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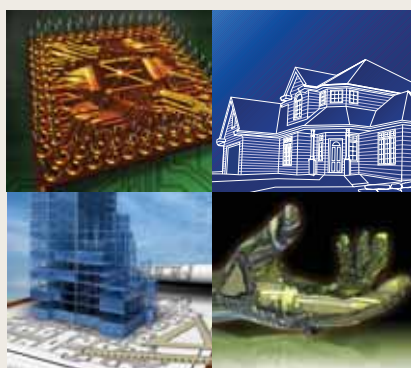
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The Seanad Éireann elections will take place this summer. We need a strong voice in Seanad Éireann to highlight teachers' grievances.



There are approximately 25,000 second-level teachers and more than 27,000 primary teachers in this country, many of whom are registered to vote in these elections. We have it within our grasp to put a serving teacher in the Seanad who will highlight education. I urge you to vote for the ASTI-endorsed candidates (pictured left), Bernadine O'Sullivan (NUI Panel) and David Martin (University of Dublin Panel), to ensure that the voice of the teacher is heard at the highest political level.



This edition of *ASTIR* contains a comprehensive report of our Annual Convention, which took place in April. This year's Convention was a great success, facilitating genuine debate both within the union and in the media on issues

that are crucial to the future of our education system, including class size, special needs education and science education. I want to extend my sincere thanks to all of you who contributed to the success of our 85th Annual Convention. I am very grateful to our General Secretary and the Head Office staff; the Sligo branch who hosted Convention; the tellers, stewards and timekeeper; and the hotel staff. It was a great honour for me to preside over this year's Convention.

I will continue to work on your behalf towards improving pay and conditions. We must ensure that pay increases compensate us for rising inflation rates and that our conditions do not deteriorate any further due

to clauses in Towards 2016. Our recent independent survey, carried out by Drury Research, has highlighted once again some alarming statistics on overcrowded classes. It is completely unacceptable that we have over 100,000 students in classes of 25 or more and approximately 25,000 in classes of 30 or more. The survey shows very clearly that large class size has a huge impact on the quality of education, teaching methodologies, discipline, safety and teacher stress.

I wish you all well for the rest of the school year.

Rath Dé oraibh go léir.

Michael Freeley
Michael Freeley



Michael Freeley,
ASTI President

RDS Business Innovation Award



RDS Business Innovation Award winners from CBS High School, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.

Five students from CBS High School, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, have won this year's Student Innovation Award for their company 'Deutsch macht Spab'. They produced a package consisting of a CD, colouring book and posters that provide a new and innovative approach to teaching and learning German in primary school.

Over 3,000 students from around Ireland took part in the programme, in which students operate and manage their own mini-companies and are mentored by a business volunteer from a local company.

The winning team were assisted in their project by their teacher, Martina O'Reilly, and were mentored by Larry Douglas of Abbott Vascular. Other finalist companies were from: Presentation Secondary School, Galway; CBS Middleton, Co. Cork; St Aloysius Secondary School, Cork; Loreto College, Cavan; CBS, Carrick-on-Suir; and Dundalk Grammar School, Co. Louth.

Going for gold

ASTI member and teacher at Gonzaga College, Sean Dingle recently competed in the long-running daily television quiz on TV5 Monde, *Questions pour un Champion*, a show that tests contestants on international current affairs through French. Ireland is invited to participate in the show once every five years. Sean won the Irish selection and went on to compete against representatives from nine other countries. Canada was this year's eventual champion.

Campaign to restore universal child benefit

In May 2004 a habitual residence condition was introduced to child benefit entitlements, meaning that families need to have resided in Ireland for at least two years or claim a 'centre of interest' in the State, to be entitled to child benefit. Child benefit is also denied to children whose parents cannot work, such as asylum seekers or those waiting leave to remain in the State on humanitarian grounds. FLAC, the Free Legal Advice Centres, an independent human rights organisation, has recently launched a campaign to restore child benefit payment as a universal right for all children in Ireland.

FLAC is asking the public to engage in the campaign by writing to their local TDs about the issue, signing FLAC's petition (available at www.flac.ie) or highlighting the issue in local media.

Young people and work

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions Youth Committee has reissued its *Your Rights and Work* information leaflet. The leaflet covers rest periods and maximum working periods for young people in second-level education. The information leaflet can be downloaded at <http://youth.ictu.ie/card.htm>.

Healthy eating challenge

Eureka Secondary School, Meath, and St Mary's Secondary School, Mallow, were the national winners of this year's 'Our Food – Your Way' healthy eating challenge. The students were required to identify foods produced in their area, interview a local farmer or food producer, develop a healthy menu using locally sourced produce and design an innovative communication strategy to demonstrate the importance of healthy eating in their school.

Mary Mullaghy, ASTI member and co-ordinating teacher at Eureka School, said her students "showed great initiative and embraced the challenge with great enthusiasm". ASTI member Mairead Lucey was involved with the project at St Mary's School.

The overall winners in Category 1 (Second/Third Year) were St Mary's Secondary School, Mallow. Colaiste Íosaef, Kilmallock, were runners-up in this category. Eureka Secondary School, Meath, were winners in Category 2 (Transition Year). The winning schools will attend a two-day cookery course in Neven Maguire's cookery school during the summer, and each student received a cheque for €100.

More than 2,000 students countrywide entered the competition, which was designed by Agri Aware and is sponsored by Bord Bia and the Association of Teachers of Home Economics (ATHE).



The winning team from Eureka School. Back row (l-r): Neven Maguire, Celebrity Chef; Teresa Brophy, Bord Bia; Paula Mee, Nutritionist; and Mairead Lavery, Agri Aware. Front row (l-r): Emma Tully; Téagan O'Toole; Katie Murray; and Amy O'Reilly.



This summer think inside the box

To make sure your vote in the Seanad Éireann elections really counts, make sure you post it.

With approximately 25,000 second-level teachers and 27,000 primary teachers, teachers have it within their grasp to put a serving teacher in Seanad Éireann.

The ASTI has endorsed two candidates running in the 2007 Seanad Éireann University Panel Elections.

Bernadine O'Sullivan is the ASTI-endorsed candidate for the NUI Panel. **David Martin** is the ASTI-endorsed candidate for the University of Dublin (Trinity College) Panel.

In the 2002 Seanad Éireann election, Bernadine O'Sullivan received just 210 fewer first preference votes than the third elected candidate. She came fourth in the three seat NUI University Panel constituency out of a total of 16 candidates.

David Martin came ninth out of 13 candidates.

If you are registered on either of the Seanad Éireann University Panel electoral registers you should receive a ballot paper and a "declaration of identity" form at your home address this summer. In order to vote, you must complete your declaration of identity form in the presence of a witness, mark your ballot paper in your order of preference, and return your ballot paper and your declaration of identity in the envelope supplied.

Please use your vote to help elect an ASTI-endorsed candidate to Seanad Éireann.

And remember, in order to cast your vote, you must post it!

New maths and science initiative

Ireland is the first country outside of the United States to introduce the Infinity Project, an innovative hands-on programme that aims to make maths and science relevant and interesting to students. The nine-module course teaches maths and science fundamentals through their use in everyday devices, such as MP3 players and digital cameras. The project



Students and teachers of Oaklands College at the official launch of the Infinity Project.

also encourages students to be innovative and to develop a logical thinking process, and the curriculum is enhanced by hands-on experiments that are integrated with the classroom material. Further information on the Infinity Project can be found at www.electronics.dit.ie/infinity/.



Professor Brian Norton, DIT, presents an Infinity Project Certificate to student Daragh Stewart.

Professional development database

The Drumcondra Education Centre has launched a new online database to promote lifelong continuing professional development for teachers. The database allows teachers to search available courses appropriate to their teaching subjects, and to enrol for programmes online. The database will also be accessible to school principals to enable them to identify expert help in specific disciplines for their schools, as well as suitable training opportunities for their teaching staff. The site can be accessed at www.ecdrumcondra.ie.

Schools' Business Partnership

The Schools' Business Partnership is a Department of Education and Science initiative that matches schools with local companies throughout Ireland. It aims to add value to the School Completion Programme, to support students and to build stronger communities. Linked schools and companies engage in one or more Schools' Business Partnership modules depending on the resources of the company, and the needs of the school and its students. Modules available include student mentoring, management excellence for principals and a summer work placement programme. The partnership launched its 100th link, between St Ailbhe's in Tipperary and ALZA Ireland Ltd., in March of this year.

Subject choice website



The Minister for Education and Science has launched a new Internet service designed to help pupils to make the right subject choices through second level. The site – www.qualifax.ie – was developed in partnership with the Institute of Guidance Counsellors. It explains the subjects a student should take at second level in order to pursue a particular course and identifies courses available.

Increase in capitation for Transition Year

The capitation grant for Transition Year pupils is to be increased from €63 to €100 from September next. The additional grant is on top of the normal per-pupil capitation funding provided to second-level schools, and is to allow schools to introduce extra activities for Transition Year students.

ASTI General Secretary John White welcomed this 59% increase in capitation funding for Transition Year students. "This increase recognises that the Irish second-level system has made tremendous progress given that the innovative Transition Year

Programme is now offered in more than 500 schools. Transition Year provides a dynamic and modern education experience, which encourages self-directed learning, self-reflection, innovation and creativity," he said.

However, he added that the additional funding is in the context of the Irish second-level education system being one of the worst funded second-level education systems among the OECD countries. "The increase therefore represents a very minute step towards addressing the gross under-funding of Irish second-level education."

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Around the Branches

The cameras were out at various Branch functions around the country.

CARBERRY



Attendance at Carbery Branch function to honour retired members held at Parkway Hotel recently.



ASTI President, Michael Freeley, making a presentation to Donnchadh O Luasa, Coláiste Ghobnatan, Baile Mhuirne, at a recent Carbery Branch retirement function.



ASTI President, Michael Freeley, making a presentation to Teresa Cahalane, Maria Imaculata Community College, Dunmanway, at the Carbery Branch function.



ASTI President, Michael Freeley, making a presentation to Mary Hennessy, Mount Saint Michael's Secondary School, Roscarbery, Co. Cork at the function.



ASTI President, Michael Freeley, making a presentation to Helen Matson, Ard Scoil Phobail, Bantry, at a recent Carbery Branch retirement function.

CLARE



Pictured at a recent Clare Branch retirement function. Back row (l-r): Michael Corley, Chairperson, Clare Branch; Jack Keane, Standing Committee; Tim Ryan; Séan O'Brien; Paddy Flynn; Michael Freeley, ASTI President; Tom Cahill; Séan O'Mahony; Fintan Quinn; Berna Lyons; Seamus Liddy; Murt McInerney; and Mary Morgan, Regional Organiser. Front row (l-r): Ann Hynes; Maura Ashton; Anne O'Sullivan; Mona Moloney; Nora Liddy; Anne McCarthy; Nuala Monahan; and Monica Gallagher.



Pictured at a recent Clare Branch retirement function: Michael Corley, Chairperson, Clare Branch; Mary Moran; Peter Quinn; Helen Meade; Michael Freeley, ASTI President; Mary Bourke; Mary Carroll; and Jack Keane, Standing Committee.

DUNDALK



ASTI General Secretary, John White, and Kathleen McGowan, Dundalk Branch, at a Dundalk Branch function.



ASTI President, Michael Freeley, and Irene Barr, Dundalk Branch, at a Dundalk Branch function.



Pictured at a Dundalk Branch function (l-r): Elaine Devlin, Chairperson, Dundalk Branch; Kevin McEneaney, Standing Committee, Region 12; and Alan Craven.

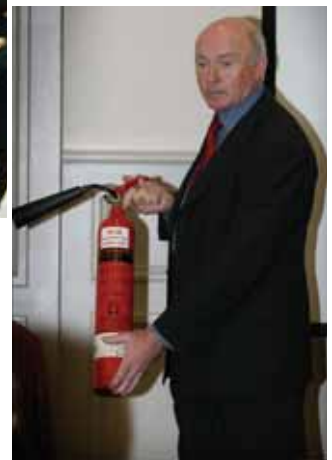


Noel and Anne Lennon, Dundalk Branch.

Health and Safety Seminar



Attendees at a recent ASTI Health and Safety Representatives seminar. Almost 300 Safety Reps have attended 8 such seminars, held across the country over the last few months. Topics covered included the Health and Safety Act, the role of the Safety Rep and fire and evacuation procedures. Pictured above is Jim Kavanagh, Fire Safety Consultant giving a demonstration on fire safety



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Build a Bank Challenge winners



Students from St. Paul's CBS, winners of their AIB Build a Bank Challenge regional final. Back row (l-r): Margaret Carey, AIB; Máire Pender, teacher and ASTI member; Gerard Jordan; Raymond Moran; David Manger, teacher and ASTI member; Maeve Hogan, AIB; and Ciara Mulcahy, AIB. Front row (l-r): Peter O'Neill; Augustin Javelosa; Stephen Cleary; and Hamid Abdilaahi.

A group of Transition Year students from St Paul's CBS, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7, recently won the South Dublin regional final of the AIB Build a Bank Challenge. The final was held in Fitzpatrick's Castle, Killiney, on Thursday March 22. The competition, now in its sixth year, is open to all Transition and Fifth Year students and requires a team of six students to run a bank in their school during the academic year.

Other regional winners were: St Aidan's Community College, Ballyvolane, Co. Cork; Mercy Secondary School, Mounthawk, Co. Kerry; Presentation Secondary School, Thurles, Co. Tipperary; Castletroy College, Limerick; Loreto Secondary School, Milford, Co. Donegal; and Monaghan Collegiate School, Monaghan.

Teaching Council bursaries

The Teaching Council has recently agreed a research policy to provide a framework within which the Council will implement its research function. The research policy is available on the Teaching Council website – www.teachingcouncil.ie.

Of particular interest to teachers is the section of the policy that relates to practitioner-based research. The policy states that in managing its research programme, the Teaching Council will have regard to the importance of continuing professional development in the teaching profession and will allocate a portion of its annual budget to research bursaries for registered teachers undertaking practitioner-based research. The purpose of the research bursary is to assist registered teachers undertaking research to cover some of the research costs. Up to 10 bursaries will be awarded each year. The scheme is due to be launched in mid May and application forms will be available on the Teaching Council website.

September ASTIR

The deadline for September ASTIR is Wednesday, August 1. Contributions should be forwarded to astir@asti.ie.

Members to be balloted by post

ASTI Annual Convention has voted to conduct future ballots of the ASTI membership by post. The ASTI is currently working to check/update personal contact details of all members for the purpose of conducting postal ballots. School Stewards and members will be asked to co-operate with this process in the coming weeks.

NCCA workshop



Workshop on 'Languages in the Curriculum' held during a seminar for all ASTI NCCA representatives on Saturday, March 13, at ASTI Head Office. The seminar focussed on promoting the work of ASTI Reps on NCCA syllabus and programme committees.

Forging links with developing world



Minister of State for Irish Aid and Human Rights, Conor Lenihan, at the launch of the Irish Aid Schools Linking and Immersion Scheme at St Mark's Community School in Tallaght.

The Department of Foreign Affairs recently announced a scheme to promote links between schools in Ireland and in developing countries. The Irish Aid School Linking and Immersion Scheme will provide access and grant funding to Irish secondary schools to forge links with schools in developing countries, and will be run by Léargas. The schools partnership will involve communication and collaborative educational work between teachers and students in Ireland and in developing countries, and may also include reciprocal visits from teachers and students. Information is available at www.irishaid.gov.ie and an information campaign, inviting applications for grant funding, will commence shortly.

RSTA membership information

The RSTA was established to promote the welfare of retired secondary teachers. You can become a member by forwarding your name and address to the National Treasurer, Catherine McHugh, 5 Blacquiere Villas, Phibsborough, Dublin 7, Tel: 01-830 5646. The annual subscription fee is €24. Members of the RSTA can avail of group rate insurance in relation to life cover, health and travel.

Members of the Dublin Branch make friends with the falcon and Harris hawk at a talk on 'birds of prey and falconry' by Tommy Byrne at the March Branch meeting.



Maureen O'Flynn and Falconer Tommy Byrne.



Maurice Flanagan.



Louis O'Flaherty,
National President, RSTA.

Events around the country

Last year, members of the RSTA went on a tour of the battlefields of Europe, where they visited the grave of the poet Francis Ledwidge. Those who are interested in the work of the poet may also be interested to know that the Annual Francis Ledwidge Summer School will take place on the last three days in July. It will begin with a gathering in The Memorial Gardens in Islandbridge on Sunday and continue with slide shows, exhibitions and lectures in The Kilmainham Hilton Hotel. Further details can be had from Liam O'Meara at 085-142 5752.

Wicklow Branch

The Wicklow Branch organises walks on the last Thursday of each month and members, parties and friends are all welcome. On Thursday May 31, walkers will meet at 11am in Wicklow Town Murrough car park and will walk part of the north beach area, visiting an ecological farm or the Wicklow Gaol. A visit to a nice restaurant will also be included.

North Eastern Branch

The North Eastern Branch are organising a visit to Inniskeen on Monday May 28. The group will assemble at the Kavanagh Centre at 11.30am and there will be a guided tour of the Centre and a visit to Kavanagh's grave, lunch at the Poet's Rest and a guided tour to include Creggan, Co. Armagh and many of the places that featured in Kavanagh's poetry and prose (about two hours). The cost of the Inniskeen lunch and the coach tour should be about €25/30 depending on numbers. The Branch needs to have numbers in order to enable them to book a suitably sized coach so if you plan to attend, please contact Michael McMahon as soon as possible, Tel: 042-966 1097/087-735 280, email: ctmcmahon@eircom.net.

Belfast

A visit to Belfast will take place on Wednesday June 13. Anyone who is interested in going should contact Nuala O'Connor on 01-298 0819 as soon as possible.

Branches do not meet during the months of July and August. Meetings resume in September/October. For details contact your local branch Secretary or the National Secretary, Marie Doyle, Tel: 01-626 5226. The RSTA website address is www.rsta-ireland.com.

Teaching Council – update

MOIRA LEYDON takes a look at the work of the Teaching Council and the new Register of Teachers.

One year on from its establishment on March 28, 2006, the Teaching Council marked its first anniversary by launching the Codes of Professional Conduct for Teachers. Speaking at the launch, the Chairperson of the Council, Ms Joan Ward, said:

"The publication of the Codes marks an important milestone, not only for the Teaching Council, nor indeed for the teaching profession, but for the entire education community."

The Codes of Professional Conduct for Teachers set out a model for the teaching profession, which makes explicit the essential values that underpin the profession, and sets out the key responsibilities of teachers in the context of the holistic education and development of the student. The Codes are set out in two sections. Section one relates to professional practice and includes standards for teaching, knowledge, skill and competence. Section two relates to professional conduct and the standards to which teachers are required to adhere. Copies of the Codes have been circulated to teachers and schools. It is advisable that teachers read the Codes and familiarise themselves with the content, which is wide-ranging and covers all aspects of teachers' professional lives, including assessment, curriculum changes, relations with parents, lifelong learning, etc. Moreover, the publication of the Codes represents an important statement to the wider society on the values and standards in the profession. In this sense, the Codes will serve to promote teacher professionalism and the status of teachers in society.

Commencement of Register of Teachers

Last November, all second-level teachers who were in service on March 28, 2006, were issued with verification forms from the Council, the purpose of which was to confirm the accuracy of information on teacher qualifications and employment prior to the establishment of the Register of Teachers, as required under Section 7 (2)(c) of the Teaching Council Act, 2001. When all data has been verified, teachers will be deemed to be registered for 12 months from Establishment Day, March 28, 2006, and will receive individual confirmation to that effect. From March 2007 onwards, teachers will have to renew their registration on an annual basis with the Council. Registration will be necessary for teachers to teach in a recognised school and to receive remuneration from monies provided for by the Oireachtas. This process will include the payment of a registration fee, the amount of which has yet to be determined by the Council. Discussions are ongoing in relation to the mechanism for compensation to teachers for the payment of their registration fee. Separate procedures are in place for newly qualified teachers, whereby the Council contacts the colleges of education and the education departments providing higher diploma in education courses directly. Teachers from outside



At the launch of the Codes of Professional Conduct were a group of students from Loreto College, St Stephen's Green, with the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, and former ASTI member, Mary Kennedy of RTÉ.

Ireland – EU and non-EU countries – must apply for recognition of their qualifications prior to registration. The issue of registration and unqualified teachers is currently under intense discussion in the Council. The Council has sought legal advice on its obligations in relation to the Teaching Council Act, and will determine the registration status of such teachers in the coming months.

The Council is also deeply engaged in discussions on the vetting of teachers as part of the registration process. The Council has sought legal advice on this critical matter. The outcome of the constitutional referendum on the rights of the child, which will take place later this year, will also be of relevance to the outcome of the Council's discussion. The ASTI Standing Committee is following the discussions in the Council closely, and is currently examining the issues in relation to the vetting of teachers.

Teaching Council education conference

The first conference of the Teaching Council will take place on November 18 and 19, 2007, in the Galway Bay Hotel. The theme of the Conference is 'Teaching in a Changing Society – Embracing the Challenge'. The conference programme includes an impressive line-up of speakers, including Dr Garret FitzGerald, Chancellor of the National University of Ireland, who will open the conference. The full programme is now available on the Council's website – www.teachingcouncil.ie – and a number of places have been reserved for classroom teachers. The conference fee will be waived for such teachers and the Department will provide substitution. Teachers who are interested in attending are recommended to apply online as places may be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

A first anniversary issue of *Oide* – the Council's newsletter – has been issued to all schools. It contains a comprehensive statement of the work of the Council to date, as well as a noticeboard.



*Moira Leydon,
Assistant General Secretary,
Education and Research.*



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General Secretary, John White, and President, Michael Freeley, get ready for proceedings.



Pictured at the top table during Convention: Honorary Treasurer, Ray St John; and Timekeeper, Pat Deery.

Annual Convention 2007

Resources for schools, equality for students and valuing the work of teachers are vital for a quality education service. These were the issues highlighted by the key speakers at ASTI Annual Convention 2007 in Sligo. Report compiled by BRIGID FITZGERALD with photographs by JAMES CONNOLLY.

The media must support the goal of equality in education by valuing the achievements of all students and schools, ASTI President Michael Freeley told Annual Convention. The Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, acknowledged that there is a need for more resources to tackle many of the current problems in second-level education. She highlighted the steps taken by the Government to address these issues. Any society that fails to value education and teachers is a deeply flawed society, ASTI General Secretary John White told the Convention. He reported on the union's efforts to improve and maintain teachers' terms and conditions of employment.

President Michael Freeley

Michael Freeley began his speech by noting that 2007 has been designated The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All by the European Parliament and Commission. He pointed out that: "The teaching profession is certainly playing its part in welcoming and embracing immigrant students, students with special educational needs and students from disadvantaged backgrounds".

According to the ASTI President, league tables linking schools to third-level colleges are "doing Irish education a great disservice" because "those tables distort the facts and have such a narrow focus. After the Leaving Cert results come out each year, the media provide huge coverage in lauding the high achievers. I wish those students well, but what about the majority of students who have worked diligently to reach their potential? We must value the achievements of all students and put an end to this elitism".

Curriculum

Referring to the Minister's recent letter to NCCA on the proposals for the development of Irish in post-primary education, the President said: "I agree with her sentiments that urgent action should be taken to ensure that a greater emphasis is placed on oral competence in the language. This is the best way forward to improve the teaching and learning of Irish We must ensure that our native tongue becomes a vibrant living community language". He urged the Department, however, to ensure "that teacher professional development be put in place to ensure that the oral emphasis is implemented", and added that "there must be more incentives for our young people to become immersed in the Irish language".

Towards 2016

The President appealed to ICTU "to renegotiate the deal, as the proposed pay increases are well below the rate of inflation. The situation is much worse when one factors in taxation. Eighty-two percent of our members and 75% of TUI members rejected the agreement but yet we are faced with a situation where others can decide to worsen our conditions of employment. This is completely unacceptable and should never happen again". The President expressed "solidarity with the nurses unions in their demand for improved pay and conditions", saying "we must respect our caring professions – nurses and teachers – where we have an ethos of dedicated service".

Non-permanent teachers

With regard to non-permanent teachers, the President said: "Part-time



President Elect, Patricia Wroe, with Tony Burke, Chairperson of the ASTI Credit Union.

legislation has brought about some improvements, with the advent of contracts of indefinite duration. At long last the arrears of incremental credit going back to December 2001 have been paid but regrettably it took a decision of our Standing Committee to stage a protest at the Department of Education offices to get a response at the eleventh hour". The President finished his address on a positive note, saying: "Colleagues, you are making a big difference to young peoples' lives, you are a profession who care, your influence is very significant. You deliver a high quality education service. You place the dignity of the student at the heart of the system. You do most valuable work in educating the youth of the nation". He encouraged the Minister "to ensure that she would be remembered when people talk about the great Ministers for Education who made a real difference" by refuelling "the education system with some positive decisions and commitments to resources".

Minister Mary Hanafin

In reply to the President's address, Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, began her speech by saying: "The prosperity of the nation as a whole and the expectations people have for their young people" result in schools, particularly our second-level schools, being expected to help all those young people to reach all of those expectations. That in itself, she said, "is a real pressure for our schools, but also one to which every teacher in the country is responding very well".

Class size

The Minister accepted the President's point on the issue of class size, saying: "Obviously part of ensuring the positive learning environment is to ensure that teachers can teach in smaller classes" and promised that "if back in government we will prioritise smaller classes for the core subjects of Irish, English and maths". "The learning environment of the school buildings is obviously very important as well," she said. "Half the post-primary schools in this country have building works going on this year, creating whole new schools and new extensions, and recognising that refurbishments of very old schools have to continue to be prioritised."

"We are conscious of the genuine cost pressures on schools and that is why we prioritised record increases in the capitation grant," the Minister said. "The funding, the increased capitation, the ancillary services grant ... go a long way to dealing with the issues." However, she acknowledged that "equalisation needs to be completed quickly and extra funding needs to be put in place on each of those grant services over the next couple of years to support your schools and to support your leadership".

Discipline

"When I was appointed, one of the key issues that was raised with me was discipline and behaviour in the classroom," the Minister said. "Mutual respect between teachers and students must be protected and supported. That is why we set about getting an expert group to look at behaviour, and when their report was published, we immediately set up the National Behaviour Support Service. There is no set model as to what will work and what won't work, and that is why, in setting up behavioural support classrooms in schools, we are very open to the idea not only of additional teachers, but also of working with other professionals, such as counsellors or youth workers, to make sure that the needs of young people are met." The Minister said that it is important to recognise that "the mainstream second-level school doesn't suit all young people ... That is why the expansion of an extra 1,000 Youth Reach places has been agreed in the partnership agreement over the next three years".

"The other issue that came to light in relation to supporting you in your work was the need to change the legislation, and in the last couple of months the Oireachtas has passed the legislation changing Section 29 of the Education Act, which restores a balance between the rights of the teacher to teach, of all children to learn and of the student who is being disruptive."

Special needs

The Minister stated: "I fully accept that with the rolling out of the EPSEN Act, more supports have to be put in place to support you in what you are doing. Equally I know that a lot of different models will be tried, and that we will continue to work with the ASTI to see what are the most appropriate models in our second-level schools for children with special needs, recognising that there is a range of needs among those children".



Former ASTI President, Susie Hall, speaking with the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin.



A section of the attendance at this year's Convention.

General Secretary John White

Teachers' pay

"The remaining increases proposed until the end of Towards 2016 in September 2008 – amounting to 7% – will not match inflation if the present rate of inflation continues," ASTI General Secretary, John White, told convention delegates during his address. Speaking on measures taken to address issues of pay, he reported: "The three teacher unions have made a joint submission to the Benchmarking Body. The claim has a number of integrated complementary elements, which taken together seek to reduce the disparity in lifelong earnings between teachers and comparable groups in the public and private sectors."

"I want a loud and clear message to go out from this conference to those politicians and their right wing followers who assert as fact that no modernisation was granted for the last, modest, benchmarking award to teachers. Of course, if their only point of reference is the grind school, they might be right, but Irish teachers have transformed the education system over the past 10 years. We have mainstreamed special needs pupils; we have successfully integrated newcomer children; we have introduced the innovative Transition Year, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, the Leaving Certificate Applied and the Junior Certificate Schools Programme. We have provided social, personal and health education; civic, social and political education; and new physical education programmes. The plethora of education legislation has placed statutory obligations on schools across a whole range of areas from school attendance to special education needs. The publication of Whole School Evaluation Reports and subject inspection reports on the web makes our profession the most accountable across both the public and private sectors. To those ideologues of the unfettered market whose mantra is public sector bad, private sector good, we say that we have delivered and we, unlike you, do not rely on simple assertion; we have the evidence to prove it. Second-level teachers have delivered"

Redeployment

The General Secretary said that ASTI has signed up to negotiate a new redeployment scheme. "There have to be new redeployment arrangements

because for the first time Community and Comprehensive schools are closing and there is no scheme to provide continuity of employment for teachers in that sector. This new scheme was supposed to be in place for the school year 2007/08, but the Department of Education and Science only began serious negotiations on this matter in March. Let me make it very clear at the outset to our colleagues in the Community and Comprehensive sector ... that despite some strong talk from the official side that the alternative to redeployment is redundancy, we will be ensuring continuity of employment for teachers in the Community and Comprehensive sector. We will be demanding that these talks must be concluded, as a matter of extreme urgency, by the end of April, so that teachers in school closure situations can decide on their options and so that schools can fill vacancies".

Pensions and retirement

According to the General Secretary, 25 pages of 'The Submission of the Public Service Employers to the Benchmarking Body' "are devoted to the argument that public service pensions, in comparison to private sector pensions, are so valuable that no salary raises of any kind are justifiable. This submission is of course made in the context of a relentless campaign by certain private sector employers to jettison defined benefit pensions and replace them with defined contribution schemes, which of course, do not guarantee pension levels but make them dependent on the operation of the stocks and bonds market. The ICTU has countered this with a submission, which points out that the principles of fair comparison between the public and private sectors have always been based on comparisons with 'good employers' in the private sector – a substantial portion of whom retain guaranteed pensions for their employees." Speaking of the early retirement scheme, the General Secretary said: "In November, the Department agreed to continue the schemes for a further two years ... the scheme is thus due for review this autumn. The early retirement scheme is very close to my heart; I was involved in its negotiation and I represented the three teacher unions on the Early Retirement Advisory Committee this year. Surely the Government must see that a system that forces teachers, exhausted by the vicissitudes of the modern classroom, to remain in that same classroom against their will is



Department of Education and Science Officials, Pat Burke and Michael Keogh.



Pictured during Convention (l-r): ASTI Assistant General Secretaries, Moira Leydon, Maire Mulcahy and Pat King.

absurdly counterproductive. Second-level teaching is by any measure a highly intensive activity. Increasingly, there are pupils with behavioural problems in mainstream classes. Such relentless activity means that second-level teaching can be extremely debilitating. We negotiated these schemes under the PCW in lieu of a 3% salary increase and we cannot and will not allow their removal". The case for their retention, he said, is "further buttressed by the clear recommendation of the Task Force on Student Behaviour that the early retirement scheme should be retained".

Motions debated at Convention

Pay

A motion that the ASTI calls on the ICTU to renegotiate the pay terms of Towards 2016 owing to the significant increase in the cost of living in recent months was proposed by Philip Irwin, Standing Committee Region 18, who described Towards 2016 as an agreement that is "very strong in its demands on teachers, but weak in its provision of resources into schools". In highlighting the inadequate pay terms, he said that with inflation at just under 4%, a 10% pay increase over 27 months might mean teachers are less well off by 2008. In seconding the motion, Brendan Broderick,

Dublin South 2, made the point that "in this time of prosperity, pay increases should at least match the current rate of inflation". He added: "It really is absurd that when the economy and profits are still growing, workers are delivering extra productivity, modernisation and flexibility for, in effect, a pay cut".

The motion was carried unanimously.

Class size

A motion that the ASTI adopt as policy a maximum class size of 20, to be implemented from the start of the 2008 school year, was proposed by Micheál O'Neil, Standing Committee Region 8. Mr O'Neill presented some results of the recent ASTI survey on class size, including the statistic that 100,000 students are currently in classes of over 25 students. He stated that "our second-level education system is under-resourced, which in turn leads to understaffing and large classes. These large classes cause more stress for teachers; teachers spend more of their time on discipline and controlling classes and don't have enough time to give individual attention to pupils". He noted that "large class sizes have a negative impact on teaching methodologies and affect teachers' ability to cover the syllabus". Speaking for the motion, Sean Fallon, Dublin South 1, observed that the

Convention 2007 experience

The Newcomer

Before attending the Convention, I was unsure what to expect and unsure as to the exact nature of the role of the union. My experience up to then had been noting the deduction on my payslip. I believed that the Department of Education and Science made changes for the good of education and teachers, and the union had a role in the background. All this was about to change.

On arrival it was exciting; the lobby of the hotel was buzzing. The staff of the ASTI were friendly and welcoming. The atmosphere was uplifting and after a long drive it captured my interest.

The Convention itself was an eye opener. It was interesting to see how

motions were put forward, and topics debated and voted on. The passion and determination of each speaker was inspiring and addictive. Although I was not well informed about many of the topics discussed before Convention, I quickly gained interest and knowledge.

On the whole, the Convention has given me an insight into the role and work of the union. It has been encouraging to see the united front that teachers present on important issues.

Attending Convention has encouraged me to take an interest in union matters and to attend Branch meetings when I can.

All the best,

'The converted'

Name and Branch with Editorial Board.



Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, talking to delegates Maura Greaney and Christina Kennedy of Seamount College, Kinvara, and members of the Galway Branch.



East Galway Branch delegates at Annual Convention (l-r): Pat O'Looney; Karen Crimmins; Mattie Quinn; Grainne Lally; Mary Buswell; Della Fahey; and John Molloy.

Government cares about parents as a group and he appealed to the media to take note of the class size message and to tell parents how their children are missing out. Paddy Clancy, Wexford, made the point that: "if you've got 30 12-year-olds in front of you, it's hard enough, but if you've got 30 12-year-olds with reading ages varying from six to 16, it's a completely different situation".

The motion was carried.

School closures

Proposing a motion that the ASTI insist that full consultation take place between all the relevant partners in education when a school's future is at risk, Christina Kennedy, Galway, spoke about the impending closure of Seamount College in Kinvara. She said: "There is no apparent reason to close the school", and that it is "a vibrant, viable and very successful school". She called it "unacceptable" that six leaders of any congregation can make "decisions that impact on so many. It is an injustice to the students, teachers and whole community of Kinvara, and to education as a discipline, that this was allowed to happen". She made the point that

"students are the most important stakeholders". Peter Molloy, Galway, speaking to the motion warned: "If Kinvara is closed, other schools will follow" and said that "it is vital to secure the future of relatively small schools in the country". Jim O'Dea, Dublin South 1, suggested a policy that at least 10 years notice should be given before any school would be closed down, while Christy Maginn, Standing Committee Region 15, called on the ASTI to examine the plans of trusteeships.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Special needs

A motion that those teachers who have special needs students in mainstream classes are given the required training and resources by the Department of Education and Science was proposed by Bernadine O'Sullivan, Dublin North West. In proposing this motion, Ms O'Sullivan asked: "How many people in this hall had or currently have special needs students in their classrooms?" She then asked: "How many of you have had training in all 11 categories of special needs?" She made the point that "it is very complex at second level to manage special needs students" and

Convention 2007 experience

The School Steward

Perched on a height on the picturesque Rosses Point peninsula lies the Radisson SAS Hotel, Sligo. For three days it was home to the annual ASTI Convention, hosted by the Sligo Branch. During the long drive across country I wondered what would be the talking point of this teachers' tête-à-tête? Which motion would be the memorable moment? Having attended all the branch meetings, I knew of common causes proposed by other branches and as a School Steward I was aware of issues close to the professional heart of my school.

The smooth swoosh of the front door welcomed me into Convention 2007. I registered and received my information pack. Stands enticed me to join the Credit Union, VHI or to visit the local caves, however, the electronic white board made me salivate and I began to form lesson plans in my mind!

Mobile phones buzzed as delegates looked for their colleagues, and I finally met up with my fellow branch members. In the convention hall, branches booked prime seating areas, some more colourfully than others (respect to the Cork South Branch!).

Public and private matters led to the Presidential address and the Minister for Education's speech. Minister Hanafin was greeted by hundreds of teachers nodding in sage wisdom that every word was being monitored by the members of the press. With a general election looming, controversial comments or radical remarks were avoided.

It was up the President of the union, Mr Michael Freeley, to rouse the Convention and remind all present of our contribution to the lives of all those we teach and our dedication, worth and needs in the society we live in. Journalist Liam Horan provided the greatest insight into life in the classroom with the hilarious honesty and clarity of his description of the mind of a teenage boy intent on causing chaos.

It was during day two that I really looked around the convention hall.



Vice President, Pat Hurley, at Convention.



Máire Ní Chiarba, Cork North Branch, and Eileen Scanlon, Galway Branch.

that training is very necessary. Mary Ohle, Dublin North West, seconded the motion and said: "The mainstreaming of students with special educational needs will only be successful if the necessary resources and supports are put in place for them and for their teachers". She added: "The policy to integrate is in place, the legislation is in place, the National Council for Special Education is in place, but sufficient funding and resources are not yet in place. As long as this continues, special needs students will be integrated by location only and their proper inclusion will remain aspirational".

The motion was carried.

International/non English-speaking students

Beth Cooney, Nenagh, proposed the motion that the Department of Education and Science urgently provide schools and teachers with the necessary resources, time and training to facilitate fully the integration of international and/or non-English speaking students. She said: "The classroom is the interface of emerging interculturalism and we, as teachers, are being challenged to facilitate the process of change and must

demand the resources, the time and the training to do so". She pointed out that "at present no co-ordinating plan exists to cater for newcomer students" and that "the range of newcomers is broad and all have different needs to be addressed". She said: "We have to demand common sense from the DES" and pointed out that teachers "are not trained to deal with this new environment" but that nonetheless the DES relies on teachers' "flexibility and professionalism". John Mulcahy, CEC Cork South, pointed out that children "are not being given an equal opportunity because they don't have the language". He stated emphatically that "students who have very little English should not be integrated into classes straight away". Evelyn Holderick, Dublin North Central, gained much notice in the hall by beginning her speech in Dutch, in order to demonstrate the plight of newcomer students in Irish classrooms.

The motion was carried.

Support for nurses' dispute

Following initial expressions of support for the INO and PNA industrial action on day one of Convention, Standing Committee and Steering

Speakers spoke not just of facts but also of feelings, fears and our teaching futures. All motions were vital to ensure that the work we do is fully catered for and developed by our union. All discussions were based on the common thread of providing the best possible education for the young people of Ireland.

Before Convention and during breaks, election business took place. Of all the delegates and CEC members present, many were willing to go further and sought your vote for a variety of committees or posts. As a teller I found out how carefully all votes are counted, checked and recorded. Night two of Convention belonged to my branch. In time-honoured tradition we met in a highly recommended restaurant (this year it was The Fiddlers Creek). Many hours later we gently rolled towards the door, full of fine food and bursting with laughter. Some sought refuge in their beds, while others sought the dance floor!

Thursday morning greeted us quickly and further stories were exchanged on the previous night's activities. While Convention prepared itself,

teachers scoured the newspapers for commentaries on yesterday's proceedings or pictures of delegates lighting up the pages. But suddenly, almost as soon as it began, it finished. Motions were proposed and seconded, and almost all were passed unanimously. Delegates still volunteered to step up on the traffic light-controlled podium and give their own opinions on a motion. Under the careful eye of the top table, members spoke of their own experiences or beliefs, some with softness, others with robust conviction. And so the cross-country grand prix beckoned. Convention 2007 drew to a close. Familiar nods said, "see you next year", and slowly the hotel emptied. Members filed home filled with memories to pass to staff or promises to return next year.

Valerie Redmond

Dublin South County Branch



Bernadine O'Sullivan (left), Dublin North West Branch, and Jennifer Steede, Dublin North East Branch.



Committee met on Wednesday evening to determine a motion of solidarity for debate. Margaret Moore, Standing Committee, Region 17, in introducing the motion first thing on Thursday morning, said that it was "not proposing to enter into any debate about the merits or otherwise of the nurses' dispute; what we are seeking to do is send our support to them in pursuit of their demand to have the right to sit down and talk to their employers". Seconding the motion, Joe Moran, Standing Committee Region 9, pointed out that trade union solidarity was a major argument in re-affiliating to ICTU and that the ASTI "has to be a force that is for the overall good of trade unionists and of workers and society in general".

The motion was carried unanimously.

Postal ballots

A motion that ballots of ASTI members be postal was proposed by Eilís

Casey, Limerick South, who pointed out that this motion came with the second highest number of branches supporting it and claimed that, if carried, "it is sending out a very, very important message to our members. It is saying that we have an organisation that is aware of the pressures of modern day living ... it means that we have a union that is cogent and cognisant of these things and it means that we have a union that is willing to facilitate what matters – our 17,000 members". Opposing the motion, Vincent O'Mahony, CEC Waterford, asked in reply: "Why are we so concerned with these people who don't care enough to come out to vote?" and he asserted that "if you don't vote you don't have a right to complain about the result". Sean Fallon, Dublin South 1, supported the motion but wanted to see "a lot of safeguards built in".

The motion was carried by a more than two-thirds majority.

Convention 2007 experience
The First Timer

"Come," they said. "It'll be fun," they said. "Sligo's lovely," they said. So, only half listening, I agreed.
A newcomer to the branch meeting, a space to fill and there I was, my name printed in the handbook under the heading 'Delegates'. Carried along by the encouragement of a friend, a frequent convention flier who booked the room and phoned me en route with directions, I arrived in Sligo.
Parked in hotel car park. Gleefully rang friend. Am here! Pre-lunch drink in the bar? Oops, can't find friend. Can't see you? Am in foyer ... beside interactive white board ... ok, see you there... Where's friend? Where's interactive white board?
Wrong hotel! Convention in Radisson! Room booked in Clarion! Must have misheard, not to worry. Only short drive away. There shortly!
Parked in hotel car park. People with matching navy shoulder bags. Is this the right hotel? Sheepishly approach the hotel. Injected by automatic revolving door into another world. Papers, leaflets, fliers, faces thrust at me. Some people holding colour photos. Who are these people? What are these people? Are they teachers? Are they famous? Are the photos valuable? Are they signed? Is this the right place? Is there an interactive white board?

Rescued by friend. Steered by older, wiser hands towards registration. Phew!
Oh, did I need that bag I got in the post? Saved by Head Office staff! Maybe little drink in the bar? Car can stay in car park. Perfectly safe there! Will get taxi later!
"No time!" say my companions! "Ballot papers!" Yes, yes. Am anxious to please. Feeling a little shamefaced. Into convention centre! Colourful laminated signs? Should I have brought one? Sit beside friend. Few deep breaths. How to vote? A familiar name. Decision made. Drop page in ballot box. Little drink in the bar?
No time! Business of convention begins. What's a standing order? What do the traffic lights mean? What's a point of information? When does the Minister get here? Are we supposed to applaud?
Then comes a motion. Do I agree or disagree? Do I do what every one else is doing? "Those in favour" from the top table. Where's my credentials card? Too late! Another motion. Discussion goes on. Why is that man shouting? Feeling more interested. Now agreeing wholeheartedly. Muttering to my companions: "Yes, that is an important issue, it's time something was done". "Those in favour." I raise my card decisively. The credentials card becomes my most treasured possession. It never leaves my side. Issues possess me. Union fever sets in. Where is convention next year?

Name and Branch with Editorial Board.



Honorary Life Membership was presented to (clockwise from top left): John Crilly; Eamon Barry; Niall O'Mahony; Michael Reardon; Joe McDonagh; Tommy Francis; and Paddy Daly.

Federated unions

Proposing the motion that the ASTI commits itself to formal discussions with a view to formulating proposals for a Federated Teachers' and Lecturers' Union, Sheila Parsons, CEC Fingal, contextualised it by saying that the motion only committed the union to formal discussions. She pointed out that the unions have many common areas of concern and that in order to make progress on these, they need to join forces and support each other. She noted that the three unions already negotiate jointly at conciliation and arbitration, and that there is ongoing daily contact between them. She called federation "political wisdom" and warned that "we don't want to be played off against each other by either government or management". Paddy Mulcahy, Standing Committee, Region 6, in seconding the motion, said that the unions would be stronger together but that the ASTI would retain its unique identity. Patricia Wroe, Dublin South County, predicted however, that in a federation the ASTI's interests would be subservient to the large majority. Susie Hall, Dublin North East, opposing the motion, advocated a "from the ground up" approach to develop trust and build solidarity and said: "Until we can get coalition on assessment of our students for certification purposes, I'm sorry, I don't think the time is right".

The motion was carried.

Laboratory technicians

In proposing a motion that the ASTI demand that the Department of Education and Science appoint laboratory technicians in all schools so that science can be taught safely and effectively, Micheál O'Neill, Standing Committee Region 8, made the point that "many of our neighbouring EU countries provide laboratory assistants for science at second level". He said that "our Government expects our teachers to do two jobs – that of a teacher and a lab assistant" and "if the quality of our science teaching is to be maintained so that our education system is able to compete with other Member economies, facilities, resources and personnel must be made available in all schools". Seconding the motion, Liam O'Mahony, CEC Dungarvan, spoke about the new syllabus at Junior Cert, which teachers were forced to adopt and implement without the "necessary prerequisites".

The motion was carried.

Election results Convention 2007



Patricia Wroe
President-Elect



Pat Hurley
Vice-President Elect



Ray St John
Honorary Treasurer

President-Elect Patricia Wroe

Vice-President Pat Hurley

Honorary Treasurer Ray St. John

Trustees Pat Cahill
Michael Corley
Michael Kilbride

Equal Opportunities Committee

Eilís Casey	Elaine Devlin	Jim Duffy
Carmel Heneghan	Anne Loughnane	Edel McNerney
Mary Ohle	Anne O'Sullivan	Ann Piggott

Education Committee

Noel Buckley	Pat Deery	Sean Fallon
Christina Henehan	Jerry McCarthy	Caitriona McGrath
Máire Ni Chiarba	Eileen Scanlon	Jimmy Staunton

Steering Committee

Máire Ni Laoire	Noel Buckley	Lily Cronin
Máire Ni Chiarba	Carmel Heneghan	

Rules Committee

Pat Deery	Francis Foyle	Martha Goggin
David Martin	Sheila Parsons	

Investment Committee

Pat Collins	Mattie Finnerty
Áine Ni Cheidigh	Gearóid O Ciaráin

Business of CEC Committee

Catherine Fitzpatrick	Eamon O hAllmhurain
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Bullying Sub-Committee

Kieran Christie (Convenor)	Kevin Brogan	Anne Loughnane
Sheila Parsons	Ann Piggott	

Resolutions adopted

ASTI Annual Convention 2007

Motion 111: Rule 83

Amend Rule 83 by deletion of the words:
"and shall hold its first meeting within a week from that date"
and by insertion of:
"and shall hold a meeting in May".

Standing Committee motion: ICTU

That the ASTI calls on the ICTU to renegotiate the pay terms of Towards 2016 owing to the significant increase in the cost of living experienced by all workers subsequent to the adoption of Towards 2016 in September 2006.

Motion 55: Class size

That the ASTI establishes a policy of maximum class size of 20 for all subjects and that this policy be implemented from the start of the 2008 school year.

Motion 15: Posts of responsibility (as amended)

That the ASTI, through negotiation with the Department of Education and Science and the managerial authorities: (a) seeks the removal of the anomaly between different sector schools whereby assistant principal post-holders are on reduced teaching hours in some schools but not in others; (b) seeks to ensure that assistant principal post-holders in all schools are given a maximum of 18 teaching hours per week; and (c) seeks that schools are compensated for this with an extra staffing allocation.

Motion 21: Early Retirement Scheme

That the ASTI seeks to maintain on a permanent basis the Three Strand Early Retirement Scheme, and to enhance the existing conditions of the Scheme.

Motion 93: School closures

That the ASTI insist that full consultation takes place between all the relevant partners in education when a school's future is at risk.

Motion 116: Bullying of teachers (as amended)

That Convention sets up a sub-committee of five persons to: (a) construct and conduct a survey of ASTI members to establish the extent of bullying of teachers in our schools; (b) devise an anti-bullying charter for teachers; (c) recommend measures to be implemented in our schools to combat the incidences of teachers being bullied; and (d) this committee to report to CEC in January 2008.

Motion 67: Laboratory technicians

That, in light of the large mandatory practical workload in junior and senior science, and in line with the recommendations of the Task Force on the Physical Sciences, the ASTI demands that the Department of Education and Science appoints laboratory technicians in all schools so that science can be taught safely and effectively.

Motion 68: IT technicians

That the ASTI negotiate with the DES for the provision of technicians for IT laboratories, workshops and all practical subjects, to be in place by September 2008.

Motion 74: IT equipment

The ASTI demands that the government supply every ASTI member with a laptop computer and any other IT equipment necessary to facilitate the delivery of existing and forthcoming new or changed syllabuses, including projection equipment for classrooms.

Motion 2: Special education needs allowance

That the ASTI campaign that the current diploma allowance in special education needs payable to qualified teachers working as special needs teachers be also made available to teachers who have: (a) a graduate diploma in learning support; (b) equivalent qualifications in special education, acquired in third-level institutions either within or outside of Ireland; or (c) undergone comprehensive training organised by the DES prior to such training being accredited by third-level colleges or institutions.

Motion 86: Special needs students

That those teachers who have special needs students in mainstream classes are given the required training and resources by the DES.

Motion 90: School admissions

That the ASTI state as its policy that all schools in receipt of state support, both fee paying and non-fee paying, should accept their fair and proportionate share of special needs students, immigrant students and students from less privileged socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

Motion 79

That the ASTI seeks to ensure that the Department of Education and Science provides comprehensive training for all teachers involved in the preparation of IEPs and that the promised resources, including appropriate timetabling allocation, are put in place before IEPs are made mandatory.

Motion 77: International students

That the ASTI demands that the DES urgently provides schools and teachers with the necessary resources, time and training to facilitate fully the integration of international and/or non-English speaking students into the Irish education system.

Motion re nurses' dispute

In solidarity with and support of our fellow trade unionists, Convention supports the right of the INO and the PNA to negotiations outside the benchmarking process, as the deficiencies and inflexibility of the current benchmarking arbitration process must not be used to isolate, obstruct and demean a caring profession.

Motion 28: Contracts of indefinite duration

That the ASTI demands that teachers with CIDs working 18 hours or more in community and comprehensive schools receive the same remunerations as teachers working under the same circumstances in voluntary secondary schools (at present teachers working in the community and comprehensive sector are paid 18/22 of salary for teaching 18 hours; teachers employed in secondary schools receive full pay).

Motion 51: Job-sharing and career break

That the ASTI seek a commitment from the Department of Education and Science that teachers in over quota schools wishing to job-share or take a career break will not be discriminated against and that replacement hours will be granted irrespective of whether the school is within quota or outside quota.

Standing Committee equal opportunities motion

Convention:

- (a) welcomes the designation by the European Commission of 2007 as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All;
- (b) notes the progress which has been made in promoting equal opportunity and combating discrimination in the teaching profession;
- (c) calls on DES, management authorities and the Teaching Council to implement equal opportunities policies and practices; and
- (d) commits itself to working for those still experiencing inequality.

Motion 7: New teachers' conditions

That the ASTI reject any change to the pay, pensions and conditions of work of new teachers that would amount to less favourable treatment than that which applies to other members.

Motion 85: Pupil indiscipline

That, in the context of pupil indiscipline, the ASTI demands that school managements meet their statutory obligation to provide a safe and healthy working environment for their employees, and that extra resources are provided by the Department of Education and Science for the provision of behaviour support classrooms for dealing with problem pupils.

Motion 112: Postal ballots

Rule 88/89

Amend Rule 88 by deletion of everything after the word "Association" and by insertion of the following after the word "Association":

"Plebiscites or ballots of Association members shall be by postal ballot. All branches shall, where possible, convene information meetings prior to such plebiscites or ballots."

Rule 88 to read as follows:

"With a view to deciding matters of policy or principle, the CEC may take or cause to be taken a plebiscite or ballot of all members of the Association. Plebiscites or ballots of Association members shall be by postal ballot. All branches shall, where possible, convene information meetings prior to any such plebiscites or ballots."

Rule 89

Amend Rule 89(a) by deletion of "or cause to be taken a plebiscite or ballot of Association members at properly convened branch meetings, or they may use any other method of procedure as, having due regard to the circumstances, they may deem acceptable" and amend Rule 89 (b) by deletion of everything after the words "ballot all members".

Rule 89 to read as follows:

"(a) Any final salary offer shall be referred to the CEC. The CEC shall not be entitled to accept such an offer without a ballot of members. The CEC may reject an offer by a two-thirds majority. If a ballot is held a decision to accept such an offer shall be by simple majority of members voting.


(b) In the case of salary proposals emerging as a result of centralised bargaining by the ICTU, the CEC, prior to and only prior to any ICTU special delegate conference at which a final decision is to be made, shall ballot all members."

Standing Committee motion on federation

That the ASTI commits itself to formal discussions with a view to formulating proposals for a Federated Teachers' and Lecturers' Union. These proposals to be presented to Annual Convention 2008.

Motion 39: Parent-teacher meetings

That the ASTI renegotiate the holding of parent-teacher meetings so that such meetings take place within normal school time.




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Convention 2007 – Vox pops

Are extra curricular activities an essential component of a quality education or merely a break from the routine of the classroom? *ASTIR* asked six teachers for their views.



Nathania McDevitt teaches business and maths at Mercy College, Sligo.

Are you involved in extra curricular activities?

I'm involved in the Key Programme, which is a cross-border initiative promoting enterprise among young people. It involves taking students away

four times a year. I also take kids away on overnight basketball trips and on day trips for athletic events. Apart from this, the school is fundraising to renovate our gym so we've had a balloon race, fashion shows and musicals. We had a *Guinness Book of World Records* attempt for the biggest ever table quiz – over 1,000 people were involved. We also had a talent show called the Wow Factor.

What are the benefits of extra curricular activities?

The sport – especially the team activities – allows young people to become more rounded individuals. They get to meet other groups, students outside of their own year, and find role models among the older girls who are achieving a balance between study and an active lifestyle. I've worked with kids who seemed non-academic and de-motivated at the start of the school year, but you take them away on a few trips where they interact with new people, play new roles, and at the end of it they are into school and their confidence is amazing. That to me is brilliant.



Darragh O'Donnell teaches English, CSPE and religion at Sacred Heart College, Carrignavar, Co. Cork.

Are you involved in extra curricular activities?

In the past I have been; with the Augustinian hurling team, drama groups and

competitions. But after the 2000 industrial relations dispute I stopped. I am a teacher, I love my job and I am paid to teach. I think extra curricular activities are wonderful and the Government should consider paying people to do them. The Government must realise that it is depending on teachers' good will and for me that good will is gone. Now all my effort goes into my teaching.

What are the benefits of extra curricular activities?

When I was involved in hurling it was great to get to know students outside the classroom and it definitely enhances relations within the classroom. Unfortunately, this is not recognised by the Government.



Peter Keaney teaches maths, science and agricultural science at Wilson's Hospital School in Westmeath.

Are you involved in extra curricular activities in your school?

It's a boarding and day school so extra curricular activities are important. I do girls soccer and cricket. I help out a little with drama and other activities.

What are the benefits of extra curricular activities?

I think kids nowadays operate on the basis of mutual respect. They are much more worldly and streetwise so if they see you giving your time, they seem to have a better rapport with you. But there is a lot of pressure on schools to get points and results and this means there's pressure on principals. If I'm involved in a sporting event with students and I have to miss half a day, even if there is someone else covering the class there is still pressure on teachers not to miss class time. That's a drawback and it needs to be looked at because if you lose extra curricular activities the school and the community lose out. For example, some parents have the time to bring their kids to local football clubs, some don't, some can afford to pay for their kids to be a member of this club or that club, others can't. The school provides these opportunities for all students.



Pamela Campbell teaches Irish, music and geography in De La Salle School, Dundalk.

Are you involved in extra curricular activities?

I organise musicals and an annual talent show. I'm in charge of the school choir and an Irish traditional music group, and I teach guitar.

What are the benefits of extra curricular activities?

Students get to see teachers outside of the classroom and they can build a different rapport with you. I think this encourages students to respect you as a person and this helps with discipline in the classroom. Inside the class some kids find it hard to shine, but they can excel in a different setting. Through music and drama I see boys suddenly able to express themselves. It gives them self-confidence.

Looking at Whole School Inspections, there is such a focus on what happens during the school day. It seems that work outside the classroom is not regarded as highly. Teachers don't get enough recognition for the time and effort put into extra curricular work and the benefits for young people are not recognised.



Aidan O'Leary teaches history and English in Presentation Secondary School, Ballingarry, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

Are you involved in extra curricular activities?

I am involved in GAA in the school. I

train various hurling teams, under 17s and under 15s, for Munster Colleges and Tipperary competitions. In our school the main competitive sports are hurling and gaelic football for boys and basketball and camogie for girls. The basketball teacher and the camogie teacher work together and train girls three times a week in the evenings, and at lunchtimes. Teachers' involvement in extra curricular work is an aspect of our school culture.

What are the benefits of extra curricular activities?

The recognition young people get from being part of a team makes them feel valued within the school community. If they see that the activity is taken seriously by the school, that the school team has a goal it wants to achieve, they will row in behind. This is very important in a rural community. We are in a small village and kids from five parishes come to the school. The school needs to have a strong identity that the kids can identify with. So the stronger your extra curricular activities are, the stronger the relationship between the kids and the school is. And this affects the wider community. You have a kid in the school show who has a tremendous voice. The recognition he gets gives him confidence and when the school show finishes he joins the local drama society. Extra curricular activities help to ensure that a new generation joins the local organisations.

Also, we are living in a time in Irish society when people take up activities and drop them without any real commitment. Extra curricular activities demand commitment – you have to be there in the school hall at 8pm for your school play. This kind of commitment is good for mental well-being and personal health. But it is also vital to the long-term survival of the school community.



Eadaoin Brennan is a resource teacher and teaches history and geography at St Ciaran's College, Kilkenny.

Are you involved in extra curricular activities in your school?

I am involved in the Young Social

Innovators and I coach the under 18s soccer with another teacher. It involves some after school time and lunchtimes.

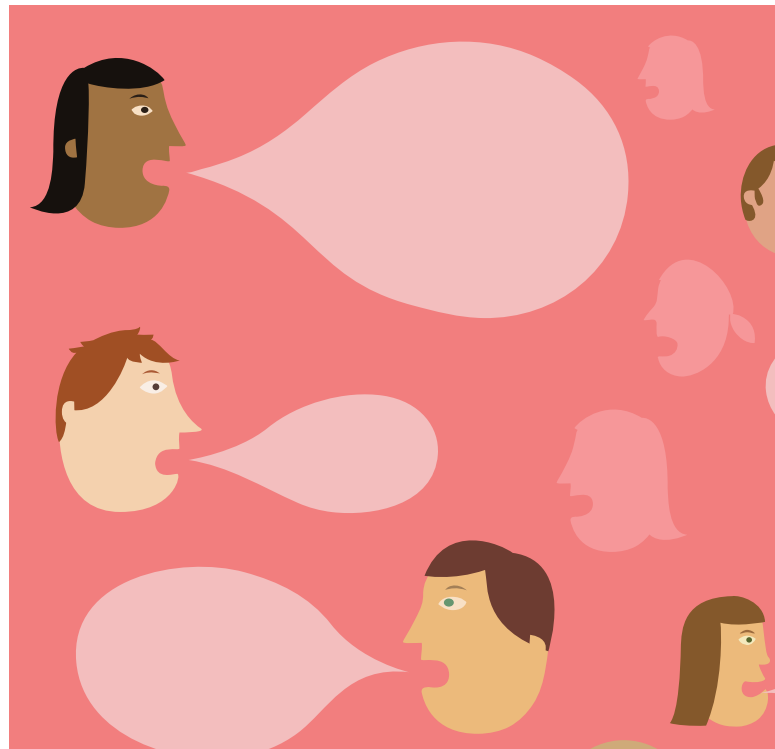
What are the benefits of extra curricular activities?

I teach in an all boys school and one of our Young Social Innovators projects is on the rules of the road. All the boys involved are into cars and are learning how to drive. They did up a booklet aimed at young people on the rules of the road, which focuses on preventing road accidents rather than passing the driving test. We did another project on recycling, looking at what is good and bad in terms of recycling. So students are taking social issues and really trying to move them forward.

In terms of sport, well the under 18s put a lot of effort in, they are fit and I think it gives them more confidence.

Civic republicanism and public morality

DR GARRET FITZGERALD proposes a role for teachers in helping to build a new moral and ethical awareness in Irish society.



To my mind, what has been socially most striking about recent decades has been the collapse of authority here, at almost every level. Until the 1960s, and to a considerable extent even up to the early 1980s, we were, I think, a society deeply dependent on authority. Despite our early 20th Century history of political revolution, and the persistence of an element of popular subversion deriving from our semi-colonial history, our people were generally remarkably accepting of authority. Above all, this was the case with the overwhelming Roman Catholic majority, who accepted wholeheartedly the authority of the institutional Church.

I should perhaps add that this was also true of other non-religious aspects of our society. For example, there was also great respect for the authority of doctors, teachers and lawyers, and for the Garda Síochána, ever since its emergence as an unarmed police force in the middle of the Civil War.

Reasons for our changing society

Why did the moral authority of the Church weaken dramatically from the 1960s onwards? There were several reasons.

First of all, of course, this weakening reflected the general process of secularisation throughout the formerly Christian world, a gradual, centuries-old process from which, however, until the 1960s, we were sheltered by our artificial isolation. Also, because in our case the process of secularisation was compressed into a fraction of the time that it took to develop elsewhere, its impact in Ireland has been huge.

Next, in countries like Ireland where sexual morality had been very much influenced by Catholic Church teaching, the Vatican's handling of the contraception issue from 1968 onwards undermined that Church's moral authority. The damage thus done to the authority and credibility of the Catholic Church was huge – in Ireland as elsewhere.

Then in the 1990s the handling by Irish bishops of the clerical paedophilia issue further undermined the moral authority of the Catholic Church in Ireland. First of all, the covering up of this issue until the mid 1990s meant that 40 years of clerical paedophilia hit the headlines within a single decade, making this problem appear very much more extensive than it would have seemed had it been dealt with as it arose during that extended period. Secondly, persistence with attempts to cover up this problem, after it had begun to be exposed, hugely damaged the credibility of the episcopacy, in Ireland as elsewhere. Bishops displayed a quite extraordinary incomprehension of the revulsion of parents, and of the laity in general, at the betrayal of the innocence of children by a small minority of the clergy.

The speed at which our economy has recently grown, and the extraordinary changes, partly associated with that process, that have impacted upon our society, together with the effective collapse of the authority of the Catholic Church, upon which so many of us depended for so long and so exclusively for our moral code, all this has left a huge and dangerous moral vacuum in our society, one that desperately needs to be filled.

What is civic republicanism?

In her book, *A Civic Republicanism*, Dr Iseult Honohan sees nationalism as involving a sense of collective identity, whereas, she suggests, civic republicanism rests on political recognition of multiply reiterated interdependence and membership of a shared

public culture, rather than a culture of ethnicity, and also involves equality of recognition among heterogeneous citizens. Shared cultural values are, she suggests, the outcome of political interaction, provisionally embodied, open to change, and developing towards a cosmopolitan citizenship from the bottom up, through an increasing web of relationships.



The role of teachers

How can that gap be filled? Only, I believe, by our corps of teachers, especially at second level – led by the principals of our schools – to whom therefore our society must now turn for help to retrieve the dangerous social situation in which we find ourselves. The disappearance of the former deferential attitude to religious authority means that the teaching profession today must function in a much more challenging day-to-day environment than heretofore. Nevertheless, I believe that we must now look to teachers in particular to address the profound problems that these changes pose our society. I know that this is a lot to ask.

The problem that we are not yet facing is that in any secondary school class there will now be students with widely varying degrees of religious conviction, and also students who, whatever their religious beliefs, have attitudes towards sexual issues that conflict with what clergy are required to teach. This means that if moral guidance in schools is confined to traditional religious teaching, we may be in danger of losing any capacity either to curb hedonism or to instil in the new generation public moral values. How can we address this dilemma?

Unless firm ethical foundations can be laid in our schools for what I would describe as a new 'civic republicanism', the prospect of improving, or even maintaining the quality of Irish society as we move further into the 21st Century seems pretty grim. We could eventually find that we have created an ethical wasteland, a society without human values, corroded by materialism, selfishness and hedonism.

Now, it is, of course, very difficult for those actually engaged in denominational religious instruction in schools to attempt, in addition to church teachings, to carry the burden of presenting to a mixed group of teenagers, moral issues in terms of ethical principles that would be credible to the whole of this mixed, and often mixed-up, younger generation. Could this burden perhaps be shared by other teachers, drawing on their unique potential influence with the new generation to offer a parallel ethic that could carry real conviction with a much wider group of pupils?

And could our basically confessional school structure accept and successfully operate such a parallel ethical structure?

That is the difficult question that seems to me to be posed to the principals and teachers of our second-level schools. For our Irish society, much might hang on the answer to this question.

The fact is that, despite past – and not always edifying – rows about issues such as pay and hours, teachers and school principals generally retain today the trust of their pupils. More than anyone else, through privileged access to the new generation, they retain today a capacity to contribute to an urgently needed re-moralisation of our society.

Many parents, although clearly today not all, will no doubt assist such a process in their own way, but the schools – both primary and secondary – hold the key to this project.

In this connection I should perhaps add that while those teachers who may themselves no longer be church-going or even in some cases believing Christians, must currently find difficulty with presenting some aspects of religious teaching, there must be very few of them indeed who would find difficulty with exposing and presenting ethical principles to their pupils. Indeed I know that many teachers and principals are already doing this kind of work with skill and enthusiasm.



Dr Garret FitzGerald

Dr Garret FitzGerald worked as an economic consultant, a lecturer and a journalist before joining Dáil Éireann in 1969. He became leader of Fine Gael in 1977 and served two terms as Taoiseach between 1981 and 1987. He is currently Chancellor of the National University of Ireland.



Seanad elections 2007

ASTIR speaks to the two ASTI-endorsed candidates for the 2007 Seanad elections, Bernadine O’Sullivan (NUI Panel) and David Martin (University of Dublin Panel).

Bernadine O’Sullivan



Did you enjoy your schooldays?

Yes. I eagerly awaited the daily storytelling in primary school. In secondary school I realised that we had been told the history of Ireland from pre-Celtic times to 1922 during those storytelling sessions. I wonder how that inspiring teacher, Helen Meehan, with nary a lesson plan in sight, would fare in today’s bureaucratic evaluation system. I have a degree in history.

Where did you receive your second-level education?

I spent five very happy years at The Four Masters secondary school in Donegal town with my Catholic, Church of Ireland, Methodist and Presbyterian classmates. A spirit of tolerance for diversity permeated the school and gave me a life-long interest in religion. I studied philosophy and years later I was a member of the NCCA Religion Course Committee and, with members of different faith traditions, drew up a curriculum that could be used by different faiths.

In English class we read the *Irish Independent*, the *Irish Press*, the *Irish Times*, the *Daily Mail* and the *Guardian*. These were not on the curriculum. The same enlightened teacher brought us 50 miles to see the Abbey Theatre on tour. I have a degree in English.

How important, do you think, is the work of the teacher?

One of the challenges we face as we work against the tide of the consumer culture is to help students to realise that it is who they are and not what they have that really matters. Giving the students quality interaction is only possible in manageable class sizes. I enjoyed a class size of 22 at school in Donegal. Given that in today’s classrooms we have

special needs and international students, the maximum class size should be even lower. Both my husband and daughter are teachers.

Why did you decide to contest the Seanad election?

Seanad Éireann is one of the two houses of the Oireachtas where issues can be raised by someone who is independent of the political parties. A Senator can directly address and question a Minister and have a crucial input into the drafting of new legislation. I believe that education has important economic and social consequences and that education issues like class size must be raised at the highest political level, and where they will receive media coverage.

What advantage can you see for the ASTI in having you elected as a Senator?

A Senator gets more media coverage than most backbenchers and so is in a unique position to publicise and campaign on issues. If parents were more aware of the advantages of less-crowded classes for their children they would demand greater investment. Our students and teachers would then have a better learning environment. There would be more permanent positions, and the personnel to support practical subjects like IT, home economics and science would be put in place.

What other issues are of interest to you?

As chairperson of the ASTI Pensions Committee I wish to see a reversal of the draconian changes in the pension entitlements of teachers appointed after April 2005. I am determined that pension parity and the three-strand early retirement scheme are kept intact. As a founding member of the association of CSPE teachers I believe that our teachers do not get enough credit for fostering civic and social values, and concern for the environment. We have green schools, litter-free schools, energy-saving schools, etc.

You are still teaching and are currently a member of the Convocation Council of the NUI and the Teaching Council; do you get time to relax?

I am blessed with a large extended family with whom I enjoy music sessions and dancing. I like to read and since first seeing the Abbey Theatre on tour, I love the theatre.

David Martin



Why are you running for the Seanad?

It is an opportunity to voice concerns and to make suggestions concerning education. It is a public platform that gets reported in the media. The sitting Senators on the Dublin University Panel never raise issues regarding secondary education. One reason for this is that there has historically been hostility to public servants in general and teachers in particular. If we let negative voices define teaching without challenging them and without promoting a positive image of teachers, then we cannot be surprised if the general public believe the reported negative image of our profession.

Is it possible to elect a teacher?

The Seanad meets one-and-a-half days per week, so a teacher can teach

and serve too. The quota of votes necessary is mostly only achieved by one Senator and the other two are often elected under the quota. A total of 2,000 first preference votes would be achievable if each ASTI member made five more calls and asked five to lobby five.

Is it financially possible?

Unions are restricted by law to a contribution of €2,500. Many candidates spend 10 times that! All contributions make a difference. Sitting Senators have the advantage of free postage and their printing costs are subsidised. Independent candidates are at a serious disadvantage in mounting a challenge.

For these reasons, not having a full-time secretarial service and functioning office, my strategy depends on the Internet. My website – www.davidmartin2007.com – is in the process of development and you can correspond using the 'contact' button on the home page.

What are some of the education issues of interest to you?

Pay and conditions are quite constrained by national agreements, therefore, we must concentrate on areas such as investment in educational resources if we are to provide for an educational future that features in Europe and in an international context. Investment must be made in the resources to support teaching. Teachers must be given time to teach each pupil and time to upskill and upgrade their teaching – weekend and evening courses are not enough. Creative teaching needs creative teachers and this means investment in educators.



Irish Aid
Department of Foreign Affairs
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha

Irish Aid is Ireland's official programme of assistance to the developing world.

Léargas manages the Schools Linking and Immersion Scheme on behalf of Irish Aid.



Irish Aid Schools Linking and Immersion Scheme

The Irish Aid Schools Linking and Immersion Scheme aims to raise awareness and understanding of development issues within second-level schools in Ireland.

Through the scheme, schools here will build relationships based on mutual learning with schools and communities in developing countries.

The scheme will provide funding to second-level schools and networks for various activities that may include the following:

- enhancing the development education dimension of the linking and immersion projects
- enabling Irish schools to form links with schools in developing countries
- preparing students and teachers for immersion visits to developing countries
- sharing the learning with the school and wider community
- training, study and preparatory visits of teachers

A call for applications for funding will be made in May 2007 and will be published in national print media and on the Irish Aid and Léargas websites. We hope to award grant funding in September/October 2007 for activities during the 2007-8 school year.

For further information, please email schoolslinking@leargas.ie or contact
The Manager, Irish Aid Schools Linking and Immersion Scheme, Léargas, 189 Parnell St, Dublin 1. Tel.: (01) 873 1411

Transforming the teaching and learning of technology

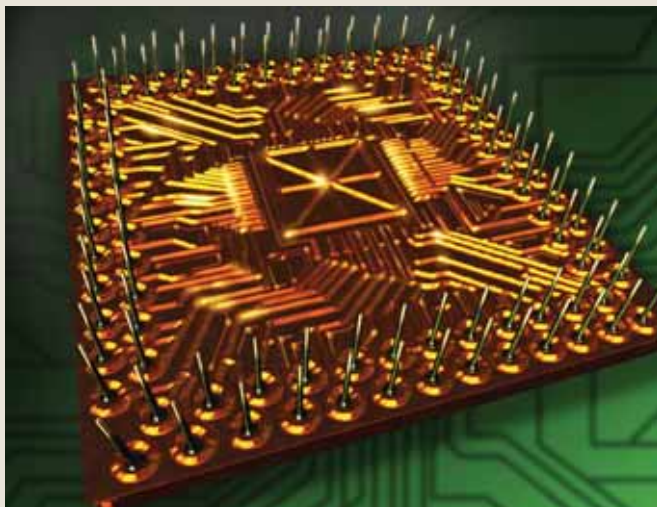
The introduction of four new subjects will transform the way technology is taught in our schools.

This autumn will see two out of four new technology subjects introduced in schools. An official date for the introduction of the remaining two subjects is due to be announced shortly.

The new subjects will overhaul the way technical subjects are taught, introducing students to cutting-edge technology and equipment, and

better preparing them for a society, and an economy, that are increasingly technology- and knowledge-based. The subjects are:

- design and communication graphics (formerly technical drawing);
- engineering technology (formerly engineering);
- architectural technology (formerly construction studies); and



Technology

Although Junior Certificate technology was introduced in 1989, this is the first year that a Leaving Certificate syllabus will be available. Fifty-four schools have been approved to teach it in a phased implementation process. A number of other schools have been approved for funding to upgrade their facilities and resources with a view to commencing next year.

The technology course will cover areas such as electronics, mechanics, communications, design, and project management, with a strong ICT component and a strong emphasis on practical work and problem solving. A creative and student-oriented course, it will contain core and optional modules, allowing students to choose areas of particular interest. As part of the course students will be given a theme and a brief, and will have to design, present and construct a product. This product and an accompanying folder will each comprise 25% of the mark for Leaving Certificate, with the remaining 50% available from the final examination.



Design and communication graphics

Replacing the technical drawing course, this course will retain certain elements of the older syllabus, including an emphasis on two-dimensional drawing and sketching skills, and the geometry of design. However, there are differences in structure and content, and in context and approach, which will affect how the subject is perceived and taught. A major innovation is the introduction of 3D parametric computer-aided design (CAD) software, allowing students to learn about three-dimensional modelling.

The subject will also incorporate optional modules, where students can choose between such topics as dynamic mechanisms, geologic geometry and assemblies. Crucial to the course will be learning to communicate design ideas. It is intended that the course will develop students' communication, design and problem solving abilities, as well as their awareness of the role and impact of design on the environment. A total of 40% of the student's final mark will be based on a course assignment with the other 60% based on the final examination.

■ Leaving Cert technology (follow on subject from the Junior Cert technology subject).

Design and communication graphics and Leaving Certificate technology will be introduced to classrooms this September and will be examined from 2009.

Resources and support

A programme of continuing professional development for teachers of these subjects will be provided by the Department of Education and Science support service, t⁴ (www.t4.ie). Hosted by the Galway Education Centre, the primary function of t⁴ is to prepare and support teachers in implementing the course syllabuses. t⁴ currently has nine full-time team members consisting of a National Co-ordinator, an Assistant National Co-ordinator for each subject, and two Regional Development Officers for both design and communication graphics and technology. In addition, 28 Associate Trainers assist the full-time team.

Paddy Keays, an ASTI member and until recently a teacher at Crescent College Comprehensive in Limerick, is the National Co-ordinator of t⁴. He speaks of a "massive feelgood factor" surrounding these subjects, with teachers enthusiastically attending in-service days and very much looking forward to commencing in September.

Rehabilitating technology

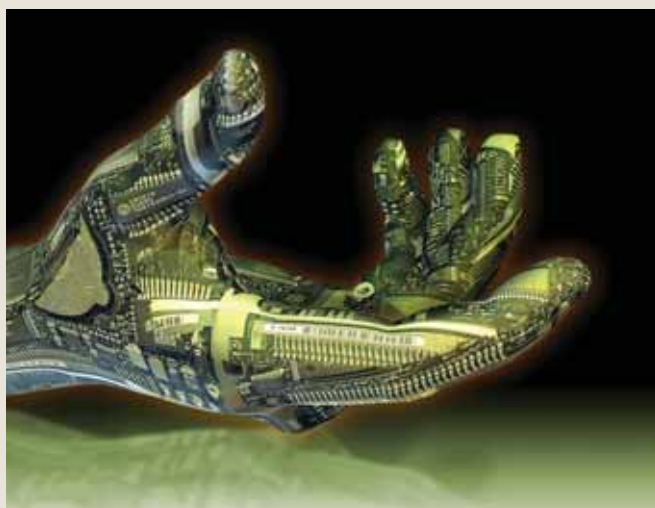
According to Paddy Keays, technology subjects have moved away from being perceived as preparation for the workplace for students planning to leave school early, to their current status, providing a broad education in technology involving reasoning, visualisation, logical thinking, and group and individual work, with a strong mixture of theory and practice.

Initial supports have been given to schools with existing technology programmes. However, some additional funding has been made available to schools that wish to begin to offer these subjects to their students.



Architectural technology

This course, which replaces construction studies, will focus on developing the student's understanding of the visual impact of buildings on the Irish landscape, as well as the technologies and materials involved in creating the built environment. The study of architectural heritage and planning will form part of this approach, and students will interact with a variety of technologies, including CAD applications. Hands-on experience through experimenting and modelling will form a crucial part of the student's work. Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial skills will be developed in a learning environment that incorporates the practical and the theoretical. Students will also address issues of sustainability and the environment. Like the technology course, the project component of architectural technology will be worth 50% of the student's final mark.



Engineering technology

The revised engineering technology syllabus, which has yet to be officially launched, consists of a core and options. The core includes practical and theoretical elements and is intended as a general introduction to engineering principles and techniques. All students are required to study the core, which includes topics such as health and safety, manufacturing techniques and technology, and drawing and design. Students also choose two from a list of five optional areas of study, including computer-aided processes (CAD/CAM) and decorative metal-craft.

The syllabus has been developed on a modular basis to utilise existing facilities and teacher expertise, and to allow for the development of the subject within all second-level schools. The new syllabus has been developed to be attractive to both boys and girls. Emphasis is placed on problem solving, research and design, manufacture of artifacts, and health and safety. Students are encouraged to develop and express, in a practical and imaginative way, their creative ability and innovative potential.

The syllabus should appeal to students who wish to progress to the wide range of engineering, science and information technology courses on offer in third-level colleges and universities, or to those who are considering a trade career.



Multiculturalism and values

MARY MULDOWNEY discusses the need for greater understanding by teachers of the value systems of students from other cultures.

The importance of a culture-centred perspective cannot be underestimated in regard to Ireland's radically changing nature, particularly when one considers the findings of the 2006 General Census Report, which indicated that one in ten of the population arrived in the country within the last five years. Hence, for teachers to work successfully in a multicultural context, it is essential that they have a clear understanding of the term 'multiculturalism' and of the value systems of their students.

What is multiculturalism?

The term 'multicultural' refers to the situation where a society is portrayed as having a diverse and heterogeneous set of cultural practices, as a result of the existence in that society of different social and cultural traits. Consequently, debates around multiculturalism are multi- and interdisciplinary. Such debates concern politics and pedagogy, the humanities and cultural studies, science and social science, law and political economy, public administration, women's studies and ethnic studies, race, ethnicity, class, gender and nation. Interestingly, the actual word 'multiculturalism' is of relatively recent coinage, although the phenomenon it describes has been present throughout history. In today's world, the term can have different meanings, some of which will influence its application to policy and programmes in plural societies. The general premise that underlies all definitions of multiculturalism is the right of individuals to be respected for their differences. This rests upon the idea that all cultures have values, beliefs, customs, language, knowledge and world views that are valid and viable, and that these components reflect the experiences of a particular group. Multiculturalism as an orientation accepts both the maintenance of the

cultural identity and characteristics of all ethnocultural groups, and the contact and participation of all groups in the larger plural society. In its broadest sense, multiculturalism is critical and resistant to mono-cultural assimilation.

Understanding cultures through values

One means of understanding cultures is by comparing their different value systems. Geert Hofstede considers values to have a functional purpose in each culture and to reflect a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs to others. Values are also important for expressing identity and for communication purposes. In short, values define the parameters of cultural systems. Therefore, awareness of a student's value system is crucial for understanding that person in his/her contextual environment. One of the most extensively investigated concepts in cross-cultural psychology concerning value systems is that of 'individualism/collectivism'. This dimension emerged as one of four factors in an important multinational study by Hofstede. He states:

“Individualism pertains to societies in which ties between individuals are loose; everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism pertains to societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive groups, which throughout the peoples' lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.”

Interestingly, a person can hold both individualistic and collectivistic values at the same time.



To understand what it means to be a member of an individualistic or collectivistic culture, it is important and necessary to distinguish between the underlying philosophical or cognitive dimensions of a culture and how these aspects are expressed in social behavioural patterns. This can be one means of exploring the cultural world of an individual.

The most notable difference between the two value systems appears to be a fundamental philosophical distinction concerning how people arrange, order and perceive reality. If teachers are not aware of the distinctions and the values inherent in individualism and collectivism as orientations, erroneous conclusions and decisions may ensue. Derald Wing Sue and David Sue, two leading writers on multiculturalism, consider that there is a need for those working in a multicultural context to work at:

“Balancing the individualistic approach with a collectivistic reality that acknowledges our embeddedness in families, significant others, communities and cultures. A client is perceived not just as an individual, but also as an individual who is the product of his or her social and cultural context.”

It is also important to be aware of some of the implications of individualistic and collectivistic value systems when working in a multicultural context. Western concepts such as fulfilling one's potential, self-actualisation or authenticity may have little or no meaning for individuals who have a strict collectivist background. Concerning the construction of morality, western individualistic thinking places a strong emphasis on the person's 'internal locus of evaluation' and the person's capacity to make moral choices based on an individual set of values. In contrast, persons from a collectivist culture place a heavy emphasis on the influence of destiny or Karma in their lives.

Impact of values in schools

The construction of time in various cultural settings can have major practical consequences. For example, the concept of an appointment is alien to many people from non-individualistic cultures, in that many clients would expect to be able to visit a teacher when the spirit moves

them, rather than at a specific appointed time. The verbal patterns of students from collectivist cultures, narrating a story in a circular manner, for example, may impinge on the time constraints of western-trained teachers. The emotional bond of people from collectivist cultures to land and place is also extremely powerful. Indeed, it can be difficult for people from an individualist culture, where the bond may be very insignificant, to comprehend this. Home and land for people of collectivist origins are paramount, and can very much reflect the reality of their world view in terms of the inter-connectedness of humankind and nature.

In summary, for teachers working in a multicultural context, awareness and understanding of their students' value systems is crucial, if a dialogical relationship is to develop. In essence, a dialogical relationship is necessary between people of diverse cultural groups, if an over-arching framework of shared values in a multi-ethnic state is to develop. Such a framework must be flexible and responsive to the various cultures and ethnic groups that compose our nation.

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Mary Muldowney

Mary Muldowney teaches physical education at Loreto Secondary School, Bray, Co. Wicklow. She also graduated last December from TCD with a MSc in Guidance & Counselling. This article on multiculturalism is part of her Masters thesis, 'An Investigation into Multiculturalism and Multicultural Counselling & Therapy'.

Teachers' Employee Assistance Scheme

The Teachers' Employee Assistance Scheme offers support to teachers and their families who are experiencing personal and work-related difficulties.

What is the Teachers' Employee Assistance Scheme (EAS)?

This is a service for teachers, which provides them with easy access to confidential counselling in order to assist them in coping with the effects of personal and work-related issues.

Can any teacher contact the EAS?

Yes, this service is available to all primary and post-primary teachers.

Is the service free?

Yes, there is no charge for the service. Following lengthy representations from the ASTI and the other teacher unions, the Department of Education and Science agreed to fund this service, which will cost €2-3 million per annum.

When can I contact the service?

You can ring the freephone number – 1800 411057 – on any day, at any time. This 24-hour service is available 365 days per year.

Can my family use the service?

Yes, a teacher's spouse, partner, mother, father or dependant (over 16s only) can avail of the service.

What kind of problems does it deal with?

You can use the service if you have a work-related issue that is causing you distress. You can also use it if you have family concerns, or emotional or relationship difficulties. Contact with the service may be the first step in solving such problems.

Who organises the service?

VHI Corporate Solutions have been contracted to provide this service. They have retained a countrywide team of professional counsellors and psychotherapists who will give direct advice to those who contact the service.

Is it more than just a telephone service?

Yes, the counsellor can arrange to meet the contacting teacher in a convenient and appropriate venue. This could include up to six counselling sessions.



How can I be sure the service is confidential?

The EAS staff follow standard ethics and codes of practice and are bound by the protocols of the Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP). Any contact remains confidential. Contact is by self-referral only.

Where can I get more information?

Each school principal has been sent an explanatory leaflet for each teacher. Contact can be made by ringing 1800 411057 or by email to eas@vhics.ie. Further information is also available from ASTI.

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Gerry Morrissey

John the Baptist Community School, Hospital, Co. Limerick.
(February 6, 1948–March 27, 2007)

sic transit gloria mundi

Gerry Morrissey, who passed from this life on March 27 last, served as a teacher in Hospital, Co. Limerick from September 1969 up to the time of his unexpected death.

A native of Carrigaholt, Co. Clare, Gerry studied as a boarder in the famous Banner nursery of St. Flannan's from 1960 onwards, before going to University College Cork to study medieval history, Latin and Greek in 1966. While still a HDip student at UCC, Gerry began his teaching career in Hospital, travelling to Cork at night to study for his teaching diploma while teaching Latin and history by day in the original convent school.

In an era of platform shoes, flared bell-bottoms and flowing tresses, Gerry brought youth and dash and a flavour of the Sixties to the Hospital scene. He also brought with him the O'Curry tradition of scholarship and the fun-loving attitude to life so characteristic of his native place.

These qualities were to serve Gerry well in 1972, when the Presentation sisters amalgamated with the De la Salle Brothers School and he had to cope with the twin challenges of mixed gender and new approaches. Students and colleagues from that era fondly remember his sparkling contributions in the changeover negotiations, his effortless embracing of a new regime, his dedication to teaching and his 'devilment' on various school tours and end-of-year activities.

Marriage to Eleanor, a teacher in St Enda's, Limerick, in 1978, brought new responsibilities and new beginnings. Their children, Ciara, Ronan and Eimear, excelled during their student days in Hospital and in their chosen careers, and were a source of constant pride and delight to Gerry, and to each of the aforementioned we offer our deepest condolences on the loss of a doting husband and father.

All three children were students in Hospital when another major advance in pedagogy took place in the area, with the amalgamation of the local VEC and Presentation/De la Salle into John the Baptist Community School from 1997 onward. As construction began on the new school it was an opportunity for Gerry to sharpen his wits with a newly extended staff.

Here again, his mischievous nature and application to work won him a whole new set of friends, both young and old alike.

This was a time especially of involvement in quizzes for Gerry; The *Cork Examiner Quiz*, *Blackboard Jungle*, Gridlock, The Cadbury's Quiz, The Pioneer Quiz, covering both Secondary and National school teams, with coaching after school and on Saturdays, and driving teams to various events nationwide, par for the course. Many a student has happy memories of those escapades and has reason to be grateful to Gerry for this lifetime opportunity.

In all, Gerry Morrissey served under six different principals, taught in three different regimes, worked through two major amalgamations, mastered new curricula and subject areas, served with scores of different teachers, battled health problems in recent years – and yet is remembered by all for his humour, soundness and comradeship. To his grieving family, heartbroken colleagues, legions of friends; to his golfing buddies, historians and hurlers; and to all our students who mourn the loss of this totemic figure, we offer a few paltry lines of consolation:

"An empty chair in your classroom,
And one at your fireside too,
Your new car's not in the car-park,
(In the space that was kept for you!)
And where's your quick step in the morning?
Your quick quip at the start of the day?
Your pranks and your wisdom and sparkle,
As bright as any Spring day?
A byword for two generations,
For laughter and learning and wit,
Go mberimis piosa de d'anam,
Is slán gearr tamaillin duit."

L.J.

Tadhg O'Connell

St John's, Balloonagh/Mercy Mounthawk, Tralee.
(1959–2006)

Tadhg O'Connell was born in Ducleagh, Dromagh, Mallow, Co. Cork on September 29, 1959. He studied science at UCC where he met his beloved wife, Mary. He began his teaching career in the Crescent, Limerick, where he taught science from 1982 to 1985.

In 1985, Tadhg moved to Tralee where he joined his wife on the staff of St John's, Balloonagh. He taught science, maths and physics there until 2001, when he moved to the newly amalgamated school at Mercy Mounthawk. Tadhg loved to teach. He was totally professional and dedicated. His students loved and respected him, and this was very evident in the large number of past pupils who attended his removal and funeral mass. As a colleague, he was caring, good-humoured, compassionate, helpful and sincere.

Tadhg became ill in January, 2003. When he left school on the evening of January 27, nobody could have known that he would never teach again. During his lengthy illness he showed great strength of character and patient endurance of suffering. Mary and his children, Pádraig and Orlaith, cared for him at home until the end. This had been his dearest wish. Tadhg made his final journey from his home to St Brendan's Church, Clogher, where his remains were met at the church gates by his teaching colleagues, who stood in silent tribute in the fading August sunlight. On Saturday, August 5, following requiem mass during which his favourite hymns were beautifully sung by the choir of Mercy Mounthawk, accompanied by his family and flanked by a guard of honour of his former teaching companions, he was laid to rest in Clogher Graveyard. *After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well.*

Principals and Deputy Principals' Advisory Committee



The Principals and Deputy Principals' Advisory Committee, pictured at Head Office during a recent meeting. Committee members are: Brendan Forde, Chair; Brendan Duggan; Michael Concannon; John Cleary; John O'Donovan; Breda Lyons; Joe Whyte; Mary Hurley; Dermot Curran; Paul Butler; Eileen Mullaney; Austin Kearney; Marian Healy; Deirdre Healy; and Diarmaid de Paor, Deputy General Secretary.

This ASTI Principals and Deputy Principals' Advisory Committee advises the Standing Committee on issues affecting principals and deputy principals. One principal and one deputy principal is elected in each of nine regions, based on the Standing Committee regions. Elections take place at regional meetings. The term of office is two years and members may serve a maximum of three terms.

Over the past year the Committee has devoted its time to many issues that are of concern, not only to principals and deputy principals, but to teachers in general. Among these issues are over-quota schools, educational disadvantage, student behaviour and whole school evaluation.

Over-quota schools

Many aspects of the Department of Education and Science's handling of issues in over-quota schools have been raised at the Committee, and have been a cause for considerable concern. The Committee has noted a lack of sympathy for teachers in such schools who are seeking a career break, even where the teacher may be suffering from a serious illness. Concern has also been expressed at the practice of asking school management in over-quota schools to fill hours allocated for students with special educational needs from among the existing allocation of teachers in the school. This is done without any reference to whether there are teachers qualified for such duties in the school, and without any assurances that training will be provided if necessary. This practice does a disservice, not only to teachers, but also to students with special needs.

Educational disadvantage

The Government's action plan to combat educational disadvantage caused much disquiet among the members of the Principals and Deputy Principals' Advisory Committee, who feared some schools and students would lose out. While the additional funding provided under the DEIS scheme was welcomed by the Committee, they identified some disquieting anomalies in the roll-out of the plan. The greatest difficulties were experienced by those schools that had been in previous disadvantaged schemes but were not included in DEIS. The Committee expressed concern that these schools, which had disadvantaged students but were not included in the DEIS programme, were being punished for successes such as improving examination results and the student retention rate. Following representations made by the ASTI, the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, decided to continue the provision of resources to combat educational disadvantage to these non-DEIS schools until 2010. The ASTI has made representations to the Department of Education and Science seeking the introduction of a dispersed disadvantage scheme to cater for those schools with a cohort of disadvantaged students who do not qualify for inclusion in DEIS. The union is also seeking clarification in relation to university access programmes and arrangements for accessing the National Educational Psychological Service.

Student behaviour

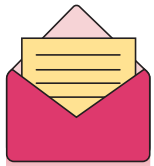
The Committee has welcomed the moves made by Minister Hanafin to amend Section 29 of the Education Act and the introduction of the behavioural support units. However, they regretted the fact that nothing is being done to address the growing problem of indiscipline, which is affecting all schools.

Part-time teachers

While welcoming the introduction of CIDs, which they saw as the extension of basic rights to many fixed-term teachers, the Committee warned against the fragmentation of teaching posts and urged the ASTI to do its utmost to ensure that teachers on part-time hours were not left in this position throughout their careers.



*Diarmaid de Paor,
ASTI Deputy General Secretary.*



Teacher exchange

A permanent teacher of English, SPHE and learning support in the northeast seeks an immediate exchange with a teacher in the west, ideally Mayo. Also qualified to teach history and German. Current position is within comfortable commuting distance of Navan, Drogheda, Dundalk, Monaghan, etc. For further information, Tel: 087-929 4167.

A permanent teacher of maths and geography, based in North Mayo, would like to exchange with same in Galway, South Mayo, West Roscommon or North Clare. For further information, Tel: 087-764 9662.

A permanent teacher of English and history, based in Athlone, would like to exchange with same in Sligo or surrounding area. For further information, Tel: 087-937 0410.

Springday 2007

Springday for Europe is an annual citizen-driven initiative aimed at encouraging young people to debate, reflect, learn and make their voices heard on European issues. Events run from May until June 30. More information is available on www.springday2007.net and students can use this website to exchange ideas and collaborate with pupils from different regions and countries. Teachers participating in the project can take advantage of learning material, educational games, news and information featured on this portal.



Separated teachers support

The INTO Separated Teachers Support Group aims to provide support, information and a forum for social exchange for its members. It welcomes separated, divorced, widowed and lone parent members from the ASTI, TUI and IFUT. A social evening is being held on June 9, at Club na Múinteoirí, Parnell Square, Dublin 1. For further information, contact Chairperson Maura Killackey, Tel: 0505-21694/087-123 3456, or Secretary Christina Henry, Tel: 01-848 1405/087-620 1153.

Teacher reunion

The University of Limerick Alumni Association is holding a college-wide reunion for all graduates of the Thomond College of Education (formerly the National College of Physical Education). It will be held on Saturday, September 8, at the UL campus. All graduates and former faculty and staff are welcome to attend. To receive an invitation contact Niamh Madden, UL Alumni Association, Student Centre, University of Limerick, Limerick, Tel: 061-202 475, Email: ulaa@ul.ie. Further information is available on the website – www.ulaa.ul.ie/?page=TCEPages.

Call for papers

The Reading Association of Ireland is holding its Annual Conference from September 27 to 29, 2007. The theme of this year's conference is 'Developing and Sustaining Literacy' and the association is inviting proposals for workshops or papers within this theme. Proposals can be sent to Celine Fitzpatrick at celinefitzpatrick@eircom.net, or to President, RAI, St Pius X Girls National School, Fortfield Park, Terenure, Dublin 6. The closing date for receipt of submissions is June 15.



Irish Applied Maths Teachers' Association (IAMTA) established

On November 25, 2006, the Irish Applied Maths Teachers' Association (Cumman Múinteoirí Matamaitice Feidmi na hÉireann) was voted into existence. The IAMTA's aims include:

- to enhance the standing of applied maths and to work with other agencies (IMTA, ISTA, NCCA, DES) to improve the education of all students in Ireland;
- to influence the Department of Education and Science and the SEC with regard to the syllabus, and exam content and duration;
- to enhance the standing of applied maths in the public eye and push for applied mathematics to be included in the 'Science in Crisis' discussion; and
- to strongly oppose moves to downgrade this important subject.

If you wish to join the IAMTA, contact Mary Nagle, Subscriptions Manager, at managle@eircom.net.

Ethnicities and languages conference

A conference on minority ethnicities and minority languages in Irish education will be held on Thursday, June 21, in St Patrick's College, Dublin. This will be the first major conference to address the implications of the change in ethnic and language composition of the majority of Irish schools. Further information is available on www.spd.dcu.ie/memiconference2007. Places are limited and those wishing to attend should book their places in advance by emailing memlconf@spd.dcu.ie.

Trade union campaign

The General Secretary of the European Federation of Public Services Unions, Carola Fischbach-Pyttel, has urged Irish workers and citizens to support its campaign for a European Union Framework directive on public services. The campaign is supported by the European Trade Union Confederation, the European public service employers' body, CEEP, and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. You can support the campaign by signing an online petition at www.petitionpublicservices.eu.

Diploma in Teaching Enterprise

The South Dublin County Enterprise Board, in co-operation with Dublin West Education Centre, has set up a new third-level Diploma in Teaching Enterprise. Participants will be either currently employed or seeking employment as secondary school teachers in the South Dublin County area and the course will commence in Autumn 2007. For further information, Tel: 01-405 7073. The closing date for completed applications is June 2007.

Safefood conference

Safefood is co-hosting a conference with the Northern Irish Consumer Council from June 27 to 29. This may be of interest to anyone researching, teaching or working in the areas of consumer sciences or home economics. For further details contact Dr Chris Strugnell at cjstrugnell@ulster.ac.uk.

That was then

A look back at the world of teaching in 1985 – plus ça change, plus c'est la meme chose.



"It will be talked of in years to come, wherever teachers meet." This was how a contemporary edition of *ASTIR* described December 5, 1985, "the day 20,000 teachers came to Croke Park, united in their determination to achieve the implementation of an Arbitrator's award".

This mass rally was the result of a year of pay issues and negotiations. In June of 1985 the ASTI, TUI and INTO lodged a joint pay claim for an increase of between 18% and 22% to take account of the pay awards in both the civil and public services since 1980. The Arbitrator recommended a 10% increase, payable in two phases. The Minister for Education, Gemma Hussey's stance in relation to this finding was: "it cannot be paid". This occurred in the context of a proposal for a 12-month public sector pay freeze. In September the Executives of the ASTI, TUI and INTO held a joint meeting in Dublin to launch a countrywide, united campaign to secure full implementation of the award to teachers. This included lobbying TDs and Senators, arranging one-day regional strikes and pursuing publicity in local media. Compromise on the 10% award was ruled out; it was pointed out that the 10% was itself a compromise. This campaign failed to impact on the Government's stance and the decision to call a mass rally of teachers on December 5 was announced at a meeting of campaign co-ordinators in November.

The 20,000-strong rally was addressed by the then ASTI President, Louis O'Flaherty, General Secretary Kieran Mulvey, and the Presidents and General Secretaries of the other teacher unions. Greg Maxwell, Chairperson of the Public Services Committee of ICTU, also addressed the crowd and said: "Teachers' commitment, organisation and unshakeable resolve in this dispute has made them the single most effective group within the entire

public service". In reaction to the rally the Government offered to pay the 10% increase in three phases but with no retrospective payments. This was unacceptable to the teachers' unions and industrial action continued into 1986.

Some of the other important issues in 1985 remain relevant today. One such issue was redeployment. Following negotiations, an interim redeployment agreement was announced at Convention 1985. The Department agreed to continue to pay incremental salary to those who became redundant through falling enrolments, a special group was established for the purpose of facilitating the placement in alternative teaching posts of lay secondary teachers who became redundant through school closures, and in the case of amalgamated schools, tenure of existing permanent teachers would be safeguarded.

The other issue to dominate Convention 1985 was class size. During 1985 the Minister for Education conducted a survey of attitudes of young people towards education. The results showed that students felt schools were failing to deal adequately with modern technology and they perceived computer science as being one of the most important subjects. In a 2007 survey of teachers, carried out by the ASTI, almost 30% of respondents said there were no computers available in their classrooms, while a further 52% described the provision of computers in classrooms as either very inadequate or inadequate. Today we have an average expenditure on ICT education in Ireland of €40 per student per annum, compared to €110 in the UK, implying that despite our knowledge-driven economy, information and communications technology remains a low priority 22 years later.

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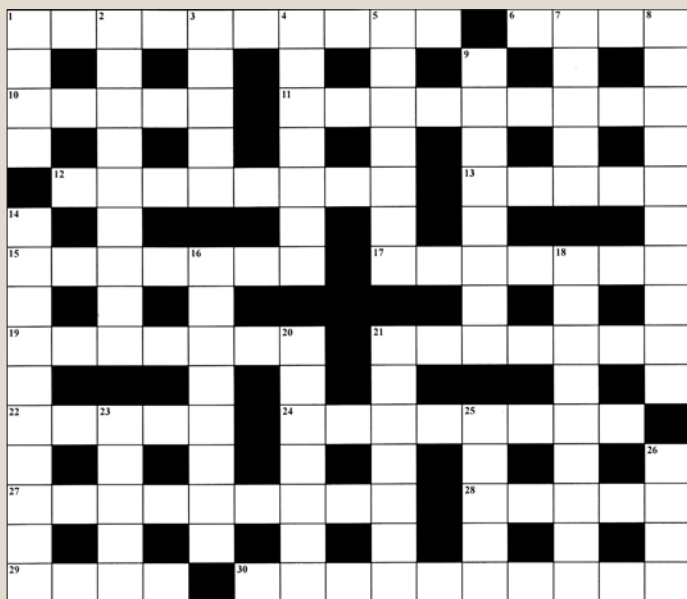
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ASTI Branch

Entries to: **Astir Crossword No. 0703, Think Media, The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.**
To arrive by: **Friday June 29, 2007.**

CLUES ACROSS:

- 1 This scheme is explained in DES Circular Letter 18/98 (3,7)
- 6 Could be Irish, Mulligan, Brunswick among others (4)
- 10 Et 30 across
This scheme has three strands (5, 10)
- 11 Must I moan at this conclusion? (9)
- 12 Not an offshore island (8)
- 13 Subtle clatter contains showy splendour! (5)
- 15 Must Sir accept their veracity? (7)
- 17 He wrote, among other plays, *The Cherry Orchard* (7)
- 19 An inflexible English pop star? (4,3)
- 21 You might find him/her supplying food on the terrace (7)
- 22 Messed up education and got cheated (5)
- 24 Peig in black French negligee! (8)
- 27 "The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest..." (9)
- 28 In an embarrassing silly frame of mind (5)
- 29 Use a tool to unearth the stolen treasure (4)
- 30 See 10 across

CLUES DOWN:

- 1 A four-wheel drive vehicle (4)
- 2 Sometimes applied to one who uses aggressive and selfish methods to obtain a goal (9)
- 3 Considered by some as Father of the symphony (5)
- 4 Mischievous persons have cars, Sal! (7)
- 5 Do I moan as I wander about? (7)
- 7 That of Robert Emmet in 1803 was a famous Irish one (5)
- 8 On the street where we live! (10)

- 9 He negotiated for the *Aud* to sail for Ireland in April 1916 (8)
- 14 Did you play golf here at Easter? (10)
- 16 This committee consists of 23 members (8)
- 18 One hit the Gulf Coast of the US in August 2005 (9)
- 20 Deposit this prime lean cut of beef! (7)
- 21 Italy's most famous red wine (7)
- 23 Pa & I to the courtyard repair! (5)
- 25 A vine could be artless (5)
- 26 "When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath ... : Ambition should be made of sterner stuff" (Shakespeare) (4)

Congratulations to the winner of Crossword No. 0702: Seamus Curley, St Nathy's College, Ballaghaderreen, Co Roscommon.

Solution to ASTIR crossword No. 0702

- | Across | | Down | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. Banquet dinner | 23. Afraid | 2. Acronym | 18. Mocha |
| 10. Harpies | 25. Ghosts | 3. Quip | 20. Aid |
| 11. Lunatic | 27. Pew | 4. Ersatz | 21. Mig |
| 12. Iona | 29. Sloe | 5. Dollop | 24. Rhombic |
| 13. Ethos | 30. Peril | 6. Nine | 26. Saviour |
| 15. Anne | 31. Over | 7. Estonia | 27. Petrel |
| 17. Zip | 34. Nibbler | 8. Sheila Parsons | 28. Wisest |
| 19. Armada | 35. Epitome | 9. Science survey | 32. Alto |
| 21. Mosaic | 36. School steward | 14. Hipster | 33. View |
| 22. Miasmic | | 16. Admit | |

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7. I can view my account online at www.asticu.ie (from April 2007).
8. I can request that transactions be carried out on my account through our online (from April 2007).
9. I can apply for an ATM card (from April 2007).
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12. I can apply for funding for my local club or charity through the credit union's sponsorship committee.
13. I can enter a competition to win one of three bursaries per annum.*
14. I can open a junior account for my children.
15. My spouse can open an account.
16. I can earn an attractive return on my savings through a yearly dividend.
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