

Report of the ACCS Education Sub-Committee 2017/2018

Members: Ms Antoinette Nic Gearailt, President, Mr. Paul Crone, Chairperson, Mr. Paul Fiorentini, Mr. Paul Thornton, Mr. Pat McKenna, Mr. Frank Moran, Ms. Noralene Ní Urdail, Mr. Derek Lowry, Mr. Michael Brett, Mr. James Duignan, An t-Úas Tomás Ó Nidh, Ms. Mary Jackson, Ms. Áine O’Sullivan, Assistant General Secretary, ACCS and Mr. John Irwin, General Secretary, ACCS.

The Education Sub-Committee works under the direction of the Executive Committee. They meet regularly and report to the Executive on issues of an educational nature and leadership in our schools. The focal point of the year for the Education Sub-Committee is our Education Conference which takes place annually during the final term of the year. The Education Sub-Committee endeavours to address the issues of concern for schools that are of educational significance and impact on quality of teaching and learning as well as student service and the leading of learning.

Education Conference 2017

The Education Conference 2017 took place on 10th of May 2017 in the Mullingar Park Hotel. The focus for this year was “*Innovation and Excellence*” as we endeavoured to highlight collaboration and sharing between schools of practice that was both innovative and excellent. The aim was to support schools in trying to build a culture of innovation while striving towards excellence. The key note speaker, Mr. Harry Freeman, Education Consultant was selected to initiate the overview while specific examples from within our own schools were shared to allow us to build our own culture of collaboration and support.

Mr. Harry Freeman has extensive experience in supporting schools and delivering key messages on the topic of innovation in schools. On the day Harry spoke about the importance of linking the gap between the theory and the practice of promoting innovation in schools placing a particular emphasis on the role of the leader in the school and the leader in the classroom.

The mid-morning session involved four presentations from our own schools which allowed delegates to engage with innovative examples of excellent practice from within our own sector.

The sessions were:

Strategies to improve problem solving in maths

Homework

Academic monitoring of students

Féilte Beaga

St. Mark’s Community School

Scoil Mhuire, Clane

St. Colmcille’s Community School

Kinsale Community School

In the afternoon Ms. Seamus Ó Ceallacháin, Principal in Pobalscoil Na Tríonóide in Youghal spoke about his experience in school as they have been working on “Building Excellence into the Culture of our School”.

Feedback on the conference received from the delegates was excellent and the sharing of practice was commended during the conference.

Continuing with the similar format that has been well received this year we are working towards our Education Conference 2018 with the theme of “Championing Learning”, which will again focus on sharing experiences that have been successful in our schools.

Our Education Conference, as well as catering for school leaders, is aimed at the practitioners who are leading learning in their classroom, subject departments and individual schools. This conference will take place on 25th April 2018 in the Mullingar Park Hotel.

Other Work of the Education Sub-Committee

ACCS has a representative on the Executive Committee of NCCA, representatives on the Junior and Senior Cycle Committees and on various subject and course committees. Our representatives, while accountable to the Executive Committee, represent the voice of Community and Comprehensive schools in the decision making processes at this level. We whole heartedly thank our representatives who willingly give of their time to ensure our voice is heard.

The Education Sub-Committee has made recommendations to the Executive Committee in relation to issues that are considered whole school issues such as DEIS schools and Gaeltacht schools. The Education Sub-Committee has been involved in defining its own terms of reference and has been involved in making recommendations to the Executive Committee on topics such as Special Educational Needs provision and on Junior Cycle.

The face of education is changing rapidly which creates significant challenges for schools and school leaders. To keep up to date and on top of every aspect of educational change, to break it down into manageable sections, is something the Education Sub-Committee is continually working to achieve. Our commitment to supporting schools to deliver the best educational experience that they can, continues to be our motivation.

It has been a hugely successful year that has been very busy, working with the new management team. I wish to thank John and Áine for their support as well as Eileen for her help. I want to thank Antoinette for her vision and guidance. I thank wholeheartedly the members of the Sub-Committee who have always engaged in honest debate, as well as the staff in Head Office who are always available. It has been a real pleasure. As we continue to drive forward into the age of wellbeing and identity, I look forward to continue working with the Education Sub-Committee on issues that enhance the student experience in our schools and which allow us to continue to be the “Champions of Learning”.

*Mr. Paul Crone,
Chairperson.*

