

Message from the EA Board

1<sup>st</sup> April 2020



*"I chose a lotus flower to symbolise strength, beauty, resilience and an awakened mind. Despite being born into dark, gloomy, challenging conditions, where hope for such beautiful life seems doubtful, the lotus grows and rises above adversity. If we, the human race, are to gain more understanding, more kindness and more compassion, we must also rise to the hardships and challenges we currently face, just as the lotus does."*

*Leah Sloan, Year 11, Portadown College.*

Dear Colleagues

Many of you are working under demanding circumstances and yet have shown exceptional dedication to provide support throughout the education sector at this unprecedented time. For this, we would like to convey our gratitude and thanks to you all.

Thank you for supporting your colleagues and redeploying your skills where needed and thank you for supporting each other. Heartfelt gratitude goes to our own key workers, those in the wider community and those who are supporting them and their children through this.

Many of you are now working in new and developing conditions. We recognise that you are dealing with unprecedented challenges and what lies ahead is uncertain. Everyone is impacted in some way. We ask you to reflect on the inspiring words of Leah Sloan and that you continue to ***"rise to the hardships and challenges we currently face"***. Continue to

embrace the positives that can come from a situation that is out of our control and which unites us in many ways.

The EA Board wishes to let you all know how proud we are of how the entire Education sector has come together as a united community. Thank you for following the guidance and applying our workplace protocols, being adaptable and for supporting each other and our critical services.

We hope you and your families stay safe and well.

Best wishes

**Sharon O'Connor**  
**EA Chairperson**  
**On behalf of the EA Board**