

Greetings from the President of NPCpp



A Chairde,
It is a great honour to speak to you as the new President of NPCpp. I would like to welcome everyone back to a new school year. Congratulations to all students who successfully sat their Leaving Certificate Examinations and have moved on to further education, or employment, and to all Junior Certificate pupils on their great examination results.

The 2009 /2010 year was the 25th Anniversary of NPCpp and it has been a very eventful and productive year with significant progress:

- NPCpp launched the NPCpp Newsletter, 5 in total where distributed to all schools nationwide which has led to more parents knowing what NPCpp stands for and the role parents can play in the education system.
- 13 in-service "Training the Trainers" sessions were provided nationally the delivery of such a programme ensures that the members of each Parent's Association will know their responsibilities, their rights and where to obtain the knowledge

required to ensure they can advise fellow Parents/Guardians as the need arises.

The Junior Cycle Review is the next step in changes to the education system as we know it. Parents should avail of the consultation process around reforming the Junior Certificate Examination. Venues and dates are available in this newsletter.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the NPCpp Executive Jim Moore and Rose Tully who have stepped down from their roles as Directors, for all their diligent and tireless hard during their time with NPCpp. Both Jim and Rose will still be with us for the year 2010/11 representing us on various committees. We would also like to extend our thanks to Carole Trodden and Margaret Molloy who are also stepping down as Directors but will still continue to represent us with the ISSU and the NCCA.

May I welcome our new Directors and wish them well in their new roles - Michael Mulry (Fed.CBS), Frank McDaid and Pauline O'Brien (NPAVSCC) and Catherine Riordan, Julie Kilroy and Nora Irwin (PACCS)

Le gach dea ghúí
Tommy Walshe
President, NPCpp

Innovation and Identity: Ideas for a new junior cycle in Post Primary Education

What's all of this about changing the Junior Certificate? Well, a set of ideas about what

a junior cycle of the future might look like has been drawn up by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in the paper '**Innovation and Identity—Ideas for a new Junior Cycle**'. The full paper, and a summary of it, is available to download from the NCCA website:
www.ncca.ie/juniorcycledevelopments.

The paper outlines ideas on why there is a need to make change at junior cycle, what we should change in junior cycle, and how we might go about making those changes in all schools. It is important to remember, that at this stage these are merely 'big' ideas—not proposals. As parents, you will have a perspective on junior cycle, so give these ideas some thought, talk them over and then make your comments available to NPCpp or the NCCA.

So what could change?

The paper has grouped big ideas on what would change in the junior cycle into five pathways:

- 1. The curriculum:** Schools would have greater freedom to be different and design their own junior cycle programme to suit their students' needs.
- 2. A broader Junior Certificate qualification:** At the moment, there is only one qualification available at junior cycle, the Junior Certificate. A move is made away from the Junior Certificate being the sole method of awarding a junior cycle qualification and (a) new qualification(s) which would better reflect students' needs and interests, as well as allowing recognition of a wider range of learning, could be awarded.

- 3.** The structure of the junior cycle could change from that which we know now; a unified three-year programme to introducing more flexible boundaries with 6th class and senior cycle.
- 4.** Central role of teaching and learning: The paper identifies the need to have a renewed focus on quality teaching and learning in junior cycle and deepen students' relationship with their learning.
- 5.** Getting evidence of student learning: Schools would have greater choice as to how they can generate and use evidence of their students' learning—it all won't be focused on the terminal examinations.

In a new junior cycle, school communities would have an increased role in designing their own junior cycle programme to meet the needs of the learners in their own settings. Each school would ensure that their programmes are developed within the context of a Framework for Junior Cycle, which will also ensure that certain learning, experiences and requirements are met by all schools.

NCCA and NPCpp invite you to come discuss these ideas with them. During the month of October 2010, NCCA staff will be visiting a number of venues around the country to discuss these ideas and to hear some of your feedback. Why don't you join us at one of the following venues for an hour and discuss these ideas.

5th October 7.00 pm Kings Hospital School, Palmerstown, Dublin 20

7th October, 7.30 pm Gaelcholáiste, Askea, Carlow

12th October 7.00 pm Moate Community School, Moate, Co Westmeath

12th October, 7.30 pm, Education Centre Tralee, North Campus, Institute of Technology, Tralee, Co Kerry

19th October 7.30 pm, Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town

19th October 7.30 pm, Colaiste Choilm, Ballincollig, Co Cork

If you can't make it, perhaps you'd like to share your ideas with us through a short questionnaire or blog comment on: www.ncca.ie/juniorycycledvelopments.

From this page you will find the summary and other resources which may help you form your opinion. Remember, now is your opportunity to have your say on what a future junior cycle education programme could look like.

Leaving Certificate Helpline 2010

NPCpp ran its annual Leaving Cert. Helpline in August following the publication of the examination results on August 18th and 19th. The Helpline is sponsored by The Irish Independent, Eircom and the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Minister Barry Andrews T.D. launched the event on August 16th. The Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) provided counsellors to answer all queries to the Helpline. Eight counsellors were available from 10.00a.m to 6.00p.m daily. Two counsellors were available from 8.00a.m to 10.00a.m. There were very many calls to the helpline from anxious parents who wished to obtain information on course availability before the First Round Offers were released by the CAO on August 23rd.

The Tánaiste, Ms. Mary Coughlan T.D. visited NPCpp offices on August 18th. The Minister

witnessed at first hand the excellent professional service being offered to students and parents.

The service was again available on August 23rd and 24th. The counsellors were extremely busy on both days. Students were anxious to confirm their future career options if they had not received their first choice of course. This year two thirds of the calls came from parents and one third from students and/or close friends.

NPCpp would like to thank its sponsors: The Irish Independent, Eircom and the DES for their continued and valued support. Without their input it would be impossible to run the service annually. NPCpp also wishes to acknowledge the fantastic work carried out by the professional members of IGC who worked tirelessly to provide information, advice and support for parents and students during the course of the Helpline service.

Rose Tully
NPCpp Helpline Coordinator



L-R: Barry Andrews TD, Minister for Children, Rose Tully NPCpp Director and Helpline Co-ordinator and Eilis Coakley President Institute of Guidance Counsellors at the launch of the NPCpp Leaving Cert. Helpline 2010



L – R: Rose Tully NPCpp Director and Helpline Co-ordinator, Mary Coughlan TD, Minister for Education and Skills and Jim Moore President 2009/2010 NPCpp at the launch of the NPCpp Leaving Cert . Helpline 2010

NPCpp Appreciation

At the AGM of NPCpp on September 18th the existing Officer board ended its term of office and a new board has taken up office.

Mr Jim Moore resigned his position as President after two years at the helm, where his work has seen the organisation move forward in leaps and bounds. This work was a culmination of background research over time, through his involvement in NPAVSCC and the formation of a "strategic review" for NPCpp, which has certainly gained the association a lot in terms of interdepartmental involvement in NPCpp. The formation of the PPEF and ongoing support from the DES and other Education Partners. Resigned as he may be, Jim will remain for one year as "ex officio" President, and hopefully beyond that. I am sure we have not seen the last of him. We wish him well in the future and thank him for all his work on behalf of parents.

Ms Rose Tully has also stepped down from the NPCpp . Rose, who, over a period of more than twenty years of selfless, unstinting and tireless work on behalf of parents, served both NPAVSCC and NPCpp, as

Secretary, President, and at NPCpp as PRO for the last three years. A National School teacher by profession, Rose has taught at all levels in the primary sector and in later years specialised in the area of "Special Needs", which is a subject she has taken to her heart and has, as a consequence, become a champion to many people who have children and young adults in this sector who quite often find themselves out on a limb. Much more than just "a volunteer" , as all members of NPCpp are, Rose has over time spoken with, counselled , mentored and guided not only the parents and students her life path has brought her in contact with, but those who have joined the parent movement along the way as volunteers . Her wealth of knowledge, her caring and her persistence to see a problem or issue through to the end has endeared her to many. Rose, through the NPAVSCC and NPCpp has been a progressive and forward thinking member of the organisation and her most public image in her time as PRO in particular was probably the organisation and running of the National Parents Council Helpline for Leaving Cert Students and their parents .This has always been a huge undertaking which requires a lot of determined planning for months in advance with sponsors – the Irish Independent, Eircom, DES and in association with the IGC. As with all else that Rose does nothing is left to chance and all is made to look so easy. As a fellow officer on both NPAVSCC and NPCpp , I would personally like to thank Rose for all she has done in helping me along the way, but on behalf of NPCpp the parents and students of this country a huge "mile maith agat " . Like Jim Moore, I'm sure we have not seen the last of Rose.

Jackie O'Callaghan, PRO NPCpp



L – R: Bernie Ruane President of TUI and Jackie O'Callaghan, Director and PRO of NPCpp at the launch of the Leaving Cert Helpline 2010

Parents & Legislation

This the 3rd in a series of Legislation and Constitution that will be of interest to parents/guardians (See NPCpp Newsletters 3 and 4 2009/10)

CONSTITUTION OF IRELAND – Bunreacht Na hÉireann Education - Article 42

1. The State acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the Family and guarantees to respect the inalienable right and duty of parents to provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children.
2. Parents shall be free to provide this education in their homes or in private schools or in schools recognised or established by the State.
3. 1°The State shall not oblige parents in violation of their conscience and lawful preference to send their children to schools established by the State, or to any particular type of school designated by the State.
2° The State shall, however, as guardian of the common good, require in view of actual conditions that the children receive a certain minimum

education, moral, intellectual and social.

4. The State shall provide for free primary education and shall endeavour to supplement and give reasonable aid to private and corporate educational initiative, and, when the public good requires it, provide other educational facilities or institutions with due regard, however, for the rights of parents, especially in the matter of religious and moral formation.

5. In exceptional cases, where the parents for physical or moral reasons fail in their duty towards their children, the State as guardian of the common good, by appropriate means shall endeavour to supply the place of the parents, but always with due regard for the natural and imprescriptible rights of the child.

NPCpp 25th Anniversary Conference 2010

On the 30th April and the 1st May 2010 NPCpp celebrated 25 years in operation. The conference was entitled ***“Empowering Parents - Risk or Opportunity”*** and took place at the Clock Tower, DES, Dublin. Parents and representatives of Teacher Trade Unions, Management Bodies and the DES attended this excellent conference.



Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector, DES addresses Conference on “The Role of the Inspectorate including the Role of the Whole School Evaluation”



National Parents Council PP

Back Row: L-R : David Hegarty, Sandra Boylan, Declan Hogan, Gerard O’Hara, Tom Lillis, Paul Beddy, Jackie O’Callaghan, Tommy Walshe, Carole Trodden and Alan Mulligan. **Front Row** L-R: Eleanor Petrie, Joe Kennedy, Brigid McManus (Secretary General DES), Jim Moore (President NPCpp) Rose Tully and Connie Carolan.



Past Presidents of NPCpp

Back Row L-R: Sean Mitchell, Eleanor Petrie, Humphrey O’Riordan, Marie Danaswamy, and Rose Tully. **Front Row** L-R Nula Henry, Brigid McManus (Secretary General, DES) Jim Moore (President NPCpp) and Elizabeth Quinn.



Dr. Anne Looney CEO of the NCCA addresses Conference on “Innovation and Identity: Towards a New Junior Cycle”.



The Irish Teaching and Learning Festival is Ireland’s first interactive conference and exhibition focused on the future of education in Ireland and it takes place in the Citywest Conference Centre, Saggart, Co. Dublin on Friday 15th October (10.00 – 5.00 pm) and Saturday 16th October (10.00 am – 4.00 pm). This exhibition and conference will deliver a unique opportunity for teachers, principals, policy makers, boards of management and parents from all over the country. The conference will feature keynote speakers such as Lord David Puttnam. There will be practical workshops and live teaching and learning demonstrations. The exhibition will feature over 80 exhibitors showcasing a wide range of essential teaching and learning resources for the 21st century. There will be a festival guide and a festival bag filled with information and resources for every delegate attending the festival.

For further information:

<https://www.cpreregistrations.com>
Or call: **Tel:** 01 2968688

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