

General Secretary's Report 2019/2020

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Introduction

The ACCS vision of “*leading and supporting Boards of Management to enable schools to provide equal access to a comprehensive, coeducational, community-based, multid denominational education and in doing so it aims contributing towards a just and caring society*”, underpins the work of the ACCS Executive. From the formation of the first comprehensive schools more than 50 years ago the aim of ACCS has been to provide an education for all the children of the community. The concept of community-based multi-denominational education is not new in Ireland and has been promoted in the vibrant educational communities of our 96 member schools. From the outset the Deed of Trust identified, “the object of providing a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the community”, as a core principle. This is a powerful statement pointing to the inclusive nature of education provided in Community and Comprehensive Schools. We congratulate ACCS schools on the wonderful opportunities they provide to learners throughout Ireland to engage in community-based education for all the children of their communities.

The work of ACCS is overseen and directed by the National Executive. The Executive is led by the Officers, Paul Fiorentini, President, James Duignan, Vice-President, Noralene Ní Urdail, Hon. Secretary and Paul Thornton, Hon. Treasurer. Like so many of our Board of Management members, the members of the Executive give their time voluntarily. While acknowledging schools provide the opportunity for many of the Executive members to attend meetings and sub-committee meetings, we greatly appreciate the voluntary work of Executive members.

To fulfil the remit of ACCS in leading and supporting Boards of Management successive Strategic Plans have been developed. These Plans have provided a useful framework on which to report on the operation and work of ACCS. The current plan, which concludes in 2020, identified the following priorities:

- 1) **Shaping the Future by Influencing and Managing Change**
- 2) **Continue to Embed and Enhance Governance Structures in Community and Comprehensive Schools**
- 3) **Managing the Evolution of ACCS and Promoting the Community and Comprehensive School Sector**

I will take the opportunity to look at the work of ACCS under each of the headings.

1) Shaping the Future by Influencing and Managing Change

ACCS CPD Programme

The continuous professional development programme offered by ACCS is reviewed on a regular basis. All in-service programmes are evaluated with the views of participants informing future practice. In April each year the staff at ACCS head office review the previous year’s in-service and layout plans for the coming year. This is to ensure that schools can receive a draft calendar of CPD events by May to assist with their planning for the next academic year.

In considering items for inclusion for the forthcoming year the planning team is cognisant of new developments in education and the requirement to ensure Boards of Management and in-school management teams also meet their governance obligations. This year saw the development of two new programmes of particular note:

- 1) The Middle Leadership Team
- 2) Enhancing Learning and Teaching in the Classroom: Promoting Student Voice

Both of these programmes are reflective of emerging trends which will greatly influence the experience for learners in our schools. In these programmes ACCS has sought to engage the expertise of leaders within our schools in developing programmes very much on the model promoted by Fullan of ‘theory chasing practice’. ACCS as an organisation has always grounded its CPD programmes in practicality while promoting excellence in schools. The involvement of leading practitioners in schools ensures that the programme is rooted in best practice.

ACCS Green Agenda

ACCS is committed to managing and minimising our environmental impact.

- ACCS circulates materials using Microsoft Teams in advance of Executive Meetings and ACCS no longer provides hard copies of documentation.
- ACCS holds meetings of ACCS sub-committees and Team Meetings using Microsoft Teams where appropriate.
- ACCS will continue to reduce our paper output at Conference and CPD Events as appropriate.



The Middle Leadership Team

From within head office the middle leaders programme has been led by Áine O'Sullivan, Assistant General Secretary. A core team of school leaders was established by Áine which consisted of experienced Principals, Deputy Principals and those with experience in leadership programmes offered by Department agencies. To bring a focus and direction to this work it was decided to also engage the services of Dr. Joe O'Connell whose expertise and rich research knowledge added greatly to the project. The work of this team was to explore the opportunity of developing middle leadership teams across ACCS schools consistent with the vision of a model of distributed leadership as envisaged in the Department of Education and Skills circular 0003/2018. This circular, in conjunction with the policy framework for leadership envisaged in Looking at Our School and the model of school self-evaluation, provided an opportunity to revisit and reimagine leadership roles in schools.

In March 2020 the third cohort of schools will engage with this programme bringing the total number of schools involved to 75. This is potentially transformational as its purpose is to refocus leadership and management posts in schools with the key focus on learning in the classroom. Each participant is asked to assess the leadership and management structures in their school and their effect on learning in the classroom. It was very satisfying that the work preparing and delivering this programme was recognised by the Centre for School Leadership who has endorsed the programme.



L to R: Karol Sadleir, Pat Mc Kenna, Dr. Joe O'Connell, Fergal Mc Carthy, Noreen Rafferty, Paul Fiorentini, Áine O'Sullivan, Rachel Hayes and James Duignan – The Middle Leaders Programme Panel Discussion.

Enhancing Learning and Teaching in the Classroom: Promoting Student Voice

Without doubt one of the key vehicles identified for improving the learner experience in schools is student voice. We are aware that student voice will form an important part of the revised framework for quality leadership in schools due for publication later in 2020. We acknowledge the support of the NCCA for this project with our schools. At the launch of 'Our Schools, Our Voices' online resource in December 2019 hosted by Comhairle na nÓg, it was interesting to note that two of the schools invited to participate were Old Bawn Community School and Kinsale Community School. Congratulations to both schools and all other schools currently engaged with this student voice project.

Other CPD events which occurred during the course of the year are detailed in a separate CPD report in this convention handbook. Others will also be referenced during the course of this report given their importance in areas such as school governance.

Collaboration with Education Partners

In ACCS we are delighted to welcome many of our partners in education to Convention 2020. We work with many of these organisations on an ongoing basis throughout the year and value their input which helps to enhance the educational experience of learners in our schools. We acknowledge the support of the Department of Education and Skills who not only financially support the ACCS but support many other CPD events throughout the year.

In our exhibition centre I encourage you to meet with, not only the trade exhibitors, but also visit stands representing the Parents' Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools, PACCs, the Chaplains' Association, Further Education Advisory Service and Adult Education Ireland. These organisations actively engage in and support our schools. PACCs will host their annual Convention on April 25th. We encourage all Boards of Management to affiliate their Parents' Association to PACCs through the National Parents Council Post Primary. ACCS looks forward to working closely

with PACCS on the implementation of reforms proposed under the Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill 2019. We will hear from Tony Nolan, Chairperson of the School Chaplains' Association, on the theme of a '*Chaplain for All*' as part of our Convention agenda.

ACCS attends all Teacher Conciliation Council (TCC) meetings which provide a forum for management bodies, the teacher unions and the Department to discuss issues of concern. A separate report of the work of TCC is provided in this handbook. Such a forum is important as it provides space for both management and employee representative bodies to address issues on a regular and ongoing basis. This year has however, not been without its difficulties with particular challenges facing school management addressing the scheduling of subject learning and assessment review meetings, SLARS, and school closures due to industrial action. ACCS, as a management body, seeks to engage positively and constructively with our fellow partners in education seeking a resolution to these issues.

There are many other agencies that ACCS engages with on an ongoing basis. Two issues in particular have received a lot of focus and attention over the last year, teacher supply and provision for students with special education needs.

Teacher Supply

The Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills chairs the teacher supply steering committee and the Teaching Council has taken the lead role in facilitating focus groups of key stakeholders. ACCS thanks those schools which took the time to complete the teacher supply survey over the last number of years. This has helped greatly to inform ACCS contributions in these discussions. Initiatives have been put in place including an increase in the number of concurrent education degrees in subject areas where there are current shortages. While this does not alleviate the current problem of teacher recruitment it will assist in addressing the imbalance in certain subject areas in the near future. We are at a critical juncture in the teacher supply challenges facing schools. It is suggested that the opportunity for schools to advertise and recruit teachers for the coming year will be facilitated at an earlier date to assist in combating the current imbalance where outside agencies are recruiting new graduates from Irish colleges commencing March/April of each academic year. The teacher unions have linked the teacher supply issue to their campaign on pay inequality. In Ireland it has been noted we have always been successful in attracting highly qualified graduates into education. This is a position that must be maintained given the importance of education to society and our economic recovery. Any disincentives to young graduates seeking to enter the teaching profession should be removed.

Special Education

There have been significant changes in the provision for children with special education needs in our schools. The establishment of a new allocation of teaching resources to schools has provided a degree of certainty in planning in schools. However, the transfer of responsibilities to schools of the identification of all learning needs of students and the subsequent prioritisation and allocation of resources to meet these needs has occurred without the provision of adequate leadership and management resources to lead this process in schools. The current review of the SNA provision in schools will again delegate the identification of needs and allocation of resources to school management. The ever-expanding role of the school and withdrawal of external supports points to the need for professional coordination of these essential services within each school. ACCS has sought the establishment of the position of special educational needs coordinator in all schools appointed on a similar basis to that of programme coordinator. It is not sufficient to suggest that this specialist post can be met from within the existing middle management post structure where specific posts cannot be advertised. We call on the Department of Education and Skills to address this issue as a matter of urgency to ensure the efficient and effective use of resources provided to schools for the benefit of students with special education needs.

The National Council for Special Education, NCSE, is currently engaged in a process of consultation on the meaning of inclusive education in the Irish context. ACCS has attended consultation fora on behalf of its member schools. Community and Comprehensive Schools are committed to the vision of inclusive education where schools seek to provide an appropriate education for all the children in the community. However, it is important to note that to achieve this aim is not without significant investment in the necessary supports to meet the needs of individual students. We welcome the current inclusion support pilot taken place in a cluster of 75 schools. This model potentially provides access to essential therapeutic supports for children with complex needs engaged in schools for the first time. It is essential that in planning any future model the focus is on providing an appropriate education for the individual child with the necessary supports. While it is a very worthy proposal that all children access education in their local school, this has significant resource implications for children with complex needs if it is envisaged education through special schools is replaced by this model.

From engagement with the Inspectorate and the ACCS Special Education Needs Sub-Committee it has become apparent that there are challenges for schools around the new special education needs inspection model. The ACCS Special Education Needs Sub-Committee has been tasked with reviewing this situation and, as is the norm in ACCS, best practice will be shared across schools to ensure best outcomes for all learners in our schools.

ACCS will continue to engage with all relevant stakeholders on behalf of member schools to ensure the best possible outcome for learners in our schools.

The Association of Joint Patrons of Community and Comprehensive Schools, AJP

The role of the Patron is significant and valued in Community and Comprehensive Schools as the founders of schools and those who establish the characteristic spirit and founding intention of schools. The AJP has evolved from the National Trustee Forum. At its initial Seminar for Patrons of Community and Comprehensive Schools, hosted in the Mullingar Park Hotel on 26th February 2019, a draft Constitution was presented to those present. The Constitution states the following:

The main object for which the body is established is to address the concerns of Patrons / Trustees and to promote best operational practice in the exercise of Patronage / Trusteeship in Community and Comprehensive Schools. In furtherance exclusively of the foregoing main object the body shall have the following subsidiary objects:

- (a) To develop coherence in the exercise of joint patronage, or where relevant single patronage, of Community and Comprehensive Schools in Ireland.*
- (b) To provide a means by which Joint Patrons can be consulted and supported at national level.*
- (c) To enable the views of Joint Patrons to be articulated and communicated to the Department of Education and Skills and other relevant agencies.*

In excess of 100 patrons attended this seminar. This event, which it is intended will take place on an annual basis, probably allows for the most diverse meeting of school patrons at post primary level in Irish education. The first AGM of the Association of Joint Patrons is scheduled to take place on March 31st, 2020, hosted again in the Mullingar Park Hotel.

Technology

Currently within ACCS we are redeveloping our website. This has actually taken longer than initially envisaged as we seek to explore the full potential of our online presence. The current website is a repository for a myriad of useful and helpful resources but looking to the future we are investigating how best to make this a more interactive tool. The development of our middle management/leadership program has highlighted the need to develop online resources such as webinars to support key leadership roles in our schools on an ongoing basis. We wish to acknowledge the work of the ACCS ICT Sub-Committee in advising in this area and also producing very helpful guidelines for all schools on The Use of Social Media in Education which can be accessed in ACCS info Bulletin 18/19 on our website www.accs.ie.

Further Education and Adult Education

Catherine O'Sullivan, Director of ACCS/JMB Further Education Support Unit, joined the team in September 2019. The funding for this position was achieved through a joint ACCS/JMB application to SOLAS. Prior to this Catherine would have been well known to many in schools through her engagement in the provision of in-service to further education providers. Since taking up her position Catherine has engaged with each of our further education providers to give guidance and support. This guidance also includes opportunities to extend provision where an identified need has been established. In this regard we welcome the announcement that Cabinteely Community School will provide 40 places in further education from next September.

Catherine also attended the recent Adult Education Ireland Conference hosted by the National Association of Community Education Directors, NACED. The Deed of Trust for Community Schools references the "ongoing education for persons living at or near" the school. In this regard an excellent tradition of self-financing adult education has developed in many of our Community and Comprehensive Schools. In this regard, I congratulate the work of NACED under the leadership of Gene Cahill. Adult Education Ireland/NACED are represented at our Convention and welcome all schools to visit their stand where schools seeking to establish adult education programs are welcome to meet with experienced practitioners.

A dedicated report from Catherine O'Sullivan includes greater detail to the work of the evolving Further Education Support Unit. As part of this valuable work Catherine represents ACCS/JMB further education providers on national advisory groups.

2) Continue to Embed and Develop Governance Structures in Community and Comprehensive Schools

In all facets of Irish life governance within organisations has attained a greater level of attention and importance. In the sphere of education this is particularly true where there appears to be a never-ending list of demands placed on schools through legislation and procedures. As part of our ongoing training and guidance to Boards of Management matters relating to governance appears on a regular basis. The governance section at this Convention will focus on the commencement of additional sections of The Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 announced on 1 February 2020.

Child Protection

The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools were published in 2017. Early in 2019 a new Child Protection School Inspection, CPSI, model was introduced by the Inspectorate. In Autumn of 2019 ACCS hosted regional training sessions for members of Boards of Management regarding their responsibilities in the area of child protection. These training sessions were very well attended and received by board members who commented particularly on the practical input given by Des Cullen, Principal, Moyne Community School. This was followed by inputs to Principals and Deputy Principals attending the In-School Management Conference given by ACCS head office staff and a presentation by the senior management team of Pobalscoil na Tríonóide, Youghal. The Department must be commended for the excellent resources available through the schools and colleges section on their website www.education.ie. Despite all of this in-service and support material, child protection issues can prove very challenging for Boards of Management. This is particularly true if it involves a member of school personnel and ACCS looks forward to engaging with the Department in the planned review of these procedures.

Data Protection and GDPR

At Convention 2019 we introduced Hilary Treacy, ACCS Data Protection Advisor. We acknowledge the support of the Department in funding this post. Over the past year Hilary has become an important member of the ACCS team providing in-service on a regional basis following the publication of our new ACCS Data Protection Policy. This policy was drafted in consultation with the JMB and ETBI. This new policy has been followed by a redrafting of a Data Retention Schedule which has also been circulated to schools and introduced to school secretaries as part of their in-service in late 2019 and early 2020. Hilary has also visited many schools and remains available for individual school visits when requested by the school. The three greatest challenges schools face identified to date are:

- 1) Data access requests/data minimisation
- 2) Prevention of/addressing data breaches
- 3) Historical data retained by the school

Awareness across schools has increased greatly and the resources available on www.gdpr4schools.ie and www.dataprotectionschools.ie have proved valuable.

Garda Vetting

ACCS is the registered organisation for processing vetting applications for all non-teaching staff in Community and Comprehensive Schools who are engaged in relevant work with young people or vulnerable adults. Elaine Mooney has joined the ACCS team as Vetting Administrator, replacing Fiona Mac Cormac who departed ACCS to take up new career challenges. In 2019 ACCS processed fully 3752 vetting applications from a total of over 5000 submitted. These figures show there is still a considerable number of applications submitted which are never fully completed. The majority of these relate to TY work experience or PLC work experience. There is also a significant number of errors in applications submitted. Currently the process is predominantly paper based. A pilot programme investigating the advantages of an online vetting application system has commenced with a number of schools. It is envisaged that this system will bring greater efficiencies to the process and will be made available to all schools during 2020.

Financial Support and Governance

The Financial Support Services Unit, FSSU, is well embedded at this stage and the supports and access to such support is highly valued by schools. This is a year of particular significance as the new financial year commenced on 1 September 2019 and will end on 31 August 2020. This change from the calendar year to the academic year coincides with the new obligation that all Boards of Management will be required to submit certified accounts at the end of the financial year to the FSSU. The filing of these accounts, no later than February 2021, will also meet the Board's obligation to submit accounts to the Charities Regulatory Authority and the Central Statistics Office.

The FSSU also hosts an extensive range of in-service supporting accounts personnel in schools as well as Board of Management financial sub-committees. Regular financial bulletins issue from the FSSU and these and other excellent financial resources are available at www.fssu.ie.

Dignity at Work

At last year's Convention we introduced the new ACCS Dignity at Work Policy agreed between the management bodies and unions in schools. As indicated at that time an in-service programme would follow supporting the introduction of this new policy. Since then this policy has been introduced to members of the senior school management team and regional in-service on the role of contact persons identified in the policy. This in-service was designed by the ACCS Human Resources Manager, Anne Marie Dillon, in conjunction with Dr. Gerard McMahon, an acknowledged expert in the area of employee relations. Currently additional training for Designated Persons identified in the Policy is being finalised for delivery commencing late March 2020. ACCS acknowledges the input of the unions in this process of roll-out of the Dignity at Work Policy.

The Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018

As previously referenced, there will be a presentation during the course of this Convention on the most recent sections of the Act commenced on February 1, 2020. The most pressing requirement on Boards of Management is to complete, following consultation with patrons, parents of students attending the school and the staff of the school, redrafting the school's Admission Policy for submission to the patrons by 30th of April 2020. Guidance on this process is provided in ACCS Info Bulletin 10/20. This Info Bulletin is accompanied by a copy of Department of Education and Skills circular letter 0007/20 and the following supporting documentation:

- a) Template Admissions Policy
- b) Template Admissions Notice
- c) FAQs on the commencement of certain sections of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018

The admission policy will provide that a school will admit each student seeking admission to the school including, where appropriate, each student seeking admission to a special class in the school, other than—

- (i) where the school is oversubscribed,
- (ii) where the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23 (4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student,
- (iii) in the case of a school that admits students of one gender only, where the school refuses to admit as a student a person who is not of that gender,
- (iv) in the case of a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values, where the school refuses to admit as a student a person who is not of that denomination and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school,
- (v) in the case of a school that, with the approval of the Minister, provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister, where the student does not have the specified category of special educational needs concerned, or
- (vi) in the case of a student seeking admission to a special class in the school, where the student does not have the category of special educational needs specified by the Minister in respect of that class,

As Community and Comprehensive schools seek to provide a post primary education for all the children in the community the new admission policies should not involve major redrafting.

3) Managing the Evolution of ACCS and Promoting the Community and Comprehensive Sector

Support for Existing Schools

The primary focus of ACCS is supporting the Boards of Management and in-school management teams of existing schools. During the course of 2019 all 96 schools have engaged directly with ACCS through in-service, telephone conversations, emails and correspondence. In ACCS we continually review our practices to ensure the service provided to schools is relevant and accessible.

We are constantly looking to improve the service to schools and this year we were delighted to welcome to the team Catherine O'Sullivan, Director of ACCS/JMB Further Education Support Unit and Elaine Mooney, Vetting Administrator. The role of Jim Twohig, ACCS School Building

Projects Advisor, has also been enhanced on the request of the Department of Education and Skills. You will see from Jim's report the high level of engagement he has with schools where he now, on behalf of ACCS, assists and oversees the procurement process for consultants to building projects in excess of €1 million.

These services are in addition to those already provided including human resource management, data protection, school leadership and management advice. We communicate with schools on a regular basis through information bulletins and newsletters including articles relevant to the most recent leadership and management issues facing schools. Through our extensive CPD programme we have the opportunity to meet with school leaders and Board of Management members on a regular basis.

With the Executive we are currently exploring how to strengthen our regional structures. We greatly welcome the mentoring program for new Principals introduced by CSL. However, we cannot underestimate the strength and supportive nature of the regional network for senior school leaders. It is important we provide opportunities for the school leaders to meet and share best practice and experience. We must also continue to offer easily accessible supports for newly appointed Principals and Deputy Principals. We are also currently exploring how middle leaders who have attended our excellent middle leaders programme may stay engaged with ACCS and their fellow colleagues in other schools. In ACCS we not only seek to promote professional collaboration within schools but professional collaboration across schools. Through our news and events section in our newsletter we encourage schools to share their successes and stories of best practice with fellow schools across the Community and Comprehensive Schools Sector. It is indeed very inspiring for us in head office to see the wonderful work taking place on a daily basis across schools throughout the country. We ask schools to continue sharing this information and good news stories as the newsletter is also a means of promoting the excellent work taking place in schools affiliated to ACCS.

Working Collectively

The evidence of the power of collaboration between the management bodies is very much seen in the emergence of new middle leadership and management structures in schools. The provision of additional Deputy Principal posts (API and APII level) and the emergence of a distributive leadership model in schools is a direct result of collaboration and working together. In a similar vein both ACCS and the ETBI have sought a reversal of cuts imposed during the financial downturn in relation to secretarial and caretaking support in schools. ACCS acknowledges the Department's commitment to continue alleviating these cuts. We will continue to work with the Department not only in achieving full restoration but also a reimagining of the supports required leading and managing a modern post primary school. On a personal level I also wish to acknowledge the work of our President, Paul Fiorentini, in progressing these issues and preparation of our pre-budget submissions.

The question of the sustainability of leadership teams in schools has been raised. There is evidence of a declining number of applicants for the position of Principals in post primary schools. We acknowledge the work of NAPD in researching the reasons which, for many, may appear obvious given the ever-increasing demands placed on senior school leaders in our schools. We look forward to working with NAPD and our fellow management bodies in progressing this issue.

ACCS engages in a myriad of consultations with Department bodies on an ongoing basis. Currently we are engaged with the Teaching Council in a review of initial teacher education including school placement. It is essential that initial teacher education is of the highest possible standard and we encourage all schools to support school placement programmes. We expect publication of recommendations from the Teaching Council in the very near future.

Patronage of New Schools

ACCS, the Management Body for the 96 Community and Comprehensive Schools, has significant concerns regarding the operation of the process to identify the Patrons of new post primary schools. The process excludes the Community School model. This is at complete odds with the stated aims of the process to promote diversity and meet the patronage preferences of parents.

ACCS concerns have been previously expressed in a submission to the Department of Education and Skills, *'Awarding of Patronage for New Schools 2017/18 from a Community School Perspective'*. The announcement of the patronage of 6 new post primary schools by Minister McHugh on 17th December 2019 further confirms ACCS in its view of the shortcomings of the process.

The New Schools Establishment Group report sets out the argument for diversity of patronage along the lines of denominational v multi-denominational education. ACCS maintains that diversity is not limited to these factors but must include ethnicity and nationality, socio-economic background and status and inclusion of special educational needs.

Section 8 (5) of the Education Act 1998 provides for Joint Patronage. However, the new patronage process does not appear to allow for the establishment of Community Schools under joint patronage. This would appear to limit the potential for diversity of patrons in the schools and also fail to honour the expressed wishes of the majority of parents who have responded to patronage surveys.

In the previously lodged analysis of 'Awarding of Patronage for New Schools 2017/18 from a Community School Perspective' to the Department of Education and Skills. This analysis highlights that, "the parental surveys analysed in this report would suggest that joint patronage was the most democratic option in at least five areas: Carpenterstown and Castleknock, Malahide, Swords, Limerick City South and Firhouse".

A similar pattern has emerged again where the clear preference expressed by parents has not been reflected in the patronage awarded in schools.

Enfield

LMETB	45.2%	LMETB	45.2%
Educate Together	25.7%	Le Chéile	20.6%
Joint Patronage	70.9%		65.8%

Either decision reflects a majority of parents' preferences are respected as opposed to the recommendation of a single Patron.

Kilcoole/Greystones

KWETB	50.7%
Educate Together	31.7%
An Foras Pátrúnachta	16.4%
Joint Patronage	98.8%

The opportunity was there under a Joint Patronage Model to recognise the wishes of nearly all parents who responded. While there is one Community School in Celbridge under the Joint Patronage of KWETB and Educate Together, there is none which involves An Foras Pátrúnachta.

Blanchardstown

DDLETB	46.6%
Islamic Foundation of Ireland	29.0%
Joint Patronage	75.6%

A unique opportunity was afforded to recognise the Islamic Foundation of Ireland as a Joint Patron in a post primary school. This would have increased diversity and recognised the expressed preference of the majority of parents. Parents of students of the Islamic faith have expressed their difficulty accessing post primary schools in the Dublin area.

Citywest/Saggart

DDLETB	48.6%
Educate Together	34.3%
Joint Patronage	82.9%

D6 – Clonskeagh – D6W

Educate Together	55.4%
An Foras Pátrúnachta	31.8%
Joint Patronage	87.2%

While Educate Together has received a clear majority of votes cast the opportunity existed to explore Joint Patronage which would have represented the views of the vast majority. There are no schools under the Joint Patronage of Educate Together and An Foras Pátrúnachta in the area.

The figures consistently highlighted the potential of meeting the patronage wishes as expressed by parents more equitably while also increasing diversity of patronage across schools.

The continued exclusion of the Community or Comprehensive School model as an option open to parents needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency if true diversity and parental choice are to form a part of the selection criteria for patronage of new schools. This would be consistent with Action 51 of the Department's Action Plan to "make progress towards increasing the diversity of school type in order to offer parents more choice".

Pre-Budget Submission 2019

The following table highlights the priorities submitted by ACCS in its Pre-Budget Submission 2019.

Priority 1	The need for the ending of the moratorium and the funding of appropriate clerical/administrative and caretaking support for schools.
Priority 2	The Need to Enhance Leadership and Management Supports in DEIS schools.
Priority 3	Co-ordinated response to the challenges that school inclusion brings.

The following is a summary of the key recommendations made under each of the priorities.

Priority 1

ACCS recommends:

1. That the role of clerical officers be re-imagined reflecting the variety of the tasks associated with the role.
2. That the job description for clerical officers be expanded to include these areas of responsibility.
3. That the allocation of clerical/administrative support to schools be augmented.
4. That the pay scale and progression be examined to attract highly trained/experienced personnel to meet the role of senior clerical/administrative officer.
5. That the allocation of caretakers be restored to a level where schools can meet all their Health & Safety, Health & Hygiene, Repair & Maintenance obligations and expectations.

The implementation of the figures as per the Blackstock Report 1999 is seen in the table below:

School Size	Schools >1000 students	Schools < + = 800 students	Schools <=500 students
Clerical	2.6	2.2	1.5
Caretaking	2.6	2.2	1.5

Priority 2

ACCS recommends:

1. That 1(one) additional Deputy Principal post be allocated to DEIS Schools with an enrolment between 400 and 699 students.
2. That an additional Post of Responsibility at Assistant Principal Level 1 be allocated to all DEIS schools with an enrolment of up to 400 students. In addition, it is proposed that a time allocation, equivalent to that allocated to the post of Deputy Principal in schools under 400 students be allocated to this post. This would facilitate time to fulfil the requirements of the DEIS programme in proportion to the size of the school.
3. That two additional Post of Responsibility at Assistant Principal Level 1 be allocated to all DEIS schools with an enrolment of and above 700 students. This would facilitate time to fulfil the requirements of the DEIS programme in proportion to the size of these schools.

Priority 3

ACCS recommends:

1. The creation of a dedicated Special Education Needs/Inclusive Education Co-ordinator in each post primary school.
2. The quantum of hours required for this position are identified based on the educational profile of each individual school.

While significant progress has been made in priority one, ACCS continues to engage with the Department seeking to progress priorities two and three. ACCS has also engaged with the JMB and ETBI to approach the Department in a common bid to advance these priorities.

In Conclusion

Community and Comprehensive Schools are affording opportunities for all the students within the community to engage in a comprehensive, multi-denominational, inclusive, vibrant liberal education. This tradition, established across Ireland with 50 years of experience, is valued by the communities the schools serve. Community Schools are uniquely placed to meet the evolving needs and context of communities. It is incumbent on us all present to promote this model of education for the benefit of the communities we serve.

The operation of ACCS is very dependent on the wonderful support of the staff at Head Office. I wish to express my sincere thanks to our Office Manager Susan Cunniffe so ably assisted by Debbie Riordan and Eileen Diver. This last year it has been great to welcome Catherine, Hilary and Elaine to our team. A special word of thanks to my colleagues Áine and Anne Marie for their friendship and absolute dedication. Our President, Paul, all members of the Executive and to those still in the background, Antoinette, Ciarán, Eileen, Liam, Tommy and others, your support is greatly appreciated.

*Mr. John Irwin,
General Secretary, ACCS.*

ACCS Info. Bulletins

Since Convention 2019 the following ACCS/info. Bulletins were issued to the schools:

ACCS/info. Bulletin 08/19	11/02/2019	Dates of Certificate Examinations 2019
ACCS/info. Bulletin 09/19	11/02/2019	Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement
ACCS/info. Bulletin 10/19	21/02/2019	ACCS Convention, 27th–29th March, 2019
ACCS/info. Bulletin 11/19	28/02/2019	ACCS Invitation to all Community & Comprehensive Schools to participate in a Middle Leaders Training Programme
ACCS/info. Bulletin 12/19	04/03/2019	An invitation to Community & Comprehensive Schools on updating the ACCS Website
ACCS/info. Bulletin 13/19	04/03/2019	DES Circular 0018/2019 Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure – 2018/2019 School Year
ACCS/info. Bulletin 14/19	05/03/2019	New Dignity at Work Policy
ACCS/info. Bulletin 15/19	07/03/2019	Teacher Allocations Process 2019/20
ACCS/info. Bulletin 16/19	11/03/2019	ACCS CPD: “The place of Student Voice in enhancing learning, teaching and assessment in the classroom.” 11th April 2019
ACCS/info. Bulletin 17/19	12/03/2019	Student Climate Change Protest
ACCS/info. Bulletin 18/19	14/03/2019	ACCS Guidelines on the Use of Social Media in Schools and JCT School Leadership Workshops
ACCS/info. Bulletin 19/19	19/03/2019	Regulation of School Age Childcare and the Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours
ACCS/info. Bulletin 20/19	03/04/2019	Circular 0027/2019 Multi-Annual Summer Works Scheme (SWS) 2020 onwards
ACCS/info. Bulletin 21/19	11/04/2019	ACCS Data Protection Policy for Schools
ACCS/info. Bulletin 22/19	29/04/2019	Certificate Examinations 2019 Examinations Aides and Leaving Certificate Examination 2019 Organising Superintendents for the supervised viewing of marked Leaving Certificate scripts
ACCS/info. Bulletin 23/19	23/05/2019	Taking Photographs at School Events
ACCS/info. Bulletin 24/19	23/05/2019	Website Privacy Notice Template
ACCS/info. Bulletin 25/19	24/05/2019	Multi-Annual Summer Works Scheme (SWS) 2020 onwards
ACCS/info. Bulletin 26/19	24/05/2019	Urgent Appeal from State Examinations Commission and Information regarding Examination Candidate Self Service Portal 2019
ACCS/info. Bulletin 27/19	27/05/2019	Recruitment of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) - Supplementary Assignment Arrangements for the 2019/20 School Year
ACCS/info. Bulletin 28/19	30/05/2019	Student Voice
ACCS/info. Bulletin 29/19	31/05/2019	Extension to RACE Scheme in respect of Candidates Suffering Bereavement During the June Examinations
ACCS/info. Bulletin 30/19	31/05/2019	Declaration in respect of Self-Financing Part-Time Adult Education Programmes
ACCS/info. Bulletin 31/19	31/05/2019	Redeployment 2019
ACCS/info. Bulletin 32/19	06/06/2019	Junior Cycle Management Resource Hours 2019/2020
ACCS/info. Bulletin 33/19	12/06/2019	“Turasabhaile” Online recruitment portal

ACCS Info. Bulletins cont'd

ACCS/info. Bulletin 34/19	18/07/2019	Teacher retirements on 1st September 2019
ACCS/info. Bulletin 35/19	14/08/2019	Survey on secretaries and caretakers working in schools whose salaries are funded from state grants
ACCS/info. Bulletin 36/19	16/08/2019	Leaving Certificate Results, Viewing and Appeals 2019
ACCS/info. Bulletin 37/19	02/09/2019	Exemptions from Irish
ACCS/info. Bulletin 38/19	16/09/2019	Junior Cycle Changes Circular Letter 0055/2019
ACCS/info. Bulletin 39/19	16/09/2019	FÓRSA Notification of Industrial Action by School Secretaries
ACCS/info. Bulletin 39/19A	18/09/2019	FÓRSA Notification of Industrial Action by School Secretaries
ACCS/info. Bulletin 40/19	20/09/2019	Transfer of personal data in the event of a No Deal Brexit
ACCS/info. Bulletin 41/19	20/09/2019	ACCS Essential Education Law Day 19th September 2019 – Event Materials
ACCS/info. Bulletin 42/19	02/10/2019	Guidance from the Department of Education and Skills regarding Storm Lorenzo
ACCS/info. Bulletin 43/19	04/10/2019	DES Circular S.71/19 – Junior Cycle Examination Results 2019
ACCS/info. Bulletin 44/19	14/10/2019	Budget 2020
ACCS/info. Bulletin 45/19	24/10/2019	Data Retention Schedule
ACCS/info. Bulletin 46/19	24/10/2019	Suspension of industrial action by school secretaries
ACCS/info. Bulletin 47/19	26/11/2019	Changes to the Career Break Scheme for Teachers - 2019/20 School Year
ACCS/info. Bulletin 48/19	26/11/2019	NCCA FAQ Documents re Wellbeing & RSE
ACCS/info. Bulletin 49/19	27/11/2019	ACCS CONVENTION 2020, Great Southern Killarney, East Avenue Road, Town Centre, Killarney, Co. Kerry
ACCS/info. Bulletin 01/20	08/01/2020	Scheduling Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) Meetings - ASTI Directive
ACCS/info. Bulletin 02/20	09/01/2020	Industrial action by grant-funded secretaries (SSSF funded) who are members of the FÓRSA trade union
ACCS/info. Bulletin 03/20	13/01/2020	ACCS CONVENTION 2020 - 4th, 5th & 6th March 2020 Great Southern Killarney, East Avenue Road, Town Centre, Killarney, Co. Kerry
ACCS/info. Bulletin 04/20	13/01/2020	Nominations for the Election of Area Representatives to the ACCS Executive at Convention 2020
ACCS/info. Bulletin 05/20	14/01/2020	Admission Policy
ACCS/info. Bulletin 06/20	22/01/2020	Suspension of industrial action by grant funded (SSSF funded) school secretaries who are members of the FÓRSA union
ACCS/info. Bulletin 07/20	24/01/2020	Strike Action 4th February 2020 by TUI Member Teachers
ACCS/info. Bulletin 08/20	06/02/2020	Standardisation of the School Year in respect of Primary & Post-Primary Schools for the years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23
ACCS/info. Bulletin 09/20	07/02/2020	ACCS Convention, 4th – 6th March, 2020
ACCS/info. Bulletin 10/20	10/02/2020	DES C/L 007/20 'Commencement of Certain Sections of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018', changes to school admission processes

Retirements and New Appointments

Retired/Departing Principals and Deputy Principals

ACCS offers its thanks and best wishes to those retiring or moving to pastures new.

Ballinamore C.S.

Principal: Padraig Leyden

Blakestown C.S.

Principal: Eileen O'Connor

Bishopstown C.S.

Principal: John Farrell

Boyne C.S.

Deputy Principal: Raymond Tully

Carrick-on-Shannon C.S.

Deputy Principal: Paul Byrne (seconded)

Coláiste Cholmille

Principal: Jimmy Keogh

Gallen C.S.

Principal: Ursula Finnegan

Deputy Principal: Frances Scully

Hartstown C.S.

Principal: John Bean

Holy Child C.S.

Deputy Principal: Stacey Kenny (moved sector)

Kildare Town C.S.

Principal: Patrick Flynn

Killinarden C.S.

Deputy Principal: Denise Lennon-Hennessy (moved sector)

Moate C.S.

Deputy Principal: Frances Kelly

Mount Temple Comprehensive

Principal: Liam Wegimont (seconded)

Newpark Comprehensive

Principal: Derek Lowry

Old Bawn C.S.

Principal: Paul Crone (moved sector)

Portumna C.S.

Principal: Derry Long

St. Caimin's C.S.

Principal: Claire Knight

St. Patrick's Comprehensive

Principal: Morgan Heaphy (moved sector)

St. Tiernan's C.S.

Deputy Principal: Gerry McCooey

Tallaght C.S.

Principal: Teresa Hennessy

Deputy Principal: Mick Glynn

The Royal and Prior Comprehensive

Deputy Principal: Margaret Nairn



Back L to R: James Duignan, ACCS Vice President, Mick Glynn, Jimmy Keogh, Margaret Nairn, Derek Lowry, John Farrell, Patrick Flynn, Raymond Tully, Gerry McCooey, Áine O Sullivan, Assistant General Secretary, ACCS, John Irwin, General Secretary, ACCS.

Front L to R: Ursula Finnegan, Frances Scully, Eileen O'Connor, Paul Fiorentini, ACCS President, Teresa Hennessy, Claire Knight and Philomena Cherry.

New Principals and Deputy Principals

Congratulations to all recently appointed Principals and Deputy Principals.

Ballinamore C.S.

Principal: Diarmuid McCaffrey
Deputy Principal: Martin Cunnane

Ballinteer C.S.

Deputy Principal: Amy Doherty

Blakestown C.S.

Principal: Frank Milling

Bishopstown C.S.

Principal: Edwina Gottstein
Deputy Principal: Lorna Finnegan

Boyne C.S.

Deputy Principal: Donncha Ó Siadhail

Carrick-on-Shannon C.S.

Acting Deputy Principal: Catriona Sexton

Coláiste Cholmille

Principal: Cora Fagan
Deputy Principal: Darren McGuinness

Gallen C.S.

Principal: Garrett Buckley
Deputy Principal: Stacey Guinan

Hartstown C.S.

Principal: Lucia Ryan

Holy Child C.S.

Deputy Principal: Clodagh Downes

Kildare Town C.S.

Principal: John Hayes
Deputy Principal: Fiona Behan
Deputy Principal: Jenny O'Halloran

Killinarden C.S.

Deputy Principal: Gillian White

Moate C.S.

Deputy Principal: Olive Costello

Mount Temple Comprehensive

Acting Principal: Helen Gormley
Acting Deputy Principal: Gareth Borland

Newpark Comprehensive

Principal: Eoin Norton

Old Bawn C.S.

Principal: Ursula McCabe
Deputy Principal: Sarah Gibbons

Pobalscoil na Rosann

Deputy Principal: Dáire Gillen

Pobalscoil Rosmini

Deputy Principal: Karen O'Donovan

Portumna C.S.

Principal: Shane McClearn

St. Caimin's C.S.

Principal: Alan Cunningham
Deputy Principal: Maria Sheehan

St. Patrick's Comprehensive

Principal: Mary Costello

St. Tiernan's C.S.

Deputy Principal: Kevin Martin

Tallaght C.S.

Principal: Aidan Lynch
Deputy Principal: Ian Boran

The Royal and Prior Comprehensive

Deputy Principal: Tara Cowan