

2009-2010 - at a Glance



President – Pat Goff

IPPN continues to grow from strength to strength, with over 90% of all Principals and Deputy Principals as members. 2010 was a year of many challenges arising from the serious economic situation in the country. Principals faced diminishing resources, salary reduction and a lowering of morale in schools. Despite these challenges Principals offered strong and positive leadership in their school communities.

IPPN presented at Misneach and Spreagadh programmes, had three very successful seminars presenting Your School and the Law and had the largest-ever attendances at Principal's and Deputy Principals' Conferences. IPPN also dealt with more professional queries from members than ever before, over 4,000 between 1st July 2009 and 1st July 2010, reflecting both the increased complexity of the leadership role and the faith members have in IPPN's ability to provide support.

Continuous Professional Development

Principals' Conference 2010

Theme: Primary Education
- A Human Right or a Privilege?

Facilitator: Olivia O'Leary

Venue: Citywest, Dublin

Date: 28th to 30th January 2010

Speakers: Colm O'Gorman, Minister Batt O'Keeffe, TD, Brendan Keenan, Fergus Finlay, Enda Kenny, Eamon Gilmore, Ferdinand von Prondzynski, Vincent Browne, Don Thornhill, Pat Goff & Seán Cottrell.

This was the largest-ever gathering of Primary Principals in Ireland with over 1,000 attending. Minister Batt O'Keeffe prioritised the tackling of disadvantage and school leadership as the two main areas for which he would wish his ministry to be remembered.



Fergus Finlay,
CEO Barnardos



Colm O'Gorman,
CEO Amnesty Intl. (Ireland)

Deputy Principals' Conference

Theme: Stepping Up to Leadership

Venue: Citywest, Dublin

Facilitator: Virginia O'Mahony

Speakers: Professor John Coohalan, Anne Looney - CEO of the NCCA, Paul Rellis - General Manager of Microsoft Ireland, Brigid Scully - Acting Principal (Deputy Principal).

This was the largest-ever gathering of Deputy Principals with well over 400 attending.

Your School & The Law

Seminars were run in Dublin, Kilkenny and Limerick with a total of 200 attending. Speakers were Emer Woodfull, BL, Denise Brett, BL and David Ruddy, BL and Principal of Talbot NS, who also acted as seminar director.

Topics covered included:

1. Disciplinary Issues including new procedures for suspension & dismissal of teachers
2. Enrolment Policy & Section 29 Appeals
3. Current Legal Issues including
 - Health & Safety Statements
 - Insurance
 - H&S inspection visits to schools
 - Data Protection
 - Child Protection/recent developments
 - Child Custody/Guardianship
 - School Policies – mandated and strongly recommended.

Mentor Training

Mentor training was offered to Principals who were already in a mentoring partnership with a newly-appointed Principal or who wished to act as a mentor.

Professional Briefings for Principals

Briefings were held in Cork and Dublin and included presentations by the following organisations on their current supports and services being provided to schools:

- HSE on Child Protection and Child Guidance
- DES Inspectorate on the WSE and The Principal and NQTs
- NCSE on the role of the SENO
- Medmark on Fitness to Teach and the Teachers' Occupational Health Service
- SESS
- SPHE and
- IPPN on leadership and management resources.

Online Summer Course

150 people participated and gained certification in 'Ciall Ceannaithe', an induction course for newly-appointed Principals.

Challenges/Press Releases

- Sep 2009 - Swine flu 'pandemic' – IPPN's response was to provide access to online resources for schools
- Sep 2009 - NEPS Scheme for Commissioning Psychological Assessments
- Sep 2009 - INTO directive
- Oct 2009 - Unemployed Teachers
- Dec 2009 - Flooding affected large parts of the country - many schools forced to close
- **Jan 2010** - 'Should we open or should we close' was heard in schools all over the country as snow falls created further havoc and despair - that was until the IPPN conference lifted the gloom.
- Mass exodus of Principals set to continue
- Public sector work-to-rule and its impact on school leadership and education
- DES cutting Special Education by stealth
- Primary Education shredded by an Bórd Snip Nua
- Haiti earthquake and primary schools' response
- ICT Strategy an embarrassing shambles
- Failure of national leadership
- Child protection the absolute first priority
- Teacher and Principal underperformance
- June 2010 - Leading schools through a recession
- April 2010 - Department Cutting Special Education by Stealth
- Oct 2010 - Education Cuts are an attack on children.



Professor John Coolahan

Research/Policies

- Submission to DES on 'Children First Guidelines'
- Submission to the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA) on 'ICT Strategy'
- Mar 2010 - SNA Allocation
- Jun 2010 - Continuous Professional Development Needs
- Oct 2010 - Joint Oireachtas Committee discussion on Curriculum Reform

Key Milestones

- Virginia O'Mahony takes up the Presidency of the International Confederation of Principals from January 2011

Significant Projects

- In February, IPPN office-based staff moved into new, purpose-built Support Offices at Glounthaune, marking a significant milestone for the network. This is the first time IPPN staff have worked from permanent, IPPN-owned offices.
- Research Project – review of all research conducted over the years.

Publications

- Jointly published with the National Parents' Council – Primary, 'Supporting Each Other: a Guide to Best Practice for the Effective Partnership between Principals and Parent Associations'. This is the first such joint effort in Europe. IPPN and the NPC-P were invited to a European Conference to present on the initiative.
- Ciall Ceannaithe for aspiring and newly-appointed Principals (Updated)
- Leadership+ issues 52 to 57
- 'Deich mBliana ag Fás', reviewing IPPN's first decade.