

# 2003-2004 - at a Glance



President – Virginia O'Mahony

The focus of 2003/2004 was to continue to develop IPPN services to a growing membership. As the role of the Primary Principal became more complex & demanding, the challenge at this time for IPPN was to develop practical relevant supports for members. This year saw significant growth in the demand for confidential Principal advice on an individual basis. In response, a team of experienced Principals was further expanded to meet this growing need. IPPN's relationship with the other education partners and agencies was further enhanced through meetings, both formal and informal, we ensured that the voice of Principals was heard on issues which impacted on their crucial leadership role.

## Continuous Professional Development

### North South Conference - 'Putting Our Heads Together'

Principals from the North and South of Ireland came together at the Slieve Russell Hotel in County Cavan for an historic Conference on 22nd – 24th November 2004. This was the first ever cross-border conference of primary school leaders in Ireland. The National Association of Head Teachers, (NAHT NI) and the Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN), provided a forum where Principals, Deputy Principals and partners in education North and South shared their experiences of delivering education throughout the whole island of Ireland.

Funding was provided by the Department of Education and Science North/South Co-operation Unit and NcompasS, which is a partnership between British Council, Léargas and the Youth Council for Northern Ireland. Speakers were Virginia O'Mahony, (President IPPN ), Dr. Sheelagh Mc Grogan (RTU/NI), Dr. Mark Morgan, (St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra), Mr Colm Davis, (Vice- President NAHT NI), Dolores Corcoran, (IPPN), Ms. Sinead Mc Laughlin, ( IPPN), Mr Billy Tate (Aughnacloy P.S), Ms Máire Ní Threasaigh (British Council) and Emer Malone (Léargas)

The Conference theme provided opportunities to

- Commonality and difference regarding differing job descriptions, roles, shared experiences and issues which are both cross-border and international
- The future of smaller schools and teaching Principals
- The integration of children with special needs
- The establishment of closer cross -border links at association, school and individual Principal level

### Principals' Conference 2004

- Theme:** Leadership is Different – Ag ceannaire féin is fear cá luíonn an bhróg air
- Attendance:** 700 Principals
- Facilitator:** Caoimhe Máirtín
- Venue:** Citywest Hotel, Dublin
- Date:** 5th to 7th February 2004
- Speakers:**
- John Walshe, Education Editor, Irish Independent
  - Pat Cox, President of the European Parliament
  - Professor Kathleen Lynch, Chair of Equality Studies, UCD
  - Mary Davis, CEO of the Special Olympics
  - Virginia O'Mahony, President IPPN
  - Seán Cottrell, Director IPPN.

At IPPN Conference in January 2004 it was pointed out very clearly to the Minister of the day, Noel Dempsey TD, that his vision for education would never become a reality without the support of school leaders.

### Deputy Principals' Seminar

- Venue:** Montague Hotel, Portlaoise, 24th April 2004
- Theme:** Defining the role of the Deputy Principal
- Attendance:** 175 Deputy Principals
- Facilitator:** Máire Áine Uí Aodha



Prof. Michael Fullan - Leading in a Culture of Change

### Professor Michael Fullan

**Theme:** Leading in a Culture of Change

IPPN hosted 2 one-day workshops facilitated by Professor Michael Fullan on Tuesday 11th May 2004 in the Anner Hotel, Thurles, Co. Tipperary and on Wednesday 12th May 2004 in the Bloomfield Hotel, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

### Online Summer Course

The Principal and the Law online course was facilitated by David Ruddy, BL during the summer, in collaboration with Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.

### Milestones

On October 18th, the IPPN Annual General Meeting was held in the Corrib Great Southern Hotel, Galway. Jim Hayes announced his intention of stepping down as IPPN President and Virginia O'Mahony was elected the second President of IPPN.

### Challenges/ Press Releases

- Nano Nagle anti-bullying case
- Weighting system for SEN allocations
- Principals take a lead in addressing underperformance
- 1,300 Principals respond to a survey on Principals' Workload
- Executive members of IPPN and NAPD met in Laois to discuss progress in issues of mutual interest
- Circular 09/04 on SEN emphasised teamwork and collaboration in the integration of children with SEN and in drawing up IEPs
- IPPN recommended that Principals would regard all Learning Support Teachers and Resource Teachers as Support Teachers
- IPPN provided professional advice on the appointment of SNAs
- IPPN expressed concern about the growth of commercialism in schools

- Principals had a difficult summer with long delays in panels being cleared
- IPPN joined the DES working group on Principals' Workload which began by reviewing the DES Circular relating to In School Management. The revised circular has never been published
- Seán Cottrell and David Ruddy presented a submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill.
- Meetings were held with Minister Noel Dempsey, CPSMA and INTO
- 190 Newly Appointed Principals were supported through the assistance of a Mentor
- Whole School Evaluation was extended gradually as a general means of school inspection.

### Research/Policies

- IPPN research on In-School Management - Under the title "Future of Small Schools and Teaching Principalship", IPPN worked in co-operation with St. Patrick's College of Education led by Dr. Mark Morgan and published an important research document on ISM entitled 'In School Management - A Critical Review'. This was a break-through document, describing the role of the ISM team and its shortcomings.
- Survey on Principals' Workload to which 1,300 responded.

### Significant Projects

- IPPN Bursary 2004 was jointly awarded to Marie Dunphy, Principal of St Fergal's JNS, Ballywaltrim, Bray, Co. Wicklow and Helen O'Sullivan, Principal of Holy Rosary School, Dominican Convent, Wicklow Town. Helen and Marie undertook a study visit to New Zealand on the topic of 'Leadership Development for the Learning Community' in order to assess the impact of Leadership Development opportunities on attitudes to continuous professional development among teachers.

### Publications

- Boards of Management – A Framework of Good Practice –To coincide with the election of new four year term Boards of Management in November, CPSMA and IPPN agreed to produce a joint document outlining examples of good practice for Boards of Management called "Boards of Management – A Framework of Good Practice". This was revised in 2007.
- Leadership+ Issues 17 to 21.

# 2004-2005 - at a Glance

## President – Virginia O’Mahony

2005 was a year where IPPN put strong emphasis on the pivotal role of the Principal in bringing about positive school improvement. The challenge of the new weighted system for the provision of resources to children with SEN was uppermost in the minds of Principals.

IPPN continued to play an active role on the DES working group dealing with Principals’ Workload and the role of the ISM team. Principals asked to be allowed to lead the teaching and learning in their schools.

## Continuous Professional Development

### Principals’ Conference 2005

**Theme:** Inspiring Professionalism

**Attendance:** 700 Principals

**Conference Facilitator:** Ms Caoimhe Máirtín, President, Coláiste Mhuire, Marino

**Venue:** Citywest Hotel, Dublin

**Date:** 3rd to 5th February 2005

**Speakers:**

- Mr Eamon Stack, Chief Inspector, DES
- Ms Áine Lawlor, Director, Teaching Council
- Ms Mary Hanafin TD, Minister for Education & Science
- Dr Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin
- Ms Geraldine Kennedy, Editor, Irish Times
- Virginia O’Mahony, President IPPN
- Seán Cottrell, Director IPPN.

### International Confederation of Principals Conference

In March 2005, IPPN and its second level colleagues, NAPD, hosted an historic event in Cork from March 7th to 11th. Both Principals’ associations are affiliated to the International Confederation of Principals (ICP) and agreed to host ICP’s Council Meeting for 2005. Cork was chosen as the conference venue to coincide with the city’s designation as European Capital of Culture. The ICP Council Meeting, based at the Maryborough Hotel in Douglas, was attended by 60 delegates from 30 countries across 6 Continents.

As part of the ICP Council Meeting, a one-day focused symposium took place on Wednesday March 9th. The day was facilitated by Michael Farrell, currently



Seán with Prof. Michael Fullan

Corporate Secretary of UCC and a founding member of IPPN. The focus of this day was ‘The challenge of recruiting and retaining school leaders’ and the issue was addressed by Professor John Coolahan, NUI Maynooth, Dr. Séamus McGuinness, TCD and Professor Geraldine McCarthy, Professor of Nursing, UCC.

### Professor Michael Fullan Workshops

**Theme:** Leading in a Culture of Change

Three one-day workshops were held on

- Monday 9th May 2005 in Mallow, Co. Cork
- Tuesday 10th May 2005 in Galway
- Thursday 12th May 2005 in Dublin.

### Online Summer Course

‘The Principal & The Law’ - Online Summer Course on legal issues pertaining to primary schools, was facilitated by David Ruddy BL, in collaboration with IPPN and Mary Immaculate College, Limerick during the summer of 2005.

## Challenges/ Press Releases

- The establishment of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) to take over the key functions in relation to SEN provision from the DES
- Whole School Evaluation was gradually rolled out as a general means of school inspection nationwide
- Principals begin to experience the demand of Section 29 appeals
- IPPN Bursary award 2005 went to Siobhán Cartúir, Gaelscoil na Rithe, Domnach Seachnail, Meath and Mary McGarry, Our Lady of Good Counsel National School, Mourne Road, Drimnagh, Dublin who undertook a study visit to Ontario, Canada

- By introducing the 'Ten Commandments for Self Care' IPPN again highlighted the need for Principals to be vigilant about their own health and welfare
- NCCA reported on the Primary Curriculum Review of 2003/2004
- Spreagadh: A Leadership Development Pilot Programme was launched as a three way partnership between IPPN, LDS and Cork Education Support Centre
- Dealing with bullying behaviour was a serious issue in many school communities
- Garda Vetting Unit began to do checks on new teachers and school employees in September 2005
- Minister Hanafin announced that WSE reports were to be published. 62.5% of IPPN members were in favour of publishing the reports
- IPPN provided guidance to Principals on the in school management of SNAs
- In July, a number of IPPN executive members were invited to travel as delegates to the Convention of the International Confederation of Principals (ICP) in Cape Town, South Africa where they delivered a number of workshops.
- The demands placed on the Principal of having Special Classes in mainstream schools were highlighted by IPPN
- On September 21st Moira Lynch, Principal of Tubber NS, in Westmeath and a founding member of IPPN died after a long illness.
- Concern was raised by IPPN about the drop in applications for Principalship
- IPPN met with the NEWB to bring some clarification to Principals' many queries
- One teacher schools founded a support group to highlight the difficulties of their situation.
- Archbishop Diarmaid Martin told the IPPN annual conference that 'The primary ethos of the school should be an educational one"



*Caoimhe Máirtín, Conference Facilitator*

## Research/Policies

- Jan 2005 – Principals' Workload
- Mar 2005 – Attitudes and Aspirations towards the Role of Principal
- Apr 2005 – Healthy Eating Policy/Sponsorship in Schools
- May 2005 – SEN Provision

## Publications

- Professor Michael Fullan, an acknowledged expert in the field of Educational Leadership, wrote a document on School Leadership, specific to the Irish context. Entitled 'Sine Qua Non - The Role of the Principal in Educational Improvement'. This publication made a strong coherent and irrefutable argument for significant investment in Irish School Leaders as a key strategy towards general school improvement and better learning outcomes.
- New Horizons for Smaller Schools and Teaching Principals
- Leadership+ issues 22 to 27.

