be a serious inhibition for them, co-incident with an opportunity for efficient accountability. There is also a likely effect on morale.

Some questions to prompt an analysis of culture are:

- Do I know the culture of the organisation?
- Is it universal within the organisation?
- Are some areas less autonomous than others?
- What culture should we choose now?
- How do we move towards building that culture?

Those charged with managing staff during the merger have a task to recognise the stages of adjustment in the next year or so and to assist

¹ Andy Hargreaves and Dean Fink: Sustainable Leadership, 2006, John Wiley & Sons Jossey Bass San Francisco

employees through to the acceptance stage, following the loss of the old VEC and its comforting status quo. The aim is to achieve an atmosphere of psychological safety. There should be clear communication without any effort to be oblique or misrepresent the truth. Where staff are involved in producing new values and examining consequences of the merger for themselves, it can help enormously to engage people with the change. Preparing a Strategy Statement, which is a responsibility of ETBs in the Act, may be the appropriate opportunity to harness good will and engage staff in planning for the future.

In the diagram below, four cultures typical of organisations are depicted. The person/support culture, which allows for increased autonomy through the individual staff member using his/her own initiative was already prevalent in many VECs for certain staff in particular posts. The threat to that culture from increased constraints on merging has to be protected against, whilst acknowledging that in a larger and different organisation, the order of things must change. The task/achievement culture is also to be nurtured since it is the way we are continually approaching our work. It allows for increased autonomy at work and also ensures that we can plan work in ways that serve the goals of the new ETBs. While the

role structure is useful at one level, it is too constraining to operate and restricts flexibility in dealing with new challenges. We have in the past been bedevilled by a silo-mentality that stratifies and stultifies, while providing accountability and defining clear boundaries of responsibility. In spite of silos, VECs were rightly proud of their capacity to adapt and that quality needs to be preserved and developed in the new boards' work. The power culture may be invoked from time to time but it sits uneasily in a setting where the new work situation is beyond easy prescription. In successful mergers, leaders discard the fantasy of a corporate culture of reflexive obedience and undertake the hard work of creating a culture of willingness and accountability. This takes time.

The new ETBs as organisations require a new style of leadership, distributed throughout the various layers. It is the case that consensus and transactional leaders integrate cultures most effectively. The task faced demands that we build that culture through example, coaching, and work on meaningful accountability. Each of us involved in building the new future within the ETB can become a consensus or transactional leader.

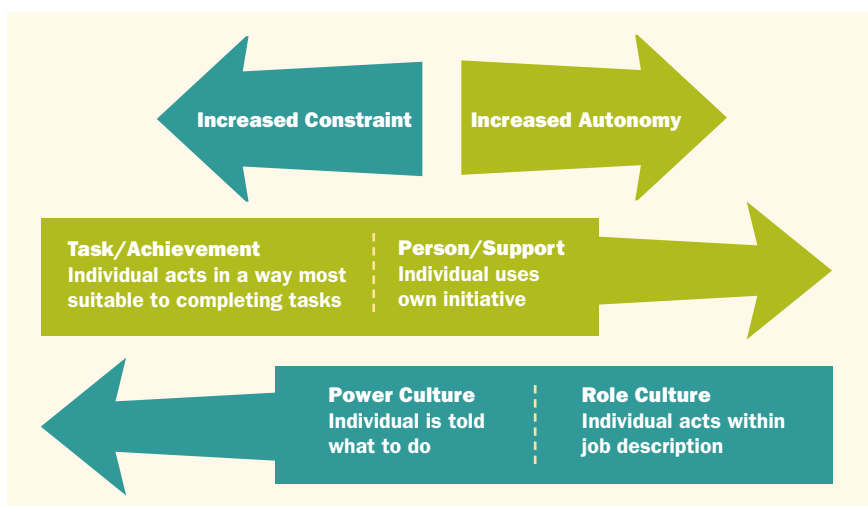
The traits to recognise these capacities within our staff include communication of vision, inspiration,

motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealised influence and individualised consideration. Leaders who communicate core values through vision and personal actions motivate staff to change. Those with the transformational leadership behavioural traits listed above should be successful in realigning their staff's values and norms, promoting both personal and organisational change and helping them exceed their initial performance expectation. Research testifies to the fact that leaders will be perceived in a positive manner when the consequences for individuals involved in the change process are positive. That gives us a goal to work towards. Through this process of change, we must work on support for staff. The coaching talks we give should aim at reinforcing the positive aspects and effects of the merger. There needs to be a constant recursive and deliberate inclusion of staff views and perspectives.

At the start and throughout the process it is helpful to continue to provide good communications, best of all if they are both personal and written. Opportunities should be created to include statements modelling the vision, especially in personal communications. It is good to repeat at this point the benefits to be gained from asking staff to participate in analysing and deciding upon the consequences of the merger.

Hopefully the gathering of these thoughts will help us all to make the best of the mergers we are part of and to take charge of the process so our stewardship will produce sustainable ETBs to serve our learners and the public even better than our VECs have done. The reality check from Gandhi grounds us with the thought that in the end we are all about building good relationships.

"I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people."
– Mahatma Gandhi



John Marcus O'Sullivan Summer School 2013

'Religion, Diversity and Publicly-managed Schools in Ireland:

Democracy, Empowerment and Student/Teacher Responsibility'

Dr. Joanne O'Flaherty and Dr. Orla McCormack Department of Education and Professional Studies, University of Limerick



officially opened by President of ETBI, Cllr Noel O'Connor and Professor Mary O'Sullivan, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Limerick. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Gerry Jeffers. Gerry

(Head of Religious Education, Mater Dei Institute of Education).

Four dynamic workshops were facilitated by a number of contributors. Ms. Aiveen Mulally's workshop titled 'School Planning for Religious Inclusivity' presented a draft of a set of guidelines she is writing for ETB schools regarding the inclusion of different beliefs, which initiated dialogue and debate for delegates in attendance. Ms. Leanne Coll's workshops titled 'Student Voice: Students as co-creators of curriculum – beyond the rhetoric' provided delegates with an opportunity to experience a number of Leanne's approaches to co-constructing curriculum with post-primary student.

Dr. Jennifer Hennessy's participatory workshop titled 'Acting within the spaces: critical pedagogy and teacher agency in Ireland' provided delegates with the opportunity to reflect and debate the multi-dimensional role of the teacher; the theoretical perspectives that underpin this role and the application of this in professional practice. Dr. Patricia Kieran and Dr. Tom Grenham facilitated an interactive workshop titled 'Rethinking diversity and religion in Irish classrooms: The implications of the forum on patronage and pluralism in the primary sector'. Within this participatory workshop delegates were once again given opportunities for dialogue and reflection within the context of the Forum on patronage and pluralism – applications and implications for the post-primary sector.

The John Marcus O'Sullivan Summer School 2013 entitled "Religion, Diversity & Publicly Managed Schools: Democracy, Empowerment and Student/Teacher Responsibility" aimed to address issues pertaining to the distinctive role of publicly managed schools in relation to notions of moral education, citizenship and belonging. It provided an opportunity for debate, discussion and learning on the distinctive contribution of publicly managed schools within an ever more diverse Ireland.

This Summer School continues a tradition established by the VECs in Kerry in the 1970s, to commemorate the memory of John Marcus O'Sullivan, who was the Minister for Education 1927-1932 and who steered the Vocational Education Act, 1930, into law. The 2013 Summer School was hosted by the Department of Education and Professional Studies, University of Limerick in collaboration with Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI formally IVEA); Kerry Education and Training Board (ETB) and Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB.

This year the summer school was

has written extensively on a variety of educational issues including co-editing Education for Citizenship and Diversity in Irish Contexts (IPA, Dublin, 2008). The title of the keynote was: "Realising children's rights in schools: challenges and opportunities" and an edited version of the address follows this report.

The title of the plenary session was 'Towards a Framework for Junior Cycle: The place of Religious Education?'. Chaired by Dr. Barney O'Reilly, this session explored and presented differing perspectives and positions on the place of Religious Education within the post-primary sector and particularly within the context of the new Junior Cycle Framework, cognisant of the role and responsibilities of publicly managed schools. This proved a very successful session with contributions being offered by Ms. Katherina Broderick (Teacher and former Deputy Principal, Causeway Comprehensive School, Co. Kerry); Ms. Aoife Neary (Irish Research Council Scholar, Department of Sociology, University of Limerick); Mr. Paddy Lavelle (CEO of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB); Mr Mark Caffrey (President of the Irish Second-level Student Councils) and Dr. Gareth Byrne



Gerry Jeffers, Education Department, NUI Maynooth

Much has changed in Ireland and internationally since John Marcus O'Sullivan was framing the 1930 Vocational Education Act. In particular, thinking about children, their needs and rights, has progressed significantly. This is especially evident in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989). The ramifications of ratifying the Convention are far reaching. This paper links the UNCRC with schooling, proposing that the Convention is a useful lens through which to re-imagine schools. The UNCRC is also put forward as an ethical framework for engaging with a growing intercultural and multidenominational society. Secondly, some of the issues associated with terms like 'multi-denominational' and 'interdenominational' are explored. Finally, the concept of 'curricular justice' is proposed as arising from the UNCRC. Curricular justice, when linked to school size, is seen as presenting uncomfortable challenges.

The UNCRC, origins and development

Eglantyne Jebb (1876-1928), an Englishwoman and contemporary of John Marcus O'Sullivan, was so horrified by the impact of World War I on children that, in 1919, she founded the Save the Children Fund, an organisation that still thrives. Furthermore, she approached the International Union in 1923 to get them to adopt a Children's Charter. The result was the Declaration on the Rights of the Child or the Geneva Declaration, drafted mainly by Jebb and adopted the following year by the League of Nations. (Harrison, 2004). That Declaration sets out five basic rights.

- The child must be given the means requisite for its normal development, both materially and spiritually.
- The child that is hungry must be fed, the child that is sick must be nursed, the child that is backward must be helped, the delinquent child must be reclaimed, and the orphan and the waif must be sheltered and succoured.
- The child must be the first to receive relief in times of distress.
- The child must be put in a position

to earn a livelihood, and must be protected against every form of exploitation.

- The child must be brought up in the consciousness that its talents must be devoted to the service of its fellow men. (League of Nations, 1924)

Within these focused concerns are the seeds of ideas that germinate in the Universal Declaration of Human



Gerry Jeffers, Education Department, NUI Maynooth.

"Some of our traditions of dealing with children and young people are strongly authoritarian and very much at variance with the spirit of the UNCRC."

Rights (UN, 1948), the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (UN, 1959) and, most dramatically, in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989).

THE CONVENTION

Since Ireland ratified the Convention in 1992, its impact on public policy has been pronounced. Four key values underpin the Convention. They are:

- Non-discrimination
- Commitment to the best interests of the child
- The right to life, survival and development
- Respect for the views of the child.

The various articles can be grouped into four categories:

Survival rights: include the child's right to life and the needs that are most basic to existence, such as nutrition, shelter, an adequate living standard, and access to medical services.

Protection rights: ensure children are safeguarded against all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Development rights: include the right to education, play, leisure, cultural activities, access to information, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Participation rights: encompass children's freedom to express opinions, to have a say in matters affecting their own lives, to join associations and to assemble peacefully. As their abilities develop, children are to have increasing opportunities to participate in the activities of their society, in preparation for responsible adulthood. (UN, 1989)

IMPACT ON IRISH PUBLIC POLICY

The Convention's understanding and articulation of children as active participants rather than as passive recipients is seen, in varying ways, in such initiatives as the National

Children's Strategy 2000, the Children Act 2001, the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002, the establishment of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2011 and, more recently, in the passing of the Children's Referendum in 2012. Within the education sphere, we can catch glimpses of its impact, for example, in the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the Education for Person with Special Education Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004.

In the Irish context, these developments have to be placed against the disturbing evidence in reports like the Ryan Report (2009) and the recent RTÉ programme on child care, *In Breach of Trust*. Some of our traditions of dealing with children and young people are strongly authoritarian and very much at variance with the spirit of the UNCRC. I suspect that many of the more contentious debates at school staff meetings hinge on a clash of an authoritarian view with a rights-based one.

AN EMERGING QUESTION FROM THE UNCRC

From a children's rights perspective, an examination of the UNCRC prompts a key question for educators:

HOW CAN SCHOOLS BE RE-CONFIGURED AS SITES FOR THE GREATER REALISATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S RIGHTS, ESPECIALLY THEIR DEVELOPMENTAL AND PARTICIPATION RIGHTS?

Elsewhere, I have suggested that the UNCRC lens might usefully look at the following topics: relationships, curriculum, school governance, school leadership, teacher education, admissions policies, architecture, care (Jeffers, 2013, in press).

In addition, the UNCRC can provide

a rigorous framework for any school engaging in self-evaluation. Other manifestations of a rights-based perspective can be seen, for example, in The Yellow Flag project, an initiative pioneered by the Irish Traveller Movement and aimed at schools wishing to respond to our increasingly intercultural society.

SOME SPECIFIC UNCRC ARTICLES OF RELEVANCE TO SCHOOLS

Working with teachers following post-graduate programmes in NUI Maynooth has taught me that they consistently identify about seven UNCRC articles as having particular relevance to schools. These are

Article 2. '... without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status'

Article 3. 'In all actions concerning children... the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration'.

Article 12. '... the child who is capable of forming his or her own views (has) the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'.

Article 23. '...a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community'.

Article 28. 'the right of the child to education', progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity...

Article 29. Education to be directed to:

- (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

- (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles

enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

- (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilisations different from his or her own;
- (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
- (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

Article 42. States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike.

Furthermore, these students – all experienced practising teachers – can at times be disarmingly frank in their contributions in class and in their written assignments. Few believe, for example, that schools do enough to listen to young people's voices or to promote democratic classrooms. Student Councils are often seen as tokenistic. Some state that school rules are often framed in negative and disempowering language. One student recently surveyed staffroom colleagues and found that more than half were not familiar with the contents of the UNCRC!

THE CHILD: RELIGION, CONSCIENCE, FREEDOM

Article 14 of the UNCRC obliges States to '....respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion'. As with article 12 regarding children's views and opinions, the concept of the 'evolving capacities of the child' is invoked. This presents children, their parents and schools with special challenges, particularly in our new, emerging intercultural society.

Earlier this year, I facilitated a series of public meetings with parents about their wishes for their children's second-level schooling. These parents wish their children to attend schools that are safe, happy, caring places. They expect such schools to be staffed by committed and competent teachers, led by visionary leaders and to support their children in identifying and realising their varied potential. For many, the school as a community focal point, a site where children learn to mix with children and young people from different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds is important. This aspiration to an inclusive school environment led to some particularly interesting exchanges concerning the denominational character of schools.

The views expressed covered a rich spectrum. Broadly speaking, there was a rejection of two extremes, one of a somewhat caricatured view of Catholic schooling where the focus seemed to be primarily on moral prohibitions, the other of a secular school where religion was totally absent. A majority appear to favour a school where different religious traditions are respected in word and in practice, where religious education is available and where those who wish to 'opt out' are facilitated with sensitivity.

Most parents seemed to be of the opinion that 'multi-denominational' is an appropriate term to cover the ethos of such a school. (The Department of Education and Skills website www.education.ie currently appears to prefer the term 'inter-denominational'). In general, parents displayed some confusion - or at least vagueness - about the denominational status of a school; it did not seem to be a burning issue, compared to, for example, the community focus, the concern for facilities, the quality of teaching and care or a visionary leadership. Sometimes in these discussions it seemed that 'multi-denominational' was being embraced because it resonates more with the multiculturalism or interculturalism we see and hear all around us. At times I wondered whether a 'multi-denominational' ethos was being imagined as, in essence, a Catholic one 'with a small c', a kind of 'catholic-lite', a somewhat religiously diluted version of the schooling that many of these parents had received. How 'multi-denominational' or 'inter-denominational' practices might manifest themselves was not particularly well articulated. The overarching point is that much clarification is needed on what schools mean when they describe themselves as 'multi-denominational' or 'inter-denominational'.



Now this territory is even a controversial one for Catholic schools within the voluntary sector as they struggle to re-imagine themselves in the radically changed environments of religious practice and belief that characterise students, their parents and their teachers in 2013. There are widely diverging views about what a 'Catholic school is. A recent article in the international Catholic weekly, *The Tablet*, by James Arthur (Arthur, 2013, p.s6), albeit referring to the UK, stoked heated debate on the topic.

Here in Ireland the Community school model from the 1970s and the Community College one from the 1980s, especially the Model Agreement between Co Dublin VEC (Co Dublin VEC, 1981) and the Archdiocese of Dublin offer a unique framework to build on. This leads to the second key question:

How is a multid denominational/ interdenominational school environment best nurtured?

CURRICULAR JUSTICE

Finally, the idea of 'curricular justice' emerges from reflection through three particular lenses of my own

professional experience. Firstly, there was the annual challenge of constructing school timetables. Later, when working on the support service for Transition Year, there were many conversations with school principals who could not offer TY because of the school was 'too small'. More recently, as a teacher-educator, I have visited a range of schools observing students on teaching practice.

A children's rights perspective suggests that every child should have the possibility of access to all school programmes, for example, at senior cycle Transition Year, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and the Leaving Certificate Applied. Furthermore, each child should have access to a wide range of subject choices, particularly minority subjects such as Music, Physics, Chemistry, Design and Communications Graphics and Latin. If schools don't offer such programmes or subjects, it may also be instructive to examine their justification for denying children 'curricular justice'. This may become more pronounced with the emerging - and potentially very

enriching - short courses proposed for the new Junior Cycle.

Perhaps we focus too much on the school as an institution and not enough on the child's rights. Greater inter-school co-operation is in the best interests of the child while inter-school competition favours the already advantaged.

Currently there are 722 Post Primary Schools with a total enrolment of 360,339 students, giving an average school size of 499. But the range of school size, set out in Figure 1 below, prompts some uncomfortable questions.

These include: How important is 'curricular justice' as a concept? How different are the school experiences of young people who attend the 110 schools represented in the two end categories (both of which include a majority of VEC schools)?

These questions lead to the third key question in this paper:

Is there a minimum size a school should be in order to ensure that each child can receive 'curricular justice'?

Figure 1. Number of schools grouped by school size (Source www.education.ie)

1-199	200-399	400-599	600-799	800-999	1000+
80	201	208	149	54	30

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This is an edited version of the keynote address given at the John Marcus O'Sullivan Education Summer School held in the University of Limerick on 20th/21st June, 2013. The conference theme was Religion, Diversity & Publicly Managed Schools: Democracy, Empowerment and Student/Teacher Responsibility. The full paper is available on request from the author at gerard.jeffers@nuim.ie

The challenges of religious diversity in ETB Schools

By Aiveen Mullally, Marino Institute of Education



The new ETB Bill (2012) heralds a new era for publically-managed schools and a timely opportunity to examine how ETB schools cater for different religions and worldviews in their schools. The history of the development of VEC schools is complex due to the strong influence of the Catholic Church on its ethos and provision of religious instruction. This article arises out of a small-scale study with a small sample of VEC/ETB CEOs and teachers of religious education, to ascertain what practical issues arise in their schools around the accommodation of different faiths and world-views. The purpose of the study is to inform the publication of a set of guidelines on the inclusion of different faiths and worldviews in ETB schools into the future.

Ireland has undergone significant change since the 1960s with the changing demographic patterns emerging from immigration and emigration. The 2011 Census records that 17% of the Irish population is from immigrant backgrounds, almost 50,000 residents describe themselves as Muslim and 6% of the Irish population claim to have no religion (www.cso.ie). As well as becoming more religiously diverse, there is an increasingly secular stance also growing in the State. This change and diversification has resulted in many changes and challenges to schools which are servicing an increasingly religiously diverse and secular population and schools are under pressure to adopt more inclusive

practices. Educational policy and provision, therefore, needs to address the reality of religious diversity in ETB schools and this time of transition is a timely opportunity.

Following interviews with four CEOs and two teachers of religious education, five clear themes emerged in the study as being the most significant current challenges to ETB schools regarding religious diversity.

ETHOS DEFINITION AND IDENTITY

It is apparent that one of the greatest challenges to the ETB/VEC sector seems to be that the ethos or denominational nature of the schools is unclear. There was a lack of clarity among the CEOs and teachers interviewed when asked what the denominational nature of ETB/VEC schools is;

CEO 1: "In practice I would describe them as multi-denominational... providing religious education for whatever children they have".

CEO 2: "In practice I'd say they are quite denominational...the rituals and the general culture of the school, the iconography, would be hardly distinguishable from catholic schools."

CEO 3: "I would think multi-denominational but why all the uncertainty? Because there has been a lot of discussion and I haven't actually heard the convincing argument as to where we are or what we should be doing".

CEO 4: "In essence we respond to those that might be of a catholic faith and those that might be of a protestant faith and beyond that then we respond to a lesser degree".

The reason for this vagueness and preference for Christian traditions is due to the history of the VEC sector and the influence of the Catholic Church. VEC legislation does not in fact make any explicit reference to religion in the programme of the vocational school nor does the new ETB Bill. The Catholic Church's influence on VEC schools in the last century did not raise much difficulty in a largely homogeneous Catholic Ireland, however, this history and influence on religious education and practice is currently causing significant challenges to VEC/ETB schools because they are publicly-managed schools in a significantly more diverse, secular Ireland.

"The 2011 Census records that 17% of the Irish population is from immigrant backgrounds, almost 50,000 residents describe themselves as Muslim and 6% of the Irish population claim to have no religion."

One of the religious education teachers interviewed stated that the lack of clarity regarding ethos creates a challenge for the teaching of religious education;

Teacher 1: “The lack of definition of what exactly ethos is, is a challenge... it does at times leave the religious education department in the school, or the chaplaincy department, in a sort of limbo because we are not quite sure where to go...it shouldn't just depend on the actual people that are working in the school”.

One of the CEOs argued that the vagueness about ethos and apparent reluctance on the part of the sector to define their ethos is also due to enrolment issues and the wishes of parents for denominational education, particularly in rural areas;

CEO 4: “If our schools stand up and say ‘ok we are going to be legislated for as the non-faith schools in Ireland; ‘the secular school’ then we will be punished for it. We will lose our enrolments, particularly in rural Ireland – no doubt”.

It is clear that this lack of clarity around ethos definition needs to be addressed so that ETB schools can review their practices and policies regarding the diverse nature of their current school populations. As publicly-managed schools, the religious orientation and world-views of all students must be catered for and an alternative model of educational provision to the denominational system in Ireland needs to be developed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION?

The changing nature of religious education (RE) and the challenges facing RE teachers was a strong theme throughout all of the interviews conducted. The NCCA Religious Education syllabus has been embraced by most ETB/VEC schools in Ireland and holds a set of aims that point to the possibility of a common programme being taught for all faiths and world-views in the classroom. However, the question remains regarding the requirements of Circular Letter 73/74.

If this is still legally binding, it requires ETB/VEC schools to provide religious worship and instruction for pupils in accordance with the rites, practice and teaching of the religious denomination to which the pupil belongs. This challenge was highlighted by one of the RE teachers interviewed;

Teacher 2: “The greatest challenge that there is, is the level of diversity that exists in VEC schools... How does one person cater for all of those needs, in one room, at the same time in a timetabled class for 40 minutes and keep in at the same time with what is outlined in Circular Letter 7/79 which is the final word on the provision of religious instruction or education in a VEC school?”

The existence of the terms religious education and religious instruction creates complexity in the argument. The terms are not interchangeable and mean quite different things. Legislative documents referring to VEC schools clearly refer to ‘religious instruction’ taking place during the school day. However, due to the growing secularisation of Ireland and the complexity of welcoming different religions into Irish schools, most educators, particularly at second level, prefer to adopt the term ‘religious education’. This term implies a broader, more phenomenological approach to education about religions. This may be justified as a more inclusive practice in ETB schools but the term ‘religious instruction’ still holds legal and constitutional implications. This clearly points to the need for legalisation regarding religious instruction in ETB schools to be reviewed.

The provision for students of different beliefs, particularly humanist or atheistic beliefs, was also raised by some CEOs.

CEO 4: “...we are silent on the issue of accommodating people who are not belonging to a faith and don't believe that faith education is worthwhile for



their children. We are silent of any alternative provision, for example, ethics or philosophy...so we are silent on what should be done when the religion class is going on, other than sending some children to supervised study."

CEO 3: "...how do we educate those who claim to be of no faith and who want to absent themselves from anything to do with the teaching of religion and, to a limited degree, the faith formation that might be associated with that? Should we develop an ethics programme to respond to such students or not?"

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN EUROPE

The question remains as to which approach to religious education is most suitable for publicly-managed ETB schools in Ireland. It is helpful to look to our European neighbours regarding how they have negotiated religious education in their schools. In reality, the term 'religious education' is generally employed in public schools in Europe. It is a subject that is believed to have potential to promote democratic citizenship, the common good and mutual understanding (Council of Europe, 2006). In Finland, for example, where 80% of the population are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, religious education is a compulsory subject both in comprehensive schools and in secondary schools, mostly in the creed of the Lutheran majority. However, along with studying about other religions, every student can receive religious education according to his or her own religion if the denomination is registered in Finland. Interestingly, religious education within a particular tradition will be organised if there is a minimum of three pupils in the school belonging to that tradition. Also, because religious education is a compulsory subject, pupils who do not belong to any religious group are taught ethics.

An intense and long public debate took place in Norway in the 1990s, where 86% of the population are Lutheran.

"The advent of the new Junior Cycle Framework offers an opportunity for ETB schools to review their approach to religious and ethics education and how they cater for religious difference."

The result was that confessional religious education was displaced by a non-confessional approach called 'Christianity, Other Religions and Moral Education' in 1997. The aim of the religious education programme is to enable students to deal with existing plurality while recognising Norway's cultural heritage.

The advent of the new Junior Cycle Framework offers an opportunity for ETB schools to review their approach to religious and ethics education and how they cater for religious difference. The teachers interviewed were fearful whether religious education would have a future in ETB schools but the CEOs interviewed emphasised their support for the continuation of religious education in their schools.

CEO 1: "I think it would be a very retrograde step if we just moved away from moral, ethical and spiritual development".

CEO 4: "...it is part of the education of a young person that they do engage in this dialogue...in a controlled environment...with a teacher, who is a professional, present to talk about the issues of ethics, morality and peer pressure and spirituality because they are all issues that young people talk about".

The key question that needs to be answered is whether the circular letters and memoranda of agreement regarding religious instruction still hold legal weight following the introduction of the new ETB Bill and the new Junior Cycle Framework. Until this is clarified, policy and practice and the teaching of RE will remain vague.

FAITH DEVELOPMENT IN ETB SCHOOLS

The issue of faith development and the spiritual development of students

in ETB/VEC schools was also a theme widely discussed by all interviewees. Circular Letter 73/74 requires VEC schools to provide religious worship and instruction for pupils in accordance with the rites, practice and teachings of the religious denomination to which the pupil belongs. However, this is logistically challenging due to the plurality of religious beliefs now existing in schools.

Teacher 1: "We wouldn't have the personnel from within the school but you could always source people. The issue that the principal would have here then is 'well, how do you cater for the humanists?' and 'how do you cater for the atheists?'"

The lack of clarity regarding how VEC/ETB schools should respond to the faith development of students is clear in the variety of opinions offered by the interviewees:

CEO 1: "The schools wouldn't see their role as nurturing the faith in a specific religion sense".

Teacher 1: "...the whole area of faith development and the whole area of running rituals and running services and all that is a grey area. I am in dialogue with the principal and vice-principal in the school, trying to tease out what exactly we can and we can't do because they are not 100% sure either".

Teacher 2: "...we teach the exam syllabus here...but we don't have a faith element".

It seems that the tradition in VEC schools has been to cater for the faith development of Catholic students and sometimes students from other Christian denominations. One of the CEOs stated:

CEO 1: "We may acknowledge the Muslims in the school and we may know when Ramadan is on and when they have their festivals but we don't engage

in as full a way as we would obviously with Catholic children....I suppose the easy response is to back away from acknowledging the Catholic faith as strongly as we do so that we say that we treat them all the same but I'm not sure that is the best response..."

As a result of the advent of religious diversity and secularism in ETB/VEC schools, many of the schools no longer cater for the faith or spiritual development of the variety of students and the interviewees had strong opinions on this also:

CEO 3: "I do believe that the spiritual side of the person has to be catered for as well as all the other aspects of the person".

Teacher 2: "...are kids in a VEC school at a disadvantage to kids going to denominational schools in terms of spiritual developmental support?"

Teacher 1: "...it doesn't sit with me personally not to have faith development. I find its lacking something. I think the faith development does add something to the children's education and, as far as I'm concerned, my experience of the VEC is that they are very forward thinking school; they sometimes have the best campus and the best facilities so why would they all of a sudden start omitting the faith development element?"

The 1998 Education Act states that "...A recognised school shall... promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students... having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school" (S.9 (d)). How should ETB schools of the future cater for the spiritual development of their students and are they still bound by the directives of the circular letters?

RITUALS AND RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

The area of faith development was also closely linked with the celebration of religious festivals and rituals in VEC schools. Many of the interviewees acknowledged that an increasing

number of students have less and less experience of ritual and prayer outside that which they are offered in the school context. However, despite the circular letters that exist instructing VEC schools to provide for the religious worship and instruction of all pupils in their schools, all of those interviewed stated that the area of religious celebrations has become a very grey area. However, there are many attempts to be inclusive and adopt an inter-faith approach:

Teacher 2: "...the end of year graduations, the Christmas celebrations...are always based on respect, morality and inclusiveness. It would be a celebration, there would be a reflection...but there would be no mass".

Teacher 1: "We keep an eye on the inter-faith calendar and just put signs up that read something like 'be mindful that Islamic students today are beginning Ramadan' and about different religious festivals".

The influence of Humanist and Atheist world-views regarding school rituals were also a cause for concern among some interviewees and have resulted in opportunities for dialogue in some of the schools:

CEO 1: "They are replacing Mass generally with some kind of ceremony that has spiritual reflections and maybe includes readings from different faiths... some people have difficulty with that because they don't want any faith represented but that's the challenge and if we are to include everybody we have to include the voice of faith as well as those that don't have a faith."

CEO 3: "... if people have a belief in God...they should be allowed to express that...therefore, to have a religious service or ceremony that doesn't include any reference to God, I suppose a very humanist type of ceremony, I just

don't think that is meeting the needs of the majority of the students that we would be trying to respond to".

In a publicly-managed school, it is necessary that all beliefs are respected and no communal celebrations are in conflict with the constitutional, legal or human rights of the students. The report from the Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector (2012) recommends that "... Boards of Management should develop a school policy, supported by Department guidelines, on religious and cultural celebrations in their schools. Boards should ensure that celebrations are inclusive, educational and respectful of the differing traditions of the children in their school" (p.93).

RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS

There was a sense from the interviewees that the issue of religious symbols in VEC/ETB schools was also often shied away from. One CEO acknowledged that the iconography in his schools were predominantly Catholic, while the two teachers interviewed felt very strongly about the display of symbols in their schools:

Teacher 2: "You should not put up a crucifix in a VEC school, unless you include all the various signs or symbols that pertain to everybody that's in the school. You cannot endorse one over the other...We don't have a crucifix, we don't have any religious symbols around the school at all."

Teacher 1: "In the early days we didn't even put up Christmas trees [but]... we started putting up Christmas trees because it came as a request from the student council...but we wouldn't do anything like a crib...or make the little oil lamps for Diwali for Hinduism or anything like that".

"Many of the interviewees acknowledged that an increasing number of students have less and less experience of ritual and prayer outside that which they are offered in the school context."



The solution to the accommodation of different religions and worldviews in some schools seems to have been the elimination of any religious symbols. The Forum on Patronage and Pluralism Report recommends that Boards of Management should develop school policy on the educational display of religious and non-religious artefacts in the school. "Such displays ought not to be exclusive to any one faith or tradition but should have a balance, reflective of the beliefs of children attending the schools" (2012, p. 93).

In 2011, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the 47 member-states of the Council of Europe (including Ireland), are not violating anyone's rights by displaying religious symbols like the crucifix in public places like the walls of State classrooms. Therefore, publicly-managed schools do not have to remove

religious symbols from their school environment to be inclusive but rather should ensure a fair representation of the various belief systems in their school.

It is clear from this small-scale study that many ETB schools are existing in a grey area regarding how to respond to religious diversity and this emphasises the need for clarity regarding the Department of Education memoranda and circular letters and for guidelines addressing these challenges. These complexities need to be addressed by policy-makers regarding religious education and ethos and require further debate by the new ETBs. The Council of Europe (2007) states that political and legal bodies have to adopt a progressive attitude towards religion which is itself evolving and must be scrupulous in safeguarding its citizen's freedom of conscience and religion, and ensuring

that it does not put any particular religious group at an advantage or disadvantage.

ETB schools are at an opportune time to own the public schooling space within the State and provide for all students, regardless of their faith or worldview. publicly-managed schools can provide a forum for open and respectful sharing and debate rather than seeking consensus or common programmes. Fielding and Moss put it eloquently:

...the essential tasks of the school in radical education are to expose children (and parents) to diversity and otherness, to enable them to think for themselves, and to equip them to live in a democracy of plural values, multiple identities and diverse ways of life... The aim is to reconcile individuals and ways of life honouring conflicting values to a life in common. We do not need common values in order to live together in peace. We need common institutions in which many forms of life can coexist (2011, p. 133).

Aiveen Mullally has a Masters Degree in Religion and Culture and is currently working in Marino Institute of Education lecturing in World Religions and Managing Religious Diversity in the Classroom. She began her career as a teacher of Religious Education and is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Religious Diversity in Education. Aiveen is author of the JMB Guidelines on the Inclusion of Students of Other Faiths in Catholic Secondary Schools (2010) and is currently drafting a set of guidelines for ETB schools on the Inclusion of Different Faiths and World-Views. She is interested in people's views on this topic and is welcoming feedback to this article (aiveen.mullally@mie.ie).

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Preventing and managing the risk of cyber-bullying in the ETB

By Rosemary Ryan, Risk Manager, IPB Insurance



Media coverage in recent times has reported an increased prevalence of cyber-bullying (e-bullying) and the impact it has on people's lives. This type of bullying can be directed at people of all ages in their personal and professional lives; it can impact on children, teenagers, adults, families, relationships and work. The impact can be minimal with little, if any disruption experienced by the person being bullied, to an impact of catastrophic consequence where a person may self-harm and take their own life.

Cyber-bullying is when instant messages, emails, text messages or webpages are used to spread rumours, make threats or harass persons. It can include written messages, photographs, videos or voice messages (Parenting Positively: Helping Teenagers to Cope with Bullying: Family Support Agency & Barnardos 2011).

"Cyber-bullying is when instant messages, emails, text messages or webpages are used to spread rumours, make threats or harass persons. It can include written messages, photographs, videos or voice messages."

Employees/students and others working for or providing services to the ETB may be at risk.

Carrying out a risk assessment to assess the level of risk of cyber-bullying in the ETB is the first step that should be taken to identify and implement appropriate management controls so that preventative measures can be implemented and so that the level of cyber-bullying risk can be managed.

Managing the implementation of the management controls through monitoring and audit to assess the level of compliance with the agreed management controls/policy/ procedure, etc. will assist in building a body of assurance while also identifying opportunities for improvement.

ETBs should be cognisant that there may be warning signs of cyber-bullying such as changes in behaviour;

alcohol/drug misuse; deterioration in a student's academic performance; changes in mood e.g. withdrawn, low energy, or more boisterous; loss of interest in usual pursuits, and expressions of hopelessness and helplessness.

The assessment of risk of cyber-bullying includes consideration of the likelihood of the risk occurring and the immediate impact and long term consequence if the risk materialises.

The management controls identified for implementation should be commensurate with the level of risk assessed. When considering the management controls for implementation involve employees, students, parents/guardians, professionals such as educational psychologists, etc so that the buy-in to the agreed controls will be enhanced.

Ignoring content which amounts to cyber-bullying can be seen as an acceptance of the aggressor's actions and may cause further isolation for the victim. Schools in particular should create awareness among students of the consequences of ignoring such behaviour online.

"Students should be informed that failing to report cyber-bullying may have serious consequences not only for the victim, but potentially for themselves."

To this end students should be encouraged to report (either via the tools provided by a social network, or to the designated employee with responsibility for Child Protection any inappropriate content or abuse which they may encounter online.

Students should be informed that failing to report cyber-bullying may have serious consequences not only for the victim, but potentially for themselves; furthermore those who are found to have aggravated the bullying e.g. 'liking', or 'reposting' content may be likewise considered to be engaging in bullying behaviour.

Organisations that are described as open learning organisations strive for excellence and promote an open and transparent culture. These organisations strive to learn from unexpected adverse events that could impact adversely on the achievement of strategy and plans. They also seek solutions to prevent re-occurrence of the adverse events, to implement corrective action and to communicate the learning to others by monitoring the implementation of the Code of Behaviour/policy/procedure by ensuring all those required to sign-off acceptance have done so; checking on a random basis that

employees and students understand their responsibilities for promoting a positive culture to eliminate cyber-bullying, and by evaluating learning from seminars/in-service training, etc.

If cyber-bullying manifests in the ETB it is important to note the duty of care that is owed to employees, students and others to prevent cyber-bullying and to understand that the duty of care may extend beyond the school boundary e.g. to the school bus; when students are away on educational trips or representing the school at sports events, etc.

If a report of cyber-bullying is received it is important that the ETB management action plan is activated. This should include establishing and documenting the facts, investigating the circumstances that gave rise to the report in the first instance and implementing appropriate controls to prevent re-occurrence.

If the report is indicative of very serious cyber-bullying it may be necessary to consider seeing additional competent persons to undertake the investigation.

Consideration should also be given as to whether a report should be made

to the appropriate statutory body/ies such as An Garda Síochána/Health Service Executive or the soon to be formed National Child and Family Support Agency

If you require further support/advice please contact: riskmanagement@ipb.ie.

Rosemary Ryan, RGN RCN RM H Dip (HSA) BA HSM MPM MSc, CMIOASH - Risk Manager. Following a career in the health service as Director of Nursing in St James's Hospital, Dublin and Altangeline Hospitals H&SS Trust, Derry. Rosemary leads the provision of client risk management services and has developed models of best practice to support the management of risk in the health service and local and education authorities.



<http://www.barnardos.ie/media-centre/news/latest-news/cyber-bullying-help-from-barnardos.html> (5th February 2013) and

<http://www.barnardos.ie/getting-involved/barnardos-your-school/barnardos-and-schools.html>

Well-being in post-primary schools – guidelines of mental health promotion and suicide prevention (Department of Education and Skills: 2013)

<http://antibullyingcampaign.ie/>

An Garda Síochána: provision of training on prevention and management of cyber-bullying

<http://www.spunout.ie/health/Healthy-mind/Bullying/Cyber-and-text-bullying>

"Connect with Respect" Garda campaign for Post Primary <http://www.garda.ie/Controller.aspx?Page=10567>

<http://www.slss.ie/evt/view/746>

<http://www.youthworksconsulting.co.uk/>

ETBI hosts European seminar to explore competences required by public service employees

ETBI, through its membership of the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE) is involved in a significant European research project jointly led by European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public services (CEEP) and EFEE.

The project explores the competences that public service employees need to have in order to ensure the delivery of public services that meet the constantly changing needs of those who use public services. The project maps the current and future competences needed in public services, creating best practice guidelines and generating European policy recommendations about how the competences provided by education and training institutions might better meet the competence requirements of public service employers in Europe.

This project focuses on the following public services: education and

training, health care, public transport, energy and public administration.

The core work of the project involves the research team interviewing those who line-manage public servants and those involved in the management and delivery of education and training programmes to prepare prospective public servants. For example, the researchers interviewed two second level school principals and two university lecturers involved in the provision of initial teacher education in Ireland.

The project involves two seminars, one of which was hosted by ETBI in Piper's Hill on 7 June 2013. The second seminar will be held in Amsterdam on 27 September 2013.

The purpose of the seminars is twofold. Firstly, it allows the researchers to share their preliminary findings with those managing the project and with a select group of public service employers/managers and education/training providers. Here, the discussion informs on the progress of the research and the development and refinement of the project's recommendations. Secondly, the seminars provide an opportunity for new inputs in relation to identified best practice in closing the gap between the competences the education/training institutions provide to their students and the competences that public service providers need their employees to have in order to meet the needs of their clients.

"The core work of the project involves the research team interviewing those who line-manage public servants and those involved in the management and delivery of education and training programmes to prepare prospective public servants."



Front Row (left to right): Alessandro Camilleri (HERA, Italy) Anna Kwiatkiewicz & Eckhard Voss (research team), David Simmonds (EFEE), Catherine Moynihan (Principal, Cross & Passion College, Kilcullen), and Bianka Stege (EFEE)
Back Row (left to right): Patricia O'Brien (Kildare-Wicklow ETB), Mark White (HSE), René van Schalkwijk (EUproVET), David Anciaux (CEEP), Pat O'Mahony (ETBI), Michael Moriarty (ETBI)

The EU Youth Guarantee

James Doorley – Assistant Director, National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)



There has been much discussion about the Youth Guarantee over the last year both in Ireland and at European level. In this article I explore the background, potential and implications of the Youth Guarantee for young jobseekers.

Almost five years into the crisis young people are still bearing a heavy toll as a result of the economic collapse. The youth unemployment rate in Ireland is 26.6%¹ with 27,857² young people now among the long-term unemployed having been out of work for 12 months or more. The rate of unemployment varies significantly between young people with different levels of educational attainment. The 2011 census showed that youth unemployment among third-level graduates was 18% but is as high as 65% for those with lower secondary level qualifications³. Ireland also has the 4th highest rate of young people 'not in education, employment or training' in the EU at 18.4%.⁴

As a result many commentators including NYCI have called for a more coherent and comprehensive response to meet the needs of young jobseekers, especially the most disadvantaged. In our 2011 report on youth unemployment "Creating a Future for Young Jobseekers"⁵ NYCI recommended that the Irish Government should

examine the introduction of a Youth Guarantee scheme here. Since 2011, support for the proposal has grown substantially both nationally and across the European Union.

The concept of a Youth Guarantee is not a new one, having originated in the Nordic countries in the early 1980s. So what in practice does it offer? Essentially the initiative would 'guarantee' a young person, between 18 and 24, education, training, work experience and/or training. Alternatively a combined work placement within a defined period of time after leaving school or becoming unemployed would be offered. The proposal agreed at European level under the Irish EU Presidency in February 2013 states that the Youth Guarantee should be offered to young people within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed.

In exploring how a Youth Guarantee scheme might work in Ireland, it is useful to examine how such schemes, which have been in operation in other European countries for a number of years such as Sweden and Finland, have fared. The evaluation of the Youth Guarantee scheme in Finland indicates that it has reduced youth unemployment and inactivity. It is estimated in Sweden that 46% of participants have benefited from

participation in a Youth Guarantee scheme. The Swedish and Finnish schemes were found to be more effective for young people who were new to the labour market compared to long-term unemployed participants. NYCI strongly supports the Youth Guarantee and believes it can offer both hope and a pathway to employment for young people. It will only work, however, if certain conditions are satisfied. Most importantly, it needs to be properly resourced to ensure sufficient high quality education, training and job experience places.

WHAT ABOUT THE COST?

It is difficult to estimate the cost of introducing the Youth Guarantee scheme in Ireland. The International Labour Organisation estimates that the Youth Guarantee in Sweden costs approximately €6,600⁶ per participant. The recent allocation of €6bn in the multi-annual financial framework for 2014-2020 towards the European Union's "Youth Employment Initiative" fund and the subsequent decision to frontload the spending of this money in 2014 and 2015 is a first step. For the Guarantee to have maximum effect, however, the Irish government will have to leverage other funds to support the implementation of the Guarantee. With a little imagination and cooperation between Government, education, business and the youth-work sector, such leverage should be possible.

As of now, Ireland will qualify for funding as a region with a youth unemployment level of 25% or more, however the Irish Government will also have to invest

"Essentially the initiative would 'guarantee' a young person, between 18 and 24, education, training, work experience and/or training."

"Failure to engage with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged may result in the onset of disengagement, a legacy of long-term unemployment and the emergence of distrust by many young jobseekers in state institutions."

significant resources. The cost of doing nothing to address youth unemployment is very significant. The negative social impact of unemployment on the wellbeing of young people, their families and their communities is incalculable. A recent Eurofound report⁷ examined the cost in terms of the loss to EU economies in 2011 as a result of our inability to integrate young jobseekers into the labour market (in foregone earnings, unpaid taxes and an excess of welfare transfer). The estimates for Ireland suggest that the economic cost of youth unemployment in Ireland is in the region of 2% of GDP or over €3bn per annum.

We need to recognise that young people 'not in education, employment or training' are not a homogeneous group. The Eurofound report recommends that a particular focus is given to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable group of young jobseekers; otherwise we are ignoring the lessons from other jurisdictions. Failure to engage with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged may result in the onset of disengagement, a legacy of long-term unemployment and the emergence of distrust by many young jobseekers in state institutions. As a result they may be less likely to engage with public employment and training services in the future. Also there is a danger they will miss the opportunities presented and be pushed

once again to the back of the queue.

NYCI believes that the youth work sector has a role to play. Youth work and youth workers have the capacity to be 'the bridge' between young people and further education and employment services. Youth workers are already engaging with marginalised and excluded young people; many with limited resources. NYCI believes that resources should be provided as part of the Youth Guarantee scheme to

support voluntary youth organisations in partnership with local education and training providers to develop and deliver programmes to support young people who are in the NEETs category to engage with the existing education and public employment services.

While there has been significant political progress on the Youth Guarantee at national and European level to date, the real challenge lies ahead in translating the policy into reality for young jobseekers. We believe it is possible to develop and deliver a Youth Guarantee scheme which gives young jobseekers hope, direction and a foothold onto the labour market. Given the scale of the unemployment challenge nothing less is acceptable.



¹ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-31052013-BP/EN/3-31052013-BP-EN.PDF Eurostat Unemployment, May 2013

² Answer to Dáil Question 371, 372, May 28th 2013

³ <http://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/documents/census2011profile3/Profile,3full,doc,for,web,sig,amended.pdf>

⁴ http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/Economic_Benefit_Youthwork_2012.pdf P15

⁵ <http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/Creating-a-future-for-Young-jobseekers-web-version.pdf>

⁶ Euro zone Job Crisis, Trends and Policy Responses, International Labour Organisation July 2012

⁷ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf>

A brief insight into the progress of the Instructional Leadership Programme over the last year

By Joan Russell, Cork ETB

"This programme affects me minute by minute and hour by hour".

The Instructional Leadership Programme (ILP) has gone from strength to strength again in 2012/2013. Cohort 3 graduated in March 2013 and Cohort 4 commenced. Cohort 5, is due to commence in November 2013. This brief insight will illustrate the recent developments of the ILP over the last year.

The highlights of the year included, the First National Conference on Instructional Leadership, October 2012, the first ever Diploma Course in Instructional Leadership offered through NUIG, the first Evaluation session of the ILP by the steering committee, further development of the website www.instructionaleadership.ie and the publishing of Newsletter 2 and 3, all of which has really promoted the potential of the ILP to transform the Irish classroom.

The first ILP National Conference in October 2012, entitled Opening Classroom Doors – Instructional Leadership: Nurturing Excellence in Teaching & Learning, we examined the potential of how IL can support School Self-Evaluation. Dr Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector, DES, was the Keynote Speaker. The workshops, a vital part of the National Conference, supported teachers to engage with each other, using a common language for the first time to understand how making conscious decisions of practice can transform the classroom environment. The twelve participants on the Diploma course in NUIG, on "Leading Learning" have now completed year 1 of a 2 year Post Graduate Diploma.

The IL sessions took place in March

and November 2012, and hosted representatives from the DES Inspectorate, Initial Teachers Educators, Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), The Teaching Council and NAMSE.

The first evaluation session took place in Carlow 20 May 2013. The title of the evaluation workshop was "Teacher Voice". A questionnaire was distributed in advance to Cohort 1 and Cohort 2, the results of which formed the introduction on the day. Sessions on the "The impact of IL on your Professional Practice and Personal Growth", "Impact and implementation on ILP on your school/centre" and "How ILP has supported the implementation of current educational policy" followed.

It was astounding and very reassuring that the greatest influence of the ILP was on the personal and professional development of the teachers; "This programme affects me on a minute by minute and hour by hour", "My questioning is now much more thoughtful", "It has made me, helped me rethink how I work as a teacher", "More confident, more collaborative", and "the students are now at the centre of the learning, not the content". Those schools where the rollout was achieved were very satisfied with the impact on their school or centre "there was a great change in the school as a result of the ILP", "Teachers are now open to new ideas". "There is now more excitement about teaching in our school "Inspectors validating the IL work gives it more credibility". In addition there was a resounding approval that ILP has the capacity to address current educational policy. Literacy and Numeracy were highlighted in the feedback as were School Self Evaluation (SSE), Induction and Mentoring, WSE



recommendations, inspections, School Development Planning and Junior Cycle Reform. Indeed the ILP has caught the imagination of all sectors of Education in Ireland and the excitement that we have really begun to open the doors of the school and classroom as well as the hearts and imaginations of educators was palpable at the evaluation sessions.

The second National Conference on ILP will be held on October 11th and 12th. The theme for the conference is, "Instructional Leadership and Induction and Mentoring in Post Primary School and Further Ed settings". Among the invitees will be representatives from the teacher training colleges and from the Teaching Council. Tomás O Ruairc, Director of the Teaching Council will be the keynote speaker.

The impact of the ILP has influenced some ETBs to develop Teaching and Learning Committees in their schools, for teachers to connect and develop their Instructional Leadership capacities. Some ETBs are now offering their schools "Days of Learning" to further consolidate the ILP in schools. A Leargas Initiative is also being researched to further enhance the ILP in Ireland. This initiative would see Ireland engaging with other countries on the ILP. We are indeed proud of our achievements in relation to ILP in Ireland and feel confident in sharing our experiences internationally.

We look forward to a challenging and exciting year ahead as we strive to further enhance the experiences of students and teachers in classrooms across all post-primary sectors.

SmartVET –

building the ICT capacity of schools, colleges and centres of education and training to transform teaching and learning

By Pat O'Mahony, ETBI Education Policy & Research Officer

WHAT IS SMARTVET?

SmartVET is a two-year (November 2011 to November 2013) transfer of innovation project funded under the Lifelong Learning Programme of the EU. The project partnership includes partners from Ireland (Fast track to IT (FIT), Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (ETB), and ETBI), Italy (ENAI FVG), the Netherlands (TELLConsult) and UK (City College Norwich – a College of Further and Higher Education). The project is also supported by the Irish associate partner - National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE).

The objectives of the project are:

- to transfer good practice in the delivery of education and training using Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) from the project's European partners
- to participating teachers/tutors in Kildare and Wicklow ETB;
- to adapt and improve this practice in the course of the project;
- to develop a bespoke model for building the capacity of teachers and tutors in the effective use of IWBs that is suited to the particular circumstances that prevail in Irish education and training; and
- to transfer this model to the whole of the education and training sector in Ireland and, subsequently to disseminate it as widely as possible across Irish education.

An IWB is a large display screen that connects to a computer and a projector – it is not simply a static substitute for a blackboard. The projector projects the

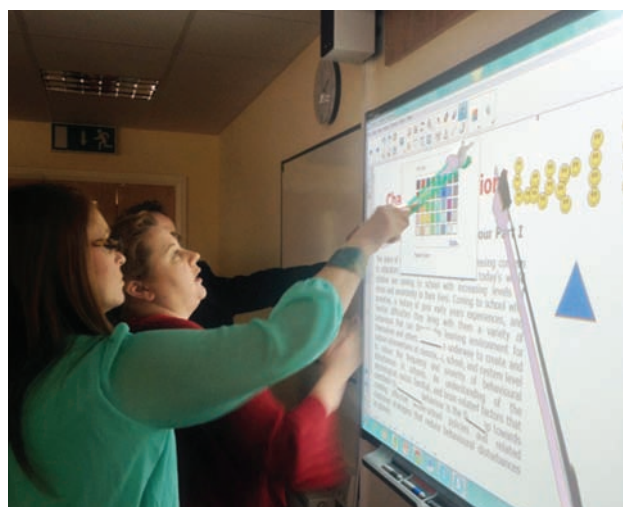
computer's desktop onto the board's surface, where users control the computer with a pen, finger, or other device. The board is either mounted to a wall or on a floor stand, and a variety of accessories, enable interactivity.

PROJECT RATIONALE

There is a widespread acknowledgement within education and training of the need to change from a 'teaching-led' model to a 'learning-led' model, with the emphasis moving from learners being taught what they need to retain for the remainder of their life (ostensibly) to acquiring the skills and dispositions to become willing and able lifelong learners.

In a world where information of any kind is no more than the touch of a mouse button away, the function of education and training is no longer to provide learners with information but to provide them with the competences to go on learning for the remainder of their lives. This will require them to interact continuously with knowledge, technology, politics, economics and social and cultural structures that are in a permanent state of flux. Today, citizens are inundated with perpetually changing information and contexts and one

of the key functions of education and training must be to provide learners with the skills and dispositions to gauge what new information is useful and what is not, having regard to the context. Ten years ago, we didn't have Facebook or digital designers or e-commerce or wind farms (to any great extent) and engineering was about the construction of roads and buildings rather than medical devices. The Web, which is just 20 years old, is literally transforming every aspect of our lives; indispensable in many ways but also posing serious challenges around privacy and security. Technology is now all-pervasive, and has an impact on every aspect of our lives, whether we like it or not. This poses significant challenges to educators as educators, to educators as learners, and to those of all ages participating in education and training.



Bray YouthReach Champion Gillian Clarges provides hands on IWB support.

LEARNERS MUST BE ENGAGED IN THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

In this milieu, the notion of learners sitting quietly in serried rows and absorbing information is redundant. Twenty first century education and training cannot just be about having learners subjected to an experience. Rather, it must be about learners being intimately engaged in the educational experience – irrespective of whether the experience is about practical subjects such as woodwork and art, or those subjects perceived to be ‘academic’ such as philosophy and history. Effective learning is no longer about learners being able to regurgitate information or even about being able to repeat mechanical procedures. Rather, it is about learners internalising their learning and using what is learned to solve new problems, to interpret the world around them as it changes before their eyes, to inform relationship development and so on. Here, the Confucian proverb: ‘tell me and I’ll forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I’ll understand’, is more apt than it ever was. Even if it was to be assumed that education is still substantially about the transmission of information, on the basis of both research and personal experience, we know that the capacity of learners to concentrate on what they are being taught, using a teacher-centred approach, for more than some 15 minutes at any one time, is quite limited.

If we want to maximise the return on our investment in education and training we must maximise engagement between teachers and learners and between the learners and what they are learning. And this engagement must take place in a context where teachers and learners fully appreciate that, more than anything else, what is being acquired is the capacity to go on learning about the things that they deem relevant to all aspects of their lives (in the family, in the home and at work) in a world where change is

fundamentally the only constant. In the second decade of the 21st century, it is neither possible to predict with any certainty what jobs will exist in the future nor what particular skills workers will require even if they continue in the same employment. We can simply forecast that what is commonplace today is likely to be changed tomorrow. This is the perspective that underpins the SmartVET project.

The core objective of SmartVET is to develop a sustainable model for supporting the initial and continuous professional development needs of teachers/tutors in the ETB sector in the use of interactive technology (specifically IWBs) for teaching and learning. There is also the expectation that this model may be adapted for the continuous professional development of all involved in the delivery of education and training in relation to using modern information and communications technology to enhance teaching and learning. While the State has invested significant funds in the provision of information technology in schools and colleges, there has been no concomitant investment in building the capacity of those who deliver education and training to use these resources effectively. The SmartVET project provides a tested model for building this capacity and this model will be capable of being adapted, as new technologies come on stream, to build teacher and trainer capacity continuously.

WHAT INTERACTIVE WHITEBOARDS CAN DO

While there are several technologies that can make teaching and learning more effective, the big advantage of IWBs is that, where used properly, they facilitate the seamless integration of digital technologies, hardware, software and traditional teaching practices and, in doing so enable teachers to differentiate their teaching and individualise student learning to the maximum extent possible. While only a few short years ago class groups of



adults or children, tended to be quite homogeneous, today’s heterogeneous classrooms demand the use of this kind of technology, if desired learner outcomes are to be achieved. Indeed, the effectiveness of the inclusive classroom depends very significantly on teachers making the most of modern information technologies both to differentiate teaching and individualise learning.

Among other things, IWBs can facilitate the following.

- Allows the teacher to combine the power of a whiteboard with the power of a computer to provide dynamic lessons, to write notes on the whiteboard with a pen, to save these notes for future use, and to share them with learners via the Web.
- The creation of reusable interactive exercises and tests. Improved student motivation, interest and engagement.
- Learner interaction with teachers, content and other learners
- Collaborative and cooperative learning, where students learn from and with one another rather than relying exclusively on the teacher to teach them – very much a preparation for lifelong learning
- Learners learning via a variety of sensory channels.
- Education and training catering to different learning styles.
- Teachers preparing teaching and learning resources in advance of lessons being delivered and storing them in a way that they can be easily retrieved and amended, as required – from virtually anywhere there is Internet access.
- An individual teacher, a teaching faculty or a group of teachers from

different institutions building a library of constantly updatable multimedia, hypertexted and interactive resources – all of which may be shared with learners as required.

- Teachers collaborating with other teachers in the production of teaching and learning resources.
- Accessing teaching and learning resources developed by other teachers right across the Globe.
- Recording a lesson (both voice and presentation) and making it available to learners via the Internet, thus catering to those who missed the class or those who may wish to revisit a lesson for revision purposes.
- Teachers being able to focus more attention on learning than on teaching and on providing feedback to learners on their achievements rather than subject content.

IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING

The appropriate use of IWBs can effectively transform teaching and learning not only in a way that significantly facilitates the achievement of desired learning outcomes but also by improving the professional satisfaction of teachers. Currently, teachers do much of the work in class and, because the engagement of students with the learning is not all it might be, this can contribute to teachers feeling jaded and frustrated, as their efforts do not appear to be appreciated. Whiteboard technology can help bridge the gap between teacher and learner and content and learner, thus contributing to the creation of a collaborative and cooperative learning environment, where students take responsibility for their own learning and the role of the teacher is to support students in their learning rather than, as it were, to force learning on unwilling recipients.

This transformation cannot, however, be achieved by schools, colleges or centres simply investing in whiteboard

technology. The capacity of staff to use this technology appropriately needs to be developed. Here, work by Marzano & Haystead (2009)¹ indicates that the appropriate use of interactive whiteboard technology delivered a 16 percentile point gain in student achievement. This means that a student who achieves at the 50th percentile in a classroom without the technology could be expected to score at the 66th percentile in a classroom using whiteboards – quite a significant improvement.

Interestingly, however, the Marzano and Haystead study found that, in 23% of cases, the use of IWBs actually resulted in lower levels of student achievement and, when they explored the reasons for this lower achievement, they found it was due to the inappropriate use of the technology. So building teacher capacity to use such technologies is not just about providing the technical skills to use the technology, it is also about providing an appreciation of how the different IWB tools should be used as part of the overall mix of teaching strategies.

As previously stated, SmartVET is about transferring good practice in the delivery of education and training using IWBs from the European partners to the teachers/tutors in what was Kildare and Wicklow ETB and adapting and improving this practice to craft a model for training teachers and tutors in the use of IWBs that is suited to the particular circumstances that prevail in Irish education and training. Then, once the model has been developed and tested it will be communicated to all other ETBs and, subsequently, disseminated as widely as possible – across the whole education and training sector, initially in Ireland and subsequently throughout the EU. The project will also focus on the use of IWBs in the delivery CPD programmes for teachers.

IWBs and other technological tools have in recent years become relatively commonplace in schools, colleges and centres of education. However, they remain under-utilised because there has not been a structured approach to providing teachers and tutors with the knowledge, skills and dispositions essential to using these tools effectively to improve teaching and learning. The SmartVET project was originally designed to remedy this by identifying good practice throughout Europe and transferring it to the ETB Sector in Ireland.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

As well as a 'road-tested' model for training teachers and tutors in the use of IWBs, the SmartVET project, which will conclude in early November 2013, will result in the production of the following:

- A needs analysis of teachers/tutors regarding the training they feel they need in order to become competent in the use of IWBs.
- An online Community of Practice to facilitate teachers/tutors sharing and collaborating around the effective use of IWBs.
- Training Programmes, Learning Manuals and CPD materials on the effective use of IWBs to enhance teaching and learning.

The model for building the capacity of teachers/tutors to use IWBs effectively and everything else that has been learned in the course of the SmartVET project will be showcased in a national conference in the second week of October 2013 and the conference will be followed by four regional seminars to introduce teachers and tutors to the model. Full details of the conference and the seminars will be posted on the ETBI website and those of the other partners.

¹ Marzano, R. J., & Haystead, M. (2009). Final report on the evaluation of the Promethean technology. Englewood, CO: Marzano Research Laboratory

Exemplar Projects

'We have already issued a call for exemplar projects that will test the Framework this year and ensure that we bring forward a pipeline of projects through the development phase. We want to prove the concept at scale utilising a number of pilot projects in 2013. These projects will be provided with technical assistance to help them become investment ready. By introducing this discipline to the market we will instill confidence in project promoters, energy service companies and most importantly the banking industry who underwrite them'.

– Pat Rabbitte, launch of the National Energy Efficiency Framework and Fund, February 2013

WHAT ARE EXEMPLAR PROJECTS?

The potential for energy savings of 20-50% for many buildings, facilities and systems is widely researched. More importantly, the technical feasibility of the majority of energy saving technologies and methods has been proven.

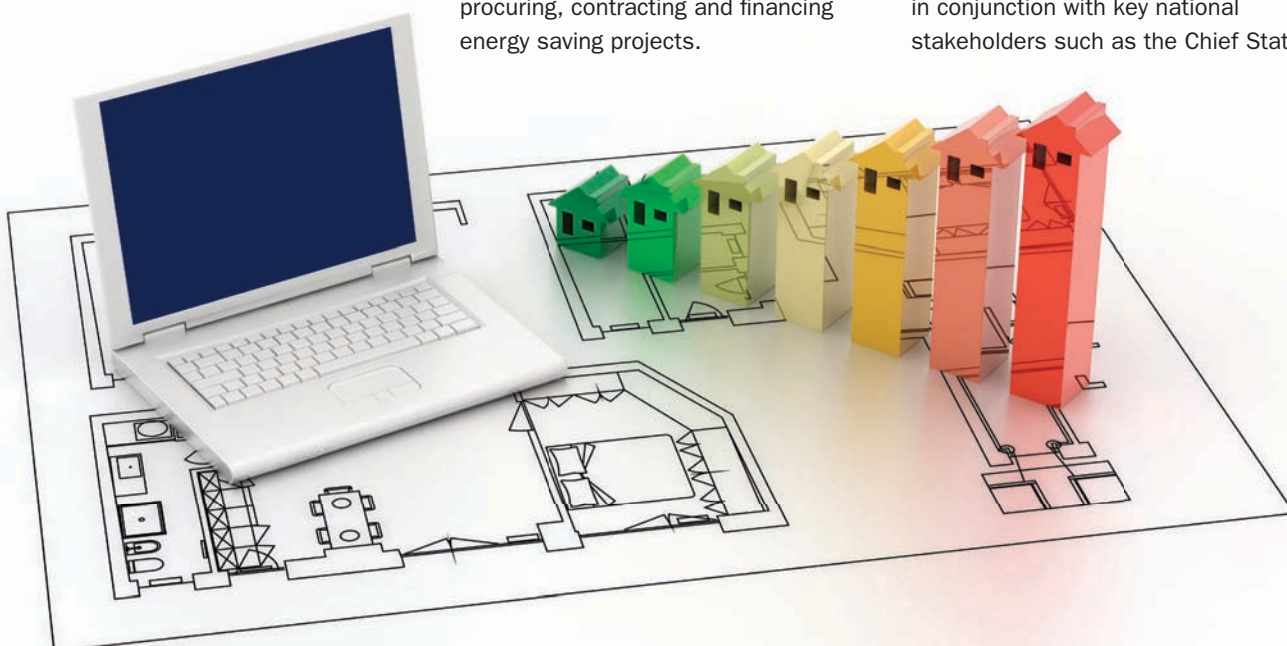
Many organisations through implementation of structured energy management approaches or otherwise have a register of potential energy-saving projects. They are now struggling to resource their implementation. Traditional methods of scoping, designing, procuring, financing and implementing energy saving projects can only deliver a small portion of the potential. The limiting factors are typically the resources required to scope, design and procure solutions, and the financial resources for any capital works. Ireland cannot deliver the scale of the energy savings required for competitiveness and job creation using traditional processes. New market accepted methods of delivery are required.

Exemplar Projects will road test new and innovative methods, enabling a significant scaling up of energy-saving projects completed in the public and private sectors. In essence these projects will act as pioneers for others in their respective sectors to follow. They will test new processes for procuring, contracting and financing energy saving projects.

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) have developed a National Energy Services Framework (the Framework), which brings together for the first time the processes, standard forms of contract, procurement methods, measurement and verification protocols, tools and templates to implement energy efficiency projects delivered through Energy Service Companies (ESCOs).

An Initial Draft of the Framework is available at http://www.seai.ie/Your_Business/Energy_Performance_Contracting. The Framework is a major deliverable under the Action Plan for Jobs. An accepted and working Framework will create a market demand for energy services, sustaining jobs in providers of such services and their suppliers, and creating potential for new businesses to serve domestic and international demand.

For the public sector, these new processes are being developed in conjunction with key national stakeholders such as the Chief State



"Exemplar Projects will road test new and innovative methods, enabling a significant scaling up of energy saving projects completed in the public and private sectors."

Solicitors Office, the Department of Public Expenditure and the National Procurement Office. Private sector organisations can adopt and utilise the documentation as required. The Framework will align with the National Energy Efficiency Fund (the Fund), which is a €70m fund created by government to provide a source of dedicated funding for energy efficiency projects in the public and private sectors.

By road testing, proving, and improving the Framework's processes, tools and documentation, the Exemplar Projects will determine accepted practice for implementing ESCO type projects. Collectively, delivering successful Exemplar projects will create trust amongst clients, ESCO providers and financiers alike.

WHAT'S EXPECTED FROM EXEMPLAR PROJECT ORGANISATIONS?

Organisations or Client organisations are those committed at the highest level to

- Implement an energy services project utilising (where applicable for the private sector) the processes and documentation in the Framework
- Working with and providing feedback to SEAI throughout the process so as to modify and improve the Framework Working with and providing feedback to the Financing Entity's Fund manager,
- For the public sector, progress through a number of stage gates before tendering the project is required. The Client organisation must also be or become members of the SEAI Public Sector Partnership programme as a demonstration of their commitment to energy management in general before then

committing to a specific ESCO project.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING AN EXEMPLAR PROJECT?

- Provision of advisors for finalising the initial scoping stage, and also assessing the detailed business case stages of an energy services project implementation process
- Access to, on agreement with SEAI, a panel of ESCO legal and technical experts to comment upon or advise upon a particular issue or clause of concern to the Client organisation
- Dedicated network and group approach for public and private sector Client organisation project teams
- Provision of tailored and detailed training programme for public and private sector Client project teams
- Advice and assistance to engage with the parent government body, or private sector's corporate body, or other key stakeholders to progress the project
- Client organisations will receive a significant amount of promotion, case studies and will be market leaders in their sector.

HOW DO I BECOME AN EXEMPLAR?

The call for Exemplars was announced in February 2013. Interest can be expressed by completing the Stage 1 Initial Scoping Questionnaire and submitting it to SEAI. Please see the Framework

and associated Appendices on the SEAI website.

CONTACT DETAILS

Public body client organisations, should contact their Partnership Support Manager (PSM) to discuss the early stages of the project, or contact alan.ryan@seai.ie with specific requests.

Private sector client organisations, should contact their Agreement Support Manager, or Large Industry Energy Network coordinator to discuss the early stages of the project, or contact ivan.sproule@seai.ie with specific requests.



BREATHE- TOGETHER WE CAN CHANGE THE LANDSCAPE

Geraldine Canning, Cork ETB



We take our first breath as we enter this world and for the rest of our lives we will breathe every moment of every day. How can we do it more easily?

Our country has too many problems for our politicians and policy makers, so we need to become pro-active within our communities to help ourselves. More and more of our young people are experiencing a mental health problem. What are we doing about it? Why are so many depending on alcohol, drugs or self-harm to cope? Where are their coping skills?

As a society we are failing to deal with this everyday reality. We need to be there for our young people. They need to know we are there. Everyone needs a significant other, a caring adult who can listen. Contact with caring adults and a sense of connection with the school/centre are major protective factors against a variety of disruptive behaviours including; substance abuse, interpersonal violence and suicide. Building a more supportive culture in the school/centre involves emotional, structural and problem-solving support. Staff and parents are key caregivers in the lives of our young people.

The Breathe programme will create a strong awareness around positive mental health. It will focus on changing attitudes and improving links between teachers parents and teenagers. The school community is an extension of the family unit and we must ensure the core is healthy. We must adopt a unified approach based on knowledge and common sense, in order to bring about change. Most programmes tend to deal with suicide at the intervention and postvention stage, whereas this particular programme asks the question why do we get that far? The role of the teacher is critical but limited. The overarching role of schools/centres in the prevention of all student disruptive behaviours is to maintain a competent community.

Similar to the campaign around safety awareness on our roads, this is an awareness programme on positive interaction with each other. We must stop and take a breath and learn how to cope. All members of our community should adopt this heads up approach. We need to demedicalise the problem and realise we can all be part of the solution. It's often the last key in the bunch that opens the lock.

BREATHE is a joint partnership between the public/private sector Cork Education and Training Board and the Gaiety School of Acting The National Theatre School of Ireland. It is a professional response to the ever increasing suicide trend. Research indicates that schools that incorporate music, art, drama, dance and creative writing into their curriculum significantly increase a student's overall success in school. Professor John Westburnham suggests that social relationships contribute to the variables affecting effective learning. There is consensus in the suicide prevention field that the development of a centre policy and procedures represents a very critical component of comprehensive centre-based suicide prevention programmes.

Based on this research a programme was piloted in County Cork during the Spring of 2013. The team created a unique training programme to improve the social and emotional lives of students. Through participative workshops, skills were taught informally through the creative arts in a non-threatening environment where each participant's contribution was welcomed and valued, and indeed helped shape the overall programme.

Involvement in the "Breathe" initiative is a process. "Breathe" follows a series of stages and central to them are 3 interactive workshops. These will be facilitated by trained professionals under the guidance of

The Breathe programme will create a strong awareness around positive mental health. It will focus on changing attitudes and improving links between teachers parents and teenagers.

Patrick Sutton director of the Gaiety School of Acting. Staff, students and parents will participate in separate workshops based on five key words; communication, reengagement community, transformation and well-being. These are combined with a guided workshop on a whole school/centre approach to developing and implementing a policy on suicide prevention. This can be incorporated into school/centre development planning. As with all policies it will have to be communicated and understood by everyone. It must be active and serve a purpose. It will provide a framework for action within the school/centre.

Students will be participating in the workshops using various creative tools to express themselves. They will walk away with the feeling that they have been heard and that they

"Students will be participating in the workshops using various creative tools to express themselves. They will walk away with the feeling that they have been heard and that they achieved something that might help them."

achieved something that might help them. Through their own work and contribution, the student will create "their personal workshop". Parents participating in the workshop will have an opportunity to see the students work and during their workshop they will learn how to communicate better and re-engage with their children. What matters in this process is not the end product but the experiences people have as they work to create a greater understanding of each other and improve their social and emotional lives.

It is envisaged that when the school community partakes in this project they will have a greater awareness and understanding of the importance of emotional wellbeing. The interchange will help breakdown feelings of isolation and improve communication between all parties. Staff at schools will be encouraged to integrate the acquired knowledge into the classroom through Religion, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) and other classes. Parents will develop new skills in listening and engaging in dialogue with their children. Creative works, recordings and paintings will be documented and published on the Breathe website on the day of the workshop. Schools who participate in the sessions will have a separate page on the website and will be encouraged to maintain and continuously upload students' pieces. This should enable the project to stay live within the community and will give students a means of expression allowing them to explore new ideas and communicate on all aspects of their lives.

Emotional well-being is the key to unlocking the door. A whole school/centre approach towards positive mental health is critical to the wellbeing of our students. We tend to respond to issues rather than focus on preventing them. We deal with each issue in isolation offering a quick-fix. We must approach the emotional well-being of our young people through a planned and consistent programme. Bullying, alcohol, substance abuse and suicide are often the result of an unhealthy society. It is time to stop thinking only of our economic capital and start investing in our social capital – our young people. This is what the Breathe initiative aims to do.



Louth and Meath ETB intergenerational project wins EU award

Transition-year students from four schools in Louth and Meath ETB have been involved in a unique project with adults in the region to come up with prototypes for mobile apps that aim to cross the inter-generational divide.

The SANDPiT project involved 40 transition-year students from four post-primary schools in Louth and Meath ETB and a number of adults aged in their 60s and 70s who worked together to co-design the apps. It was a joint project between Louth and Meath ETB and the CASALA applied research centre based at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT).

The Louth students hail from Scoil Uí Mhuirí in Dunleer; St Oliver's Community College in Drogheda; Ó'Fiach College in Dundalk; and Bush Post Primary School in Cooley. They worked with the adults to develop the apps to prototype stage. The apps produced included an emotional well-being app, a local tourism app, an inter-generational quiz app, a community security app, and a 'Don't Panic' app to get help for the elderly quickly following a fall.

The project was selected for the GO-ACT award from the EU's 'Generations in Action' project. It was selected out of only four projects to present their work at the EU conference in Brussels that took place on June 17th and 18th. The project has been recognised for its innovative approach to intergenerational learning.

IT Project Manager, John Heeney, who headed up the project for Louth and Meath ETB said:

"The project's primary goal was to use technology as the tool for the intergenerational work and communication. Our focus was always

on what was shared between the generations, rather than the differences. The entire experience was an excellent learning experience for our students".

CASALA's Dr Julie Doyle, who specialises in human computer interaction research, worked with the group during a series of workshops that were held over nine months. She said: "We mixed up the generations on the teams and it was wonderful to see how they interacted. Our plan is to have the more relevant projects developed into fully fledged apps and a number of DKIT students will be working on this during the summer,"



CASALA volunteer, Noel Coogan, with students Olivia Thornton, Diarmaid Mongey, Kim Lane, Shannagh Redmond and Lauren Keraney

Galway City's newest second level school

Coláiste Mhuirlinne, in Doughiska is Galway City's newest second-level school. It is under the patronage of Galway and Roscommon ETB and the school will share a site with Merlin Woods Primary school. An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny attended a bricklaying ceremony recently to mark the progress the building had made in its construction.

The school is due to open in February 2014 but will have its first intake of students in September 2013.

The state-of-the-art building was built to cater for 650 students and to service the needs of the growing population on the east side of the city, where schools are limited.



An Taoiseach Enda Kenny planting a tree in recognition of City of Galway VEC's 83 years service to Galway City. This took place during Coláiste Mhuirlinne's brick laying ceremony. Pictured from left to right are: Breandán Ó Callarán, Tomas MacPhaidin, Terry Flaherty, Mayor of Galway, Ciarán Cannon TD, Minister for Training and Skills, An Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Councillor Donal Lyons, John Cleary, Principal of Coláiste Mhuirlinne

ConnectEd

Connect for Education

Edward McEvoy, Laois and Offaly ETB

Our Project is called ConnectEd (Connect for Education). We have been working on it for the past two years and thanks to the recent inclusion of Offaly in the 100Mb broadband scheme we have been able to bring it to fruition.

The Five schools in the former County Offaly VEC now have High Definition Video Conferencing equipment linking them to each other and to the wider world. There are two aspects to this initiative – Beyond the Walls and Around the Globe.

APPLIED MATHS IN TULLAMORE COLLEGE & BANAGHER COLLEGE

In Beyond the Walls, by connecting our schools to each other we can now offer Applied Maths to two schools. A teacher in Tullamore College is teaching students in Tullamore College and Banagher College after school on Tuesdays.

Other possibilities...

We are examining the possibility of using the link to afford students in schools who cannot offer as wide a range of subjects at Senior Cycle because of the size of the school, to access some of the senior science options such as chemistry. We believe that the use of this technology will help ensure that students in smaller schools will no longer be disadvantaged in relation to subject choice and that it will help secure the future of smaller rural schools.

The second aspect - Across the Globe is offering really exciting learning opportunities. We can have real time live cultural exchange and learning between schools in Offaly and schools

anywhere in the world.

ARDSCOIL CHIARÁIN NAOFA & WARE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL, GEORGIA, USA

We have established a link between Ardscoil Chiaráin Naofa in Clara, Co Offaly and Ware County High School in Georgia, USA, through our links with Georgia Tech. Teachers and students from the two schools have completed work on a Comparative Ecology Project comparing the ecology of the swamp in Georgia with the ecology of the bog in Clara. Students in both schools have presented and discussed their projects with their counterparts in each school.

TULLAMORE COLLEGE & GEORGIUS AGRICOLA GYMNASIUM CHEMNITZ, GERMANY

Tullamore College has two exchange partner schools – Friedrich Ebert Gymnasium in Germany and Lycée Blaise Pascale in France. Unfortunately neither of these schools has video Conferencing equipment. However thanks to the assistance of LifeSize we have developed a link with Georgius Agricola Gymnasium

Chemnitz in Saxony. Our students have participated in interactive lessons with students in Chemnitz. There is great enthusiasm in both schools for developing closer links. This initiative has such a powerful potential for improving language skills.

We are also currently working on developing links with French schools for all the schools in Offaly.

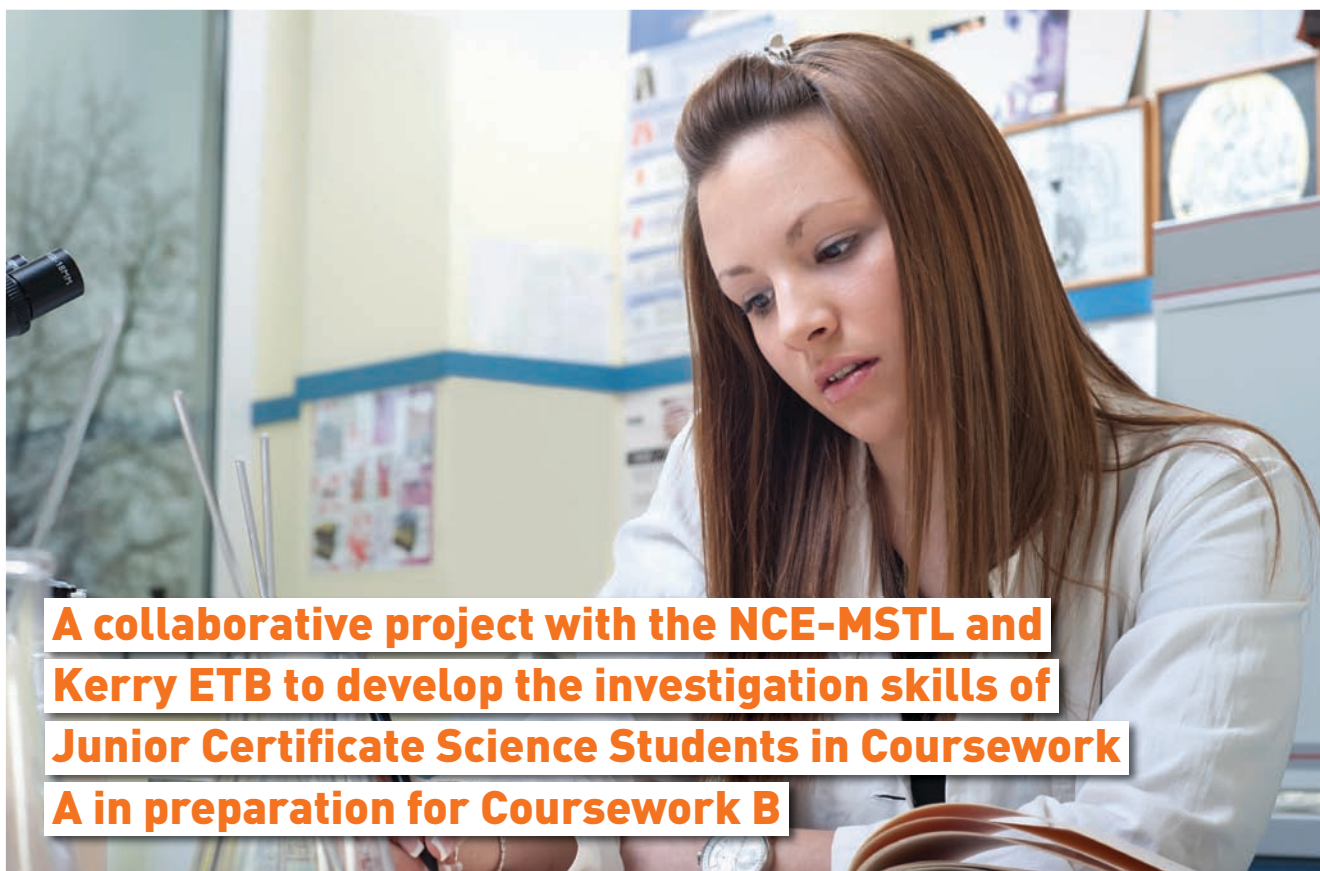
FURTHER PROJECTS IN CONJUNCTION WITH GEORGIA TECH

We are very grateful to Mr Jeff Evans, Deputy Director at the Institute for People and Technology at Georgia Tech who facilitated our link with Ware County High School. We are looking forward to linking with other schools in Georgia on a Robotics Project and on a project to develop Constitutional Literacy in the coming academic year.

Our Project would not have developed to the extent it is but for the assistance of local IT Company NIS and its CEO Gerry Buckley and the staff of LifeSize Europe who have already given substantial sponsorship and support to ConnectEd.



Edward McEvoy, Laois and Offaly ETB, Ms Beatrice Quirke, Minister Ruairí Quinn, Cllr Eamon Dooley.



A collaborative project with the NCE-MSTL and Kerry ETB to develop the investigation skills of Junior Certificate Science Students in Coursework A in preparation for Coursework B

The collaborative project involving the NCE-MSTL and the Kerry ETB, now in its third and final year, is examining the effect of targeted CPD training using Inquiry Based Learning (IBL) as a teaching and learning strategy to promote student independent learning and hence aid in the completion of the practical assessment component Coursework B.

The 3 year longitudinal project follows a group of teachers and their students as they progress from year 1 to year 3 in the junior cycle science programme, providing their teachers with training on teaching and learning strategies that complement the use of IBL in their classes including questioning, IBL task design and group work. Training was also provided on developing students' scientific language skills as this is an area identified that causes considerable difficulty for students when completing the Coursework B pro-forma booklet.

This year the project focused on Coursework B. Training was provided to the lead teachers from the eight KES schools on how best to plan, facilitate and help their students complete and write their investigations in a manner that gives students responsibility for their work and also avoids an increase in teacher workload. Two CPD workshops took place in November and January. These hands-on laboratory sessions provided the teachers with the opportunity to practise and try out alternative approaches to complete the set investigations. The sessions, which were facilitated by staff from the NCE-MSTL and Anita Mahon (laboratory technician from Villiers

Secondary School Limerick), provided the teachers with key information regarding laboratory management, safety and planning investigations.



Back row (L-R): Michael Collins, Tralee CC; Iseult Glynn (Lisowel CC); Máire Spillane (Killarney CC); Anne Griffin (Coláiste na Sceilge, Caherciveen); Michael Corridon (Causeway Comprehensive); John O'Regan (Kerry Education Service) Front Row (L-R): Róisín Lyons (Gaelcholáiste Chiarraí); Dr. Joanne Broggy (Project Leader, NCE-MSTL); Aoife Ryan (Castleisland CC) and Marieke O'Connor (Killorglin CC).

Cork Schools scoop Final LESS Energy Awards



School staff and student teams work together to save energy

Through excellent levels of teamwork, two Co Cork VEC/ETB schools have scooped the final Leading Energy Saving School (LESS) Awards and shared in the prize fund of €800 one-for-all vouchers.

Coláiste Pobail Bheanntrai won 1st prize following the significant energy savings they delivered through a holistic campaign tackling energy usage and improving waste management. Coláiste Choilm Ballincollig, won 2nd prize through their stellar energy awareness campaign, led by the school's student council.



Coláiste Pobail Bheanntrai won 1st prize.



Coláiste Choilm Ballincollig, won 2nd prize.



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