

New teachers' pay, education cuts, working conditions to dominate convention

Unequal pay for newly qualified teachers, the two worst education cuts, and the Croke Park hours are key themes at this year's Annual Convention.

TEACHERS' PAY

Teachers who entered the profession after 2010 are on different pay scales than their colleagues even though they have the same duties and responsibilities.

Budget 2011 slashed new teachers' pay by 10 per cent. In 2012, most pay allowances above the basic salary scale (e.g. allowance for obtaining a Master's Degree) were abolished for those entering teaching (as well as for new beneficiaries).

While the ASTI has made some progress in having these cuts restored, it still remains that new and recently qualified teachers are placed on inferior pay scales.

Because many newly qualified teachers spend the first few years of their career in temporary and/or part-time teaching positions, they experience the double whammy of a part-time income and an inferior pay scale.

On Tuesday, March 29th, three motions will demand the restoration of one common pay scale for all teachers.

Pension levy

A motion calling for the abolition of the public service pension levy will also be debated on Tuesday, March 29th. This levy has reduced all teachers' pay by up to 7.5%.

IMPACT OF EDUCATION CUTS ON STUDENT WELLBEING

On Wednesday, March 30th delegates at the ASTI Annual Convention will discuss the impact of cuts to the allocation of guidance counsellors and to posts of responsibility (e.g. Year Head posts) in second-level schools. A survey by Millward Brown in 2013 found:

- Seven in 10 second-level schools have reduced one-to-one guidance counselling for students;
- Almost 60 per cent of principals surveyed stated that the moratorium on posts of responsibility has had a high or medium adverse impact on the wellbeing of students.

Delegates will discuss how impositions such as the Croke Park hours and compulsory supervision and substitution are using up time previously available for teaching-related work (e.g. marking and lesson preparation), pastoral care activities, extra-curricular activities.

Junior Cycle – Industrial action over Junior Cycle reform:

The ASTI is currently engaged in industrial action over the Junior Cycle Framework. ASTI members are prohibited from engaging with aspects of the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle, including attendance at CPD for the Framework. The issue will be discussed by Convention delegates on Wednesday, March 30th.

News from Convention

This year's Annual Convention will be held in the Clayton Hotel, Silver Springs, Co. Cork from 29th – 31st March 2016. As well as attracting media coverage, reports from Convention will also be available at www.asti.ie and on Facebook and Twitter.

Watch ASTI President's Address live

Máire G. Ní Chiarba, ASTI Presidential Address to Convention will be streamed live on the ASTI website at 4.30 pm approximately on Tuesday 29th March, 2016. Keep up with Convention debates as they happen by following us on Facebook and Twitter.

CONVENTION 2016

Convention 2016 will be held in Cork from Tuesday 29th March to Thursday 31st March. More than 500 delegates will attend the event in the Clayton Hotel, Silversprings Cork.

Each year delegates elect a new President and Vice-President. This year's candidates are:-

CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT

ED BYRNE

Nominating Branches:

Athlone, Bray, Carbery, Carlow, Carrick-on-Shannon, Cavan, Clare, Cork South Paddy Mulcahy, Donegal, Dublin North 1, Dublin North East, Dublin North West, Dublin South I, Dublin South II, Dublin South Central, Dublin South County, Dublin South West, Dungarvan, Fermoy, Fingal, Galway, Iar Thuaisceart Thir Chonail, Kerry, Kilkenny, Laois, Limerick North, Limerick South, Longford, Roscrea, Sligo, Stillorgan, Tipperary, Tuam, Waterford, West Limerick, Wicklow.



ED BYRNE
CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT

KEY EVENTS

Tuesday 29th March

- Election of President and Vice President 2016/2017
- Comóradh 1916 – Daltaí ó Choláiste an Phiarsaigh, Gleann Maghair, Co. Chorcaí
- President's Address
- Minister's Address
- Guest Speaker's Address
- Debate on motions

Wednesday 30th March

- General Secretary's report
- Debate on motions

Thursday 31st March

- Debate on motions

CANDIDATES FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

FINTAN O'MAHONY

Nominating Branches:

Bray, Carlow, Clare, Donegal, Enniscorthy, Fermoy, Iar Thuaisceart Thir Chonail, Kerry, Kilkenny, Limerick North, New Ross, Roscrea, Stillorgan, Tipperary, Waterford.

GER CURTIN

Nominating Branches:

Athlone, Carbery, Carrick-on-Shannon, Cork South Paddy Mulcahy, Dublin North 1, Dublin North East, Dublin North West, Dublin South I, Dublin South II, Dublin South Central, Dublin South County, Dublin South West, Dungarvan, Fingal, Tuam.

PROFILE OF THE CANDIDATES FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

GER CURTIN

Personal Profile

- Born in Silvermines, Co. Tipperary.
- Primary education- Silvermines N.S.
- Secondary education- Nenagh C.B.S.
- Third level education- NUIM (B. Sc. and H.D.E.)
- Teacher of Maths. and Physics in Beneavin College, Finglas.
- Married to Nora and we have two sons (both teachers and new entrants).
- Living in Celbridge Co. Kildare for the past thirty years.
- Former chairman of North Kildare Bord Na nÓg.
- Voluntary steward in Croke Park.

ASTI Experience

- Chairperson of the Dublin North West Branch.
- Member of CEC for many years.
- Current school Steward in Beneavin College.
- I have also served the branch as secretary for many years and also served as vice-chairperson.
- Branch delegate at Convention for over twenty years.
- Former Regional Organiser for region 15.
- ASTI Trustee 2009-2010.
- Standing Committee Representative for region 15 from 2010-2015.
- Member of finance committee while I served on Standing Committee.
- Currently ASTI first representative for Physics on NCCA course committee.

Priorities

- We must maintain our total opposition to assessing our own students for Certification purposes.
- We have a responsibility to look after our temporary teachers who are not catered for in the Ward report. We must insist on panel rights for all teachers caught in this situation as promised in Haddington Road Agreement.
- Reduction in the pupil teacher ratio.
- Campaign for an end to the moratorium on Posts of Responsibility.
- Full pay restoration and the removal of the pension levy and USC.
- Review how we ballot our members with the possible introduction of school based ballots.

If you elect me as your Vice-President I will play my part as part of a united team in the difficult road ahead working for improvements in the pay and conditions of all our members.



GER CURTIN
CANDIDATE FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

PROFILE OF THE CANDIDATES FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

FINTAN O'MAHONY

Personal Profile

I was born and raised in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary and attended St Mary's CBS and the High School CBS, graduating from UCD with a BA (Hons) in English and History followed by a HDip in Education.

I have been teaching English, History and Drama in Scoil Mhuire, Carrick-on-Suir since 1993. For many years I examined History at Junior and Leaving Certificate. I am a member of both the HTAI and INOTE, interested in using technology in the classroom. I'm married with three daughters aged 9, 7 and 3.

ASTI Profile

I joined the ASTI during my HDip year in St David's Artane in 1992 while still a student. I have served as School Steward in Scoil Mhuire for sixteen years, as Waterford Branch Secretary from 2003 to 2011 and as Region 8 Organiser from 2009 to 2012. I have served on Standing Committee for Region 8 from 2011 to 2016. I also served at NCCA as ASTI English Representative for several years and am a member of the Leaving Cert English Texts Committee. I was selected by Standing Committee to be a member of ICTU's 1913 Schools Committee, as a member of the Post of Responsibility Review sub-committee, and as an ASTI scrutineer.

When you vote for me you will get

- A believer in action over inaction: I proposed the ballot for strike action on Junior Cycle reform which CEC approved and members overwhelmingly embraced as our most successful industrial action in years
- A persistent voice at Convention, CEC and Standing Committee on the effects of austerity on our New Entrants, Career Guidance and Posts of Responsibility, I have fought for action from the ASTI on all of these issues
- An active, recognisable representative for teachers in print, on radio and on television: I have represented the ASTI in all national newspapers, on the Marian Finucane Show, the Pat Kenny Show, Morning Ireland, Newstalk Breakfast, RTE News, Prime Time and TV3 News.
- An advocate for the voice of the classroom teacher who wants to reconnect with ASTI members in schools by promoting school visits
- A committed trade unionist who advocates strengthening our Association by looking forward, not backwards and by building on our tradition as an accountable, inclusive and progressive union previous generations of teachers can be proud of.
- For teachers. For a change. I ask for your support at Convention.



FINTAN O'MAHONY
CANDIDATE FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

CONVENTION MOTIONS 2016

Moratorium on posts of responsibility - Motion 14 - Composite Motion:

That in light of the changed economic circumstances and economic growth, Convention call on the Department of Education and Skills to lift the moratorium on posts of responsibility immediately and restore the number of posts to the pre 2008 level.

(Desmond, Wexford, Galway)

Ex-Quota Guidance - Motion 51

That the ASTI seek the full restoration of guidance counselling hours in all second-level schools.

(Limerick North).

Common basic pay scale - Motion 1 - Composite Motion:

That in the interests of equality for all its members, the ASTI enter into negotiations with the Department of Education and Skills with the view to restoring a common basic pay scale for all teachers.

(Bray & Dublin South Central)

Common basic scale - Motion 5

That the ASTI enter into negotiations with the Department of Education and Skills, prior to the termination of the Haddington Road Agreement, to immediately restore all teachers employed post January 2011 to the common basic pay scale including entitlement to qualification allowances

(Wicklow).

Pensions Levy - Motion 21

That the Public Service Pensions Levy be removed.

(Dublin South Central).

Sick leave - Motion 48

That the ASTI demand that the DES does not count holiday leave as part of sick leave entitlement.

(Nenagh).

Common basic scale - Motion 6

That the ASTI demand that the DES restore the common basic scale for teachers to the pre-2011 common basic scale for teachers. In the event that this matter is not resolved by 31st August 2016, that the ASTI ballot its members on industrial action, up to and including strike action.

(Fingal)

Croke Park hours - Motion 39 - Composite Motion

Following the rejection of the Lansdowne Road proposals and in the absence of any consequent agreement by members of the ASTI, that Standing Committee issue a directive to members to cease fulfilling the 33 Croke Park hours upon the completion of the Haddington Road Agreement.

(Dungarvan, Kilkenny, Longford, West Mayo, Wicklow)

Note from Steering Committee: This motion may require a ballot of members.

CONVENTION MOTIONS 2016

Continuous Professional Development - Motion 63

That the ASTI reject any attempt to link Continuous Professional Development and the annual renewal of registration with the Teaching Council.

(Dublin North 1).

Privately paid teachers - Motion 97

That the A.S.T.I. establish a committee to oversee the pay and working conditions of privately paid teachers and to make policy recommendations in this regard; this committee to report back to Annual Convention 2017. Such committee to be elected at Annual Convention 2016.

(Tipperary)

Continuous Professional Development - Motion 62

That the ASTI seek to ensure that in the event of compulsory CPD, that it must take place during normal school hours, and that full mileage and subsistence be paid where appropriate

(Athlone)

Ballots - Motion 78 - Composite Motion:

That Rule 87 be amended by addition after the words 'postal ballot' of the words 'or school-based ballot as decided by Standing Committee'

The Rule will then read:

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

(Kildare, Laois, Navan, West Mayo, Kilkenny, Tuam).

Ballots - Motion 77 - Composite Motion:

Amend Rule 87 by deletion of the second sentence "plebiscites or ballots of association members shall be by postal ballot" and by insertion of the following new second sentence:

"The format of any plebiscite or ballot of association members shall be by postal ballot or by school based ballot, such format to be decided by CEC".

Rule 87 to then read as follows:

With a view to deciding matters of policy or principle, the CEC may take or cause to be taken a plebiscite or ballot of the members of the association. The format of any plebiscite or ballot of association members shall be by postal ballot or by school based ballot, such format to be decided by CEC. All branches shall, where possible, convene information meetings prior to such plebiscites or ballots.

(Enniscorthy, Kerry, New Ross)

CONVENTION MOTIONS 2016

Croke Park Hours - Motion 37

That the 33 hours of the Croke Park Agreement expire at the end of Haddington Road Agreement and be not renewed in future agreements with the Government.

(Dublin North West)

FEMPI - Motion 10

That the A.S.T.I. refuse to co-operate with the D.E.S. while FEMPI legislation is still in place.

(Dublin South 2)

Superannuation - Motion 20

That this Convention vehemently reject the changes to pension provision which force teachers to retire on average rather than final salary and call upon the ASTI to devise a strategy and effective campaign to fight against this cut.

(Dublin South County).

Assessment for School Certification - Motion 67

That ASTI members refuse to assess their own students for school certification (the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement).

(Dublin North East)

Examination Superintendents - Motion 27

That the ASTI seek that the SEC should accept home addresses of superintendents and examiners for the purpose of calculating travel expenses incurred during the exercise of state examination duties.

(Nenagh).

Supervision and Substitution - Motion 30

That the current S&S scheme revert to the scheme that existed prior to the Haddington Road Agreement.

(Carbery)

Croke Park Hours - Motion 38

Following the rejection of the Lansdowne Road proposals, and in the absence of any consequent agreement by members of the ASTI, that Standing Committee issue a directive to members to cease fulfilling the 33 Croke Park hours and S & S duties upon the completion of the Haddington Road Agreement.

(Dublin South Central)

Note from Steering Committee: This motion would require a ballot of members.

Committees for Election 2016 at Annual Convention

Steering Committee

- 5 members

Investment Committee

- 4 members

Rules Committee

- 5 members

Pensions Committee

- 5 members

Convention 2016 will also elect:

- ASTI President
- ASTI Vice President

Convention Dinner

The Convention Dinner will take place on Tuesday March 29th at 8:45pm in the Conference Centre in the Clayton Hotel Silver Springs.

The cost of a ticket is normally €48 but if your Branch reserves a table of ten before 11th March 2016, it will cost only €380 - a saving of €100. If your branch wishes to join with another branch for a table, please book under one branch's name by emailing info@asti.ie, reference 'Annual Convention Dinner'.

Payment for branch reserved tables must reach the ASTI Accounts Department on or before 18th March 2016. Book early to avoid disappointment.

A limited number of tickets may also be on sale from 2:30pm - 3:00pm in the Conference Lobby, Clayton Hotel Silver Springs on Tuesday 29th March at a cost of €48.00.