

Press Release from the Marino Institute of Education and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

Thursday 29th November

Member of Advisory Board to Barack Obama Advises Irish Educators on Teaching Mathematics

Professor Deborah Ball, Dean of the School of Education at the University of Michigan, visits Ireland this week to meet with curriculum designers, teacher educators, policymakers and teachers about improving teacher education and mathematics education in this country. The visit comes just two weeks after President Barack Obama announced his intent to appoint Professor Ball to the National Science Board in the United States.

The event, which is co-hosted by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and the Marino Institute of Education, takes place on Friday, 30 November at the Marino Institute of Education in Dublin. The theme for the day, "Great teachers are not born, they're taught", is based around Professor Ball's pioneering studies of teacher education and mathematics education in the United States. Deborah Ball is probably best known for her research on mathematical knowledge for teaching. This is the idea that teachers of mathematics require a special type of mathematical knowledge and that more advanced knowledge of university mathematics is not necessarily helpful when doing the work of teaching.

Deborah Ball's visit to Ireland is timely because it happens as the colleges of education are reconfiguring their pre-service teacher education programmes in line with requirements of the Teaching Council and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment is reviewing and revising the primary mathematics curriculum. Her visit comes just before the publication of findings on the performance of children in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in which Ireland participated.

Deborah Ball is the Director of Teaching Works, an organisation that seeks to improve professional training for teachers. Her expertise on mathematics education is especially relevant as *The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020* enters its second year.

Deborah Ball will close the event by launching three new research reports about Project Maths. She will also address primary teachers at a meeting on Saturday morning.

More about Deborah Ball here: www-personal.umich.edu/~dball/ and about Teaching Works here: www.teachingworks.org/ and the three maths reports being launched here: www.ncca.ie.