

ISSUE 4 | APRIL 2017

EDUCATION NEWS

*Newsletter of the Department of Education
- passionate about all things educational!*

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Welcome to the fourth edition of the Department of Education Newsletter! It has been an inspiring period since our previous instalment, particularly with settling into our new home in the School of Education building with the Department of Adult and Community Education, the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education and the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Living together under one roof has succeeded in bringing about the synergies we had hoped for across the continuum of education – and like all good relationships, our collaborations with them have made us a better and stronger Department.

As we lead up to the annual frenzy of examinations, it is important to take time to pause and reflect on what relationships across the sectors offer to how we think and practice education from the life perspective of students. Policy, both national and international, seems to be overly focused on what extrinsic purposes education can serve: it can lead to a stronger economy, a more skilled workforce, a better-informed consumer. Whilst these might be important, surely they are not the only – or indeed the main – aims of education. Asking us as teachers to educate students for economic reasons can miss out on the transformative possibilities education can create for students to lead meaningful lives – lives that are self-directed, ethically attuned and thoughtful about the world. The real challenge for us as educators is to create conditions so that each student from early childhood education through to university – no matter if they are a refugee, a Traveller, Irish, disabled, white, black or poor – can experience their self-worth and dignity as being central to their education. At second and third level, one wonders what effect our high stakes examination culture has upon our students? What messages do they receive about what is important in life and what role education plays in it? Do students feel supported in building a strong sense of themselves and their place in the world? These are the kinds of questions that have informed some of the activities you will read about in the following pages.



Professor Sharon Todd

Just to highlight a few: we have been active in continuing to develop Team Teaching in the PME and you will read a student report on a Teach Meet event that the Education Society held earlier this term. Majella Dempsey writes about the stimulating Irish Science Teachers' Association conference held here at Maynooth in April, and Rose Dolan reports on the PME Year 1 Action Research Café. We also had a rewarding two days with Dr. Oren Ergas from Beit Berl University in Israel, who offered workshops and seminars on Mindfulness in educational practice. Two new exciting programmes are being launched, which will start in September: the Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Leadership and Management; and a professional Doctorate of Education (Ed.D) with two possibilities for specialisation: Educational Leadership and Teacher Education. You will find out more about these and a host of other activities within the next few pages.

As always, we could not do what we do without you. We invite you to share with us ideas for partnerships, research ideas, or simply come in for a chat. Our doors are always open and we are most definitely passionate about all things educational!

Professor Sharon Todd
Maynooth University Department of Education

The Enquiring Classroom

Professor Aislinn O'Donnell (Maynooth University) and Dr. Patricia Kieran (MIC) in collaboration with the Chester Beatty Library (CBL), and the Hunt Museum, Limerick are hosting a training school as part of their ERASMUS+ Project "The Enquiring Classroom".



This is a European project, partnering with Lovisa Bergdahl of Sodertorn University, Sweden and Stephanos Cherouvis of EA, Greece.

This project aims to build a repository of learning and ideas for engaging children and young people in the discussion and

exploration of ideas, religions, beliefs, values and 'big questions'. At the heart of the project is a commitment to dialogue, listening, imagination, and philosophical enquiry. We believe that educational spaces must be preserved as spaces of learning and understanding where students can speak freely, imagine, and explore questions, values and big ideas together, and where each person feels listened to, respected and valued. We are also interested in exploring moments of what we are calling 'stuckness and perplexity' and reflecting together on ways of navigating these.

In the Irish schooling context, this approach will have direct relevance to a range of subjects including the new Junior Cycle course in Philosophy and the new Leaving Certificate Subject, Politics and Society, and CSPE. But it will also be of interest to youth workers, people engaged in interfaith work, and people interested in engaging children and young people in philosophical enquiry. The aim is to explore ways of embedding this particular approach which has dialogue, imagination, philosophical enquiry and lived values at its heart, and to think of connections across the curriculum and in wider society.

Workshops will be held in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (**Saturday May 27th**), and in the Hunt Museum, Limerick (**Saturday May 13th**). There is also an online component of three 3-hour module inputs which will involve sharing ideas, practices, engaging in exercises and tasks, and deepening an understanding of the rationale for different approaches, for example, philosophical enquiry.

We would like to invite you to participate in this exciting project by registering for and participating in the workshops and online modules. For further information or to register, please email Rachel.Ryan@mic.ul.ie and cc Aislinn.ODonnell@nuim.ie and Patricia.Kieran@mic.ul.ie

SWIFT 2017 – Summer Writing Institute For Teachers

Dr. Alison Farrell, Centre for Teaching and Learning/ University Writing Centre, School of Education, Maynooth University.

We are delighted to announce our fourth summer writing institute which will take place in July 2017. This offering builds on previous institutes, held in 2014, 2015 and 2016, which were originally designed in consultation with a range of teaching and learning networks, including Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, Maynooth University Education Department, the Further Education Support Service, the Reading Association of Ireland (now Literacy Association of Ireland) and the Irish Network for the Enhancement of Writing. The institute draws from the US National Writing Project model and is designed to provide an opportunity for teachers, from all education levels, to meet, share good practice, and learn more about writing and the teaching of writing.



Dr. Alison Farrell with SWIFT participants in 2014.

At the institute you will look closely at your own writing and student writing, explore issues and ideas in the teaching of writing, work toward becoming teacher leaders and share classroom practices or activities.

The institute will take place in Maynooth University from 10.00 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. from Monday 3rd July until Friday 7th July inclusive.

The institute is free to all participants but places will be strictly limited and allocated across the education levels.

If you are interested in attending this event, please contact us for an application form at writingcentre@nuim.ie. The completed form should be submitted to us before Monday 8th May 2017. All applications must be made by email to writingcentre@nuim.ie. All shortlisted applicants will be contacted by Friday 12th May 2017.

All queries about the project should be directed to the writingcentre@nuim.ie.

Career Advancement Courses at Maynooth University



The Department of Education in Maynooth University offers a range of dynamic and flexible courses to support you to deepen and develop your pedagogical practice or to further your career in education.

These include courses in the areas of educational leadership, school guidance counselling and advanced academic courses. We have introduced a new **Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Leadership and Management (PGDELM)** for teachers who seek, or are currently in, leadership roles. The new **modular Master in Education programme** introduced last

year is proving very popular among students owing to its flexible structure and diverse content. September 2017 will also herald the introduction of a new **Doctor of Education (Ed.D)** with two specialisms, one in teacher education and the other in educational leadership.

Further information is available by clicking on the booklet or by visiting <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/education/our-courses>. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like any additional information on any of the courses offered.

School Placement

As we approach the end of the school year, we would like to thank all of our partner schools that have facilitated the placement of our student teachers in 2016-17.

Throughout the year, student teachers have developed and deepened their pedagogical practice with the support of your co-operating teachers and wider school communities. This experience is integral to their formation as teachers and complements the work they undertake here in the university.

Many of our student teachers are currently seeking placements for next year and we hope that you might be able to facilitate some in your school in 2017-18. As outlined in the flyer opposite, student teachers can support teachers and schools in a variety of ways and enrichen the wider life of the school through their work. Full details on the arrangements around school placement for 2017-18 can be found in the flyer – Please note that placement days have changed for PME student teachers. If you have any queries or if

you are interested in facilitating the placement of a student with a particular subject/ subject combination, please contact school.placement@nuim.ie.

All student teachers will be Garda Vetted by the University under the new April 2016 legislation and will have a current Garda Bureau Vetting Disclosure statement ahead of commencing their placement in 2017-18.



College Events

BSc Science and Mathematics Education Class of 2017

The BSc.Ed. Class of 2017 will be the first graduates of the new five year course in Maynooth University School of Education next year.

They will progress from the BSc Science or Mathematics with Education into the second year of the Professional Master of Education (PME). The graduating science teachers will be qualified to teach junior science and two subjects from biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics. The mathematics education graduates will be qualified to teach maths, applied maths and computers.



Action Research Café

The annual PME Year 1 Action Research Café was held in the School of Education on March 14th 2017.

The Action Research Café is designed around the concept of the World Café <http://www.theworldcafe.com/> and gives students the opportunity to share their work and insights with staff and students in the department.

During semester 1, each student chose a pedagogical area that s/he wanted to develop within his/her classroom. Using an action research approach, each one designed and implemented a plan for developing his/her capabilities in that area. 110 posters describing the results of the implementation were displayed at the Action Research Café. Colin Cooney (Lecturer, DkIT) and Silvan Comer (Second Level Teacher, Enniscorthy) joined the students for the morning and spoke about their experiences of using action research in their own teaching.



Colin Cooney, PhD student MU Department of Education/Head of Department of Business Studies DkIT and Anita Davenport, PME student MU Department of Education.

NIPT Workshop Hosted by Dept. of Education, Maynooth University

On Monday 6th February, the Department of Education hosted a workshop facilitated by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) on shared teacher education developments across post-primary ITE and induction.

NIPT staff provided a comprehensive overview of the Droichead process in post-primary schools and its plans for the future development of the initiative. The workshop was attended by participants from Maynooth University, University College Dublin, Hibernia College, Dublin City University and the Teaching Council. The event provided a fantastic opportunity to explore the synergies that exist between the three phases of the teacher education continuum and to build partnerships between the various institutions and organisations working across the continuum. Further events are planned to develop and foster the partnerships developed on the day.



Ms. Ann Kelly, Regional Development Officer with the NIPT.

ISTA Conference 2017 in Maynooth University

The Kildare branch of the Irish Science Teachers' Association (ISTA) organised this year's ISTA national conference in Maynooth University.

The theme was Meitheal / Working Together, and the main aim was to bring together primary, post-primary and tertiary educators, as well as researchers in industry to network and discuss topical issues.

We were excited to have many of the most influential members of the science community taking part in this year's conference, both national and international. Professor Aidan Mulkeen welcomed delegates stating: "The University is proud of its rich heritage in education and we are always delighted to be associated with organisations like the ISTA in promoting science education". Newstalk's Science broadcaster, Jonathan McCrea, opened the conference on Friday evening, and Sheila Donegan and Eoin Gill entertained delegates with an interactive lecture based on the life of Rev. Nicholas Callan (1799 – 1864).



ISTA Conference Organising Committee 2017

Keynote addresses included Professor Donal O'Shea on cracking the obesity code, Dr. Marc Ó Gríofa from NASA on education in space, Dr. Marie Cassidy entertained all on forensic pathology, and Professor John Sweeney talked about how climate change is education's new integrator. On Sunday morning, Dr. Alan McCormack from the USA challenged us to spark creative thinking through storylines and imagining.

Reconstructing Education through Mindful Attention

From 27-30 March 2017, the Department of Education had the pleasure of hosting **Dr. Oren Ergas**, senior lecturer at Beit Berl College, Israel, and author of the recently published 'Reconstructing 'Education' Through Mindful Attention: Positioning the Mind at the Center of Curriculum and Pedagogy'.



Dr. Oren Ergas, senior lecturer at Beit Berl College, Israel



Reconstructing 'Education' Through Mindful Attention: Positioning the Mind at the Center of Curriculum and Pedagogy (2017)

Throughout his few days with us, Oren was kind enough to facilitate a workshop with our PME student teachers on mindfulness, as well as a session with staff and doctoral students on contemplative practices and pedagogies in higher education. Oren's visit culminated in a public lecture (sponsored by the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain), in which he explored the need for education to refocus its attention upon the mind in responding to the many challenges it faces today. For Oren, education is always a 'mind-making' endeavour: thus, the mind must always be considered in reflecting on what education entails and demands. It was fantastic to have Oren visit us, and we look forward to welcoming him back again in the future for more 'mindful' conversations!

Global Teacher Award – PME Year 2 Workshop

The Global Teacher Award (GTA), held during the February mid-term break, was attended by around 20 PME Year 2 students.



The GTA is a validated teacher-education programme currently being made available across Ireland and in three EU partner-countries. It aims to raise the profile and quality of development education provision in the EU through the creation of a standardised development education training and award scheme for teachers.

In Maynooth, the programme builds on Year 1 Development Education provision for PME students. The workshop is led in Ireland by the Education Officer of the Galway One World Centre, Ms. Vicky Donnelly. This is the first time that Level 2 of the GTA has been delivered.

The workshop was a hands-on session which challenged student-teachers to allow their pupils to grapple with the main issues at the heart of development education. Feedback from the students taking part suggests that the workshop was a huge success and the students were keen to express their thanks and admiration of Vicky's creative, committed and deeply socially-engaged approach. They felt that her passionate engagement with issues of inequality, discrimination and injustice was an inspiration for them as they begin their careers.

One student, when asked how he found the GTA workshop, said the following:

It was an absolutely fantastic experience. Vicky was so passionate and dedicated to Development Education and brought outstanding resources and exercises that we can use for years to come. I would highly regard this day as one of the most important experiences in the PME.

With thanks to students David Doyle and Seán Stoll for their contribution to the writing of this article.

3rd National Team Teaching Seminar in Maynooth

The third national team teaching seminar was co-hosted by the Department of Education Maynooth University (MU) and the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) in Maynooth on Monday 13th February 2017.



A selection of posters presented by PME student teachers and experienced teachers.

The seminar marked the culmination of a research project involving Year 2 PME student teachers and experienced teachers in partner schools. Team teaching as an approach has been gaining prominence in post-primary schools in Ireland in recent years and is advocated in a range of policy documents from the Department of Education and Skills, the Inspectorate, the National Council for Special Education and the Teaching Council.

The overall aim of the project was to facilitate the development of team teaching skills among student teachers and experienced teachers. Approximately 150 participants engaged in a series of workshops on team teaching in autumn 2016 in Maynooth, Dublin, Navan and Carlow. These workshops introduced the concept of team teaching, explored the opportunities and challenges of working closely with a colleague and supported participants to engage in the planning and delivery of lessons taught in this way. Furthermore it offered a space for honest reflection based on team teaching experiences.

The national seminar was attended by close to 200 delegates, including student teachers, experienced teachers, principals and deputy principals, support services, policy makers and university representatives. Following the opening remarks by Prof. Sharon Todd (Head of the Department of Education MU) and PDST National Director Ms. Ciara O'Donnell, presentations throughout the afternoon provided a comprehensive picture of team teaching in post-primary schools. An overview of the project was presented on behalf of the team by Dr. Thomas Walsh (MU) and Ms. Phil Fox (PDST). Other team members integral to the project included Ms. Angela Rickard (MU), Ms. Rachel Farrell (PDST) and Ms. Edel Ní Arrachtáin (PDST), as well as a large number of PDST and MU staff who were present at the seminar. Insights from a team teaching partnership were provided by PME student Ms. Claire Cunnane and experienced teacher Mr. Michael Finnegan from Wilson's Hospital School, Multyfarnham. The centre piece of the seminar was a poster session with posters from over 60 student teachers and experienced teachers that distilled their key learning and insights gained from involvement in team teaching

activities. These provided an opportunity and stimulus for delegates to discuss their experiences, insights and concerns with colleagues and other professionals. The keynote address was given by Dr. Colette Murphy of Trinity College Dublin while Dr. Finn Ó Murchú (Mary Immaculate College) concluded the afternoon's presentations.

Data emerging from the research project to date indicate that the vast majority of experienced teachers who attended the workshops did not engage with team teaching during their initial teacher education nor have had an opportunity to engage in continuing professional development (CPD) around team teaching since qualifying. However, 82% of experienced teachers reported that team teaching was undertaken in their schools. Interestingly, 62% of the experienced teachers were involved in team teaching even though over 90% had never engaged in training/CPD around this approach. Participants' feedback on their experience of team teaching as part of the project was overwhelmingly positive. For example, 95% agreed or strongly agreed that it was a positive experience and 96% agreed or strongly agreed that the approach was beneficial for students. Moreover, 97% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that team teaching provided an opportunity to explore new methodologies in classrooms and 89% agreed or strongly agreed that it was an effective form of CPD. While 88% of participants believed team teaching should be introduced more widely in post-primary schools in Ireland, many also raised the challenges this would entail. These included the need for additional resources in terms of time and teachers; a clear national and school policy for team teaching as well as opportunities for CPD.

We would like to thank and congratulate all of the PME student teachers, co-operating teachers and school leaders who participated in the project to date. Further information on the project and access to the poster presentations can be found at <http://www.pdst.ie/teamteaching/MU/2017>. We hope to develop the project again next year and will be in touch with partner schools about this in the autumn.

M.Ed Students Present their Research

Over 50 Master of Education (M.Ed) students made poster presentations of their theses/capstone projects in early April 2017 in the foyer of the Iontas building.

The projects presented evidence a very wide range of research interests from early childhood education, primary education, post-primary education as well more informal educational settings. The purpose of the presentations was to allow students to contextualise and communicate their research as they approached the completion of their projects. There was an opportunity on the evenings to speak about their research with staff and peers, to discuss the research of others and to reflect on the final steps to complete their research projects.



M.Ed students and staff from the Department of Education engaged in scholarly conversations around their research in the Iontas foyer.

€750k Awarded from HEA 'Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH)' Fund



Maynooth University
National University of Ireland Maynooth



In seeking to widen participation within Initial Teacher Education, Maynooth University has been awarded a grant by the Higher Education Authority of €750,000 over three years.

The funding was announced at a press conference held by Minister Richard Bruton TD on April 17th. Our Department, in conjunction with the Froebel Department, the Department of Adult and Community Education and the Access Office proposed a 'Turn to Teaching' programme, which encourages increased diversity in the teaching profession through offering a range of educational innovations. The programme includes an 'Aspiring Teachers, Rising Leaders' programme targeting post-primary schools; a 'Think about Teaching' access course for mature students; a 'Tar linn ag Teagasc' support for students to learn Gaelige; and a 'Teaching for Tomorrow' part-time Professional Master of Education programme to be run by our Department. We are very proud to be part of making a real difference to Irish teacher education and the teaching profession more broadly speaking and will keep you posted on further developments!

Proud of our Alumni!

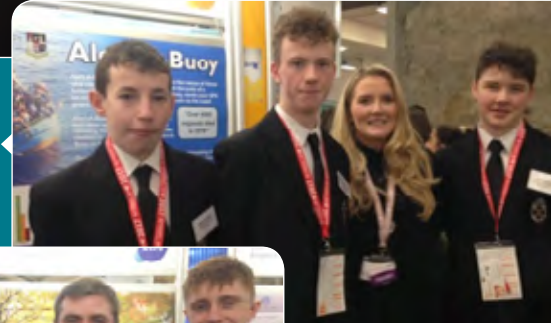
We were thrilled to see that there were 22 Young Scientist projects from Maynooth University School of Education graduates in the 2017 competition.



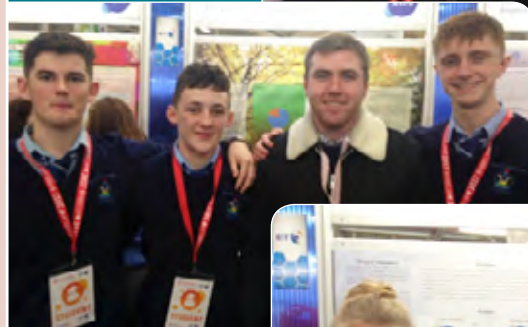
Gemma Buicke with her students from Pobalscoil Neasáin in Baldoyle



Eva Marie Acton with her students from CBS Mullingar



Gary Galvin with his students from Bush Post Primary School



Edward Heery with his students from Mercy Secondary School Kibbegan



News from Students

First Aid for Future Teachers *Alison Lynch, PME 2*

On February 6th and 10th last, thirty second year Professional Masters of Education (PME) students took part in a first aid course on campus.

The course was organised by PME student, Alison Lynch (front row) and provided by the Irish Red Cross. As students and teachers spend the majority of their time together in a classroom, the likelihood of a medical emergency occurring increases. Prior to the course, these student-teachers

(pictured below) felt unprepared to deal with a medical emergency if one were to arise in their classroom. On completing the course, these thirty student-teachers will enter the profession in September as Irish Red Cross certified first aid providers. Well done everyone!



Back row L-R: Niamh Maguire, Ian Feighery, Clare Doyle, Megan O'Donoghue, Patricia Farrell, Claire Cunnane, Conor McManus, Patrick Ward, Jason Sheerin and Laura Byrne.

Middle row L-R: Laura Tubman, Sarah Bolton, Shauna Byrne, Ciara O'Callaghan, Ann McHugh, Laura Geraghty, Nadine Brennan, Ciara Devoy, Jordan Lyttle and Orna McCabe.

Front row L-R: Derek O'Keeffe, Niamh Lynch, Darina Walsh, Jessica Reilly, Megan Monerawela, Mark Heffernan, Ian Carney, Alison Maguire and Alison Lynch.

Missing from photo: Sophia Diver

Music at Mullingar Community College *Marc Oliver, PME 2*

Mullingar Community College Choir was on Market Square singing carols and adding to the festive atmosphere of the Mullingar Christmas Market.

The music and accompaniment was provided by Marc Oliver, Year 2 PME student teacher.

The Mullingar Community College Choir was also involved in a new production of the world famous musical 'Oliver' which premiered on the 18th of January 2017 and ran until the 20th.

The three shows were sold out and along with Marc on guitar in the orchestra were the Mullingar Town Band, conducted by Mullingar Community College Music teacher, Ms. Patricia Magee.



Members of the choir with music teachers Claire Gilmartin and Marc Oliver (PME YR 2), and choir director Andrew Yau.



Students rehearsing at Mullingar Community College for their production of Oliver.

Education Society TeachMeet

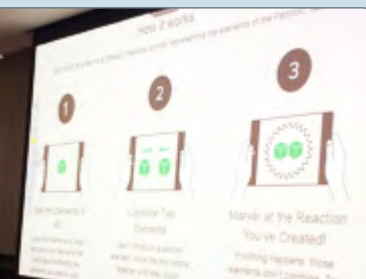
Conor Maxwell, President of the Education Society

On Wednesday, 8th February, the Education Society hosted a TeachMeet for all current Science Education students and PME students.



The event was also attended by past graduates and members of the department and a great evening was had by all. It was the first event of its kind run by the Education Society and it surely won't be the last!

The evening consisted of numerous presentations from both the current and past students on various teaching apps, ideas and advice for everyone to use in their own classroom. It was particularly beneficial to those of us who will be starting the PME in September when our teaching placement becomes more prolonged and intense.



Drimnagh Castle's 'Stop Homelessness Campaign'

Warren Farrell, PME 1

December 2016 and January 2017 saw PME Year 1 student Warren Farrell and his group of first year C.S.P.E students from Drimnagh Castle Secondary school tackle the issue of Homelessness together.

Representatives from the Peter McVerry Trust were invited by the students to come to the school to raise awareness on the issue within the school itself. The students then took it upon themselves to actively engage with Inner City Helping the Homeless and to create and fill shoeboxes for those on the streets of Dublin at Christmas time. Warren's first year students also carried out a poster campaign and presented their findings to their peers in first year at the school.

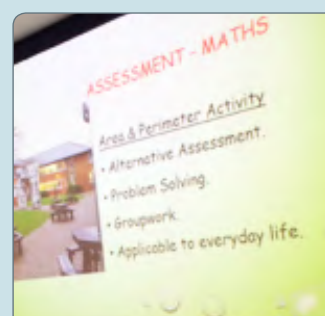
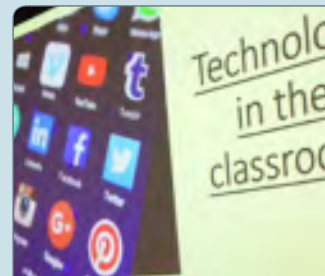


Students from Drimnagh Castle Secondary school work with Warren Farrell (PME 1) on their homeless campaign

Some of the apps presented on the night which are particularly useful include "Elements 4D", which is a fantastic tool for all chemistry teachers when teaching about the elements and bonding, "Chatterpix" which is very useful for bringing famous people to life in the classroom and "EarthViewer" which is a fantastic app for visualising the changing appearance of the Earth over time.

The society would like to extend a huge thanks to Angela Rickard who worked tirelessly to help us organise the event and to Aishling Donohoe and Eva Acton who both travelled to present their wonderful ideas to us. And of course, no night would be complete without the wine and pizza which was present!

Follow us on our twitter @MUEDSoc and facebook "MU Education Society" to keep up to date with all our events in future.



St. Mary's Edenderry are Leinster Champions

Paul Cribbin, PME1

On Wednesday 8th March, the school I am completing my placement in, St. Mary's Edenderry, won the Leinster u16 boys 'A' final, defeating Nass CBS.

I was fortunate enough to be coach of the team. We won the game with a score line of 2-14 to 1-6. The game was contested in Hawkfield, Co. Kildare in front of over 1,000 spectators. It was a great achievement considering the population of the school in comparison to other competing schools. The lads trained very hard all year, including early morning sessions before school. The success of the football team created a great buzz with the whole school getting behind them for support.



Paul Cribbin (PME 1) with members of the victorious u16 team from St Mary's Edenderry

Collaborate to Design for Change

Rebecca O'Meara, Year 3 BSc (Education)

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, Nothing is going to get better. It's not." Dr. Seuss

This year I was one of 29 BSc.Ed third year students who participated in a module called Collaborate to Design for Change. As part of the module, we participated in a Massive On-line Open Course (aka a MOOC). This was part of a European Project on collaborative learning called Co_Lab <http://colab.eun.org> in partnership with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). It was incredibly helpful and practical for use inside and outside the classroom. We learned about the collaboration rubric which had four questions. These allowed us to create collaborative lessons and evaluate the level of collaboration. We used this in our work in teams during our project and most of us have integrated it into our classroom practice. A large majority of us did find, however, that a wholly online course lacked human interaction which is the case of many MOOCs. We felt as though our learning was nurtured more with interactive, face-to-face learning, even if this happened to be on Monday at 9am!



Dominic Goodings and Kevin Fitzpatrick with their project.

The Design for Change (DfC) challenge was the second element of the module. DfC was started in India and has become a global movement <http://www.dfeworld.com>. Our projects were facilitated by Development Educator, Ms. Tara McGrath. We all agreed that this was an interesting, thought-provoking experience. It allowed us to think about issues of social injustice in developing countries, to appreciate how lucky we are and to recognise that we, as students and as teachers, can do something to help solve problems in many places. We all come from a Science/Maths background and so most of our projects were based around these subjects. Some teams used Physics to think of inexpensive ways to light roads and increase personal safety in Haiti; Chemistry was used to research women's health and to build awareness of the need for folic acid; while Maths was used to design Apps that can alert people to earthquakes. These are just some of the many amazing projects that the class group created in the 12-week module.



Pictured at the showcase event in Maynooth University: Ms. Angela Rickard, Dr. Peter Robbins, Ms. Tara McGrath, Dr. Majella Dempsey and Mr. Ben Murray (NCCA).

We used the FIDS framework that stands for Feel, Imagine, Do and Share. Students initially use 'feel' to put themselves in the shoes of people going through these tough times; they then use 'imagine' to think of the perfect solution regarding the issue; after this they 'do' something to try to work towards that perfect solution, even if it is only a tiny step; and finally they 'share' their idea with the world and try to make their theory and their project a reality. As student teachers, we would hope that by introducing this into the curriculum it would serve students not only as a curriculum-orientated project but also as part of the hidden curriculum as they learn empathy and are exposed to the reality of the world around them, outside their bubble. It can make students realise that issues need to be addressed and they are more than capable of thinking up incredible, creative solutions to these global problems.

Then on February 28th we got to present our learning at the Co-Lab Conference in Dublin Castle. All the supporting materials for the DfC module and the materials from the MOOC are available at the links above.



Pictured at the Co-Lab conference in Dublin Castle: Kevin Foley, Shauna McGinley, Margaret Ward, Rebecca O'Meara, Majella Dempsey, Cathal Dunne, Eoin O'Hara, Sadhbh O'Brien and Viola Pinzi from European Schoolnet.