

Report of ACCS In-School Management Task Group and Conference 2020

Members: **Paul Fiorentini, President ACCS, Denis Ring, Chairperson, Ceola McGowan, Willie Culkeen, Howard Welch, Anne Smyth, Bríd Ní Annracháin, Eileen Gildea, John McKennedy, Catherine O’Sullivan, Áine O’Sullivan, Assistant General Secretary ACCS and John Irwin, General Secretary ACCS.**



The main task of the In-School Management (ISM) Task Group is to organise the annual In-School Management Conference. In 2020 this event went online and virtual for the first time in the history of ACCS.

This year the ACCS In-School Management Conference was held as a one-day virtual event on the 26th November and was sponsored by Microsoft Ireland and PCI Group. The event, which was opened by ACCS President, Paul Fiorentini, was planned with school leaders’ wellbeing in mind as a celebration of what they do and as a timely opportunity for school teams to reflect on their work as leaders in complex and challenging times. In the days before the event, all school leaders received a wellbeing pack from the ACCS team as a token of our appreciation for their dedication and commitment to their school communities.

The ACCS In-School Management Task Group chaired by Denis Ring, organised an agenda which included an engaging interview with Professor Luke O’Neill, School of Biochemistry and Immunology at Trinity College Dublin. The interview covered a wide range of topics such as good practices in promoting positive selfcare for school leaders and developing strategies for navigating the Covid landscape, vaccinations, writing his new book and taking time out with his band.

The final session was facilitated live from the UK by Jim Steele, International Motivational Speaker and Leadership Coach. Jim Steele is an



internationally respected speaker and business adviser who has inspired people within some of the world's leading companies to perform at their highest level and maintain their resilience no matter what challenges come their way. Jim's presentation, aptly titled, *'Unashamedly Superhuman'* was thought provoking and challenging for the delegates showing us how to achieve better results, greater resilience and stronger leadership teams in these challenging times.

Participant numbers were high as the senior management and leadership teams took the opportunity to take some time out of busy schedules to replenish, relax and recharge the energy levels. While the event marked the retirement of many colleagues this year with a video of photographs, and Joe Sweeney, former Principal of Coláiste Chiaráin spoke eloquently on their behalf, all agreed that when current Public Health restrictions are lifted and when ACCS can host an evening to mark the occasion properly later in the school year, the traditional ACCS lamp will be presented at a separate function.

Following the regional area meetings which were held in breakout rooms, John Irwin, General Secretary ACCS updated delegates on recent developments in schools and facilitated a brief questions and answer session on current issues as raised by the regions.

ACCS was delighted to feature musical recordings from both Ballinteer Community School and Carndonagh Community School showcasing the wonderful talent of 3rd year student, Andrew Moore on the piano (Ballinteer Community School) and a traditional Irish music group from Carndonagh Community School featuring Ciara Gilmore TY and 5th year students Tara McLaughlin, Kirsten McLucas, Kate McCallion, Brónach Harkin and Hanna Fiorentini.

Despite a number of technical distractions, and delays, including an impromptu fire drill, feedback from delegates was overwhelmingly positive in terms of planning and content, timing and variety of presentations. We acknowledge that the implementation of the event was not as perfect as we would have liked, we thank delegates for their patience, and we recognise that we certainly learned lots of valuable lessons about the perils of hosting virtual events in this format.

The ACCS ISM Task Group would like to acknowledge the support of its many sponsors and in particular, the work of the 3rd year students (Limerick Institute of Technology BSc (Hons) Creative Broadcasting & Film Production) who hosted and produced this event in partnership with ACCS. Special thanks to FESU Director, Catherine O Sullivan who liaised closely with course director/lecturer, Nora Ní Fhlathárta in the organisation of the event.

The Task Group would also like to record its gratitude to General Secretary, John Irwin and the ACCS team for their support in organising the conference, acknowledging the substantial work completed by Debbie Riordan, Eileen Diver and Elaine Mooney in ACCS Head Office.

The following people were elected to the In-School Management Task Group 2020/21:

Connacht:	Willie Culkeen & Eileen Gildea	Munster:	Denis Ring & Kathleen O'Brien
Dublin:	John McKennedy & Cora Tighe	Ulster:	Ceola McGowan & Howard Welch
Leinster:	Anne Smyth & Des Cullen		

**Denis Ring,
Chairperson.**