

Press Release

4th November 2010

Press Release from the Joint Managerial Body re JMB Education Conference

The Joint Managerial Body, representing the management of almost four hundred Voluntary Secondary schools, has demanded in the strongest possible terms that Education be prioritised in the Budget on 7th December. Experience during recessions in other countries point to the absolute necessity to not just ring fence education, but in fact it is strongly recommended that resources for education be increased.

Ferdia Kelly, General Secretary of the JMB, notes that ” the views of experts focus on education as the driver that will assist this country work its way out of recession. At a time when a well educated cohort of young people is our hope for the future we must shout stop to any further damage to our education sector.”

“ We have already witnessed the impact of the increase in the PTR to 19:1 in September 2009 leading to a serious increase in class sizes in addition to the curtailment of the range of subjects being offered in our schools and the elimination of programmes such as Leaving Certificate Applied and Transition Year. These programmes have been extremely successful in facilitating students at risk of leaving school early to complete a full post-primary education in our Voluntary Secondary schools. Any further increases in the pupil teacher ratio will severely threaten the education of the most disadvantaged young people in our society”, claims Ferdia Kelly.

Ferdia Kelly makes the point that “ the integration of pupils with special needs into mainstream schools is a core principle of our education policy. We must ensure that the resources available to mainstream schools is adequate to allow for the provision of an appropriate education for each pupil in the school”.

“It is the stark reality that Voluntary Secondary schools are at present forced to raise more than 30% of annual expenditure through fund-raising and parents’ contributions and any attempt to reduce an already inadequate capitation grant will place an intolerable burden on parents to directly fund education for their children. Voluntary Secondary schools are already seriously underfunded and in the current situation of increasing unemployment it is impossible to keep asking parents to put their hands into shallower pockets to try and keep the schools running”, says Ferdia Kelly.

“ The Government parties recognized the importance of education by agreeing in October 2009 that no further increase in PTR or reduction in capitation grants would occur during the lifetime of this Government. The JMB is now calling on the Government to honour this promise. Remember our children get only one chance to receive a formal education – now is the time to ensure that we give them the best possible education by deciding that education is a priority in the Budget on 7th December next,” states Ferdia Kelly.

Ferdia Kelly

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15th November 2010.

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