

General Election – Questions for Politicians

The upcoming General Election provides an opportunity for teachers to act together in delivering a message to politicians and political parties.

During the past two years, the ASTI has campaigned - alongside our colleagues in other trade unions - for a better, fairer way which involves prioritising people and protecting our public services. A consistent message from the ASTI has been that education must be protected because it is essential for economic recovery.

Political parties are launching manifestos and politicians are knocking on doors. It is vital that as many ASTI members as possible engage with politicians and parties prior to election day on February 25th. This will help to deliver the message that people and public services must be prioritised by any incoming Government.

Tell your politicians ...

Please tell all canvassers/ candidates how you, your family and your school have been affected by the current situation including public sector pay cuts, job losses and cuts to education services. Remember, while statistics can be useful, it is real life stories and experiences which will help to change thinking.

Questions for politicians:

- ◆ Will you honour the terms of the Croke Park Agreement (including no compulsory redundancies and no further pay cuts)?
- ◆ Will you protect second-level schools from further cuts?
- ◆ Will you oppose the proposed new public service pension scheme which will see new teachers pay more into their pension than they will receive in benefit?
- ◆ Will you seek to restore the salaries of new teachers so that they are in line with their teacher colleagues?
- ◆ Will you prioritise job creation?

For more information visit the ASTI's General Election page at www.asti.ie.

"The bottom line is that we need people, not just in Dáil Éireann but actually in Government, who care about workers and who will strive to protect our interests in the difficult times which most certainly lie ahead."

David Begg, ICTU General Secretary

"Politicians will be calling to our doors. There will be phone-in radio programmes. There will be on-line discussions and blogs. There will be chats outside the local supermarket. The theme for all of us working in education is that schools should not just survive: they should thrive. The message is your story."

Pat King, ASTI General Secretary

ASTI members have voted to accept the Croke Park Agreement by a two to one majority.
See page 2.

In 2007, Ireland was spending less of its wealth on education than all but 3 of 28 OECD countries

Since then second-level schools have had to cope with:

- Increase in pupil-teacher ratio
- Withdrawal of teachers for Travellers
- Reduced subject choice for students
- Loss of English language teachers
 - Supports to families cut
 - Cuts to school funding
 - A range of other cuts

Oppose education cuts and protect everybody's future - www.asti.ie.

Croke Park Agreement – implementation discussions to take place

ASTI members have voted in favour of the Croke Park Agreement as clarified in discussions between the Department of Education and Skills and the ASTI by 67% to 33%.

The ballot of members followed months of intensive discussions between the ASTI and the Department.

What happens now?

The next step will be implementation discussions between the ASTI, management bodies and the Department of Education and Skills. School Stewards and members should await further information from ASTI Head Office **before** engaging in local school discussions. ASTI Head Office will update members via Nuacht and the ASTI website as soon as possible.

ASTI members voted to accept the Agreement by a two to one majority.

Details of the ballot are as follows:

Turnout: 6,626
Spoiled votes: 6
Valid poll: 6,620
Yes: 4,459
No: 2,161

Seanad Éireann Election – Register by February 26

The ASTI has endorsed two candidates for the Seanad Éireann election which will take place later this year. Members should note that the final date for voter registration for the Seanad Éireann elections is February 26, 2011.

NUI graduates can register or update their address by visiting www.nui.ie/elections/seanad.asp.

Graduates of the University of Dublin (Trinity College) can register or update their address by visiting [/www.tcd.ie/vpcao/administration/records-awards/seanad-electoral-register.php](http://www.tcd.ie/vpcao/administration/records-awards/seanad-electoral-register.php).

ASTI-endorsed candidates for Seanad Éireann election

ASTI member Bernadine O'Sullivan is the ASTI-endorsed candidate for the Seanad Éireann NUI constituency.

ASTI member David Martin is the ASTI-endorsed candidate for the Seanad Éireann University of Dublin constituency.

Candidate profiles will appear in the next issue of ASTIR magazine. ♦

ASTI Retirement Seminars 2011

The ASTI will be running its popular retirement seminars again this term.

Please visit asti website for seminar dates and details - www.asti.ie

Political fund

The ASTI operates a political fund.

ASTI members who are duly nominated candidates for Dáil Éireann, Seanad Éireann, the Governing Bodies and Senates of the Universities, or the membership of the Assembly of the European Communities may apply to the fund. Donations from the ASTI political fund are decided by Standing Committee and are subject to the Standards in Public Office Act 2001 and associated guidelines published by the Standards in Public Office Commission.

Applications by letter should be made to the ASTI General Secretary, Thomas MacDonagh House, Winetavern Street, Dublin 8.