



wwetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
*Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board*

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

MINUTES

Of meeting held February 24th, 2026

*Held at Waterford Training Centre, Waterford Industrial Park, Cork
Road, Waterford X91 PX02.*

Tuesday 24th February at 3.00p.m.

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB)

Minutes of Meeting held 24th February at 3.00p.m.

Board Members in attendance: *Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan Chairperson, Cllr. Jim Codd, Cllr. Blaise Hannigan, Cllr. John Pratt, Cllr. John O'Leary, Mr. Pat Rath, Cllr. Michael Sheehan, Dr Mary Meade, Cllr. Donnchadh Mulcahy, Mr. Niall Finn, Ms. Foluke Adewumi, Cllr Mary Farrell, Cllr Aidan Browne, Ms. Kate Miskella, Mr. Garret Hickey. Ms. Margaret Darrer*

Also in attendance: *Dr. Karina Daly, Chief Executive (CE), Mr. Michael O'Brien, (Director of Organisation Support & Development), Ms. Eimear Ryan (Director of Schools), Ms. Caitríona Cullen (Director of Further Education and Training), Mr. Mark Devereux (Director of Organisation Support & Development), Mr. Fintan O'Reilly, Corporate Services (CS) Manager and Mr. Cathal Cremer, Finance Manager.*

Apologies: *Cllr Paddy Kavanagh, Cllr. Bridín Murphy, Ms. Janine Flynn and Dr. Richard Hayes*

240226.01 APOLOGIES

Apologies as listed above were noted and included.

Mr. Michael O'Brien advised members that Under Section 36(3) of the ETB Act 2013 a person shall be taken to have resigned as a member of an education and training board where the person is absent from meetings of the Board held during any 6 consecutive month period. Mr. O'Brien confirmed that due to illness, Cllr Paddy Kavanagh was unable to attend recent meetings and could reach the threshold, as comprehended by the Act.

Pursuant to Section 36(4) of the ETB Act 2013, the Board resolved to extend the relevant period for Cllr. Kavanagh to 12 months from the relevant date

Proposed: Cllr Mary Farrell; **Seconded:** Cllr Jim Codd

Cllr Lola O'Sullivan (Chair) on behalf of the board welcomed two new Directors, Ms. Caitríona Cullen, Director of Further Education and Training (FET) and Mr. Mark Devereux, Director of Organisation Support and Development (OSD).

240226.02 CONDOLENCES

Olive Reddy, Wexford College, on the passing of her father, Nicholas Moore.

Carol O'Malley, Safety Advisor, Wexford Training Centre, on the passing of her brother James Roland.

Margaret Nunn, VTOS Teacher, on the passing of her brother, Declan Bates.

Ann-Marie Hickey, Corporate Services, Ardcavan, on the passing of her mother, Ann Hickey.

Joan Flannagan-Cowman, SNA at St. Pauls Community College, on the passing of her mother, Eileen Flanagan.

Michelle Ryan, Human Resources, Wexford Head Office, on the passing of her sister-in-law, Susan Roche.

Susan Brady, Teacher with BTEI, on the passing of her husband Eugene Brady.

Eileen O'Connor, Acting Deputy Principal WCFE, on the passing of her brother, Donal O'Carroll.

Fintan O'Reilly, Corporate Services Manager, on the recent passing of his brother-in-law.

Cllr. Jim Codd requested the board express condolences to the family of Fr. Odhrán Furlong who had been involved in the Meitheal programme at Bridgetown College.

Cllr Michael Sheehan requested the board express condolences to Phyl Cullen, Youthreach, on the passing of her husband, John Cullen.

240226.03 CONGRATULATIONS

WWETB Inter-Firms Football Team who won the Southeast football league, beating Tipperary ETB by a score of 3-21 to 2-6.

WWETB Inter-Firms Hurling Team who won the Senior Hurling league final, beating Tirlán by a score of 1-15 to 1-14.

Katie Moore, Gorey Youthreach, on the recent birth of her baby boy.

Cllr John O’Leary requested that the board express congratulations to St. Declans College who won the hockey Southeast Inter A Cup and League and the first-year team who won the B league and have now been promoted to the A league.

240226.04 DECLARATION OF INTEREST – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest declaration forms were issued to the Board for completion and return *{to fulfil requirements as set out in CL0083/2024 Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards}*. No conflicts of interest were declared.

Mr. Michael O’Brien reminded members of their obligations to complete the Standards in Public Office (SIPO) return. He asked members who have not yet submitted their return to do so as soon as possible. Members may submit their form to WWETB who will make the return on their behalf if they wish.

240226.05 MINUTES

The minutes of the Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) meeting held on *13th January 2026* were adopted.

Proposed Mr. Niall Finn; **Seconded** Dr Mary Meade.

240226.06 FINANCE

(a) Finance Update

Mr. Cathal Cremer provided a financial update to the Board and noted that the annual financial statements are due for submission to the Department by 31st March. He advised that figures were presented to the Finance Committee at their meeting on 12th February 2026. He also advised the final FET/SOLAS budget confirmed for 2026 is €91.8M. Preliminary figures issued to FET as of 23rd February 2026.

Mr. Michael O’Brien advised that the financial update is contained in the Chief Executives report as circulated to members

Cllr. Michael Sheehan queried if there has been a change in policy on ESOL funding.

Dr Karina Daly advised that in 2025, the FET sector received a temporary national funding allocation of €20 million, which allowed ETBs to significantly expand ESOL provision in

response to heightened demand arising from recent migration trends. For 2026, ESOL funding has returned to the baseline national allocation of €4.5 million, and WWETB, in line with all ETBs, must now plan its provision within these established resources while continuing to respond to local demand.

(b) Service Plan 2026

The WWETB Draft Service Plan 2025 as circulated was discussed.

Mr. Michael O'Brien, Director of OSD, presented a high-level overview of the 2026 service plan as aligned to WWETB's six strategic goals (Quality, Schools and FET Colleges of future, Communications and Marketing, Health and Wellbeing, Climate Action and Sustainability and TEL/Digital Learning). He updated board members on the priority actions under each pillar, which will be the key focus of work during 2026. He also referred to the FET service plan which had been included in the service plan. He confirmed that the plan had been reviewed and agreed by the finance committee at its meeting on February 12th.

Mr Cathal Cremer, Finance Manager, gave an overview of the financial element of the service plan. He advised members that this year an indicative figure was provided by SOLAS. He also advised that a letter from the Department of Education and Youth was received on 31st January. The board approved the service plan for 2026.

Proposed: Cllr Blaise Hannigan; **Seconded:** Cllr Mary Farrell.

Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan requested that WWETB communications should, where possible, feature images of WWETB learners and staff.

Dr. Karina Daly advised that WWETB does run campaigns using images of its students and learners. She added that although a previous bank of images existed, many were unsuitable due to issues such as backgrounds and image quality.

Mr. Michael O'Brien advised that services are being procured to train staff in social-media skills

Cllr Blaise Hannigan referred to a current course being offered by WWETB in Parnell Street, and that this should be used to support staff to develop social media skills. Dr. Daly advised that this course does not meet the specific social-media training needs required.

240226.07 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) OCAG Insights: Providing good quality financial information.

Mr. Michael O'Brien brought to the attention of members the OCAG insights document as circulated. He advised the document had also been circulated to the ARC and Finance Committee.

(b) Mr. Michael O'Brien advised members he was in receipt of a letter from Mr. Michael Drea, Co. Secretary, Wexford Co. Council to confirm Cllr Darragh McDonald had stepped down as a WWETB Board member effective 9th February 2026. He advised Cllr McDonald will be replaced by Cllr. Patricia Byrne. The Board wished Cllr McDonald well.

Consideration will be given to Cllr McDonalds current role on the board of Creagh College

Mr. Michael O'Brien will formally acknowledge the letter from the County Secretary and will write to Cllr Patricia Byrne to welcome her to the Board of WWETB.

This was noted by the Board members.

240226.08 GOVERNANCE

(a) Risk Management:

The corporate risk register as circulated was reviewed. Mr. Michael O'Brien advised that the register was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) on 11th February 2026. Mr. O'Brien explained that other risk registers will be presented to the Board throughout the year.

Ms. Kate Miskella, gave an overview of the recent ARC meeting. She acknowledged the steps taken to address recommendations following the ISMS internal audit. A follow-up ISMS audit took place in December 2025 with an effective finding.

Mr. O'Brien brought to the Boards attention information in relation to a data breach reported to the Data Protection Commission (DPC). He advised that based on the information available at the time the breach was reported as medium risk. The matter is still under review. Given information subsequently received this may be adjusted to a low risk. He advised that the ARC was updated on the breach at their meeting of 11th of February. The Statement of Internal Control (SIC) was also discussed and approved at the ARC committee meeting.

All items of risk were noted by the Board.

(b) Approval/ Renewal of Leases:

Due to their membership of Wexford County Council, the following members of the Board absented themselves from the meeting during discussion of this matter. Cllr Mary Farrell, Cllr Michael Sheehan, Cllr Jim Codd and Cllr Aidan Browne.

Mr. Fintan O'Reilly, Corporate Services Manager, advised the board of WWETB owned land in New Ross which it was proposed would be disposed of to Wexford County Council to facilitate a new housing development. Mr. O'Reilly provided maps of the proposed land which it was proposed to be disposed of.

It was resolved to dispose of the land as described to Wexford County Council subject to Ministerial approval.

Proposed Ms. Kate Miskella; **Seconded** Mr. Pat Rath.

(c) Nominations for Boards of Management

- (i) Enniscorthy Community College – Board nominee - Mr. John O'Connor
Proposed Mr. Niall Finn; **Seconded** Cllr. Mary Farrell

- (ii) Youth Work Committee: Representative for Wexford Comhairle na nÓg – Leah Molyneaux.

Proposed Cllr. Michael Sheehan; **Seconded** Ms. Kate Miskella.

(d) Charities Annual Report

The Charities annual report as circulated was reviewed. Mr. Michael O'Brien, Director of OSD, informed the Board that the report was submitted to the charities regulator. This was noted by the Board.

(e) Wexford Area Committee – Terms of Reference

Mr. Michael O'Brien, Director, OSD advised that a review of the terms of reference of the Wexford Area Committee had been deferred from the January meeting. Cllr Mary Farrell provided an update of two Wexford meetings held during 2025, both of which were very informative and provided committee members with a valuable opportunity to engage with staff and learn about activities at a local level. To encourage attendance, it was agreed that one area meeting would be held in North Wexford and one in South Wexford before June and the structure of the committee would be reviewed following these meetings.

This was agreed and noted by Board members.

(f) Standing orders – remote attendance at meetings

The proposed amendments to standing orders in connection with the updating of procedures regarding remote meetings, as circulated, were reviewed. It was agreed that the standing orders would be updated in accordance with the proposed amendments. In addition, members would be required to attend at least 3 meetings in person.

Proposed; Ms. Kate Miskella; **Seconded** Mr. Niall Finn.

240226.09 POLICIES

Three policies were presented to the Board for noting.

- (a) Policy for the Prevention and Resolution of Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work.
- (b) Domestic Violence and abuse policy and supports for recognized primary and post-primary schools and ETBs.
- (c) Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy.

Policies were noted by the board.

240226.10 CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT #1

Mr. Michael O'Brien provided members with a high-level overview of the Chief Executives report drawing attention to items including the announcement of schools that will receive funding as part of the initial two-year period of the NDP rollout during 2026 and 2027. Unfortunately, no WWETB schools were included in the list. WWETB will continue to engage with the Department regarding this. He advised that a protocol is currently in draft in relation to the formal invitation

of board members to events and of the 5-year strategy for Music Generation.

Eimear Ryan, Director of Schools advised members that Mr. John Connolly had been appointed Principal of Selskar College. She also advised members of the invitation to attend the '*In Harmony*' concert scheduled to take place at the National Opera House on 10th March 2026.

A discussion took place regarding schools not included in the initial NDP roll out but where works are required. Dr Daly advised that the Department would consider shorter works where there is a significant need. Kate Miskella referred to a leaking roof at Bridgetown College and Cllr Mary Farrell said there were similar issues at Coláiste an Átha. It was agreed that Eimear Ryan would follow up with the buildings team.

Dr Karina Daly, Chief Executive, provided an update following the recent announcement by Minister Lawless of the development of a tertiary campus at Ballynagee, Wexford. She advised that WWETB is working with SETU to develop a business case for the campus. She confirmed that a governance structure had been agreed between both organisations.

Cllr Michael Sheehan asked if there are any indicative timeframes on delivery of the development. Dr Daly advised that there is 7 years left on the lease in the current FET Centre and it was intended that the campus would be in place prior to the expiry of this lease.

This was noted by the committee.

240226.11 COMMITTEE REPORTS / MINUTES TO BOARD

The following committee minutes were noted by the Board.

- (a) Minutes of ARC Committee meeting of 26/11/2025
- (b) Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 09/12/2025

Noted by the committee.

240226.12 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING MINUTES

- (a) Bridgetown College BoM Minutes 04.11.2025
- (b) Creagh College BoM Minutes 06.11.2025
- (c) Creagh College BoM Minutes 22.01.2025 - draft
- (d) Kennedy College BoM Minutes 02.09.2025
- (e) Kilnamanagh CNS BoM Minutes 15.01.2026 - draft
- (f) Kilnamanagh CNS BoM Minutes 20.11.2025
- (g) St Declans CC BoM Minutes 30.09.2025
- (h) WCFE BoM Minutes 11.09.2025
- (i) Gorey Hill School BoM Minutes 07.10.2025
- (j) Gorey Hill School BoM Minutes 03.12.2025
- (k) WCFE BoM Minutes 06.11.2025
- (l) Coláiste Abbáin BoM Minutes 03.12.2025
- (m) Coláiste Abbáin BoM Minutes 21.01.2026 - draft
- (n) WCFE BoM Minutes 26.01.2026 - draft

240226.13 CIRCULAR LETTERS: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and YOUTH

{available: <https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/>}

- (a) **0001/2026:** Changes to 1:50,000 Discovery Series Maps.
- (b) **0002/2026:** Application of Bonus marks for all components of State examinations through Irish to be examined in Leaving Certificate 2027 and in subsequent years.
- (c) **0003/2026:** Teacher Fee Refund Scheme 2025
- (d) **0004/2026:** Revision of Primary Teacher Salaries under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026 effective from 01 February 2026.
- (e) **0005/2026:** Revision of Post-Primary Teacher Salaries under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026 effective from 01 February 2026.
- (f) **0006/2026:** Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026 effective from 01 February 2026.
- (g) **0007/2026:** Revision of Salaries and Allowances of Certain Grades other than Teachers and SNAs employed by ETBs under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026 effective from 01 August 2024.
- (h) **0008/2026:** Revision of Salaries of Clerical Officers and Caretakers employed under the 1978/1979 Scheme under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026 effective from 01 February 2026.
- (i) **0009/2026:** Revision of Salaries of School Secretaries and School Maintenance Staff in Community and Comprehensive Schools effective from 01 February 2026.
- (j) **0010/2026:** Revision of Salaries for School Secretaries Previously Grant Funded and Bus Escorts Effective from 01 February 2026.
- (k) **0014/2026:** Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure 2026
- (l) **0017/2026:** Extension to the Waiver of Abatement of public Sector Pensions under Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012.
- (m) **0018/2026:** Standardisation of the School Year in respect of primary & Post-Primary Schools for the years 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29.
- (n) **0019/2026:** Concurrent Initial Teacher Education Bursary Scheme (STEM Bursary)

240226.14 PRESS RELEASES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and YOUTH

{available: <https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/>}

- (a) Minister Naughton wishes students well as she attends opening day of Stripe Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition.
- (b) Minister for Education and Youth Hildegard Naughton congratulates Aoibheann Daly on winning the 2026 Stripe Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition.
- (c) Ministers Naughton and Murnane O'Connor launch Active Schools 'Active Break Every Day' challenge promoting wellbeing in school communities.
- (d) Ministers Naughton, Foley and Moynihan launch the National Conversation on Education.
- (e) Minister Naughton sees education in action during school visits across County Kildare.
- (f) Minister Naughton to pay tribute to work of school communities as she visits schools in Monaghan.
- (g) North-South Shared Island Teachers Research Exchange (T-REX) Platform Announced.
- (h) Minister for Education and youth Hildegard Naughton TD welcomes interim additional-time scheme for students with specific needs in state examinations.

- (i) Minister Naughton publishes €7.55 billion NDP Sectoral Investment Plan for 2026 to 2030 period.
- (j) Minister for Education and Youth Hildegard Naughton to represent Ireland at Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (EYCS) council meeting in Cyprus.
- (k) Minister Naughton invites applications from schools for Creative Clusters 2026-2028.
- (l) Minister Naughton to visit schools in Laois where she will witness the dedication and hard work of staff and students first-hand.
- (m) Ministers Naughton and Moynihan announced first phased roll-out of Education Therapy Service (ETS).
- (n) Minister Naughton congratulates winners of the All-Island Schools History Competition.

240226.15 PRESS RELEASES: DEPARTMENT OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE

{available: https://www.gov.ie/en/search/?type=press_releases&organisation=department-of-higher-education-innovation-and-science}

- (a) Colour vision entry requirements updated for craft apprenticeships.
- (b) Government Approves Major Expansion of Tyndall National Institute.
- (c) Minister Lawless announces funding of almost €1.5M to advance Access, Equity and Opportunity in Further and Higher Education for Care Leavers and members of the Traveller and Roma communities.
- (d) Minister Lawless visits Strasbourg to engage with European Parliament in preparation for Irish Presidency.
- (e) One year into the Programme for Government.
- (f) Ministers Lawless and Harkin urge students to consider all their options ahead of CAO deadline.
- (g) Careers in construction action plan is updated to meet growing housing, climate and infrastructure needs.
- (h) Minister James Lawless launches De Chastelain Scholarship Programme.
- (i) Minister Lawless announces €28.5m investment to deliver over 1,100 new third level healthcare places.

240226.16 A.O.B.

- Cllr Jim Codd raised a query regarding the sourcing of food at WWETB canteens and asked if assurances could be provided that companies providing catering services source all of their food Ireland. He was advised that several companies are responsible for providing these services. All are appointed following competitive procurement processes which are carried out in accordance with the relevant statutory guidelines. It would not be possible to specify a requirement in these procurement exercises that all food must be sourced from Ireland. It was agreed that the relevant regulation/EU Directive would be circulated to all members for reference.
- Cllr Mary Farrell raised an item raised at a School Board of Management meeting that related to school tours and teachers paying for activities during trips. Mr. Cathal Cremer advised that under revenue guidelines, advances cannot be provided. He suggested that in most cases there is an agreement between the school and the tour operator where parents make payment for the tour and any pre-booked activities in advance of travel. Ms. Eimear

Ryan said no issue had been flagged with her directly, however, she will follow up separately with Cllr Farrell and the Principal of the school.

- Cllr Lola O'Sullivan asked members if they would be in favour of moving all remaining board meetings for 2026 to a 3pm start. Members in attendance agreed.

240226.17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board meeting will take place on Tuesday 24th March 2026 at 3.00pm, Wexford College, Whitemill Industrial Estate, Wexford Y35 XR22.



Signed: _____ Date: 24th March, 2026

Documents circulated:

Agenda: meeting of 13/01/26
Minutes of WWETB meeting held 11th
November 2025
Conflict of Interest Declaration
Forms
Committee Evaluations
Terms of Reference of ARC and
Finance Committee's
Minutes of Finance Committee of
16/09/25
Minutes of ARC Committee meeting
of 01/10/25
Minutes of Waterford Area
Committee meeting of 29/05/25
Minutes of Wexford Area
Committee meeting of 19/06/25
Board of Management Minutes