

# **Educational Studies Association of Ireland**

## **36<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

**April 14<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> 2011**

**Church of Ireland College of Education, Dublin**

### **Partnerships: Relationships of Educational Purpose**

One of the defining characteristics of Irish Education has been the number and range of mutually enriching partnerships that have been forged with stakeholders both within and beyond our broad professional community. These partnerships have taken many forms ranging from short-term internal processes to address specific issues of curricular and research interest to national and transnational policy fora which have led to substantive and long-lasting systemic change.

As we negotiate our way through a period of severe instability and widespread retrenchment, the importance of these partnerships as mechanisms for achieving shared educational aims increases. As a professional community, it is arguable, therefore, that the time has come to examine the purpose and effectiveness of these partnerships and, where possible, to celebrate their existence as evidence of the continued importance of relationships of educational purpose to society as a whole.

This conference will seek to explore the extent and nature of partnerships that exist within Irish Education and beyond. Delegates are asked to speak to their experience of working in partnership with other stakeholders and to assess the importance of these experiences to their professional practice, thought and to the process of shaping policy. In practical terms this might involve:

- An examination of the purposes, processes, outcomes and impact of research partnerships at individual, institutional or system level
- Identifying and exploring the meaning of the relationships that have developed between different stakeholding groups including schools, higher education institutions, parents groups, policy making groups,

professional bodies, teacher unions, community and voluntary sector and other constituencies within civil society

- Critically examine how the principles of respect, reciprocity and inclusion are established and maintained within partnerships drawn from diverse constituencies
- Investigating the range of intra and cross disciplinary teaching and research relationships that have developed with allied fields of social and academic discourse.
- Consider the impact of context and external factors e.g. resources/funding mechanisms on the process of partnership-building and their sustainability
- Consider how the concept of partnership is realised in the context of the teacher-learner relationship
- Exploring the educational meaning of a range of longstanding and systemically important partnerships such as those that have developed between education providers and a range of faith groups
- Examining the increasingly complex relationships that have developed between educational professionals and a range of statutory bodies and NGO's

With its broad theme, we hope that the conference can bring together educational professionals from a range of sectors and roles (i.e., researchers, policymakers, teachers, leaders etc) from North and South in Ireland and beyond to discuss these important educational questions.