

INFORMATION MEETING: School Transport Issues

Gort Community School

13th December 2010

On Monday, **December 13th**, an **Information Meeting** was held at Gort Community School to discuss the government decision to withdraw school transport services to Gort CS from students starting secondary school in September 2011 from the areas of New Quay, Doorus, Kinvara, Northampton, Ballinderreen and Kiltiernan.

The meeting was attended by approximately 50 people including parents of existing students, parents of prospective students, teachers and staff at the school, and school bus transport providers.

Speakers at the meeting were:

- Denis Corry – Principal, Gort Community School
- Joe McDonagh – CEO, Co. Galway VEC & Transport Liaison Officer
- Pat Gilmore – Chairperson, Board of Management, Gort Community School

The meeting was chaired by Catherine Cronin, Chairperson of the Parents Association.

Denis Corry explained the position of the school in relation to these changes, highlighting the fact that, currently, 25% of the student population at Gort Community School comes from the areas which will be affected by the school transport withdrawal. Mr. Corry highlighted the subjects, activities and facilities which Gort Community School has to offer to students.

Joe McDonagh described changes which are due to take place regarding school transport in the near future. It is planned that beginning in 2012-13, catchment boundaries will no longer apply (throughout the country). Students will only be entitled to school transport to the school nearest to them, if they live the requisite distance from that school.

Pat Gilmore reiterated the Board's commitment to the continued success of Gort Community School, and to the efforts of the Parents Association in securing school transport for all students who wish to attend the school.

Many issues were raised in the Q+A session which followed. It was suggested that the parents and boards of management of Gort Community School and Seamount College could work together to try to secure the continuation of school transport as it currently stands.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the following motion was agreed: **“This meeting calls on Minister Sean Haughey to reverse the decision of May 2010 regarding school transport in the Kinvara/Gort area, and to continue with the existing school transport arrangements in the shared catchment area for an additional year 2011-12”**.

Efforts will continue in this regard, through engagement with our local political representatives, the VEC, national Parents Association bodies, etc. Updates will be posted to this web page.