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Dear Minister,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to your stakeholder consultation on the development of the new strategy. I outline below the views of the Irish Educational Publishers' Association for the attention of the strategy team.

Reflecting your own statement values, IEPA members recognise that the development of close and open working relationships between all stakeholders in the education sector is key to improving educational outcomes for Ireland's students.

The IEPA believe its experience and expertise is best suited to strategy implementation rather than formulation of Government Education Policy. Early and continuous engagement with publishers will contribute significantly to policy implementation and we look forward to assisting in every way possible.

Textbooks and other materials provided by publishers are vital to the successful implementation of (changing) syllabi and educational strategy. Not only are they a key support for teaching and learning in Ireland's classrooms, children also use rely heavily on these resources at home when no other teaching support is available.

After teacher training and CPD, the education materials supplied by IEPA members are the only constant tool available to teachers. IEPA publishers also have technical help desks for teachers and representatives regularly visit schools. Feedback from teachers (as supplied to the DES) indicate an urgent requirement for operating system training, with insufficient guidelines on ICT use and lack of ICT infrastructure. Teachers urgently require training and resources to implement new policy or changes.

In addition, to ensure that textbook indigenous content is of the highest quality and fitted to progressive syllabi, the IEPA would appreciate the Department's recognition from the outset of the established 18 month timeline from final specification to publication of a textbook. It is not possible for publishers to produce quality textbooks and resources which will last the test of time in the classroom without adherence to this timeline. The Project Maths project 2010-2012 is an example of poor strategy implementation, a repeat of which should be avoided at all costs.

If consulted and involved in this process the IEPA believes it can be value-adding partner to policy implementation.

I look forward to hearing from your office and would appreciate acknowledgement of this mail.

Regards

Clíodhna O'Donoghue

General Secretary, IEPA

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