

# Cumann na dTuismitheoirí / Parents' Association Coláiste an Phiarsaigh

Miontuairisc:

Tues 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021 8.30pm

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**Lucht Freastail:** Micheál Ó Tuama Julie Dennehy-O'Callaghan  
Helen Mannion Heidi Robertson Mary Haslam  
Jerry Reen Des Connolly Nicola Uí Mhaoileoin  
Paula Kennedy Patricia Kelleher Gillian O'Callaghan  
Josephine Sugrue Elaine Hill Winnie Lynch  
Breda Dennehy Carmel Brudair Collette Finnegan

**Leithscéalta** Mark Chu Michelle Philpott

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**Minutes Issued by:** Nicola Uí Mhaoileoin

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**AGENDA:** Fáilte (Julie Dennehy-O'Callaghan)  
Apologies (Julie Dennehy-O'Callaghan)  
Minutes from previous meeting (Nicola Malone)  
Imeachtaí Scoile (Micheál Ó Tuama)  
Treasurer Update (Des Connolly)  
L1 & L2 Leaving Cert Irish Proposal for 2025 (Des Connolly)  
Rollcall (Nicola Malone)  
Action List Update (Nicola Malone)  
Acknowledgement  
AOB  
Date for next meeting

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**Imeachtaí Scoile:** 13-04-2021 – 11-05-21

1. **14/04/21** Gaelachas Teoranta and Scoil na nÓg worked in conjunction with the Food Safety company, Little Island, to develop Health and Safety Plan. This was signed off on by the Board of Management.
2. **19/04/21** Board of Management Meeting.
3. **26/04/21** 5<sup>th</sup> Year subjects chosen by current Transition Year Students. This involves timetabling choices as well as advertising for new teachers.
4. **27/04/21** Staff Meeting via Teams 15:30 – 17:30

5. **28/04/21** Senior Business Studies Quiz
6. **10/05/21** Re-registration for academic year 2021/2022 begins via App
7. **11/05/21** Recording for this year's awards ceremony took place. Pádraig Walsh's services were engaged for this recording. Micheál thanked Julie for giving of her time to record a piece as Chairperson of the Cumann na dTuismitheoirí. The school also took the opportunity to record this unique school year /covid journey.

### **Transition Year 2021:**

Below is a flavour of what the Transition Year students have been involved in recently:

- Guest speaker, Paddy Slattery (Film Producer) spoke of his life after a car accident when he was 19 years old which left him wheelchair bound. The main theme of the talk was Resilience
- 19 Students took part in the online Prep for Med course with UCC
- The Road Safety Authority gave a workshop to all TY students
- Talk given by Dr Dan Grigoras head lecturer of Computer Science from UCC
- All students took part in a University of Limerick Spring Taster Day
- Walk to Mayfield, picnic and games in the park
- Apple TY Experience morning with the team from Apple, Hollyhill. Cathy Kearney (Vice-President of European Operations) spoke to the students
- Rocky Road walk and hot chocolate at the River Café
- All TY students took part in TY Talks21 which included the following topics: 1) Designing your future 2) Working life 3) Finding your way through education and 4) Life skills
- 'Let's Go' were onsite with a climbing wall, tower & slides as well as human football. It was great to see the students out in the fresh air
- Orienteering quiz
- TY interviews and portfolio presentations are currently in progress
- Some students are on work experience this week
- Guest speaker, Aisling Smith, from Pfizer spoke to the group
- Salsa morning
- TY working on using mindfulness to support mental health
- A lot of students are undertaking an engineering course with STEPS
- Students are participating in an architecture course with DCU
- Students are also taking a nursing course with St. James' Hospital
- There will be a Transition Year afternoon to celebrate the year

As well as all of the above, normal classes, subjects etc have been ongoing. The YSI (Young Social Innovator) group have been painting a mural in the yard.

Micheál thanked all the parents for attending the Cumann meetings throughout the year and the new officers for their work.

### **WELCOME**

Julie Dennehy-O'Callaghan warmly welcomed everyone to the last meeting of this academic year.

### **APOLOGIES**

Michelle and Mark sent their apologies

### **MINUTES**

The minutes from 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021 were read by Nicola Malone.  
The minutes were then proposed by Heidi Robertson and seconded by Helen Mannion.

### **CÚRSAÍ TÓGÁIL**

Tender process is ongoing at present. KOBW Architects have been engaged and the 4 portacabins will be delivered by Castlecabin. These are hoped to be in place by September 2021.

### **TREASURER UPDATE**

BOI Account was closed 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Des thanked Michelle Philpott and Suzanne Moloney for going to the bank at short notice, as signatories, to close the account.  
AIB Account is now open and monies were transferred via bankdraft. The current total is EUR4780.07. Internet banking, PayPal and Revolut accounts to follow.

### **FUNDRAISING**

Heidi, Winnie and Des, along with Micheál, stayed online after the last meeting to discuss fundraising and creating a subcommittee.

It was decided to focus on the Auction/Raffle of Breda's Rugby Jersey for now and look at the Virtual Walk in September 2021.

Des looked into various options that are available – there are lots of online auction companies but they are more suited to multiple sales rather than single items. A simple auction via WhatsApp was decided upon which will be advertised through the school website. It was agreed details about the auction may be shared outside of the school to generate interest – via Facebook etc. Restaurants or companies may be interested.

Jerry suggested that we should put a reserve value on the item. Breda will send on photos of the Jersey. Des will tie in with Heidi, Winnie, Breda, Jerry & Elaine to organise same.

### **CAINTEOIRÍ**

Heidi spoke about Lorcán McMullan, Ray Connellan, Conor O'Keeffe (a Glanmire native) and Hugh Mulligan who appeared on the Late Late Show last week. They spoke about mental health issues. She suggested it may be worth having Conor as a guest speaker at the school. Des knows his father and will follow up. Conor mentioned a lot of mental health issues started for him in secondary school. Micheál is very interested in this and will link up with Des to discuss and set it up for the next academic year.

## **L1 & L2 LEAVING CERT RESTRUCTURE PROPOSAL FROM 2025**

Des gave an overview of the Gaeloideachas meeting from 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment – the body responsible for all curricula) have published, in draft form, Senior cycle teaching and assessment restructure for Irish. This is proposed to come into effect for students sitting the Leaving Certificate in 2025. Schools teaching through the medium of Irish (Schools in Gaeltacht areas and Gael Choláistí) are called L1 and schools teaching through the medium of English are L2. The proposal includes reducing the percentage of marks available for the Oral exam in L1's while not affecting that marking system in L2's. It also involves a higher level of competency and literature study expected from L1 students when compared to the L2 curriculum.

The main difficulties with the process are:

- a) It is not yet clear whether there will be a reward system in place for the L1 level
- b) Whether this is compulsory or if L1 students will have the option to sit the L2 paper
- c) distribution of marks is not yet clear
- d) there appears to be an inequality when compared to other subjects.

Gaeloideachas are asking parents to engage with the process. They are asking us to contact the NCCA and the Department. There is a survey to complete but, in some cases, this has taken over 2.5hrs. The alternative is a submission to the NCCA airing concerns and asking for clarification. The deadline for sending this submission is Aug 31<sup>st</sup> 2021. They are also asking us to contact themselves, Gaeloideachas, so they may compile a list of concerns.

Coláiste an Phiarsaigh has already had a team working on this and has submitted its concerns to the NCCA via a submission. The main concern is if you have two students studying each curriculum, the L2 student gains more for their oral exam than the L1 student. You could have a scenario where the L2 student could earn a H1 in a less difficult paper while an L1 student could earn a H2 in what is a much more difficult paper. There may be no extra reward for the extra work required. The student is almost penalised for going to a Gael Choláiste.

Mary highlighted the fact this is already in place for Junior Cycle where you have a T1 and T2 differentiation. This is, however, yet to be evaluated as it was introduced for Junior Cycle 2020 which did not take place, as neither will Junior Cycle 2021. We cannot move on to Senior Cycle changes unless and until Junior Cycle has properly been assessed. Mary's other concern is, as an Irish teacher, there needs to be a Junior Cycle Oral exam. There is too much literature on the JC – there is more than a school subject at risk – we need to reinforce the spoken language.

Josephine mentioned a copy of Gaeloideachas seminar is now available on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/d8UChbsj8S0>). This link will be sent to the Cumann WhatsApp group by Nicola. Josephine also highlighted the fact that the reading lists, topics, sample papers etc are not available.

Nicola mentioned the JC 2020 Irish changes were decided the November 2019, leaving little time for Teachers and Students to prepare, again with no sample papers available.

Patricia agreed with all of the points above and added it could almost be perceived as a punishment for students attending Gael Choláistí.

Mary asked if we could perhaps lobby some politicians in relation to this, suggesting Micheál Martin and Pádraig O'Sullivan could be our first ports of call.

Jerry wondered if the drive behind this was curriculum design or points for the Leaving Cert. Should our response be focused on the redesigning the curriculum or targeting a reward for the additional work required? Points should reflect the work involved therefore rewarding the student will need to come into play. Reducing the percentage marks available for the oral exam is a backward step and marks an imbalance.

Julie asked that parents email Nicola (malone\_nicola@hotmail.com) with their individual statements and we will correlate them. Micheál would welcome a strong statement from the parental committee which we can then pass on to both Gaeloideachas and the NCCA.

### **ACTIONS LIST UPDATE**

- AIB Accounts for current 2<sup>nd</sup> Years  
Micheál has spoken to Martin O'Connor (Manager of AIB). He suggested that any student with queries should speak to the student officer in AIB. There shouldn't be any problems withdrawing money, closing or keeping their accounts open. If the student officer is unavailable, they can ask to speak to Martin O'Connor directly.
- The fundraising sub-committee has decided to put the Virtual Walk on hold until September and focus on the Rugby Jersey auction
- Guest Speakers  
Micheál has carried out some research into this and three names have come to the fore:

Ray Langan

Ray runs "Rayse The Game". He has lots of experience in giving school talks and dealing with adolescents.

John Lonergan

John is the former governor of Mountjoy Prison. He has spoken to TY students already. He has also previously spoken to parents in Coláiste.

Liam Doocey

Liam is a local with wonderful experience. He left a great experience with Coláiste following his previous presentation.

- Cork Library  
Helen has been in touch with her contact in the library several times. The query has been posed but needs to be escalated. Helen will follow up.
- Addition of contacts to WhatsApp  
Julie has added the missing contacts since the last meeting.

## AOB

No AOB at this point

## ACTIONS

1. Internet Banking, PayPal & Revolut accounts to be opened from new AIB Account – Des
2. Photos of Jersey to be sent to fundraising subcommittee - Breda
3. Jersey Auction - Des will tie in with Heidi, Winnie, Breda, Jerry & Elaine
4. Conor O’Keeffe – Micheál and Des to look into inviting Conor to speak on mental health issues during the next academic year
5. Gaeloideachas seminar YouTube link to be sent to WhatsApp group – Nicola
6. Emails to be sent to Nicola ([malone\\_nicola@hotmail.com](mailto:malone_nicola@hotmail.com)) with concerns re: Irish Leaving cert restructure. These will then be correlated and details forwarded to Gaeloideachas and the NCCA – Parents & Nicola
7. Follow up with Cork Library re: advice on popular books in a library app – Helen
8. Link to Minutes to be forwarded to group via WhatsApp (rather than email) when finalised - Nicola

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Julie acknowledged that this is what would have been Michelle Philpott’s last attendance of a meeting of the Cumann na dTuismitheoirí. She thanked her for her hard work over the past few years as chairperson. She also offered her gratitude for all the help and guidance given when Julie was vice-chair which greatly helped her own transition to the role. Micheál also thanked Michelle for her guidance and great assistance to him during her time as cathaoirlach, especially when he moved into the role as principal of Coláiste an Phiarsaigh, Heidi has agreed to stay on to help with fundraising for the next academic year.

## CLOSE

In closing, Julie thanked the team and all the parents for a great year and asked to pass on our thanks to the school staff for all they had done during this challenging year. We are all looking forward to some sense of normality from September 2021. The date for the next meeting was decided - Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021. This will go ahead through Teams. There was a request that the meetings continue to be available online for our valued parents who live further afield. This will be available even if we return to in-classroom meetings. Wishing everyone a great summer and we look forward to bigger and brighter things ahead.

**Next Meeting Date:**

**Tuesday 14th September 2021 at 8.30pm**