



Educate Together Second-Level Project

Educate Together Second-level News Vol. 1, Issue 2 - March 2008

Working Groups

Volunteer Working Groups are currently being established to contribute to the work of the second-level project. It is hoped that these can be supplemented by National and International Advisory Groups, made up of key people in the world of educational research and policy who we feel would make a positive contribution to ET second-level education.

An initial meeting of people interested in contributing to working groups was held on Saturday, 1st March in the Clarion hotel in the IFSC, Dublin, after the General Members Meeting on the Ethical Education Curriculum. The purpose of this meeting was to clarify the role of working groups, and to assign volunteers and outline terms of reference for some groups.

Working groups on **Management and Structure** and **Teaching and Learning Methodologies** were established on the day and these groups should meet within the next month. Groups on **Lobbying and Communications**, **Campus and Built Environment**, **Curricular Framework** and the **Ethical Education Curriculum** were also discussed and we are keen to set these up as quickly as possible.

Volunteers Wanted

If you have an interest in ET second-level education and would like to join a working group, or if you (or someone you know) has particular skills which would be useful to these groups please contact Emer at the national office or email secondlevel@educatetogether.ie. In particular if there is anyone with experience in school buildings and/or planning, this is a skills gap which was identified in Saturday's meeting.

Patronage and Trusteeship Negotiations

We are continuing to build relationships and negotiate with potential partners.

Department of Education and Science

Paul Rowe, CEO, Emer Nowlan, Second-level Project Manager and Bob Dowling, Director of Educate Together met with officials from the Department of Education and

Science on Tuesday, 26th February. This meeting was requested after writing to the Minister for Education last December and its aim was to find out the Department's position on ET as a second-level patron.

At this meeting we were told that there will be a process to go through for ET to register as a patron of a second-level school. While this process does not constitute a simple application procedure, and the criteria are not spelled out, the fact that we now have a direction to go in is positive. National office staff are currently working on documentation to support this registration process and this will be an important part of the work of the Second-level Project in the coming weeks and months.

IVEA / VECs

A meeting is scheduled for the end of March with a group representing the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA), the national representative body for the Vocational Education Committees (VECs). The aim of this meeting is to explore the possibility of drawing up a national level "Model Agreement" which could then be entered into by ET and local VECs around the country to establish ET second-level schools in partnership with VECs.

Start-up Groups

At the working group meeting on Sat 1st March, a clear distinction was made between the work of the Working Groups, which we hope will contribute to national policy in relation to second-level education, and the work of local Start-up Groups, who are campaigning for an ET second-level school in their area. Currently there are a number of active start-up groups around the country who are engaged in a range of activities including: collecting demographic information in relation to the need for new second-level schools, lobbying local and national representatives, looking for potential sites, building relationships with existing schools in the area, holding public meetings, etc.

From time to time we hope to highlight a Start-up Group in this newsletter. If your group is interested in sharing its experiences here, please contact us at secondlevel@educatetogether.ie.

Waterford Second-Level Educate Together Plans Blossoming

Spring has arrived in the Sunny South-East (in theory, at least!), and plans for the Waterford second-level Educate Together school are also flourishing. Following on from the capacity attendance at the first public meeting in Waterford City in November 2007, interested parents formed a committee to establish a second-level Educate Together school. This committee has been meeting on a weekly basis since, and its spokesperson, Maria Cahill, is very pleased with progress to date. "Great work has been done in the few short months since the committee was established," comments Maria.

Waterford has a wealth of experience and a great track record to fall back on, with the successful Waterford Educate Together National School now in its sixth year. Expect to hear more developments from the Waterford second-level Educate Together team in the coming months.

Orla Shanaghy, PR rep for Waterford Second-level Committee.



Some members of the Waterford Start-up committee with Emer Nowlan, Second-level Project Manager. (taken at public meeting held on 6th November 2007)

Lobbying and Communications

Newsletter

Suggestions so far for a name for this newsletter are:

"Onwards and Upwards", "ET-The Sequel", "Chapter 2" , "A New Level", "Breaking New Ground", "Taking ET to a new level" (thanks to Castaheany for their enthusiasm!). Any preferences for one of these names, or further suggestions are welcome. Please let us know what you would like to see in the newsletter in the future.

Working Group on Lobbying and Communications

If anyone would like to volunteer to participate in a working group on Lobbying and Communications please get in touch. There is a great deal which can be done to support the Project. For example, we are currently establishing a campaign to enlist the support of 'Advocates'; these would be well-known figures in Irish education who are willing to show their support for the ET second-level project. Following this we would like to organise a petition to gain wider support for the campaign. We would be grateful for all the help we can get with this work and would appreciate your ideas and energies.

New Web Page: Useful Links and Resources

A new webpage has been added to the Second-level section of the webpage. This has been designed as a space for members of both Working Groups and Start-up Groups to

share links and references to interesting or helpful material they have found. If you come across anything you think might be helpful to others, let us know so that we can add it to the http://www.educatetogether.ie/2_campaigns/SecondLevel_publications.html site.

That's all for this month. Don't forget to visit the second-level rooms in forum and get chatting! www.educatetogetherforum.ie

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