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 September 8th, 2026*

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

*Tuesday 8th September at 3.00p.m.*

# Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB)
## *Minutes of Meeting held 8 September at 3.00p.m.*

**Board Members in attendance:** *Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan Chairperson, Cllr. Jim Codd, Cllr. Blaise Hannigan, Cllr. John Pratt, Cllr Paddy Kavanagh, Mr. Pat Rath, Dr Mary Meade, Mr. Niall Finn, Cllr. Patricia Byrne, Dr. Richard Hayes, Ms. Margaret Darrer Laura, Ms. Sandra Winkle, Ms. Kate Miskella and Ms. Foluke Adewumi.*

**Also in attendance:** *Dr. Karina Daly, Chief Executive (CE), Mr.* Michael O'Brien, (Director of Organisation Support & Development), Mr. Mark Devereux (Director of Organisation Support & Development), Ms. Eimear Ryan (Director of Schools), Mr. Fintan O'Reilly, Corporate Services (CS) Manager, Ms. Kate Organ and Mr Paul O'Brien.

***Apologies:*** *Cllr. John O'Leary, Cllr Mary Farrell, Cllr Michael Sheehan, Cllr Donnchadh Mulcahy, Cllr. Pat Kehoe, Mr. Garrett Hickey, Cllr Aidan Browne, Ms. Caitriona Cullen (Director of FET).*

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**080926.01 APOLOGIES**
Apologies as listed above were noted and included.

In accordance with the recently amended standing orders, Mr. Michael O'Brien asked all members attending remotely to confirm:-

- Cameras would be kept on for the duration of the meeting.
- That they could see and hear the meeting.
- That there were no other persons present.
- That they were not recording the meeting or using any AI enabled functionality or technology.

**MATTERS ARISING**
Ms. Eimear Ryan updated the Board following a query at the June board meeting in relation to the allocation of special school places. She updated members on the admission policy that sets out the process for each school in the allocation of places, noting that applicants must qualify for admission to the specific Special Class where a diagnosis, relevant reports and an NCSE letter of eligibility is required. She advised that the policy is aligned with the principles of inclusion and applications are considered before applications for mainstream places during the admissions period. She also advised that where there are more applications than places, applications are considered against published selection criteria and applications are ranked accordingly. Selection criteria can vary from school to school but they are all compliant with relevant legislation and all are aligned to WWETB's core values.

The update was noted by the Board.

**080926.02 CONDOLENCES**
Nicola Kelleher, Adult Educator Learner Support, on the passing of her father, Donal Kelleher.
Sean Toomey, teacher at WCFE, on the passing of his sister, Siobhan Toomey.
The family of Eileen Flynn (retired), former employee of WCFE.
Cindy Ryan, teacher at Selskar College, on the passing of her father, Kenneth Merson (and father-in-law of Mike Ryan, Kennedy College).
Diane Murphy, Instructor at Waterford Training Centre, on the passing of her father, John Cooney.
Lisa Brennan, teacher at Enniscorthy Gonzaga House, on the passing of her father, Anthony Brennan.
Brenda Connick, teacher at Selskar College, on the passing of her father, Jackie Connick.
Maria Everett, teacher at WCFE, on the passing of her father, Gerry Everett.
Richard Quinn, teacher at WCFE, on the passing of his sister, Helen Craughwell.

Shane Dunphy, teacher at WCFE, on the passing of his father, Harry Dunphy.
P.J. Guinan, teacher at Coláiste an Átha, on the passing of his father James (Jimmy) Guinan.
Helen Hogan, guidance counsellor at Dungarvan College, on the passing of her husband Vincent O'Meara.
The family of Nicola McCarthy, (former Adult Literacy Organiser, retiree 2025).

The Board also expressed its sympathies to Henry Kirwan, Bridgetown College, on the passing of his father, John Kirwan and Cllr Michael Sheehan, Board Member, on the passing of his brother John Sheehan.

**080926.03 CONGRATULATIONS**

Cllr. Mary Farrell on her election as Cathaoirleach of Gorey Kilmuckridge Municipal District.
Cllr. Pat Kehoe on his election as Cathaoirleach of Enniscorthy Municipal District.
Cllr. Michael Sheehan on his elections as Leas Cathaoirleach of New Ross Municipal District.

**080926.04 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 conflict of interest was declared.

**080926.05 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) meeting held on 19th *June 2026* were adopted.

**Proposed** Cllr Blaise Hannigan; **Seconded** Cllr John Pratt.

**080926.06 FINANCE**

(a) **Finance Update**

Mr. Cathal Cremer provided board members with a financial update. In 2026, WWETB will be in a surplus position and will be returning money to SOLAS as part of the third quarter review. The final amount will be known closer to the mid-October submission to SOLAS when WWETB have figures for phase 4 and phase 6 apprenticeship allowances. However, Cathal stressed that it is important to put context to these figures as the initial budget for 2026 was looking substantially different in the latter half of 2025.

He advised that in 2025 WWETB had an initial allocation of €83.6M and in September 2025, SOLAS notified WWETB that any increase in the 2026 budget would be in the region of no more than 3% on the 2025 initial allocation only (this would represent a total budget of €86.1M) WWETB began its 2026 planning on this basis. The amount made available to WWETB in the 2026 budget, however, amounted to €92.2M by summer 2026 - an increase of over €6m on the projected budget – the majority increase of which was within the apprenticeship pot which is funded from the National Training Fund. Of this, c. €20M has been allocated for Phase 2,4 and 6 allowances.
A number of projects have been initiated that are comprehended with apprenticeship for

WWETB and there is significant work underway to ensure that as many of these projects as possible can be delivered in 2026.

(b) **Overdraft Facility**
Mr. Cathal Cremer sought board approval for the application of an overdraft facility of €3M for a 12-month period beginning on 1 January 2027.
He advised that sanction will be required from the Department of Education and Youth (DoEY).
Approved.

**Proposed** Cllr Paddy Kavanagh; **Seconded** Dr Richard Hayes.

**080926.07 PRESENTATION**

(a) **Music Generation Strategy**

Mr. Paul O'Brien, Business Development Manager, provided members with an update on the strategic planning process for music generation. He explained that Music Generation is a national music education programme that is co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, the Department of Education and Local Music Education Partnerships. In Wexford and Waterford, the programme is led by WWETB in partnership with Wexford Co. Council and Waterford City and County Council with the primary aim of enabling children and young people to realise their full potential through access to, and participation in, high-quality performance music education and performance opportunities. The review process identified several key strengths, including a strong team of educator's teams, effective partnership working, positive outcomes for young people, and high levels of participant satisfaction. However, a number of challenges were also highlighted, including the lack of permanent contracts, difficulties in retaining specialist staff, and increasing pressures on teams.

Infrastructure constraints, together with transport and venue issues, have prompted consideration of a central headquarters model, supported by music hubs to improve reach across the counties. The next phase of planning will focus on addressing issues relating to inclusion, reach, ambition and available resources, while also exploring opportunities for both staff teams and young musicians. A draft Strategic Plan will be submitted to the Senior Management Team for approval before its formal launch.

Ms. Kate Miskella queried difficulties with offering permanent contracts. The Chief Executive, Dr Karina Daly advised that WWETB will continue to look for funding and permanency for staff within the programme. She advised that in June, Minister Hildegarde Naughton announced a new phase of support for Music Generation.

The Board commended everyone involved and wished the programme continued success.

**080926.08 CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT #3**

- Mr. Michael O'Brien brought to the Boards attention a series of key highlights from the Chief Executives report, as circulated. He advised that WWETB are continuing to work with SETU on finalising a business case for the development of a Tertiary Campus at Ballynagee, Wexford. In collaboration with consultants, it is hoped that the business case will be submitted to DFHERIS for consideration in Q4 of 2026. He also advised that The Secretary General, Mr. Colm O'Reardon visited the site in August with plans progressing well.

- Following a consultation process over the Summer, WWETB have prepared a

comprehensive submission to the Department of Education and Youth on the National Development Plan.

- Mr. Mark Devereux updated members on WWETB's partnership with SETU. As part of this collaboration, a number of ESOL classes have relocated to College Street campus following the expiry of leases at Railway Square. He advised that a Memorandum of Understanding and Service Level Agreement are currently being prepared and will be presented to the Board at a future meeting.

- Ms. Eimear Ryan gave an update on construction at Gorey Hill which is aimed at providing additional teaching and learning spaces for the school. She advised that four classes will be delivered on a phased basis. When classrooms are ready the school will be in a position to offer 12 places in 2026/2027 and an additional 12 places in 2027/2028.

Mr. O'Brien asked members to contact him directly with any additional queries from the report.

**080926.09 CORRESPONDENCE**

(a) **ETBI Annual Congress 2026**

Mr. Michael O'Brien updated members on the ETBI Annual Congress, which is scheduled to take place at the Rose Hotel, Co. Kerry on Thursday 15th October. He invited nominations from Board members and sought approval for attendance at the event.

The Board approved the attendance of Cllr Lola O'Sullivan, Cllr John Pratt, and Ms. Kate Miskella at the event.

The Board further approved attendance by other Board members who may wish to attend, subject to prior confirmation with the Director of OSD and a maximum attendance of six Board members in total

**Proposed** Mr. Pat Rath; **Seconded** Dr Richard Hayes.

(b) **Department of Education and Youth – Acceptance of Gift**

Mr. Michael O'Brien advised members that the Minister approved a donation of €500 that had been offered by the family of the late Pauline Asple, a former staff member and maths teacher at Enniscorthy Community College.

This was noted by the Board.

**080926.10 GOVERNANCE**

(a) **Risk Management**

Mr. Michael O'Brien advised members that the Audit and Risk Committee are due to meet on Wednesday 16th September. The revised FET Risk Register will be brought forward for their attention. Ms. Caitríona Cullen, Director of FET will attend the meeting. An update will be presented to Board members at the next meeting in November.

(b) **Approval/Renewal of Leases**

License agreement for FET centre at Lismore, Cappoquin is due for renewal.
Mr. Fintan O'Reilly advised members of a 4.5% increase at a cost of €31,350.
He advised that this would provide access to a large classroom, small classroom, 2 offices, first flood boardroom, ground floor kitchen on 2 full days per week.

Licence agreement was noted by the Board.

(c ) **Nominations to Board of Management**

(i) Bridgetown College – Female staff nominee.
Ms. Maisie Gorman

**Proposed** Ms Kate Miskella; **Seconded** Dr Mary Meade

(ii) Bunclody Community College – Male staff nominee.
Mr. Enda Keogh

**Proposed** Cllr Lola O'Sullivan; **Seconded** Mr. Pat Rath

d) **Nomination to Finance Committee**
Mr. Michael O'Brien updated members on the nomination of Ms. Anita Power to the Finance committee. Ms. Power is a fellow member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accounts and was a former member of the WWETB Finance Committee.

**Proposed** Cllr Patricia Byrne; **Seconded** Cllr John Pratt

e) **Board evaluation**

Mr. Michael O'Brien advised the Board that the annual Board Evaluation process would commence in advance of the next meeting. He advised that the annual self-evaluation of the Board is a requirement of the Code of Governance for Education and Training Boards and supports the Board in reviewing its effectiveness and governance practices.
Members were advised that a questionnaire would issue to all Board members and that responses would be collated and considered by the Board at a future meeting. The evaluation process provides an opportunity for members to reflect on the Board's performance, identify areas of good practice, and consider any improvements that may be required. Members were encouraged to complete and return the questionnaire within the specified timeframe. The Board noted the process and agreed to participate in the annual evaluation.

**080926.11 POLICIES**
The following policies were noted by the Board.

a) Display Screen Equipment and Provision of Spectacles Policy
b) Network Security Policy
c) Password Policy

Policies were noted by the Board.

**080926.12 COMMITTEE REPORTS / MINUTES TO BOARD**
The following committee reports and minutes were noted by the Board.

(a) No reports

**080926.13 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING MINUTES**

a) Bunclody Community College BoM Minutes 04.06.26 - Draft
b) Bridgetown Community College BoM Minutes 25.03.26
c) Bridgetown Community College BoM Minutes 03.06.26 - Draft
d) Coláiste Abbáin BoM Minutes 04.03.26
e) Coláiste Abbáin BoM Minutes 11.06.26 - Draft
f) Creagh College BoM Minutes 19.03.26
g) Creagh College BoM Minutes 11.06.26 - Draft
h) Enniscorthy Community College BoM Minutes 02.06.26 - Draft
i) Kilnamanagh Community National School 18.06.26 - Draft
j) Selskar College BoM Minutes 21.04.26 - Draft
k) Selskar College BoM Minutes 09.06.26 - Draft
l) St. Pauls Community College BoM Minutes 12.05.26 - Draft
m) WCFE BoM Minutes 23.04.26
n) WCFE BoM Minutes 11.06.26 - Draft

Board of management minutes of meetings were noted by the Board.

**080926.14 CIRCULAR LETTERS: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and YOUTH**
{available: https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/}

**0041/2026**: Guidance in Post Primary Schools
a) **0054/2019**: Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post-Primary Schools
b) **0063/2026**: National Council for Special Education Parents Notify process to determine the level of need for special education places for the 2027/2028 school year
c) **0066/2026**: Interim Senior Cycle Redevelopment (SCR) Implementation Support Measures.
d) **0067/2026**: Home Tuition No. School Place (NSP) 2026/2027
e) **0068/2026** Home Tuition Children in Care (CIC) 2026/2027
f) **0069/2026**: Home Tuition Maternity Related Absence (MRA) 2026/2027

**Proposed:** Cllr John Pratt; **Seconded:** Cllr Patricia Byrne

**080926.15 PRESS RELEASES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and YOUTH**
{available: https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/}

a) Inspectorate concerned and disappointed at partial progress in removing conditional clauses from admission policies for special classes for autistic students
b) Ministers Naughton and Moynihan launch new national transitions support service for students in special schools
c) Minister Naughton visits European Parliament to discuss Ireland's EU Presidency priorities
d) Minister Naughton to Turn Sod on Major Extension at St. Gerald's College During Mayo

School Visit.

e) Minister Naughton officially opens new school building at Rush and Lusk Educate Together National School
f) Minister for Education and Youth Publishes Results of Primary School Survey
g) Young people put their priorities at heart of Ireland's EU Presidency.
h) Minister Naughton Welcomes Record Progress in Student Retention Across Post-Primary Education
i) Minister Naughton and Minister of State Moynihan announce the opening of NCSE Parents Notify online portal for 2027/2028 to support early planning for special education places
j) Ministers Naughton and Moynihan Announce Establishment of National Forum on Inclusive Education for Students with Special Education Needs.
k) Publication of Implementation Plan for the Review of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004.
l) Minister for Education and Youth announces over €624,000 in funding for Education for Sustainable projects.
m) Evaluation of Counselling in Primary Schools Pilot finds significant benefits for children, families and school communities.
n) Minister Publish Traveller and Roma Education Strategy Plan for Implementation and Action 2026-2028.
o) Minister Naughton announces extension of City Connects to 25 schools in Limerick City and Tallaght.
p) Oíche na hÓige 2026 to celebrate young people and the impact of youth work across Ireland.
q) Ireland to host EU Presidency conference on the future of AI in education.
r) Ministers congratulate over 70,000 students receiving their Leaving Certificate examinations and Level 1 and 2 Learning Programme results today.
s) Minister Naughton announces new youth service to be established in Dublin.

**080926.16 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) Minister Lawless launches new Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation and Tertiary Degree in Agricultural Science at Louth and Meath Education and Training Board.
b) Minister Harkin visits electrical vehicle training facilities in Roscommon and Limerick.
c) Minister Lawless announces Government approval for Ireland to formally apply to ratify the UNESCO Global Convention on the recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education.
d) Minister Lawless Warns Ireland at "Critical Moment" in AI Skills Race
e) Taoiseach, Minister Lawless and Minister Harkin announce purchase of major site in Castlebar as part of next phase in multi-million-euro FET capital investment in the region.
f) Minister Lawless Reminds Students to Review CAO Choices Ahead of 5pm Deadline on 1 July.
g) Ministers welcome new sectoral working group for tertiary education to support Irish language skills across the public sector.
h) Taoiseach and Minister Lawless Announce Major Expansion of Tyndall National Institute.
i) Minister Lawless Launches Push to Future-Proof 200,000 Professional Services Jobs
j) Ministers Lawless and Harkin highlight major expansion in Public Service Apprenticeships and launches new Paramedicine programme.
k) Minister Lawless welcomes announcement of successful European University Alliances under Erasmus+ Programme call for proposals.

l) Minister Lawless Announces Quantum 2030 Implementation Plan.
m) Major boost for health and disability services as Government approves 274 additional Health and Social Care Professional training places.
n) Minister Lawless announces Ireland's participation in Europe's high-performance computing AI Gigafactories Initiative.
o) Minister Lawless announces the largest expansion of healthcare education places in State history.
p) Minister Lawless urges homeowners to 'Rethink the Room' after research shows 'digs' accommodation provides overwhelmingly positive experiences for homeowners and students.
q) Minister Lawless gives green light to Trinity's 358-bed Dartry student accommodation project.
r) Minister's Lawless and Harkin congratulate students on receiving their CAO offers.
s) Minister Lawless launches WorldSkills 2026 which showcases the many pathways available to students through skills, apprenticeships and traineeships.

**080926.17 A.O.B.**

Mr. Michael O'Brien informed Board members that WWETB has purchased devices for use by Board members. It was intended to pilot use of the devices to allow members to evaluate the devices and help identify the most effective approach for wider deployment over time. He invited 3 to 4 volunteers to participate in the evaluation.

The following members volunteered:-

Dr Mary Meade
Mr Pat Rath
Cllr Patricia Byrne

A separate meeting will be arranged with volunteers in due course.

**080926.18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Board meeting will take place on Tuesday 10th November 2026 at 3.00pm, at Wexford College, Whitemill Industrial Estate, Wexford Y35 XR22.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

***Documents circulated:***

Agenda: meeting of 08/09/26
Minutes of WWETB meeting held 19th June 2026
Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms
Finance Update
Chief Executives Report #3
Display Screen Equipment and Provision of Spectacles Policy
Network Security Policy
Password Policy