



Educate
Together



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SECOND-LEVEL PROJECT

ETSLN

Second Level Newsletter

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JAN 2011

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2011. Busy times are ahead for the second-level project. The General Election date has been set for 25 February, and politicians are already out on the campaign trail. We need supporters to ensure that political candidates get the message about what Educate Together is advocating. See our website for more details, and to download our *Five Policy Priorities for our Education System*. We are also planning an Educate Together General Members Meeting (GMM) for **Saturday 5 March**, the week after the Election. The GMM will include second-level start-up group training and will provide a forum for working groups to report back to each other.

Ann Ryan,
Second-level Education Officer



Tánaiste announces plan for new second-level schools

Tánaiste and Minister for Education and Skills Mary Coughlan has announced plans to establish several new post-primary schools between 2012 and 2016. "We are now planning to open at least 13 new post-primary schools over the next five years," stated the Tánaiste. The 24 January announcement includes a list of nine areas, which are as follows:

Ashbourne & Navan (Co Meath); West Blanchardstown & Mulhuddart (Dublin 15); Claregalway (Co Galway); Maynooth & Naas (Co Kildare); Drogheda (Co Louth); North Co Dublin/South Co Louth area.

The Tánaiste also acknowledged that other areas will see significant growth at post-primary level, and said: "In these areas it may be necessary to establish new schools." This will provide hope for those second-level start-up groups whose areas are not included in the above list.

The Minister's announcement is encouraging for Educate Together, which has already submitted applications for patronage of second-level schools in some of the above areas. The new DES-led patronage process will involve a Second-Level Patronage Advisory Group, which has still to be established. It is not yet clear if a parental survey will form part of the application process, but it is likely that prospective patrons will need to show how they meet defined DES criteria.

As part of ongoing negotiations between Educate Together and Co Dublin VEC regarding the proposed post-primary school in Clonburris, the two patrons are organising a consultation session in February. Local primary schools are being invited to send parent representatives to the session to share their views.

New Advisory Panel Members

We are delighted to formally welcome Conor Galvin, Anne Molloy and John O'Reilly to our advisory panel.

Dr Conor Galvin, UCD, brings considerable knowledge and expertise in ICT and Education to the panel.

Second-level Start-up Meetings

Drogheda Educate Together Secondary School Action Group

An Expression of interest event will take place on **Sat 5 Feb** at the Laurence Town Centre. The group's next meeting will be on Wed 9 Feb at 8.30pm, @ Aston Village ETNS. For more information, go to: www.droghedaetss.com

Dublin 15

Wed 9 Feb at 7.30pm

Tyrellstown ETNS

Meeting for interested parents from all ET schools in the area. For more information, contact:

gerry.mckevitt@educatetogether.ie

Second-level Campaign Fund

A second-level campaign fund has been set up to support this crucial phase of the second-level campaign. Intensive lobbying, legal and policy work is planned, in a final push towards opening the first school.

Would you like to help raise funds for the second-level campaign and get fit at the same time?

We are looking for volunteers to take part in the **Great Ireland Run** (10 April), and the **Flora Womens' Mini Marathon** (6 June). To sign up, contact:

Masina.Johnston@educatetogether.ie

To find out more about the second-level campaign, or to donate, go to:

<http://www.educatetogether.ie/get-involved/secondlevelproject/>

Anne Molloy is Human Rights Education Manager with Amnesty International (Ireland). She takes over from Ruth Gallagher, who was an active member of the panel before moving on to a different role in Amnesty - we are very grateful to Ruth for her contribution.

Finally, Dr John O'Reilly has been an active and very valuable member of our working groups since the early days of the second-level project. He brings his experience as a lecturer in the Department of Education and Professional Studies to the panel - his work in the areas of collaborative and active learning methodologies and teacher education is particularly relevant to the second-level project.

Working Groups Review

We have just initiated a review of our working group membership, as there have been some changes recently. As part of this, we are asking all working group members to complete an online survey so we can find out their views. We have also asked groups to redefine their terms of reference. Alongside this review, working groups are continuing to meet and work towards agreed tasks; they will also have the opportunity to report back to each other at the GMM on Sat 5 March.

If you are interested in joining one of our working groups, please email: secondlevel@educatetogether.ie.

Ning Social Network - At the 22 January working groups meeting, our Communications Officer Aoife Murray, introduced members to the Ning Social Network, which is now available for working groups to use as an online discussion forum. If you are a working group member, and have not received an invitation to join our Ning Social Network, please email: secondlevel@educatetogether.ie and we will invite you to join.

Conference: Re-imagining Learning - Curriculum Integration in the Early Secondary Years

This conference, organised by Educate Together and partners University of Limerick and the NCCA, will take place on **Friday 13-Saturday 14 May** at the Strand Hotel, Limerick.

Re-imagining Learning will focus on ideas for innovation in early secondary education, and in particular on integrated approaches to delivering the curriculum. We are delighted that [B2C](#) have recently agreed to present on their new in-school cross-curricular group work projects. Other speakers include: Dr Candy Beal, Dr Jim Gleeson, Dr Anne Looney, Prof John Portelli, and Dr Emer Smyth.

For more information see: <http://tiny.cc/reimagining-learning>



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