National Parents Council Post Primary

Numeracy and Literacy Submission

- Is the plan mainly school based?
- Many aspects of second level education are significantly under resourced. Has this Draft report been costed and how does it fit in to the national recovery plan?
- Properly resourced and supports need to be in place before implementing and plan. In section 7 of the report on Enabling Parents support, will it be resourced? Will the support teachers be resourced-- in section 6. "The measures in which to enable parents and communities to support their children's development"
- We need primary schools to transfer information to post primary schools on learning achievements to help develop stability and supports if necessary. How this is done with security and data protection issues? Maybe an issue that can be overcome
- Numeracy and literacy is the ability to understand and communicate, not just learn and repeat within a classroom situation. The current English syllabus, introduced over twenty years ago (1989), does not adequately address the social and cultural applications of literacy skills in the modern age, such as in electronic communications
- The concept of school self-evaluation. Schools need to continuously self evaluate and act on any findings. We have to ensure that school curricula define unambiguously what children should learn at each stage of their development. Publishing national standards, comprising a revised curriculum and examples of what students should be able to achieve in literacy and numeracy at the end of second year in post-primary school
- Continuing professional development. Teachers with the latest teaching methods, qualifications and teaching programmes that incorporate improving their students’ numeracy and literacy skills. A minimum of twenty hours of in-service training on literacy and numeracy education for primary teachers and post-primary teachers of English (or Irish in Irish-medium schools) and Math’s every five years
- Continue to implement Project Maths and monitor the effect of implementation on standards achieved in mathematics using a range of indicators, including commissioned research, thematic evaluation by the Inspectorate and national sample testing in first and second year. (We are involved in the 24 school pilot programme)
- In the ESRI report “Behind the Scenes? A Study of Parental Involvement in Post-Primary Education” findings. Families are central in teenager’s decision making. Supports for the home are critical in improving teenager’s literacy and numeracy skills.
• Supporting literacy and numeracy improvement in DEIS schools. *This is a must*

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation survey of 40,000 teachers in America shows five ways (seven bullet points) of addressing the challenges facing today’s schools.

[http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Pages/home.aspx](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Pages/home.aspx) (well worth a look)

- They spoke on owing students a consistency across their education. Nationalised education standards would provide a level playing field for all teachers and learners. Common assessments and collaboration on a professional level would blossom because the goals would be clear to everyone.
- I look at how my students have improved over the course of the year--- not at what level they are at.
- If you don’t discuss student’s performance with them, they don’t take ownership and they don’t care. If you don’t tell students how they’re doing, how do they improve?
- My directive is to use the textbook every day and I refuse. A textbook is so easy: “Turn to page 57, answer the question at the end” Kids are bored, but they like it because it’s easy. It doesn’t matter if they understand the material, because the answer is right there
- Students are different learners than they were ten years ago. Education isn’t what needs to change? Students today can’t learn the same way we did.
- Great teachers are leaving education and taking all their expertise with them. We need a better environment for collaboration to share what works and what doesn’t.
- Single most likely reason teachers say some students in their classes won’t leave high school prepared to succeed. 38%--Lack of encouragement from family and friends. 34%--Lack of student motivation and 27%--Lack of academic preparation.

*NPCpp – Working towards a better education system for all*