

“Putting Instructional Leadership in Context – The Current and Future Landscape of Irish Education at Post-Primary Level”

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I A Backward Glance

Benchmarking P.P. School Provision,

1966-2016

1966 – “Investment in Education”

Post-Primary Binary:- Sec., Voc.

60% of Sec. Schools less than 150 pupils

73% of Voc. Schools less than 150 pupils

125,214 Pupils enrolled

Pupil Participation

Age Cohort 55,000

Left at Primary 17,5000 (11,000 no Primary Cert)

Left P.P. without Cert. 13,500

18% sat Leaving Cert

.04% went to University

- Poor Economy, Reliance on Agriculture, Protective Trade.

A Changing Society – Changing P.P. Schools, 1966 →

Adoption of Free Trade Policies
Recruitment of Investment from Multinationals
Human Capital Theory – Investment in Education
Nurture the Pool of Talent – “A nation’s wealth is its people.”
Emphasis on Manufacturing, Technology, Service Industries
Importance of Science, Technology, Modern Languages
Curriculum, Assessment Reform
Reforms in Teacher Education
Expansion of varied forms of Post-Primary Education
1967-“Free” P.P. Education : “Free” School Transport.

Post-Primary Schooling, 2016

Plurality of P.P. Schools

345,550 pupils enrolled (non PLC)

Migrant Pupils 12%

Early Leavers 6.8% : EU Average 11.1% (2015)

20-24 year olds 92.7% had attained a L.C. or equivalent

Ireland 3rd highest of EU 28. (2015)

People who have completed upper P.P. School, 2014

	<u>Ireland</u>	<u>EU (21)</u>	<u>OECD</u>
Ireland 25-34 years	86%	84%	82%

II Facing the Future

Schools for the Learning Society in 21st century (1)

- Intelligence in Multi-dimensional
- School is Culturally Heterogeneous
- The Inclusive School
- Focus on Personalised Education
- “Learning to Learn” Motif
- Creativity re Curriculum and Assessment
- Repertoire of Pedagogic Skills
- Extensive use of Technologies
- Teacher Teamwork / Collegiality
- Teachers as Learners – CPD.

Schools for the Learning Society in 21st Century (2)

- More School Autonomy
- School Development Planning
- School Self-Evaluation
- R and D. Projects in Schools
- Leadership Style Collegial
- Leadership Focus on Teaching and Learning
- Links with External Agencies / Partnerships (Co-professional with Inspectorate)
- Schools in Clusters / Networks
- Education is User Influenced.

Irish Policy in line with Good International Practice

- Curriculum Reform and Innovative Practice
- Varied Pedagogy, including ICT
- Efforts at Assessment Reform
- Reform of Initial Teacher Ed.
- Induction and C.P.D. for Staffs
- Staff Teamwork and Collegiality
- Leadership Focus on Teaching and Learning
- School Development Planning
- School Self Evaluation
- Promoting School Networking
- Links with External Partners.

Policy Focus on School Leadership

1992 Green Paper – Chap. 5

1994 Report of National Education Convention –
Chap. 7.

1995 White Paper – Chaps. 10, 11, 12

1998 Education Act – Section 23.

Role of Principal (Part of Ed. Act, 1998)

- Encourage and Foster Learning
- Evaluate Students and Report Thereon
- Manage the School, including guidance and direction of Teachers and other Staff
- Provide Leadership to School Community
- Promote Learning Environment.

Role of Principal (Part of Ed. Act, 1998)

Contd...

- With School Community, Set Objectives for the School and Monitor Achievements
- Involve Parents in Work of School
- Promote Co-operation with Community.

Developing Leadership Courses and Support Structures

- 1990s – Postgrad. Courses in Ed. Management and Leadership
- 1994 In-Career Unit in DES; 2004 → TES
- 1990's Restructuring of Education Centres
- 1998 – NAPD; 2000 – IPPN
- 1999 “School Development Planning Initiative” (SDPI)
- 2002 “ Leadership Development for Schools” (LDS)
- Expansion of Educational Leadership Courses by Univer. (TL 21 etc.)
- 2015 Centre for School Leadership – “Misneach”, Mentors, Placements, Coaching
- 2017 New Postgrad. Prog. In S.L. for Aspiring Principals.

Significance of IPPN and NAPD

“Professional organisations of school leaders provide a forum for dialogue, knowledge sharing and dissemination of best practice both among professionals and between professionals and policy makers”, p. 182.

“In a number of countries school leavers’ professional organisations play a very active role in providing training and development opportunities to professionals. In Ireland, two professional associations have been set up over the past decade to provide advice, support and training for principals” (p. 177)

OECD, Improving School Leadership, 1 (2008)

International Focus on School Leadership

2005 OECD – “Teachers Matter”

2008 OECD – “Improving School Leadership” 2 vols.

2006 EU – “Report on Implementation of Education and Training Work Programme”

2009 EU “Council Conclusions on the Professional Development of Teachers and School Leaders”

2011 ETUCE, “School Leadership”

- Hugh expansion in the Research Literature on School Leadership.

Importance of School Leadership – International Perspective

“School leadership has become a priority in education policy agendas internationally. It plays a key role in improving school outcomes by influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers, as well as the school climate and environment. Effective school leadership is essential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of schooling.”

OECD, Improving School Leadership (2008).

5 Sections – School Leadership Matters; Defining School Leadership Responsibilities; Distributing School Leadership; Developing Skills; Making S.L. an Attractive Profession.

European Policy Network on School Leadership (2011/13), financed by European Commission arising from Commission's view -

- “School leaders have great impact on the quality of teaching and on the overall learning environment, including staff motivation, morale and performance, teaching practices, and the attitudes and aspirations of pupils and parents alike ... School leaders should have sufficient opportunities to develop and maintain effective leadership skills”

2006/C 298/03).

EU Ministers of Ed.---

“Equally important is ensuring that school leaders are not overburdened with administration tasks and concentrate on essential matters, such as the quality of learning, the curriculum, pedagogical issues, and staff performance, motivation and development (2009/C 302/04).

“It is important that the core responsibilities of school leaders be defined and delimited”
(OECD, 2008, p.9).

Challenges facing S.L. across Europe

- Heavy workload;
- Salary disproportionate to workload;
- Responsibility *vaguely* defined and delimited;
- Lack of continuous professional development (CPD) of school leaders;
- Ageing school leaders, nearing retirement;
- Loss of professional leadership experience due to low gradual transition;
- Gender imbalance of school leaders
- Unclear, and highly varying, recruitment procedures;
- Low attractiveness of the school leader profession; and
- Decreasing number of qualified candidates.

ETUCE, School Leadership Survey, 2011

ETUCE Policy – 30 Recommendations.

IV Legacy Impediments to New I.L.

- (A) Education Cutbacks of the Recession
- Salaries, •Ps. of R.; Promotions;
- P.T.Rs; Guidance; Special Needs;
- Allowances; Support Resources

→ Multi-faceted Impact

- Yet, the “Centre” is holding
- Issues being addressed.

(B) Lack of Intermediate Tier of Administration (except ETBI for 35% of P.P. Schools)

DES ⇔ Individual Schools

→ Multiplicity of Duties on Sch. Leadership e.g. roles with parents, staff, students: procurement; maintenance; insurance; exam. agencies, Rel. with D.E.S.; extensive bureaucratic activity, administrative planning etc.

- Overloading – stress – burn-out
- Distraction from the T. and L. emphasis of Instructional Leader for contemporary schools.

(C) Interpretation of Teacher's Contract

- Despite much voluntary work, tendency to interpret teacher's contract, in school hours, to be confined to specific teaching hours.
- Time for school planning, school staff-evaluation, collegial work with peers, peer review etc. not structured.
- Pressure on school leaders – relying on voluntary commitment of staff.

Realising the Potential for I.L.

- Address the Legacy Impediments
- Clarification of Role: Management, Administration, Instructional Leadership
- Public Recognition of the Changed Paradigm of School Leadership
- Build on Recent Initiatives e.g. I.L.P., C.S.L., new CPD courses
- Focus on Implementation of National and International Policy Intents
- Reconciliation of Role of Support Groups – Trustees, J.M.B, A.C.C.S. B.O.Ms, NAPD, IPPN
- Explore Expanding Role for ETBs
- Nurture Leadership Succession
- Time for Reflection and Planning.
- Reason for Optimism.