

Report of Training Meeting held in the Millrace Hotel, Bunclody on 21st November at 10.30.

The Training meeting was the first to be held in the South East Region and despite the extremely bad weather there were representatives from East Glendalough, Tullow and Gorey.

Tommy Walshe, President gave the address and the meeting was also attended by Connie Carolan.

He spoke on a number of areas relating to parents.

PACCS: This is a voluntary body, dependent on the affiliations for its finance. Last year, because we were celebrating 25 years of PACCS, NPCpp gave a grant of €5,000. This is allowing us to travel out to the Regions to offer the training to parents. It is also an opportunity to meet the parents in their own area.

To date we have travelled to North East, South East, Mid West, Donegal and the West and have still to travel to North and South Dublin.

All the information is on our Website – www.paccs.ie and by going to the Regions we are bringing the leaflets containing this information so that parents may pick them up and pass them to the parents in their schools.

We are updating our website and this will be on line within the next two weeks.

He stressed the importance of affiliations. This allows us to hold our conference, where parents may submit motions for debate and if successfully carried will then become the policy of PACCS.

NPCpp: Four of the directors of NPCpp are from PACCS.

The structure is such that if a parent should have a problem, he/she should approach the school, region, National in that order. Since PACCS is represented on NPCpp the issues will ultimately go there.

PPEF: This structure was set up over a year ago to get more funding into education. It is made up of students, parents, principals, Management and Unions.

Together with meetings the group have had the opportunity to put forward their case to the Oireachtas Joint Committee. Jim Moore and Paul Beddy, NPCpp sit on this forum.

Meetings: This year PACCS have met with the DES, SEC, ACCS, TUI and ASTI. They have still to meet with NAPD. We aim to have most of our meeting over during the summer months.

Day of Action: On this, PACCS is totally against anything that takes a student out of the classroom for whatever reason. They have just 167 days and if anything disrupts this the teachers will have difficulty covering the curriculum.

He also covered the PACCS position on Supervision and Substitution – children should be taught for the full time they are in school.

Parent/Teacher meetings – the agreement should stand.

Conference: This will be held again in Tipperary Institute on the first week-end in March. There will be two workshops – Mental Health for Teenagers and Project Maths.

These topics have come from a questionnaire which was circulated at last conference.

All the details of Project Maths and how it is being introduced and rolled out and is on the website.

Tommy also gave information on yTeach – again the details are on the website.

McCarthy Report:

This has serious implications for parents and students if introduced:-

- Increase in P/T ration to 20:1
- Reduce Special Needs Assistants by 2000
- Increase school transport charges to €500 per child
- Reduce funding to schools by 10% in 2010 and by another 10% in 2011
- Suspend recruitment to NEPS
- 100m savings on Supervision and Substitution
- Reduce teacher training
- Re-introduce 3rd level fees.

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.

ACCS: Grace Mooney had planned to attend but due to the bad weather had not been able to make it and her address was given by Tommy.

The parents attending discussed issues surrounding the training session as the meeting progressed i.e. Insurance, Boards of Management, parent participation etc.