

ASTIR

Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland



YOUNG
TEACHERS
SPEAKING
OUT



ASTI survey shows pressures on teachers

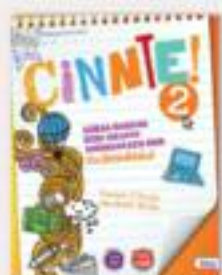
Convention 2018 report

Remembering the marriage bar

EDCO NEW PUBLICATIONS

2018

New Junior Cycle Titles



Gaeilge



Gaeilge



French



Spanish



German

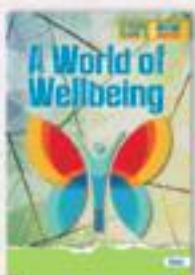
New Junior Cycle Titles



SPHE



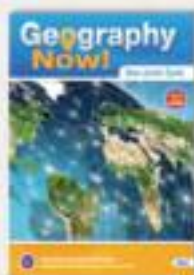
SPHE



CSPE



History



Geography

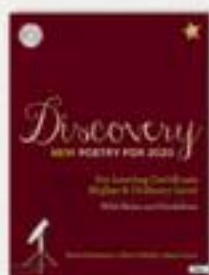


Home Economics

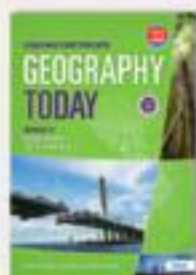


Music

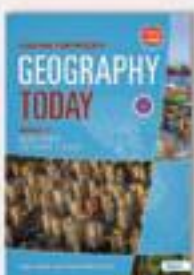
New Leaving Certificate Titles



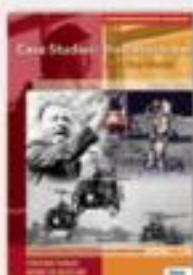
English



Geography



Geography



History



French



Edco Learning

Interactive resources
and e-book available on
www.edcolearning.ie

Edco

2018

The Educational Company of Ireland

If you would like to request a sample copy, please contact your local representative,
Ph: (01) 4500 611, Fax: (01) 4607 330, E-mail: info@edco.ie, Website: www.edco.ie

CONTENTS

4	From the President's desk <i>Past tells us to invest in the future</i>
4	General Secretary's update <i>Teacher input essential to education change</i>
5	News
8	News features
8	<i>Teachers under pressure, says ASTI survey</i>
10	<i>Campaigns update – equal pay for equal work 2018</i>
12	ASTI in the media <i>Pressure growing on equal pay issue</i>
14	ASTI Convention 2018
14	<i>Key speeches</i>
20	<i>Convention votes for action on pay and pension inequality</i>
22	<i>Education policy</i>
24	<i>Motions debated at Convention 2018</i>
25	<i>Elections at Annual Convention 2018</i>
26	<i>Vox pop – What does ASTI membership mean to you?</i>
28	<i>Calls for improvement on terms and conditions</i>
29	RSTA news
30	Feature <i>Different times for women</i>
32	Obituary
33	Noticeboard
34	Crossword



Editorial Board

Ger Curtin	President
Kieran Christie	General Secretary
Breda Lynch	President-Elect
Deirdre Mac Donald	Vice President
Ray St John	Honorary Treasurer
Máire G. Ní Chiarba	Standing Committee Nominee
Noelle Moran	Standing Committee Nominee

Media and Communications Officer:

Gemma Tuffy

www.asti.ie

Published on behalf of ASTI by Think Media.

Editorial: Ann-Marie Hardiman, Paul O'Grady and Colm Quinn
Design: Tony Byrne, Tom Cullen and Niamh Short
Advertising: Paul O'Grady

ASTI, Thomas MacDonagh House,
Winetavern Street, Dublin 8, Do8 P9V6
Tel: 01-604 0160 Fax: 01-897 2760 astir@asti.ie

Cover photographs of Keith Howley, Liam Hennelly, Claire Ní Chanainn and Marian O'Neill taken by Gerard MacCarthy Photography at ASTI Convention 2018.

ASTIR is published five times annually by the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland. The opinions expressed in ASTIR are those of individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the ASTI. While every reasonable effort has been taken to ensure information published is accurate, the ASTI cannot accept responsibility for articles or advertisements. Publication of advertisements does not equate to endorsement by ASTI.

The ASTI reserves the right to edit all material submitted for publication.

The *ASTIR* Editorial Board is interested in receiving feedback on *ASTIR*.

Members can email astirfeedback@asti.ie or text 087-9349956.



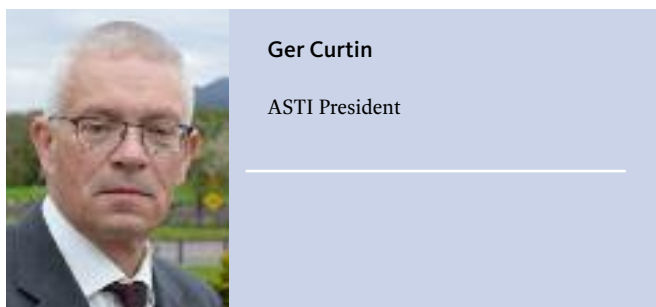
PAST TELLS US TO INVEST IN THE FUTURE

The decision to invest in the expansion of State-funded second-level education in the 1960s had a profound impact on Ireland's social and economic development. To put it into context, we need to reflect on what Ireland was like before the introduction of free second-level education. Harsh economic and social circumstances and an unsustainable reliance on agriculture meant that emigration to England was the only way out for many young people. Since the late 1960s second-level schools have continued to play an important role in improving quality of life and mitigating the impact of poverty and other disadvantage on young people's lives. Today, over 90% of students complete their second-level education. According to the OECD, in Ireland parents can now access a quality education for their children regardless of what type of school they go to. We must guard these achievements closely.

While Donogh O'Malley's vision that no child be denied an education because their parents cannot afford it is being realised at second level, much more needs to be done to tackle educational disadvantage and support all of our young people. The recent OECD report *Education at a Glance 2017* stated that spending on education in Ireland needs to increase. Austerity measures implemented in schools since 2009 have hurt schools, teachers and students. These cuts have impacted on every teacher working in, and every student going through, the second-level system since 2009. History has taught us that strategic investment in education has far-reaching benefits for Ireland's economy, society and for individuals – for people's future life experiences, their health, and so much else. The Government must act on the OECD's 2017 report and make increased investment in our schools a priority.

Shaping the future of teaching

The future of education also depends on teaching remaining an attractive and sustainable career for the best and brightest graduates. Only then can schools continue to provide the quality, inclusive education service Ireland is renowned for. Teachers are the key resource in any education system and are hugely influential in terms of student learning outcomes. In Ireland we have a highly educated, talented and committed teaching workforce. However, in recent times, schools have been experiencing severe difficulties recruiting teachers across a range of subject areas. As I write, the ASTI, INTO and TUI are attending talks between unions representing public sector workers and Government officials on pay for post-2010 entrants. I urge all of our post-2010 teachers to engage with your union and have your voice heard on this issue over the coming weeks and months. In particular, it is essential that post-2010 teachers get involved at school and branch level. Together we can shape the future of teaching and education.



TEACHER INPUT ESSENTIAL TO EDUCATION CHANGE

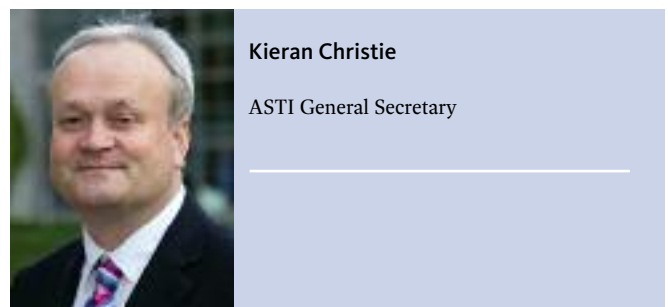
The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment is conducting a review of Senior Cycle education. A key message from this year's ASTI Annual Convention is that teachers must be central to any change process in education. The recent past has demonstrated the need to ensure that teachers' voices are listened to from the very beginning, that they have a sense of ownership over the change process, and that they trust that there is a coherent investment and professional development strategy underpinning the implementation of change at school level.

Research has found that countries which perform best on international educational measures are more likely to have strong teacher unions that play a key role in setting the education change agenda. Teachers are experienced professionals who understand what makes for an inclusive and sound education. They also understand the implications (including unintended implications) of proposed curriculum reform for students, teachers and schools.

ASTI survey sounds alarm bells

Teachers' work and work intensity is deeply connected to school curriculum and the resources available to deliver curriculum successfully. Teachers' work and work intensity is vital, not just for the well-being and effectiveness of the teaching profession, but for the quality of education in our schools. The recently published RED C/ASTI survey on teachers' work and work intensity provides some insight into the impact of recent policy initiatives on teachers, students and schools. The survey findings must sound alarm bells for the Minister and his Department. Job satisfaction has dropped from 77% in 2009 to 51% in 2018. Teachers find that their work has changed continuously, and 97% say that their work intensity has increased since the start of the decade. Teachers are particularly frustrated with the amount of additional administration work that has arisen due to a broad range of new programmes, initiatives and legislative requirements. They want more time in the school day for preparation and planning, smaller classes and less administrative work so that they can enhance teaching and learning in their classrooms. The findings of the survey were mirrored by the individual experiences of delegates shared at this year's Convention.

Delegates also expressed their concerns about future policy on the assessment of students. The ASTI's Junior Cycle campaign demonstrated very clearly the high level of trust among parents in Ireland's State-certified, externally assessed examinations model. Any proposals for change at Senior Cycle must be based on what is working and trusted in our education system.



Kilkenny Branch co-hosts education event



At the Kilkenny Branch event were: Jim Ahern (ASTI Kilkenny Branch Treasurer), Margaret Maxwell (Director, Kilkenny Education Centre), Jackie Beere (workshop presenter), John Beasley (workshop co-presenter), Eithne McKenna (Chairperson, Management Committee, Kilkenny Education Centre), and Siobhán Peters (ASTI Standing Committee Representative, Region 9).

A simple idea can sometimes lead to interesting and innovative projects. This was certainly the experience of the ASTI Kilkenny Branch. A unique collaboration with Kilkenny Education Centre brought UK author and educationalist Jackie Beere to Kilkenny on February 23.

Jackie and her co-presenter John Beasley engaged the 73 participants in a day-long workshop on the topical themes of learner and teacher well-being and resilience. From her background in primary education and as principal of a large secondary school, Jackie developed an award-winning and innovative learning curriculum targeting achievement and resilience for students and teachers.

With an emphasis on practical strategies for developing excellence in the

classroom, emotional intelligence and a growth mindset culture, Jackie is author of several bestselling books on teaching and learning. Her latest book *GROW: Change your Mindset, Change your Life – A Practical Guide to Thinking on Purpose* concentrates on how to be more resilient, adaptable, self-confident and successful. Jackie's infectious passion for well-being and happiness for students, as well as great learning and the highest aspirations for all our school community, informed and engaged local teachers and school leaders in how every teacher and school leader can develop ways of thinking that will improve outcomes for learners.

For more information, visit www.jackiebeere.com/grow/.

Children's Rights Alliance Report Card 2018 – 'C' grade for Government for education

The Children's Rights Alliance has launched its Report Card for 2018. Each year the Alliance – supported by an independent panel of experts – examines the Government's delivery on the promises it made to children in the areas of education, standard of living, health, rights in the family and alternative care, early childhood and equality.

The Government is awarded an overall 'C-' grade in Report Card 2018, reflecting a satisfactory attempt, with children still left wanting. This is an improvement on last year's 'D+' grade.

The Government is awarded a 'C' grade for education, an improvement on last year's 'D' grade. The Report Card focused particularly on the areas of educational disadvantage, religious diversity and disability and additional needs in education as areas in which the Government should take further action.

In the area of educational disadvantage the Government received a 'C' grade, an improvement from 'D' in 2017. The report recommends that the Government implement and monitor the efficacy of the DEIS Plan 2017 improving outcomes for pupils and complete the reform of the school completion programme.

The Government received a 'C-' grade for religious diversity, an improvement

from a 'D' grade in 2017. In order to improve its grade, it is recommended that the Government increase the number of multi- and non-denominational primary and post-primary schools to 400 by 2030.

Disability and additional needs in education received a 'B-' grade, an improvement on the 'C+' grade in 2017. In this area the report recommended clarity and information on the rollout of the new resource allocation model and the publication of costings for implementing the EPSEN Act.

For more information and to read the full report visit www.childrensrights.ie.

Rejoining penalty waived

The ASTI is currently offering a waiver to members who have left the union in recent times but may wish to rejoin. No penalties will be applied should they seek to rejoin before the end of the current school year.

Contact the ASTI membership department at membership@asti.ie.

Galway East celebrates 50 years



Back row (from left): Michael Fitzgerald (former teacher, Garbally College), Ray St John (ASTI Honorary National Treasurer), Diarmaid De Paor (ASTI Deputy General Secretary), Greg Mammion (Branch Treasurer), and James Coughlan (Branch Chairman). Front row (from left): Aodhan MacCarthaigh (Branch Secretary), Yvonne Earls, Helena Cunniffe (Branch Vice Chair), Noelle Moran (ASTI Standing Committee), and Toni MacCarthaigh (CEC delegate).

The East Galway Branch of the ASTI recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of its foundation while also honouring recent retirees and welcoming school stewards. The Branch was founded in Kinsella's in Loughrea in 1968. At that meeting, John Dunne was elected Vice Chairman, Sean O'Dwyer Honorary Treasurer, and Tony MacNamara CEC representative. Joe Gunther also attended that first meeting. In September 1968, Frances Holohan, Tom Feeney, Ulick Burke and John Molloy joined the Branch. Speaking at the event, Branch chairperson James Coughlan thanked those who had been involved in the branch over the years and commended their contribution to shaping education in Ireland through their involvement in the ASTI.

ASTI seeks exam pay increase

The ASTI and TUI have lodged a claim with the State Examinations Commission (SEC) for increased pay for examiners and superintendents. In their letter to the SEC they note the "significant difficulties" that the SEC has recently faced in securing contract staff for the State exams. The ASTI has repeatedly highlighted poor levels of pay as the key factor in reducing the desirability to teachers of taking up contract work with the SEC. Payment rates available to contract staff have fallen considerably in the last decade. In addition, changes to the expenses regime applied by the SEC have considerably reduced the take-home pay for examiners and superintendents.

The ASTI and TUI also noted that there are teachers being contracted by the SEC who are receiving less than the minimum wage for their work, particularly for oral and practical examiners with very few students to examine, and are seeking a minimum payment of €150 for such work. The ASTI and the TUI contend that the improving economy now presents an opportunity for the SEC to increase pay and resolve its recruitment problems. The unions have stated that an immediate increase of 30% would encourage far more teachers to apply for work with the SEC and have asked the SEC to take action on this matter as soon as possible.

ASTI education conference

The ASTI's education conference, '50 Years On: Reflecting on the Legacy of Free Second-Level Education' took place in April. The social and educational legacy of the introduction of free second-level education, and the growth of the teaching profession and its struggles for decent work and pay were

examined by speakers Áine Hyland, Emeritus Professor of Education, UCC; Ciarán Sugrue, Professor of Education, UCD; and, Kathleen Lynch, Full Professor of Equality Studies, UCD. The conference moderator was former *Morning Ireland* broadcaster Cathal Mac Coille.



Kathleen Lynch (left), Full Professor of Equality Studies in the Equality Studies Centre in UCD, speaking with Moira Leydon, ASTI Assistant General Secretary, at the ASTI Education Conference.



Cathal Mac Coille (conference moderator and former *Morning Ireland* broadcaster), Ger Curtin (ASTI President), Ciarán Sugrue (Professor of Education, UCD), Áine Hyland (Emeritus Professor of Education, UCC), and Kieran Christie (ASTI General Secretary) at the ASTI Education Conference.



Science | Technology | Engineering | Mathematics

Explore your future in STEM

From designing video games or medical devices, to improving food science and sport, and even saving lives through cancer research, students need real insights into the many exciting and diverse STEM career opportunities in Ireland.

Visit www.smartfutures.ie

Irish STEM industry facts

250 medical technology companies employ 25,000 people in Ireland

9 of the top 10 global pharmaceutical companies are located in Ireland

The top 10 multinational technology companies are in Ireland

Laboratory technicians are needed in the biopharma, food and medical devices sectors

Keeping up to date on the many career paths available in STEM isn't easy. It's a fast-moving area, with multiple routes to entry and a high demand for graduates. As a consequence, students need insights into STEM career opportunities in Ireland.

Visit www.smartfutures.ie to read any one of more than 150 STEM career stories, watch videos, and download posters and career infographics. Filter your choices based on your interest. You might be surprised which careers will interest you.

@SmartFuturesIE
 @smartfuturesireland
 @SmartFutures



FULL TIME

TEACHERS ARE TEACHING FOR
**21 HOURS AND
20 MINUTES A WEEK**



PLUS
20 hours and 7 minutes
ON NON-TEACHING
ACTIVITIES



PLUS
SUPERVISION AND
SUBSTITUTION
DUTIES WEEKLY



PLUS
OPEN NIGHTS
GRADUATION NIGHTS
AND PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS



**ONE
IN THREE**
CARRY OUT AN EXTRA
UNPAID ROLE FOR
5 HOURS WEEKLY



TEACHERS UNDER PRESSURE, SAYS ASTI SURVEY

Recent ASTI/RED C research shows that new initiatives and additional demands on second-level schools have led to an unsustainable work burden and increased levels of stress for teachers.

ASTI/RED C research published in March found that 97% of teachers believe their work intensity has increased in recent years. Some 89% of teachers say that they cannot complete their non-teaching duties during the school day and 74% say they have an unacceptable workload. In Ireland, second-level teachers spend 21 hours and 20 minutes teaching each week. The ASTI/RED C survey has found that in addition to this, teachers typically spend 20 hours and seven minutes each week

engaged in non-teaching duties including lesson planning/preparation, homework/assignment marking and providing feedback, attending school meetings, and completing pastoral care duties.

In addition, most teachers undertake supervision and substitution duties, and are also required to attend a range of school events such as parent-teacher meetings and school open nights.

The survey shows that helping young people is the main source of job



“ The work of teachers has changed significantly in the last 10 years. As society has changed, the role of the teacher has expanded.



satisfaction for teachers. However, it also finds that overall job satisfaction has dropped sharply since the beginning of the decade. In 2009, 77% of teachers described themselves as either very satisfied or satisfied with their work compared to just 51% in 2018.

Commenting on the survey, ASTI President Ger Curtin said: “The work of teachers has changed significantly in the last 10 years. As society has changed, the role of the teacher has expanded. The number of new initiatives in schools and the pace at which they are implemented has increased. It has always been acknowledged that teaching is a stressful occupation; however, what we are now seeing in schools – as evidenced by the RED C survey – is unsustainable demands, high levels of stress and low morale. This must be addressed as a matter of urgency if we are to maintain our high-quality education service”.

For more information and to read the full ASTI/RED C survey, visit www.asti.ie.



CAMPAIGNS UPDATE – EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK 2018

Talks on pay inequality in the public sector are currently taking place and are due to finish in May.



The three teacher unions – ASTI, INTO and TUI – have been engaging in a joint campaign for equal pay for post-2010 teachers since the beginning of the school year. Activities have included a lobbying campaign, a media campaign, a public protest, and the adoption of a motion at the teacher unions’ conferences on a joint campaign of industrial action (in the event of failure to resolve the pay inequality issue).

Urgent action needed on pay

Recent lobbying efforts by the three teacher unions resulted in an amendment to the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017 requiring the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to “prepare and lay before the Oireachtas a report on the cost of and a plan in dealing with pay equalisation for new entrants to the public service”. This report was published by Minister Paschal Donohoe in March. Based on a methodology of merging new entrant pay scales (post-2010 entrant scales) with pre-2010 scales, the report calculates the cost of adjusting new entrants’ pay by two incremental points as €200 million across the public sector. In education, the cost of adjusting the post-2010 teachers’ scale is stated as €59 million.

In its response to the report, the ASTI noted that post-2010 teachers were not only impacted by a pay cut, but also by the decision to appoint new teachers to the first point of the scale, instead of the third point, and by the abolition of qualification allowances in 2011. As a consequence, new entrants to the teaching profession earn €4,000 less than a 2010 entrant. In the initial years of teaching, the loss is closer to €6,000 to €7,000 per annum.

“ The three teacher unions – ASTI, INTO and TUI – have been engaging in a joint campaign for equal pay.

Following the publication of the report the three teacher unions called for the prioritisation of talks on pay equalisation. The talks began in late April. Whether they will adequately address the discriminatory pay arrangements of recently qualified teachers remains to be seen.

The motion passed by ASTI Annual Convention (which is similar to motions passed by the INTO and TUI) states that the talks must end in May and that any outcome must be brought to the ASTI Central Executive Council for consideration (see page 24 for full motion).

In the event that this issue remains unresolved the motion commits to a campaign of industrial action, where possible in conjunction with the other two teacher unions.

As the talks are expected to conclude after this ASTIR is printed, members will be updated via the ASTI website. Central Executive Council meets on Saturday May 12, and members can expect an update following this meeting.

“The challenges faced by graduates entering the teaching profession has led to a recruitment crisis. Applications for postgraduate teacher training courses are down.

Research

The recent ASTI/RED C survey found that of the post-2010 entrants who completed the survey 46% were in temporary and/or part-time teaching positions. Less than half (49%) said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs. While the survey found that the amount of administrative work was the key cause of

job dissatisfaction among all teachers, among recently qualified teachers the level of pay was the number one cause of job dissatisfaction.

Teacher supply

The challenges faced by graduates entering the teaching profession has led to a recruitment crisis. Applications for postgraduate teacher training courses are down and many of those who do qualify are going abroad. The ASTI and the other teacher unions have been highlighting the difficulties faced by schools in recruiting teachers in recent months and this has resulted in the establishment of a Teacher Supply Steering Group chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. However, the ASTI is concerned that no teacher union representative has been appointed to this group. This is despite the pivotal role the teacher unions played in bringing this issue onto the public agenda. The ASTI has been warning of such a crisis for a number of years.



HETI

Teaching the Holocaust

3 DAY SUMMER SCHOOL FOR TEACHERS
Continuous Professional Development
13, 14, 15 AUGUST 2018



Bring this challenging subject into the classroom working with international Holocaust scholars and educators

Venue: Trinity College Dublin
Fee: €295.00 (includes lunch each day)

This programme can be undertaken as part of the Certificate in Holocaust Education

HETI

For information and details about all our teacher education programmes, contact:
Holocaust Education Trust Ireland, Clonon House, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2, Ireland
Tel: +353 1 6690080 Email: info@htrireland.org www.htrireland.org



Certificate in Holocaust Education

Continuous Professional Development
Special Purpose award at NQF level 7 carrying 30 ECTS



Trinity College Dublin
University of Dublin, Dublin 2, Ireland

A certificate in Holocaust Education for post-primary teachers providing in-depth tuition on the historical significance and contemporary relevance of the Holocaust. The programme provides participants with information, tools and skills to enhance the subject in their areas of work, and to develop pedagogic expertise to complement their knowledge. The programme is divided into four modules, all of which must be completed by participants.

Donec Donecque (in year) (part time)

Accreditation: The Certificate in Holocaust Education is awarded by Trinity College Dublin, standardised by the ED and acknowledged internationally.

Modules:

- Teaching the Holocaust (August):** intensive three-day summer programme for teachers that addresses the complex subject of the Holocaust and how to teach it in the classroom
- Learning from the Holocaust (October):** Six-day programme that includes a five-day study visit to Krakow and Auschwitz-Birkenau. The programme is supported by two separate seminars, one in preparation for the study visit and one on reflection afterwards.
- Irish Seminar at Yad Vashem International School, Jerusalem (July):** Eight-day programme for teachers at Yad Vashem International School for Holocaust Studies
- Assignments:** There are four assignments to be completed on the programme.

Fee: €1,200 for registered teachers which includes university registration, all tuition, travel and accommodation (p.p.s). For other applicants who do not qualify for sponsorship, the fee is €2,500. This programme may qualify for the Return of Fees Scheme.



For information and details about all our teacher education programmes, contact:
Holocaust Education Trust Ireland, Clonon House, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2, Ireland
Tel: +353 1 6690080 Email: info@htrireland.org www.htrireland.org

PRESSURE GROWING ON EQUAL PAY ISSUE

Throughout Convention 2018, ASTI representatives spoke out in the media on the plight of lower-paid teachers and other crucial issues in education.



“ASTI president Ger Curtin said the term ‘new entrant’ teacher was a misnomer given that many were now in their seventh year of teaching. Many have lost up to €7,000 per annum due to inferior salary scales compared to those who entered the profession one or more years before them. He said many of those who graduate from teacher training courses were opting to move abroad or take jobs elsewhere. ‘Why wouldn’t they when they are being offered full-salaried, permanent jobs abroad?’

“As the number of second-level students entering our schools continues to rise, principals are reporting severe difficulties recruiting teachers across a range of subject areas. Students need qualified teachers. ‘The situation is urgent. How can we attract and retain new entrants when so many of our teachers are underpaid and undervalued?’”

Irish Times coverage of President Ger Curtin at Convention 2018, April 3, 2018

“There is a shortage of examiners and superintendents for State exams, and that’s for many reasons. The remuneration – teachers don’t find it adequate. That’s one reason. Another one would be, because of the work intensity of the school year, people are saying, ‘well I’m not going to opt in for the exams this year’ and it is a separate arrangement with the State exams so people are making choices like that. Younger teachers who may not be on full hours may just go and work in full-time employment for the summer whether in the country or out of the country and they’re not available for it either. I’m an examiner myself. I correct Leaving Cert maths. I’m not correcting this year but I do know that what I was getting a number of years ago for maths papers was considerably higher than what I’m getting at the moment. You had all the austerity and all the cutbacks. They all applied to that as well as the pension levy.”

Ger Curtin, President, *The Pat Kenny Show*, Newstalk, March 28, 2018

“We would argue actually that reform is an important, integral part of curriculum development over time. Because there’s always changed circumstances and new realities to be addressed and we always want to be to the forefront of that. But I would make the point that we want to be at the forefront of quality reform ... The Leaving Certificate, as you know, is a very high-stakes exam, and it currently enjoys an acknowledged strong international currency. It’s domestically and indeed internationally perceived as meeting the criteria of fairness, transparency and objectivity. We think we should never ever surrender these principles because international studies point to the necessity to ensure that an education system is grounded in strong educational principles and students are assessed in a very strong and objective way.”

Kieran Christie, General Secretary, *The Pat Kenny Show*, Newstalk, April 5, 2018

“The teacher unions haven’t signed up to the Public Service Stability Agreement because it didn’t deal with the issue of pay equality. Now, we have no issue with any other public servant getting pay equality but the reality is, this has affected more teachers because we were recruiting while other sectors of the public service had an embargo on recruitment. This means that we have teachers now who have been on lesser pay scales for seven years. It’s escalating and these people are losing a lot of money and we can’t stand over that. We’re happy that other sectors of the public service get their pay equality too. We’re fighting for teachers and we really need this to be sorted and sorted soon.”

Breda Lynch, President Elect, *News at One*, RTÉ Radio 1, April 3, 2018



“Pay is absolutely fundamental to teacher shortages. I myself am a maths teacher, a maths and science graduate. If I were qualifying now looking for a job, there are so many other things that I could do that would be better paid, that would give me the potential to buy a car, to have a full-time job, and the potential to be able to live away from home. So, if I had a choice between that or living precariously, maybe getting work for so many hours a week, you see the problem. There’s that hours culture as well. It’s not, you know, I’m qualified, and I’ll instantly get a full-time job. This casualisation of the profession means that recently qualified teachers may not have enough money to be able to live a full life and to develop themselves professionally ... so, there’s two issues, people not going into teaching because they see the pay and the working conditions in teaching are not what they used to be. Others who are qualified are taking the option of going abroad where they will have much better pay and better working conditions.”

Deirdre Mac Donald, Vice President, *Limerick Today*, Limerick Live 95FM, April 5, 2018

“I qualified in January 2014 so I’m one of the lower paid teachers. I know they talk about how the starting salary is €36,000 for a secondary school teacher. That’s if you’re on full hours. My first contract was for four hours a week. I couldn’t afford to live near my school so I had to rely on my parents to let me live at home and to help me out to basically get my start in the system, to work up my hours, to get my experience, and I had to do that for a full year. To be honest, I would’ve earned more on the dole than I did that full year of working four hours a week.”

Shane Curran, New Ross branch, *The Last Word*, Today FM, April 3, 2018

“I’m not full time. This is my fifth year teaching. I have a 14-hour contract. In my first year teaching I had a contract for three hours when I first started so I’m up to 14 now. The Minister talks a lot about a starting salary of €35,000 but it’ll be another five or six years if not more before I hit that figure. I think it’s just the breakdown of the hours in the school really; it’s hard to get everyone the hours within the school. My subject is Spanish and we hear the Minister saying that there’s a big need for language teachers so ultimately it’s down to the resources that the Minister is willing to put into education.”

Cian O’Grady, Galway Branch, *Today with Sean O’Rourke*, RTÉ Radio 1, April 3, 2018

DIPLOMA CENTRE

DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION LAW

LAW SOCIETY OF IRELAND

- Commencing Friday 2 November 2018
- Four Friday & Saturday sessions (to coincide with periods of school leave)
- Flexible onsite and online learning options
- Ideal for those acting as decision-makers within schools and for those with an interest in education law matters
- Fee €2,700

Our diploma provides comprehensive coverage of applicable constitutional and legislative provisions and pertinent case law relevant to the day-to-day issues that arise when advising on education law matters or indeed when acting as a decision-maker within a school.

VISIT www.lawsociety.ie/diplomacentre
 T 01 672 4802
 E diplomateam@lawsociety.ie

KEY SPEECHES

This year's speeches addressed the value of teaching, and restated the ASTI's commitment to equal pay.



ASTI President Ger Curtin.



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Pay equality remains the burning issue for the ASTI, according to President Ger Curtin.

Making teaching an attractive career

Earlier today we debated the treatment of our recently qualified teachers. Many of these teachers are now in their seventh year of teaching and believe that the term 'recently qualified' is a misnomer. I will refer to them as post-2010 teachers. Post-2010 teachers have endured losses in income amounting to €6,000 and €7,000 per annum. In recent weeks we have outlined the significant drop in applications for second-level teacher courses since 2011 – the year that the first pay cut for new entrants was implemented. What is more, many who do graduate from teacher education are not staying. Why would they when they are being offered full-salaried permanent jobs abroad? As the number of second-level students entering our schools continues to rise, principals are reporting severe difficulties recruiting teachers across a range of subject areas. The situation is urgent. How can we attract and retain new entrants when so many of our teachers are underpaid and undervalued?

A co-ordinated response is required. The ASTI believes that pay equality is the most important first step in addressing teacher shortages. Other steps are also needed. A co-ordinated response must also involve the regulation of teacher supply across subject areas. In addition, the high cost of teacher education must be addressed. This is not only worsening the problem of teacher shortages, it will lead to a less socially diverse profession as young people from less affluent backgrounds are deterred from entering teaching. Abolishing fees for graduates entering teacher education would definitely help,

as would paying them for the teaching work they undertake in the second year of the PME, just as nurses are paid during their final year of training.

In my recent presentation to the Joint Oireachtas Committee I made a number of other suggestions to deal with the teacher supply crisis. Chief among these is the need to end casualisation in the teaching profession. In our most recent RED C research, almost half – 46% – of post-2010 entrants surveyed said they were in temporary and/or part-time employment. This must be addressed if we want teaching to be an attractive career.

Teacher unity

The pay and conditions of our younger teachers is what unites members of the ASTI in 2018. It is also what unites members of the ASTI, INTO and TUI. I want to pay tribute to my counterparts in the INTO and TUI – John Boyle and Joanne Irwin – for their work on keeping equal pay on the public agenda this year. I want in particular to thank the members of the ASTI, INTO and TUI who have stood by their post-2010 colleagues. Together the three unions are a powerful force of close to 70,000 teachers who are saying a collective NO to the discriminatory treatment of their younger colleagues.

Quality curriculum

The NCCA has begun a process that will feed into a review of Senior Cycle education. Teachers know that in a world that is rapidly changing, an effective education service must evolve continuously. If anything is to be learned from the recent past, it is the need for genuine regard for the knowledge, experience and professionalism of teachers. The voice of the teacher must be at the centre of any proposals in relation to the development of Senior Cycle education.



Seán Ó Foghlú (Secretary General, Department of Education and Skills), Ger Curtin (ASTI President), Richard Bruton TD (Minister for Education and Skills) and Kieran Christie (ASTI General Secretary)



President Ger Curtin presents the ASTI President's Medal to Ed Byrne.

Quality education

There are now multiple forms of inspection, and inspection reports are published on the Department of Education and Skills' website. However, while teaching is continuously under the microscope, the lack of resources and facilities gets far less attention. Many of the worst of the austerity cuts imposed on schools have yet to be restored. The education cuts must be restored in full.

“ **The pay and conditions of our younger teachers is what unites members of the ASTI in 2018. It is also what unites members of the ASTI, INTO and TUI.** ”

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are disproportionately impacted by under-investment in education. Teachers have spoken to me about seeing the signs of homelessness in their classrooms: students who suddenly start to arrive into school hungry and without any lunch, without PE gear or books, without homework, without a clean uniform.

Teachers and schools need access to resources and services in order to support these students.

Our RED C survey demonstrates the level of demands on teachers' working time in 2018. A combination of cuts to resources and new work practices and initiatives has led to a significant intensification of teachers' working lives. This is having a worrying impact on teacher well-being and morale. The Action Plan on Education contains 370 actions, which, according to the plan, will make Ireland's education and training system the best in Europe by 2026. This sounds great on paper, detached from the reality of an under-resourced education system and increased demands on teachers. In the last 10 years 'doing more with less' has become a public policy mantra. But many teachers believe that they could achieve far more for their students by doing less: less paperwork, less bureaucracy, less unproductive meetings; more time focusing on teaching and learning, more time for individual students. The main reasons why young people choose second-level teaching as a career are firstly because it presents opportunities to change children's lives for the better and second because they want to teach a subject they love. However, our research shows that our recently qualified teachers are conflicted by their strong commitment to their students and their schools, and the frustration they feel about their inferior terms and conditions and insecure employment. I ask you today Minister to make the first right move towards ensuring that teaching is a sustainable career for our best graduates – give them Equal Pay for Equal Work.

Read the full speech on www.asti.ie.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Kieran Christie's speech to Convention outlined the key issues for the union in the coming year.

ASTI members quite rightly rejected the Public Service Stability Agreement. Notwithstanding that fact, because we are not repudiating it, its terms are being applied to ASTI members. I think it stands as a great testament to the fortitude of ASTI members that although they had been through the ringer of the draconian FEMPI legislation, they continued to stand up for their most vulnerable colleagues – those who entered the profession since 2010 and are on inferior pay scales.

In that context, it was pleasing that the INTO and TUI rejected the Agreement for largely the same reason. This provided a springboard by which we have been able to vigorously pursue equal pay for equal work along with our sister unions. We will not stop until the discriminatory treatment of post-2010 teachers is put to an end. It may be that it will take a course of industrial action by all three teacher unions to have this out, once and for all. I believe we won't have to wait much longer to find out.

Recruitment crisis

The recruitment and substitution crisis is being keenly felt in all of our schools on a daily basis. Stopgap solutions the like of which we have heard from our Minister simply won't cut it with us. The culture of casualisation that has infected our schools for too long has come home to roost in many ways.

The ASTI also rejects outright any proposals that shortfalls in substitution be made up through the employment of unqualified personnel. The students in our schools deserve qualified teachers. In its submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills the ASTI made a number of practical recommendations regarding addressing teacher shortages at second level. Chief among these was pay equality, but we made other suggestions, which would deal with issues such as casualisation. Given the positive response to the submission I was dismayed to learn that the Minister's Special Group on Teacher Supply does not include any teacher union representative. There is no teacher on the group. Our Minister and our Government need to start joining up the dots before the system becomes damaged beyond repair. The truth is that if the pay and conditions issues are properly addressed, the other pieces of the jigsaw will start to fall into place.

ASTI research

I want to speak now of fine research that was recently undertaken on our behalf by RED C. One of the mantras that I have been espousing for a long time is the need to underpin our initiatives and campaigns with quality research. And boy, does this research deliver. It clearly shows, once and for all, that teaching is a profession that is under pressure. Some 74% of teachers inform us that they have an unacceptable workload. Job satisfaction levels have plummeted since the beginning of the recession. It is interesting to note that the main sources of satisfaction that teachers derive from their job are all associated with working with students and teaching their subjects, while the dissatisfaction is bound up in the growth of administrative tasks and all that contributes to them being taken for granted.



ASTI General Secretary Kieran Christie with Minister for Education and Skills Richard Bruton TD.

Curricular reform

It's fair to say that Junior Cycle is a topic that has featured massively on the agenda of the ASTI for some years now. We are not finished yet. I believe that the ASTI can hold its head up high in all that it did and continues to do in protecting standards at Junior Cycle. However, it is now clear that a new canvas is opening up in the guise of Leaving Certificate reform. Today, I want to put down three important markers in that regard.

Firstly, the ASTI is not opposed to reform per se. We want quality reform, which is in the best interests of the students we teach and the system we work within.

Secondly, the ASTI has for many years had a policy that we will not assess our own students for certificate examination purposes. That is something that is not going to change. The ASTI must never surrender on this principle. The third marker is that you cannot have radical curriculum change without a parallel process of engagement with the teaching profession. Teachers deserve to have their professional knowledge and experience respected and their concerns listened to. This is the way forward in ensuring that teachers have confidence in any new curriculum model.

Economy

It's a few years now since we first began to hear noises from Government that the recession was over. If there is a recovery going on, precious little of it has been allowed to trickle down into our schools. Certainly, it would be churlish not to acknowledge that some small progress has been made. However, it is entirely unacceptable that the pupil-teacher ratio at second level remains higher than it was this time 10 years ago. It is critical that the cuts introduced during the recession are reversed.

It is dispiriting and a worry that thus far, whether it is new entrant pay, teacher supply issues or on several other fronts, this Government's



Each branch is represented by delegates at Convention.



Guest speaker Dr Melanie Ní Dhuinn of TCD.

utterances and responses often seem to be of the placement of the finger in the dyke variety. I have demonstrated that there is an interconnectivity around all the issues within the system. The Government needs to develop an understanding that salary issues, supply shortages, curricular reform, resourcing of schools, teacher and student well-being issues, to name but a few, are all aspects of a matrix that requires clear strategy and a clear, integrated plan. It's time for the Minister to bring it forward.

Read the full speech on www.asti.ie.

DR MELANIE NÍ DHUINN, TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN – GUEST SPEAKER

What are the values and the value of teaching?

The teaching profession has undergone unprecedented change and reform over the past number of years. While teachers recognise the need for compliance and the need to implement new initiatives, they feel squeezed and feel that quality time with students has been impeded.

'Values' and 'value'

From my perspective, 'values' and 'value' are key concepts. [Albert] Bandura refers to 'values' and beliefs as being inextricably linked to self-efficacy in teaching, the evidence being that teachers who have high levels of self-efficacy are confident in their own abilities to be successful teachers, while

teachers with low levels of self-efficacy are less confident in their own abilities. Efficacy is a motivational construct that continues throughout a teaching career. When motivation is negatively affected, confidence, self-esteem and self-worth are diminished. The 'values' aspect of the profession is therefore one of the most critical cornerstones within it.

The other type of 'value' is the value that is placed on the profession by external stakeholders. Usually, if we own something valuable such as jewellery or objects of sentimental value, we take care of them and protect them from harm. How the teaching profession is valued, how it is minded, and how it is invested in and resourced, should be no different.

The concept of teaching

When I think about the concept of teaching it conjures up many images, including classrooms, students, art folders, intercom announcements, examinations, relaxed chats with colleagues, energised discussions, choirs, young scientists, curriculum reform, and much more, but at the heart of all of these, the common denominator is 'the teacher'. Teachers are the heartbeat of the system. Working directly in initial teacher education (ITE) and speaking to student teachers and potential student teachers, I have noticed the emergence of a negative discourse about teaching over the past number of years, a discourse that does no favours to the recruitment or retention of student teachers, aspiring teachers or practising teachers. Objective use of available real-time data, fully informed and validated statements, and meaningful consultation with those on the ground, teachers and school management, would eradicate some of the negative spin that tends to be heaped on education 'issues' in Ireland.

Reliable data from higher education providers informs us that concurrent undergraduate teacher education programmes at both primary and post-primary remain popular for CAO applicants and those applying are securing places with very high points at Leaving Certificate and thus the academic



From left: Ger Curtin (ASTI President), Diarmuid de Paor (ASTI Deputy General Secretary), Seán Ó Foghlú (Secretary General, Department of Education and Skills), Richard Bruton TD (Minister for Education and Skills), Dr Melanie Ni Dhuinn (guest speaker), Kieran Christie (ASTI General Secretary), Breda Lynch (ASTI President-Elect), and Ray St John (ASTI Honorary Treasurer).

standard is high. Concurrent graduates are more likely to enter the profession immediately on graduation as NQTs. Applications have remained steady and with the Minister's recent announcement to expand and increase the number of available places it is hoped that more applicants will consider teaching as a career. However, it is important to state that numbers of applicants do not equate to the number of registered students on ITE courses. The net effect of the call for more applicants remains to be seen and we will not know until September 2018 what the data will reveal.

The cost of teaching

President Curtin referred to the mounting costs of being a PME student and I would like to alert you to ongoing research being conducted by two TCD School of Education colleagues and myself.

Since the commencement of the PME in 2014 we noted evidence of financial hardship across a significant cross-section of registered students coupled with evidence of high anxiety and high stress levels, evidence of attrition and, despite the high workload, significantly high levels of part-time work by students (78% of the cohort) to enable them to meet their financial obligations. After payment of course fees of approximately €6,000 per annum, students' mean monthly expenditure was €873.12.

The second phase of the research is currently underway, in which we have also captured the socio-emotional costs. Preliminary findings indicate that students' self-efficacy, confidence and motivation is negatively impacted by ongoing financial adversity and obligations. The evidence from the pilot phase and preliminary findings from the second phase are staggering and point to a huge unsustainable financial burden on student teachers. It is a fact that a proportion of our students had no option but to teach out of jurisdiction to meet their financial obligations and repay their debts.

When I qualified as a teacher and secured a position, not only was I

delighted to have secured a job which meant I would finally start earning a salary and officially commence a career, but I felt validated to be receiving a qualification allowance. I am of the view that the removal of that qualification allowance, among other financial changes, has been damaging to the professional identity of the teaching profession. Restoration of that allowance would go a long way to addressing and ameliorating some of that damage and would send out the message that we really do value teachers in our profession.

I opened my address by referring to the motivational construct of self-efficacy. Teachers' perceptions of their own individual usefulness, worth and value is enhanced by confidence, trust, acknowledgement and affirmation. The seanfhocal: 'Ní thagann an óige faoi dhó' reminds me of the privileged position teachers occupy as custodians of the formative years of students.

Read the full speech on www.asti.ie.

**RICHARD BRUTON TD,
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
AND SKILLS**

Minister Bruton spoke of a range of initiatives that his Department has launched.

Fifty years on we have a chance to reflect on the legacy of second-level education in this country and there's no doubt that second-level



*Frances O'Donoghue and Gloria
Helen of Carbery Branch.*

education has had a transformative impact. People who have been committed to teaching at second level over those years can take a great deal of pride in what has been achieved. It is also education that has given Ireland, in the last number of years following the recent crash, the resilience to come back so quickly. I'm absolutely convinced that education will be the driver of our future prosperity.

I'm almost two years in this job now and I have a greater understanding of the challenges that are going to present themselves over the coming decades. There's no doubt that the power of new technologies has to be harnessed within our education system. They can transform a learning environment in a very significant way if we invest and shape our education system to use them and to teach people to be discerning in their use.

We also face the growing complexity of the problems that our young people present with, such as issues of mental health and resilience. These are the sort of challenges that we have to plan for and that's something that I am determined to do. Equally we must continue to protect and develop the role and voice of teachers.

Action plan

I have developed the action plan for education, which sets a bold ambition that by 2026, we would have the best education and training service in Europe. I'd like to comment on four areas where I think there are particular challenges. One of these is incorporating digital technology. We have made investments last year of €30 million, and we will make another investment of €30 million this year. We're also creating a framework, which is being piloted in 50 schools.

The second issue I'd like to take up is that we need to strive to change the way in which we support children at a disadvantage or with special needs. There is work going on to ensure that those transitions from primary to

secondary, which can be difficult, are addressed in a more effective way. Another area where I think we are showing great progress is building new pathways for young people through the education system. We have been fortunate to see so many go on to third level but we have neglected areas such as apprenticeships and traineeships. I'm very pleased that we are now in a position where there's more than 50 new areas of apprenticeships being developed that will offer pathways for young people who perhaps are not best suited to the academic route.

The third area that I'd like to mention is how we build the capacity for leadership within our schools. We have invested in the centre for school leadership and this year 1,000 principals will be supported either through mentoring, coaching or an opportunity to take a postgraduate qualification. We also have been in a position to invest in new positions of leadership within the school with 1,300 additional assistant principals and 475 deputy principal posts.

I'd like to turn to the issue of teacher supply. I'm proud that in the last couple of years I've been able to employ 5,000 extra teachers in permanent full-time positions. I also recognise that we need to do new things particularly in the areas where we've set great ambitions for the future, areas like STEM, foreign languages, the Irish language. In the last few weeks I've been able to provide an additional 280 undergraduate places for second-level teaching, including an increase of more than 100 places in the STEM, foreign language and Gaelige areas.

The fourth area that I think we have to prepare for is to develop a coherent approach to the new expectations that citizens have of our education system. There's no doubt that schools are being expected to play a greater role in many of the challenges that young people are now encountering – child safety, mental well-being, respect for diversity, avoiding substance abuse, relationships and sexuality, internet safety, bullying.

We will be establishing a consultative forum to work with unions and other interested bodies to ensure that as we roll out those programmes that are important for the citizens of tomorrow, we do it in a way that's coherent and that you working at the coalface are in a position to implement effectively.

Issues of pay

I know that your union has a justifiable demand to see more progress on new entrant pay and I'm glad that very early on in my period in government I was able to negotiate an improvement in the deal for newly qualified teachers that sees increases, the most recent of which was paid in January this year. As you know, in the new agreement last October, there is now a process in which the issue of new entrant pay right across the public service will be addressed, and engagements and negotiations on that will start on April 27.

Looking to that future, I think it is really encouraging that the recently published national development plan puts education front and centre of the ambition the Taoiseach has articulated to build a republic of opportunity. There is a commitment in that programme to invest €12 billion in our education system. That is the largest single investment in any spending department that's been made by the State. We are moving into an era when we can start to reinvest in our education system. And it is a time when education will shape our capacity to fulfil our ambitions as a nation.

CONVENTION VOTES FOR ACTION ON PAY AND PENSION INEQUALITY

An urgent motion at Convention confirmed that the three teacher unions will work together to achieve pay equality.

The urgent motion, which was simultaneously debated (and passed) by all three teacher unions, called on the Government to commence engagement on pay inequality in April 2018. The motion further stated that in the event of a failure to resolve the issues promptly, a campaign of industrial action, up to and including strike action, will be pursued by all three unions. Members spoke passionately on the need to restore pay to lesser-paid teachers, many of whom have suffered an inferior pay scale for seven years now, and on the need for the three teacher unions to maintain a strong and united front in this dispute. Another motion called for the establishment of a salary review body for teachers, with the aim of restoring remuneration that would attract the best candidates to the profession. The issue of pensions was also debated in a motion calling on the ASTI to secure pension parity for members obliged to join the Public Service Pension Scheme.

Pay equality

“This is not a new issue for the ASTI – we have been fighting this fight since pay inequality was introduced and we will continue to do so. We’ve done the days and we’ve taken the pain, all in the cause of equality. We want and need meaningful engagement over the next few weeks and we want this matter resolved. We do not want this going into another school year. Morale among teachers is at an all-time low and pay inequality is at the heart of this problem.”

Ger Curtin, ASTI President

“I am a lower-paid teacher who joined the profession in 2011, and I currently earn approximately €5,000 less than my 2010 graduate colleagues and am five points behind them on the incremental scale. I feel that we as a union have been fair in our approach over the last couple of months in order to achieve a route to pay equality. Our engagement with this process needs to bear fruit before the end of the school year.”

Siobhan Peters, Tipperary Branch

“The campaign for pay equality will be the defining issue for the Irish trade union movement. We are trying to claw our way back to pay levels of 10 years ago. Those ten years have hit us all hard in the pocket and so have unnecessary increases in workloads leading to divided staffrooms and low morale. No group, however, has been hit as hard as our fellow teachers who entered after 2011. The question for us as their only advocates is what are we going to do about it? Let us join now in good faith with our brother and sister unions to put this issue to bed.”

Martin McMullan, Dublin North West Branch



*Siobhan Peters,
Tipperary Branch.*



*Henry Collins,
Waterford Branch.*



“Unequal pay is an injustice that has to be put right and if all the unions are to have any credibility, that fight to put that injustice right has to continue. Standing isolated from other unions will not achieve the cause – even if the cause is right and just. Let’s be here next year saying we put that injustice right.”

Noel Buckley, Tipperary Branch

“Inequality should never be accepted. The Government will always say ‘we can’t afford it’. I’m asking whether the Government can properly afford not to invest in the public service. Equality must underpin everything that we do. The fundamental principle of trade unionism is that we stand for all, even if we’re not personally concerned, we still stand in support of our colleagues.”

Susie Hall, Dublin North East Branch

Salary review process

“Guards and nurses have had salary review bodies in the past. The PSSA was for the public sector in general. That means generic conclusions were going to be drawn. This is looking for a body just for teachers and I feel this motion supports the [urgent] motion gone ahead of it. It can even run in tandem with it.”

Gerard Hanlon, Waterford Branch

“It’s appropriate that we have a multi-faceted approach in the way in which we deal with an extremely complicated problem that is not just about salary. In my county there was a school that advertised last week for a maths teacher – three hours a week. This is nonsense. This salary review has to include everything. It’s about it being a proper profession, something that should be valued and promoted. It cannot be promoted on three hours a week.”

Robert Chaney, Kilkenny Branch



*Gloria Helen,
Carbery Branch.*

Pension parity

“The principle underpinning this motion needs to be enunciated clearly and emphatically: pension is pay deferred. Every teacher in this hall and all the teachers across the country are earning every cent of the pension you hope to receive when you retire. If we accept the principle of equal pay for equal work, and if pension benefit is part of pay, albeit deferred, the question of pension parity in the profession must be addressed.”

Henry Collins, Waterford Branch

“In our acceptance of benchmarking approximately 10 years ago, teachers’ pay was discounted by 12%; in other words, our salary is 12% worse than it would have been. This 12% was seen as deferred pay that we would recoup as pension. Entrants to the profession since 2013 experience the same discount along with a lot more.”

Gloria Helen, Carbery Branch



*Robert Chaney,
Kilkenny Branch.*

EDUCATION POLICY

Several motions on education policy were carried by Convention 2018.



*Pauline Nagle,
Clare Branch.*



*Máire G. Ní Chiarba,
Cork North branch.*

Motion 47 called for a policy of opposition to any attempt to introduce assessment of students for certification/accreditation by their teachers at Senior Cycle. Delegates spoke passionately on the importance of external assessment for State certification. Motion 18 called on the ASTI to demand meaningful consultation with subject teachers before further curricular reform is introduced. Several delegates argued for the importance of consulting with classroom teachers and students before changes are made to the curriculum. Two further motions on Junior Cycle dealt with the inadequacy of the in-service for the new Junior Cycle, as well as under resourcing of schools. Delegates called for research into the impact of the new Junior Cycle on educational standards. Motion 33 called for parity of funding between non-fee paying voluntary secondary schools and ETB/Community and Comprehensive schools; many delegates described the difficulties they faced due to lack of resources in their schools.

Senior Cycle

“We need to modernise, and to move our fine, world-renowned and internationally recognised terminal exam forward. However, we must be resolute in our efforts to ensure that it does not fall victim to the vicissitudes that have eroded and enveloped our Junior Cert. We must not allow populist and money-saving theories to infect our great, flagship, tried and tested exam.”

Joe Scally, Mullingar Branch

“We talk about learning from mistakes, but we need to articulate those mistakes. I happen to be the Junior Cycle co-ordinator in my school.

The problems of inadequate training and inadequate ICT in schools, inadequate time available, has led to a huge amount of problems and pressure on teachers ... I'm saying enough is enough. It's time to invest in our education. No more change until we are properly resourced so I would urge you to support this motion to stop the Leaving Cert going down the same road as the Junior Cycle.”

Annette Mooney, Dublin North 1 Branch

Curricular reform

“Change is good when it's done in consultation with the people concerned. Change is good when it's brought about to improve standards. It is good when it's brought about to improve engagement and enjoyment for students. Teachers are best placed, after years spent working with young people, to suggest what works to bring a subject to life.”

Pauline Nagle, Clare Branch

School resources

“Our schools are crumbling. Teachers walk down their halls and they see cracks, mould, damp, patchwork repairs. They walk into classrooms and see equipment, often antiquated, often damaged, patiently awaiting repair. We do our best, we decorate our walls, covering up the cracks, we spend our own money to buy laptops and tablets for classroom use, our caretakers do their best in repairing and renovating, our admin staff do their best, single secretaries doing the job of two, two doing the job of four. Our management does its best, squeezing the budget, hammering civil servants and TDs for funding. Now I recognise that there are many complexities to this issue, of



*Richard Terry,
Fermoy branch.*



*Mark Walsh,
Dublin North East branch.*

ownership and of patronage. The solution to this problem will not come with a single stroke of a Ministerial pen. Nevertheless it is a problem that must be tackled for the sake of our students, our members and our unions.”

Richard Terry, Fermoy Branch

“ There is a **chronic underfunding** of education in this country going back **decades**...Students are going to schools that are **not fit** for purpose

“There is a chronic underfunding of education in this country going back decades...Students are going to schools that are not fit for purpose. They are talking about Computer Science being a Leaving Cert subject.

I mean come to my school; there are not enough computers in my school for students to be able to access the lab appropriately. There are about 10-15 computers working and there’s no technician there to look after them. They’re the type of problems we need to address, and we also need to look at DEIS schools. I work in a DEIS school and the lack of investment is apparent when you enter a DEIS school. It’s not just equality of pay, its equality of access to education for

every young person in this country. Every young person has a right to a classroom that is warm, comfortable and well equipped to address their needs.”

Enda Duffy, Dublin South County Branch

Junior Cycle

“There’s an issue of access to in-service. Most of us have two subjects at Junior Certificate, some of us have three. I had in-service for one day. The next in-service day will be some time next year, the next academic year. The option is to either go to your “other” subject, thereby losing out on the first subject you have gone to your in-service on, or not go at all and thereby lose out on in-service in your second, or indeed third, subjects. It is a disgrace. It is wrong that you and I have to choose, for what is supposedly a radical new development in Junior Cert, what subject we will go to.”

Ger Hanlon, Waterford Branch

“We’ve entered into a world in education of corporate speak. Everything has to be justified. We have so many definitions of everything passed around our staffroom ... It was all argued that this was to reflect a changing world in terms of technology and of society. This was all part of reflective learning and of managing information. Again, corporate speak. I’m afraid that it’s corporate speak for a corporate world. What has happened in this education system? I believe that we are educating people for the corporations. We’re not actually educating the whole person, towards becoming a better person.”

Sean O’Neill, Dublin South County Branch

MOTIONS DEBATED AT CONVENTION 2018

The following resolutions were adopted by Annual Convention 2018.

Standing Committee urgent motion – pay inequality

Convention notes the report presented to the Oireachtas on March 16, in accordance with Section 11 of the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017.

Convention further notes that the Report:

- restates the terms of the PSSA
- contains a global costing for the movement of all newer entrants two points further up the pay scale
- shows that this costing amounts to less than 2% of the public service pay bill for 2018
- neither constitutes a commitment by government to pay equality nor addresses the additional, disproportionate layers of pay cuts that were applied to new entrant teachers
- provides no guidance towards a fair and sustainable resolution of the injustice of pay inequality
- anticipates “further engagement over the coming months”.

Accordingly, Convention demands that the proposed engagement must:

- commence in April 2018 and conclude by early May 2018 and
- have the capacity to achieve a resolution of all aspects of pay inequality.

Convention agrees that any proposals that may emerge in respect of a resolution of the issues relating to pay inequality will be brought back to ASTI Central Executive Council for decision, with a recommendation to put them to members in a ballot at the earliest practicable time.

Convention requires that, in the event of continuing failure by Government to fully engage to resolve the issues or in the event of failure to resolve the issues in the engagement, a campaign of industrial action, up to and including strike action, as mandated by members will be pursued, where possible in conjunction with the other teacher unions.

Motion 3 – Salary review body

That ASTI call on Government to establish a salary review body to restore remuneration for secondary teachers to levels that will attract the most able and best-qualified graduates into the teaching profession.

Motion 8 – Pensions

That ASTI seek, in the context of the Equal Pay for Equal Work campaign, to secure parity of expected pension benefits for secondary teachers, obliged to join the Public Service Pension Scheme, with the pension benefits enjoyed by teachers in the Secondary Teachers’ Superannuation Scheme.

Motion 23 – Sick leave

That special consideration be given to teachers on Critical Illness Leave, where all leave has been exhausted by one continuous illness, that the DES does not count the summer holidays as sick leave.

Motion 20 – Supervision and substitution

That the ASTI negotiate the right for teachers to opt in or out of the supervision and substitution scheme on an annual basis.

Motion 47 – Senior Cycle

That the ASTI formulate a policy of total opposition to any attempt to introduce assessment of students by their teachers for certificate or accreditation purposes at Senior Cycle.

Motion 18 – Curricular change

That ASTI demand that no further curricular change be introduced without meaningful consultation with subject teachers.

Motion 33 – School resources

That the ASTI demand parity of funding between non-fee paying voluntary secondary schools and the ETB/Community/Comprehensive sectors.

Motion 43 – Junior Cycle

That ASTI urgently and emphatically bring to the attention of the Minister for Education and his Department the serious concerns of teachers about the inadequacy of the in-service courses for teachers, the under-resourcing of schools and the lack of clarity around the modes of assessment and certification procedures for implementing the new programme.

Motion 9 – Examiners and superintendents

That the ASTI negotiate with the State Examinations Commission on an increase of 30% in the rates of pay for all teachers contracted to assist in the operation of State exams.

Motion 40 – Junior Cycle

This Convention wishes to express its serious concern regarding the fall in educational standards in subjects that have changed as part of the reform of the new Junior Cycle, and calls on the Department of Education and Skills to immediately conduct a review of all subject changes so far.

Motion 71 – Trade union rights

That the ASTI take a case to the International Labour Organisation against the continued use by Government of emergency legislation to restrict the trade union rights of teachers.

Motion 36 – Teaching Council

That the ASTI negotiate with the Department of Education and Skills and the Teaching Council, as a matter of urgency, so that funds will be made available to pay the cost of legal representation incurred by the ASTI for representing members at investigation and disciplinary proceedings.

The following motions were rejected by Annual Convention 2018:

Motion 16 – Supervision and substitution

That the ASTI negotiate an annual opt out option from the S&S scheme for all members who have given 15 years of service.

Motion 68 – School stewards – composite motion

That the ASTI grant a waiver from payment of the annual subscription for all school stewards, for the duration of the time served as school steward, in recognition of the work done representing the ASTI members in their school.

Amendment 1

Amend by deleting ‘a waiver from payment of the annual subscription’ and replace with ‘an appropriate honorarium’.

Amendment 2

Amend Motion 68 by the deletion after the word “grant” and before the word “payment” the words “a waiver from”; and by insertion after the word “grant” and before the word “payment” the words “a reduction in”.

Amendment 3

Amend motion 68 by the insertion of “attendance at branch meetings and” after the words “recognition of” and before the words “work done”.

MOTION 48 –

Amend Rule 67

To amend rule 67 by addition of

- (v) Special Convention may not overturn decisions made by members in a ballot.

Rule 67 to then read as follows:

- (i) A Special Convention of the Association shall be summoned:
 - a) at the discretion of the President,
 - b) on receipt of a notice in writing signed by the Chairperson and Honorary Secretary of each of at least twelve branches in accordance with resolutions so empowering them, passed at properly convened meetings of each of the twelve branches concerned, or
 - c) on receipt of a notice in writing signed by at least eight hundred members of the Association.
- (ii) Such notice must contain a full statement of the reasons for requiring the summoning of a Special Convention. The General Secretary shall call a Special Convention within six weeks of the receipt of such notice.
- (iii) If the Special Convention shall be called at the discretion of the President the business transacted thereat shall be confined to an Agenda to be drawn up by the President and if the Special Convention is called pursuant to a notice the business shall be confined to the matters stated in such notice.
- (iv) The decisions of a Special Convention shall have equal validity with those of the Annual Convention.
- (v) Special Convention may not overturn decisions made by members in a ballot.

The following motions were referred to Standing Committee by Annual Convention 2018:

Motion 57 – Indemnity insurance

That an indemnity insurance scheme be put in place by the ASTI and offered to members. The indemnity insurance scheme to cover legal costs arising as a result of an ASTI member being the subject of a complaint made to the Teaching Council.

ELECTIONS AT ANNUAL CONVENTION 2018



President
Breda Lynch
(Aug. 2018/19)



Vice President
Deirdre Mac Donald



Honorary Treasurer
Ray St John

Steering Committee

- Richie Bell
- Noel Buckley
- John Byrne
- Mary Lyndon
- Máire G. Ní Chiarba

Business of CEC Sub-Committee

- John Byrne
- John Conneely
- Peter Keaney

Rules Committee

- Noel Buckley
- Séamus Keane

- John McDonnell
- Michael McGrath
- Padraic McWeeney

Investment Committee

- Patrick Collins
- John McDonnell
- Noelle Moran
- Peter Quinn

Pensions Sub-Committee

- Gloria Helen
- Pauline Nagle
- Denis O’Boyle
- Ger O’Donoghue
- Bernadine O’Sullivan

VOX POP – WHAT DOES ASTI MEMBERSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

At Convention this year, we spoke to teachers about the value of union membership.



Shane Curran, CBS New Ross, Co. Wexford

ASTI membership is a safety net. You know that if anything goes wrong, there is someone there – they're willing to help you and fight for you. I'm a member of the Non-Permanent Teachers' Committee and in the meetings we've had we hear about cases that are going on, for example making sure that people get a CID if they're entitled to it.

It's about knowing that it's not just you on your own; there are people there who've done it hundreds of times before. There is the whole community element of [membership] as well. This is my second Convention and you get to know people, and it's nice to make connections. You can meet other teachers of your subject and get ideas, teachers coming together to try and do the best they can.



Seán Bohan, Mercy Secondary School, Ballymahon, Co. Longford

At the moment, more than ever, ASTI membership means that I can have some small say in protecting standards of education. I think it's the single biggest issue at the moment. The education system is going through a lot of change and it's changing very quickly, and I think that

members of the ASTI are leading the way in trying to maintain standards and not have them diluted too much. I also think that a lot of good will and confidence has been eroded in teachers in the last number of years and we don't get an awful lot of public support, and I think being part of an organisation like the ASTI can be a motivator in itself that we're all fighting together to do our very best for all the kids in our care.



Siobhán O'Donovan, Patrician Academy, Mallow, Co. Cork

For me, ASTI membership means being actively involved in a union that has the courage and the conviction to take a stand on issues. It means being part of a democratic, transparent organisation. It's not perfect – there isn't any organisation of 17,500 people that will be perfect

– but each and every member can have a voice and can have their voice heard if they choose to get involved. As Desmond Branch Secretary, and as a member of CEC, I've met colleagues, some of whom are now friends, from schools both near and far, and our discussions and meetings are, for me, the greatest thing that ASTI membership has brought. It offers a support network – formal and informal. I would urge members to become more involved rather than sitting on the fence, so they can fully benefit from what membership has to offer.



Sinéad Moore, St Joseph's Secondary School, Rush, Co. Dublin

ASTI membership means a lot of different things for me. What stands out especially is meeting very passionate, committed, invested teachers who care about education, students, teachers' well-being, and the future of the country. The people I've met in the ASTI are passionate and dedicated,

and give selflessly of their time, acting as school stewards and in various other roles trying to promote quality education as well as defend the rights of their colleagues. Being part of the ASTI means you're part of a resistance movement against anything that will negatively affect quality education. We're fighting pay inequality as well as defending the fairness and objectivity of State exams and encouraging the Minister to consult us on all educational issues. We advocate for an increase in resources for education so that students can get a quality and improved holistic education. I'm proud to be a member of the ASTI.



Cian O'Grady, Calasanctius College, Oranmore, Co. Galway

What ASTI membership means to me is that it's the only union that has stood up for the lesser-paid teacher and has actually tried to make a difference. You can see that the teachers who are members of the union were prepared to give up their pay, to take pay cuts, to make sacrifices, and that's very reassuring for any lesser-paid teacher.

I hope that the ASTI will continue to value that and hopefully will stand up for the lesser-paid teacher, and if that does mean taking strike action I hope that the whole membership of the union is prepared to go that far. It's been seven or eight years and lesser-paid teachers are not on full-time hours, they're not earning the €35,000 a year, and it has gone on quite a long time, so I trust in the union to look out for the lesser-paid teachers.



Fiona Bolger, Presentation Secondary School, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

ASTI membership has meant different things to me over the years. I was among the first teachers to get a CID. For that reason, I was pretty engaged with the ASTI at that time, and found their meetings really informative and helpful. In more recent times, in the campaign we had in the

last year, I was unhappy. But instead of leaving, I decided to engage with it. So I came to Convention last year for the first time, and also attended the Special Convention. What I learned is that being a part of something gives you a voice. I was able to say what I felt and I was able to portray the feelings of some of my colleagues as well. I now understand that it's a democratic process. If you're not happy with the strategy there is a forum to voice that.



MIC
MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE
COLÁISTE MHAIRE SAN IMÁIL
Educating the future






EDUCATION POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- Structured PhD in Education
- Structured PhD in Literacy Education ***New for 2018**
- Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology
- Professional Master of Education (Primary Teaching)
- Master of Education (M.Ed)
- M Ed in Educational Leadership and Management
- M Oid san Oideachas Lán-Ghnoilge
- MA in Education and the Arts (META)
- MA in Education and Well-being of the Older Person
- MA in STEM Education
- MA in Music Education
- Graduate Diploma / M Ed in Adult and Further Education
- Graduate Diploma / M Ed in Information and Communication Technologies in Primary Education
- Graduate Diploma / M Ed in Special Education Needs
- Graduate Certificate / Diploma / M Ed in Professional Studies in Education
- Graduate Certificate in Autism Studies

PhD & MA BY RESEARCH AND THESIS IN THE FOLLOWING EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

Learning, Society & Religious Education; Language, Literacy and Mathematics Education; Reflective Pedagogy and Early Childhood Studies; Arts Education and Physical Education; Educational Psychology, Inclusive Education and Special Education.

LIBERAL ARTS POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- Structured PhD in Contemporary Irish Studies ***New for 2018**
- Structured PhD in International Development Education and Practice
- Structured PhD in Philosophy of Art and Culture
- Structured PhD in Applied Linguistics
- MA in Applied Linguistics (online/on-campus/blended)
- MA in German Language and Culture in Europe
- MA sa Ghnoilge
- MA in History
- MA in Local History (with UL)
- MA in Media Studies
- MA in Language and Literature
- Graduate Certificate/MA in Christian Leadership in Education

PhD & MA BY RESEARCH AND THESIS IN THE FOLLOWING LIBERAL ARTS DEPARTMENTS

Drama and Theatre Studies; English Language & Literature; French Studies; Gaelige; German Studies; Geography; History; Mathematics and Computer Studies; Media Studies; Music; Philosophy; Psychology; Theology and Religious Studies.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Admissions Office T: 061 204 348 E: admissions@mic.ul.ie
www.mic.ul.ie/postgradstudies/Pages/default.aspx

Mary Immaculate College,
South Circular Road, Limerick.

Download MIC App



www.mic.ie

ASTIR Volume 36: Number 3: May 2018 27

CALLS FOR IMPROVEMENT ON TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Several motions addressed issues around sick pay, supervision and substitution, and examiners' pay.



Motion 23 on sick leave sought for special consideration for teachers on Critical Illness Leave, that the summer holidays are not counted as part of their sick leave. Delegates spoke about the difficulties faced by those with a critical illness whose leave entitlements had ended. Motion 20 called for the right for teachers to opt out of supervision and substitution on an annual basis. Motion 9 called for an increase in the rates of pay for examiners and superintendents, with delegates stating that the low rates of pay for acting as an examiner or superintendent for the State exams will lead to a shortage of people taking on these roles and could cause uncertainty for students. Motion 71 called for the ASTI to take a case to the International Labour Organisation against the use of FEMPI to restrict the union rights of teachers.

Sick leave

“Including three months’ summer holidays as part of a continuous critical illness leave is unfair and unjust, not just with regard to the monies lost, but what about the stress and the anxiety for the teacher concerned? We all agree that teaching can be a very stressful job, and teacher well-being has been in the media often over the past couple of years. A teacher’s well-being is as important as a student’s well-being. A teacher who returns to work after a critical illness should not have to worry about whether he or she will have a relapse and have already used up three months of their leave during the summer. A more humane approach should be taken in these situations.”

Peter Quinn, Clare Branch

“We have had people here speaking while they were sick, while they were undergoing treatment, here over the years. Proud trade unionists, who for the sake of others not having to follow in the awful steps that they were taking, have come to do this. You’ve heard enough of the experiences. I

thankfully have not had such experiences but I have known others who have ... I have always been to the fore in advocating that teachers’ health is education’s greatest wealth. We need to protect that, and to support people when their health is not what it should be. Not to add to the stress, not to make a bad situation worse.”

Deirdre Mac Donald, Vice-President, Wexford Tony Boland Branch

Supervision and substitution

“Once upon a time we did substitution for free, and that system actually worked. Now we find ourselves in another situation of further inequality ... This motion needs to be passed in order to give all teachers a chance to opt in or to opt out annually. This is being forced upon you. You do not get paid to do it, but you get financially penalised if you don’t do it. It is therefore cost neutral for the Government if you opt out and the option should be available to all ... We want our decent working conditions back. Some teachers are happy to do supervision and substitution and others are not. I don’t imagine it would be a situation where people opt in one year and out the next. People would generally choose whether to do it or not. Supervision and substitution is another reason people are choosing not to teach or to retire early.”

Ann Piggott, Cork South Paddy Mulcahy Branch

Examiners’ and superintendents’ pay

“Examiners and superintendents have been working on this important and pivotal area for diminishing financial returns. The ASTI made strong representations on the issue of examiners’ and superintendents’ pay, but nobody in the SEC or DES listened. Indeed we had problems last year in relation to supervisors and examiners and getting the numbers. For example, last year we had 5,150 superintendents, of whom 1,100 were retired teachers, and now in 2018, the nail has been hit on the head. The SEC has had major difficulties in recruiting members to take up the various tasks ... We now have reached a crisis point. Our students, having completed three years for Junior Cert and six for the Leaving Cert, could now face the possibility of there not being sufficient examiners and supervisors for their exams in June.”

Jim Breslin, Dublin South Central Branch

FEMPI

“We should be trying all avenues to fight against FEMPI and this motion gives us another avenue to challenge FEMPI.”

Mark Walshe, Dublin North East Branch

“FEMPI was used to freeze the increments of ASTI members in July 2016 and to deny payment for S&S in September 2016 ... The continual drip feed of partial pay restoration in national agreements is designed to make us do more for less, with the promise that we will eventually get our money, which was taken from us, back. The continued use of emergency legislation is there to punish unions who exercise their rights to reject such agreements.”

Séamus Keane, Fingal Branch

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO JOIN THE RSTA

A message from RSTA President Carmel Heneghan.

The slow pace of pension restoration is not justifiable in the current economic climate. The RSTA, in conjunction with the Alliance of Retired Public Servants and the Retired Workers' Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), has campaigned vigorously for accelerated pension restoration. As the majority of teachers will have full restoration by 2020, the Alliance will continue to campaign on pension parity, negotiating rights and the anomaly of the reduced lump sum to the cohort of teachers who retired post 2012 and whose pensions have been realigned.

The Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA) appears to have upheld the long-established principle of pension parity, but only up to 2020. It is imperative that pension parity be maintained to safeguard the living standards of retirees. The ASTI fought a long and arduous battle to achieve it.

Denial of rights

The denial of negotiating rights to retired public servants is a cause of great concern to the RSTA. It is working through its kindred bodies to progress this issue and has raised the anomaly of the lump sum in the pensions of the post-2012 retirees with those organisations.

We appeal for the support of all retired colleagues to give us the numerical strength to campaign effectively in the interest of retirees. The varied social activities organised by branches throughout the year are most enjoyable and offer an opportunity to stay connected.



RSTA President Carmel Heneghan with ASTI President Ger Curtin.

RSTA membership application/renewal

Name:

Address:

Home phone:

Mobile:

Email:

RSTA branch:

Annual subscription: €24

Annual renewal date: September 1

Payment options: Bank standing order (recommended by RSTA) or cheque (payable to RSTA)

Return to: Mrs Muriel McNicholas, Cordarragh, Kiltimagh, Claremorris, Co. Mayo.

Contact: murielmcnicholas@gmail.com or 085-118 1330

Standing order set-up form

Please complete in **BLOCK CAPITALS** using black or blue pen.

To: The Manager (Bank name and full address)

I hereby authorise and request you to DEBIT my account:

Account name/s:

IBAN

And to credit the account of:

RETIRED SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

IBAN: IE55 AIBK 9323 6112 7290 80 (**BIC:** AIBKIE2D)

with the amount of **€24** (twenty four euro)

Start Date: ___/___/20___ **Frequency:** Annually until further notice

Reference: (To identify member's subscription on RSTA bank statement):

Member name and RSTA branch

Signature: Date: ___/___/20___

DIFFERENT TIMES FOR WOMEN

Two retired teachers and ASTI members reflect on the days of the ‘marriage bar’.



Susie Hall



Kathleen Ryder

Fighting injustice: Susie Hall

Susie Hall has been an active ASTI member for many years, but her activism began when she found herself a victim of injustice.

Originally from Carrickmines in South County Dublin, Susie completed her BA in UCD and went to TCD to complete teacher training: “It was very different then – we taught during the day and studied at night. We were thrown in at the deep end with Honours Leaving Cert classes, and then rushed into town in the evening for lectures!”

Susie graduated in 1969 and commenced teaching French and German in Loreto Foxrock. She met her future husband and began to make plans for the future. But in 1971 everything changed: “We had put down a deposit on a house and got a mortgage based on both our salaries, and we got engaged. My future husband was congratulated in the company he worked for, and I naïvely thought everyone would be thrilled for me. I went into school wearing my ring, and the sister took me to one side and said ‘well you realise that when you get married we won’t keep you’. I was panic-stricken”.

Susie was a member of the ASTI, having joined when she began teaching, but her involvement did not extend beyond paying her subs: “I came from a very affluent background. My sole knowledge of trade unions was garnered from hearing my father railing against them”.

Susie’s father was an importer and the dockers’ unions in those days could bring the port of Dublin to a standstill: “I thought that’s what unions did. I thought if one person was victimised they all rowed in to help. In my naiveté I went to the ASTI thinking half the teachers in the country would be pulled out in solidarity with me, but that didn’t happen!”

While there was no formal marriage bar for teachers, as there was in the civil service at the time, schools were free to offer only temporary contracts to married women, or to offer them none at all, despite their having a permanent contract before marriage. To make matters worse, the pupil–teacher ratio had been raised from 15:1 to 18:1, so schools were overstaffed and there were no jobs to be had: “What really struck me was the terrible

unfairness of it. They were dismissing you for something you might do in the future [have children]. You have two options when you’re faced with that sort of thing: you can either accept it, or you can get stuck in. The latter was my choice and that’s how I became involved in the ASTI, and started going to my local branch”.

Susie’s tenacity paid off when she got a job in a girls’ school in Malahide (which soon became a community school), a post she held until her retirement, but the sense of unfairness at her treatment never left and contributed to her commitment to fighting injustice as a member of the ASTI. Indeed, she later found herself unexpectedly benefiting from a cause that she took on. When maternity leave was introduced, it was not available to adoptive parents. Susie brought a motion to Annual Convention, and the ASTI pursued the issue: “I never thought it would affect me, but I became the first person in Ireland in the public service to get adoptive maternity leave”.

Fond memories: Kathleen Ryder

The ASTI deserves belated thanks for giving the ‘green light’ to me and many married women secondary teachers to return to the fold! The ASTI broke a mould that had been firmly set for many decades and in the interest of fair play gave the go ahead to married women to follow their professional vocation.

I attended national school in Kilkcorman National School, Co. Limerick, followed by second-level education in FCJ Laurel Hill and later FCJ Bruff. After completing my Leaving Cert in 1945, I graduated with my arts degree in 1948 before returning for my HDE in 1950–51.

My teaching career began in 1950. An ethos of selfless giving prevailed in all the schools I experienced. In Limerick Presentation Top everyday life featured strongly, whereas in Laurel Hill students were shielded from life in the raw. In Spanish Point the students were totally committed to scholarship. In 1955 I came to Sacred Heart School Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo. The children were docile and well mannered. Their parents were co-

operative and appreciative. Missions, Stations, potato-picking and fair days were their natural 'home days'. Exams were incidental in the larger canvas of community life.

My career came to an abrupt halt in 1958 as the Archbishop of Tuam had banned the employment of married women in secondary schools in his diocese. With the characteristic compliance of a woman of the times I duly accepted a marriage gratuity of £480 and departed the scene.

Three children were born to me in succeeding years without benefit of maternity leave or Childrens' Allowance – until the '70s. That was the prerogative of 'men only' who in that sphere truly laboured less: married men received a marriage allowance whereas women had to resign on marriage. I worked for short periods as a substitute teacher and as Latin was in decline I retrained in French at my own expense during holidays.

Redemption came in 1960 through the intervention of the ASTI. The late President Donal O'Conallan and faithful members of the West Mayo

Branch, Joe Gilmartin, the late Paddy Gallagher and the late Jim Kerins worked on my behalf and succeeded in getting a motion passed at the Lucan Convention in 1960. It wasn't just an Act that needed to be challenged but a long entrenched attitude towards the role of women: 'a woman's place was in the home!' *O tempora! O mores!*

After the obstacles and challenges of those early years I continued my teaching career in Ballinrobe until my retirement in 1993. I repaid my marriage gratuity with compound interest!

I am very grateful to the ASTI for having given me and other married women autonomy and for bringing light into our teaching lives. I have loved my work as a teacher and still enjoy engaging with my former pupils and colleagues.

Many thanks to Kathleen Ryder and her family, who kindly gave permission for this edited version of her article, which appeared in *Issues in Education* Volume 5, to be published in *ASTIR*.

How disability aware is your school?

Sign up for your full **disability awareness lesson plan!** Support your school in attaining the **Enable Ireland Disability Awareness Shield.**

This October 23rd take part in the **Enable Ireland No Phone Survival Challenge**, increase disability awareness and raise vital funds for your local Enable Ireland centre.

ENABLE IRELAND'S NO PHONE SURVIVAL CHALLENGE

enable ireland
Disability Services
Life With No Limits

For more info email us - nophone@enableireland.ie or call - **01 885 7152**

DON O'SHEA: FAREWELL TO OUR FRIEND



There are some people whom you meet on your journey through life who make you stop, listen, learn and laugh. Don O'Shea was one such person. His untimely death in August devastated his loving family and deeply distressed his loyal friends and legions of appreciative pupils and parents. Don was a native of Tralee. He taught for a year at the Intermediate Secondary School Killorglin and for two years in Zimbabwe prior to being appointed as a teacher of maths and science at Our Lady of the Rosary Secondary School, where he taught for three years, prior to the opening of Kinsale Community School in 1996. He taught maths and science there, specialising in chemistry, and had the foresight to pioneer the introduction of IT long before most other schools.

He was admired for his in-depth subject knowledge, his unique teaching style and his inimitable sense of humour. He was universally respected as an expert in his field and was the author of a best-selling chemistry textbook.

IT wizard

Don was entrusted with scheduling the timetable and was diligent and discreet in his duties. He was an IT wizard who had the vision to seamlessly weave laptops, data projectors and virtual learning environments into the daily pedagogical practice of his colleagues. Last March, when asked by the visiting inspectors about the school's e-learning plan, he immediately proffered a detailed document outlining his vision for the future. It was classic Don: thorough, thoughtful and tremendous. He instilled confidence in his colleagues who all had confidence in him. Don was responsible for

the induction of new staff and trainee teachers into the school system. He managed the production of the school reports, as well as collaborating with UCC to mentor trainee science teachers in IT.

He was instrumental in devising the school's numeracy policy. One particular initiative which illustrates that Don was ahead of his time was the placing of clocks showing the time of capital cities throughout the world near reception!

Commitment above and beyond

Don's dedication was not confined to the classroom. He saw the value of extracurricular activities. He participated in trips to Cappanalea OEC in his native Kerry, where he sacrificed sleepless nights supervising enthusiastic second years on this traditional 'rite of passage' trip! It is little known that he also helped to facilitate weekend retreats to alleviate the stresses of Leaving Cert students in west Cork.

For many years, Don accompanied groups on school tours abroad where he was a great source of fun on long bus journeys to France (via the UK!). He regaled his rapt audience with funny stories, played games and entertained everyone with hilarious impressions of his colleagues (and principal!). He always reminded students that "what happens on tour stays on tour!"

Don particularly loved Christmas. He succumbed to the spirit of the season before most. He decorated his classroom with fairy lights and colourful decorations, ensured that Christmas FM was on in the staffroom, and was guaranteed to make you smile on Christmas jumper day, with an array of eclectic decorations.

Don was generous, gifted and gregarious. He was always fun to be with. Whether you were in his classroom or at his table for lunch, he was always the centre of attention. His areas of expertise extended to: pensions and phones, tax and travel and, especially, bargains! His eyebrows would often rise as his break was 'interrupted' by staff seeking advice on what laptop to purchase for their children or how to book a cheaper holiday. He spun tall tales that entrapped less suspicious colleagues and was especially eloquent on matters regarding nail varnish and fashion.

While all of us will miss Don, his spirit lives on in his wife Anne and their daughters Caoimhe and Saoirse. One anecdote that epitomised Don comes from an in-service some years ago. People were asked how they would like to be remembered and while most replies were mundane, Don's, as usual, was more considered. Poignantly, he answered "as a good husband and father". The courage demonstrated by Don's family justified the enormous pride with which he always spoke of them. Though often vocal in conversation, his voice would always soften when he spoke of his beloved family.

To Anne, Caoimhe, Saoirse, Don's mother Marjorie, his sisters, Linda and Mandy, and extended family, we extend our sincere sympathy at your loss. Your Don was humble, honest and humorous. He was a force for good. Although Don was taken far too soon, his wit and wisdom lives on in the hearts of all who were privileged to know him; and that will be forever.

HOW DISABILITY AWARE IS YOUR SCHOOL?

Enable Ireland has designed a full lesson plan for students to help increase disability awareness in schools.

Enable Ireland's Disability Awareness Programme gives students an in-depth knowledge of disability, including the different types of disabilities, appropriate use of language, disability services available, and how challenging the home, school, work and general community environment can be for those with a disability. The four-part module is packed with interactive activities, discussion and learnings, culminating in the No Phone Survival Challenge on October 23.

Enable Ireland's No Phone Survival Challenge means exactly what it says – no phones, no calls, no texts, no snaps, no posts, no likes, no selfies for an entire day. By giving up their phones, students are highlighting their use of technology and how technology can be used by children and adults with disabilities to help live a more independent and empowered life. It's all to raise awareness of disability and to raise vital funds for Enable Ireland and disability support services within the community.

Sign up today for a full disability awareness lesson plan and take part in the Enable Ireland No Phone Survival Challenge. Support your school in attaining the Enable Ireland Disability Awareness Shield!

Contact nophone@enableireland.ie, or 01-885 7152.

TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST

Teaching the Holocaust is a three-day summer course for teachers, introducing methodologies, lesson plans, tools and resources presented by international experts. This programme can be taken independently or as part of a Certificate in Holocaust Education awarded by Trinity College Dublin.



For more information, please call the Holocaust Education Trust Ireland (HETI) office on 01-669 0593, where Aideen and Áine would be pleased to discuss our programmes with you and answer any of your queries, or email info@hetireland.org.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF HBSC IRELAND STUDY

2018 marks Ireland's 20th year of participation in the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) study. The research is undertaken in collaboration with the World Health Organisation and is taking place across 48 countries and regions in Europe and North America. The HBSC team at the Health Promotion Research Centre, NUI Galway, will ask children from third class to fifth year about their physical and mental health and the contexts of their lives.

More information on HBSC Ireland can be found at: www.nuigalway.ie/hbcs.

YOUR ASTI VOTE: HAVE WE GOT YOUR CORRECT CONTACT DETAILS?

The ASTI regularly ballots its members on key issues. Ballots may be conducted via the school structure or by posting individual ballot papers to members' home addresses. It is therefore vital that ASTI Head Office has your up-to-date contact details, including:

- your school address
 - your home address
 - your mobile number
 - your email address
- to ensure you have Your Vote.

If you have changed your school or home address recently, please email your most up-to-date information and contact details to membership@asti.ie. Please note that the best time to do this is well before a ballot. For administrative reasons, ballot material is prepared in advance of any ballot voting period. Once ballot papers are issued they cannot be rescinded. Being a member of the ASTI means that you get to participate in important decisions that affect your career, teaching as a profession, and the education service.

Maynooth University
National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Maynooth University Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education

Postgraduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs (PDSN)

This course is:

- Designed for practising primary and post primary teachers who:
 - work in special education roles
 - work as mainstream teachers and wish to enhance their skills in this area
- A one year, part-time course of study
- Accredited by and taught in NUI Maynooth
- Due to commence in late September 2018
- Compatible with full-time employment

Closing date: 30 June 2018

For further details see www.maynoothuniversity.ie/froebel-department-primary-and-early-childhood-education/our-courses/postgraduate-diploma-special-educational-needs
Enquiries: froebel-department@niu.ie or call 01-4747401

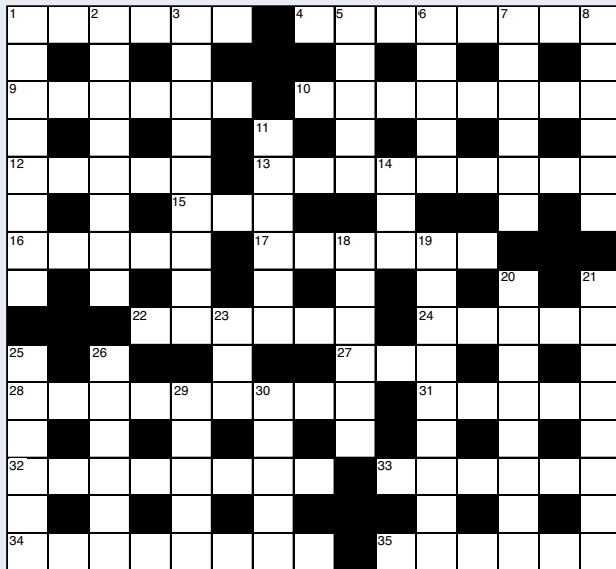


Sponsored by ASTI Credit Union

ASTIR CROSSWORD NO. 1803

The winner will receive €200

If you wish to keep your copy of *ASTIR* intact you may send a photocopy of the crossword. One entry only per member.



Name

School

Address

ASTI Branch

Entries to: ASTIR Crossword No. 1803, Think Media,
The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.

To arrive by: Friday, June 29, 2018

CLUES ACROSS:

- 1 See 12 across
- 4 Armies press on if served in shots (8)
- 9 Change boundaries of an area (6)
- 10 across and 11 down: Chief Inspector DES (2,6,6)
- 12 across and 1 across: Secretary General DES (4,1,6)
- 13 Instant (9)
- 15 and 32 across: Good times and bad (3,3,5)
- 16 Each school has its own particular one (5)
- 17 Alfalfa, chickpeas, soybeans for example (6)
- 22 The system per se lends itself to an outburst of anger (6)
- 24 India's first prime minister ... or his jacket! (5)
- 27 Perhaps the IDA could help! (3)
- 28 See 19 down
- 31 Orderly display (5)
- 32 See 15 across
- 33 Japanese art of growing miniature trees (6)
- 34 Derogate and get it accepted (6,2)
- 35 Go round in circles (6)

CLUES DOWN:

- 1 One's free to roam as predicted (8)
- 2 Cold Spanish soup (8)
- 3 Spiny lobster (9)
- 5 Forwards get down to it in rugby (5)
- 6 First name of *Matilda's* author (5)
- 7 Anglo's catchphrase! (6)
- 8 Find plenty in a good lesson (6)
- 11 See 10 across
- 14 Flightless bird (3)
- 18 Service station (6)
- 19 down and 28 across: Statutory obligation for teachers under the Children First Act 2015 (9,9)
- 20 Personal magnetism (8)
- 21 Wife of Orpheus (8)
- 23 Bon (witticism) (3)
- 25 Military flotilla (6)
- 26 An eight-legged creature, maker of webs (6)
- 29 Longest French river (5)
- 30 Otherwise (2,3)

Solution to ASTIR Crossword No. 1802

Across

- 1. Lerner
- 5. Raisin
- 10. Accepts
- 11. Braille
- 12. Kirk
- 13. Wield
- 15. News
- 17. CPD
- 19. Result
- 21. Fossil
- 22. Oration
- 23. Phoney
- 25. Income
- 28. SEC
- 30. Vape
- 31. Titan
- 32. JCPA
- 35. Onstage
- 36. Sistine
- 37. Idlers
- 38. Recess

Down

- 2. Encores
- 3. NEPS
- 4. Rustic
- 5. Ribald
- 6. Imam
- 7. Illness
- 8. Marker
- 9. Vessel
- 14. Epithet
- 16. Sloes
- 18. Donne
- 20. Try
- 21. FOI
- 23. Pavlov
- 24. Opposed
- 26. Orchids
- 27. Elated
- 28. Sirens
- 29. Caesar
- 33. Fake
- 34. PSPC

Did you miss?

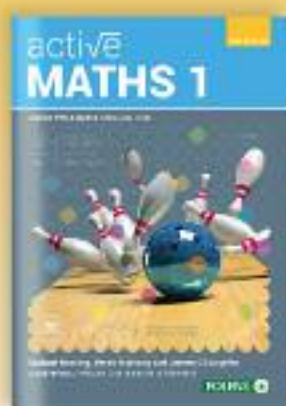
ASTI research into teachers' workload	8
Reports from Annual Convention 2018	14

CONGRATULATIONS

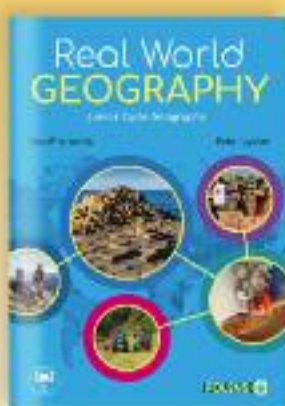
Congratulations to the winter of Crossword No. 1802:
Justin McGree, Patrician Presentation SS, Rocklow Road, Fethard, Co. Tipperary.
Tipperary Branch.

Our NEW Programmes for 2018

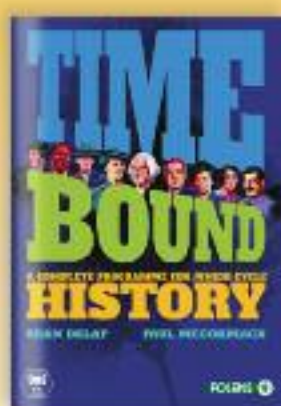
Aligned to the new Junior Cycle Specifications.



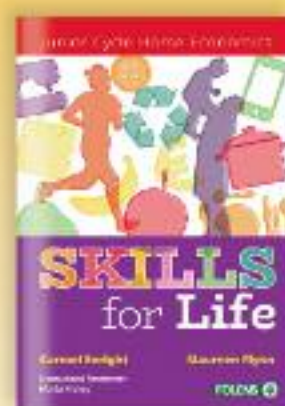
MATHS



GEOGRAPHY



HISTORY



HOME ECONOMICS



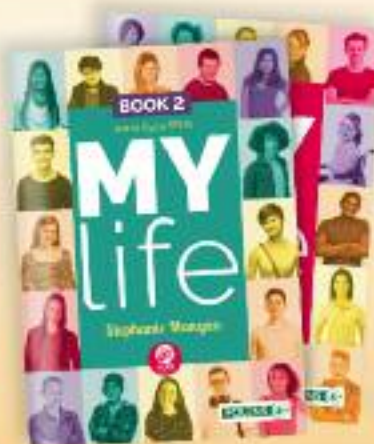
SPANISH



FRENCH



PE



SPHE

Visit **FolensOnline** today to try our Digital Resources.
Contact your Folens Representative for more information
or to book a meeting.



cornmarket
group financial services Ltd

ASTI
A century of service

**SALARY
PROTECTION**
It's there when you need it

“

To help pay my mortgage & bills,
and to keep my car running,
which I rely on so much!

”

*Laura, Teacher &
Cornmarket Scheme Member*

**For most people, their salary
is their greatest asset.**

Salary Protection gives you a replacement salary*, if you get sick and can't work. It's peace of mind for you knowing that the important things in your life will stay on track.

**Protect your future and join the ASTI Salary Protection Scheme today.
Call us on (01) 470 8075 or visit cornmarket.ie/asti**

*Up to 75% of salary is paid (less any other income which you may be entitled to e.g. half pay, Ill Health Early Retirement Pension, Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration, State Illness or Invalidity Benefit) after you have exhausted the deferred period of the Scheme. Terms and conditions apply. Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. A member of the Irish Life Group Ltd, which is part of the Great-West Lifeco Group of companies. Telephone calls may be recorded for quality control and training purposes. Irish Life Assurance plc is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.