Cosán: Teachers' Continuing Professional Development

Draft Submission by the IDEA Formal Education Working Group

IDEA, the Irish Development Education Association, is the national network for Development Education in Ireland. Our more than 100 members are involved in the practice, promotion and advancement of Development Education throughout the island of Ireland. Our membership reflects the full spectrum of Development Education and civil society in Ireland, including development NGOs, community and voluntary organisations, educational institutions and networks, trade unions, educators, researchers and activists, many of whom work in collaboration with practicing teachers and academics in the formal, further and higher education sectors. Since 2004 IDEA has been a voice for the Development Education sector in Ireland. IDEA plays an active role in national strategy processes relating to Development Education including: membership of the Department of Education and Skills Advisory Group on the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development; participation in National Council for Curriculum and Assessment consultations; the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) review of Development Education in Ireland; consultation on One World One Future - Ireland's policy for international development; the OECD DAC review of Ireland's development cooperation programme; and other relevant civil society initiatives.

Within the IDEA structure, members form working groups to address issues of long-term importance to the sector. The Formal Education Working Group is one of the longest-running and is the largest IDEA working group. Members of the Formal Education Working Group include teachers/educators, education researchers, policy makers and civil society actors working in early childhood, primary, post-primary, further and higher education from twenty-eight institutions and organisations. This submission has been compiled by a subgroup that represents all Formal Education Working Group members (see details in Appendix 1).

INTRODUCTION
The IDEA Formal Education Working Group welcomes the publication of *Cosán,* the draft framework for teachers' learning. *Cosán* provides a much-needed opportunity to clearly articulate what constitutes teacher professional development, as well as the core values and approach that underpin this critical area.

We support a framework that values teacher continuing professional development (CPD) as an ongoing process, which has relevance in the classroom and which encourages teachers to demonstrate an open disposition to continuous learning. We particularly welcome the concept of a flexible learning process for teacher CPD (rather than a linear journey) and one that can be meaningfully supported by external actors.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community engagement and civil society groups working in Development Education provide a myriad of structured as well as informal educational opportunities to schools that effectively support and build the capacity of teachers. This diversity of learning opportunities and the pivotal role that Development Education plays in CPD provision is not currently reflected in the *Cosán* document.

VALUES
The IDEA Formal Education Working Group views the values underpinning CPD as outlined in *Cosán* as important. We would recommend, however, decoupling 'Relevance' and 'Quality', viewing each of these as essential and distinct values that lose impact by being incorporated under one heading.

The Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (2012) identifies 'Respect' as one of the four ethical values that underpin the standards of teaching, knowledge, skill, and competence. In line with this, the teacher is required to respect *"spiritual and cultural values, diversity, social justice, freedom, democracy and the environment"*[1]. In the interests of coherence, we would recommend linking core values of *Cosán* to the Code of Conduct. We also recommend drawing explicitly on the Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education (2011) in setting out the indicators for sustained professional standards contained in Appendix B, amalgamating the terms 'continued professional growth' and 'sustained professional practice' into one term for the purpose of clarity.

LEARNING PROCESSES
(i) <u>Capturing the interconnected nature of teacher learning processes</u>
While the indicative list of Learning Processes outlined in in Figure 5 (page 14) of *Cosán* captures some key aspects of teacher learning, the list is not sufficiently extensive to reflect the reality of learning processes with which teachers engage, nor does it demonstrate the interconnected nature of the various processes, which we view as a critical omission. In Figure 5 these processes appear as

[1] http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/Publications/Professional-Standards/Code-of-Professional-Conduct-for-Teachers.pdf - page 6

stand-alone and separate elements. This contradicts the circular, ongoing and fluid nature of CPD that is defined at the outset of *Cosán*. We recommend reworking Figure 5 to better convey the fluid nature of the various learning processes (Figure 3 on page 11 is a better example of how to effectively illustrate interconnectedness). It would also be useful to demonstrate how teachers can engage with these processes via different pathways throughout their careers. To illustrate this points, we have included a selection of one-page case studies based on the CPD experiences of teachers that track their learning journeys over the course of their careers to date (see Appendix 2).

(ii) Capturing the full range of teacher learning processes

There is a wide range of external agencies/organisations that are currently engaged in and well placed to contribute to high quality CPD for teachers, as evidenced in the Development Education sector. This reality does not currently feature in the *Cosán* definition of teacher learning processes. We would recommend a number of amendments in order to strengthen this section the document:

- Under the heading of 'Immersive Professional Activities' there should be scope for teachers to engage with external social initiatives and civil society organisations (rather than current articulation which is restricted narrowly to 'Industry' - we suggest replacing this with the broader term 'Economic, Social and Environmental Organisations).
- Expand 'Courses and Programmes and Learning through Collaboration' to include developing specialisation(s) with high quality CPD providers in civil society and community/voluntary settings.
- Include the term 'Reflective Practice' and associated methodologies such as portfolios and journal writing (which are outlined in the 2011 Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education but missing here).
- 'Professional Contributions' and 'Learning Through Practice' indicate curriculum development (with an example of engaging in NCCA consultative processes) - but do not mention teachers themselves engaging in the process of developing curriculum, a phenomenon that occurs with some frequency in partnership with civil society organisations and has huge potential in terms of opportunities for CPD. The Statements of Learning within the Junior Cycle Framework (2015) also suggest greater teacher and school autonomy in relation to curriculum development.
- The implication in the heading 'Working as a mentor or member of a Professional Support Team' is that this learning process is applicable only to the specific roles within the education system. We recommend including scope for these types of roles outside of the formal education system, for example, when teachers share their learning with peers in the context of being part of a network co-ordinated by a civil society organization.

DIMENSIONS OF TEACHER LEARNING

The challenge in this section of *Cosán* is in striking the correct balance between the various aspects outlined in each of the four dimensions. It is positive that Figure 3 (page 11) allows all four dimensions to intersect – that flexibility is good. However, we would like to see school-based CPD highlighted as the 'norm' – or at least, highlighted as the standard to work towards, given that CPD in Ireland

currently takes place largely outside of school, in spite of the research cited, which points to school-based CPD having far greater long-term impact. The term 'External' could be replaced with 'The Wider World' (linking into the concept of Global Citizenship, outlined under our next point).

PRIORITY LEARNING AREAS

The UN Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative[2] calls for a priority focus on fostering global citizenship. This document states that the world faces global challenges, which require global solutions. These interconnected global challenges require far-reaching changes in how we think and act for the dignity of fellow human beings. It is not enough for education to produce individuals who can read, write and count. Education must be transformative and bring shared values to life. It must cultivate an active care for the world and for those with whom we share it. It requires transforming the way people think and act. Education must fully assume its central role in helping people to forge more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies. It must give people the understanding, skills and values they need to cooperate in resolving the interconnected challenges of the 21st century.

Within this context, the Priority Learning Areas outlined in *Cosán* are certainly relevant, but do not go far enough in articulating our shared responsibility to help form global citizens. We propose that Global Citizenship Education and Education for Sustainable Development should be included as priority/potential learning areas given that the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development emphasises the need for education to equip learners *"with the relevant knowledge, the key dispositions and skills and the values that will motivate and empower them throughout their lives to become informed active citizens who take action for a more sustainable future."*[3] Global Citizenship Education and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) should also be referenced as a sub heading under 'Wellbeing'.

We make these recommendations within the broader context of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals by the UN General Assembly in September 2015; the focus on wellbeing, equality and sustainability within the Junior Cycle Framework (2015); and the introduction of Politics and Society as a Leaving Certificate Subject (see Conclusion for further points on policy coherence and *Cosán*). The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which have been ratified by Ireland, require UN member states to, *"by 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development."*[4]

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[2] http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/priorities.html

[3] https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/National-Strategy-on-Education-for-Sustainable-Development-in-Ireland-2014-2020.pdf Page 3

[4] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1579SDGs%20Proposal.pdf Goal 4.7

CONCLUSION

In order for the proposed framework on teacher CPD to be as comprehensive and coherent as possible, it should be explicitly linked to existing government policy and initiatives, as well as broader international policies that the Irish Government has committed to, such as:

- The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (Department of Education and Skills, 2014-2020);
- The Junior Cycle Framework (Department of Education and Skills, 2015);
- One World One Future: Ireland's Policy for International Development (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2014);
- Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015).

The Development Education sector possesses the required expertise and skills to continue the valuable contribution it has already made in the field of teacher education and capacity building. The accreditation of approved providers is also an area where the Development Education sector can make a significant contribution, with its valuable illustrations of the impact of innovative, participative approaches to teacher professional development (from ITE to CPD) that focus on theory, practice, reflection and action. These examples would greatly enrich and benefit the future development and implementation of *Cosán*. To this end, we have attached a selection of one-page case studies based on the CPD experiences of teachers who are engaged DE practitioners. These track the inter-related opportunities that Development Education and involvement with organisations in this field provide in relation to teachers' professional development right across the continuum of their careers.

Appendix One: IDEA Formal Education Working Group Members

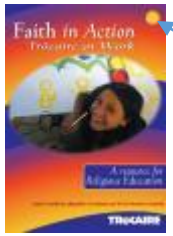
This submission has been compiled by the following subgroup:

- WorldWise Global Schools
- The Ubuntu Network
- Trócaire
- A Partnership with Africa (APA)
- 80:20: Educating and Acting for a Better World
- Children in Crossfire
- Darran Irvine (individual)

On behalf of all IDEA Formal Education Working Group members:

- Amawele
- Amnesty International, Ireland
- An Taisce
- Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland
- CDETB Curriculum Development Unit
- Childfund
- Concern
- EcoUNESCO
- DICE project
- Friends of Londiani
- Galway One World Centre
- GOAL
- Gorta-Self Help Africa
- Global Citizenship Schools
- Irish Jesuit Missions
- John Scottus Secondary School
- Kimmage Development Studies Centre
- Léargas
- Loreto Education Centre
- Ben Mallon (PhD student)
- Sean Coakley (teacher)
- Sightsavers
- St Patrick's College
- Suas
- UNICEF
- Value Added in Africa
- Young Social Innovators

CASE STUDY 1: TRÓCAIRE



Coordinated a cluster group of 6 schools which provided student workshops – **Learning through practice**

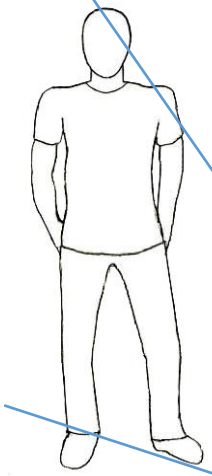
Undertook reading on current development issues e.g. climate change - **Reading**

Coordinated consultation workshop with teachers and NGO re identifying development education opportunities in their subject area – **Learning through collaboration and Mentoring and Coaching**

Undertook Masters in Religious Education/Chaplaincy – **Courses and programmes**

Engaged in teacher study visit to Malawi – **Immersive professional activities**

Developed RE Resource for Junior Certificate: Faith in Action – **Learning through Practice**



Supported other teachers to implement a whole school approach – **Mentoring and coaching, Learning through collaboration**

Collaborated with colleagues: Geography, CSPE, Woodwork re integrating development education across the curriculum – **Learning through collaboration**

Developed relationship with local community radio to raise profile of development issues and actions being undertaken by staff and students – **Learning through practice, Professional contributions**

Ran events in the community to raise awareness of development issues in conjunction with colleagues and students – **Learning through collaboration, Mentoring and Coaching, Professional contributions**

Developed relationship between the school and local asylum seeker centre – **Learning through practice**

Participated in workshops and seminars for teachers organised by WorldWise Global Schools, Trócaire and others – **Workshops, seminars and other events**

CASE STUDY 2: Children in Crossfire

Designed and implemented curriculum materials for Global Citizenship

Learning Through Practice	Developing curriculum materials
Mentoring and Coaching	Working as a member of a Professional Support Team
Learning Through Collaboration	Sharing ideas and resources with colleagues Actively participating in professional Learning Communities

Co-facilitated CPD teacher training to peers

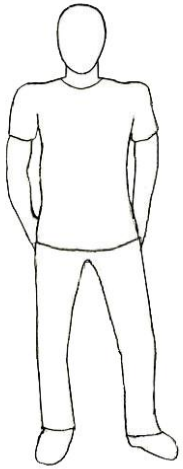
Learning Through Practice	Engaging in team teaching
Mentoring/ Coaching	Supporting colleagues to develop their teaching Engaging in coaching activities Working as a mentor or a member of a professional support team
Learning Through Collaboration	Engaging in peer observation and collective reflection Engaging in professional conversations with colleagues in my school or in other schools Sharing ideas and resources with colleagues Sharing experiences with colleagues through making presentations or otherwise contributing to the knowledge base of teaching and learning
Professional Contributions	Delivering a lecture or facilitating a workshop or other professional learning activity

Attended Teaching Controversial Issues in Schools Professional Development course for teachers

Learning Through Collaboration	Sharing ideas and resources with colleagues Engaging in peer observation and collective reflection
Workshops, seminars and other events	Participating at a conference or workshop Attending lectures or seminars

Pilot a new initiative for Junior Cycle level, which links personal development/well-being to local and global citizenship

Learning Through Practice	Action research projects Piloting new initiatives Developing and implementing curriculum materials
Learning Through Collaboration	Engaging in professional conversations with colleagues in my school or in other schools Sharing ideas and resources with colleagues Sharing experiences with colleagues through making presentations or otherwise contributing to the knowledge base of teaching and learning



Delivered Initial Teacher Education Personal Development/Well-being and Global Citizenship Training

Mentoring/ Coaching	Engaging in coaching activities Working as a mentor or member of a Professional Support Team
Learning Through Collaboration	Sharing ideas and resources with colleagues Sharing experiences with colleagues through making presentations or otherwise contributing to the knowledge base of teaching and learning Engaging in peer observation and collective reflection
Professional contributions	Delivering a lecture or facilitating a workshop or other professional learning activity

CASE STUDY 3: WorldWise Global Schools

Responsible for devising an overall Development Education school policy, and integrating DE into schemes of work for the school, through collaboration with management

Learning through practice

Coordinates annual development education conference for teachers & students in collaboration with the ETB (30 teacher and 200 student participants)

Supported other teachers in the implementation of a whole school approach to DE through peer mentoring.

Mentoring /Coaching

Organised a whole staff workshop on Development Education using Croke Park hours. Teachers developed lesson plans collaboratively during this time.

Delivered workshops with students at the ETB 'Teach Meet' entitled "DE in your subject area."

Learning through collaboration

Currently collaborating with school leadership and students to get FSC certification for the school

Active member of History, Georgraphy and CSPE Associations, bringing her DE experience and ideas to these associations whenever possible.

Contributed to Gorta Self Help Africa educational resource on Eriteria following study visitsthere

Professional Contributions

Contributed to consultations on draft subject specifications run by the NCCA. Very open to further opportunities regarding

Participated in a study visit to Eritrea with development NGO - Gorta-Self Help Africa

Developed relationship between the school and community groups to work on making the local town Fairtrade

Reading

Regularly reads the deved.ie blog, the Guardian Development Network News

Developed relationship with local community radio and media to raise profile of development issues and actions being undertaken by staff and students

Workshops, seminars & other events

Participated in WorldWise Global Schools Annual Conferences in 2014 & 2015 and Teacher Training Events (including Residential) in

Immersive Professional Activities

Ran events in the community to raise awareness of development issues in conjunction with colleagues and students

Courses & Programmes

CASE STUDY 4: Student Teacher Perspective - impact of student teaching placements in a developing context.[5]

Developed teaching course African Culture and Development Issues and piloting in schools
- **Learning through practice**
- **Professional contributions**
- **Learning through collaboration**

Undertook reading on current development issues e.g. climate change, child labour etc.
- **Reading**

Undertook further education in development education issues
- **Courses and programmes**

Engaged in teacher study visits to Gambia and Zambia
- **Immersive professional activities**
- **Learning through collaboration**

Ran Africa Night in the community to raise awareness of development issues in conjunction with colleagues and students
- **Learning through collaboration**
- **Workshops, seminars and other events**

Engaged in peer reflections and a research project on the impact of study visits in a development context
- **Learning through collaboration**
- **Professional contributions**

Collaborated with colleagues: re integrating development education across the curriculum
- **Mentoring/coaching**
- **Learning through collaboration**

[5] Source: *The Impacts of Student Teaching Placements in a Developing Context* (2010) research report by Mary Immaculate College and 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World. Note: activities were not 'exclusive' but rather students moved between them at different rates and at different times.