

## **Notes of the Amalgamation Review Committee meeting held in St. Mary's Rosary School on Monday the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 09**

**Attendance:** Frankie Berry (Chairperson), Catherine Troy, Barry Glennon, Eugene Doyle, Shirley Wolverson, Laura Behan, Paula Keenan, Brenda Egan, Janet O'Shaughnessy, Regina O'Connell, Mark O'Leary, Nora Duggan, Maura Buckley, Liam O'Dwyer, Lisa Dunne (Interpreter)

**Apologies:** Declan Keane, Loretta Wynne and Miriam McNally

**Introduction:** Frankie Berry as Chairperson opened the meeting and welcomed the Committee to St. Mary's. It was noted that while Liz McLafferty the new principal of St. Joseph's had replaced Val Quinn (who has retired), on this Committee, she had asked Eugene Doyle to act as her nominee.

### **Minutes of May meeting**

Copies of the May meeting were circulated in advance of the meeting and hard copies distributed at the meeting. The minutes were agreed to be an accurate reflection of the meeting. It was confirmed that the St. Mary's Board of Management had received a copy of Eoin O'Mahony's report, and their key concern was the need to consult with and listen to the staff.

### **ARC recommendations draft 2**

The second draft of the Committees recommendations from stage one of the process was also circulated prior to the meeting and copies distributed at the meeting. A discussion on each of the recommendations took place and the main issues which arose are detailed below.

No final decision has taken place to amalgamate, but the Archbishop and CIDP Board in principle believe it is the correct approach. Eoin O'Mahony's report recommends an amalgamation and shows that the majority of the stakeholders believe it is the right thing to do once the identified concerns are met. The Committee (ARC) is being asked to begin a process that may lead to amalgamation by setting out an agreed education modal during this school year, with a final proposal going to the CIDP Board in June 2010. If this is acceptable, engagement with the Department of Education and Science would begin in September 2010 with a view to the new modal being implemented in September 2011. In relation to the location of any new amalgamated school / schools this would only be decided once the educational modal was itself agreed. The role of the unions will be to act as advisors to the Committee which they will be invited to join. While Liam will contact their official representatives the local representatives will also be in touch this week to advise them of the situation.

It was agreed that two joint days with staff will be planned for December 2009 and April 2010 to ensure they are fully involved in the process and to ascertain their views as to the best educational modal for the future, also to get to know each other socially.

The suggestion that an independent facilitator would be asked to manage this process with the Committee was discussed and agreed. The facilitator will also arrange for the key ideas from the meeting to be recorded. Liam mentioned a possible candidate, and it was agreed he would approach her

this week regarding her interest and availability. Once the facilitator is on board he/she will meet with Liam, the Chairperson and the two Principals to plan the next steps which will be brought to the next meeting of the Amalgamation Review Committee at its meeting in November.

One of the key issues to be managed from now to June 2010 is to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed. It is intended to organise Parent/Teachers meetings in November hopefully but not necessarily on the same day. At these meetings the parents will be informed of progress to date and the next steps and asked for their views and their email address if they wish to be kept fully up to date with the developments. This it is hoped will make consultation with parents easier to manage.

While staff engagement may seem less of an issue it was recognised at the meeting that formal engagement with staff on a day to day basis was difficult due to the structure of timetables and school activities.

The Committee are agreed that the recommendations in draft 2 reflect the views of the Committee and provide a structure for moving the process forward.

**Next meeting**

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> of November beginning at 2.00pm in St. Mary's Rosary School Hall**