

Next meeting of the Region will be held in _____ on Thursday, 21st January 2010 at 7.30p.m. All parent associations / Parents in the Region are welcome.

Report of Meeting of North Eastern Region – Trim – 8th October, 2009 at 7.30.

Tommy Walshe, President, PACCS and Connie Carolan, PACCS also attended.

Tommy gave a presentation covering the following topics:-

PACCS – How it is funded and how it is part of NPCpp and PPEF.

The funding comes solely from the school affiliations, a small grant from NPCpp (who do get funding from the Department of Ed. & Science).

NPCpp – There are five constituent bodies making up this organisation – PACCS is one of those bodies and has four representatives - Tommy Walshe, Carole Trodden, Margaret Molloy and Teresa McSweeney.

PPEF – This consists of Parents, Management, Unions and NAPD. It had been in operation prior to the Education cuts and was set up primarily to get more funding into schools. The idea for this came from NPCpp. Jim Moore and Paul Beddy represent NPCpp on this forum.

Management Body – ACCS – This is body representing our Boards of Management

Teacher Unions – TUI and ASTI are the unions representing our teachers in the C and C Sector.

Department of Education & Science – PACCS meet with the DES on a yearly basis at least. This is mainly to discuss successful motions from our conference and any other issue which may affect our schools.

State Examination Commission – Meetings are also held with this body annually. - The issue of assessment for State Examinations was discussed at this point.

Project Maths – This is currently in 24 schools on a pilot basis and will be rolled out to all schools in 2010. A workshop on this topic will be held at Conference 2010.

Why have a parent Association?

There are practical possibilities for parent's associations:-

- Information re school subjects i.e. SPHE
- The Everyday Schedule
- The curriculum possibilities
- Funding
- The Extra Needs

Practical ways to co-operate and support the work done by teachers:-

- Transition Year
- Homework
- Sporting Events, Concerts etc.

Passing information to parents:-

- Transition Year
- Curriculum Offered
- Drug and Drink abuse
- Bullying
- Study

There opportunities for liaison between Parent/Teacher and Parent/Student.

The association will not be a Complaints forum, Tea and Biscuit making or Fundraising organisation.

The Parents' Association also has responsibilities. They should encourage excellent attendance, Check and sign homework journal and provide required textbooks.

The role of the Officers and work of the committee was discussed together with agendas for meetings, election of officers etc.

Questions and a general discussion followed. It was decided that the Regional meeting should move from School to school and if possible be held on the evening of a parents' association meeting in the school which is hosting the Regional meeting.

The next meeting of the region will be on 21st January, 2010. This will allow ample time for preparation for Conference.

Report of North Eastern Region of PACCS – Trim Castle Hotel – 7th May, 2009.

This was the first meeting of the Region for some time. There were representatives from four schools i.e. Trim, Athboy, Ashbourne and Ardee. Tommy Walshe, President of PACCS also attended.

He gave a presentation on Community and Comprehensive schools and their integration in the whole community, through involvement in their area. This covered parents' associations, students, teaching staff and management. He also outlined ACCS and its role in the schools.

The presentation was discussed and commented on during the evening.

Other items discussed were:- Examinations and special accommodations, Section 29 and its implications, Transition Year, Conference, Project Maths, Outside involvement and extra curricular activities.

Copies of the following were distributed at the meeting:-

Presentation – overview of PACCS, ACCCS & Parent and Student Councils,
'What is a Parents' Association?',
'How to form a Parent Association',
'Home and School – necessary alliance',
Home Factors which are beneficial,
NCCA Fact Sheet on Junior Certificate Geography.
Other Relevant leaflets.

The meeting concluded with Tea & Coffee.

North East Region news.

In response to the budget cuts in education the Post Primary Education Forum (PPEF) organised local forums. The PPEF was established in November 2007 and has brought together parents ,management and teacher unions to discuss areas of common interest in education. The Co. Louth forum comprises of three parents, representing various parent bodies, the general secretary of the parents association of community and comprehensive schools, three post primary schools principals and two representatives of the ASTI and TUI, the two post primary teacher unions.

The local forum surveyed the schools in Co. Louth and assessed the actual loss on the ground in our schools. Overall the picture is bleak. Our students, due to a serious cut in resources available, will suffer greatly. To examine the figures in detail...Co. Louth Post Primary schools will lose €475,000 from their working capital. In effect, there will be no money available to implement many of the curricula requirements. For example, the compulsory geography field trips and biology field trips cannot be completed under these proposed conditions. Theatre visits to help students understand their plays cannot be taken. Many C.S.P.E action projects cannot be considered.

Our economy depends on the success of our education system. We attract foreign based companies because of the calibre of our graduates, with specific reference to our science and business graduates. 43 teachers are going to lose their jobs in Co Louth. Schools may no longer be in the position to deliver the expectation of our students and parents.

The minister has not thought through the immediate implications of these cuts. Minority subjects cannot run. These classes are needed to ensure that

our best students are well catered for and given every opportunity to reach their potential and also equally as important our weaker students are helped to achieve their potential.

Every child has the right to an appropriate education to cater for their needs. With these swingeing cuts these rights are diminished. When the Minister decides to refuse a student who is in need of help he is militating against that student from succeeding in the education field.

From a management point of view, the logistics of dealing with cover for absent colleagues due to illness or school business are untenable. The existing supervision and substitution scheme does not adequately cover absenteeism and now there is nothing else. What does the Minister foresee happening? If there are no teachers available then what are the options?

Drogheda and Region:

Teachers lost: 19.5

Finance: €125,000 LOST

Courses: TYO, LCA, LCVP, JCSP

Subjects: Physics, Chemistry, Accounting, Music, Engineering, Economics among others

Curricular components: Essential work

Special Needs: At least 28 hours LOST.

HSCL officer: 1 LOST

Dundalk and Region:

Teachers lost: 23.5

Finance: €350,000

Courses: TYO, LCA, LCVP, JCSP

Subjects: Physics, Chemistry, Accounting, Music, Engineering, Economics among others

Curricular components: Essential work

Special Needs: At least 35 hours LOST.

HSCL officer: 3 LOST

The Irish people have always recognised the advantage of a good education. Schools do everything in their power to give an education to every pupil. The Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) Officer supports those students who are at risk of not meeting their potential in the educational system because of economic or social disadvantage. The HSCL scheme has proved to be very successful. Parents who may otherwise have been reluctant to visit a school are now actively participating in the school community. Possible early school leavers are now being retained at school and through education are maturing to responsible adults. The Minister in his wisdom has decided to remove 4 HSCL officers in Co Louth. Does the cost of the HSCL officer not pay for itself when compared to the cost society must endure from

misbehaving young adults who are outside the education system because of lack of support.

Has there been any consideration given to what will happen if school based sports activities are affected? Our schools are the nurseries for GAA , IRFU and FAI activities among others. The health authorities have highlighted the risk of high levels of obesity among our young people and advised those working with the young to encourage physical activity. The Department of Education and Science have ignored this advise and have threatened to end all games in schools.

Minister, what were you thinking?