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Our Schools' Mission in a Digital Era:

Embracing Change
and Upholding Values

Reports 2025

Emmet House, Milltown, Dublin 14

T 01 283 8255 F 01 269 5461 E info@jmb.ie W www.jmb.ie

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General Secretary's Report

AMCSS/JMB 38th Annual Conference 2025

Foreword

It is a privilege to present the Annual Report 2024-2025, offering a comprehensive overview of the Secretariat of Secondary Schools' work in advancing the mission and objectives outlined in our Strategic Development Plan 2022-2025.

This report is structured around the strategic goals that guide our organisation. It brings together contributions from each of our key operational areas: School Management Advisory, Education, Research and Development, Corporate Services, Financial Services Support Unit, Schools Procurement Unit, Building Advisory Service, Data Protection, and Child Protection and Garda Vetting.

Throughout the year, every section of our organisation aligned its activities with the priorities set out in the Strategic Plan. This report serves as both a summary of achievements and a transparent assessment of how our efforts support our overarching strategic aims.

By linking our Annual Report directly to the Strategic Plan, we reaffirm our dedication to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. The Strategic Plan remains the compass guiding our work, and this report provides an important opportunity to evaluate our progress and reaffirm our shared goals.

I would like to sincerely thank the Assistant General Secretaries (ASG) for their invaluable support and expertise throughout the year. I am equally grateful to the staff of the JMB for their professionalism, commitment, and passion for serving our schools. Special appreciation is extended to the principals and chairpersons of the Councils of JMB and AMCSS for ensuring that the lived realities of school leadership inform and shape our advocacy and action.

On behalf of the Board of the Secretariat of Secondary Schools, the staff of JMB, and the Councils of AMCSS and JMB, I express my deep gratitude to the Board of Directors of the Secretariat. Their leadership has been pivotal in advancing the Strategic Plan and in supporting the voluntary secondary school sector.

Mrs. Deirdre Matthews

General Secretary,

AMCSS/JMB

April 2025

Strategic Development Goals

1. Promoting Denominational Education in Voluntary Secondary Schools
2. Carrying out the Role of a Recognised School Management Body
3. Providing Management, Compliance, and Advisory Services
4. Promoting Educational Research and Development
5. Organisational Effectiveness and Governance
6. Conclusion

Goal 1:

Promoting Denominational Education in Voluntary Secondary Schools

The Secretariat of Secondary Schools (SSS) remained deeply committed to promoting voluntary secondary education grounded in the Catholic ethos and the distinctive ethos of each school under the leadership of the Irish School-Heads Association (ISA).

During the year, 96 newly appointed principals and deputy principals engaged with JMB's professional learning programme for newly appointed school leaders, endorsed by Oide, and informed by the values and ethos of denominational education. On-site support visits by JMB staff reinforced school identity, ethos development, and pastoral leadership.

The AMCSS regional section on the JMB website was launched to support leadership collaboration and peer support, and regional meetings were convened to discuss issues and to inform national advocacy through the Council of AMCSS representatives. Council meetings were informed and consulted on the work of the Catholic Education Partnership (CEP) and the Association of Patrons and Trustees of Catholic Schools (APTCS). The General Secretary represents AMCSS on the

Croí Committee of CEP, which seeks to provide a unified approach to Catholic Education and facilitates consultation with AMCSS on this work. The Deputy President and the Assistant General Secretary (ASG) for Education Research and Development lead work on two of the pillars of this work: mission and vision framework pillar; and the structures and services framework pillar.

Collaboration with APTCS and CEP continued, implementing the Memorandum of Agreement and preserving the ethos of Catholic voluntary schools across all policy developments. ASG's school management advisory and corporate services continue to collaborate with APTCS to develop guidelines to support school amalgamations. The Catholic Schools Building Committee (CSBC) has been established to provide a collaborative structure between APTCS and JMB on the management and governance of building projects, funded by the Department of Education. Work is ongoing to develop agreed procedures for the governance and management of building projects under the Department of Education's

General Secretary's Report

Additional School Accommodation Scheme. The work of the Catholic Schools Building Committee (CSBC), in collaboration with the JMB Building Advisory Service, continued to support the provision of infrastructure that reflects the ethos and educational mission of voluntary secondary schools. The development and repurposing of SEN accommodation, in particular, aligned with the values of inclusivity and care central to denominational education.

In line with the ambitions set out in the Strategic Development Plan 2022–2025,

the Secretariat maintained strong links with international Catholic education partners. This included ongoing collaboration with the Catholic Education Service of England and Wales, the Scottish Catholic Education Service, and Catholic education bodies in Northern Ireland. Through active engagement with the European Committee for Catholic Education (CEEC), the Secretariat contributed to promoting and safeguarding denominational education within wider European education discussions.

GOAL 2:

Carrying out the Role of a Recognised School Management Body

The Secretariat continued to play a leading role as a recognised management body during 2024–2025, actively representing the interests of all voluntary secondary schools at every level of educational policy development and implementation.

National Advocacy and Submissions

The Secretariat made a substantial and comprehensive Pre-Budget Submission to the Minister for Education in preparation for Budget 2025. This key advocacy document addressed critical areas, including leadership challenges, the urgent need for additional Deputy Principals, increased capitation, restoration of the pupil-teacher ratio, enhanced SEN supports, investment in wellbeing services, technology resourcing, and school infrastructure renewal.

In addition, the Secretariat collaborated with ACCS and ETBI to submit a joint proposal to the Department of Education advocating

for dedicated SEN coordination time and the appointment of additional Deputy Principals, recognising the increasing complexity of leadership demands and inclusion requirements in schools.

A total of nineteen comprehensive policy submissions were made to national consultations, covering areas such as Senior Cycle reform, SPHE curriculum development, Transition Year review, EPSEN Act review, student mental health and wellbeing supports, teacher supply strategies, literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and the national guidance framework.

Many of these submissions directly reflected the feedback and lived experiences of school leaders gathered through regional meetings, AMCSS regional structures, and the national JMB advisory groups, ensuring that the Secretariat's policy positions remained grounded in the day-to-day realities of school leadership.

Role of JMB Advisory Groups

The Secretariat's advocacy work was further strengthened by the advice and consultation provided by its national advisory groups, including the National Curriculum Advisory Group (NCAG), the Special Education Advisory Group (SENAG), the ICT Advisory Group (ICTAG), and the Delivering Equality in Schools Advisory Group (DEISAG). These advisory groups played a vital role in shaping JMB policy positions, offering expert sectoral insights that informed all national submissions, consultations, and negotiations.

Policy Leadership on Student Wellbeing and Inclusion

Recognising the increasing mental health challenges faced by students, the Secretariat actively participated in national consultations addressing SPHE reform, school counselling services, and the need for expanded therapeutic supports. Submissions were made advocating for enhanced wellbeing provision at post-primary level, and the Secretariat engaged proactively with emerging frameworks such as the NEART mental health programme for schools.

Supporting Inclusive Education and Special Class Provision

The JMB Education Research and Development Team, the JMB Building Advisory Team, and the JMB Management Advisory Team worked closely with the Department of Education planning and building unit and the NCSE to support the establishment and management of special classes in voluntary secondary schools, providing direct advice to schools on planning, resource allocation, and compliance.

Advocacy efforts continued to emphasise the need for dedicated senior leadership structures to manage and coordinate the growing complexity of inclusive education provision.

Supporting School Building Infrastructure

The JMB Buildings Support Service, through quarterly and informal meetings with the DE planning and building Unit, ensured sustained communication and effective escalation of issues pertaining to school building projects. This strategic coordination enhanced the delivery of capital and minor works in schools.

Cross-Divisional Expertise and Strategic Collaboration

The Secretariat's policy engagement was further enhanced by the collaboration and expertise of its specialist divisions in School Governance, Data Protection, Procurement, Financial Services, and Child Protection.

Input from these operational teams ensured that national advocacy addressed emerging issues in areas such as GDPR compliance, procurement reform, financial oversight, and safeguarding standards.

Sustaining Leadership Capacity

The Secretariat maintained a clear and distinct strategic focus on enhancing leadership capacity, particularly through advocating for the appointment of additional Deputy Principals and the formal recognition of SEN leadership roles.

Strengthening senior leadership remains a cornerstone of the Secretariat's vision for effective school management and sustainable policy implementation across the voluntary secondary sector.

Through these extensive advocacy, consultation, and engagement activities, the Secretariat fully **advanced Strategic Goal 2:** to

negotiate on behalf of all voluntary secondary schools and to influence education policy nationally and strategically.

Goal 3:

Providing Management, Compliance, and Advisory Services

In support of our commitment to strengthening school governance, operational compliance, and sectoral resilience, the JMB continued to deliver high-quality management, compliance, and advisory services throughout 2024–2025. Our work in this area directly aligned with Strategic Goal 3 of the Strategic Development Plan 2022–2025.

Advisory and Compliance Services

Throughout the year, the School Management Advisory (SMA) team, the Financial Services Support Unit (FSSU), the Schools Procurement Unit (SPU), the Building Advisory Service and the Child Protection and Vetting Advisory Service provided extensive support and guidance to voluntary secondary schools across a wide range of operational, governance, and compliance matters.

Key areas of advisory and compliance support included:

- Governance structures and compliance with Department circulars,
- Staffing and recruitment procedures, including senior leadership appointments and teacher allocation,
- Student enrolment, admissions policies, and compliance with the Education (Admission to Schools) Act,
- Deployment and management of Posts of Responsibility and leadership development initiatives,

- Crisis management including health and safety, critical incident planning, and student safeguarding,
- Child protection obligations, with particular focus on DLP responsibilities and Board oversight,
- Employment law matters including fixed-term contracts, job-sharing, and career breaks,
- Curriculum leadership and the implementation of Senior Cycle and Junior Cycle reforms,
- SEN leadership and establishment of special classes,
- GDPR compliance, data governance, and cybersecurity support,
- Advice on school building projects and additional accommodation processes,
- Financial governance and statutory financial compliance,
- Procurement compliance and support for school procurement processes.

All advisory services were tailored to the evolving needs of schools and underpinned by a commitment to responsive, practical, and sector-specific support.

Supporting Schools with the Junior Cycle Schoolbook Scheme

In addition to its general advisory role, the Secretariat provided targeted support for specific national initiatives, notably the Junior Cycle Schoolbook Scheme.

In collaboration with the SPU and FSSU, the SMA team provided dedicated support to schools implementing the new scheme.

Supports included:

- Direct advice on procurement obligations and financial management of grant funding,
- Hosting national webinars, drop-in clinics, and one-to-one MS Teams consultations for school leaders and administrators,
- Issuing financial and procurement templates to assist compliant management of the scheme,
- Publishing bulletins clarifying Department circulars and operational requirements,
- Representation on the Schoolbook Scheme Steering Committee and national Implementation Teams to ensure the school management perspective was reflected in Department policy.

These targeted supports helped schools to manage the administrative, financial, and governance challenges associated with the new scheme effectively and compliantly.

School Management Advisory Services

The SMA team continued to deliver a highly response service to school leaders during 2024 – 2025 including:

- Telephone and email advisory support on a wide range of management issues,
- On-site induction visits to newly appointed principals, with 35 new leaders receiving direct support and professional learning conversations on topics such as teacher allocation, GDPR, child protection, critical incident management, curriculum leadership, and staff deployment,
- Webinars and national events on key operational and compliance topics,

- The full rollout of a professional learning programme for newly appointed deputy principals, endorsed by Oide, with strong engagement from participants.

These professional learning supports equipped school leaders with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to lead effectively within increasingly complex operational and policy environments.

JMB's Building Advisory Service

The JMB Building Support Service supported school boards of management in navigating the complexities of capital projects, including major and minor works, SEN accommodation, emergency works, and the Climate Action Summer Works Scheme. The JMB's representation in Department-led planning forums further advanced the policy and operational priorities of schools regarding building infrastructure. The JMB Building Advisory Service expanded significantly, with two additional dedicated Building Officers being appointed. This team provided tailored support to over 386 schools on project planning, design team appointments, compliance with capital schemes, and resolution of project-stage issues. The service also supported emergency works applications and engagement with new climate and retrofit schemes, further enhancing sectoral resilience.

Financial Management Support

The Financial Services Support Unit (FSSU) provided comprehensive financial governance support to schools, including:

- Issuance of over 30 updated Financial Guidelines,
- Delivery of a national Financial Year-End and Budget Planning webinar,

- One-to-one financial support for Boards of Management and finance committees,
- Ongoing advice on VAT compliance, payroll, and public sector financial regulations,
- Cloud-based submission system for timely and accurate annual school accounts.

The FSSU's work ensured that voluntary secondary schools maintained transparent, compliant, and resilient financial practices.

Procurement Support Services

The Schools Procurement Unit (SPU) continued to deliver a high-volume, high-impact advisory service for schools, recording over 15,600 activities across the year.

Key activities included:

- Direct support for 224 procurement projects,
- Development of updated tender templates and indicative pricing lists,
- Delivery of webinars, workshops, and consultation clinics to improve procurement outcomes,
- Ongoing support for schools engaged with School Meals Schemes, ICT purchasing, schoolbook procurement, and science laboratory equipment.

SPU engagement helped schools achieve better procurement practices, cost efficiencies, and compliance with national frameworks.

Child Protection and Garda Vetting Support

The Child Protection and Vetting Advisory Service supported schools in complying with child protection legislation and Garda vetting requirements.

Key activities included:

- Participation in the national review of Child Protection Procedures,

- Launch of a streamlined online Garda Vetting Portal for schools and Education Support Centres,
- Delivery of national training webinars and the publication of an updated user manual,
- Advisory support for Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) and Boards of Management on statutory obligations.

Data Protection Advisory Services

The Data Protection Advisory Service continued to provide expert GDPR and data management advice, including:

- Advising schools on Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs), breach management, and third-party data sharing,
- Publishing updated data protection templates and issuing regular bulletins,
- Conducting tailored GDPR training sessions for school leaders and staff,
- Contributing to the Department of Education's development of the national Data Protection Toolkit for Schools, ensuring that school perspectives were represented in national guidance.

Communications and Sectoral Updates

Timely and clear communication with schools remained a cornerstone of the Secretariat's advisory service model.

During the year, the Secretariat issued:

- 30 national Bulletins covering critical updates (e.g., posts of responsibility, procurement obligations, wellbeing initiatives, and SPHE reforms),
- Advisory Information Notes on emerging issues such as redeployment, digital transformation, and governance matters,

- Regular updates through AMCSS regional meetings and direct communications with school leaders.

Professional Learning and Development

In line with the Strategic Development Plan 2022–2025, the Secretariat prioritised the provision of targeted professional learning opportunities to strengthen leadership capacity and support school improvement across the voluntary secondary sector.

National Conferences and Seminars

■ AMCSS/JMB 37th Annual Conference – May 2024

Theme: *“Embracing Diversity in All Its Forms: The Voluntary Secondary Sector in Irish Education”*.

Highlights included:

- Launch of major ESRI research on diversity, led by Professor Selina McCoy,
- Keynote response by Professor Eamonn Conway on ethos and culture,
- Plenary sessions with Andrea Feeney (SEC) and Dr Eamonn Carroll (ESRI),
- Workshops on inclusive education, AI, workforce planning, behaviour management, and inspection frameworks.

■ JMB Education Conference – September 2024

Theme: *“Leading for Learning”*.

Key sessions included:

- Keynote by Professor Anne Looney (DCU),
- Workshops on AI in education, student transitions, parental engagement, and curricular collaboration.

■ DEIS Seminar – March 2025

Focused on promoting equality of opportunity in education, this seminar explored leadership strategies for improving literacy, numeracy, attendance, and wellbeing in DEIS schools.

■ Special Classes Seminar – February 2025

This seminar provided principals and deputy principals with practical guidance on establishing and managing special classes within mainstream schools. Input from experienced school leaders, the NCSE and the Department of Education planning and building unit supported schools planning for the opening of a special class in 2025 or 2026.

■ Pilot Cross-Sectoral Professional Learning Initiative for SEN

In collaboration with ETBI, four JMB schools participated in a pilot initiative supporting a provision mapping approach to provision for Special Educational Needs (SEN) across the post-primary sectors, enhancing coordination and access to SEN-related training.

Regional Professional Development and Peer Support

Professional learning was further supported through:

- Regional information and training sessions via AMCSS structures,
- Peer-to-peer professional support through revitalised Regional Ballint Groups,
- Webinars and advisory clinics on GDPR compliance, financial management, procurement, and child protection.

During 2024–2025, the Secretariat maintained its unwavering commitment to providing voluntary secondary schools with comprehensive management, compliance, and advisory services. Through sector-specific support structures, targeted professional development, and strategic collaboration across specialist units, the JMB ensured that school leaders were equipped to meet

emerging operational challenges, lead resilient school communities, and maintain the highest standards of governance and accountability.

In doing so, the Secretariat fully advanced **Strategic Goal 3**: to deliver high-quality management, compliance, and advisory support that enable voluntary secondary schools to thrive within an increasingly complex educational landscape.

Goal 4:

Promoting Educational Research and Development

In alignment with the Strategic Development Plan 2022–2025, the JMB prioritised the promotion of a research-informed approach to leadership development, curriculum innovation, and inclusive education. Throughout 2024–2025, the Education, Research and Development (ERD) Unit expanded its engagement with national policy consultations, practitioner-led research initiatives, and advocacy for enhanced student supports.

National Policy Engagement and Research Contributions

The ERD Unit led extensive engagement with national education policy consultations, contributing research-informed submissions across key areas including:

- The review of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act,
- The reform of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE),
- The development of mental health and wellbeing services for post-primary schools.

These submissions were grounded in sectoral consultations, practitioner feedback, and current educational research, ensuring that the voice and experience of voluntary secondary schools shaped emerging national policies.

Practitioner Research Bursaries

To foster a culture of inquiry and reflective practice within the sector, the Secretariat awarded research bursaries to principals and deputy principals throughout 2024–2025. Supported projects explored areas such as school leadership, inclusion strategies, curriculum innovation, and whole-school wellbeing initiatives, contributing to both professional development and sectoral knowledge.

Advocacy for Technology, STEM, and Digital Innovation

Research and advocacy in the fields of technology integration, STEM education, and digital innovation remained a core focus during 2024–2025.

The Secretariat ensured that the perspective of voluntary secondary schools was strongly represented in national discussions on:

- The rollout of Senior Cycle Technology subjects,
- National digital literacy strategies,
- The ethical integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education.
- These activities supported the sector's preparedness for emerging technological changes and promoted a future-focused approach to teaching and learning.

Research on Leadership Peer Support Structures

In line with the Secretariat's strategic goal of promoting sustainable leadership in voluntary secondary schools, a dedicated research study was commissioned during 2024–2025 to evaluate the effectiveness of the Regional Ballint Groups.

These confidential, peer-support structures aim to:

- Enhance the personal and professional well-being of school leaders
- Foster collegiality and leadership resilience
- Support collaborative professional problem-solving and the sharing of best practices among principals and deputy principals

The research, led by Maynooth University and in collaboration with by the ERD Unit, seeks to systematically assess the impact of Ballint Groups on leadership sustainability across the sector. The findings of this study will directly inform future leadership support strategies, ensuring that structured professional peer networks remain a central and evidence-informed component of the Secretariat's leadership development work. Data Gathering and Sectoral Evidence

The ERD Unit continued to ground the Secretariat's advocacy in sectoral realities through systematic data gathering, drawing on feedback from:

- JMB and AMCSS Regional Meetings,
- National Advisory Groups (NCAG, SENAG, ICTAG, DEISAG),
- Council consultations and leadership feedback forums.

This consultative approach ensured that Secretariat submissions and strategic positions were responsive to the real-world experiences of voluntary secondary school leaders.

Through these research, development, and advocacy initiatives, the Secretariat advanced Strategic Goal 5: to embed a research-informed approach across leadership development, policy engagement, and strategic planning in the voluntary secondary school sector.

Goal 5: Organisational Effectiveness and Governance

The Board of Directors prioritised organisational effectiveness and strong governance throughout 2024-2025, ensuring that its structures, systems, and operations continued to meet the highest standards of transparency, efficiency,

and accountability. Governance structures were strengthened through compliance with the Charities Governance Code, internal audits, and the development of the Directors' Handbook. Strategic staff recruitment and

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development, stronger regional engagement, and the expansion of communications outputs characterised the year's operational focus.

Corporate Governance and Compliance:

The JMB Board of Directors conducted regular reviews of governance practices to ensure alignment with the Charities Governance Code and best practice standards for company oversight. Over the course of the year, the Board convened 7 formal meetings to oversee strategic, financial, and operational matters. During the year, the board engaged in a process of evaluation in compliance with Standard 5.9 of the Charities Governance Code (2018). The board's effectiveness as a whole was considered together with the work of office holders and individual charity trustees. A Compliance Report required by the CRA was prepared, and areas requiring further development were identified under each of the six principles: Achieving Charitable Purpose; Behaving with Integrity; Leading People; Exercising Control; Working Effectively and Being Accountable. An internal financial controls audit was completed, strengthening systems for financial management, risk oversight, and compliance reporting. Policies were reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with evolving legislative and regulatory requirements.

A comprehensive Directors' Handbook was developed and circulated to support Board members in fulfilling their governance responsibilities, ensuring clarity of roles, responsibilities, and fiduciary duties. The Handbook has become an essential tool for guiding effective and ethical governance practices.

The Board's Nominations Committee played a key role during the year by overseeing the nomination of JMB representatives to external educational bodies. The Committee coordinated

nominations to the NCCA Council, NCCA Subject Development Groups, NCSE Working Groups, ensuring strong voluntary secondary sector representation in strategic educational policy development processes.

The Board's Strategy Committee also undertook important work in surveying the chairpersons of school Boards of Management to identify their professional development needs. The survey focused on the supports required to strengthen chairs' governance and leadership capabilities and to enhance their effectiveness in their roles. The findings of this survey will inform future training and development programmes tailored to the specific needs of Board chairs across the voluntary secondary school sector.

Conclusion

In 2024-2025, the Secretariat of Secondary Schools delivered comprehensive support to its member schools, strengthened national and international advocacy, and reinforced its internal governance structures.

Looking ahead, the Secretariat remains committed to sustaining excellence in voluntary secondary education, promoting leadership development, advancing inclusive practices, and representing the voice of voluntary secondary schools across Ireland. Guided by our Strategic Development Plan, we will continue to advocate, innovate, and support schools as they navigate an increasingly complex educational landscape.

Through these activities, the Secretariat reaffirmed its commitment to the Strategic Development Plan 2022–2025 and to the enduring values of voluntary secondary education.

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Education Report

Education Report

AMCSS/JMB 38th Annual Conference 2025

Introduction

We welcome the appointment of our new Assistant General Secretary with responsibility for Research, Development, Education, and Training, Mr Colm Keher. This appointment coincides with the expansion of the R&D Unit to two fulltime and one part-time colleagues, reflecting the impact of rapidly evolving and expanding education policy across the education system.

This AMCSS/JMB Annual Education Report tracks seven key areas of contemporary policy development and points to the Secretariat's ongoing educational, research, and development activities on behalf of our members.

1. Sustainable Leadership and Management in Our Schools

In our Pre-Budget Submission 2025, the JMB set out an unarguable case for the enhancement of leadership capacity in the face of overwhelming, concurrent, policy change in both curricular and special education demands. Our position is widely supported by other relevant stakeholders and is acknowledged as reasonable and appropriate in conversations with high level Department officials.

In summary, our contention is that in light of evolving policy around inclusion and curriculum, the required systems-level knowledge, delegated authority, year-round availability, and agency within schools can best be mediated at deputy principal level, and certainly not as a meagre increase in the allocation of posts of responsibility.

What emerged in Budget 2025 was precisely that – *'a meagre increase in the allocation of*

posts of responsibility':

'As part of Budget 2025, funding of €4 million will be made available to provide 1,000 additional posts of responsibility in the school system for the 2025/26 school year. This is in recognition that school leadership and management play a key role in improving educational outcomes by creating a positive school climate and environment as well as motivating and empowering educators and learners within their school communities'¹

In other words, out of a Budget allocation, current and capital, of €11,800,000,000, just €4m could be found to invest in the single most important lever in policy implementation, effective school leadership, and even this in one of the least effective enhancement measures. If 1,000 additional posts of

¹ <https://assets.gov.ie/306585/d14f1663-d3c5-4647-b67f-739ab208ac3b.pdf>

responsibility spread across 4,000 schools represents the then government's regard for the work of senior management in schools, we could only look to the next government to recognise the fact that policy can only be transformed into practice through available, authoritative, and agentic leadership.

Sadly, such a hope was in vain. Furthermore, the Programme for Government has opted for the cheapest model of task-level intervention in the form of administrative assistants. For the avoidance of doubt, the JMB has long argued for alleviation of the overwhelming administrative burden on its principals and deputy principals, but it is in the domain of leadership for learning and inclusion that the greatest demand exists.

We will continue to make our case in the strongest terms and urge our new Minister and Government to reconsider this essential investment.

Activities

- Continuing communication with the Department and others on the workload of principals in contemporary voluntary secondary schools
- Development of submissions establishing a clear rationale for enhanced senior leadership capacity
- Advocacy for greater coherence of policy implementation across the range of demand areas impacting on schools
- Ongoing advice and support for senior and middle management systems in schools
- Roll-out of peer support 'Balint' groups across the network of voluntary secondary school principals and carrying out research on its impact
- Leadership training and development opportunities for principals, deputy principals, and Boards of Management
- Engagement with Oide relating to leadership-for-learning amongst principals and deputy principals
- Continued awarding of research bursaries for voluntary secondary principals and deputy principals

2. Curriculum Matters

Renewal of Junior and Senior Cycle

Curriculum development at national level is characterised by having a lag-phase wherein the development and consultation work continues 'behind the scenes' for some years but then emerges into schools for implementation in an apparently short timeframe. We are currently at this post lag-phase with senior cycle and experiencing newly developed curriculum specifications, assessment methodologies, state examination

requirements, and teacher professional learning roll-out at a pace and depth never before seen in Irish education.

Parallel to this development, the junior cycle framework continues to embed, having both stalled and been adjusted in light of the pandemic school closures. It's axiomatic that 'research makes the familiar look strange' and this is particularly true of the longitudinal study carried out by the University of Limerick into the impact of the framework. Key

messages in its final report will come as no surprise to school leaders and teachers:

- There still remains a strong focus on terminal examinations at junior cycle and they are of primary concern to most teachers
- The extent to which students engage in more active creative learning is an area where there is little evidence of signs of change
- The way the CBAs were realised in the curriculum appears to have inhibited the attempts to establish a dual approach to assessment, as they were mainly seen as activities that were bolted on to existing requirements rather than alternative aspects of assessment
- The absence of the necessary structural changes to assessment inhibited teachers and students from experiencing the framework as it was originally intended.
- It should not be concluded that the intended changes do not work, as the necessary conditions for enactment were not fully realised

The JMB is highly active on all aspects of curricular change and implementation as are our NCCA Development Group representatives and Council and Board members. At the highest levels we are bringing the voluntary secondary school leadership perspectives and voice to bear on developments across all the arenas of consultation and engagement. We will continue to maintain close contact with our schools as these developments proceed and are particularly cognisant of the messages contained in last year's ESRI report on curriculum and assessment concerns in our schools.

Supporting Literacy and Numeracy

We welcome the commitment in the

Programme for Government to 'Expand the Junior Certificate School Programme School Library Programme to include additional schools'.

All schools should have a well-stocked and attractive library, centrally located, and staffed by enthusiastic and skilled promoters of reading and literacy approaches.

Teachers, however, continue to report a need for a block of time in the first term of 1st year to ensure that *all* students are brought to a functional level of skill in numerical functions, basic algebra, and geometry.

STEM Education

The new Government's commitment to STEM education appears in a range of commitments under the Programme. In particular, there is a commitment to

'Advance education, training and maintenance of new digital skills and capacities, and particularly STEM subjects, with a special focus on girls (universal access to coding, maths and ICT classes), through training and life-long learning, and to prioritise diversity and inclusion in STEM'.

While welcome, such commitments suffer from a lack of clarity around resourcing and the actions within the Department's current *STEM Education Implementation Plan to 2026* makes no mention of the finances, school time, or additional teaching personnel required to deliver on such promises. Schools are crying out for resources to support this education priority and we urge the new Minister and government to supplement the Implementation Plan with an investment strategy aligning with the real needs of schools. As immediate measures, schools urgently require

- Laboratory Assistants

- Dedicated time for teachers involved in STEM projects with their students
- Annualised equipment replacement and software upgrading grants
- Appropriate laboratory-class space and storage areas

Teacher leadership posts to coordinate STEM teaching and activities, including health and safety compliance

Teacher Supply

A raft of actions is currently being undertaken by the Department and its agencies, each aimed at addressing one or more aspects of the current crisis in teacher supply. JMB is highly active in each of these areas and fully engages with the Department, the Teaching Council, and others in exploring solutions.

Two areas of activity require, in our view, much more serious consideration. Firstly, one of the most commonly cited reasons for teachers not accepting, or remaining in, teaching positions is the difficulty in sourcing accommodation, particularly in our cities. Creative ways of prioritising both education and medical personnel for housing must be found and JMB will be happy to engage with the Department on such possibilities.

The second strand of change relates to the two-year PME programme structure. JMB is proposing an independent review of the current PME model. While the system may not revert to a one-year post-graduate model of ITE, we need to determine the scope for a more fit-for-purpose placement, or 'apprenticeship' model in terms of depth, rather than breadth, of in-school experience in the programme's second year, as well as cost mitigation by remunerating student teachers on placement as in nursing and other professional development programmes.

Activities:

- Collaboration with the Sectoral Teacher Supply Forum
- Membership of the Teacher Supply Data Working Group
- Participation in plenary teacher supply events and promoting data-gathering across schools
- Regular and frequent engagement with the Department's Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit
- Active participation in the Senior Cycle Forum
- NCCA liaison at the highest levels – Council, Board for Junior Cycle, Board for Senior Cycle, Subject Development Groups, and consultation events
- Close involvement with NCCA on their review of RSE and SPHE across all sectors
- Close liaison with Churches and Trusts regarding RSE and school ethos
- Membership of an education advisory panel with BelongTo and advising schools on supporting transgender students
- Responding to school questions relating to RSE, ethos and LGBTI developments
- Submissions and meeting contributions on issues of key importance to curricular policy implementation
- Policy-practice dialogue via the JMB National Curriculum Advisory Group
- Meetings with Oide on the roll-out of Teacher Professional Learning

3. Guidance Counselling and Psychotherapy Services

One of the key challenges facing our school communities centres on the impact of Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their consequences for socialisation, learning, and behaviour, particularly in the teenage years.

At school level, clear evidence of trauma and adversity impacting on mental health of our children and young people continue to be exacerbated in the long comet-tail of the pandemic, worsened by the additional emotional and financial strain of housing, energy, and food inflation on so many families. Serious concern is emerging around worsening attendance rates, particularly in schools serving socially and economically disadvantaged communities and also on the growing evidence of demotivation brought about by both learning loss and de-socialisation factors in young people. In a recent School Attendance Data and Report² published in 2023, Tusla noted:

'The pandemic severely impacted school attendance in 2021–22 with fully opened schools. A similar pattern [to primary] can be seen in post-primary education, with student days lost rising from 2.3 million days in 2019–20 (8.2%), 2.3 million days in 2020–21 (9.2%), to 5.4 million days in 2021–22, which was 12.6% of all days for 2021–22.

It is against this backdrop that the JMB has been calling for the provision of fully qualified psychotherapeutic services to schools. The optimal model is where a trained psychotherapist engages over an extended time with a school community, becomes embedded in the professional life of its

educators, and develops co-professional relationship with teachers, meeting with parents, and providing appropriate therapeutic supports to relevant students.

We congratulate the Department on the establishment of a Counselling Pilot in Primary schools and the recent extension of Strand 1 of the pilot to 61 urban DEIS primary schools in Dublin.

The Department, however, has no plans to extend such a programme into post-primary. The recent announcement that Jigsaw is the successful bidder for the tender to deliver NEART: the new national programme of mental health and wellbeing resources and training for post-primary schools is welcome, but is unlikely to deliver the deep and long-term supports needed by young people with ACE impacts.

We place on record our appreciation of the wonderful work of both our guidance counsellor colleagues and NEPS, but even with such provision, the core needs of young people with profound and enduring mental health challenges remain unaddressed.

In 2023, the three post primary management bodies made a submission to the then Minister, urging the Department to consider trialling of a resourced model of an embedded one-to-one psychotherapy service across a limited number of secondary schools and to review its impact after a period of time.

We very much welcome the commitments in the Programme for Government to 'expand and strengthen measures to address the problems which exist with school attendance', and to 'review the mental health and wellbeing pilots

² https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/AAR_SAR_2019_22.pdf

that are ongoing in primary and post-primary schools and expand them’.

In our view, both these commitments would be realised by the provision of appropriate psychotherapies, and we would very much appreciate having an exploratory meeting with the Department to explore such an initiative.

Activities

- Advocating for the expansion into post primary of the Pilot Scheme for Student Emotional Therapeutic Supports
- Meetings with the Department’s Guidance Section on current developments, policy, and best practice
- Advocating for enhanced Guidance Counselling allocation to schools
- Liaising with the Department and the Inspectorate on teacher supply concerns in relation to the recruitment of guidance counsellors
- Submissions to, and participation in, the National Policy Group for Lifelong Guidance
- Consulting with the Department on confidentiality and consent policy relating to guidance and counselling provision in schools
- Continued development of supports and advice for schools on whole-school guidance provision
- Responding to school queries on guidance and counselling provision

4. Special and Additional Educational Needs

In light of the publication of last year’s landmark NCSE paper ‘*An Inclusive Education for an Inclusive Society*’ and its adoption as Department policy, the direction of travel is now absolutely clear – our school system will require to adapt itself to a radical conceptualisation of inclusion and the process of realising this goal begins now.

Of course, our voluntary secondary schools are already extraordinarily inclusive, innovative, professionally committed, and welcoming communities and we are building on strong ethical and, indeed, spiritual foundations when it comes to living out each school’s expressed ethos. This review of the legislative and policy underpinnings of the State’s provision for our most vulnerable, though equally most wonderfully diverse, resilient, and talented young people, offers our citizens an opportunity to reframe both our conversation and our language as we grow in social maturity as a nation.

As an immediate enabling measure however, the Department must demonstrate its understanding of the essential need for senior school leadership provision to enable SEN team development, management, and coordination. SEN departments have become increasingly complex and require the dedicated senior leadership skillset, focus and authority to manage their teams in this context. Adequate allocation of deputy principals to all our schools is necessary to achieve this aim.

JMB has repeatedly asserted the need for dedicated special needs coordination, planning, tracking, consultation, communication, and reporting in every school, and this position is supported by the NCSE.

Our contention is that the systems-level knowledge, authority, and agency at school level can best be mediated by a deputy principal rather than a dispersed allocation of SENCO

hours, or undefined posts of responsibility. We will continue to make this case on behalf of our schools and look forward to engaging with the new Minister on this critical investment.

Activities

- Liaison and consultations with NCSE and the Department on the rollout of special classes
- Advice and support for schools establishing special classes
- Consultation with Special Education Section on SET allocations processes
- Ongoing communication with NCSE and the Department across the three PP sectors, via the Management Representative Group
- JMB representation on the NCSE National Council and its Consultative Forum
- JMB representation on the EPSSEN Review Working Group
- Engagement between our JMB National SEN Advisory Group and a range of policymakers
- Sector-wide data gathering from schools to inform policy stances on SNA allocation and deployment
- JMB representation and activity across all streams of the Department's SNA Workforce Development Plan
- Liaison with SEC on developments relating to RACE supports
- Close monitoring of the Assessment of Need process in post primary schools
- Ongoing policy-practice discussions with our JMB National SEN Advisory Group

5. Developing and Expanding the DEIS Programme

We welcome the commitments in the new Programme for Government to 'Establish a new DEIS Plus Scheme to support schools with the highest level of educational disadvantage to improve educational outcomes, particularly in literacy and numeracy', and to 'Expand the Home School Liaison Coordinator Scheme with new posts for schools demonstrating high need'. While lacking in detail, the direction of travel is positive and aligns with the case we at JMB have been making for years in terms of tapered provision for non-DEIS schools with high numbers of students from socially and economically challenged communities.

As a more immediate measure however, JMB is calling on the Department to provide for enhanced deputy principal allocations with a differential ratio allowing for whole, not

fraction, of DPs in schools within the DEIS Programme of over 150 students.

The impact of policy and initiative overload on schools within the DEIS programme is but one of a number of challenges facing school management in such settings. What is far more concerning is the effect of higher levels of student behavioural challenges due to emotional, social, and cognitive-capacity issues which erode the time and energies of the DEIS school leader, and particularly in relation to unsatisfactory student attendance patterns.

Activities

- Advocacy for enhancement of senior management resources in DEIS schools
- Advocating for the provision of parallel supports for schools not in the programme

but with significant number of students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds

- Annual JMB DEIS seminars with presentations on policy, practice, and programmes
- Sharing of good practice on social inclusion initiatives amongst JMB schools
- Ongoing and frequent meetings with TUSLA, DE Social Inclusion Unit on specific programmes, such as SCP and HSCL, within the DEIS programme

- Consultation on the process to identify new schools for inclusion in the programme
- Research on key support needs of DEIS schools to inform submissions
- Engagement of the JMB National DEIS Advisory Group with key policymakers and developments

6. Technological Expansion in Schools

As they look to the creation, storage, and transmission of new Leaving Certificate additional assessment components; increasing demands for assistive technologies; almost fully electronic administration; new pedagogies, and a raft of other ICT non-negotiables, principals and their school communities cannot help but reflect on the recent failure of the Department to issue the annual grant funding under the Digital Strategy for Schools.

The core technology demands on schools require a stable and predictable resource-base on which to build. A successful school-system partnership will be characterised by key tasks including:

1. **Invest:** Put relevant and adequate technologies in place. This must be centrally funded but spending locally determined
2. **Facilitate:** Provide every school with time for ICT coordination tasks
3. **Motivate:** Empower teachers. This must also be resourced in terms of digital champions and teacher-release
4. **Plan:** Locate the school on a continuum of

digital maturity and set jointly developed, achievable targets for progression

5. **Focus:** Begin to consider how technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, can be successfully integrated into the emerging Framework for Senior Cycle
6. **Monitor and Evaluate:** Celebrate successes and address deficiencies

Our investment must therefore concentrate on ensuring schools' technologies are trustworthy and well-maintained. The Minister and Department must now future-proof multi-annual digital grants to schools and not leave students' life-chances to the lottery of their school's or their family's financial capacity or, indeed, the vagaries of budgetary pressures within and across government departments.

Activities:

- Consultations on curricular developments in newly developing subjects, digital studies, and applications
- Engagement around the emerging impact of artificial intelligence in schools
- Engagement with SEC on technological developments

- Data protection updates relating to IT in schools
- Close liaison with Oide: Technology in Education on a range of developments
- Participation on consultation structures

relating to the development of the current National Digital Strategy for Schools

- Meetings with key IT providers to schools
- Ongoing policy-practice dialogue with our JMB National ICT Advisory Group

7. Teaching Council

The Council has 37 members, and 22 of these are registered teachers, 16 of whom are elected by teachers.

The membership is comprised of:

- 11 registered primary teachers, nine of whom are elected by registered teachers and two of whom are teacher union nominees
- 2 nominated by specified higher education institutions (HEIs)
- 5 nominated by the Minister for Education, including one representing each of IBEC and ICTU

- 2 nominated by colleges of education
- 11 post-primary teachers, seven of whom are elected by registered teachers and four of whom are teacher union nominees
- 4 nominated by school management organisations (two primary and two post-primary)
- 2 nominated by national parent organisation

JMB acts as one of two nominees of the Post Primary Management Bodies on the Teaching Council for the period 2022-2026.

Teaching Council Strategic Plan 2022 to 2027:

With the largest professional register in the country, the Teaching Council now has **122,743** teachers (50,066 at Post primary level) on the Register of Teachers an increase of 4,311 teachers on the same period 2022-2023. 7,755 new registrants entered the register in that period.

A total of **6,873** teachers engaged in Droichead, the Council's integrated induction framework for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs).

The Teaching Council also advanced its national review of the Droichead framework to ensure it meets the evolving needs of the profession. 49 career fairs attended across Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The Teaching Council, as the relevant organisation for the vetting of teachers,

vetted **48,145 teachers** for initial registration, registration renewal and employment purposes.

To facilitate its work, the Teaching Council has established several committees, groups and panels. These include the following:

■ Executive Committee

The EC facilitates the efficient and effective functioning of the Council by conducting the business of the Council between Council meetings.

It has delegated functions from Council with regard to Council making complaints or applying to the High Court for interim suspension Orders, in relation to registered teachers.

During the reporting year, this Committee decided that the Council should make thirteen complaints under Section 42(1) of the Act.

The Executive Committee also decided, under Section 47 of the Act, that Council should apply to the High Court, in the public interest, for an Order to suspend the registration of 3 registered teachers, for a specified period, during the reporting year.

■ Investigation Committee

85 Complaints were before the Investigating Committee between March 2023 – March 2024.

58 new 'Fitness to Teach' complaints were received by the Council over the reporting period. (27 related to post-primary registrants)

■ Disciplinary Committee

9 Fitness to Teach' inquiries were completed in the period.

3 sanction decisions confirmed by the High Court (all were removals from the Register).

■ Registration Committee

7,755 new registrants added to the Register

■ Education Committee

› Céim: Initial Teacher Education (Céim) - Teaching Council

52 programmes have been reviewed across 14 HEIs since November 2021

› Droichead: 6,873 teachers engaged in Droichead.

› Cosán Professional Learning: (Cosán)

20 research projects were funded.

49 career fairs attended across Ireland and Northern Ireland.

■ Finance Committee

The Teaching Council's expenditure in the 2023 financial year was €9.67million, an increase of €1.11million compared to 2022. This was driven by higher staff costs along with increased legal, research, and maintenance expenditure.

■ Audit and Risk Committee

The Teaching Council has a risk management policy and framework in place which is reviewed regularly. This document supports the ongoing identification, assessment, monitoring, management, and review of risks and was developed with reference to the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, 2016 and other published guidance on risk management in the public sector. The Council's Audit and Risk Committee met nine times between March 2023 and March 2024 and reported to the Council at each meeting.

■ Evidence of Character Panel

The Council's Evidence of Character Panel assesses the evidence of character of applicants seeking to register as teachers with the Council. The Committee, which consists of seven members, met on 13 occasions during the year.

■ Qualifications Panel

The Qualifications Panel assesses the professional qualifications of applicants seeking to register as teachers. The Committee, which consists of 7 members, met on 12 occasions during the year.

Key Teaching Council Initiatives 2023-2024

Section 37 (Employer's notifications) Regulations took effect on 11th May 2023. The Regulations oblige employers to provide particular information to the Teaching Council, as soon as practicable, in a defined set of circumstances:

S.37 Notification Process:

1. Employers are required to notify the Teaching Council if dismissal occurs
2. If teacher resigns after complaint is made about them at school level or after school procedures are invoked Employer must notify Council
3. Employers should take their own legal advice, if unsure of obligations in a given case
4. Employer contacts the Teaching Council by email, phone, or post to say that they have a Section 37 notification to make
5. Link provided to a unique dedicated folder containing copy legislation, blank S.37 Notification Form & I.T. guide re upload
6. Employer completes S.37 Form and uploads all documents

Other Activities:

- Teacher Supply Implementation Groups
- Department of Education's response to the Ukrainian crisis
- Stakeholder events as part of the current Periodic Critical Review of the Teaching Council³

Date for your Diary!

This year, our JMB Education Conference is themed:

Moving Beyond 'Special':
Community • Co-Creating • Celebrating

and will take place on

Friday 19th September 2025 at the Croke Park Conference Centre.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Colm Keher
Catherine Moynihan
Michael Redmond

JMB Research & Development Unit

³ Teaching-Council-2023-2024-Annual-Report-English.pdf

School Management Advisory Report



School Management Advisory Report

AMCSS/JMB 38th Annual Conference 2025

Role

The work of the School Management Advisory Team falls into three broad areas: advisory work on the wide range of issues which present in the day-to-day management of schools, training and professional development and representative work. We also feed into the regular bulletins which issue from the JMB. The School Management Advisory Team includes Bríd de Brun, Raymond McHugh, Paul Cahill, Caroline O'Reilly and Christine West.

Advisory Work

Throughout the course of the 2024/25 school year, the team dealt with a large volume of queries from Principals, Deputy Principals and Chairpersons by phone and email. We met with Principals, Deputy Principals and Chairpersons by Zoom and in person. The queries were wide ranging, including the following:

- Admissions of students to 1st year, special classes and other years
- Reviews by boards of management of decisions to refuse admission
- Section 29 appeals arising out of refusals to enrol and the withdrawal of places
- Procedures relating to the suspension and expulsion of students
- Section 29 appeals in relation to suspensions and expulsions
- Guardianship and custody matters
- Complaints of parents and students aged 18 and over
- Complaints to the Ombudsman for Children
- Anti-bullying procedures for students
- Child protection
- Recruitment of teachers, SNAs and ancillary staff
- Appointments to posts of responsibility, Principal and Deputy Principal and appeals arising from same
- Allocations
- Curriculum planning and timetabling
- Contracts for teachers, SNAs and ancillary staff
- CID entitlements of teachers, including attending at adjudication hearings
- Employment of SNAs
- Leave entitlements of teachers, SNA and ancillary staff
- Referrals to Occupational Health
- Applications under the Critical Illness Provisions
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures for teachers, SNAs and ancillary staff

- Negotiating terms and conditions of employment of ancillary staff
- Complaints of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment
- Protected Disclosures
- School books scheme

Training

Training is a core activity of the SMA team. We are always looking to build on the training provided, both through its refinement and the identification of new areas. We seek feedback from attendees and review the training provided on a regular basis for this purpose. JMB's training for newly appointed Principals and Deputy Principals has been endorsed by Oide.

Professional Development of Newly Appointed Principals and Deputy Principals

Training for newly appointed Principals and Deputy Principals is long established with sessions taking place over a number of days in June, September and November each year. The training provides a great opportunity for new appointees to meet and to network with other new appointees. It also gives an opportunity for newly appointed Principals and Deputy Principals to meet with the SMA team and the wider JMB staff. In January 2025, we repeated the session for newly appointed principals which we had introduced in the previous year, which focussed on allocations, curriculum planning, timetabling and the recruitment of teachers.

We look forward to Phase 1 of training for newly appointed Principals and Deputy Principals in June 2025.

Allocations and Circular 0064/2024 The operation/application and deployment of Special Education Teacher resources

The annual national training on Allocations continued this year and we were delighted to be able to deliver sessions in person at eight venues in Dublin, Athlone, Galway, Sligo, Kilkenny, Cork and Limerick in February and early March. The session on Allocations provided an overview of the allocations process, including how the allocation for each school is calculated, guidance on completing the returns for the Department of Education, sequencing, before finishing up with worked examples of eligibility for CIDs. We are very grateful to Gabriel Martin, Assistant Principal Officer, Teacher Allocations Section, and to his colleague Kevin Kenny for making themselves available to attend the sessions and to meet with Principals throughout the day.

In the afternoon session, Patrick Kelly, Specialist Lead Post Primary Education and Curriculum, NCSE, presented on Circular 0064/2024 The operation/application and deployment of Special Education Teacher resources and the Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools. The presentation was followed by a Q&A session.

An additional and important benefit of delivering the training in person is the opportunity it presents for the SMA team to engage with Principals, Deputy Principals and Chairpersons of Board of Management on queries relating directly to the training as well as any other matters.

School Management Advisory Report

Education Law Day

The JMB hosted the Education Law Day on 2 December 2024 in partnership with Mason Hayes & Curran. The feedback was extremely positive. We would like to thank, Catherine Kelly, Lorcan Maule, Aine Haberlin and Ciaran Doyle for sharing their expertise with us. We plan to hold a similar day in early December 2025.

Board of Management Training

We are actively involved in the training provided by JMB and members of the SMA team delivered training in person to new boards of management at venues in Dublin, Athlone Cork, Kilkenny, Galway, Limerick, Dundalk and Sligo in November 2024.

Representative Work on behalf of JMB

We engage with the Department of Education, the other management bodies and the ASTI, TUI and FÓRSA on policy and matters concerning the management of schools. Throughout the year, we attended at meetings, including the Interpretation Sub-Committee of the Teachers Conciliation Council on disciplinary appeals and Croke Park hours, the Payroll Technical Subcommittee, review and consolidation of CL 0003/2018, appeals in relation to appointments of Principal and Deputy Principal, the Incremental Credit Group, the Incremental Credit Appeals Committee, Junior Cycle Reform, SPHE, Teacher Supply, Senior Cycle, the Steering Committee for review of the Guidelines on Developing a Code of Behaviour, the SNA HR/IR Forum and the SNA Workforce Development Plan.

Redeployment

The Pilot Voluntary Redeployment Scheme for 2025 is available to permanent/CID teachers who are employed in a post primary school:

- In counties Kerry, Limerick, and Tipperary for those who wish to be considered for redeployment to a school in any location.
- Outside of Dublin and who wish to be considered for redeployment to a school in Dublin.

Redeployment Statistics 2024

	Requested
Reviews	0
Appeals	0
Ward - Invalid applications	1

Applications Processed

	Compulsory	Voluntary Accepted	Total Redeployed	Voluntary Refused
Surplus	0	0	0	0
Ward CIDs	4	1	5	0
Pilot	0	6	6	2
Total	4	7	11	2

Pilots - Total applications	55
Pilots - received offers	8

Includes 7 applications to redeploy to Dublin - 4 accepted offers

From To	Secondary	C&C	ETB	Total
Secondary	7	0	2	9
C & C	0	1	0	1
ETB	0	0	1	1
Total	7	1	3	11

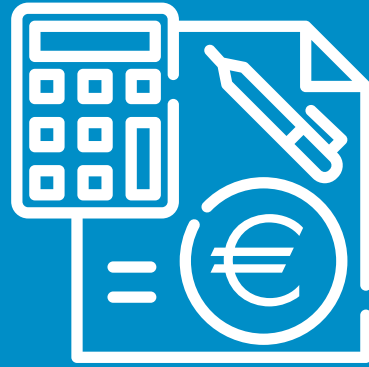
Schools that had not previously received a redeployed teacher

Secondary	1
C & C	0
ETB	2
Total	3

Ready to help and advise

The SMA team is ready to help and advise on all queries arising in our schools. Please contact us, no matter how big or small your query is.

Christine West, on behalf of the SMA team.
April 2025



Financial Services Support Unit (FSSU) Report

Financial Services Support Unit (FSSU) Report

AMCSS/JMB 38th Annual Conference 2025

Executive Summary

The Financial Support Services Unit was established under Department of Education & Skills circular M36/05. In the school year 2018/2019, the Department expanded the remit of the unit to include the Primary (DES Circular 60/2017) and Community & Comprehensive (DES Circular 02/2018) sectors. Objectives for the FSSU were set out in these circulars. This report outlines the founding objectives of the unit and the activities undertaken by the unit over the past year to adhere to and reach these objectives.

1. Provision of advice and support to schools on financial governance matters including compliance with the requirements of the circulars:

The unit issued the following Financial Guidelines to support school management in good financial practice:

- Revenue Enhanced Reporting Requirements (ERR)
- Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC)
- Science Implementation Grant in the Free Education Scheme
- Government Budget Summary 2025
- Public Holidays 2025
- Cost of Living Grant 2024/2025
- Determining Employment Status for Taxation Purposes including Part-Time Lecturers/ Teachers/Trainers
- Revised Rates of Pay for Bus Escorts
- Solar Panels & Microgeneration Payments
- Charities Regulator Requirements for Schools
- School Tours – Complying with Regulations & Requirements
- Repeat of Leaving Certificate Course Fees
- Update to FSSU Chart of Accounts – Sept. 24
- External Accountants/Auditors Guideline 2024
- Financial Year End 2023/2024 in Sage
- Accounting for Junior Cycle Schoolbooks Scheme 24/25

- Annual VAT Return of Trading Details (RTD)
- Important Dates for the School Year 24/25
- Payments to Selection Committee Members
- Travel and Subsistence Expenses – VSS
- ICT Grant 2023/2024
- VAT Compensation Scheme for Charities
- Payments to Exam Personnel 2024
- Accounting for JC Schoolbooks Scheme Grant
- VSS School Grants 2024/2025

A Financial Update and School Budget 2025/2026 webinar was held in March 2025 to help school management to develop a budget, ensuring good financial management.

The Unit produced a Financial Internal Controls Manual which covers all aspects of financial governance and provides useful sample policies and templates.

Working with the Department of Social Protection, a webinar for boards of management was held in February 2025 providing boards with information on their obligations for auto enrolment.

2. Development of templates for use by schools in relation to financial matters, including a standardised national template for annual school accounts

The unit has devised budget templates, board of management reporting templates and practical sample forms and spreadsheets. These templates are consistently revised to enhance effectiveness.

The monthly template reports tie into the year-end reporting format.

3. Acting as a central repository for receipt of annual school accounts prepared by an external accountant/auditor registered with a recognised accountancy body in the State.

The unit has developed an online secure cloud system for the submission of school financial data. This data is uploaded by the school's external financial accountant/auditor. This allows the unit to receive timely, accurate data that allows comparisons and research. The online submission incorporates the ability to fulfil the financial obligations of the board to the Central Statistics Office and the requirements of the Charities Regulator.

4. Carrying out such audits as may be required.

A number of requests have been received from the Department of Education to carry out audits on specific areas of concern in schools.

5. Preparation of an annual report for the Department.

An annual report is prepared and submitted to the Department of Education.

6. Liaison with the Department in relation to financial matters pertaining to schools.

When issues of a financial nature arise that affect schools, the unit will liaise with the Department on behalf of the schools.

The unit continues to provide advice and support to our schools through the following mechanisms:

- A. Financial Internal Controls Review
- B. Telephone and online support from the unit on all aspects of financial management
- C. Free support on the computerised accounts package, Sage 50, is available to all voluntary secondary schools
- D. One-to-one training for new principals, boards of management and finance committees

Louise McNamara, Director,
Financial Support Services Unit
March 2025

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Schools Procurement Unit (SPU) Report

Schools Procurement Unit (SPU) Report

AMCSS/JMB 38th Annual Conference 2025

Annual Report on Operational Activities in 2024

Introduction

2024 brought further change and renewal, and the new and expanded SPU team is as committed as ever in its dedication and endeavour to deliver the best service possible to our client schools. It is a tribute to the commitment and endeavour of the individual SPU team members that the year-on-year progress across all areas of activity has been continued across 2024. For this I wish to acknowledge the considerable effort of the team and thank them for these increases in service delivery to our client schools.

Summary

The Schools Procurement Unit delivers a free professional advice and practical support service to almost 3800 schools, to help them achieve improvements in their procurement processes, practices and outcomes.

Fundamental to the role played by the SPU is improving access for schools to the centralised procurement model. The stated ambition remains to change the behaviour at school level from sourcing, to ordering their requirements from pre-appointed suppliers. What remains clear, however, is that a considerable amount of procurement activity and effort is still taking place at the level of individual schools, because central arrangements which service specific school requirements remain at a deficit. To that end, SPU has been involved in several cross-sectoral procurement initiatives, covering schoolbooks, ICT, School MIS, school furniture, and mobile phone pouches. The extension of the Department of Social Protection's School Meals Scheme continues to be a considerable call on the resources of the SPU, and this will continue in 2025. SPU will continue to work with stakeholders, and, through the Education Procurement Project Board, to identify and advance further procurement initiatives on behalf of the sector.

SPU 2024 Statistics

A total 15657 activities are recorded in the CRM for Q1 – Q4 in 2024. This figure reflects all activities (excluding internal comms) across a total of 53 different categories, including team interaction with stakeholders and resultant team outputs.

The top 10 categories consolidated in the table below, account for 11 568 of the overall figure for recorded activities, and represents almost 74% of all activities during this period.

Table 1 - Summary of Top 10 Activities by (combined) Category

All Activity (Emails & Documents) 2024	Total
School Meals Scheme	3787
School Books Scheme	2368
Utilities Electricity	1370
T4 Equipment	968
Utilities Natural Gas	616
OGP/eTenders	598
ICT (all)	581
Department of Education	479
Science Laboratory Equipment	421
Loose Furniture	380
Total	11568

Table 2 - School-based Procurement Projects (RFQ/RFT) initiated in 2024

All Projects 2024	CFT	RFQ	Negotiated Procedure	Total
School Meals Scheme	107	11	7	125
T4 Subjects	22	4		26
Science Laboratory Equipment	13			13
Physical Education	8	3		11
Loose Furniture	6	3		9
Art/Craft	1	6		7
Catering Services	5		1	6
ICT Hardware	2	3		5
Home Economics		5		5
School Books Scheme	4			4
Music/Drama		4		4
Dress Design		2		2
Works (Minor/Emergency/Summer)	2			2
Cleaning Services	1			1
Cleaners' Store		1		1
General Office Administration				1
Facilities Management & Maintenance	1			1
Learning Support		1		1
Printing		1		1
Kitchenette				1
Total	172	44	8	224

Schools Procurement Unit (SPU) Report

Commentary

Table 1 demonstrates strong ongoing interest in the core services that SPU provides and highlights those areas of procurement focus which have been particularly active within schools in 2024. This overall figure represents an increase of almost 37% on the 2023 total for all SPU activities. The impact of the expansion of the School Meals Scheme and providing close support for the junior cycle schoolbook scheme is evident in these figures. Table 2 represents SPU core business activities, projects which have already had considerable consultation input from SPU personnel, from the provision of document templates, advice provision, document review and assistance with e-tenders to providing guidance with the evaluation process. Many of these projects, depending on contract value and category of procurement activity, have a high level of complexity which necessitates commensurate high levels of SPU resource commitment.

Other activities in 2024

- Continuous refining of the service delivery model.
- Developed new suite of tender templates for School Meals Scheme to simplify the process for schools.
- Further developed and maintained indicative pricing lists based on the Department's post-primary equipment lists.
- A series of Webinars/Workshops/Drop-in Clinics in support of the Junior Cycle Schoolbook Scheme
- Daily support of the Level 1 Team for the Junior Cycle Schoolbook Scheme
- Primary/Post-Primary Classroom Furniture procurement project participation
- Many meetings reflecting membership of Schoolbook DPS Steering Committee and Implementation Team.
- A series of meetings reflecting membership of Mobile Phone Security Pouches Project Team.
- Averaging 40 individual MS Teams consultations per week across all of 2024.

Events / Stakeholder engagement in 2024

- Presentation to JMB-member Schools – January 2024
- Presentation on the JC Schoolbook Scheme and Procurement Clinic for JMB member schools - JMB annual conference, May 2024
- Introductory presentation to the SPU for newly appointed JMB Principals and Deputies – November 2024.

Conclusion

2024 was a particularly strong year for the SPU. As the SPU continues to grow its client support base, it must continue to evolve to meet with school needs. The focus must always be on the unit being properly resourced to best serve its client schools.

Ronan Farrell

Director

Schools Procurement Unit

February 2025

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Data Protection Report

Data Protection Report

AMCSS/JMB 37th Annual Conference 2025

JMB support to schools is provided through the services of a Data Protection Advisor. Advice on data protection issues is accessible through telephone and email. In addition JMB issues policy templates and bulletins to schools.

Issues arising

A broad range of data protection queries continues to be referred to JMB. The management of Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs) continues to be the most frequent issue prompting schools to seek advice.

Other referral issues include:

- Management of personal data breaches
- CCTV
- Dealing with data sharing requests from law enforcement bodies
- Data sharing with other controllers (other schools, colleges, DE, HSE, etc)
- Appropriate retention periods and erasure of personal data
- Use of school Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Sharing data with Parents' and Past Pupils' Associations
- Third Party Contracts
- Guidance on processing of Special Category Data (counselling, health data, SEN etc)
- Processing of personal data for school events (school reunions etc)
- Technical and Organisational Measures for data security

JMB Policy on CCTV in Schools

Schools are expected to have an up to date CCTV policy in place and with this in mind, a new JMB template policy was issued in January 2025. This template addresses important aspects of the deployment of CCTV in a schools environment including: (i) purposes & legal basis for use (ii) management & controls (iii) transparency & signage (iv) working with a security company (v) requests for disclosure & data subject rights. While there is no requirement that schools utilise the JMB template, it is highly recommended that they benchmark their current CCTV policy against the template to maximise compliance.

Artificial Intelligence

The usage of AI within education is raising an increasing numbers of ethical and data protection questions. JMB recommends that users are risk averse with regard to sharing any school data, particularly so when using "free" AI tools which often harvest and reuse any data input for their own purposes. Schools are referred to the [Oide Guidance on AI for Schools](#) as well as the [Webwise AI hub](#). The European Commission's *Ethical guidelines on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and data*

in teaching and learning for Educators highlight considerations such as risk management, the training and testing data of the AI system and data governance, provision of technical documentation, recordkeeping, transparency and provision of information to users, human oversight, and robustness, accuracy and cybersecurity.

Data Protection Toolkit for Schools

In December 2024, the Data Protection Commission (DPC) published a new guidance document for schools on different aspects of data protection. During the preparation of this guidance, the JMB was invited to meet with the DPC to highlight the specific concerns and challenges faced by schools. JMB recommends that educational users familiarise themselves with the contents of the Data Protection Toolkit which is an excellent resource for schools. As well as providing detailed guidance on the different aspects of data protection law that are most relevant to schools, the DPC Toolkit also incorporates:

- An FAQ section containing answers to questions commonly received by the DPC from the education sector
- An appendix containing three helpful resources for schools, namely:
 - A sample template for Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)
 - An infographic on what information to include in a Privacy Policy
 - A “checklist” for schools on how to respond to a Subject Access Request (SAR).

Other engagements

New statutory regulations introduced this year provide an appropriate lawful basis for the sharing of personal data between schools and the HSE. The JMB welcomes the clarity that these changes have brought to the operation of the annual in-school vaccination programmes that take place annually under the aegis of the HSE School Health Programme.

As always, this past year has seen significant consultation and input with the Department of Education with regard to a number of issues that have a data protection dimension. The JMB will continue to proactively engage with other stakeholders when it believes that this engagement will be of benefit to our member schools.

Data Protection Training

The JMB’s Data Protection Advisor is available to deliver GDPR training to schools. This training most frequently takes the form of a one hour presentation highlighting data protection issues that are relevant to the staff body as a whole, emphasizing particularly the principles of data security, data retention and data minimisation, as well as how to recognise and deal with Data Subject Access Requests and Personal Data Breaches. Other training provided on request to schools has addressed the specific GDPR needs of particular groups such as school administration staff, and senior management teams.

Cyril Drury
(JMB Data Protection Advisor)
April 2025

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Building Advisory Report

Building Advisory Report

AMCSS/JMB 38th Annual Conference 2025

The JMB School Building Projects Advisory Service was set up in June 2014. The principal aim of the service is to provide a support for principals and boards of management in meeting the practical challenges surrounding building projects.

A great number of schools have accessed the service over the past ten years, many of them on multiple occasions.

Expansion of the Service

Such as been the expansion of the advisory service, the Department of Education agreed in late 2021 to fund its expansion by supporting JMB with the appointment of two School Building Officers. Mr Tom Shannon and Mr Michael Cregan duly joined the service in April 2022. In November 2024, the Department agreed to fund two further Building Officers and in January 2025, Mr Mike O'Hara and Mr Rory Hoban joined the team.

The service was originally intended to support voluntary secondary schools but is now offered to primary schools also.

The service includes the following:

1. Supporting schools with the appointment of design teams

- On behalf of boards of management, advertising consultancies on e-Tenders
- Supporting schools in the assessment of tenders
- Drafting the formal appointment documentation
- Preparing for and facilitating the initial meetings of new design teams with clients
- Working with school boards of management and Department officials, facilitating the progress of projects through the design process, dealing with issues and delays as they arise
- Since 2019, JMB, at the request of the Department of Education, has been assisting the boards of management of 126 secondary schools and 260 primary schools with the appointment of full design teams for Additional Accommodation and major capital projects. This assistance to schools now forms a significant part of the service's work.

- The provision of SEN accommodation has been a priority for the Department of Education during the past two years. The JMB supports schools where (a) where existing accommodation is being re-purposed, (b) a full SEN Base is approved and (c) to a lesser extend where modular accommodation is being provided.
- JMB is acting as *Project Executive* for two major capital projects. We are responsible for the progression of the projects through the design stages and for the financial administration of the projects. Both projects are progressing well. In addition, JMB is actively supporting four other major projects where the local board of management is the client.
- In addition, JMB continues to informally assist many schools that have been approved for additional accommodation valued at less than €1 million (Type 1 projects).
- The JMB Service has also been involved at the request of the Department of Education in resolving difficulties that have arisen in a number of projects either at design or construction stage.

2. School visits and advising on the possibilities for future development

The needs of schools differ. The visits are aimed at assisting school management identify the physical needs of the school, often in the context of a review of its curricular provision.

3. Emergency Works:

JMB continues to assist schools with applications for the Emergency Works scheme.

4. Summer Works Scheme 2019 – 2022 and the new Climate Action Summer Works Scheme 2025-6

During the past year, JMB has assisted schools with a small number of Summer Works projects which were approved under the 2019-2022 scheme. A new Climate Action Summer Works Scheme was announced in March 2025 and the JMB will be assisting school Boards in the implementation of the new scheme.

5. PE Halls and Retrofit Programme

Five years ago, JMB welcomed the commitment of Government in the National Development Plan to a '*PE build and modernisation programme*'. This PE Hall programme was further promised in "Project Ireland" and in the 2024 Programme for Government. JMB continues to lobby for the rollout of a programme which will give access to proper Physical Education facilities to all our students. Similarly, JMB continues to press for a nationwide retrofit programme for all our schools.

6. Collaboration with the School Building Unit

Meetings with senior officials continued during the year with meetings now held every quarter. Informal contact continues on a weekly basis with officials in the Schools Capital Appraisal Section, the Devolved Section and the School Remediation Section. This ongoing dialogue is greatly appreciated by the JMB.

7. Finally

It has been a pleasure to assist so many of our schools over the past year. The commitment and dedication of school management to modernise their school buildings for the benefit of their students and staff is to be highly commended. We wish to acknowledge the support of our General Secretary, Mrs Deirdre Matthews, and also that of the President and Council, the board of the Secretariat and the staff of Emmet House.

Michael Cregan

Tom Shannon

Rory Hoban

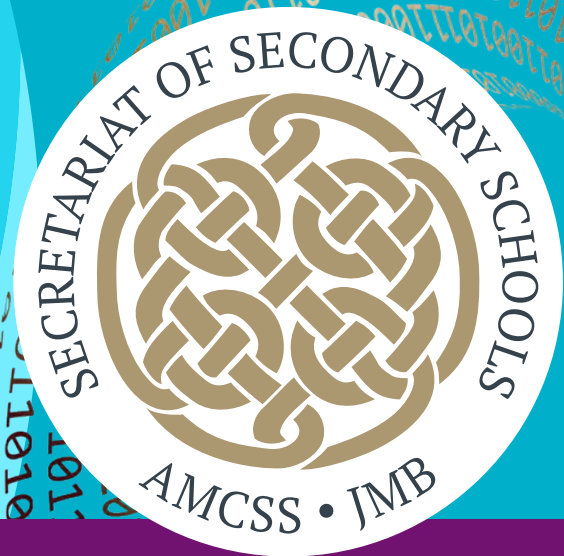
Mike O'Hara

Noel Merrick

April 2025

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Corporate Services Report

Corporate Services Report

AMCSS/JMB 38th Annual Conference 2025

The Corporate Services division is dedicated to ensuring the smooth operation and ongoing development of the organisation. This includes supporting the implementation of the Strategic Development Plan 2022-2025, overseeing organisational administration, managing human resources, leading the development of the AMCSS regional structure and supporting the work of the Board of Directors in achieving good governance.

Strategic Development Plan 2022- 2025

The Secretariat of Secondary Schools (SSS) is committed to providing high quality professional learning opportunities for school leaders and boards of management. Ninety-six newly appointed school leaders attended the professional learning programme provided by the JMB this year. Oide which supports the design, development and delivery of quality professional learning for school leaders has recently endorsed the JMB professional learning programme for newly appointed deputy principals. Information about the programme is now hosted on the Oide website. The programme of professional learning for newly appointed principals was endorsed by Oide in 2023.

Thirty-five principals were appointed in the voluntary secondary sector since the beginning of the academic year 2024/2025. Cross team collaboration allowed the JMB to provide an on-site support visit for all newly appointed principals. These visits were warmly received by newly appointed principals who engaged in professional learning conversations on a wide range of

issues including work-life balance, teacher allocation, deployment of staff, student recruitment, GDPR, health & safety, school buildings, staff relations, developing middle leadership teams, child protection, student councils, parent councils, anti-bullying and curriculum review. The initiative was supported by all advisors, and feedback is extremely positive.

Administration and HR

The administration and human resources functions play a crucial role in supporting our highly skilled and committed staff to deliver the best quality service to school leaders and boards of management. We continually strive to improve practices and work to ensure employee satisfaction and development. Effective recruitment procedures have been implemented, resulting in the successful hiring of an Assistant General Secretary, two building advisors, and two accounting technicians this year. The organisation is committed to providing professional learning opportunities for staff, who have engaged in various programmes in areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Education Law, and hybrid/remote working. Additionally, the

organisation continues to enhance efficiency through the greater use of digital tools and platforms including the vetting portal.

Development of the AMCSS regional structure

The development of the AMCSS regional structure is a key objective identified in the Strategic Development Plan 2022 – 2025. During the November Council meeting, a regional section was launched on the members' area of the JMB website. This area provides resources to support the ten AMCSS regions and the ISA. Throughout the year, members of the executive staff have attended regional meetings as requested.

The practice of providing updates on regional issues at JMB Council meetings has become well established. This demonstrates the commitment of the executive to maintaining a comprehensive understanding of regional concerns and it furnishes evidence for advocacy work carried out by the JMB. Through the provision of regular and comprehensive updates on regional issues, the executive promotes transparency, accountability and responsiveness thereby fostering stronger connections with the regions and ultimately improving overall effectiveness.

Governance

The SSS benefits from a dedicated and diligent board of directors who fulfil their obligations and responsibilities in accordance with the Constitution and Internal Regulations of SSS, the Code of Governance published by the Charities Regulatory Authority

(CRA), relevant best practice guidelines and legislation. Executive support is provided to the Board of Directors by the Assistant General Secretary (Corporate Services). Meetings of the Board of Directors took place on:

7th June 2024
16th August 2024
23rd September 2024
11th November 2024
13th January 2025
3rd March 2025
3rd April 2025

A commitment to excellence in corporate governance is evident in the way the board conducts its business. During the year the board engaged in a process of evaluation in compliance with Standard 5.9 of the Charities Governance Code (2018). The effectiveness of the board as a whole was considered together with the work of office holders and individual charity trustees. A handbook for directors was developed and approved by the board. A Compliance Report required by the CRA was prepared and areas requiring further development were identified under each of the six principles: Achieving Charitable Purpose; Behaving with Integrity; Leading People; Exercising Control; Working Effectively and Being Accountable.

Throughout the year the company continued to operate strong financial management policies and procedures governing income and expenditure. An Internal Financial Controls Audit was conducted as per the CRA Guidelines for Charities.

The Corporate Services Team is committed to maintaining a culture of continuous

improvement enabling us to achieve the objectives and goals identified in the Strategic Development Plan 2022 – 2025. Collaboration, consultation, communication and ongoing engagement with school leaders and boards of management will remain at the heart of everything we do at the Secretariat of Secondary Schools as we commit to delivering a highly effective service for our school leaders and boards of management.

April 2025



Child Protection and Garda Vetting Report

Child Protection and Garda Vetting Report

AMCSS/JMB 38th Annual Conference 2025

Child Protection and Safeguarding

The most recent Child Protection Procedures published by the Department of Education are the *Child Protection Procedures for primary and post-primary schools 2023*. The department continues to work to update the procedures and a considerably expanded and updated document is expected to be published in the final term of the current school year, with an implementation date of September 2026.

It is expected that among the topics addressed in the new document will be:

- The roles of DLP and DDLP
- Dealing with retrospective abuse allegations
- Detailed guidelines on reporting concerns to Tusla
- Recruitment procedures
- Record keeping
- In the 2025/26 school year, there will be one full day of training facilitated by Oide for all mandated and non-mandated school personnel
- There will also be one full day of training for DLPs and DDLP

JMB is represented on the working group developing the new procedures by Gerry McCaul.

Garda Vetting

In March, after a lengthy and challenging development period, JMB's new online vetting process was rolled out to all our schools and to Education Support Centres. The introduction of the new system is timely, given that the number of vetting applications continues to grow. Especially noticeable is the substantial increase in the numbers of schools vetting host families involved in school exchange visits.

The system provides schools with significantly improved control of vetting applications. It speeds up the process and eliminates the necessity for the use of codes to open vetting disclosures.

The system was developed by ERS, the company which provides IT support to JMB. The design of the system was led in JMB by our administration staff members Cathy Glavey and Jennifer

McManus, supported by Teresa Madden. Their input was invaluable in ensuring that the system meets the needs of schools and is user-friendly for school personnel who deal with vetting in each school.

To this end, the Secretariat recorded a webinar which has been made available to all our principals. The webinar is available in the Members' Area of jmb.ie. A manual has also been developed. This has been circulated to all schools. The manual provides step by step guidance for all school personnel involved in the process, as follows:

- **The School User** (provision for up to 3 school personnel to process vetting applications)
- **The Vetting Applicant/ Vetting Subject**, who uploads the data to the system
- **The School User Review and Approve Vetting Application** (data uploaded by the Vetting Applicant is verified and approved by the School User)
- **The School User Review and Reject Vetting Application** (data reviewed and rejected by the School User)
- **The Principal User.** When JMB uploads disclosures to the school's portal, an email alerts the principal. Only the principal can access and download the disclosure.

In developing the system, it was necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of the National Vetting Bureau and the legal obligations on schools.

The vetting section of jmb.ie has been re-designed to provide guidance to schools and to provide ready access to the supporting documentation. This section also provides guidance to schools on the retention of vetting-related documentation, including retention of vetting disclosures.

The Secretariat staff will support schools as they familiarise themselves with the new system. It is to the credit of school vetting personnel that they have so quickly adopted the new system. The feedback from them has been very positive and is much appreciated by the Secretariat staff.

Jack Cleary,
April 2024

Reporting Period

April 1st 2024 - 31st March 2025



Reporting Period

April 1st 2024 - 31st March 2025

Reporting Period

April 1st 2024 - 31st March 2025

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JMB Bulletins

- Bulletin 30** PRSA for secretaries who are paid through the Department of Education payroll
- Bulletin 31** JC Schoolbook Scheme Procurement Obligations
- Bulletin 32** Updated arrangements re filling posts of responsibility
- Bulletin 33** Online Training – Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment
- Bulletin 34** Composite
1. Redeployment
 2. Termination of Fixed Term Contracts and Recruitment
- Bulletin 35** Composite
1. Further updated arrangements re filling posts of responsibility
 2. Schoolbook Scheme for Junior Cycle in Post Primary Schools
- Bulletin 36** Vacancy at JMB - Assistant General Secretary
- Bulletin 37** How should I brief the newly appointed principal

New School Year 2024-2025

- Bulletin 01** JMB Representatives to NCCA Senior Cycle Development Groups
- Bulletin 02** Career Break and Job-Sharing Scheme
- Bulletin 3** Boards of Management
- Bulletin 4** Composite
1. Croke Park Hours and Circular M58/04 – Teaching Staff
 2. 72 hours and June Working – SNAs

Reporting Period

April 1st 2024 - 31st March 2025

Bulletin 5	Teaching Hours Extension Scheme for 2024/2025
Bulletin 6	Circular 55/2024
Bulletin 07	Composite <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. School Admissions for the 2025/26 School Year2. Senior Cycle SPHE3. Schoolbooks Scheme Survey
Bulletin 08	Recent queries to schools relating to SPHE
Bulletin 09	Circular 0080/2024 New Measures to Support the Forward Planning for Special Education Provision
Bulletin 10	VACANCY - Assistant General Secretary
Bulletin 11	Vacancy - School Buildings Officers
Bulletin 12	Appointment of New Assistant General Secretary - Education Research and Development
Bulletin 13	Code of Behaviour
Bulletin 14	Redeployment and the Seniority List
Bulletin 15	Composite <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The operation/application and deployment of Special Education Teacher resources.2. Bí Cineálta Updates3. Updating School Personnel Details
Bulletin 16	Composite <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. School Building Advisory Service2. State Examinations Commission
Bulletin 17	Behaviours of Concern – Circular and Guidelines
Bulletin 18	Weather Warning
Bulletin 19	Protecting school property during freezing weather conditions
Bulletin 20	Composite <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Job-Sharing2. Career Breaks3. Secondments
Bulletin 21	Status Red Alert: Schools in Status Red Areas to close
Bulletin 22	Status Red Weather Warning - UPDATE

Reporting Period

April 1st 2024 - 31st March 2025

Bulletin 23	Composite <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. New Data Protection Toolkit for Schools2. Template CCTV Policy3. Invitation to provide feedback to the DPC
Bulletin 23	Composite <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. New Data Protection Toolkit for Schools2. Template CCTV Policy3. Invitation to provide feedback to the DPC
Bulletin 24	LCA Amendments to the Social Education LCA Module Descriptor
Bulletin 25	Forward Planning for Special Education Provision – Special Classes
Bulletin 26	New JMB Online Vetting Portal
Bulletin 27	Evaluation of the Promotion of Wellbeing by the Inspectorate
Bulletin 28	Composite <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Post-Primary Guidance - Consultation2. Department of Education – Customer Service Survey
Bulletin 29	Composite <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Oide Training – Leading Senior Cycle Development2. Senior Cycle Pathways/Tranche 4&5 Consultation
Bulletin 30	Review of a Redeployment

AMCSS Information Notes

Information Note 01	Scoping Inquiry
Information Note 02	Responding to Scoping Inquiry
Information Note 03	November resources
Information Note 04	APTCS Board of Management Training Tuesday 21st January 2025 19:00 to 20:00
Information Note 05	APTCS Advert for CEO
Information Note 06	Le Chéile Advert for CEO
Information Note 07	APTCS and Elphin Diocese Annual Gathering

JMB Submissions

- Submission 01** JMB Submission on the Draft Senior Cycle SPHE Specification
- Submission 02** JMB Submission on the Draft Revised Programme Statement for TY
- Submission 03** JMB Joint Submission to the Department of Education on Enhancing School Leadership Capacity
- Submission 04** JMB Submission on the Background Paper and Brief for Development of Senior Cycle Modules
- Submission 05** JMB Submission on the Pilot Scheme for Student Emotional Therapeutic Supports
- Submission 06** JMB Submission on the Review of the EPSEN Act
- Submission 07** JMB Submission on the National Framework for Guidance
- Submission 08** JMB Submission on a New National Strategy on Literacy, Numeracy, and Digital Literacy
- Submission 09** JMB Opening Statement to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Future of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- Submission 10** JMB Opening Statement to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on 'Mental Health Supports in Schools'
- Submission 11** JMB Submission to the NCCA on the Draft Junior Cycle SPHE-RSE Specification
- Submission 12** JMB Submission on the Issue of 'Mental Health Supports in Schools'
- Submission 13** JMB Submission on Transition Year within a Reconfigured Senior Cycle
- Submission 14** JMB Pre-Budget Submission 2024
- Submission 15** JMB Submission to the NCCA on the Background Paper and Brief for Development of Senior Cycle Modules for Students Engaged in L1 and L2 Learning Programmes,
- Submission 16** JMB Opening Statement to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Future of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in Irish Education
- Submission 17** JMB Submission on the Review of the EPSEN Act (2004)
- Submission 18** JMB Submission on the National Framework for Guidance
- Submission 19** Post Primary Management Representative Group Submission to the Minister of Education on the Expansion to Post Primary of the Pilot Scheme for Student Emotional Therapeutic

FSSU Guidelines

Financial Guideline 28	ICT Grant 2023/2024
Financial Guideline 29	Travel and Subsistence Expenses – VSS
Financial Guideline 30	Payment to Selection Committee Members

New School Year 2024-2025

Financial Guideline 01	Important Dates for the School Year 24/25
Financial Guideline 02	Annual VAT Return of Trading Details (RTD)
Financial Guideline 03	Accounting for Junior Cycle Schoolbooks Scheme 24/25
Financial Guideline 04	Financial Year End 2023/2024 in Sage
Financial Guideline 06	External Accountants/Auditors Guideline 2024
Financial Guideline 07	Update to FSSU Chart of Accounts – Sept 24
Financial Guideline 08	Repeat of Leaving Certificate Course Fees
Financial Guideline 09	School Tours - Complying with Regulations & Requirements
Financial Guideline 11	Charities Regulator Requirements for Schools
Financial Guideline 12	Solar Panels & Microgeneration Payments
Financial Guideline 13	Revised Rates of Pay for Bus Escorts
Financial Guideline 15	Determining Employment Status for Taxation Purposes including Part-Time Lecturers/Teachers/Trainers
Financial Guideline 16	Cost of Living Grant 2024/2025
Financial Guideline 17	Public Holidays 2025
Financial Guideline 18	Government Budget Summary 2025
Financial Guideline 20	Science Implementation Grant in the Free Education Scheme
Financial Guideline 21	Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC)
Financial Guideline 22	Revenue Enhanced Reporting Requirements (ERR)
Financial Guideline 24	Approval and Procedures for Use of a School Credit Card
Financial Guideline 25	Travel and Subsistence Expenses
Financial Guideline 26	Payments to Members of Selection Committees
Financial Guideline 30	Revised Rates of Pay for Bus Escorts
Financial Guideline 31	VSS School Grants 2025/26
Financial Guideline 32	Free Schoolbooks Scheme Grant and Administration Support Grant 2025-26
Financial Guideline 33	Electronic Banking