

# **National Programme of Training for Boards of Management**

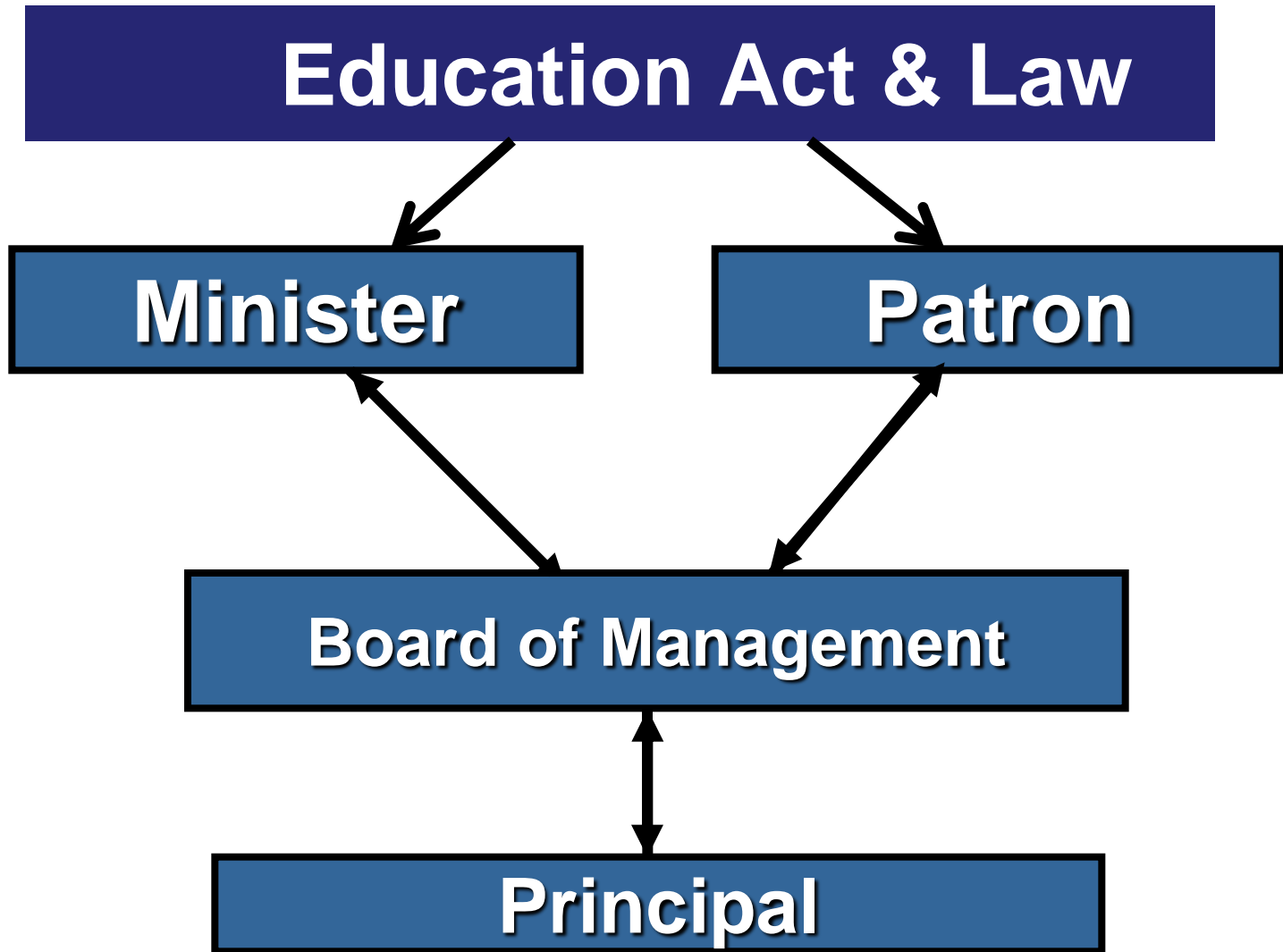
## **The Board as Corporate Entity**

**2012**

# **Role & Functions of Board of Management**

- Corporate responsibility
- Role and functions
- Relationships with others
- The Board in action
- Q & A

# Overview



# Who is on the BoM?

## **Schools with more than one teacher:**

- 2 direct nominees of the Patron
- 2 parents of children enrolled in the school  
*(one mother, one father)*
- The principal teacher
- One other teacher on the staff of the school, elected by vote of the teaching staff including the principal
- 2 extra members proposed by the six above

## **Board as corporate body**

- All 8 members of the Board, once appointed, act together as a unit
- Individuals do not act as representing various groups within the Board ...
- “Nominees” not “representatives”

# Body Corporate

A succession or collection of persons having, in the estimation of the law, an existence and rights and duties separate from those of the persons who form it from time to time.

Murdoch's Dictionary of Irish Law (2004) p.113

# Indemnity

The Board and the individual members of a Board are a corporate body and as individuals are indemnified for any claims made against them under Section 14 (7) of the Education Act, 1998 provided the members act in good faith.

# Functions of the BoM

- Manage the school on behalf of the Patron & provide an appropriate education for each student
- Act in accordance with legislation & policy
- Uphold ethos/characteristic spirit
- Consult & inform patron
- Publish policies
- Be accountable s.18 Education Act



# Board of Management ...

## **The Pupils:**

The school exists for the pupils.

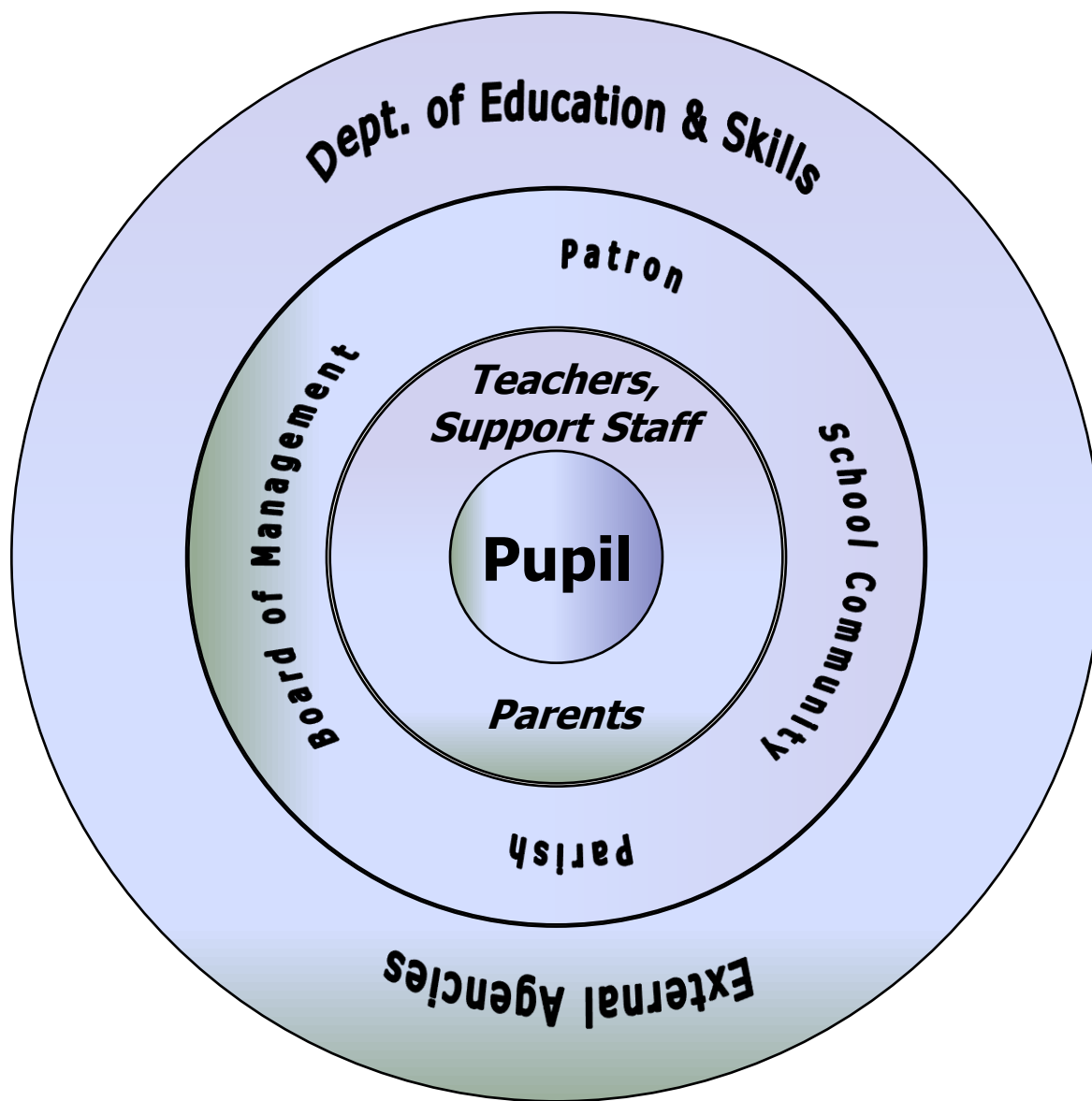
The educational progress and the welfare of the students should be the overriding consideration in all decisions arrived at by the BoM

## **The staff:**

The staff are the single most valuable and important asset of the school...

# Who is involved in a school?

- Children
- Parents/guardians
- Principal
- Teachers – classroom, resource, Learning-Support etc.
- Deputy principal, assistant principal, special duties teacher (Posts of Responsibility)
- Shared teachers
- Special Needs Assistant(s)
- Secretary & Caretaker
- Cleaner
- Inspector
- Diocesan advisors
- Visiting teachers - for sensory impaired
- Health professionals
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Patron
- Trustees
- INTO, IMPACT, SIPTU
- Management Bodies e.g. CPSMA, C of I, Educate Together, An Foras...
- Irish Primary Principals' Network
- Parents' Association/National Parents Council
- NEWB/EWO/SENO/NCSE
- Others?



# **Your contribution/s ...**

- Experience
- Time
- Commitment
- Support to school community
- Opinions and ideas
- Acting collectively as management
- Working as a team
- Learning community

# Good Practices ...

## **Board itself ...**

- Declaration of Acceptance of Membership
- Election of officers
- Delegation of tasks ...
- Regular meetings
- Consider role as BoM and priorities for next 4 years – WSE report
- Build on work of previous board - meet previous board perhaps...
- Meet other boards locally? Post primary contact?
- Information on school – classes, teachers, pupils ...
- School plan
- Circulars/Newsletters/Website from Patron/Patron Body

# Good Practices ...

- Communication – sharing of information
- Decision making following discussion, consultation  
- preferably by consensus
- Policies and procedures –
  - Give clarity
  - Ratified by BoM
- Confidentiality - Agreed report from each meeting
- Complaints dealt with in accordance with procedure

# Good Practices ...

## **Working Together as a Board**

- Positive/negative issue
- Home school links clarified....
- Complaints procedure

## **BoM and School Staff**

- Meet staff and all working with school – affirmation
- Grievance procedures
- Social occasion/s
- Other ...

# Good Practices ...

## **The Board and pupils/parents**

- Communication in a way all can understand..
- Parents' Association contact
- Social functions
- Other

## **The Board and the Community**

- Newsletter
- School website as means of linking with school
- Support/Attendance at events
- Reaching into the local community/parish...



# **The Board of Management in Action**

# Meetings ...

- Number
- Duration
- Notification
- Purpose/agenda
- Declaration of interests

## Roles ...

- Chairperson
- Principal teacher
- Recording secretary
- Treasurer
- Other:
  - Maintenance/buildings officer

# Chairperson ...

- Appointed by Patron
- No direct relationship to any other BoM/staff member where practicable
- Convening meetings/agenda
- Chairing meetings/casting vote
- Actions between meetings - reported to BOM at subsequent meeting
- Correspondent with DES & others
- Recruitment of staff
- Capital projects with patron/trustees approval
- Declarations/Forms/Agreements/cheques

# Principal's role...

## **Day to day management of the school**

- Leader of learning – sets objectives for school
- Environment conducive to learning
- Professional development of staff
- Parental involvement
- Is central to carrying out functions of the school and board

## Secretary (Principal) ...

- Notification of meetings
- Items for agenda
- Correspondence prepared for chairperson
- Minutes of meetings
- Filing and recording
- Provide members of BoM with latest relevant books, circulars, publications

[Chairperson remains as correspondent for BoM]

## **Recording Secretary...**

Duties confined to:

1. Setting agenda in consultation with Chairperson + Principal
2. Keeping minutes in an appropriate form, retained in a safe place, made available on request to representatives of Patron, DES, Trustees
3. Recording decisions reached – number of votes for and against

# Treasurer ...

- Elected from among members-cannot be Principal or teacher nominee
- School accounts
- Treasurer's report



# **Maintenance/Buildings Officer ...**

Responsibility for:

- Cleaning staff/cleaning contractors
- Caretaker
- Materials/equipment

# Safety issues...

Responsibility for:

- Health and Safety statement
- Maintenance of security & fire alarm system
- Co-ordinating a list of out of hours key holders for the school
- Other...

## **Other functions to delegate ...**

- Use of school for after hours activities
- Holiday maintenance
- Research ...
- Relationships with community/parish
- 'Research' as required
- Other ...

# Agenda ...

- **Opening: prayer/other depending on ethos**

Bereavements etc. noted here

- **Attendance and apologies**

- **Minutes:**

- Drawn up by secretary
- Confidential to those entitled to be at the particular meeting/s
- Patron & DES can have access
- Decisions recorded and read aloud
- Agreed and signed by chairperson

# Agenda ...

- **Matters arising from minutes**
  - Follow up on decisions ...
- **Correspondence**
  - Relevant correspondence to chairperson should be brought to Board's attention
  - Circulars, newsletters etc.
  - Letters of complaint etc. dealt with in accordance with procedures
  - Legal advice
- **Finance**
  - Treasurer's report at every meeting

# Agenda ...

- **Principal teacher's report**

Information and advice

- **AoB**

- **Agreed report**

Confidentiality

What information? To whom? By whom? How?

- **Suggestion**

Section of Handbook/policy for review at each meeting ...

- **Next meeting**

Date/time

# Principal's Report ...

Significant issues of concern related to life & function of the school

- Child Protection
- Literacy /numeracy
- Enrolment
- Staff *e.g.* in-service needs
- Posts of Responsibility - issues
- Teacher absences
- Pupil absences – Education Welfare Act
- Applications for...
- Public relations
- Tours

# Principal's Report ...

- Holidays and closures
- Repairs
- Health and Safety
- Future planning
- Transition to post-primary
- Class allocation
- Religious events/festivals
- Visitors
- Special needs
- Recent circulars



# Principal's Report ...

- Issues in relation to staffing
- Supervision
- Parent teacher meetings
- Policy issues
- Legislation
- Training/professional development
- Resource requirements
- Other...

# Sub committees ...

- **Finance**
- **Maintenance**
- **Research**
- **Legislation etc.**

- Co-opt expertise as required and draft guidelines for terms of reference, time scale, reporting to BOM etc.
- Minority from outside the BOM

Good practice:

- Liaise with other BoM locally
- Beware BoM decisions impinging on another school

# Procedures

## Procedures

- Addressing Parental Complaints
- Dealing with Workplace Bullying and Harassment
- Addressing Staff Relations Difficulties
- Grievance Procedure

# Backdrop...

- Each employee is personally responsible for his/her own work, conduct, performance, attendance etc.
- Employees to be given copies of procedures
- Address issues at the earliest opportunity
- Employees must co-operate with procedures

# Parental Complaints

## General Principles:

- Seek to resolve
  - with teacher
  - with principal
  - with Chairperson of Board of Management
- Procedures currently under review

# **Role of Department of Education & Skills**

- Should refer complainant back to Board of Management
- Implementation of S.28 awaited
- If issues involves functioning of BoM the Minister may have a role under S. 19

# Avoiding difficulties ...

- Good internal communication
- Processes of decision making which are inclusive
- Effective school policies and procedures which give clarity
- Mutual respect
- A sense of fairness
- Conflict resolution procedures ...



# Natural Justice and Fair Procedure

- Applicable Procedures
- Matters must be fairly examined & processed
- Details of any allegation or complaints are put to the employee
- Employee given opportunity to respond
- Right of employee to be represented
- Legal representation is not envisaged
- Right to fair & impartial determination
- Adhere to timeframes
- Keep records

# Other training modules ...

**September 2012 – April 2013**

- School plan – legislation, policies, practices and procedures
- Financial management for treasurers and chairpersons
- Child protection
- Appointment procedures

# Essential reading for Board Members ...

- Department of Education & Skills:
  - *Constitution of Boards & Rules of Procedure (2011)*
- Department Circulars
- Newsletters from Management Body
- Looking at Our School
- Other...

# Some sources of information

- [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)
- [www.cpsma.ie](http://www.cpsma.ie)
- [www.nabmse.org](http://www.nabmse.org)
- [foras.ie](http://foras.ie)
- [www.educatetogether.ie](http://www.educatetogether.ie)
- [gaelscoileanna.ie](http://gaelscoileanna.ie)
- [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie)
- [www.equality.ie](http://www.equality.ie)
- [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)
- [www.npc.ie](http://www.npc.ie)

# Reminders

- Register signed
- Evaluations completed and returned
- Handouts
- Arrangements for next training session  
*(if applicable)*