

NEWSLETTER

Foreword

NACED has just launched its new national Facebook page: Adult Education Ireland. Its aim is to help schools promote their classes and to provide schools with an easy platform to reach a wider audience. Several member schools have been using Facebook to great effect over the last few years and we feel it is a useful tool for schools to reach their clientele. NACED has contracted Elizabeth Egan to manage our new Facebook page and also to help member schools set up their own Facebook page (see below for details).

Members of the NACED Executive will meet with ETBi in early September to explore modes of collaboration across our agencies. We hope to identify a role for NACED schools within the Adult and Further Education Strategy. The landscape in which we operate is changing and it is important that we are included in the discussion and not overlooked when searching for a solution.

On the back page of this newsletter you will find a copy of the letter we circulated recently to the stakeholders in Adult Education. We hope that it reflects the opinions of the majority of Directors in relation to the subject of promotional posts and support personnel. September is a busy month for us all and, judging from the level of activity already registered, I suspect that we will have a successful Autumn term.

Fintan Kemple, Chairman



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Getting Started with FACEBOOK



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If you would like assistance in setting up your own Adult Education Facebook page, feel free to contact Liz Egan and she will help get you started. If you already have a Facebook page, Liz can help you increase your reach through the Adult Education Ireland Facebook page. As Facebook is very much a visual platform it would help if you could send her the following:

1. A good photograph of your school.
2. 4 –5 good quality photos from a variety of classes.
3. A PDF file of your brochure or a link to your website if you have the brochure there.
4. A list of two or three unusual classes that are reasonably successful that you want to promote this term.



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Further Education and Training Authority



To:

All Stakeholders in Adult Education

For Community and Comprehensive Schools.



Dear Sir/Madam

On behalf of the National Association of Adult and Community Education Directors (NACED), I am writing to you to highlight areas in educational planning which have significant repercussions within Adult Education in Community and Comprehensive Schools. Decisions made during the financial crisis of the last seven years have had a serious and negative effect on our ability to deliver a quality service.

The moratorium on promotional posts was introduced as a cost-saving measure across all educational institutions. Posts of Assistant Director of Adult Education have not been filled during this period. In response, schools have had no choice but to reduce the quality and range of the Adult Education service being offered to the public. As this service is offered outside of traditional school hours, teachers will not fill this gap by offering their services on a voluntary basis. As a result, many Directors of Adult Education now find themselves working in isolation and struggling to maintain services to their communities. This situation is constantly deteriorating as current Assistant Directors retire. The only real solution to improve this situation is to lift the moratorium on the filling of the Assistant Director posts.

Adult Education in our sector almost exclusively takes place in the evening time. Management bodies have struggled in recent years to keep facilities open to the public and, unfortunately, some have had no option but to close their doors as heating, maintenance, and caretaking costs proved too onerous. Schools that traditionally had two or possibly three caretakers are now expected to manage with an allocation of one caretaker funded by the DES. Any additional caretaking hours must be paid for from other school funds. Throughout the country, second level schools provide valuable out-of-hours services to their communities. Adult Education, youth clubs, bands, choirs, and study groups all make use of school facilities outside of school time to broaden the lives of teenagers and adults. Their local school is more than a daytime facility and the caretaker is virtually a gatekeeper to opportunity. Once the gate is locked and the lights go out, there is no chance that the excellent facilities that exist can be accessed by the people who really need them. The appointment and funding of additional caretaking posts in schools, particularly schools that provide Adult Education services, should be a priority in future planning decisions.

NACED has represented Adult Education Directors for over forty years and will continue to offer guidance and support to schools around the country in the organisation and delivery of lifelong learning programmes. Adults deserve the opportunity to access quality training to enhance their employment or life opportunities. The White Paper on Adult Education 2000 identified **access** as the greatest barrier to individuals in pursuit of training opportunities. Closing our schools and the reduction of staff within Adult Education have had a detrimental effect on how services are offered in local communities. It is vital that these posts be filled and schools be given the capacity to comfortably deliver a broad range of services to their community.

NACED is calling on all relevant stakeholders to take account of these issues in future discussions around education provision, lifelong learning, education support personnel, and posts of responsibility.

Yours sincerely,

Fintan Kemple

Chairperson

National Association of Adult and Community Education Directors



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SOLAS

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