

## Statement to members on the economic crisis and education

from **ASTI President, Joe Moran and General Secretary, John White**

### Unprecedented Difficulties Ahead

Ireland, the education service, and teachers face unprecedented challenges over the coming months. Never before have we faced cutbacks of the depth and extent proposed for Budget 2010.

Everybody recognises that Ireland is faced with the worst economic crisis for at least 80 years created by the hubris of a rampant, poorly regulated capitalism. Unemployment is likely to reach 15.5% next year and the government is borrowing €400 million per week. In this context, public service unions, including teacher unions, face unprecedented difficulties. The government is committed to reducing the deficit by €4 billion in Budget 2010. This will likely involve a combination of tax increases and cuts in expenditure, including education. Further expenditure reductions are scheduled for 2011, 2012 and 2013.

### McCarthy Report

Cutbacks are proposed in all areas of the public service, e.g. in Health the proposed cuts amount to €1,229 million. The cuts proposed for second-level education amount to €114 million out of a total expenditure cut in education of €745.9 million.

The cuts proposed in second-level education are:

Rationalisation of VEC's	€3.0m
Reduction in the capitation grants	€10.0m
Increase in the staffing schedule of non fee paying schools	€50.0m
Reduce support for fee paying schools	€25.0m
Integration of Senior Traveller Training	€25.0m
Discontinuation of Comhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	€1.2m
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>€114.2m</b>

This total of €114 million, however, masks a further proposed saving of €100 million in the cost of supervision and substitution at primary and post-primary, and a further €50 million in management allowances at primary and post-primary. The McCarthy Report also states that the "current teacher contract appears unduly restrictive, and this means that activities such as teacher inservice development and school planning have tended to erode the school year".

A moratorium on filling vacancies has been announced for the public service. Vacancies can be filled in education but no post of responsibility vacancies can be filled which will inevitably mean an impoverishment of the education we can offer.

Continued overleaf

### Regional meetings on cutbacks

Meetings on the education cutbacks are taking place in 18 venues nationwide over the next two weeks. For information on your regional meeting visit [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie).

**"The ASTI believes that implementation of the proposals in the McCarthy Report would have devastating effects in the education service, which should be the avenue to the creation of the knowledge society which alone can lead us out of recession."**

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### ASTI Directives

The ASTI has issued a number of directives to members as a response to cutbacks which will have a negative impact on the education service.

A list of the directives issued and a question and answer document on the directives is available at [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie).

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### Inside Education

Inside Education is a dedicated radio programme for education news and stories broadcast on 103.2 Dublin City FM. The programme offers an Irish perspective on news and stories from the world of education. It is broadcast every Sunday evening from 7:30 to 8:00 on 103.2 FM in the Dublin area. Live streaming is available around the world at [www.dublincityfm.ie](http://www.dublincityfm.ie). Podcasts of past programmes can be downloaded from [www.insideed.com](http://www.insideed.com). You can email the programme with comments and suggestions at [insideeducation@dublincityfm.ie](mailto:insideeducation@dublincityfm.ie).

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### Unity Essential in Reaction to McCarthy Report

The ASTI believes that implementation of the proposals in the McCarthy Report would have devastating effects in the education service, which should be the avenue to the creation of the knowledge society which alone can lead us out of recession.

The four teacher unions - ASTI, TUI, INTO and IFUT - at a recent meeting decided that a co-ordinated response to the attacks on education is the only way to protect education from the most damaging cutbacks being proposed particularly in the McCarthy Report.

### Taxation of Pension Lump Sums

The one piece of good news in a Summer of gloom for education is that the Commission on Taxation Report recommends that taxation of pension lump sums would be on sums of over €200,000.

### No Pay Cuts

The Public Services Committee of Congress has sought commitments from the government that there will be no pay cuts, no taxation of the pension lump sum, and that security of tenure will be preserved.

### Social Solidarity Pact

Given the government decision to seek to reduce the budget deficit by €4 billion in next December's budget, it is likely that any discussions on the public service including education will be the most difficult in living memory. The unions have stated to the government that a social solidarity pact is the only fair way to address the crisis.

Such a solidarity pact should ensure that those best able to bear the burden of the fiscal crisis - the well-off - should bear the greatest burden. Such a pact should also ensure a consensus is reached on the level of public services such as health and education that a decent society requires. Opportunities for our new and temporary teachers should be an absolute priority for us. All of the public service unions, including all of the teaching unions, are willing to talk to the government in that context.

### Absence of Agreement

The ASTI is dedicated to ensuring that the education service comes through this unprecedented crisis capable of providing a high quality education for our pupils and that teaching will continue as a profession respected and well remunerated.

All unions will have to hold intensive internal discussions on a co-ordinated response. In that context, the ASTI is organising 18 regional meetings in order to garner information on the cutbacks in schools and to report on developments. You are invited to attend these meetings. The ASTI has issued directives to members in response to the Budget cutbacks and the moratorium on posts of responsibility:

- (a) parent-teacher meetings and staff meetings outside of school time;
- (b) school development planning meetings;
- (c) whole school evaluation and subject inspections;
- (d) posts of responsibility, and
- (e) class size.

A ballot on industrial action may be necessary. A go-it-alone policy by any group is easily picked off by the government; the example of the pharmacists is a clear case in point. **Never was there a greater need for unity of purpose among members of the ASTI, among the four teachers unions and amongst the broader union movement.** ♦

# Good news on CIDs

The requirement that CIDs can only be awarded where teachers have four years continuous service in the same post has been removed so that the requirement is now four years continuous service in the same school, but not necessarily in the same post.

The ASTI had presented an argument for this change. Discussions have led to an agreement with the Department of Education and Science and management bodies that the requirement for four years continuous service "will include any period for which the teacher covered for another teacher absent on an approved scheme of leave". In other words, any or all of the first three years of the contract could be filling in for a teacher on, for example, a career break.

This does not affect ineligibility for a CID due to objective grounds set out in a previous contract. ♦

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## World Teachers' Day

"Build the Future: Invest in Teachers Now" is a fitting theme for this year's World Teachers' Day given that up to a 1,000 second-level teaching posts have been lost in Ireland due to the education cutbacks.

The ASTI will be participating in this international event, which aims to celebrate the work of teachers, by highlighting the damaging effects of fewer teachers to our young people's education.

In addition, the ASTI is encouraging school staff to organise, through the ASTI School Steward, to buy cakes to enjoy at morning break on World Teachers' Day - Monday, October 5th. The cost can be reclaimed from the local ASTI branch. ♦

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## Lecture on the history of the ASTI

The Irish Labour History Society is hosting a public lecture '100 years of the ASTI' on Monday, September 28th, at 8pm. The lecture will be given by labour historian Dr. John Cunningham who is the author of the forthcoming book 'Unlikely Radicals: Irish Post-Primary Teachers and the ASTI, 1909-2009'.

The lecture will be held in the Mansion House in Dublin where, at a meeting in July 1909, the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland was officially founded. ♦

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## Many voices, one goal

The Football Association of Ireland (FAI), with support from the Office of the Minister for Integration, is piloting a week of football and intercultural learning activities in schools, from 15-27th October. As part of the Intercultural Football and European Football Against Racism Week the FAI is inviting schools in Dublin to take part in a celebration of diversity and of the beautiful game.

For schools who take part, FAI Development Officers will deliver classroom based learning and football for second year students. The association will also organise an inter- schools world cup blitz day during the week beginning the 19th October. Schools will be asked to adopt a country for the week and to encourage students to learn more about that country and to discuss the issue of racism as part of SPHE.

If your school would like to take part in the Intercultural Football and European Football Against Racism Week, please contact Des Tomlinson at 01-8999571/086-8590524 or Claire Redmond at 01-8999566 before September 11th. ♦

# Training for school stewards and board of management reps

Notices have been sent to all school stewards regarding training for school stewards and board representatives.

Stewards' courses will be held during September in venues in Sligo, Kerry, Monaghan, Dublin, Cork, Westmeath, Limerick, Mayo and Kilkenny. Stewards must reserve places on one of these courses using the appropriate application form.

Courses for board representatives will be held during October in Dublin, Sligo, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick and Cork. Applications to attend should be sent to ASTI Head Office using the appropriate forms.

Further information can be obtained from Sarah Fagan on 01-6040173. ◆

## ELSTA Conference

The 2009 English Language Support Teachers Association (ELSTA) conference will be held on October 17th in the Marino Institute of Education, Dublin.

This year's theme is 'The Journey is as important as the destination' and Jim Cummins will be the keynote speaker. For more information, log on to [www.elsta.ie](http://www.elsta.ie).

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## Postal Ballots - Update Your Address

ASTI ballots of members are conducted by postal ballots sent to each member's address as given to ASTI Head Office. If you have changed your contact details, please email your change of address and other contact details to [membership@asti.ie](mailto:membership@asti.ie), or alternatively, fill in the form below and return to:

Membership Section,  
ASTI,  
Thomas MacDonagh House,  
Winetavern Street,  
Dublin 8

### Change of Address Form

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Focus Ireland education  
volunteers**

Focus Ireland is seeking volunteers to give school talks to CSPE students in their local area in Dublin. The core aims of the educational programme is to help inform young people and increase understanding about the issues of homelessness and housing need in Ireland. Full training and educational resources will be provided. Ongoing commitment for the school year is required but the level of commitment can be agreed to reflect your availability.

If you are interested and would like to register your name or find out more please contact Focus Ireland on [info@focusireland.ie](mailto:info@focusireland.ie).

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**Junior Spider Awards**

The Junior Spider Awards reward students' creativity and innovation on the web in a learning context. The deadline for entries is November 6th. Visit [www.juniorspiders.ie](http://www.juniorspiders.ie).

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## **ASTI Professional Development Programme 2009**

### **The Role of the Deputy Principal - 1 x 2 day course**

**Targeted At**

Teachers who are considering applying for the post of deputy principal.

**Objectives**

- ◆ To provide an overview of the role of the deputy principal in the school leadership system
- ◆ To provide an introduction to the specific duties typically attached to the post
- ◆ To introduce teachers to core skills - timetabling; school discipline; management of effective teaching and learning; and school development and planning

**Areas to Be Addressed**

Leadership skills and styles; school policies; leading learning; time management; team building and conflict resolution; school timetable

**Dates:**

**Day 1** Tuesday, 6th October

**Day 2** Tuesday, 20th October

### **The Role of the Year Head - 1 x 2 day course**

**Targeted at**

Teachers who are interested in applying for the post of year head or who have recently been appointed to this post.

**Objectives**

- ◆ To provide a comprehensive overview of the work of the year head in the pastoral care system.
- ◆ To present strategies for working with 'at-risk' students and disciplinary problems
- ◆ To develop effective communication and administration skills

**Areas to be addressed**

Roles and responsibilities; developing relationships; conflict management; working with students; students at risk; record keeping and follow-up.

The main feature of this programme is that, after participating in Day 1 of the programme, participants have the opportunity to have an input into the design of Day 2 having reflected on the issues that are most relevant to their current situation.

**Dates**

**Day 1** Wednesday, 14th October

**Day 2** Thursday, 5th November

**All courses will be held in ASTI Head Office.  
Contact Eileen O'Rourke on 01-6040170 to find out more**

# Non-permanent? Part-time? Know Your Rights

Whether you are an ASTI member or have yet to join the ASTI, you are invited to a **Know Your Rights** meeting near you.

CIDs

Part-time Hours

Contracts

Fixed-Term

## Non-Permanent Teachers' Regional Meetings – SEPTEMBER 2009

VENUE	DATE	TIME
DAYS HOTEL, Galway	Monday, 7th September	5.00pm
STILLORGAN PARK HOTEL Stillorgan	Monday, 7th September	5.00pm
SILVERSPRINGS MORAN HOTEL, Cork	Monday, 7th September	7.30pm
THE TALBOT HOTEL, Wexford	Tuesday, 8th September	5.00pm
TULLAMORE COURT HOTEL, Tullamore, Co. Offaly	Tuesday, 8th September	5.00pm
NUREMORE HOTEL, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan	Thursday, 10th September	5.00pm
THE HORSE AND JOCKEY INN, Tipperary	Thursday, 10th September	5.00pm
RADISSON AIRPORT HOTEL, Dublin	Thursday, 10th September	7.00pm
SOUTHCOURT HOTEL, Limerick	Thursday, 10th September	7.30pm
BREAFFY HOUSE HOTEL, Castlebar, Co. Mayo	Monday, 14th September	5.00pm
THE KEADEEN HOTEL, Newbridge, Co. Kildare	Monday, 14th September	5.00pm
RADISSON BLU HOTEL, Sligo	Monday, 14th September	7.00pm
BREHON HOTEL, Killarney, Co. Kerry	Monday, 14th September	7.30pm

If you are an ASTI member, the ASTI will pay you a travel allowance for the Know Your Rights meeting nearest to your home/school.

For more information contact Emer Hynes. Email: [ehynes@asti.ie](mailto:ehynes@asti.ie) or Tel: 01/6040171.