

# ACCS

## Newsletter Nuachtiris

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

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



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## Welcome – Fáilte

### A Word from our President Malachy Molloy



We welcome back Board of Management members, Principals, Deputy Principals and all staff of our Community & Comprehensive schools to a new school year. We thank retiring personnel for their work, commitment

and dedication to education over the years and wish them a long, happy and fulfilling retirement in whatever they undertake from here on. We congratulate and welcome our newly appointed Principals, Deputy Principals, staff members and new students and wish each every success in his/her role. We congratulate our Leaving Certificate students and their teachers on the recent results and wish the Junior Certificate pupils and their teachers the very best in the forthcoming results.

2009/10 school year has been a very difficult year for all working in and availing of education. The reduction in teaching posts with the consequent impact on subject and/or course provision, reduction in funding, loss of key positions e.g. Home School Community Liaison posts, Special Education Needs and Learning Support, and the embargo on POR and non-teaching appointments have all impacted seriously on the capacity of the school to provide a comprehensive education to the pupils entrusted to its care.

The middle management structure was developed to meet the needs of the students in our care – these needs remain and increase, hence the necessity for a structure to respond. Quick action on Motion 1 passed at Convention 2010 is even more urgent now. The revised Programme for Government has promised 500 additional teaching posts over 3 years and circular 0042/2010 provides limited alleviation on the filling of Posts of Responsibility for 2010/11 – we welcome both as a start in the restoration process. Mindful of the motions passed at Convention 2010 we continue to work with the DES and other education partners to rapidly improve on those two areas and other issues highlighted therein.

The 2010/11 school year commences with many challenges facing us all but it is important that we

approach these with courage, commitment and determination to improve the circumstances of our schools and deliver the best possible education to the pupils entrusted to us.

Challenges facing us include the implementation of the recently accepted Public Service Agreement 2010-2014; working with the DES and Trustees on the issue of patronage and updating the Deed of Trust to develop a more effective structure for the delivery of co-patronage; providing Continuous Professional Development to Boards of Management and school staff on current issues; supporting and encouraging schools to continue providing the best possible education while acknowledging the reduced resources available for achieving same.

Schools consist of a team comprising management, parents, staff and students. To live the mission statement and achieve the goals each member of that team together with the DES and the education partners has a key role to play. The challenge for ACCS is to work collaboratively with the school team and representatives to assist the schools achieve their goals. School managements must constantly avail of the structures that exist to keep ACCS and the Executive members informed of school needs – thus enabling the Executive to respond to the real needs of schools. Currently we are improving and expanding that service by employing a Human Resources Manager to provide advice and updates on contracts, employment legislation, recruitment, induction, policies and procedures etc.

ACCS exists to serve the needs of the school communities. We encourage you to make full use of the service.

### ACCS Convention 2011

The ACCS Convention 2011 will take place in Whites of Wexford, Abbey Street, Wexford on the 31st March, 1st & 2nd April 2011.

#### Dates to remember:

**31st December, 2010:** Nominations for Presidency and motions for Convention to be submitted.

**31st January, 2011:** Draft agenda of business and nominations for Presidency – including motions to be issued to Member Boards and Executive Members. Member Boards will be invited to submit amendments to the motions.

**3rd March, 2011:** Latest date for receipt of amendments to motions.

**16th March, 2011:** A final agenda will be issued to Member Boards.

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## The Role and Function of a Board of Management

### Objectives

New members of Boards will receive the information necessary to perform their role and to access further information as their experience and confidence grows. More experienced Board members will learn about recent changes affecting the work of Boards and will have the opportunity to discuss current issues in a collaborative way augmenting their skills and experience.

Separate day and evening courses will provide participants with the opportunity to gain an insight into their responsibilities as Members of a Board of Management of a Community or Comprehensive school. This in-service is also suitable as a refresher course and update for more experienced Board members. The training and information presented will empower the participants to carry out their role in an effective, informed and efficient manner. The emphasis for participants is on development of skills and on the heightening of awareness necessary to facilitate transparency, accountability, understanding and wisdom on how schools function and operate. Participants will be encouraged to raise practical issues for discussion and clarification and the seminar will be presented by a panel with wide experience.

### Content Includes:

- The role and operation of ACCS
- Deed of Trust/Deed of Indenture
- Roles of Chairperson, Secretary and Member
- The Board of Management as an Employer
- Financial Management and Accountability
- Discipline & Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Health & Safety
- Data Protection

### Who should attend?

New and recently appointed members of a Board of Management/School Principals.

### Feedback

*"Enjoyed all of it. Very informative, very clear and concise".*

Rate per participant: €110.00

For Dates and Locations in 2010 see page 4 – This is both a 1/2 day and an evening course  
In-Service may be organised with individual Boards by request.

## Accountability and Management of the DES Administrative & Financial Guidelines

1. Principals/Clerical Officers
2. Members of Boards of Management

### Objectives

Participants at either course, as appropriate to their role, will become familiar with the operation of the Financial and Administrative Guidelines in the school. They will gain an understanding of the importance of the processes underpinning financial accountability in the school. They will become aware of the pitfalls which should be avoided and how to avoid them.

This In-Service is designed to enable the participants to clarify

aspects of the ongoing management of the Guidelines (published in 1999 and amended in 2003) as they impact on school administrators. We are currently engaged in a review of the guidelines with the DES. Separate day and evening in-services on the same topic are tailored to meet the needs of Principals and Clerical Officers on the one hand and those of Board members and members of Finance sub-committees on the other.

### Content Includes:

- Board of Management Responsibilities
- Financial Returns/Audits
- Allocations: Funding and Staffing
- School Internal Controls
- Purchasing, Tendering, Quotations etc.
- Asset Management
- Receipts, Payments & Banking Arrangements
- Adult Education
- Record Keeping
- Health and Safety
- Use of School Facilities by Outside School Agencies

### Who should attend?

Principals and/or Deputy Principals, members of the Board of Management and/or Board of Management Finance sub-committee and/or Clerical Officers who are charged with the responsibility for the preparation of school accounts will obtain a greater understanding of the purpose and application of the guidelines. It will enable those who are held responsible and accountable for school finances to adhere to the DES regulations as they impact on their work within the school.

### Feedback

*"The entire day was hugely relevant as a new Principal. Well done"!*

Rate per participant: €80.00

For Dates and Locations in 2010 see page 4 – This is both a day and an evening course

## Health and Safety in Schools

NEW

### Objectives

A comprehensive guidance and toolkit titled: "Guidelines on Managing Safety and Health in Post-Primary School" has been produced by a Steering Group of representatives from the Health and Safety Authority, the State Claims Agency, the Department of Education and Skills and the School Development Planning Initiative. The publication is intended as both a guidance document and a toolkit to assist schools in planning, organising and managing a safe and healthy school environment for staff, pupils and visitors. Some of our schools were involved in the pilot process and their input and assistance has helped shaped the final production.

The document and accompanying CD is comprehensive and wide-ranging. In this seminar we will explore the practical application of the guidelines in our schools and the operation of the guidelines as required by legislation under the Health and Safety Authority. The In-Service will be conducted by personnel from the Health and Safety Authority, the State Claims Agency and ACCS.

The guidelines are intended to:

- assist schools in planning, organising and managing safety and health effectively

- help schools benchmark current policies and practices against current legislative requirements and best practice
- help schools meet their legal obligation under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- reduce the administrative burden on schools
- assist schools in writing or updating their safety statements and risk assessments
- facilitate school management and employees in implementing and reviewing best practice in safety and health.

#### Content Includes:

- A brief introduction to the requirements on schools of Health and Safety legislation by Health and Safety Authority personnel.
- An explanation as to how the guidelines can be used to meet the legislative and regulatory requirements presented by Health and Safety Authority personnel.
- The practical application of the guidelines in Community and Comprehensive schools presented by personnel from the State Claims Agency.
- Opportunities to address practical issues in an open forum raised by school personnel and collated by ACCS.

#### Who should attend?

School Safety Officers, School Safety Representatives, School Caretakers, Board of Management Members.

Rate per participant: €110.00

For Dates and Locations in 2010 see page 4 – This is a one day course

## Recruitment and Selection Procedures

#### Objectives

Principals and Members of Selection Committees will gain a comprehensive understanding of the operation of a Selection Committee in the recruitment and promotion of staff. They will gain an insight into their responsibilities under employment legislation and the issues which currently affect their work. They will gain a greater understanding of best practice and the common pitfalls illustrated by practical examples.

The legislative background to Selection, Recruitment and Promotion is complex and in a constant state of flux. It is essential, therefore, that Members of Selection Committees be encouraged to avail of this opportunity for training on the whole recruitment and selection process as it relates to staffing appointments and promotional opportunities in Community and Comprehensive Schools.

This seminar is designed to assist a School Principal and/or Secretary Board of Management and/or Selection Committees of Community and Comprehensive Schools with the process of selection, recruitment and appointment of staff in schools. Participants will be given the opportunity to improve their knowledge base and receive clarification and insight on advertising, recruitment, probation, interview skills, contracts, equality issues, impact of legislation and the pitfalls to be avoided.

#### Content Includes:

- The Selection Process – pre-interview stage
- Legislation and Discrimination
- Criteria Setting and Short Listing
- The Interview Process and Evaluation Schemes
- Roles of Chairperson and Secretary B.O.M.

- Accountability
- New Process for Post of Responsibility Selection

#### Who should attend?

Members of the Selection Committee, School Principals & Secretary Board of Management.

#### Feedback

*“This was excellent in every way – full of information and well presented. Thank you”.*

Rate per participant: €110.00

For Dates and Locations in 2011 see page 4 – This is a full day course

## Codes/Policies and Section 29 Appeals

#### Objectives

Participants will become familiar with the statutory requirements relating to, in particular, code of behaviour, admission/enrolment policy and Section 29 appeals. All individual school codes of behaviour should by now have been reviewed in line with the NEWB Guidelines on Codes of Behaviour.

Participants will gain an understanding of the processes underpinning the formulation, implementation and communication of these codes/policies arising from the legislative obligations imposed on all those involved in school management.

It is critical that participants understand and be empowered in the development and periodic review of school codes/policies and their relevance to the appeals process.

The presenters have extensive experience of Section 29 facilitations and hearings and will be in a position to discuss some of the issues which schools have experienced in these processes. Important lessons for school policies and practices arising from Section 29 processes will be shared with the participants.

#### Content Includes:

- Legislation
- Admission/Enrolment Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- NEWB Guidelines on Developing School Codes of Behaviour
- Section 29 Appeal Process
- Guidance and Best Practice garnered from practical experience
- Feedback, Questions and Answer Session

#### Who should attend?

Principals, Deputy Principals and/or members of Boards of Management.

Rate per participant: €110.00

For Dates and Locations in 2010/2011 see page 4 – This is a 1/2 day course

## Booking Arrangements

Notice of arrangements will be sent to schools with appropriate enrolment forms prior to each course. Electronic booking forms are available on the ACCS website at [www.accs.ie](http://www.accs.ie). Each completed booking form should be accompanied with the appropriate participant fee when bookings are made.

# ACCS Continuous Professional Development Programme 2010/2011

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Date and Location	Programme Title	Participants
<b>12/08/10</b> - 2.30 p.m. – 6.30 p.m. <b>13/08/10</b> - 9.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.	Induction of New Principals & Deputy Principals in Community & Comprehensive Schools.	All recently appointed Principals & Deputy Principals for an introduction to the sector.
<b>23/08/10</b> Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.	Information Seminar: Revised Procedures for Appointment to Posts of Responsibility. 10.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Principals and other Selection Committee members.
<b>06/09/10</b> Mount Errigal Hotel, Letterkenny. <b>09/09/10</b> Galway Bay Hotel, Galway. <b>13/09/10</b> ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12. <b>15/09/10</b> Woodlands House Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick. <b>23/09/10</b> Glenroyal Hotel, Maynooth.	ACCS Area Information Meeting. 6.30 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.	Principal/Secretary Board of Management plus 2 Members of the Board of Management
<b>29/09/10</b> Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.	Education Conference Junior Cycle Review – NCCA & ACCS. 9.45 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.	Principals, Deputy Principals & Member of Boards of Management (Detailed documentation to follow).
<b>04/10/10</b> Portlaoise Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise.	Accountability & Management of the DES Administrative & Financial Guidelines. 6.30 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.	Board members especially Finance Sub-committee members.
<b>12/10/10</b> ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12.	Accountability & Management of the DES Administrative & Financial Guidelines. 9.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.	Newly appointed Principals with their Clerical Officers.
<b>14/10/10</b> Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.	The Role & Function of a Board of Management. 6.30 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.	New and recently appointed Members of a Board of Management/School Principals.
<b>18/10/10</b> ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12.	The Role & Function of a Board of Management. 10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.	New and recently appointed Members of a Board of Management/School Principals.
<b>02/11/10</b> Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo. <b>04/11/10</b> Woodlands House Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick. <b>02/02/11</b> Mullingar Park Hotel, Co. Westmeath.	Codes/Policies and Section 29 Appeals. A best practice guide to reviewing and operating a Code of Behaviour and an enrolment policy with lessons learned from Section 29 appeals. 2.00 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.	Principals, Deputy Principals and/or Members of Boards of Management.
<b>18/11/10 &amp; 19/11/10</b> Sheraton Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.	In-School Management In-Service. 1.30 p.m. - 7.15 p.m. 9.15 a.m. - 1.15 p.m.	Principals & Deputy Principals of Community & Comprehensive Schools (Documentation to follow).
<b>30/11/10</b> Woodlands House Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick. <b>02/12/10</b> The Clarion Hotel, Dublin, Liffey Valley, Dublin 22. <b>09/12/10</b> Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo.	Managing Health & Safety in Schools. The practical application of the new HSA guidelines facilitated by the HSA, State Claims Agency & ACCS. 9.30 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.	School Safety Officers, School Safety Representatives, School Caretakers, Board of Management members.
<b>19/01/11</b> ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12. <b>26/01/11</b> Mullingar Park Hotel, Co. Westmeath.	Recruitment, Selection & Promotion Procedures in Community & Comprehensive Schools – Good Practice. 9.30 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.	Members of the Selection Committee, School Principals & Secretary Board of Management.
<b>31/03/11 - 02/04/11</b> Whites Hotel, Wexford, Co. Wexford.	ACCS 2011 Convention.	School Principal plus 2 Members of the Board of Management.
<b>12/05/11</b> Mullingar Park Hotel, Co. Westmeath.	ACCS National Trustee Forum Conference. 9.00 a.m. – 3.15 p.m.	Patrons & Trustees of Community & Comprehensive Schools.

## Child Protection Guidelines

Details of DES/ACCS In-Service on Child Protection Guidelines will be notified to schools as and when arrangements are finalised.

## ACCS Education Conference 2010 Ideas for a New Junior Cycle

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A special ACCS Education Conference will be held on the 29th of September 2010 in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone to address the issues raised by the recently published NCCA document “Innovation and Identity: Ideas for a New Junior Cycle”. This Conference will provide an opportunity for members of Boards of Management, Principals, Deputy Principals and interested teaching staff to consider and to express their views on the many innovative ideas raised in this document.

There has been, in recent years, considerable questioning of the Junior Cycle – its purpose, its efficacy, its contribution to teaching and learning. Recent research conducted by the Economic and Social Research Institute for the NCCA over the last number of years identified several points of concern within the Junior Cycle:

- The dominating effect of the Junior Certificate examination on teaching and learning practice and on school organisational structures.
- The absence of any significant curriculum flexibility which would allow for engagement with other areas of interest to teachers and students and areas of local interest/need.
- The inflexible over-crowded curriculum.
- The disengagement of many students at an early stage of the cycle.
- The inadequate time available for learners to engage with deeper learning.
- The narrow range of assessment activity, both in terms of examinations and in general teaching and learning.
- The limited access to a single qualification.

In approaching this present task the NCCA has drawn on the ideas presented in an earlier document entitled “Leading and Supporting Change in Schools”. This suggests that the essential direction of change in Junior Cycle should be “bottom-up”. It must be centred on and involve from the outset the key agents of change – schools, teachers and students. This presents an opportunity and a responsibility for all of us to engage constructively in the present exercise.

NCCA has already held a consultation seminar in April last at which the current document was launched. The proposed ACCS seminar will provide an opportunity to our members to articulate their views on the ideas presented and to ensure that those views are taken into account in the more concrete recommendations which are expected to emerge at a later date. The programme for the day will include a presentation by NCCA staff members in which the context and rationale for Junior Cycle change and the ideas presented in the NCCA document will be outlined. The most important part of the day will be the opportunity for members to engage in discussion of the various ideas presented and to contribute to the ACCS input to the consultation process.

A detailed programme for the day and its organisation will be notified to all schools in the coming weeks. We expect and we hope that all schools will see fit to attend and to participate in this important exercise.

## Posts of Responsibility Alleviation of Moratorium

The DES has recently issued Circular Letter 0042/2010: “Limited alleviation of moratorium on filling of Posts of Responsibility for 2010/11 school year.” This provides that, where the number of Assistant Principals falls below a designated level, they can be replaced. It also provides for the replacement of Programme Coordinators at AP level and also of Adult Education Directors under certain conditions. ACCS welcomes the increased certainty around the provision of Assistant Principals in our schools. However, the non-replacement of many AP posts and of all Special Duties posts will continue to prove very challenging for Boards of Management and Principals, particularly in the current industrial relations climate. The circular also outlines the new procedures under which such appointments will be made. These significant changes in the promotion process will have implications for School Principals and for Selection committees in our schools. An information seminar to discuss these changes has been held on August 23rd for the sector in the Hodson Bay Hotel in Athlone.

ACCS has co-operated closely with NACED to lobby the relevant parties to have the post of Adult Education Director exempt from the moratorium. The contents of the circular, particularly as it relates to the post of Adult Education Director, has been welcomed by Mr. Robbie Harrold, NACED Chairperson in a recent statement.

“I warmly welcome the alleviation of the moratorium on filling of Posts of Responsibility Circular from the Tánaiste and Minister for Education and Skills Mary Coughlan. Specifically with regard to adult education it outlines that if a Director of Adult Education retires or resigns in a school the post will be replaced. This is a very significant announcement as it guarantees the future provision of adult education in Community and Comprehensive schools.

The Minister’s circular does not allow for replacement of teachers who had Assistant Principal or Special Duties posts in Adult Education but it does ensure that adult education programmes will be available to communities all around the country after school hours. The importance of adult education has never been greater than in the present economic climate. It makes a great deal of sense for our schools to be able to provide cost effective courses which enhance the employability of adults in a time of recession and growing unemployment.”

### ACCS Area Meetings

A series of Area Meetings are scheduled for the month of September. These meetings will provide the opportunity for Board of Management members and Principals to discuss the particular difficulties which arise from the current changes in resources, procedures and the industrial relations climate. Participants can advise ACCS of issues which require attention during the course of the year. The regular In School Management In Service for Principals and Deputy Principals will take place in the Sheraton Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath on the 18th and 19th November 2010.

## ACCS offers its congratulations to recently appointed Principals and Deputy Principals and its thanks and best wishes to those retiring this year

### Retiring Principals and Deputy Principals

#### Bailieborough C.S.

Principal: Ms. Valerie McCormack

#### Carrick-on-Shannon C.S.

Deputy Principal: Mr. Malachy Molloy

#### Coláiste Chiaráin, Leixlip.

Deputy Principal: Mr. Eamonn O'Donoghue

#### Douglas C.S.

Principal: Mr. Bernard Horgan

#### Killinarden C.S.

Former Principal: Mr. Aidan Savage

#### Glenamaddy C.S.

Deputy Principal: Mr. Thomas Fahy

#### Kinsale C.S.

Principal: Sr. Mary Donovan

#### Pobalscoil Chiaráin, Kells

Principal: Mr. Dermot Carney

#### Portumna C.S.

Deputy Principal: Mr. Frank Kilkenny

#### Royal & Prior Comprehensive School

Principal: Mr. Des West

#### St. Attracta's C.S.

Principal: Mr. Willie Ruane

#### Tallaght C.S.

Deputy Principal: Mr. Declan Moloney

### New Principals and Deputy Principals

#### Bailieborough C.S.

Principal: Ms. Patricia Atkins

#### Carrick-on-Shannon C.S.

Deputy Principal: Mr. Paul Byrne

#### Coláiste Chiaráin, Leixlip

Deputy Principal: Ms. Anne Cryan

#### Douglas C.S.

Principal: Mr. Jim Long

#### Killinarden C.S.

Principal: Mr. John Fennell

#### Glenamaddy C.S.

Deputy Principal: Ms. Eileen Gildea

#### Holy Child C.S.

Deputy Principal: Mr. Jim Allen

#### Kinsale C.S.

Principal: Mr. Seán Ó Broin

Deputy Principal: Ms. Kathleen O'Brien

#### Pobalscoil Chiaráin, Kells

Principal: Mr. Francis Lafferty

#### Portumna C.S.

Deputy Principal: Mr. James Coughlan

#### Royal & Prior Comprehensive School

Principal: Dr. Howard Welch

#### St. Attracta's C.S.

Principal: Mr. David McEvoy

#### Tallaght C.S.

Deputy Principal: Mr. Austin Naughton

## The Old and the New



Members of the Retired Principals and Deputy Principals Association at their annual meeting in Glasson in April 2010



Some newly appointed Principals and Deputy Principals with ACCS President at their induction conference in August 2010

Back Row L to R: Mr. Gerry Doherty, Mr. James Coughlan, Ms. Patricia Atkins, Mr. Jim Allen, Mr. Malachy Molloy.

Front Row L to R: Ms. Anne Cryan, Mr. Seán Ó Broin, Ms. Eileen Gildea, Mr. David McEvoy, Dr Howard Welch.