



From the CEO's Desk

So much has happened in Irish Education since our first Newsletter, by virtue of the downturn in the economy, that we could have dedicated this latest edition to the educational cutbacks which have wreaked havoc upon our schools.

No more than every organisation in the country, CEIST itself is not immune to the vagaries of the market place and has had to face difficult decisions regarding its provision.

True, our school sector has suffered massive cuts in financial allocations, which has the cascade effect of reduced staffing allocations, reduced curricular options, reductions in school day-to-day budgets and the list goes on.

However, instead of being consumed with and rendered immobile in the face of such a dismal reality, our schools continue to be the centres of excellence in teaching and learning and are a testimony to the vision and mission of the CEIST Charter.

The ultimate vision motivating the establishment of CEIST, and underlying the Catholic school system since earliest times, is that human life has meaning and purpose; all persons are precious; the poor and the weak have a special claim to attention and all the time, human gifts are to be discovered and developed. CEIST endeavours to ensure that each of its schools is a hub of human fulfilment, where the strands of Faith, Culture and Life are intrinsically interwoven.

The five Congregations whose schools are now in the Trusteeship of CEIST, were founded in response to the social needs of their time and the Catholic Voluntary Secondary School system was a direct outcome of their efforts to make education and spiritual guidance available to Catholic children, children of other faiths and children of no religious belief.

These difficult times demand that we be more resourceful than ever in ensuring the continuance of the distinctive philosophy and reality of our sector. The challenge of recent times has led schools to invoke again the spirit of the founders, as generations before us have done, in order to keep eyes on the horizon and remain strong.

The content of this newsletter reflects that very resoluteness, and honours your heroic leadership and ingenuity in managing in the face of adversity. Be assured of the continuing commitment of your Trustees to assist and support you in your endeavours. I acknowledge and congratulate each of you for your unstinting performance in spite of uncomfortably shifting landscapes. I commend to us all the comfort of an old adage attributed to King Solomon and made famous by Abraham Lincoln in times even more difficult than our own: This too shall pass.

Blessings, Anne Kelleher, CEO.

New Online Developments for CEIST

In our first newsletter edition I mentioned that we had invited tenders towards re-developing our Website and Members Area. I am delighted to announce that we commenced work on both re-developments at the beginning of May and we hope to go live in September 2009.

I look forward very much to building on the great work already done by the Project team who setup the CEIST website. One of the main objectives from the re-developments is to create more interaction within the website by the inclusion of media such as Video's, Podcasts and Animations.

The new website will include sections from our Faith Development, School Support Services and Finance Departments. The new sections should make it easier for our audience to quickly find information from the relevant department and also provide a platform for our various teams to communicate with and store resources for our CEIST community.

We are also making improvements to our Members Area with the above departments having a presence here as well.

It is planned to develop a Schools Return section within our Members Area. This will provide a facility for CEIST Schools to each have their own centralised area for saving all CEIST correspondence and document templates. The objective would be that each school will be able to easily submit documents/reports through the Schools Return section to relevant personnel in our education office, thus providing more efficiency and within a highly secure environment.

School ICT Cost Initiatives: Now more so than ever, I feel it is worth investigating ICT cost initiatives for schools with a view to putting in place cost saving contracts in related ICT areas such as Maintenance, Landline, Hardware/Software purchases, Consumables, Licences, etc. Preliminary work has commenced in some of the above areas and we would hope to pursue this initiative as the year progresses. Your input and feedback would be greatly appreciated to ascertain possible benefits that could accrue to our schools.

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Schools Relationships Management

The School Relationships Management Team was very happy to have met you 'in situ' once more and to have the opportunity to discuss matters of educational management concern to the Trustees. We are delighted to find a huge richness of experience provided in the extracurricular activities pursued in each school. A flavour of that variety; which keeps the holistic CEIST educational endeavour vibrant in the lives of both students and staffs and the wider community follows.

Whole School Evaluation:

Following Michael Lane's workshop on how to prepare for a WSE, at our annual conference in Tralee last October, several schools have availed of his advice. Since then eight schools had the experience of a Whole School Evaluation: Ard Scoil na Tríonóide, Athy, Presentation College, Tuam, St. Joseph's, Castlebar, Mercy Secondary, Kanturk, Christ King, Cork, Mercy Heights, Skibbereen, Ardscoil Mhuire, Ballinasloe and Eureka Secondary School, Kells. Several subject inspection reports, which are often a prelude to a WSE, have also been received by CEIST and are very encouraging regarding the quality of teaching and learning in CEIST schools.

As Trustees, we continue to approve policies from schools as they reach their final draft. The Code of Discipline, which has to be updated in every school within two years of the publication of the National Education Welfare Board's Guidelines last year has been the most popular policy this year. Admissions Policies, particularly, in oversubscribed schools, continue to challenge us to live up to the values we espouse. Pastoral Care and Special Needs are also receiving a lot of attention. Congratulations to all the education partners in each school on excellent work achieved.

Boards of Management:

Efforts were made this year to visit each newly formed Board of Management at their inaugural meeting in October/November. We are especially grateful for the links formed with the people who manage CEIST schools on our behalf. The Board minutes, which are submitted to this office, keep us in touch with the issues of the day. We trust that you find our feedback supportive and useful.

Thanks to all Board members for their voluntary work which ensures the continuation of all that is good in CEIST schools. The National Employment Rights Authority which ensures compliance with employment legislation recently visited one of our schools. The focus of the inspection seemed to be the pay and conditions of ancillary staff paid directly by the school.

Accommodation:

Despite all of the cutbacks in the provision of new school accommodation, there have been notable exceptions. Presentation Killina had its new science laboratory completed and the opening of the newly refurbished St. Mary's Macroom occurred in November to the tune of 3.5million. Pictured on right is Minister for Education and Science, Batt O'Keeffe, shaking hands with students at St Mary's Macroom opening ceremony.

Congratulations to the Board and staff of Scoil Christí Rí, Portlaoise whose new school is being delivered under the PPP and has given us some hope that other schools awaiting PPP approval will progress to the next stage.

Presentation Thurles held the official opening of their magnificent Sports Hall on the 27th March with illustrious past-pupil, Minister Mary Hanafin officiating. Ardscoil Mhuire, Ballinasloe was recently nominated for The Gold Medal 2009 architectural award by RIAI.



Extra-curricular activities:

Since there are always winners and runners-up in competitions, participation provides no guarantee of victory. It takes all of the same hard work and dedication to reach an All Ireland competition for the runners up as it does the winners and many of the vanquished teams reappear in others forms later in their school life all the stronger for the experience. It is with some amazement that we watch two CEIST schools approach a final and when the results emerge there may be only a point in the difference.

We salute all of the teachers, students (leaders and followers) who participate so whole heartedly in all of these activities. Some samples of these close encounters: Presentation Thurles and Calasancius, Oranmore clashed in the All Ireland Colleges Basketball final which Oranmore won by a point. Holy Rosary College, Mountbellew (pictured below) defeated St. Mary's, Mallow in the Junior Football, All-Ireland. Having drawn at full time, they beat St. Mary's by four points in extra time. Strokestown won the All-Ireland Colleges C football final and Mercy Mounthawk won the Munster Colleges C football final this year.



To celebrate **Intercultural Day** in Presentation, Portlaoise, the Mayor of Portlaoise, Roatemi Adebí (first coloured Mayor of any town in Ireland) congratulated the school on its success in integrating all of its students from many nationalities. This was followed by a celebration of multinational music, drama and cuisine.

Dochas Art Festival was a feast for the eyes in St. Joseph's, Rush. St. Joseph's Navan has a group of students and teachers visiting Zambia during Easter. The school also performed Vivaldi's Gloria in St. Mary's Church of Ireland church in Navan recently.

School Productions: Ballina had its school show "Hola! Mama Mia"; Presentation Ballyphehane produced "Does Your Mama Know?", Coláiste Muire, Ennis gave its usual high standard performance, which this year was "My Fair Lady"; Mercy Mounthawk performed John B Keane's "The Field". The fun and enjoyment of all of these productions is life enhancing for the whole school community.

School Jubilees: Rockford Manor celebrated its Golden Jubilee and Presentation Rahan its 60th Jubilee, in November. Coláiste Bríde, Enniscorthy marked the 150th anniversary of the school's foundation. Congratulations and best wishes to all of these schools who are a living embodiment of education in its best CEIST tradition.

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FAITH DEVELOPMENT



At Your Service

Faith Development staff at CEIST are happy to hear that you are appreciating the work we do for you. Feedback from presentations to staffs has been very positive and we hear that schools are particularly appreciative of the Liturgical resources we send you. Our co-ordinators return with a sense that schools are increasingly aware and appreciative of the range of supports and services we are offering. Our motto is: if there is anything you think we can do for you, just try us.

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Marty Haugen at CEIST

A very successful workshop for teachers taking choirs or involved in liturgical preparation was held in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone on February 4th 2009. Marty Haugen was an inspiring facilitator and we are very grateful for his presence with us. We are also grateful to the Faith Development Services team in the

Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin, and to Fr. Liam Lawton for making this workshop possible.

Catholic Schools Week

Catholic Schools Week took place this year from January 31st to February 1st, 2009. CEIST played a prominent role in organising the event with Tonya Hanly representing us on the organising committee. The theme of the week was "Catholic Schools – A Vision for Life." It provided an ideal opportunity for reflection on the wonderful contribution Catholic Schools make to national, community and family life.

"The whole day was a nourishing and enriching experience both for us as educators and our students. Catholic education is fundamental and is at the heart of our school life." *The RE Team of Mercy College, Beaumont.*



Our congratulations to Edel Connolly, Principal, St Leo's College, Carlow for her article in the April edition of Intercom reflecting on the celebration of Catholic Schools Week in her school. You can read her article on www.ceist.ie

Pictured is the Sacred Space created for Catholic Schools Week in Coláiste Muire, Ballymote, Co Sligo

Open Heart House - Teachers' Working Group

A group of teacher participants from CEIST schools are gathering this month as a working group to formulate a module on HIV and Aids awareness for Senior Cycle students. The idea came from a visit by the Faith Development Team to Open heart House, a centre of warmth, welcome and acceptance which actively embraces and supports people living with HIV and AIDS.

It is the only voluntary agency of its kind in Ireland and was founded with the help of Mercy and Presentation congregations. For further information please contact Antonya Hanly at ahanly@ceist.ie.

Global Education Experience

The Global Education Experience (G.E.E.) is a project undertaken by the Presentation Sisters which enables students, and teachers, to deepen their awareness of their Christian calling to love God and others by learning to look at the world from the perspective of those who are excluded.

The rationale of the G.E.E. project lies in its commitment to Christian education of the whole person, and to education for social transformation. This project gives both students and teachers the opportunity to experience the many faces of Church by seeing and sharing in the work of Presentation sisters in other countries and cultures..

CEIST schools involved in G.E.E. are: Presentation De la Salle College, Baginbun; Presentation College, Carlow; Rockford Manor, Blackrock, Dublin;

St. Joseph's College, Lucan, Co. Dublin; Presentation Secondary School, Ballyphehane, Cork; St. Mary's High School, Middleton, Co. Cork; Coláiste Muire, Crosshaven, Co. Cork; Scoil Dara, Kilcock, Co. Kildare; Presentation Secondary School, Killarney, Co. Kerry; Presentation Secondary School Listowel, Co. Kerry. On March 21st Lloyd Bracken and Margaret Farrell represented CEIST at a G.E.E. meeting in Ballygriffin (the birthplace of Nano Nagle) which brought together those teachers and students who have already travelled with GEE and those who are preparing to do so, while Sr. Mary Rossiter and Sr. Jennie Clifford recently visited the CEIST office and gave a wonderful presentation on their work to the staff.

Ten students from Presentation College Carlow will be setting off for Zambia, on May 20th. We wish them a safe journey and the experience of a lifetime.



Celebrating Nano 1718-1784

In this Jubilee year, celebrating the 225th anniversary of the death of Nano Nagle on April 26th 1784, we would like to wish the Presentation Sisters and all our Presentation school communities special blessings. In spite of the risks involved because of the harsh Penal Laws, Nano Nagle, a Catholic laywoman, founded her first school for poor Catholic children in 1754. By the time of her

death in 1784 she had established several schools in Cork and had founded the congregation we know today as the Presentation Sisters.

Nano Nagle laid the foundation of our present system of education in Ireland in the eighteenth century, and her work inspired the founders of several religious congregations in setting up their schools in the nineteenth century. It is in this tradition of Catholic Education that CEIST schools, rooted in the teachings of Jesus, continue, in the twenty-first century, to synthesise education and faith.

Centenary of First Foundation

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart are celebrating the centenary of their first foundation here in Ireland in the Western Road, Cork in 1909. Special events include: Mass of Thanksgiving at the Cathedral in Cork on May 16th 2009; Pilgrimage to Knock on Sat. 25th July.

Critical Incidents

It would be good of you if you could let us know immediately when sudden death, bereavements or critical incidents occur in school. We cannot always be there but we will help and support in any way we can.

In the Pipeline

Teachers are often under pressure at the opening of class and the idea of saying a prayer may be the last thing they have time for. But supposing you had a book of prayers in your pocket with a suitable prayer for every day of the week! Something we are working on!

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FINANCE MATTERS!



Introduction

Welcome to the Finance section of the second CEIST Newsletter. Summer holidays are nearly upon us and everyone is looking forward to a well earned break. We hope that you will find the news items useful in your work. Some you may already be aware of and may serve as a refresher and others may be new and provide new information or might assist you in your day to day work.

We would be delighted, as always, to hear your feedback. The Finance Team can be contacted as follows:

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Cost Savings Measures

In all walks of life we are always seeking ways to reduce and minimise costs. This is even more important in the current economic climate, particularly in our schools. Listed below are tips (not exhaustive!) that may help:

- Only essential spending – ask yourself is this really necessary?
- Ensure you tender for supplies. Use resources like Pluspoint – www.pluspoint.ie
- Ensure that the purchase ordering system is followed at all times.
- Review Energy costs. Contact Sustainable Energy Ireland who may be able to offer advice. Investigate offers from Energia and Bord Gais.
- Use covenanting for fundraising.
- Make sure that there are control mechanisms in place for all fixed assets.
- Make sure that there are control mechanisms in place for all stocks.
- Use email where possible instead of post.
- Prepare and review monthly expenditure reports compared to budget.

School Budgets

Thank you to all those schools who have submitted their budget for the 2009-2010 academic year. It is critically important now, more so than ever in view of budget cuts, to plan carefully. A budget is not just a statement of last year's spending and a projection for the coming year. It is a planning instrument that requires careful preparation to assist the Board of Management in decision making for the smooth running of your school.

We have been compiling historical data on our schools in relation to income, expenditure, pupil number and capital expenditure. This is available in Excel format for the previous three years should you be looking at trends during budget preparation time. Just let us know if you require the information and we can email or post a hard copy of the data.

Insurance

By now all schools will be aware of the change in process for the collection of insurance premiums. We understand that some of the documentation may have been misleading and we will rectify this for the coming years. In summary:

- Premium is payable directly to Allianz plc.
- Premium for Buildings & Contents is payable in two moieties, 1st April and 1st October.
- Premium for ride-on mowers, tractors and buses is payable in full on 1st April.
- Premium for Engineering Inspections of Lifts and hoists is payable in full on 1st April.

Charitable Status

All our schools will have received correspondence during March 2009 in relation to the charitable status of CEIST. As all our schools form part of the new Trust that is CEIST, you should be using the CEIST charity number – CHY17522 – on all relevant documentation.

A number of our schools have contacted the CEIST Education Office in relation to confirmation from Revenue Commissioners of the new charity number. A copy of this correspondence from Revenue Commissioners is available on request. Please contact either Mike or Bernadette.

School Accounts and the treatment of Land & Buildings

Some years ago the Congregations issued guidelines on the removal of land and buildings from school accounts. The reasoning behind this is that the land and buildings are owned by the Trustees and, therefore, should not be included in the Board of Management school accounts. The majority of schools have adopted these guidelines.

For those schools who still have to implement these changes, copies of the guidelines are available from the Finance Team in CEIST.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTS 2008/09

Suggested TIMETABLE to meet CEIST deadline of 1st November 2009 for submission of 2008/09 Accounts.

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|----------------|---|---|
| September 2009 | Monday 7th Wednesday 9th Friday 25th Monday 28th Wednesday 30th | Accounts considered by Finance Sub-Committee Accounts forwarded to School Accountant Draft accounts from School Accountant circulated to Finance Sub-Committee Draft accounts from School Accountant considered by Finance Sub-Committee Any queries forwarded to School Accountant |
| October 2009 | Monday 5th Tuesday 13th Thursday 15th Thursday 22nd Friday 23rd | Finance Sub-Committee to meet with School Accountant Final accounts received from School Accountant Accounts forwarded to members of Board of Management Accounts considered by Board of Management Accounts forwarded to CEIST |

We hope that you find it useful. If you would like a copy of this timetable separately for your notice board or for distribution your Finance Sub-Committee and Board of Management, please contact either Mike or Bernadette.