NATIONAL PARENTS COUNCIL
Post Primary
COMHAIRLE NÁISIÚNTA TUISMITHEOIRÍ
Iarbhunoideachas

SPRING CONFERENCE

Evolving Education in Ireland

21st March 2020
Radisson Blu Hotel
Athlone

PROGRAMME

9.30am

Conference Registration

Tea and Coffee

10.30am

Opening Address

Mai Fanning, NPCPP President

10.45am

Keynote Address

Sabina Higgins

11am

Presentations

The Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC)

Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT)

SOLAS

The Irish Second Level Students Union (ISSU)

12pm

Break

12.30 pm

Panel Discussion

2pm

Closing Remarks

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

SABINA HIGGINS

Sabina Coyne, now Sabina Coyne Higgins, was born in Cloonrane on the Galway/Mayo border and went to school in Ballindine and Claremorris, Co. Mayo. She was the sixth of seven children of John and Mary (nee Kilkenny) Coyne.

Sabina moved to Dublin where she worked in the Land Commission. She studied Speech and Stage Craft at the Brendan Smith Academy. When Deirdre O'Connell came from the Actor's Studio in New York and founded the Dublin Stanislavsky Studio Drama School in 1963, Sabina was one of her first students – she was later Deirdre's bridesmaid when Deirdre married Luke Kelly of the Dubliners. In 1967, they founded Dublin Focus Theatre with Tom Hickey, Timmy McDonald, Declan & Mary Elizabeth Burke Kennedy, Dick Callanan, Joan Bergin and others. Sabina was prominent in the public performances of the Stanislavski Improvisation Theatre and later the Focus Improvisational Theatre. Focus productions were modern classics from around the world – Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekhov, Anouilh, Camus, Beckett, Hellman, Sorayan, Millar, and T. Williams etc.

Sabina met Michael D. Higgins in 1969 at a party in Dublin, in women's journalist Mary Kenny's home. In 1974 they were married in Dublin's Haddington Road Church. Sabina moved to Galway. There, in addition to working as a partner with Michael D. in every campaign and in public life for over thirty years, she maintained her involvement with Theatre and Community Arts, and with Womens' Groups.

Sabina was also very active in community initiatives in Galway and in particular in education. She was very involved in the setting up of Parents' Councils on a local and national level to promote parents as partners in education. She was chairperson for a time of the Parent's Council of the Jesuit Secondary School.

Sabina has a BA in Arts and an MA in Theatre from NUI Galway. Sabina and President Higgins have four children, one daughter, Alice Mary, and three sons, John, Michael Edward and Daniel.

SPEAKERS

DR. PÁDRAIG KIRK

Director
CPD for Junior Cycle
Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT)

BEATRICE DOOLEY

President
The Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC)

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí
Junior CYCLE for teachers

Institiúid na gComhairleoirí Treorach
Institute of Guidance Counsellors

SPEAKERS

ALAN MCGRATH

Director of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning
SOLAS

CIARA FANNING

President
The National Student Executive
Irish Second Level Students Union (ISSU)

SOLAS learning works

ISSU IRISH SECOND-LEVEL STUDENTS' UNION

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PACCS

Education & Training Board Schools
National Parents' Association