



Convention **Handbook & Reports**

BOOKS 1 & 2

SERVING TEACHERS
PROMOTING EDUCATION



ASTI

100th Annual
Convention 2022

CONVENTION 2022

100TH ASTI ANNUAL CONVENTION



Eamon Dennehy, President, ASTI



Kieran Christie, General Secretary, ASTI



Pictured at the ASTI Standing Committee November meeting are (from left): Dr Caitriona Fitzgerald, Moira Leydon (ASTI Assistant General Secretary, Education and Research), Kieran Christie (ASTI General Secretary), Eamon Dennehy (ASTI President), and Miriam Duggan (ASTI Vice President). Dr Fitzgerald presented her research findings to the meeting

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CONVENTION PROGRAMME

TUESDAY, 19TH APRIL 2022

12:00 noon OFFICIAL OPENING

**12:00 noon to
2.00 p.m. PRIVATE SESSION**

Election Arrangements:

The arrangements for the election of President, Vice-President and Honorary Treasurer are set out in the document "Election Arrangements" which has been circulated to all delegates and CEC members.

- (i) Credentials
- (ii) Adoption of Standing Orders Book 1 - 11
- (iii) Appointment of Timekeepers
- (iv) Formal Appointment of Tellers Book 1 - 18
- (v) Minutes of Annual Convention 2021
- (vi) Adoption of Steering Committee Reports Book 1 - 15
- (vii) Declaration of Results of Regional Elections to Standing Committee

ASTI PRESIDENT

HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

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**2:00p.m. to
4:00p.m. Public Session**

2.00p.m. DECLARATION OF ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Motion 1 - Pay

That the ASTI ballot members with a view to undertaking industrial action, up to and including strike action, starting in September 2022 until the following demands are met:

1. The elimination of the post-2011 pay scale and the establishment of one common pay scale for all teachers;
2. A pay rise for all teachers to counter the increasing costs of living within our country;
3. Full repayment of monies lost to teachers for lost and delayed increments imposed by FEMPI;
4. The end of unpaid work currently done under Croke Park and Haddington Road Agreements. **(Carlow)**

Motion 5 – Cost of Living

That the ASTI, in the negotiations on the successor to Building Momentum, demand cost of living increases in line with inflation. **(Fingal)**

Motion 42 – Teacher Qualifications

In light of the current shortage of teachers at second-level, that the ASTI campaign, as a matter of urgency, to have a one-year course made available to graduates, to provide them with a qualification to teach in second-level schools. **(Clare)**

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Industrial Relations

Book 2 - 16

Budget 2022

Book 2 - 13

Redeployment

Book 2 - 14

Conciliation and Arbitration

Book 2 - 15

4:00 p.m.

Adjournment4:25 p.m. to
6:00 p.m.**PUBLIC SESSION****PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS****MINISTER'S ADDRESS****GUEST SPEAKER'S ADDRESS****PRESENTATION OF MEDAL TO IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT 2019-2020****PRESENTATION OF MEDAL TO IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT 2020-2021****PRESENTATION OF MEDAL TO IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT 2021-2022**

6:00 p.m.

Adjournment

WEDNESDAY, 20TH APRIL 2022

Nomination papers will be available between **2:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.** for the election of Steering Committee, Rules Committee, Investment Committee, Business of CEC Sub-Committee, and other sub-committees as relevant.

Completed nomination papers must be submitted by 6:00 p.m.

**9:30 a.m. to
1:00pm**

Public Session

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

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Rationalisation	Book 2 - 6
Occupational Health Service	Book 2 - 8
Employee Assistance Service	Book 2 - 8
Safety, Health & Welfare Committee	Book 2 - 9
ICTU Health and Safety	Book 2 - 9

Motion 33 – Health and Safety

That, in light of the continuing assault of teachers, physically, verbally and online, the ASTI demand that the Department of Education review its policies to ensure the protection of teachers under Health and Safety legislation. **(Dublin North West)**

Motion 25 – Sick Leave

That, as a matter of urgency, the ASTI seek a written assurance from the Department of Education that school management does not require teachers on sick leave to submit work for their classes. **(Drogheda Sean Higgins)**

11:00 a.m.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

NON-PERMANENT TEACHERS

Non-Permanent Teachers' Advisory Committee	Book 2 - 31
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Motion 41- PME students

That the ASTI negotiate with the DES so that second year PME students be paid for all teaching hours worked through the academic year. **(Carbery)**

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Relations with Parents	Book 2 - 9
NCSE Departmental Council	Book 2 - 8
Retirement Seminars	Book 2 - 13
Pensions Sub-Committee	Book 2 - 12

Motion 14 - Pensions

That as a matter of urgency, the ASTI commission a comprehensive report, assessing the current contributions made under the different pension schemes, with a view to promoting equity for our members. **(Dublin North 1)**

RSTA Speaker

1:00 p.m.

Adjournment for Lunch

2:00 p.m. to
6:00 p.m.

Public Session

EDUCATION

Education Committee Report	Book 2 - 49
Junior Cycle	Book 2 - 57
Senior Cycle	Book 2 - 55

Motion 47 – Leaving Certificate

That the ASTI refuse to engage in any discussion on Leaving Cert Reform until a full, open and transparent study of the Junior Cycle has been conducted and its findings made public. **(Desmond)**

Motion 51- Student Wellbeing

That the ASTI seek that there be no more than one CBA per subject in junior cycle in the interest of student wellbeing. **(Dublin North West)**

Motion 52 – Junior Cycle

That the ASTI pursue a review of the minimum hours per subject at Junior Cycle with the intention of increasing class contact hours to implement the specifications to satisfactory levels. **(Dungarvan)**

National Council for Curriculum & Assessment	Book 2 - 63
Education Consultative Structures	Book 2 - 51
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Education (School Community Charter Bill)	Book 2 - 74
International Education Studies	Book 2 - 51
Educational Disadvantage	Book 2 - 61
I.C.T.	Book 2 - 70
Education for Sustainable Development	Book 2 - 68
Examinations	Book 2 - 10

Motion 48 – Leaving Certificate Assessment

That the ASTI insist that the assessment and grading of the leaving certificate remain the sole remit of the State Examinations Commission. **(Desmond)**

6:00 p.m.

Time of closure for nominations

6:00 p.m.

Adjournment

THURSDAY, 21ST APRIL 2022

Ballot papers will be available between **9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.** for the election of Steering Committee, Rules Committee, Investment Committee, Business of CEC Sub-Committee, and other sub-committees as relevant.

Ballot papers for these elections must be placed in the ballot boxes between 9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.

Nomination papers will be available between **1:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.** for election of Honorary National Organiser, Benevolent Fund, Awards Committee, Regional Organisers and CEC Appeals Sub-Committee.

Completed nomination papers must be submitted by 4:00 p.m.

**9:30 a.m. to
12 noon**

Public Session

COMMUNITY AND COMPREHENSIVE

Advisory Committee Report

Book 2 - 77

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

School Inspection/Evaluation

Book 2 - 10

Motion 28 – Inspections

That the ASTI insist that teachers should maintain autonomy over the way they teach and be free to determine for themselves the best pedagogical methods for their classes. As such, teachers' methodologies should not be used as a criterion in whole-school and/or subject inspections and should not be referenced in any subsequent written report or publication. **(Dublin North East)**

Motion 26 - Inspections

That ASTI negotiate with the Department of Education to ensure that no WSE Inspection or Subject Inspection takes place during the period between the 1st of May and the end of the academic year. **(Drogheda Sean Higgins)**

EQUALITY

Equality Committee Report

Book 2 - 79

Motion 24 – Supervision and Substitution

That the ASTI negotiate with the Department of Education to allow pregnant teachers opt out of Supervision and Substitution duties for the duration of their pregnancy. **(Drogheda Sean Higgins)**

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Book 2 - 32

– ICTU Women's Committee

Book 2 - 34

– ICTU Global Solidarity

Book 2 - 34

– ICTU Disability Committee

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Political Lobbying

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Post of Responsibility

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ASTI/TUI Disputes

Book 2 - 47

Legal Cases

Motion 62 – Global Solidarity

That the ASTI establish a Global Solidarity Committee.

Aims of this committee:

- To raise awareness amongst ASTI members of the challenges faced by teachers and their representative associations across the globe.
- To promote the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4: ‘Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.’
- To promote the principle of equality in all aspects of education and the teaching profession globally.
- To promote the right to education.
- To promote the rights of workers, especially teachers, and their unions where they are being victimised and/or denied human rights or trade union rights.
- To enable ASTI to express solidarity on humanitarian issues, in the context of global challenges such as world poverty, growing inequality, human rights abuses, denial of trade union rights and climate crisis. **(Tuam)**

Motion 12 – Posts of Responsibility

That the ASTI begin negotiations with the Department of Education to revisit the criteria for selection of candidates for API positions, specifically that some recognition be given for teaching experience/years of service. **(Tullamore)**

Amendment:

Amend by addition of “and AP2” after “API” and before the word “positions”. **(Tipperary)**

ASTI SUBMISSIONS

	(Book 2 - 22)
Draft Teacher Supply Action Plan - Feb. 2021	(Book 2 - 22)
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Stem Education Implementation Plan 2022-2026 - January 2022	(Book 2 - 28)

12 noon**Adjournment for Lunch****1:00 p.m.
to 2:00 p.m.****Public Session****Motion 18 – Supervision and Substitution**

That the ASTI insist that Supervision and Substitution be uncoupled so that teachers can opt in or out of supervision and/or substitution on an annual basis from September 2023. **(Dublin South Central)**

Motion 45 – Continuous Professional Development

That the ASTI resist any attempt by the Department of Education to introduce a policy of out-of-hours CPD. **(Dublin North East)**

2:00 p.m. to**4:00 p.m.****Private Session****INTERNAL UNION MATTERS**

Finance	Book 2 - 83
Members' Benefit Schemes	Book 2 - 84
Salary Protection Scheme	Book 2 - 84
Four Teachers' Unions	Book 2 - 84
Legal Aid Grants	Book 2 - 85
Principals and Deputy Principals	Book 2 - 83

Motion 44 - Vetting

That the ASTI do all in its power to have the changes to the vetting and re-vetting process for teachers reversed, so that only court convictions would be taken into account, as was previously the case. **(Dublin North East)**

Honorary National Organiser	Book 2 - 87
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Motion 20 - Leave

That the ASTI enter into discussions with the Department of Education to ensure that any teacher who takes leave for part of a day, only has that part of the day recorded as leave, and that any leave less than two hours be not counted. **(Athlone)**

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Rules Committee	Book 2 - 94

4:00 p.m.**Time of closure for nominations****4:00 p.m.****CLOSURE**

STANDING ORDERS

1. PRESIDING OFFICER

- 1.1 The Presiding Officer will normally be the President.
- 1.2 In the absence of the President, the Presiding Officer will be the Vice-President.
- 1.3 In the absence of the President and Vice-President, the Presiding Officer will be the Immediate Past-President or a member of Convention or CEC elected by Convention or CEC.
- 1.4 The Presiding Officer shall chair Convention or CEC in accordance with the provisions of the ASTI Rules and Constitution and of these Standing Orders.
- 1.5 In the event of a dispute about a matter of order or procedure, the Presiding Officer shall determine the matter. The Presiding Officer may consult the Officers prior to making such a ruling.
- 1.6 In the event of a tied vote, the Presiding Officer may exercise a second or casting vote.
- 1.7 If the Presiding Officer rises to speak, all other delegates or members shall be seated immediately.
- 1.8 Failure to observe a ruling of the Presiding Officer may result in expulsion from the meeting.

2. TIMEKEEPING

- 2.1 Convention or CEC, as appropriate, shall appoint from among its members a timekeeper.
- 2.2 The duty of the timekeeper will be to indicate when each speaker has exhausted the time allotted to them in accordance with the provisions of the Standing Orders or ruling of the Presiding Officer.
- 2.3 A visible signal shall be given by the timekeeper to each speaker when the speaker has exhausted the time allotted to them at which point the speaker must stop speaking and withdraw from the speaker's platform.

3. VOTING:

- 3.1 Every resolution shall be made by a show of credential cards at Convention or a show of hands at CEC meetings.
- 3.2 The Presiding Officer shall determine whether or not the resolution is accepted unless:
 - (i) the Presiding Officer rules that a division is needed, or
 - (ii) the determination of the Presiding Officer is challenged by not less than twenty members who shall express their desire that a division is taken by standing in their places.
- 3.3 Tellers shall be appointed by each Convention or CEC meeting to assist the Presiding Officer, on request, in determining the outcome of a division.

4. SUBMISSION OF MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

- 4.1 Motions and amendments for Annual Convention must be submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Rules.
- 4.2 Motions for Special Conventions must, in accordance with the Rules, be submitted in the notice of the Special Convention. Amendments to motions at Special Conventions must be submitted in writing prior to the opening of the debate. The amendment must state the name of the proposer and seconder who must be delegates to the Special Convention and present at the proceedings.
- 4.3 Motions and amendments may be submitted by Standing Committee or by members of CEC prior to or at a CEC meeting. Motions or amendments must be submitted in writing and must state the name of the proposer and seconder, who must be members of CEC and present at the appropriate meeting.

5. PROPOSING A MOTION OR AN AMENDMENT

- 5.1 Each motion and amendment must be proposed and seconded by persons entitled to do so whether at Convention or CEC.
- 5.2 Motions or amendments at Convention must be proposed and seconded by representatives of the branch(s) or committee which submitted the motion or amendment. At CEC they must be proposed and seconded by the persons who submitted them.
- 5.3 The proposer of a motion shall be allowed not more than five minutes to speak to the motion.
- 5.4 The seconder of a motion shall be allowed not more than three minutes to speak to the motion.
- 5.5 The proposer and seconder of an amendment shall be allowed not more than three minutes each to speak to the amendment.
- 5.6 Each other speaker to a motion or amendment shall be allowed to speak for not more than three minutes.
- 5.7 A speaker to a motion or an amendment shall be allowed to speak only once to the motion or amendment with the exception of the proposer of a motion who may be allowed the right of reply to matters raised in the debate. In such circumstances, the proposer may be allowed to speak for a further three minutes.
- 5.8 The Presiding Officer shall ensure that speakers to an amendment confine their speeches to matters specifically dealt with in the amendment.

- 5.9 A speaker to an amendment may also be allowed to speak to the substantive motion.
- 5.10 At the discretion of the Presiding Officer, the times specified above may be reduced.
- 5.11 In exceptional circumstances, the Presiding Officer may allow the proposer of a motion additional time to a maximum of three minutes.
- 5.12 Any amendments to a motion must be moved and disposed of after the motion has been proposed and seconded. No other speakers to the motion may be heard until the meeting has disposed of the amendments.
- 5.13 Each amendment must be moved and disposed of before the next amendment is taken.
- 5.14 After a motion or amendment has been proposed and seconded, the Presiding Officer shall, as far as possible, call alternately for speakers against and for the motion or amendment.
- 5.15 Where no speaker offers to oppose the motion or amendment, it shall be put immediately unless the Presiding Officer rules that the interests of the Association warrant an extension of the debate.
- 5.16 When the proposer of a motion indicates that an amendment is acceptable, the Presiding Officer will invite the proposer and seconder of the amendment to put the amendment formally before the meeting, i.e. without a speech. If there is no objection to the amendment, the amendment will be voted upon immediately. If there is an objection, the proposer and seconder of the amendment will be invited to speak first and a debate conducted on the amendment in the normal manner.

6. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

- 6.1 Procedural motions to bring the business under discussion to a close or to move to the next business may be proposed during the course of a debate by any member who has not already spoken in the debate.
- 6.2 The following procedural motions may be proposed:
- (i) "That the motion/question be now put"
 If such a motion is accepted the proposer of the motion before the meeting shall be entitled to exercise a right of reply as provided under Standing Order 5.7.
- (ii) "That the meeting proceed to next business" or
- (iii) "That the motion/question be referred to....." Such a motion must specify to whom the matter is to be referred.
- 6.3 The acceptance of such procedural motions shall be at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.
- 6.4 If any one of the above procedural motions is accepted, the proposer shall be entitled to speak on the motion for not more than two minutes after which the procedural motion shall be put to the meeting.

7. POINTS OF ORDER / INFORMATION / EXPLANATION

- 7.1 A "Point of Order" must deal with the conduct or procedure of the debate and may be put to the Presiding Officer at any time with a request to make the point.
- 7.2 The person wishing to put the "Point of Order" must indicate his/her wish to speak immediately after the alleged breach has occurred.
- 7.3 The person must obtain the permission of the Presiding Officer to speak and in order to receive that permission must prove one or more of the following:
- (a) that the speaker is travelling outside the scope of the matter under debate;
- (b) that the speaker is using unacceptable language;
- (c) that the speaker is transgressing a rule of the ASTI;
- (d) that the speaker is infringing the standing orders;
- (e) that the speaker is acting unlawfully or is proposing a course of action which is unlawful.
- 7.4 With the permission of the Presiding Officer, a person may interrupt the proceedings with a "Point of Information" or a "Point of Explanation".
- 7.5 The "Point of Information" or "Point of Explanation" should be submitted to the Presiding Officer with a request to be allowed to make the point.
- 7.6 A "Point of Information" is a request for further information regarding the procedure or the subject under discussion. It must be brief and put in the form of a question and should indicate to whom it is addressed.
- 7.7 A "Point of Explanation" is a statement to correct or clarify what is being said by the speaker. It must be a brief explanatory statement and must not be developed into a speech.
- 7.8 The role of the Presiding Officer is to determine if a point of information/point of order is legitimate. At the request of the proposer, the Presiding Officer shall explain to the meeting why a point of order/information is out of order.
- 7.9 The Presiding Officer may allow a person to interrupt a speaker to make a "Point of Explanation".
- 7.10 The Presiding Officer may allow a "Point of Information" to be made after the speaker has finished.
- 7.11 If a speaker is interrupted by a "Point of Order", "Point of Information" or "Point of Explanation", the Presiding Officer may allow the speaker additional time to compensate for the time taken by the interruption.

8. QUORUM

- 8.1 A quorum shall consist of one-third of the duly accredited members of Convention or CEC.
- 8.2 The Presiding Officer may initiate proceedings at the scheduled time or shortly thereafter without a quorum being present. However, no decision shall be taken without a quorum being present.

9. ANNUAL CONVENTION TIMETABLE

- 9.1 Annual Convention shall begin at 12 noon. on the first day and at 9.30 a.m. on each succeeding day.
- 9.2 Annual Convention shall adjourn at 6.30 p.m. on the first day, 6.00 p.m. on the second day and 4.00 pm on the third day.
- 9.3 Annual Convention shall adjourn for lunch from 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m. on the second day and 12 noon to 1.00 pm on the third day.
- 9.4 The timetable for Annual Convention may be changed by Convention on the recommendation of Steering Committee or by a procedural motion to that effect duly proposed and seconded. Such a procedural motion must be proposed at least thirty minutes before the proposed change would have effect.

10. REPORTS

- 10.1 A person introducing a report shall be allowed not more than ten minutes' speaking time for that purpose except with the express permission of the Presiding Officer or of the meeting.
- 10.2 A report shall be placed formally before the meeting through the use of one of the following procedural motions:
- (i) that the report be adopted;
 - (ii) that the report be adopted and its recommendations implemented.
- 10.3 Such procedural motions must be proposed and seconded either formally (i.e. without speeches) or with speakers directing attention to key elements or recommendations in the Report.
- 10.4 One of the following procedural motions may then be proposed and seconded:
- (i) "That the report be rejected".
 - (ii) "That the report (or a section thereof) be referred back to?"

In the case of the latter proposition the motion must be submitted in writing to the Presiding Officer and must specify to whom the report is being referred and to whom it is to be brought when completed.

- 10.5 Motions proposed under this Standing Order shall be subject to the ordinary Rules of Procedure regarding motions except

- (i) speakers shall be permitted to ask questions about matters contained in the report, and
- (ii) the person introducing the report rather than the person proposing the motion may reply to the debate and to any questions which are raised.

11. MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

- 11.1 Matters which are not on the agenda for the meeting may be raised by submitting them in writing to the Presiding Officer prior to the opening of proceedings of any session, on any particular day.
- 11.2 Standing Committee shall be entitled to submit motions on urgent matters to Steering Committee either prior to or during Convention. Steering Committee shall decide whether or not to recommend that such motions be considered by Convention.
- 11.3 The Presiding Officer shall set aside a specific time for dealing with such new business.
- 11.4 Such new business shall only be dealt with with the consent of the meeting.

12. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 12.1 A motion to suspend Standing Orders shall be submitted in writing to the Presiding Officer by a proposer and a seconder both of whom are members of Convention or CEC.
- 12.2 The motion must specify the Standing Order or Orders to be suspended, and the period of such suspension.
- 12.3 The motion must state the reasons of importance and urgency justifying such suspension and, if such suspension is for the purpose of considering a matter not on the agenda, the reason for not submitting such matter in accordance with the rules or with Standing Order No. 11.
- 12.4 A motion to suspend Standing Orders shall not be considered by the meeting except with the permission of the Presiding Officer.

A motion to suspend Standing Orders shall not be adopted save with the consent of not less than two-thirds of the members of Convention or CEC, who are present and voting.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

1. RULES OF DEBATE

- (i) Proposers and Seconders of motions are entitled under Standing Orders to five minutes and three minutes speaking time respectively. A voluntary curtailment in the use of this time would allow more time for debate. Greater co-operation between proposers and seconders could also reduce the amount of time required for presenting motions.
- (ii) At the President's discretion, and after a number of speakers have spoken for and against, the time limit on speakers should revert to two minutes and after a further number of speakers to one minute.
- (iii) Speakers for a motion and against a motion should sit at opposite sides of the hall, with speakers for to the right of the hall and speakers against, to the left of the hall.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM HANDBOOK SECTIONS

At the discretion of the President subsections of the Convention Handbook may be proposed, seconded and dealt with collectively. At the beginning of a session where this procedure is being applied, members of Convention may raise any aspect of the particular section or subsections with which they wish Convention to deal.

3. REPORTS TO CONVENTION

The following guidelines apply to the introduction, presentation and proposing of committee reports at Convention:

- (i) The person or persons introducing / presenting the report should highlight only the issues which the committee believes to be of special significance or require debate.
- (ii) If there is more than one person introducing / presenting the report, they should ensure that there is no duplication between their contributions.
- (iii) The person or persons introducing / presenting reports should use the minimum amount of time necessary to do so but, in any event, should not exceed a combined total of ten minutes.
- (iv) After the introduction / presentation of a committee report, the motion "that the report be adopted" should be placed before Convention formally, i.e. without a further proposing / introductory speech. The debate on the report should then take place in the usual way.
- (v) Amendments to a report may be proposed in the usual form of procedural motions "to refer back" a section or sections.
- (vi) Where such reports contain recommendations, they should be highlighted and / or summarised at the end of the report.

STEERING COMMITTEE

GUIDELINES FOR MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS FOR ANNUAL CONVENTION

Members are advised to read the following guidelines carefully as they will be applied by Steering Committee when it meets to rule motions 'in' or 'out of order' for the Convention Preliminary Agenda.

Steering Committee recommends that motions for Annual Convention being proposed at Branch Meetings should be put in writing either at the relevant Branch Meeting or prior to the Branch Meeting.

(a) MOTIONS:

To ensure that motions are not ruled "out of order"

- (i) all motions **must arrive** in ASTI Head Office by November 30 in accordance with Rule 73;
- (ii) all motions must ask Convention to declare an opinion or call for a course of action, or both;
- (iii) all motions must be properly worded and factually correct;
- (iv) all motions must conform to the objects of the ASTI as set out in the ASTI Rules and Constitution
- (v) all motions must be capable of implementation.

(b) AMENDMENTS AND ADDENDA:

To ensure that amendments and addenda are not ruled "out of order":

- (i) they **must be received** in ASTI Head Office by January 31 in accordance with Rule 73 (d):
- (ii) they must conform with the objects of the ASTI as set out in the ASTI Rules and Constitution
- (iii) they must be capable of implementation
- (iv) they must be properly worded and factually correct
- (v) they must not change the whole sense of a motion and must in some way involve the same question that is raised in the motion
- (vi) they must not be a direct negative of the motion.

Please Note:

Steering Committee has decided that branches may not amend the motions which they have submitted.

(c) CHANGES OF RULE:

- (i) Motions, amendments and addenda involving a change of rule should specify clearly what is to be deleted and what is to be substituted.
 e.g. *The correct formula would read:*
 Rule 59: delete"....."
 or
 Rule 59: delete"....." and substitute "....."
- (ii) All motions proposing a change of rule, which, if passed, will require as a consequence, material change(s) in other rule(s), should identify those rules in which such material change(s) will be required and specify the changes required.
- (iii) Motions, amendments and addenda, other than those specifically changing a rule or rules, must not conflict with existing rule(s).

(d) ADVICE REGARDING DRAFTING MOTIONS:

- (i) Each motion should be clear and concise.
- (ii) A motion should not contain an argument.
- (iii) Each motion should deal with one topic only.

(e) matters affecting the terms and conditions of staff, except as provided for in the Rules, are not appropriate for Convention motions. These should continue to be dealt with by Standing Committee and/or CEC as appropriate.

(f) ADDITIONAL EXPLANATORY GUIDELINES FOR MOTIONS:

- (i) the meaning of a motion must be clear to an independent reader.
- (ii) a motion must not be open to more than one interpretation.
- (iii) where a motion sets out a particular time scale for implementation, this time scale must be reasonably achievable in the opinion of Steering Committee, e.g. *a motion to be passed in April calling for a salary increase to be negotiated and paid by May would probably be ruled 'out of order'.*
- (iv) a motion must not contain errors of fact, e.g. *a motion proposing the reduction of the 'thirty five' point salary scale would be ruled 'out of order' on the basis that there is not a 'thirty five' point salary scale.*
- (v) a motion must be in conformity with the Objects of the ASTI as set out in Rule 4 of the Rules and Constitution of the ASTI. Seventeen specific objects of the Association are listed in Rule 4.
- (vi) motions proposing change of rule must be very carefully worded; they must identify clearly the specific changes being proposed; the amended rule must not be in conflict

with any other ASTI rule. Proposers should read all rules associated with or affected by the rule change that is being proposed.

- (vii) a motion may not be in conflict with any existing rule of the ASTI, e.g. *Rule 5 prohibits discussion of political or sectarian topics so a motion requiring such a discussion would be ruled 'out of order'.*

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1

The first meeting of Steering Committee took place on 6th December, 2021.

In attendance were: Eamon Dennehy, (President) Miriam Duggan (Vice President) Máire G. Ní Chiarba, Geraldine O'Brien, Susie Hall, Niall Duddy, John Byrne, Kieran Christie (General Secretary) Diarmaid de Paor (Deputy General Secretary)

1. Steering Committee Guidelines and Criteria:

The Committee adopted the guidelines for motions and amendments for annual Convention.

Steering Committee noted that for motions to be in order they must:

- (a) Be clear and concise
- (b) Not contain argument
- (c) Deal with one topic only
- (d) Conform with the objects of the ASTI
- (e) Ask Convention to declare an opinion or call for a course of action, or both.
- (f) Be factually correct
- (g) Be capable of implementation
- (h) Not conflict with an existing rule or rules. (Except those specifically changing a rule or rules).

In the case of proposed rule changes, motions should specify what is to be deleted and what is to be substituted. All motions proposing a change of rule, which, if passed, will require as a consequence, material change(s) in other rule(s), should identify those rules in which such material change(s) will be required and specify the changes required.

2. Dates of ASTI Annual Convention 2022.

The dates on which Annual Convention 2022 is to be held were noted.

3. Motions: Issues

Correspondence received from one branch acknowledging that a motion had been submitted on 1st December 2021 but requesting admission for consideration to be placed on the preliminary agenda of Annual Convention 2022 was noted.

Rule 72 of the ASTI Rules and Constitution provides as follows:

"72. All motions and resolutions for the Annual Convention shall be notified to the General Secretary, such notification to arrive at

ASTI Head Office not later than November 30."

Accordingly, the Steering Committee were unable to admit the motion for consideration to be placed on the preliminary agenda of Annual Convention 2022.

4. Motions:

Steering Committee examined the motions submitted by branches. Except for rule change motions which require precise wording, every effort was made to include motions on the preliminary agenda. A number of motions were deemed to be 'out of order' and it was agreed to write to the branches involved to provide explanation. Motions that were already policy were to be accompanied with a statement to that effect on the preliminary agenda.

5. Branch Letter:

The Committee approved the draft letter to be sent to branches regarding prioritisation of motions.

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 2

The second meeting of Steering Committee took place on Friday 4th February, 2022.

In attendance were:

Eamon Dennehy (President) Miriam Duggan (Vice President) Máire G. Ní Chiarba, Geraldine O'Brien, Susie Hall, Niall Duddy, John Byrne, Kieran Christie (General Secretary) Diarmaid de Paor (Deputy General Secretary) Gemma Tuffy (Executive Officer: Media and Communications)

1. Steering Committee Report No. 1:

Steering Committee report No. 1 was adopted.

2. Correspondence:

Late submissions by two ASTI branches of prioritised motions for Annual Convention were noted.

Correspondence regarding the format of Annual Convention 2022 was considered and noted. It was noted that further consideration of the matter would be required by Standing Committee.

3. Amendments to Motions:

An amendment to one motion that had been submitted was examined. Steering Committee decided to approve the amendment for placement with the original motion on the agenda of Annual Convention 2022.

4. Urgent Motion:

An urgent motion submitted by Standing Committee relating to a proposed change to the ASTI Rules and Constitution was considered. It was decided not to approve the proposed motion for inclusion on the agenda of Annual Convention 2022 because the motion was not as clear and concise as such a rule change would require.

5. Prioritised Motions:

Submissions from branches of prioritised motions were

noted and the most popular motions were chosen for inclusion on the final Convention Agenda.

6. Convention Programme:

The programme for Convention was approved. Motions were placed in the appropriate positions on the agenda.

7. Election Arrangements:

The arrangements for the conduct of elections at Annual Convention were approved subject to further consideration of the matter by Standing Committee.

8. General:

- It was agreed to invite a speaker from the RSTA to address Convention on Wednesday 20th April, just prior to the adjournment for lunch.
- It was agreed that there would be a presentation of medals to the Immediate Past President and the Presidents who served in that capacity for the years 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022 on Tuesday 19th April prior to the adjournment of Annual Convention at 6.00 p.m.

- Arrangements in train to mark the occasion of the 100th ASTI Annual Convention were discussed.
- It was noted that it may not be possible to organise a creche facility at Annual Convention 2022.
- Delegates who wish to submit points of order etc. must take their place on seating provided for this purpose. Under no circumstances should they approach the platform.
- Speakers should be requested to avoid repetition as it wastes valuable Convention time.
- Speakers are required to respect the 'red light'. It should be noted that those who continue to speak once the red light goes on are taking time from other speakers.
- It was agreed that the next Steering Committee meeting would be held at 6.00 p.m. on Monday 18th April, 2022 in the Clayton Hotel Silver Springs, Cork.

TELLERS

1. NOMINATION OF TELLERS

- (i) Each year branches are asked to nominate one of their chosen Convention delegates or one of their CEC members to act as a Teller at Annual Convention.
- (ii) The names and addresses of the nominated Tellers shall be forwarded by the Branch Honorary Secretary to the General Secretary so as to reach the General Secretary not later than January 31st.
- (iii) A member who intends contesting an election at Annual Convention shall not be nominated as a Teller.

2. DUTIES OF TELLERS

- (i) The tellers shall be divided into teams and assigned duties.
- (ii) On their duty day the responsibilities of the tellers are as follows:
 - (a) Security of ballot boxes in the Convention hall. This responsibility commences fifteen minutes prior to the opening of Convention business each day.
 - (b) Counting of votes taken by show of hands / cards. Each teller will be assigned to count a section of the attendance, with one teller acting as co-ordinator.
 - (c) Distribution of necessary documentation to Convention delegates as requested by the Presiding Officer.
- (iii) The counting of ballot boxes shall be carried out by the tellers at times other than when they are on duty in the Convention Hall.
- (iv) Counting of ballot boxes shall be carried out in a specified place and at a specified time. Every effort will be made to make ballot results available to Convention as quickly as possible.

3. ELECTION OBSERVERS

In the cases of elections which require nomination of candidates prior to Convention (i.e. President, Vice-President etc.), duly nominated candidates will be offered a facility to nominate an observer to attend the relevant ballot count. Arrangements will be made to inform such duly nominated observers of the place and time of counting of ballots.

4. TELLERS (STEWARDS) 2022

Branch	Name
Athlone	Monica McMahon
Bray	No nomination submitted
Carbery	No nomination submitted
Carlow	No nomination submitted
Carrick-on-Shannon	Seamus Mullen
Cavan	No nomination submitted

Clare	No nomination submitted
Cork North	Fiona Barry
Cork South Paddy Mulcahy	Pat Morris
Desmond	No nomination submitted
Donegal	No nomination submitted
Drogheda Sean Higgins	No nomination submitted
Dublin North 1	No nomination submitted
Dublin North East	Orlagh Nic Eoin
Dublin North West	Niall Mahon
Dublin North Central	No nomination submitted
Dublin South Central	Sarah Cullen
Dublin South 1	No nomination submitted
Dublin South 2	Kevin Connaughton
Dublin South County	No nomination submitted
Dublin South West	No nomination submitted
Dungarvan	Jonathan O Donovan
Dun Laoghaire	No nomination submitted
East Cork	Margaret Fitzpatrick
East Galway	No nomination submitted
East Mayo	No nomination submitted
Enniscorthy	No nomination submitted
Fermoy	No nomination submitted
Fingal	Ed Byrne
Galway	Cian O'Grady
Iar Thuaisceart Thír Chonail	Helen Moran
Kerry	No nomination submitted
Kildare	Karl Whelan
Kilkenny	No nomination submitted
Laois	Derek O Driscoll
Longford	No nomination submitted
Limerick North	Veronica Lavin
Limerick South	No nomination submitted
Monaghan	Enda Tourish
Mullingar	Gavan Kierans
Navan	Evelyn Lee
Nenagh	Bill Lonergan
New Ross	No nomination submitted
Roscrea	No nomination submitted
Sligo	Jimmy Staunton
Stillorgan	No nomination submitted
Tipperary	No nomination submitted
Tuam	No nomination submitted
Tullamore	Richard Egan
Waterford	Brideen Kirwan
West Limerick	No nomination submitted
West Mayo	John McDonnell
West Waterford	No nomination submitted
Wexford Tony Boland	No nomination submitted
Wicklow	No nomination submitted

ELECTION PROCEDURES

I. ELECTION AND NOMINATION

(a) PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENT AND HONORARY TREASURER

- (i) A nomination form for the offices of President, Vice-President and Honorary Treasurer and a list of eligible candidates are to be sent to each branch secretary by January 6th.
- (ii) Each branch may nominate one candidate for each office.
- (iii) For President and Vice-President elections, candidates must be from among members of the incoming CEC or from the Trustees. For Honorary Treasurer elections, candidates shall be elected from among the members of the incoming CEC.
- (iv) In the event of a Trustee being elected President, Vice-President or Honorary Treasurer, he/she must resign his/her Trusteeship.
- (v) For President and Vice-President elections, candidates must have been members of the Association for the six years immediately prior to the election or have been a representative on the CEC for the three years immediately preceding the election.
- (vi) Nominees defeated for Presidency automatically become candidates for the Vice-Presidency but shall have the right to withdraw.
- (vii) Nominations duly completed on the appropriate forms must be sent to reach the General Secretary on or before 31st January and no later nominations will be accepted.
- (viii) Nominated candidates may withdraw by notifying the General Secretary on or before February 18th.
- (ix) The list of nominees shall be published in the Convention Handbook.

(b) TRUSTEES

- (i) Nomination forms for election of Trustees will be made available on the first day of Annual Convention.
- (ii) Trustees shall be members of the Association elected from among those who have been members for not less than ten years.
- (iii) Nominations for the positions of Trustee shall be by two members of Convention.
- (iv) The appropriate nomination form, duly completed must be submitted to the General Secretary prior to the end of the last session on the opening day of Annual Convention and no late nominations will be accepted.
- (v) Candidates for election will be as listed on the ballot papers.
- (vi) Members of CEC who are elected as Trustees shall resign.

(c) EDUCATION COMMITTEE AND EQUALITY COMMITTEE

- (i) Nomination forms for election to the Education Committee and Equality Committee will be sent to each Branch Secretary by January 6th.
- (ii) No member may serve on more than one of the following committees namely, Standing Committee, Education Committee and Equality Committee during a concurrent term of office.
- (iii) Each candidate must be nominated by a branch.
- (iv) The appropriate nomination forms duly completed must be sent to reach the General Secretary before January 31st.
- (v) In order to facilitate balloting at Annual Convention and as members may be elected to only one of the following Committees, Standing Committee, Equality Committee, Education Committee, candidates who are seeking election to more than one of the relevant Committees are asked to submit to the General Secretary a written statement of the order of their committee preference. This written statement of preference should be placed in a sealed envelope with the candidate's name on the outside of the envelope which should also be marked "Choice of Committee" and forwarded to the General Secretary along with the candidate's nomination form. The envelope will only be opened by the General Secretary at Convention in the event of the candidate being elected to more than one committee.
- (vi) Nominated candidates may withdraw on or before February 18th.
- (vii) The list of nominees will be published in the Convention Handbook.

2. BALLOTING PROCEDURES

For election of President, Vice-President, Trustees, Honorary Treasurer, Education Committee and Equality Committee.

(a) PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT AND HONORARY TREASURER

- (i) The election of President, Vice-President and Honorary Treasurer shall take place on the afternoon of the first day of Annual Convention.
- (ii) Ballot papers for the election of President, Vice-President and Honorary Treasurer shall be made available between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on the first day of Annual Convention.
- (iii) Completed ballot papers for the election of President must be placed in the appropriate ballot boxes by a time to be specified on the first day of Convention. The counting of ballots shall then take place.

- (iv) In the event of no single candidate securing a majority over all others, a further ballot or ballots shall be held.
- (v) The result of the Presidential ballot shall be announced to Convention when the count is complete.
- (vi) Ballot papers for the election of the Vice-President and Honorary Treasurer must be placed in the appropriate ballot boxes by a time to be specified on the first day of Annual Convention. The counting of ballots shall then take place.
- (vii) In the event of no single candidate securing a majority over all others, a further ballot or ballots shall be held.
- (viii) The result of the Vice-Presidential and Honorary Treasurer election shall be announced to Convention when the count is complete.

(b) TRUSTEES

- (ix) Ballot papers for the election of Trustees shall be made available between 9.00 a.m. and 10.30 on the second day of Annual Convention.
- (x) Ballot papers for the elections of Trustees must be placed in the appropriate ballot boxes by 10.45 am on the second day of Annual Convention. The count shall then take place.
- (xi) The three candidates for Trusteeship achieving the highest number of votes shall be deemed elected and the result of the election shall then be announced.

(c) EDUCATION COMMITTEE AND EQUALITY COMMITTEE

- (xiv) Ballot papers for the election of Education Committee and Equality Committee must be placed in the appropriate ballot boxes by a time to be specified on the morning of the second day of Annual Convention. The count shall then take place.
- (xv) The candidates to be elected to the Education Committee and Equality Committee shall be the nine and nine candidates respectively who receive the highest number of votes.
- (xvi) The results of the elections to Education Committee and Equality Committee shall be examined by the Chairpersons of each of the teams to ensure that a member has not been elected to more than one of the committees.
- (xvii) In the event of a candidate being elected to more than one of the relevant committees, the General Secretary shall then be asked to open the “choice of committee” envelope of the candidate involved, if such is available. The candidate shall then be assigned to a committee based on the candidate’s expressed preference.
- (xviii) The next candidate/s in order of votes received shall then be assigned to the vacant seat/s on the relevant committee/s. The results shall then be handed to the President and be declared to Convention.
- (xix) In the event of a candidate being elected to more than one of the relevant committees and where such candidate has not submitted a “choice of committee” envelope and where such candidate is present at Convention, the candidate should be so advised by one of the chairpersons of the relevant group of tellers. The candidate must indicate immediately to a meeting of the three chairpersons of the tellers of a decision to opt for membership of one of the relevant committees.
- (xx) The next candidate/s in order of votes received shall then be

assigned to the vacant seat/s on the relevant committee/s. The results shall then be handed to the President and be declared to Convention.

- (xxi) In the event of a candidate being elected to more than one of the relevant committees, and where such candidate has not submitted a “choice of committee” envelope, and where such candidate is not present at Convention, the candidate shall be contacted by the General Secretary as soon as possible after Convention and requested to indicate a decision to opt for membership of one of the relevant committees.
- (xxii) The next candidate/s in order of votes received should then be assigned to the vacant seat/s on the relevant committee/s.
- (xxiii) In the above circumstances, the interim result shall be declared to Convention and the final result shall be published in ASTIR.

3. ELECTION CODE FOR CANDIDATES

(a) SCOPE

This election code applies to all elections to the following offices, committees and sub-committees of the ASTI:

- (i) President, Vice President and Honorary Treasurer elected at Annual Convention and Honorary National Organiser elected by the Central Executive Committee (CEC).
- (ii) Education Committee, Equality Committee and all other committees and sub-committees elected at Annual or Special Conventions of the Association or at CEC.

(b) REGULATIONS

Candidates for election to committees and offices within the ASTI should adhere to the following regulations:-

- (i) There shall be no use of the funds of the Association or the funds of any branch of the Association for the purposes of assisting any individual or individuals in an election campaign other than as provided in (iii) below.
- (ii) The structures and facilities of the union may not be used for the purposes of the collection of funds to finance the election campaign of any member.
- (iii) Branch mailing facilities shall only be used for the purposes of advising other branch secretaries of the candidate nominated by a branch.
- (iv) Candidates offering themselves for election may use the official ASTI “Candidate Information Form” for the purposes of promoting their candidature.
- (v) Blank copies of the “Candidate Information Form” shall be available from the General Secretary on request.
- (vi) Completion, copying and distribution of the above form shall be the responsibility of the candidate. Candidates must also take responsibility for the accuracy of statements on the form and for any legal liability accruing.
- (vii) No other form of canvassing literature should be distributed by a candidate or his/her agents.
- (viii) There shall be no distribution of the “Candidate Information Form” or any other election literature within the Convention Auditorium.

- (ix) There shall be no posting of election literature within the Convention precincts.

(c) CANDIDATE INFORMATION FORM



The image shows a 'Candidate Information Form' from ASTI. At the top left is the ASTI logo. The title is 'Candidate Information Form' followed by '[name of office or committee]' in brackets. There are three main sections: 'Name:' with a box containing '[Your name here]', 'Branch:' with a box containing '[Your branch here]', and a larger empty box for 'Personal Statement'. At the bottom, there is a small disclaimer: 'NOTE: No other form of advertising literature should be distributed to a candidate or his/her agents by Teachers in Education Committee, Local Organisations Committee and all other committees and sub-committees created in Annual or Special Conventions of the Association or of Central Executive Committee.'

4. ORGANISATION OF ELECTIONS AND CONDUCT OF COUNT

(a) DELEGATES/ ELECTORATE

- (i) Names of Delegates and CEC should be notified on time to ASTI Head Office in the normal way.
- (ii) In exceptional circumstances, late notification of delegates/CEC and/or changes of delegates/CEC must be submitted in writing and signed by a branch officer from the nominating branch; this to be handed to a member of the Head Office Staff in the Convention Centre no later than 11am on the first day of Convention.
- (iii) These deadlines will be notified by Head Office to each branch and Branch Officers will bring them to the attention of delegates and CEC members.
- (iv) The deadlines will be implemented rigidly.

(b) REGISTER

- (i) It was agreed that the ASTI should retain the practice of having a register of attendees at Conventions.
- (ii) The register will be divided on a regional basis at different tables for ease of signing.
- (iii) When distribution of ballot papers for each election has been completed, the register is handed to the Presiding Officer (President).
- (iv) At close of voting the register and ballot boxes will be moved by the tellers to the counting venue.

- (v) A 'late register' is then opened.
- (vi) The electorate in each election shall consist of those who have registered prior to the end of distribution of ballot papers for that election.
- (vii) The organisation of the safeguarding of the register shall be the responsibility of the General Secretary.

(c) IDENTIFICATION

Staff and tellers must adhere rigidly to the requirement that members produce ID or their ASTI membership card in order to receive ballot papers.

(d) BALLOT PAPERS: PRESIDENTIAL / VICE PRESIDENTIAL / HONORARY TREASURER ELECTIONS

- (i) Each member at Convention should be handed two ballot papers for the Presidential and/or Vice-Presidential and/or Honorary Treasurer elections - one for the first ballot and one for the second ballot (to be used if necessary on that day).
- (ii) Each ballot paper will be numbered in sequence and printed on paper with a watermark.
- (iii) Ballot papers will be placed in envelopes for delegates.
- (iv) At the Registration Desk each delegate must check that his/her envelope contains the ballot papers; any error must be immediately notified to the Head Office staff; it is only in such circumstances that replacement ballot papers may be issued.
- (v) Where a member mislays his/her ballot paper no replacement ballot paper will be handed out. This will be rigidly implemented.
- (vi) If a third ballot is required then ballot papers will be prepared on site and distributed by the tellers on production of credential cards to those who have registered.
- (vii) Head Office staff will retain a certificate from the printers which will state the number of ballot papers printed. This certificate will be given to the relevant team of tellers.
- (viii) Head Office staff will also provide, to the relevant team of tellers
 - (a) a total of the unused ballot papers contained in the uncollected delegate envelopes and
 - (b) a total of the surplus unused ballot papers.

(e) BALLOT BOXES

- (i) Ballot boxes will consist of six transparent plastic boxes.
- (ii) No other boxes (e.g. quiz boxes etc) will be allowed in the Convention Hall.

CONDUCT OF COUNT

(f) TELLERS

- (i) No teller who is a candidate may be involved in the conduct of an election.

(g) PROCEDURE FOR TELLERS

- (i) When each group of tellers first meet they will appoint one of their number to act as a ‘Chairperson’ and one to act as a ‘Recorder of Decisions’.
- (ii) Tellers must always work in teams of no less than two.
- (iii) All ballot boxes will be opened together.
- (iv) Ballot papers will be stacked face down.
- (v) The number of names on the register and the ‘late register’ where appropriate, will be counted by two tellers acting together.
- (vi) The number of ballot papers will be counted by the remaining tellers acting in teams of two.
- (vii) If the number of ballots cast equals the number of names on the register(s) then counting may proceed.
- (viii) If the number of ballots cast is fewer than the number of names on the register(s) then counting may proceed.
- (ix) If there are more ballot papers than there are names on the register then the following applies:
 - (a) If there are more than 5 ‘extra’ ballot papers then the entire ballot must be reheld ab initio.
 - (b) If there are 5 or fewer ‘extra’ ballot papers the counting of ballots may proceed. However if the difference in votes cast between a candidate to be eliminated and the next best candidate is less than or equal to the number of ‘extra’ ballot papers then the entire ballot must be reheld ab initio following the distribution by tellers of an entirely new set of ballot papers in the hall.
- (x) Once counted, the bundles of ballot papers are swapped around and counted again by a different set of tellers.
- (xi) If the tellers are satisfied with the bundle counts then the chairperson and a teller total the ballots cast.
- (xii) This total is then crosschecked by two other tellers.
 - (a) If the gap between any 2 candidates is greater than 5 votes then the count stands.
 - (b) If the gap between any 2 candidates is 5 or less then the bundles are recounted.
 - (c) If at the end of the second count the result is the same then the count stands.
 - (d) If at the end of this second count the same candidate is successful then the result stands.
 - (e) If at the end of this second count the result is different then a third count is necessary.
- (xiii) When a count has concluded and a provisional result has been agreed by the Tellers, a candidate or a candidate’s nominated observer may request a further count. A further count must then be held.
- (xiv) A candidate or a candidate’s observer may request a further recount and this must also be held.
- (xv) A candidate or a candidate’s observer may request a further recount and this must also be held.
- (xvi) There shall be no further recounts unless that is deemed necessary by the tellers.

(h) COMMUNICATION

- (i) There shall be no communication of count information from the count centre once a count has commenced until the count has concluded.
- (ii) It shall be the responsibility of the nominated observers to advise the candidates of the result.
- (iii) After each ballot the tellers shall furnish a completed teller report to the Presiding Officer. This report shall include the results and any observations which the tellers may wish to make.

(i) FINAL DETERMINATION

In the event of a major problem arising regarding a count and if the tellers are unable to arrive at a particular decision then the matter shall be referred to the ASTI Officers for determination.

5. TABLE OF ELECTIONS

	NO. OF VACANCIES	NOMINATION DATE	NOMINATED BY	ELECTION HELD
President	1	31 Jan	Branch	Annually at Convention
Vice-President	1	31 Jan	Branch	Annually at Convention
Treasurer	1	31 Jan	Branch	Annually at Convention
Trustees	3	1st day of Convention	Convention Member	2023, 2025, 2027 etc at Convention
Standing Committee	18	7 Jan	Branch or 50 members	Biennially in Regions
Honorary National Organiser	1	Last day of Convention	CEC Member	Annually at May CEC
Education Committee	9	31 Jan	Branch	2023, 2025, 2027 etc at Convention
Equality Committee	9	31 Jan	Branch	2023, 2025, 2027 etc at Convention
Steering Committee	5	2nd day of Convention	Convention Member	Annually at Convention
Sickness Benefit Committee	7	2nd day of Convention	Convention Member	2024, 2027, etc Appendix A Rules
Investment Committee	4	2nd day of Convention	Convention Member	Annually at Convention
Benevolent Fund	3	Last day of Convention	CEC Member	Annually at May CEC
Standing Committee Regional Election Committee	5	2nd day of Convention	Convention Member	2024, 2029, 2034 etc at Convention
Rules Committee	5	2nd day of Convention	Convention Member	Annually at Convention
Pensions Sub-Committee	5	2nd day of Convention	Convention Member	Biennially 2023, 2025, 2027, etc
Safety, Health & Welfare Committee	6	2nd day of Convention	Convention Member	Biennially 2023, 2025, 2027, etc.
Non-Permanent Teachers’ Advisory Committee	6	31 Jan	Branch	Biennially 2023, 2025, 2027, etc

ELECTIONS 2022

I. ELECTION OF PRESIDENT 2022-2023

Candidate	Nominating Branches
Miriam Duggan	Carbery, Carlow, Clare, Cork North, Cork South Paddy Mulcahy, Desmond, Donegal, Dublin North 1, Dublin North East, Dublin North West, Dublin South 1, Dublin South 2, Dublin South Central, Dublin South West, Dungarvan, East Cork, East Mayo, Enniscorthy, Fingal, Galway, Iar Thuaisceart Thir Chonaill, Kildare, Laois, Limerick South, Longford, Navan, Nenagh, New Ross, Roscrea, Stillorgan, Tullamore, Tuam, Waterford, West Mayo, Wexford Tony Boland, Wicklow.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENT 2022-2023

Candidate	Nominating Branches
Geraldine O'Brien	Athlone, Carlow, Clare, Dublin North West, East Mayo, Limerick North, Limerick South, Longford, Navan, Nenagh, New Ross, Roscrea, Stillorgan, West Waterford, Wicklow.
Mark Walshe	Carbery, Cork North, Cork South Paddy Mulcahy, Desmond, Dublin North 1, Dublin North East, Dublin South 1, Dublin South 2, Dublin South Central, Dublin South County, Dublin South West, Dungarvan, Fingal, Kildare, Laois, Tuam

3. ELECTION OF HONORARY TREASURER 2022-2023

Candidate	Nominating Branches
Pádraig Murphy	Carbery, Clare, Cork South Paddy Mulcahy, Dublin North 1, Dublin North East, Dublin South 2, East Mayo, Galway, Kildare, Laois, Limerick South, Longford, Navan, New Ross, Wexford Tony Boland.

OFFICERS / STANDING COMMITTEE / CEC

1. OFFICERS 2021/2022

President:	Eamon Dennehy
Vice-President:	Miriam Duggan
Immediate Past President:	Ann Piggott
Honorary Treasurer:	Padraig Murphy
General Secretary:	Kieran Christie

2. STANDING COMMITTEE 2021/2022:

Standing Committee consists of the President, Vice-President, Immediate Past-President, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary National Organiser and 18 Regional Representatives. The General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary attend all meetings of Standing Committee.

Since Convention 2020, up to time of going to press, 9 ordinary meetings and 3 special meeting have been held. The numbers in brackets after the name indicate attendance at meetings:

Region 1

(Donegal, Iar Thuaisceart Thir Chonail, Sligo): Patrick Curley (11)

Region 2

(West Mayo, East Mayo, Carrick-on-Shannon): Róisín Doyle (10)

Region 3

(Galway, Tuam, East Galway): Richie Bell (12)

Region 4

(Clare, Limerick South, Limerick North, Nenagh): Geraldine O'Brien (12)

Region 5

(Desmond, Kerry, West Limerick): Donal Cremin (12)

Region 6

(Cork South, Carbery): Anne Loughnane (12)

Region 7

(Fermoy, Cork North, East Cork, West Waterford, Dungarvan): Pat Knightly (12)

Region 8

(Wexford, New Ross, Enniscorthy, Waterford): Paul O'Reilly (10)

Region 9

(Tipperary, Kilkenny, Roscrea): Donal Coughlan (12)

Region 10

(Laois, Kildare, Carlow): Eamon Ryan (12)

Region 11

(Longford, Tullamore, Navan, Athlone, Mullingar): Peter Keaney (4)
David Wynne (4) December 2020

Region 12

(Dundalk, Monaghan, Cavan, Drogheda): Ray Nolan (6) from November 2021

Region 13

(Dublin South 2, Dublin South County): Chris Hind (12)

Region 14

(Stillorgan, Wicklow, Dun Laoghaire, Bray): Ray St. John (12)

Region 15

(Dublin South West, Dublin North West): Adrienne Healy (11)

Region 16

(Dublin North 1, Dublin North Central): Emer Brady (12)

Region 17

(Dublin North East, Fingal): Seamus Keane (12)

Region 18

(Dublin South Central, Dublin South 1): Philip Irwin (12)

3. CEC 2021/2022

Since Convention 2021, two ordinary meetings of the Central Executive Council were held.

At the meeting of 15th May, all members were present except:
Bray: Michael Berigan-Welkier, **Carbery:** Dermot Brennan, **Cavan:** Emma Sutton & Caroline Quinn, **Clare:** Jacinta McGarry
Dublin North Central: Thomas Mc Carthy **Drogheda Sean Higgins:** Dave Carolan, **Dundalk:** Helen Mc Keown, Thomas Campbell & Elizabeth Mulroy, **East Cork:** Sylvia Gillman-Pearson
East Mayo: Stacey Walsh-McDermott, **Fingal:** Evelyn Lee, **Kildare:** Karl Whelan, Padraig Murphy (Honorary Treasurer).
Kilkenny: Fergal Canton, Emma Raggett **Kerry:** John O'Donovan, Kay Bunce, Gavin Daly, **Limerick North:** Veronica Lavin, Valerie O'Shea **Limerick South:** Mary Hussey-Shee & Valerie O'Shea,
Longford: James F. Gacquin, **Monaghan:** Andrew Mayne & Enda Tourish **Mullingar:** Laura O'Toole, Robert Masterson, **Nenagh:** Sinead Kent **New Ross:** Shane Curran, **Tuam:** Cathal McGinn,
Waterford: Nora Donovan, **Wexford Tony Boland:** Brigid Power, Martin Francis **Wicklow:** Ciaran O'Muirgheasa.

At the meeting of 22nd January, all members were present except:
Bray: Michael Berigan-Welkier, **Carlow:** Imelda Keogh, **Cavan:** Emma Sutton & Caroline Quinn. **Dublin North 1:** Diarmaid O'Hogain, **Dublin South Central:** James Breslin, **Dublin South County:** Sean O'Neill, **Drogheda Sean Higgins:** David Kellett, **Dun Laoghaire:** Pauline O'Toole, **Dundalk:** Helen Mc Keown, Elizabeth Mulroy, Thomas Campbell. **East Mayo:** Stacey Walsh McDermott. **Enniscorthy:** David Flynn, **Iar Thuaisceart Thir Chonail:** Dearbhla Fox, **Kildare:** Karl Whelan, **Kilkenny:** Fergal Canton **Limerick North:** Eimear Holly, **Limerick South:** Anna Maria Trimble, **Monaghan:** Andrew Mayne, Enda Tourish, **Mullingar:** Robert Masterson **Nenagh:** Sinead Kent, Eugene Grace **Roscrea:** Maire Cleary, **Stillorgan:** Ciara Kinsella, **West Limerick:** Matthew O'Connor, Michael Fitzgerald, **Wexford Tony Boland:** Deirdre Mac Donald, Murt Francis, **Wicklow:** Jaime Fernandez, Brian Reid,

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2022/2023

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Athlone

Ms Ciara Henriques	28 Beech Park, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.
Ms Maura Igoe	Pearsonsbroom, Glasson, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
Mr David Wynne	Pearsonsbroom Glasson Athlone Co. Westmeath

Bray

Mr Shane McInerney	120 Collins Park, Dublin 9, D09 W012
Mr Conall Ó Dufaigh	Flat 7, 1 Trafalgar Terrace, Meath Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow
Ms Yvonne Rossiter	19 The Rise, Meadowvale, Arklow, Co Wicklow

Carbery

Mr Dermot Brennan	15 Lisheen Woods, Classes Lake, Ovens, Co Cork
Ms Gloria Helen	Mayfield, Knockaveale, Bandon, Co. Cork, P72 YK37
Mr Eamon Scully	Beechmount, Tawnies Lr., Clonakilty, Co. Cork

Carlow

Mr Christopher Davey	18 Barrow Mills Leighlin Road Graigucullen Co. Carlow
Ms Imelda Keogh	Killinure, Tullow, Co. Carlow
Ms Vanessa Byrne	69 Beechwood Park, Carlow, Co. Carlow

Carrick-on-shannon

Ms Jackie Wallace	Tonycurreen, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon F42 DW93
Mr Seamus Mullen	Aughaboy, Scotstown, Co. Monaghan
Mr Seamus Mallon	2 Bofin Avenue, Dromad. Co Leitrim
Ms Róisín Doyle	Drumgeaglom, Battlebridge, Leitrim Village, Co Leitrim

Cavan

Not received at time of going to print

Clare

Ms Pauline Nagle	Carroweagh, Kilshanny, Kilfenora, Co. Clare V95 TX07
Mr John Conneely	An Easca, Baile, An Tsagairt, An Spideal, Co. Galway
Ms Jacinta Mc Garry	Dromellihy, Cree, Co. Clare
Ms Geraldine O'Brien	Killard, Doonbeg, Co. Clare

Cork North

Máire G. Ní Chiarba	"Beaulieu" Pine Springs, Barnavara Road, Glanmire, Co. Cork
Ms Lorraine Mellerick	Glenview, Kilbarraree, Cloyne, Middleton, Co Cork
Mr Simon Kelliher	Upper Bellmount, Crookstown, Co. Cork

Cork South Paddy Mulcahy

Mr John Byrne	17 Ivy Court, Broomfield, Middleton, Co. Cork. P25 HE28
Ms Anne Taylor	34 Willowbank, Mill Road, Middleton, Co. Cork. P25 VW82
Ms Ann Piggott	183 Beech Park, Ballincollig, Co. Cork.

Desmond

Mr Seamus Meskill	Frehans, Newcastle, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary
Ms Amelia Fitzgerald	Lisnagrough, Doneraile, Co Cork
Ms Christine Fitzgerald	18 Woodview, Churchtown, Mallow, Co. Cork

Donegal

Mr John Lynch	34 Whitethorn Grove, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
Mr Michael Doherty	Clonglash, Buncrana, Co. Donegal
Ms Marina Carlin	13 Rosemount Terrace, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
Mr Patrick Curley	3 The Elms, Glencar, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

Drogheda Sean Higgins

Mr Sean Maher	46 Ard Rí, Beamore Road, Drogheda, A92 N5V0
Mr Louis Callaghan	Netherfield House, Haslee, Ardee, Co. Louth
Mr David Carolan	Erika, Laytown, Co. Meath
Mr Ray Nolan	37 Westcourt, Drogheda, Co. Louth

Dublin North I

Ms Miriam Duggan	11 St. Margaret's Park, Malahide, Co. Dublin
Ms Maria Markey-Greene	13 Pinewood Grove, Glasnevin, Dublin 11, D11 F8Y1

Dublin North Central

Ms Natalie Doyle Bradley	77 Lagavooren Manor, Beamore Road, Drogheda, Co. Meath
Mr Tom Mc Carthy	30 Cromcastle Green, Kilmore West, Dublin 5

Dublin North East

Ms Therese Glennon Apartment 1 Block 6, Station Way,
Clongriffin, Dublin 13 D13 X314

Mr Ciaran Kavanagh 133 Knights Wood, Matthew's
Lane, Drogheda, Co. Louth

Mr Mark Walshe 66 Edenmore Avenue, Raheny,
Dublin 5 D05 W8K1

Dublin North West

Ms Mary Ohle 16 Wainsfort Park, Terenure,
Dublin 6W

Mr Ian McColgan 59 Woodlands, Navan, Co. Meath,
C15K1W6

Mr Philip Synnott 31 Capadoo Park, Clane,
Co. Kildare

Ms Adrienne Healy 25 Castleknock Avenue,
Castleknock, Dublin 15 SC

Dublin South 1

Mr Chris Halligan 33 Willow Road, Dundrum,
Dublin 16 D16 EW60

Mr Eddie Noonan 10 Gracemeadow Way, Stamullen,
Co. Meath

Ms Maura Mc Caul Loreto College, 53 St. Stephen's
Green, Dublin 2

Dublin South 2

Mr Sandra Fay 30 Walkinstown Green, Dublin 12

Mr Chris Hind 47 Elm Mount Court, Beaumont,
Dublin 9 SC

Mr John Keville 105 Mourne Road, Drimmagh,
Dublin 12

Mr David Murphy 14 Millgate Drive, Perrystown,
Dublin 12

Dublin South Central

Mr James Breslin 25 Moyville, Edmondstown Road,
Rathfarnham, Dublin 16

Ms Sinead Corkery 105 Mourne Road, Drimmagh,
Dublin 12 SC

Ms Sarah Cullen 48 Bracken Park Drive,
Castleknock, Dublin 15

Dublin South County

Mr Keith Cassidy 5 Bolbrook Avenue, Tallaght,
Dublin 24

Mr Trevor Murray St Columba's College,
Whitechurch, Rathfarnham,
Dublin 16

Mr Sean O'Neill 75 Griffith Road, Finglas East,
Dublin 11

Dublin South West

Mr Stephen Burns 34 Delaford Park, Knocklyon,
Dublin 16

Mr Edward O Byrne 51 Casimir Road, Harolds Cross,
Dublin 6W

Mr John Woods 75 Old County Road, Crumlin,
Dublin 12, D12 K722

Dun Laoghaire

Not received at time of going to print

Dundalk

Not received at time of going to print

Dungarvan

Mr Pdraig Mac Craith Dun Na Sead, Goirtin, An Rinn,
Dungarban, Co. Phortlairge

Mr Michael Mc Grath Ballyconnery, Dungarvan, Co.
Waterford X35 YD89 HNO

Mr Liam O'Mahony An tSeán Chill, Rinn Ua gCuanach,
Dun Garbhan, Co. Phortlairge

Mr Pat Knightly Ballyconnery Upper, Dubgarvan,
Co. Waterford SC

East Cork

Ms Marina Cusack 11 Blueberry Fields, Broomfield
Village, Middleton, Co Cork

Ms Margaret Fitzpatrick Dungourney, Middleton, Co. Cork

Mr John Hurley, 7 The Pinnacles, Broomfield East,
Middleton, Co. Cork

East Galway

Ms Helena Cunniffe 35 Forest Glade, Portumna,
Co Galway

Mr Aodan Mac Carthaigh Bullaun, Loughrea, Co. Galway

Mr Greg Mannion Naomh Einne, No.2 Grattan Road,
The Claddagh, Galway, Co. Galway,
H91 P9WN

East Mayo

Mr James J Howley Carramore, Killasser, Swinford,
Co. Mayo, F12 H425

Ms Stacey Walsh-McDermott Carragarraffe, Tibohine, Castlereagh,
Co. Roscommon, F45 N762

Enniscorthy

Mr Eoin O'hAodha Castlequarter, Clohamon,
Bunclody, Co. Wexford

Mr David Flynn Glenwood, Sea Road, Ballymoney,
Gorey, Co. Wexford

Ms Siobhan Mc Cormack 59 Hazelwood, Gorey,
Co. Wexford

Fermoy

Ms Bernadette Fennessy "Firinne", Gortnahown,
Mitchelstown, Co. Cork

Mr Richard Terry Harbour View, Upper Pembroke,
Passage West, Co. Cork. T12
R8CR

Fingal

Mr Edward Byrne 7 The Avenue, Foxlodge Woods,
Ratoath, Co. Meath

Mr Seamus Keane 12 The Heights, Skerries Rock,
Skerries, Co. Dublin SC

Ms. Pamela Conway Scéal Fada, Damastown, Naul,
Co. Dublin, K32 NX98

Ms Mary McFadden 76, Cianlea, Rathbeale Road
Swords, Co. Dublin

Galway

Mr Niall Duddy	Brackloon, Kiltullagh, Athenry, Co. Galway, H65 K197
Mr Paul Glynn	Gortstuckanagh, Gort, Co. Galway
Ms Sarah Withero	11 Dun Daingean, Dangan Upper, Newcastle, Co. Galway
Mr Richard Bell	“Dunclara” Corrandulla, Co. Galway SC

Iar Thuaisceart Thir Chonail

Mr Patrick Doohan	Ballyconnell, Falcarragh, Co. Donegal
Ms Helen Moran	“Glor na dTonn”, Dunfanaghy, Co. Donegal

Kerry

Mr Donal Cremin	Gortnahaneboy East, Rathmore, Co. Kerry. SC
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Kildare

Mr Adrian Guinan	Whitethorn Lodge, Garrons, Stradbally, Co. Laois
Mr Padraig Murphy	81 Beechmount, Green Road, Newbridge, Co. Kildare Tres
Mr Karl Whelan	32 Glenfarne Road, Raheny, Dublin 5
Mr Eamon Ryan	35 Abbeygate, Monasterevin, Co. Kildare SC

Kilkenny

Mr Robert Chaney,	25 The Sycamores, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny
Ms Emma Raggett,	36 Smithland Court, Outrath Road, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny

Laois

Mr Colm O Toole	16 The Downs, Stradbally Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois
Mr Eamon Dennehy	Moate Ballinakill, Portlaoise, Co. Laois Pres
Mr Kevin Dunphy	Clohogue, Ballinakill, Co Laois
Mr Peter Masterson	20 Ardan Glas, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

Limerick North

Ms Joan Carr	3 Grattan Villas, Blackboy Road, Limerick, Co. Limerick
Ms Eimear Holly	19 Elm Road, Riverbank, Annacotty, Co. Limerick
Ms Veronica Lavin	76 Ballinacurra Gardens, Limerick, Co. Limerick.

Limerick South

Ms Johanna Healy	“Dun Mhuire”, South Circular Road, Limerick, Co Limerick
Ms Anna Trimble	3 Inis Lua Close, Father Russell Road, Limerick, Co. Limerick
Ms Valerie O’Shea	Ballysheenmore, Sixmilebridge, Co. Clare

Longford

Not received at time of going to print

Monaghan

Mr Pat Deery	Mullaghmore North, Tydavnet Co. Monaghan
Mr Andrew Mayne	15 Glenowen, Ballinodde, Co. Monaghan
Mr Enda Tourish	Camaghy, Magheracluone, Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan

Mullingar

Not received at time of going to print

Navan

Mr Ciaran Dunne	Radarc an Gleanna, Balgatheran, Drogheda, Co. Louth. A92 T38D
Ms Mary Mullaghy	26 Bailis Manor, Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath
Mr Martin Cunniffe	11, The Limes, Beaufort Place, Navan, Co. Meath

Nenagh

Ms Granu Dwyer	18 Droim Na Coille, Dromin Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
Ms Jacinta Kelly	Emmel West, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary
Ms Sinead Kent	Rathmoy, Borrisoleigh, Thurles, Co. Tipperary

New Ross

Not received at time of going to print

Roscrea

Ms Joan Brophy	Rossenay, Windgap, Co. Kilkenny
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Sligo

Ms Caroline Carr	Seafield, Knocknahur, Co. Sligo
Ms Ann Mc Kiernan	29 Crozon Crescent, Sligo, Co Sligo
Ms Eimir Murphy	Ballyglass, Cloonacool, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo, F91 C2V3

Stillorgan

Ms Ciara Kinsella	40 Irishtown Road, Irishtown, Dublin 4 D04 F6P7
Ms Catherine Shevlin	11 Cairnbrook Avenue, Carrickmines, Dublin 18 D18 K2KO
Ms Helen O’Reilly	127 Belfield Park Apartments, Stillorgan Road, Blackrock, Co. Dublin

Tipperary

Ms Janet De Souza	1 Northview Close, Fethard Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary
Ms Gerada Barry	52 Carrigeen, Rivers, Annacotty, Co. Limerick

Mr Donal Coughlan	10 Ashcroft, Abbeyside, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford	SC	Mr Matthew O Connor	Honto House, Dromtrasna Hartnett, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick
Ms Siobhan Peters	10 Gleann Beag, Newcastle, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary		Mr Michael McMahon	Ballyshonick, Kilcornan, Co. Limerick
<u>Tuam</u>			<u>West Mayo</u>	
Ms Margaret Mc Gagh	Beagh, Brownsgrrove, Tuam, Co. Galway		Ms Orla O'Callaghan	Knockleanore, Partry, Claremorris, Co. Mayo
Mr Cathal Mc Ginn	Marley, Tuam, Co. Galway		Mr Joe Daly	Cortoon, Newport, Co Mayo
Ms Noelle Moran	162 Clochran, Kilcloghans, Tuam Co. Galway		Ms Geraldine O'Loughlin	Curry, Cummer, Tuam, Co. Galway
<u>Tullamore</u>			<u>West Waterford</u>	
Ms Patricia Griffin	6 Hophill Vale, Tullamore, Co. Offaly		Ms Ann Bennett	Feagarriid, Ballysaggart, Lismore, Co. Waterford
Ms Catherine Dolan	Ballymooney, Geashill, Co Offaly		<u>Wexford Tony Boland</u>	
Mr Richard Egan	Spollanstown, Tullamore, Co. Offaly		Mr Joseph Cummins	2 Carrig Haven, Clonard, Wexford Town, Co. Wexford
<u>Waterford</u>			Ms Lorna Kearney	182 Cluain Dara Clonard Road Wexford Co. Wexford
Ms Nora Donovan	Park, Knocklofty, Clonmel, Co Tipperary		Ms Brigid Power	Curraduff, Ferns, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
Mr Gerard Hanlon	Arnold Marsh House, Newtown School, Newtown Road, Waterford, Co. Waterford		<u>Wicklow</u>	
Ms Joan Glasheen	5 Palm Drive, Grantstown Village, Grantstown, Co. Waterford		Mr Brien Reid	50A Pier view, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow
Mr Paul O'Reilly	30 Grange Lawn, Waterford, Co. Waterford	SC	Mr Jaime Fernandez	63 Charlesland Wood, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
<u>West Limerick</u>			Mr Declan McInerney	1 Stewarts Hall, Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow
Ms Joan Collins	Baranarig, Knocknagoshel, Tralee, Co. Kerry		Mr Raymond G St. John	Willow Cottage, Ashtown Lane, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow

SC

BRANCH DELEGATES 2022 / 2023

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Athlone

Ailbie Conway Cedarwood Cottage Moydrum Athlone
Co. Westmeath N37 E5X9

Monica Mc Mahon Derrymullen Ballinasloe Co Galway

Bray

Noirin Ni Chonghaile Bolinass Ashford Co. Wicklow
Katrina Nolan 47 Sans Souci Wood
Bray Co Wicklow

Gearoid O Ciarain 1 Glenmurray Park
Terenure Dublin 12

Carbery

Mairead Dineen Cappaghmore Ballydehob
Co. Cork P81 KV82

Michael Flanagan 24A Forest Ridge Crescent Elm Park
Wilton Co Cork

Carbery

Sheila Jennings Ballyduvane
Clonakilty Co. Cork

Conor Murphy 2 Cuirt Na nEan Clogagh
Timoleague Co. Cork

Frances O'Donoghue Kilgarraffe Cross,
Clonakilty, Co. Cork

Carlow

Janet Bradley Meadowlands Bilboa Carlow Co.
Carlow

Karen Brennan 19 Rathglen Killeslin Co. Carlow R93
N7X9

Dearbhla Cussen 6, College View Walkin Street Kilkenny
Edwina Gibbons Barna, Via Thurles, Co. Tipperary

John O Donovan Kilnock, Ballon, Co. Carlow.

Catherine Redmond 51 Springfields Waterford Road
Kilkenny Co. Kilkenny

Carrick-on-shannon

Marian Collins 18 French Court Strokestown
Co. Roscommon F42N205

Maureen Mc Keon Ballyardan Boyle Co Roscommon.

Martin Talbot Corbally Carrick-On-Shannon
Co. Leitrim

Clare

Barry Donnellan 14 Cahercalla Heights Ennis Co Clare

Michael K Horgan 7 Rockmount Grove Ballybeg Ennis
Co. Clare

Kate Minogue 14 Cahercalla Heights Ennis Co. Clare

Mary J Moran Glebe House Clondegad Ballynacally
Ennis Co Clare

Peter Quinn 38 Pine Grove Gort Road Ennis
Co. Clare

John Sims Island View Carnane Doolin Co Clare
V95 EA31

Karol Torpey Feakle P.O., Co. Clare

Cork North

Fiona Barry Ballyglass Grenagh Co. Cork

David Briscoe 6 Landsborough Park Moneygourney
Douglas Co. Cork T12KW3R

Hugh Coughlan 1 Laharan Way Manor Farm
Leghanamore Togher Cork T12 NHW9

Edmond Hussey 6 Kempton Park
Ballyvolane Co. Cork

Nancy Twomey 8, Blackthorn Dublin Pike
Cork Co Cork T23 X243

Cork South Paddy Mulcahy

Sean Buckley 49 Copperhill Ballintemple Co. Cork

John Corcoran Curraheen Rosscarbery
Co. Cork P85 DN23

James Cotter Versanne 17 Farranlea Park Modelfarm
Road Cork Co. Cork

Cork South Paddy Mulcahy

Peter Hyde 8, Castle Avenue Carrigtwohill Co. Cork

Peter Mannion 19, Ard Carraig Kinsale Cork P17RR23

Patrick Morris 'An Tiaracht' Curraheen
Carrigrohane Co. Cork

Anne Marie O'Mahony 23 The Maples Castlejanewoods
Glanmire Co. Cork

Kevin Ronayne Ballinlea Road Knockmore
Carrigaline Co. Cork

Aidan Tuohy 9 Hillcrest Dunningstown Road
Kilkenny R95 KXV3

Kevin Wall 11 Hillcrest Rise Blarney Road
Cork Co. Cork T23 FNE2

Jennifer Walsh 19 Ardcarraig Kinsale Co. Cork

Aaron Wolfe 14 Hollygarth Donnybrook Douglas
Cork Co. Cork

Desmond

Siobhan O Donovan Annakisha Lodge Doneraile
Mallow Co Cork

Denis O'Donovan Brickfield Effin Kilmallock
Co. Limerick V35 DX64

Noreen Sheehan Knockardanrum, Charleville, Co. Cork.

Marion Tuohy Cork Road Charleville Co Cork

Lillian Waters Liscullane Charleville Co. Cork

Donegal

Neil Curran 'Westgate' Drumboe Lower
Stranorlar Co. Donegal

Jacinta Edwards 24 The Grange Letterkenny Co.

Donegal

Oliver Horgan 69 Beinn Aobhinn Letterkenny
Co. Donegal

Anna Marie Johnston Dunmore Falcarragh
Co. Donegal F92 D8C8

James Rodgers Ashburn Knockfair
Stranorlar Co. Donegal.

Drogheda Sean Higgins

Noeleen Bogue 59 The Park Skerries Rock
Skerries Co. Dublin

Maeve Carroll 4, Grangefield Rathfarnham Dublin 16

Kathryn Gardiner 60 Georgian Close, North Road,
Drogheda, Co.Louth
Ann Mc Gowan Dun Lios, Mayne, Clogherhead,
Co. Louth
Kathleen Mc Manus Gubrawoolly, Ballyconnell P.O.,
Co. Cavan

Dublin North Central

Aileen Connolly Keaney 59 Gracepark Terrace Drumcondra
Dublin 9 D09 X9VO
Sheila Flynn 34 Cedar Hall Millbrook Court
Milltown Road Dublin 6
Sinead Keegan Greaghnafarna Dromahair Co. Leitrim

Dublin North East

Declan Burke Lyons Estate Celbridge Co Kildare
John Coleman 15 Castleabbey Kildalkey Road
Trim Co Meath
Niall Daly 41 Lorcan Road Santry
Dublin 9 D09E199
Susie Hall, 6 Mariner's Row, Baltimore, Co Cork
Conor Lyons 22 Verbena Grove Bayside Dublin 13
Ryan Murphy 6 Ribh Road Harmonstown
Dublin D05 K5X7
Orlagh Nic Eoin 49 Millfield Park The Links Station Road
Portmarnock Co. Dublin D13 XN92

Dublin North West

Paula Bigley 267 Beechdale Dunboyne Co. Meath
Gerard Curtin 26 Dara Court Celbridge Co. Kildare
Jacqueline Forde 55 The Old Mill Ratoath Co. Meath
Sean Fox 21 Inbhir Ide Close Malahide Co. Dublin
Daniel Howard 8 Saint Johns Green Clondalkin Dublin
D22 WO95
Niall Mahon 5 Brooklawn Court, The Kings Hospital,
Palmerstown Dublin 20
Robert Mc Donnell The Bungalow Kilcoskan Kilsallaghan
Co. Dublin K67 F668
Martin Mc Mullan 170 Beauvale Park Artane Dublin 5
Eamon O Ceallaigh 104 Seanbhothar Na Cabhrai
Baile Atha Cliath 7
Andrew Phelan 32 Deerhaven Walk Clonee Dublin 15
Keith Purcell 17 Woodvale Garth Clonsilla Dublin
D15 A34Y
Keith Rooney 4 Saddlers Crescent Mulhuddart
Dublin 15 D15 A4AW
Michelle Ryan 25 Castleknock Downs Laurel Lodge
Castleknock Dublin 15
Mary Yvonne Wall 206 Barton Road East, Dundrum,
Dublin 14

Dublin South I

Marian Browne Moyasta Kilrush Co. Clare
Ann Colleary 38 Nutgrove Park Clonskeagh
Dublin 14
Robert Cronin 31 Sweetmount Avenue Dundrum
Dublin 14
Mary Jo Delaney 75 Hunters Avenue Hunterswood
Ballycullen Dublin 24
Barry Hennessy 85 The Gallery Turvey Walk
Donabate Co. Dublin K36 V213
Agnes Keane 6 Delaford Lawn Knocklyon Dublin 16
Ruth Lyons 177 Whitehall Road West
Dublin 12 Co. Dublin D12 H761
Norah Martyn 33 Willow Road Dundrum Dublin 16
Douglas Miller 4 Glenvale Lucan Co. Dublin

Dublin South 2

Rachel Byrne Apt 91 Carrigmore Crescent
Saggart Co. Dublin D24 DR70
Patrick Cahill 81 Whitehall Road, Terenure Dublin 12
Kevin F. Connaughton 13 Brookdale Old Bawn T
Tallaght Dublin 24 D24 WCK3
Ruth Coppinger 159 Castlecurragh Heath Mulhuddart
Dublin 15
Pauline Donoghue St Marks Community School
Cookstown Road Tallaght Dublin 24
Lisa Douglas 49 Dromcarra Avenue Jobstown
Tallaght Dublin 24 D24 A6C6
Wayne Grehan 2 Dromard Road Drimnagh Dublin 12
Brendan Horan 64 Ellensborough Rise
Kiltipper Road Dublin 24
Anthony Kelly 14 Orpen Close Orpen Green
Blackrock Co. Dublin
Aaron O Maonaigh 3 Corran Ghleanntan na hAbhann
Cluain Dolcain Baile Atha Cliath 22
D22 Y308

Dublin South Central

Rachel Condon 272 Clonard Road Crumlin
Dublin 12 D12 P5V2
Colin Lynch St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammer School
St. Patrick's Close Dublin 8

Dublin South Central

Claire Mc Carthy 12 Bayview Pembroke Street
Irishtown Dublin 4
Maire O Ciarain 1 Glenmurray Park Terenure Dublin 12
Daniel O'Connor 29 Ailesbury Grove Dundrum
Dublin 16 D16 XV44
Sinead Sweeney 7 Hunters Lane Ballycullen Road
Dubin 24
Vanessa Hyland 103 Shanard Road Santry Dublin 9

Dungarvan

Patrick Collins Lickowen Tramore Road Togher
Cork City Co. Cork
Margo Mc Gann St. Augustine's College Ballyconnery
Dungarvan Co Waterford X35 YD89
Jonathan O'Donovan 49 An Grianán Ballinroad
Dungarvan Co Waterford

East Galway

Linda Carey Wynne Renahamana, Flagmount, Caher,
Co. Clare.
Jamie Flanagan Clonoon Rossmore Woodford
Co. Galway H62 KV09
Roisin Mac Carthaigh Ballyara South Bullaun Loughrea
Co. Galway

Enniscorthy

Barbara Doyle Lande Gorey Community School,
Esmonde Street Gorey Co Wexford
James Mc Govern Cornwall Killurin Enniscorthy
Co. Wexford

Fermoy

Kate Barry 29 South Lodge Ballinalough Co. Cork
Margaret Kent The Black Road Skeheenarinky
Burncourt Cahir Co. Tipperary
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Fingal

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Linda Ennis 5 Hadleigh Park Castleknock Dublin 15

Kathlyn Hennelly 53 Seacrest Skerries Co. Dublin
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 Sinead Moore 186 Castlecurragh Heath
 Mulhuddart Dublin 15 D15 VK18
 Karen Naughton 85 Ayrfield Road, Coolock Dublin 13

Galway

Paul Concannon Caherowen Claregalway Co Galway
 Ronan Faherty Leagaun Moycullen Co. Galway
 Maura Greaney Lavallyconor Ardahan Co. Galway
 Christina Kennedy Ballylara, Labane, Ardahan, Co. Galway
 Margaret Keville 17 Devon Gardens Salthill Co. Galway.
 Niamh Lynagh Creganna Oranmore Co. Galway
 Sandra McGrath 1 Chestnut Close Renmore
 Galway Co. Galway
 Ciara Moloney 11 Lissaniska Lahinch Road Ennis
 Co. Clare
 Michael Murphy Cullane Carraroe Co. Galway
 Kenneth O Dea Gortard Clarinbridge Co. Galway
 Terence O Regan Sonas 87 Dun Na Mara Renmore
 Co. Galway H91 H6TN
 Patrick O Toole Sleepy Hollow Gortachalla
 Moycullen Co. Galway
 Cian O'Grady Lios Na Cri Oranmore Co. Galway

Iar Thuaisceart Thir Chonail

Kevin Boyle Derrynamanser Annagry
 Letterkenny Co. Donegal
 Tony Mc Gennis 'Meadowell' Burnside Road
 Ramelton Co. Donegal F92 C437

Kildare

Brenda Breen The Grove Derrygarron
 Portlaoise Co. Laois
 Cian Carthy Greatdown The Downs
 Mullingar Co. Westmeath N91 H2P5
 Shea Farrell The Old Bog Road Kilcock Co. Kildare
 Deirdre Garrett 112 Roseberry Hill Newbridge
 Co. Kildare
 John Heffernan Ballyboy Road Kilcormac
 Birr Co. Offaly
 Patricia Keane The Old Bog Road Kilcock Co. Kildare
 Orlagh Mc Donnell 4 Fanagh Green Tirmoghán
 Donadea Co. Kildare
 Derek O Donoghue 215 Beechdale, Dunboyne, Co. Meath
 James Rattigan 4 Fanagh Green Tirmoghán
 Donadea Co Kildare
 Francis Twaddle 4 Hillcrest Grove Lucan Co. Dublin

Kilkenny

Jim Ahern 21 Sion Meadows Kilkenny Co. Kilkenny
 Ellen M Campion Ballyhemmon Upper Castlecomer
 Co. Kilkenny
 Patrick Nolan Baun Dunmore Lower Co. Kilkenny
 Michael Stokes Kilkenny Road, Castlecomer,
 Co Kilkenny.

Laois

Joan Colbert 7 Boughlone Way Bellingham
 Portlaoise Co. Laois
 Roisin Dignan Cloughoge, Ballinakill, Co. Laois
 Seamus Heaney 22, Carrick Hill, Dublin Road,
 Portlaoise, Co. Laois
 Tim Hewitt Killimy Emo Portlaoise Co. Laois
 Derek O'Driscoll Killeen Stradbally Portlaoise
 Co. Laois. R32 W312

Limerick North

Catherine Aherne 105 Foxfield Dooradoyle Road
 Limerick Co. Limerick
 Helen Barry 4 Ballinacurra Garden Limerick
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 Michael Gleeson 72, Curragh Birin Castletroy
 Co. Limerick
 Enda Grimes "Glenbeigh" 62 Mayorstone Drive
 Limerick Co. Limerick
 Niamh Harrison 82 Foxfield Dooradoyle Co. Limerick
 Elizabeth Madigan Valley View House Bridgetown
 Killaloe Co. Clare

Limerick South

John Hurley Glasscurran Ferrybridge
 Clarina Co. Limerick
 Mary Hussey-Shee Coppers Close Quarry Road
 Youghal Co. Cork
 Tony Mc Kernan 26 Hazelhall Monaleen Co. Limerick
 Gerard O Donoghue Caher Road Mungret Co. Limerick
 Mark O Sullivan The Hill House Rerrin
 Bere Island Co. Cork

Longford

John J Flynn Clonrollagh, Longford, Co Longford.
 Anthony Waldron 79 College Park Longford Co. Longford

Navan

Susan Doherty Ardamadh Kilmainham Wood
 Kells Co. Meath
 Rita Donnellan Kilcloghans Tuam Co. Galway
 H54 XT25
 Gary Glennon Hollow House Ballymadun
 Ashbourne Co Meath
 Evelyn Lee 10 Priory Gate Athboy Co. Meath
 Sarah Mannix Curragh Farm Kells
 Co. Meath A82 XY56
 Carol McCormack Balneask Old Navan Co Meath
 Noreen Mimmagh-Fleming Grangegeeth Slane Navan
 Co. Meath C15 HF20
 Patrick Molony 19 Boice Manor Tenure Dunleer
 Monasterboice Co. Louth

Nenagh

Bartholomew Callinan Dundrum Co. Tipperary
 William Lonergan 44 Arda na Deirge Killaloe Co. Clare
 Claire Spillane 1 Brookfield Drombane
 Thurles Co. Tipperary

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 Newbawn Co. Wexford
 Karen Ryan Colestown Barntown
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Roscrea

Mary E G Lyndon Oxmantown Mall Birr Co Offaly

Sligo

Maura Cullinan 23 Crozon Downs Sligo F91 Y9YF
 Maire Hynes Lisheen, Strandhill, Co. Sligo
 Philomena Lynch Knockadalteen Ballymote Co. Sligo
 Maire O'Donnell 66, Oakfield Crescent, Sligo. Co. Sligo
 James Staunton Lisheen Strandhill Co. Sligo

Stillorgan

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Sally Maguire 23 Rugby Road Ranelagh Dublin 6

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Tipperary

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Noel Buckley Old Moore's Road Marlfield Village
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Alison Duffy The Homestead Mitchelstown Road
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Cleo Fitzpatrick Newtown Caherconlish
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Annette Flanagan Trostan House Newtown Holycross
Thurles Co. Tipperary

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Co. Tipperary

Jane O Dwyer Lower Monard Solohead
Tipperary Co. Tipperary

Deborah Quinn Lisheen Ballycahill Thurles
Co. Tipperary

Tuam

Carmel Heneghan Iona Shrulce Co. Galway

Roy Hession Gortbeg Ballyglunin Tuam Co. Galway

Carmel M. Mc Hugh Kilbannon Tuam Co. Galway

Tullamore

Patricia Lowry 113 Clonminch Wood Tullamore
Co. Offaly

Aine Baggot 8 Armstrong Grove Clara Co. Offaly

Waterford

Henry Collins 20 Meneval Green Farmleigh
Dunmore Road Waterford City
Co. Waterford

Brideen Kirwan San Therese Jerpoint Church
Thomastown Co. Kilkenny

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Nicole McCarthy 57 Carraig Desmond Newcastle West
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Niamh Quaid Ballyshonick Kilcornan Co. Limerick
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West Mayo

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James Duffy 1 Parklands Castlebar Co. Mayo

Michael Freeley Pollagh Kiltimagh Co Mayo.

John Holian Ballinagran Balla Castlebar Co Mayo

John Mc Donnell Creggs Road The Quay
Ballina Co Mayo

Denis O Boyle Lisduff Ballindine Road
Claremorris Co. Mayo

Wexford Tony Boland

Brandon Cogley 54 Liam Mellows Park Wexford Town
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Niamh Doohan 3 Millbrook Gorey Co. Wexford

Megan Lynch 156 Season Park
Newtownmountkennedy Co. Wicklow

Annamarie Martin 14 Brooklands Marlton Road Wicklow
Co. Wicklow A67 YE63

REPRESENTATION AND COMMITTEES

ASTI COMMITTEES

Investment Committee

Fiona Barry, Patrick Collins, Bernadette Normoyle, Peter Quinn, President, Vice President and Honorary Treasurer.

Rules Committee

Philip Irwin, John McDonnell, Michael McGrath, Padraic McWeeney, Geraldine O'Brien, President, Vice-President and General Secretary.

Steering Committee

John Byrne, Niall Duddy, Susie Hall, Máire G Ní Chiarbe, Geraldine O'Brien, President, Vice-President, General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary.

Business of CEC Sub-Committee

John Byrne, John Conneely and Richard Egan.

CEC Appeals Sub-Committee

Sinead Corkery, Niall Duddy, Padraic McWeeney, Geraldine O'Brien and Liam O'Mahony.

DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER EDUCATION COMMITTEES

NCCA Council

Ed Byrne and Deirdre MacDonald.

Employee Assistance Scheme Steering Group

Executive Officer: Organisation and Development

Comhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta

Máire Ní Choncheanain

Teacher Fee Refund Scheme Monitoring Committee

Deputy General Secretary

Qualifications Allowance Appeals Committee

Deputy General Secretary

Incremental Credit Appeals Committee

Deputy General Secretary

OTHER COMMITTEES / REPRESENTATION

Amnesty International

Assistant General Secretary

ASTI Advisor to the Director of Redeployment

Deputy General Secretary

Children's Rights Alliance

Assistant General Secretary

Educational Studies Association of Ireland

Assistant General Secretary

General Synod (Church of Ireland) Board of Education

Susie Hall and Kieran Sparling.

ICTU Disability Committee

Geraldine O'Brien and Deputy General Secretary.

ICTU Education and Training Committee

General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary.

ICTU Executive Council

General Secretary

ICTU Global Solidarity Committee

Ann Piggot and Assistant General Secretary.

ICTU Retired Workers' Committee

Denis O'Boyle and Ger O'Donoghue

ICTU Women's Committee

Adrienne Healy and Assistant General Secretary.

ICTU Youth Committee

Christopher Davey and Executive Officer/ Organisation and Development: Desmond O'Toole

Irish Forum for Global Education

Assistant General Secretary

Irish National Women's Council

Lorraine Finn and Sheila Flynn

Irish Labour History Society

Assistant General Secretary

National Adult Literacy Association

Assistant General Secretary

NCSE Departmental Council

Deputy General Secretary

National Women's Council

Lorraine Finn and Sheila Flynn.

Post of Responsibility Appeal Boards

Ed Byrne, Neil Curran, Miriam Duggan and Noelle Moran.

Teaching Council

John Holian and Noelle Moran

TENI Education Advisory Group

Deputy General Secretary

PRELIMINARY MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

SECTION I

SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES, POSTS OF RESPONSIBILITY, SUPERANNUATION, EXAMINERS AND SUPERINTENDENTS, REDEPLOYMENT

SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

1. That the ASTI ballot members with a view to undertaking industrial action, up to and including strike action, starting in September 2022 until the following demands are met:
 1. The elimination of the post-2011 pay scale and the establishment of 1 common pay scale for all teachers;
 2. A pay rise for all teachers to counter the increasing costs of living within our country;
 3. Full repayment of monies lost to teachers for lost and delayed increments imposed by FEMPI;
 4. The end of unpaid work currently done under Croke Park and Haddington Road Agreements. **(Carlow)**
2. That the ASTI commission a comprehensive report to quantify the financial impacts of the two-tier pay scale on lower-paid teachers and the report be utilised to assist ASTI in restoring equal pay scales for all teachers. **(Clare)**
3. That the ASTI promote a campaign to set up a working group involving all teacher unions to work together to resolve all outstanding issues of pay discrimination. **(Dublin North West)**
4. That the ASTI reinvigorates its equal pay for equal work campaign in order to achieve justice for lesser-paid teachers. **(Dublin South I)**
5. That the ASTI, in the negotiations on the successor to Building Momentum, demand cost of living increases in line with inflation. **(Fingal)**
6. That the ASTI demand that fortnightly payment of salary be reinstated for all ASTI members. **(Fingal)**
7. That teachers who commenced their careers by accepting temporary positions as substitutes for permanent teachers on maternity/study/sick leave before 2001 be given incremental credit for such service. **(Tipperary)**

POSTS OF RESPONSIBILITY

8. That the ASTI renegotiate Circular Letter 0003/2018 with the Department of Education regarding posts of responsibility so that interview boards exclude personnel employed in the school or college named in the advertised post(s). **(Carbery)**

9. That, in any review of Circular Letter 0003/2018 (Posts of Responsibility), the ASTI seek a comprehensive review of the grounds for appeal. **(Dublin North East)**
10. That the ASTI demand an impartial, transparent and orderly path to promotion that takes account of all relevant experience in the interest of the retention and recruitment of teachers. **(Dublin North West)**
11. That the ASTI set up a committee to review the workload attached to API and AP2 posts with particular reference to the difference in workload depending on school size and report to CEC by January 2023. **(Fingal)**
12. That the ASTI begin negotiations with the Department of Education to revisit the criteria for selection of candidates for API positions, specifically that some recognition be given for teaching experience/years of service. **(Tullamore)**
13. That the ASTI call on the Department of Education to increase the remuneration and time allocated to API and AP2 posts of responsibility and ensure that these conditions and pay be applied uniformly across all schools in the post-primary sector. **(Tullamore)**

SUPERANNUATION

14. That as a matter of urgency, the ASTI commission a comprehensive report, assessing the current contributions made under the different pension schemes, with a view to promoting equity for our members **(Dublin North I)**
15. That the ASTI resist any measures including levies which would further adversely affect public sector pensions **(Dublin North West)**
- 16a* That, in future negotiations reviewing the salary protection scheme contract for ASTI members, the ASTI demand a scheme which covers ASTI members for salary protection to age 70 due to changes in the compulsory retirement age in the most recent teachers' pension schemes. **(Tuam)**

CONDITIONS OF WORK

Note: Supervision and Substitution

The ASTI is currently pursuing a claim at the Teachers Conciliation Council for teachers to acquire the right to opt in or opt out of the Supervision and Substitution Scheme on an annual basis.

17. That the ASTI enter into negotiations with the Department of Education to ensure that ASTI members be allowed to opt out of supervision and substitution at any stage after 10 years of service **(Athlone)**

* Motion 16 was erroneously included in the Preliminary Agenda for Annual Convention 2022.

* Motion 16A was erroneously excluded from the Preliminary Agenda for Annual Convention 2022. Branches were notified separately of this matter prior to the prioritisation of motions.

18. That the ASTI insist that Supervision and Substitution be uncoupled so that teachers can opt in or out of supervision and/or substitution on an annual basis from September 2023.
(Dublin South Central)
19. That the ASTI seek an optional opt out of the Supervision and Substitution scheme for all members who have completed 15 years of service.
(Fingal)
20. That the ASTI enter into discussions with the Department of Education to ensure that any teacher who takes leave for part of a day, only has that part of the day recorded as leave, and that any leave less than two hours be not counted.
(Athlone)
21. Given the importance of air quality and comfortable temperatures inside classrooms, that the ASTI seek as a matter of urgency, the implementation of a comprehensive government programme of works, to ensure that all classrooms are provided with an appropriate mechanical ventilation or air conditioning system, capable of introducing warmed filtered fresh air and reducing room CO₂ levels to a value below 900ppm.
(Clare)
22. That the ASTI demand that high-efficiency particulate air purifiers be installed in all classrooms by September 2022.
(Fingal)
23. That the ASTI negotiate with the Department of Education with the aim of establishing an independent and mandatory audit for each school of teachers' psycho-social hazards and stresses.
(Drogheda Sean Higgins)
24. That the ASTI negotiate with the Department of Education to allow pregnant teachers opt out of Supervision and Substitution duties for the duration of their pregnancy.
(Drogheda Sean Higgins)
25. That, as a matter of urgency, the ASTI seek a written assurance from the Department of Education that school management does not require teachers on sick leave to submit work for their classes.
(Drogheda Sean Higgins)
26. That ASTI negotiate with the Department of Education to ensure that no WSE Inspection or Subject Inspection takes place during the period between the 1st of May and the end of the academic year.
(Drogheda Sean Higgins)
27. That the ASTI demand that the Department of Education provide all schools with the funding to employ support staff to maintain, manage and develop IT facilities in the school.
(Dublin North East)
28. That the ASTI insist that teachers should maintain autonomy over the way they teach and be free to determine for themselves the best pedagogical methods for their classes. As such, teachers' methodologies should not be used as a criterion in whole-school and/or subject inspections and should not be referenced in any subsequent written report or publication.
(Dublin North East)
29. That the ASTI include Leaving Certificate Computer Science and Leaving Certificate Physical Education in the ASTI class sizes directive, with a maximum class size of 24 students for both subjects.
(Dublin North East) (Already Policy)
30. That ASTI demand that partners be given approved leave to attend 12 and 20 week pregnancy scans.
(Dublin North East)
31. That the ASTI demand that extra health and safety measures be put in place for high risk and pregnant teachers during the pandemic, ensuring two metre physical distancing at all times and minimising unnecessary extra contacts, including, but not limited to: parent-teacher meetings; open evenings; and staff meetings.
(Dublin North East)
32. That the ASTI demand the reinstatement of the 'very high risk' status of teachers who were downgraded to 'high risk', considering the vaccines are less effective as time progresses and the high rate of hospitalisation of Covid patients with underlying conditions.
(Dublin North East)
33. That, in light of the continuing assault of teachers, physically, verbally and online, the ASTI demand that the Department of Education review its policies to ensure the protection of teachers under Health and Safety legislation.
(Dublin North West)
34. That the ASTI negotiate with the Department of Finance and Revenue a tax incentive/relief, similar to the 'bike to work scheme' whereby teachers can recoup some or all of the costs of upgrading and investing in technology and equipment annually for teaching purposes.
(Dublin South Central)
35. That the ASTI seek to promote diversity in the teaching profession reflecting the diversity in our student body and our society.
(Dublin South Central)
36. That ASTI direct members to not engage with digital learning platforms unless their school IT policies include guidelines on appropriate communication between staff members, management and staff, students and staff, parents / guardians and staff, with these policies to be agreed in consultation with staff.
(Fermoy)
(This would require a ballot of members)
37. That the ASTI meet with the Department of Education to explore and discuss introducing wellbeing leave for post-primary school teachers.
(Stillorgan)
38. That the ASTI call on the Department of Education to consider/facilitate the allocation of job-sharing on the basis of two teachers sharing a full/ fixed weekly timetable (as happens in Primary Schools) and with class groups sharing two teachers per subject (e.g., English / Irish / Maths).
(Tullamore)
39. In view of the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the physical and mental health of staff and students in schools, that the ASTI immediately enter negotiations with the Department of Education and the other teaching unions to secure a reduction in class size.
(Wicklow)
40. That the ASTI immediately enter negotiations with the Department of Education and the other teaching unions to secure proper investment in the necessary resources to help schools cope with the ongoing and long-term impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the physical and mental health of staff and students.
(Wicklow)

EDUCATION

41. That the ASTI negotiate with the DES so that second year PME students be paid for all teaching hours worked through the academic year. **(Carbery)**
42. In light of the current shortage of teachers at second-level, that the ASTI campaign, as a matter of urgency, to have a one-year course made available to graduates, to provide them with a qualification to teach in second-level schools. **(Clare)**

SCHOOL RESOURCES

43. The ASTI demand that Droichead funding to schools be expanded to allow Professional Support Team (PST) members to continue to assist Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) into their second year of teaching after they have fulfilled the Droichead requirement as set out by the Teaching Council. This additional funding will allow for continued professional support such as PST-NQT meetings and additional classroom observations where requested by an NQT. **(Dublin North East)**

TEACHING COUNCIL

44. That the ASTI do all in its power to have the changes to the vetting and re-vetting process for teachers reversed, so that only court convictions would be taken into account, as was previously the case. **(Dublin North East)**

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

45. That the ASTI resist any attempt by the Department of Education to introduce a policy of out-of-hours CPD. **(Dublin North East)**

CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS

46. That the A.S.T.I. demand of the Department of Education that Junior Cycle Geography be given equal status with Junior Cycle History. **(Cork North)**
47. That The A.S.T.I. refuse to engage in any discussion on Leaving Cert Reform until a full, open and transparent study of the Junior Cycle has been conducted and its findings made public. **(Desmond)**
48. That The A.S.T.I. insist that the assessment and grading of the leaving certificate remain the sole remit of the State Examinations Commission. **(Desmond)**
49. That the A.S.T.I. insist that teachers should not examine students in their own school for state certification purposes. **(Desmond)**
50. That the ASTI set up a committee to establish what the ASTI is in favour of in terms of Senior Cycle reform. **(Dublin North East)**
51. That the ASTI seek that there be no more than one CBA per subject in junior cycle in the interest of student wellbeing **(Dublin North West)**

52. That the ASTI pursue a review of the minimum hours per subject at Junior Cycle with the intention of increasing class contact hours to implement the specifications to satisfactory levels. **(Dungarvan)**
53. That the ASTI demand that the Department of Education and the State Examinations Commission make a statement committing to the Junior Cycle examination and its future. **(Fingal)**
54. That the ASTI insist that the Department of Education prioritise completion of its review of the new Junior Cycle Curriculum. **(Stillorgan)**
55. That the ASTI insist that the Department of Education remove the Junior Cycle Assessment Task as an assessment tool in each Junior Cycle subject and instead allocate some of the Junior Cycle marks based on a review of the actual CBA2 carried out by the student. **(Stillorgan)**

RULES AND CONSTITUTION

56. Branch Delegates

Rule 60

That rule 60 be amended with the addition of "Only members who are serving teachers or honorary life members of the ASTI will be entitled to claim expenses for Convention." after "each year." and before "Credentials for delegates..."

The rule will then read:

Branch Delegates

60.

"The names and addresses of Branch delegates shall be forwarded by each Branch Honorary Secretary to the General Secretary so as to reach the General Secretary not later than January 31st in each year. Only members who are serving teachers or honorary life members of the ASTI will be entitled to claim expenses for Convention. Credentials for delegates shall be sent by the General Secretary to delegates along with the Convention Programme. In the event of an elected delegate being unable to act, a substitute may be appointed by the Branch, in which case the delegate withdrawing must return the delegate's credentials to the General Secretary who will then issue credentials to the substitute."

If passed, this motion would require as a consequence changes to rules 14(b), 159 and 160 as follows:

Rule 14(b) to be amended with the addition of "(iii) to claim expenses for Convention" after "(ii) to vote on any ballot on industrial action or to be a candidate in any election for Trusteeship of the Association"

The rule will then read:

- "Emeritus members shall have the power to exercise all the rights and privileges of all members except the right
- (i) to act as a Branch Officer, as a member of Standing Committee or as a representative on the Central Executive Council
 - (ii) to vote on any ballot on industrial action or to be a candidate in any election for Trusteeship of the Association
 - (iii) to claim expenses for Convention."

Rule 159 to be amended with the addition of “who are serving teachers or honorary life members of the ASTI” between “delegates to Convention” and “Deputations”.

The rule will then read:
159.

“Travelling expenses shall be allowed to members of the Central Executive Council, Standing Committee, delegates to Convention who are serving teachers or honorary life members of the ASTI, Deputations, and Sub-committees and Convenors of Educational Sub-committees (who shall be allowed expenses for not more than two meetings per year) who are required to travel in order to attend such meetings. Where no suitable public transport is available to members travelling to meetings, the Honorary Treasurer may allow a mileage allowance, such allowance to be decided from time to time by the Standing Committee.”

Rule 160 to be amended with the addition of “who are serving teachers or honorary life members of the ASTI” between “delegates to Convention” and “Deputations”

The rule will then read:
160.

“Members of CEC, Standing Committee, delegates to Convention who are serving teachers or honorary life members of the ASTI, Deputations, and Sub-committees (except Educational sub-committees) shall be allowed personal expenses at a rate to be determined by Standing Committee and approved by Convention.” **(Galway)**

ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

57. That the ASTI seek an emergency meeting with the Department of Education to investigate the reasons for the crisis with regard to the recruitment and retention of teachers in post primary schools with a view to reporting back to CEC in January 2023 **(Dublin North West)**

58. That the ASTI withdraw from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. **(Dungarvan)**
(Requires a ballot of members)

59. That the ASTI, in light of a recent successful ICTU motion on Industrial Relations Legislation, recognise that the restrictions on trade union action in the 1990 Industrial Relations Act need to be opposed and that the Act should be replaced or reformed to restore rights which trade unions had before 1990. **(Fingal)**

60. That a committee be formed to investigate the cost of second-level education in Ireland and a report be produced for January CEC 2023 on its findings. **(Fingal)**

61. That the ASTI begin the process of establishing a new branch for retired members, which will give those retired members the right to attend Convention in the same representative numbers as members of any other branch of the ASTI. **(Galway)**

62. That the ASTI establish a Global Solidarity Committee.
Aims of this committee:

- To raise awareness amongst ASTI members of the challenges faced by teachers and their representative associations across the globe.
- To promote the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4:
‘Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.’
- To promote the principle of equality in all aspects of education and the teaching profession globally.
- To promote the right to education.
- To promote the rights of workers, especially teachers, and their unions where they are being victimised and/or denied human rights or trade union rights.
- To enable ASTI to express solidarity on humanitarian issues, in the context of global challenges such as world poverty, growing inequality, human rights abuses, denial of trade union rights and climate crisis. **(Tuam)**

PRIORITISATION OF MOTIONS 2022

Each branch was invited to prioritise motions on the Preliminary Agenda by choosing eight motions and setting them out in order of preference, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. The following table lists the prioritisation of motions as submitted by the branches:

BRANCH	PRIORITY IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE							
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
Athlone	12	28	42	45	48	49	24	38
Bray	51	12	28	25	26	20	62	41
Carbery	25	33	59	24	3	50	28	62
Carlow	44	16	25	59	47	51	2	8
Carrick-on-Shannon								
Cavan								
Clare	39	33	14	10	25	29	26	34
Cork North	49	16A	28	34	9	4	58	19
Cork South Paddy Mulcahy	41	51	28	24	18	62	46	55
Desmond	45	19	53	44	51	39	46	33
Donegal								
Drogheda Sean Higgins	47	33	44	11	45	1	18	35
Dublin North I	1	28	10	45	62	44	30	59
Dublin North Central	1	16(A)	24	25	9	6	34	52
Dublin North East	48	5	1	13	8	21	11	62
Dublin North West	47	25	8	14	44	4	62	1
Dublin South I	9	1	49	16	20	47	36	26
Dublin South 2	1	18	42	19	22	62	2	16
Dublin South Central	47	1	42	51	52	45	62	49
Dublin South County	41	1	14	28	47	18	24	33
Dublin South West	1	10	5	16	18	20	25	3
Dun Laoghaire								
Dundalk								
Dungarvan	26	28	51	22	47	45	44	8
East Cork	5	34	62	24	9	30	45	46
East Galway	20	51	47	49	42	52	1	12
East Mayo	1	59	16a	52	58	62	14	44
Enniscorthy	61	56	62	23	45	3		
Fermoy	50	24	56	41	47	34	52	44
Fingal	1	4	16	44	62	25	48	28
Galway	16	48	12	50	33	11	55	7
Iar Thuaisceart Thir Chonail	48	51	26	12	16A	20	46	59
Kerry								

Kildare	48	24	2	1	45	62	52	42
Kilkenny	11	23	33	52	1	19	25	41
Laois	18	42	25	41	48	47	11	52
Limerick North	51	45	34	33	25	42	26	24
Limerick South	12	7	2	26	13	44	5	14
Longford								
Monaghan								
Mullingar								
Navan	5	18	42	48	54	14	27	62
Nenagh	12	48	51	47	45	24	55	44
New Ross	16a	1	48	47	52	51	44	25
Roscrea	40	39	47	16	10	25	26	45
Sligo	5	48	51	12	26	17	3	20
Stillorgan	41	27	20	47	13	30	4	45
Tipperary	45	33	28	25	18	38	12	51
Tuam	47	50	18	14	59	20	51	46
Tullamore	62	41	10	20	2	47	48	25
Waterford	28	14	13	1	11			
West Limerick								
West Mayo	1	7	9	16	18	45	47	48
West Waterford								
Wexford Tony Boland	5	23	51	17	12	33	49	52
Wicklow	17	12	13	14	26	25	55	51

* Motion 16 was erroneously included in the Preliminary Agenda for Annual Convention 2022.
 * Motion 16A was erroneously excluded from the Preliminary Agenda for Annual Convention 2022. Branches were notified separately of this matter prior to the prioritisation of motions.

Steering Committee decided to award points to motions in the following manner:

- (i) Branch's most popular motion 6 points
- Branch's second most popular motion 5 points
- Branch's third most popular motion 4 points
- Branch's fourth most popular motion 4 points
- Branch's fifth most popular motion 3 points
- Branch's sixth most popular motion 3 points
- Branch's seventh most popular motion 2 points
- Branch's eighth most popular motion 2 points

(ii) Where motions from a number of branches have been composited, then the following will apply:
 Three points will be given for each branch involved in the composite, e.g. if motions from five branches are composited into one composite motion, then points are awarded as follows: 5 x 3 = 15.

After points were awarded, the motions were listed as follows in order of popularity:

Points Awarded	No. of Motion	Topic
84	1	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
67	47	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
62	51	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
54	25	CONDITIONS OF WORK
53	48	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
52	45	CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
47	12	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
45	28	CONDITIONS OF WORK
44	62	ORGANISATIONA & ADMINISTRATION
38	33	CONDITIONS OF WORK
37	18	CONDITIONS OF WORK
37	44	TEACHING COUNCIL
35	5	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
35	24	CONDITIONS OF WORK
35	41	EDUCATION
33	16	SUPERANNUATION
32	14	SUPERANNUATION
31	20	CONDITIONS OF WORK
31	26	CONDITIONS OF WORK
29	42	EDUCATION
27	52	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
23	16a	SUPERANNUATION
21	49	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
20	10	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
20	11	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
20	34	CONDITIONS OF WORK
20	59	ORGANISATIONA & ADMINISTRATION
19	9	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
18	13	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
18	50	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
15	2	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
14	19	CONDITIONS OF WORK

Points Awarded	No. of Motion	Topic
14	23	CONDITIONS OF WORK
14	39	CONDITIONS OF WORK
13	4	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
13	17	CONDITIONS OF WORK
12	7	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
11	8	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
10	3	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
10	46	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
9	56	RULES & CONSTITUTION
8	30	CONDITIONS OF WORK
8	55	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
7	22	CONDITIONS OF WORK
7	27	CONDITIONS OF WORK
6	40	CONDITIONS OF WORK
6	61	ORGANISATIONA & ADMINISTRATION
5	38	CONDITIONS OF WORK
5	58	ORGANISATIONA & ADMINISTRATION
4	53	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
3	6	SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES
3	21	CONDITIONS OF WORK
3	29	CONDITIONS OF WORK
3	54	CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
2	35	CONDITIONS OF WORK
2	36	CONDITIONS OF WORK
0	15	SUPERANNUATION
0	31	CONDITIONS OF WORK
0	32	CONDITIONS OF WORK
0	37	CONDITIONS OF WORK
0	43	SCHOOL RESOURCES
0	57	ORGANISATIONA & ADMINISTRATION
0	60	ORGANISATIONA & ADMINISTRATION

CONVENTION 2021 RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED BY ANNUAL CONVENTION 2021:

Motion 77 - Leaving Certificate Subject Specifications

That ASTI demand that the NCCA include depth of treatment and range of subject knowledge, in the design template of all future Leaving Certificate Specifications, including those currently under development. (Clare)

The ASTI has raised this issue with the NCCA.

Motion 81 – Review of Junior Cycle Framework Implementation

That the ASTI demand an assurance that a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the Junior Cycle framework be undertaken and published by an independent educational body prior to any further changes being proposed and/or implemented at Senior Cycle. (Dublin South Central, Galway, Mullingar)

The ASTI has raised this issue with the Department of Education and with the NCCA.

Motion 79 – Cooperation with changes to Senior Cycle with Amendment

That the ASTI refuse to co-operate with any further changes to the Senior Cycle, until a full and comprehensive longitudinal report on the new Junior Cycle is compiled, completed and fully discussed in joint meetings involving the DES, SEC, NCCA, TUI and ASTI.

(Cork South Paddy Mulcahy, Fingal)

There have been no developments in this area since Convention 2021.

Motion 27 – Class Size

That the ASTI adopt a policy of maximum class size of 24 students for general subjects and a maximum class size of 20 students for all practical subjects. (Wexford Tony Boland)

This is now ASTI policy.

Motion 12 – Student teachers’ payment with Amendment

That, in keeping with the practice in other professions, the ASTI seek to negotiate payment for teaching work carried out by student teachers during their Postgraduate Master of Education course and seek to work with Student Unions and other relevant stakeholders in furtherance of this aim. (Stillorgan, Dublin South I)

The ASTI has raised this issue at the Teachers’ Conciliation Council, with the Department of Education and Skills and with the Management Bodies.

Motion 5 - Substitution for attendance at SLAR meetings.

That the ASTI negotiate with the DES for the provision of full substitution cover for teachers attending SLAR meetings.

(Dublin South Central)

The ASTI has raised this matter with the Junior Cycle Implementation Body.

Motion 26 - Casualisation of the teaching profession

To combat the increased casualisation of the teaching profession, that contracts for all parttime and newly qualified teachers should be for a minimum of 12 hours 40 minutes. (Kildare)

The ASTI has raised this issue with the Department of Education.

Motion 17 – Posts of Responsibility

That the ASTI seek an immediate review of the current selection criteria for appointments to posts of responsibility, with a view to the reinstatement of seniority and experience as major determinants of suitability for appointment.

(Dublin North West, Galway)

See report in this Handbook: Posts of Responsibility.

Motion 23 - Superannuation

That ASTI negotiate restoration of the pension scheme for all teachers to pre2004 levels in the interest of equality.

(Dublin North West)

The ASTI has raised this issue at the Public Services Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

Motion 24 – Redeployment

That a committee be formed to survey ASTI members regarding commuting, geographical proximity to their place of work and opportunities for redeployment. The results of this survey to be used to support a demand to the DES for implementation of a nationwide voluntary redeployment scheme. (Fermoy)

See report in this Handbook: Redeployment.

Motion 44 – Supervision and Substitution

That the ASTI negotiate with the Department of Education and Skills an annual opt out from the Supervision and Substitution scheme to be available to all teachers after 15 years’ service.

(Tullamore, Mullingar)

The ASTI has placed this item on the agenda of the Teachers’ Conciliation Council and continues to pursue the issue.

Motion 45 – Supervision and Substitution

That the ASTI negotiate with the Department of Education and Skills an opt in or opt out from the Supervision and Substitution scheme on an annual basis.

(Wexford Tony Boland, Kildare, Galway)

The ASTI has placed this item on the agenda of the Teachers’ Conciliation Council and continues to pursue the issue.

Motion 65 – Special Educational Needs

That, in the light of the introduction of the new Special Educational Needs (SEN) model, the ASTI approach the Department of Education and Skills (DES), with a view to providing adequate and meaningful training for all teachers without delay. (Stillorgan)

The ASTI has raised this issue with the Department of Education.

Urgent Motion from Standing Committee

Convention condemns the recent changes (issued on 30th March 2021) to the priority listing for teachers within the national vaccination programme, which were announced by Government without consultation with workers' representatives.

Convention demands that the government re-instates education staff as a priority group within the national vaccination programme, considering:

- the essential nature of their work which requires them to be in daily contact with a large number of people from a large number of households and
- that social distancing is problematic and not assured given the crowded nature, structure and layout of our workplaces.

Convention further demands early vaccination within the overall cohort of education staff, of pregnant teachers, those in higher risk categories and those who work in special schools, special classes and home school community liaison teachers.

In the event that Government does not agree to schedule by the end of the current school year, vaccinations on the basis demanded above, Convention mandates a ballot of members for industrial action, up to and including strike action.

See section in this Handbook: *Industrial Relations*.

RULE CHANGES

MOTION – ASTI Rules and Constitution

RULE 110.

- a) A special committee, to be responsible to Standing Committee, shall be elected and known as the Equal Opportunities Committee; Equal Opportunities shall be deemed to refer to issues in relation to gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religious belief, ethnic or national origin, the traveler community or disability.
- b) The Committee shall consist of the President, President-elect, where applicable and Vice-President for the time being and nine members duly elected at Annual Convention every second year.
- c) The Equal Opportunities Committee shall advise Standing Committee on such equal opportunities matters:
 - a) as are remitted to it by Standing Committee, or
 - b) on such other equal opportunity issues as the Committee itself wishes to investigate.
- f) The Committee shall remain in office for two years, shall meet not less than three and not more than seven times a year and members shall be eligible for re-election.
- g) In the event of a vacancy arising for an elected member during the period of office of the Committee the vacancy shall be filled by election at the next CEC meeting or Annual Convention, whichever is the earlier.
- h) The Committee shall meet within one month from the conclusion of Convention each year. At this meeting the Committee shall elect one of its members as Chairperson. The Chairperson shall hold office for one year and shall be eligible for re-election but shall not hold office for more than four years consecutively.
- i) The Committee shall submit an annual report to Convention which will be published in the Convention Handbook, after that report has been submitted to and approved by Standing Committee.
- j) All activities of the Committee involving expenditure shall be subject to the approval of Standing Committee.

Amend Rule 110 as follows:

- (i) By deletion of the words Equal Opportunities Committee after the words “A special committee, to be responsible to Standing Committee, shall be elected and known as the” in paragraph (a)
- (ii) By insertion of the word Equality Committee after the words “A special committee, to be responsible to Standing Committee, shall be elected and known as the” in paragraph (a)
- (iii) By deletion of the words Equal Opportunities after the semi colon in paragraph (a)
- (iv) By insertion of the words Equality after the semi-colon in paragraph (a)
- (v) By insertion of the words “or any other matter related to equality as might be assigned to the committee by Standing Committee.” After the words “the traveller community or disability.” in paragraph (a)
- (vi) By deletion of the words Equal Opportunities Committee after the words (c) The
- (vii) By insertion of the word Equality Committee after the letter (c) The
- (viii) By deletion of the words equal opportunity after the words “(ii) on such other” in paragraph (c)
- (ix) By insertion of the word “equality” after the words “(ii) on such other” in paragraph (c)

Rule 110 shall then read as follows:

- a) A special committee, to be responsible to Standing Committee, shall be elected and known as the Equality Committee; Equality shall be deemed to refer to issues in relation to gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religious belief, ethnic or national origin, the traveller community or disability, or any other matter related to equality as might be assigned to the committee by Standing Committee.
- b) The Committee shall consist of the President, President-elect, where applicable and Vice-President for the time being and nine members duly elected at Annual Convention every second year.
- c) The Equality Committee shall advise Standing Committee on such equal opportunities matters:
 - a) as are remitted to it by Standing Committee, or
 - b) on such other equality issues as the Committee itself wishes to investigate.
- d) The Committee shall remain in office for two years, shall meet not less than three and not more than seven times a year and members shall be eligible for re-election.
- e) In the event of a vacancy arising for an elected member during the period of office of the Committee the vacancy shall be filled by election at the next CEC meeting or Annual Convention, whichever is the earlier.
- f) The Committee shall meet within one month from the conclusion of Convention each year. At this meeting the Committee shall elect one of its members as Chairperson. The Chairperson shall hold office for one year and shall be eligible for re-election but shall not hold office for more than four years consecutively.
- g) The Committee shall submit an annual report to Convention which will be published in the Convention Handbook, after that report has been submitted to and approved by Standing Committee.
All activities of the Committee involving expenditure shall be subject to the approval of Standing Committee.

If passed, this motion would require as a consequence changes to rule 108 as follows:

Amend Rule 108 as follows:

- (i) By deletion of the words “Equal Opportunity Committee” after the words “Education Committee and”.
- (ii) By insertion of the words Equality Committee after the words “Education Committee and”.

Rule 108 shall then read as follows:

With the exception of the President and Vice-President, no member may serve on more than one of the following committees namely, Standing Committee, Education Committee and Equality Committee, during a concurrent term of office.

(Standing Committee)

Rules 110 and 108 have been so amended.

MOTION – ASTI Rules and Constitution

RULE 4

4. The objects of the Association shall be:

- a) To regulate the relations between members and their employers and between members and Local Authorities and Government Departments;
- b) to promote post-primary education in Ireland and to co-operate with kindred organisations for that purpose;
- c) to unite and organise those categories of teachers eligible for membership and to promote their interests and to improve their conditions of employment;
- d) to safeguard the interests of the post-primary teaching profession by maintaining a suitable system of registration;
- e) to secure for members adequate salaries with regular increments, adequate pension schemes, reasonable fixity of tenure, and an impartial Appeal Board;
- f) to obtain direct representation on such educational boards, committees, and other public bodies as the Association may approve;
- g) to act as a scholastic bureau in the interests of its members;
- h) to advise and assist individual members of the Association in professional matters;
- i) to foster among members a sense of professional honour and esprit de corps;
- j) to purchase, take on lease or in exchange, to hire, or otherwise acquire in the names of the trustees, any real and personal property and any rights or privileges which the Convention may think necessary or convenient for the attainment of the objects of the Association and to see, improve, manage, develop, exchange, lease, mortgage, dispose of, turn to account, or otherwise deal with all or any part or parts of the said real and personal property and rights of the Association;
- k) to establish and administer a fund or funds for the purpose of providing assistance to members or their dependants;
- l) to publish and produce a periodic journal;
- m) to guarantee up to such limits as shall be determined by the CEC from time to time housing loans sought by members from any bank, building society, or any other financial institution approved by the CEC;
- n) to represent, as a trade union concerned with education, the views of the membership on questions relating to education both in Ireland and outside Ireland, and to take such action as Convention considers to be appropriate in furthering those views;
- o) to represent the views of the membership as trade unionists in Ireland;

- p) to affiliate to any trade union group which Convention or CEC determines to be of advantage to the Association in the pursuit of its objectives, and to support the policies of any such group insofar as those policies do not conflict with these rules or the policy of the Association;
- q) to encourage the promotion and development of ASTI Credit Union.

Amend Rule 4 as follows:

By insertion of the words “(r) to promote equality in education and in society as a whole.” Immediately after the words “(q) to encourage the promotion and development of ASTI Credit Union.”

Rule 4 shall then read as follows:

RULE 4

4. The objects of the Association shall be:

- a) To regulate the relations between members and their employers and between members and Local Authorities and Government Departments;
- b) to promote post-primary education in Ireland and to co-operate with kindred organisations for that purpose;
- c) to unite and organise those categories of teachers eligible for membership and to promote their interests and to improve their conditions of employment;
- d) to safeguard the interests of the post-primary teaching profession by maintaining a suitable system of registration;
- e) to secure for members adequate salaries with regular increments, adequate pension schemes, reasonable fixity of tenure, and an impartial Appeal Board;
- f) to obtain direct representation on such educational boards, committees, and other public bodies as the Association may approve;
- g) to act as a scholastic bureau in the interests of its members;
- h) to advise and assist individual members of the Association in professional matters;
- i) to foster among members a sense of professional honour and esprit de corps;
- j) to purchase, take on lease or in exchange, to hire, or otherwise acquire in the names of the trustees, any real and personal property and any rights or privileges which the Convention may think necessary or convenient for the attainment of the objects of the Association and to see, improve, manage, develop, exchange, lease, mortgage, dispose of, turn to account, or otherwise deal with all or any part or parts of the said real and personal property and rights of the Association;
- k) to establish and administer a fund or funds for the purpose of providing assistance to members or their dependants;
- l) to publish and produce a periodic journal;
- m) to guarantee up to such limits as shall be determined by the CEC from time to time housing loans sought by members from any bank, building society, or any other financial institution approved by the CEC;
- n) to represent, as a trade union concerned with education, the views of the membership on questions relating to education both in Ireland and outside Ireland, and to take such action as Convention considers to be appropriate in furthering those views;
- o) to represent the views of the membership as trade unionists in Ireland;
- p) to affiliate to any trade union group which Convention or CEC determines to be of advantage to the Association in the pursuit of its objectives, and to support the policies

of any such group insofar as those policies do not conflict with these rules or the policy of the Association;

- q) to encourage the promotion and development of ASTI Credit Union;
- r) to promote equality in education and in society as a whole.

(Standing Committee)

Rule 4 has been so amended.

STANDING COMMITTEE URGENT MOTIONS AMEND RULE 151

Amend Rule 151 by deletion of everything after the words “(b) Regional Organisers to act under the direction of the Honorary National Organiser.” and replace with “The Honorary National Organiser shall have been a member of ASTI for not less than ten years. He/she shall be elected by a simple majority vote at CEC. The Honorary National Organiser shall hold office for one year and shall be eligible for re-election each year to serve a maximum of five consecutive years.”

Rule 151. to then read as follows:

151.

At its first meeting after Convention, the CEC shall appoint from among its members:

- a) An Honorary National Organiser; and
- b) Regional Organisers to act under the direction of the Honorary National Organiser.

The Honorary National Organiser shall have been a member of ASTI for not less than ten years. He/she shall be elected by a simple majority vote at CEC. The Honorary National Organiser shall hold office for one year and shall be eligible for re-election each year to serve a maximum of five consecutive years.

(Standing Committee)

Rule 151 has been so amended.

BOOK 2

Convention Reports

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

POSTS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Department of Education circular which governs posts of responsibility is “Leadership and Management in Post-Primary Schools” (Circular 0003/2018). This Circular was issued in January 2018. Negotiations on amendments to this circular have been going on for some time and continue at the time of writing.

Following a motion passed by CEC in May 2021, Standing Committee appointed a sub-committee to prepare a report for CEC. Members of this sub-committee are President, Vice-President, Adrienne Healy and Seamus Keane. The Deputy General Secretary provides professional support. The Committee has held a meeting with the Equality Committee and, at the time of writing, is arranging to meet with the ASTI nominees to Posts of Responsibility Appeal Boards.

The Standing Committee Sub-Committee on Posts of Responsibility is undertaking a body of work which is intended to assist in the development of an ASTI model of how a posts of responsibility system should work in second-level schools.

The first stage of this work is the production of a survey of ASTI members to ascertain the following:

CURRENT POST-HOLDERS

- How much time do post-holder spend on post duties?
- Do they get time off for the performance of such duties?
- What do they believe is a reasonable amount of time in this context?
- Have your post duties changed, and how?

MEMBERS WHO HAVE APPLIED FOR A POST UNSUCCESSFULLY

- Why do you believe you were unsuccessful?
- Views on interview process
- Did you get adequate and timely feedback?
- Did you appeal?
- Your experience of the appeal process

ALL MEMBERS

- Would you consider applying for a post?
- If not, why not?
- How does the post structure in your school meet the needs of the school?
- How does the consultation process work in your school?
- What changes would you like to see in the posts structure in your school?
- Impact of the post structure/appointment process etc. on teacher/school wellbeing
- Have you given up a post, and why?

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ABOVE IS ONLY AN OUTLINE OF AREAS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE SURVEY AND IS NOT BY ANY MEANS A COMPLETED SURVEY DOCUMENT.

The Sub-Committee will also be seeking to examine promotion structures elsewhere for the purposes of comparison.

Appeals: An appeal system for Assistant Principals continues to operate. The procedures for appealing are outlined in Circular 003/2018, referenced above. An appeal system for Principal and Deputy Principals has been agreed between the ASTI, the TUI, the ACCS, ETBI and JMB and the Department of Education. This procedure is governed by Circular Letter 0062/2021 which is reproduced below:

Circular Letter 0062/2021

To: The Managerial Authorities of
 Recognised Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools
 and The Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards

APPEAL SYSTEM FOR PERMANENT PRINCIPAL AND DEPUTY PRINCIPAL APPOINTMENTS

The Minister for Education, pursuant to the power contained in Section 24 of the Education Act (as amended), directs employers to implement the procedures as set out in this circular. This circular will apply to all permanent Principal and Deputy Principal appointments in recognised Post Primary schools that have not yet reached the advertisement stage in the appointment process by the date of publication of this circular i.e. the 2nd December 2021.

The circular sets out the Appeal System for the appointment of permanent Principal and Deputy Principal in recognised Post Primary schools. A list of Adjudicators has been agreed by the Management Bodies and Unions and was approved by the Department of Education.

Please ensure that the contents of this circular are brought to the attention of all members of the Board of Management/Education and Training Board (ETB) and all teachers in your employment including those on approved paid or unpaid leave of absence or on secondment.

All parties agree that consistency, fairness and probity are essential in any appointment process, and this is to be reflected in the arrangements for appeals set out in this Circular.

This Circular can be accessed on the Department’s website under <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-education/>

All queries should initially be brought to the attention of school management who may wish to consult with their representative organisation.

Clare Butler,
 Principal Officer
 Teacher/SNA Terms and Conditions

2 December 2021

Definitions

For the purposes of this system the following terms shall have the meanings assigned to them here:

Days: Means calendar days, unless otherwise stated.

Department: Means the Department of Education.

ETB: Refers to an Education and Training Board.

Qualified Service: Means the teacher has qualifications suitable to the post as set out in the relevant appointment circulars and is fully registered with the Teaching Council.



1. Appeal System for Permanent Appointments to Principal/Deputy Principal Posts in Post Primary Schools

- 1.1 Circular 0042/2010 Appendix 1, item 5 confirms "agreement in principle to the introduction of an appeal system in the case of appointments to the posts of Principal and Deputy Principal".
- 1.2 The following system shall be used in circumstances where a candidate appeals against a decision to appoint a Principal or Deputy Principal in a Voluntary Secondary School or in a Community and Comprehensive School or in a post-primary school under the patronage of an ETB.

2. General Principles

The following general principles will apply:

- 2.1 The appeal process will respect the principles of fair procedure, due process and natural justice in the procedural operation of the appointment process.
- 2.2 Where legal proceedings are invoked this procedure shall not be used.
- 2.3 All appeals under this procedure will be considered by an independent third party, hereinafter referred to as the "Adjudicator", agreed by the parties¹ to this appeal system. The Adjudicator's determination will be issued to the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager in the Voluntary Secondary/Community and Comprehensive school or, the Chief Executive (CE) of the ETB in the case of an ETB school and to the appellant.
- 2.4 An appeal may only be lodged on one or more of the stated grounds of appeal in paragraph 3 below.
- 2.5 The appeal will not be a re-run of the interview or any part of the interview.
- 2.6 Any failure to co-operate or frustrate the process by any party concerned will not prevent a determination being reached by the Adjudicator.
- 2.7 All matters relating to the discharge of this procedure are strictly confidential to the parties to the appeal concerned.

¹ Parties to this agreement i.e. ACCS, ASTI, ETBI, JMB, TUI

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- 2.8 The appointment of the recommended candidate will be postponed pending the outcome of an appeal.
- 2.9 Access to personal information pertinent to the appointment process held by the school/ETB in relation to the appellant will be provided to the Adjudicator in accordance with the principles set out in the school/ETB's data protection policy and in accordance with the legislative requirements set down in Data Protection legislation.
- 2.10 A fee of €100 per appeal lodged to the relevant school/ETB will apply. This is refundable where the appeal is successful.
- 2.11 Submission of appeals and the management responses plus supporting documentation shall only be made by electronic means using the appeal form (Appendix A) and management response form (Appendix B) available on the relevant union or management body website. Boards of Management/Manager/ETBs will not accept any responsibility for expenses incurred by the appellant.

3. Grounds for appeal

- 3.1 An appeal may only be lodged on one or more of the following grounds in relation to an alleged breach of the procedure:

For applicants who applied:

- (i) Non-placement of the advertisement on the websites as comprehended by [Circular 20/2012 \(www.publicjobs.ie\)](#) or other as agreed by Management Bodies for the advertising of Principal and Deputy Principal.
- (ii) The recommended candidate does not have the required qualified service to be appointed in accordance with the relevant Department circulars.

For candidates interviewed:

- (iii) Composition of the Interview Board².
- (iv) A computational error in the Interview Board's summary marking sheet of the appellant and this error makes a material difference to the outcome.
- (v) A departure from the selection criteria as specified in the application form.

² Please note that this ground includes non-disclosure of a conflict of interest by a member of the interview board.

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- (vi) A departure from the marking scheme as notified to interviewees prior to the interview

4. Panel of Adjudicators

- 4.1 A Panel of Adjudicators has been agreed by the unions and management bodies and approved by the Department of Education for adjudicating on appeals submitted by the Appeal Date.
- 4.2 Adjudicators will be appointed in order of rotation and will be contacted by Teacher/SNA Terms and Conditions Section of the Department of Education.

5. Operation of the Appeal System

- 5.1 In the notification of the outcome of the appointment process, the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE of the ETB will supply each candidate interviewed with his/her marks under each selection criterion. At this point in the appointment process, candidates who were not interviewed should also be notified of the appeals process and the Appeal Date.
- 5.2 The final date and time for notification of appeals to the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE shall be stated in the letter outlining the outcome of the appointment process. This date will become known as the **Appeal Date** and will be **4.00pm on the seventh calendar day**, with day one commencing on the day after the outcome of the appointment process is issued.
- 5.3 An appeal should be lodged, with the fee outlined in Section 2.10, by the Appeal Date.
- 5.4 The appeal shall comprise a statement of the grounds under which the appeal is sought (see Section 3 above) and a rationale for each of the ground/s stated. In circumstances where an appeal is lodged without a statement of the ground/s and supporting rationale under which the appeal is sought, the Adjudicator will not consider the appeal further.
- 5.5 The appeal should **not exceed 1,000 words** and should reference items in the supporting documentation, if any. Extraneous material not related to the ground/s of appeal (see Section 3 above) will be inadmissible.
- 5.6 Appeal forms should be acknowledged upon receipt by the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager in the Voluntary Secondary/Community and Comprehensive school or, the Chief Executive (CE) of the ETB. Appeal forms received after the Appeal Date shall be deemed invalid.

5



- 5.7 Upon receipt of an appeal and not later than the following working day (Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays) the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE should contact Teacher/SNA Terms and Conditions Section via email to porqueries@education.gov.ie requesting an Adjudicator for an appeal.
- 5.8 The recommended candidate for the post of Principal/Deputy Principal will be advised by the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE that an appeal(s) has been lodged and that the appointment process has been postponed pending the outcome of the appeal(s).
- 5.9 Teacher/SNA Terms and Conditions Section of the Department of Education will provide the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE with the Adjudicator's name and email address within 2 working days.
- 5.10 The Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE will inform the appellant of the name of the Adjudicator.
- 5.11 The Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE will prepare a response to the appeal of **no more than 1,000 words** (known as the management response, see Appendix B). A copy of this response will be forwarded to the appellant by the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE.
- 5.12 The appeal, the management response and each respective party's relevant supporting documentation, if any, shall be submitted by email to the Adjudicator by the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE no later than **7 calendar days** after receiving the name and email address of the Adjudicator from the Department of Education.
- 5.13 On completion of an adjudication, the appeal documentation will be forwarded by the Adjudicator to the relevant school/ETB and retained by the school/ETB in accordance with their Data Protection policy.

6. Outcome of Appeal Procedure

- 6.1 The Adjudicator will consider the appeal, the school management response and the supporting documentation supplied.
- 6.2 The Adjudicator shall deliver his/her determination in writing, within 10 calendar days of receipt of the appeal documentation using the template decision form provided for such purposes (Appendix C). This will be emailed to the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE and the appellant.

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- 6.3 Where an appeal is upheld, other than in the case as described in 6.4, the Adjudicator will advise the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE to recommence the appointment process at the appropriate stage e.g. re-advertise the post or re-interview candidates called for interview.
- 6.4 In circumstances where the Adjudicator determines that an error was made in the computation of marks awarded that materially changes the outcome, the Adjudicator will specify the fact and advise the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE that the highest ranked candidate by reference to the correct application of the marking scheme should be recommended for appointment in such circumstances.
- 6.5 This concludes the provision for external review provided under the appeal procedure.
- 6.6 In all cases, the Chairperson/Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager/CE of the ETB will consider the determination received from the Adjudicator and convey the decision of the Adjudicator to the appellant, the recommended candidate and other applicants, if necessary.
- 6.7 This procedure is without prejudice to one's statutory rights under the Employment Equality Act 1998 as amended.

7. Review

- 7.1 The operation of the Appeal System will be reviewed in September 2023.

7



Appendix A

Appeal Form for Appointment to Permanent Post-Primary Principal and Deputy Principal Appointments

SECTION A – Personal Details

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Contact Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

SECTION B – School/ETB Details

School/ETB: _____

School/ETB Email Address: _____

School/ETB Roll Number: _____

SECTION C – Notice of Appeal

I hereby give notice of an appeal against the decision regarding the permanent appointment to the post of _____

Note: A separate appeal form should be used in the event of more than one competition.

8



SECTION D – Grounds for Appeal

Tick the relevant ground(s) for appeal and enter information to be considered in the text box below. The total number of words allowed across the entire appeal is 1,000.

An appeal may only be lodged on one or more of the following grounds in relation to an alleged breach of the procedure:

- (i) Non-placement of the advertisement on the national website as comprehended by Circular 20/2012 for the advertising of Principal and Deputy Principal positions
- (ii) The recommended candidate does not have the required qualified service to be appointed in accordance with the relevant Department circulars
- (iii) Composition of the Interview Board
- (iv) A computational error in the Interview Board's summary marking sheet of the appellant and this error makes a material difference to the outcome
- (v) A departure from the selection criteria as specified in the application form
- (vi) A departure from the marking scheme as notified to the interviewees prior to the interview

Information to be considered (max 1,000 words):

9



SECTION E – Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation must be forwarded in a separate email to the School/ETB. All supporting documentation must be sent to the relevant School/ETB email address prior to the closing date.

List the supporting documentation you are sending:-

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SECTION F – Confirmation of Payment of Appeal Fee

I confirm that I have paid the Appeal Fee (€100 per appeal lodged) prior to the Appeal Date

Please enter the Transaction Number provided to you for the payment of the Appeal Fee, if relevant: _____

Note: Non-payment of Appeal Fee prior to Appeal Date will result in the Appeal not being processed.

SECTION G - Confirmation of Receipt of Appeal

You will receive a confirmation email when your Appeal Form has been received by the school.

Appendix B

Management Response Form to an Appeal regarding an Appointment to a Permanent Post-Primary Principal/Deputy Principal Position

SECTION A – Personal Details of Appellant

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Contact Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

SECTION B – School/ETB Details

School: _____

School/ETB Email Address: _____

School/ETB Roll Number: _____

SECTION C – Grounds for Appeal

Tick the ground(s) for appeal the appellant has selected:

- (i) Non-placement of the advertisement on the national website as comprehended by Circular 20/2012 for the advertising of Principal and Deputy Principal positions
- (ii) The recommended candidate does not have the required qualified service to be appointed in accordance with the relevant Department circulars
- (iii) Composition of the Interview Board
- (iv) A computational error in the Interview Board's summary marking sheet of the appellant and this error makes a material difference to the outcome
- (v) A departure from the selection criteria as specified in the application form
- (vi) A departure from the marking scheme as notified to the interviewees prior to the interview

SECTION D – Management Response to Appeal

Enter the management response to the appeal lodged in the text box below.

Note: The total number of words allowed is 1,000.

SECTION E – Supporting Documentation

List the supporting documentation you are sending:-

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Please note: Supporting documentation received from the appellant and from the school as part of the management response must be forwarded by the School/ETB to the Adjudicator.

Appendix C

Template Adjudicator Report Form

SECTION A – Personal Details of Appellant

Name _____

Home Address _____

Contact Telephone Number _____

Email Address _____

SECTION B – School/ETB Details

School _____

School/ETB Email Address _____

School/ETB Roll Number _____

SECTION C – Grounds for Appeal

Tick the ground(s) for appeal the appellant has selected:

- (i) Non-placement of the advertisement on the national website as comprehended by Circular 20/2012 for the advertising of Principal and Deputy Principal positions
- (ii) The recommended candidate does not have the required qualified service to be appointed in accordance with the relevant Department circulars
- (iii) Composition of the Interview Board
- (iv) A computational error in the Interview Board's summary marking sheet of the appellant and this error makes a material difference to the outcome
- (v) A departure from the selection criteria as specified in the application form
- (vi) A departure from the marking scheme as notified to the interviewees prior to the interview

SECTION D – Adjudicator's Decision on Appeal

Summary of findings

Name of Adjudicator: _____

Date: _____

SURVEYS 2021

ASTI RESEARCH

Each year ASTI engages in a range of research activities to support its advocacy and campaigning work, to contribute to public consultations and to obtain feedback from members on their views on current issues. This research is provided on the ASTI website. The ASTI also commissions research in advance of annual convention with Red C Research and Marketing. In 2021, this research focused on teachers' priorities for safe school communities post-pandemic.

Rebuilding our school communities: teachers' priorities March 2021

The ASTI commissioned Red C Marketing and Research to gather data on teachers' priorities for building resilient school communities in the post-pandemic period, including how best to support the work of classroom teachers, student and teacher wellbeing, ICT integration, effective school leadership and the physical environment. The strong response rate of 19.5% underlines the importance teachers attached to these issues.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

Supporting the work of the classroom teacher: Teachers identified a cluster of related areas for future investment to support the work of the classroom teacher. Smaller class size is identified by the majority of teachers as the priority investment area. This is strongly followed by associated measures of more time for teachers to engage in non-teaching professional work. Students with emotional and behavioural problems is also a priority area for future investment.

Integrating ICT into classroom teaching and learning: The provision of ICT devices to students is prioritised by teachers for integrating ICT into teaching and learning across education. Training for students on how to use ICT and software is also a priority – as is ongoing CPD for teachers. The provision of laptops to teachers is also a critical area for investment. Broadband availability is also an area for investment – better broadband in school and free broadband for students outside of school.

Supporting all students to be effective learners and ensuring their wellbeing: Access for students to dedicated mental health services outside of school is the top priority for investment. This is closely followed by adequate Guidance Counselling services in schools and ongoing teacher CPD on emotional and behavioural disorders. Future investment also needs to provide adequate learning supports for students with special and additional educational needs. Consonant with a focus on students with emotional and behavioural disorders, teachers also emphasised the need for effective student behaviour policies in schools.

Effective school leadership: Quality consultation and communication are identified by teachers as absolutely central to effective school leadership. This includes consultation with staff and communication to staff – both are interlinked. Middle management is also an important dimension of effective school leadership. Time for post holders to conduct their work was the third highest priority of teachers in terms of future investment. Ongoing CPD for post holders was also identified as important for effective school leadership.

Improving the physical environment in schools: Once again, smaller class size is prioritised by teachers as requiring investment. Such a measure would reduce current overcrowding. Dedicated work-space for teachers – outside of staff-room/canteen – is the second priority for teachers. Other key areas for investment have already been highlighted by COVID-19 safety measures including improving ventilation systems; upgrading toilet/sanitary facilities for teachers; adequate canteen facilities for students; and improving heating systems.

Promoting teacher wellbeing: Consultation and communication with staff again emerged as priorities, in particular, consultation on changes which impact on teachers' workload and time. Reducing teacher workload is critical as is ensuring a whole-school approach to a better work-life balance for teachers. Concomitant with the latter is the need to implement a 'right to disconnect' policy on communications from school at the end of the school day and at weekends.

Work intensity: Work intensity is a constant in teachers' working lives. COVID-19 has had an incalculable impact on work intensity: 90% of teachers stated an increase in work intensity, of whom 62% indicated a significant increase.

Teachers' job satisfaction: 6 in 10 teachers are satisfied with their job.

RATIONALISATION

ASTI ENGAGEMENT WITH RATIONALISATION

Meetings are held as required with the Department of Education and Skills, Planning and Building Unit regarding interests of members employed in schools facing amalgamation or closures. Similarly meetings are held with Education Training Boards concerning the assimilation of schools into their ETBs. Other management bodies and trustee representatives are also met. Schools facing amalgamation or closure are visited by ASTI personnel.

Rationalisation issues which arise include assimilation rights, agreement on school type, position of part-time and temporary staff, contracts, redeployment rights, transfer rights, retirement, post of responsibility allocation, staff allocation, principalships, deputy principalships, planning and facilities. Advice is given to members in relation to these and other related issues. Schools enlist the assistance of the ASTI to advance their claims for funding for extensions, refurbishments and completion of buildings in cases of amalgamations.

POST PRIMARY MAJOR SCHOOL PROJECTS

Details are set out below of the Post Primary Major School Projects that (a) were substantially completed in 2021 and (b) are under construction.

Post Primary School Projects substantially completed in 2021

County	Roll No	School	Project
Cork	70950A	Clonakilty Community College	Extension
Cork	76273O	Gaelcholáiste Charrraig Uí Leighin	New School Building
Dublin	76213T	Lusk Community College	New School Building
Meath	76088T	Ratoath Community College	Extension & Refurbishment
Roscommon	68325L	Coláiste Chiaráin (St Joseph's College / St Aloysius College), Summerhill	New School Building

In addition to the above, circa 110 Additional Schools Accommodation (ASA) projects were completed across the primary and post-primary sectors in 2021.

Post-Primary School projects under construction

County	Roll No	School	Project
Clare	91518F	Ennistymon Community School	New School Building
Cork	62090D	Scoil Mhuire gan Smál, Blarney	New School Building
Dublin	68306H	Edmund Rice College Carpenterstown/ Castleknock , D15	New School Building
Dublin	68308L	Malahide & Portmarnock ETSS	New School Building
Kerry	70560K	Gaelcholáiste Chiarraí, Trá Lí	New School Building
Kildare	61702D	St Pauls' Secondary School, Monasterevin	New School Building
Kildare	76194S	Naas Community College	New School Building
Louth	71750U	Bush Post Primary School, Riverstown, Dundalk	Extension & Refurbishment
Mayo	64520M	St. Marys Secondary School, Ballina	New School Building
Waterford	91509E	Blackwater Community School, Lismore	Extension & Refurbishment
Westmeath	6322IU	Meán Scoil an Chlochair, Kilbeggan	New School Building
Wicklow	61830M	St. David's Holy Faith Co-Educational	Extension & Refurbishment School, Greystones

In addition to the above, circa 220 Additional Schools Accommodation (ASA) projects were under construction across the primary and post-primary sectors in 2021.

SUMMARY OF NEW POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS WHICH OPENED IN 2020 and 2021

Details of new post-primary schools WHICH opened in 2020 and 2021 outlined below.

Area	Size*	Year of Opening	Patron
Maynooth- Gaelcholáiste Mhaigh Nuad	500	2020	Kildare & Wicklow ETB
Blanchardstown West D15 & Blanchardstown_D15 (Regional Solution)- Ériu Community College	Announced for 800 but now 1,000	2020	Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB)
Goatstown_Stillorgan DLR - Goatstown Educate Together Secondary School	Announced for 800 but now 1,000	2020	Educate Together

Enfield (Kilcock school planning area)- Enfield Community College	Announced for 500 but now 1,000		Louth and Meath Education and Training
Citywest/Saggart (Tallaght & Newcastle_Rathcoole school planning areas) (Regional Solution)- Coláiste Pobail Fóla	1,000	2020	Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB)
Dublin6_Clonskeagh & Dublin_6W (Regional Solution)- Harolds Cross ETSS	1,000	2020	Educate Together
Ballincollig- Le Cheile Secondary School Ballincollig	Announced for 600 but now 1,000	2021	Le Chéile Schools Trust
Boosterstown_Blackrock & Dunlaoghaire (Regional Solution)- Boosterstown Blackrock ETSS	1,000	2021	Educate Together
Kilcoole & Greystones (Regional Solution)- Greystones Community College	Announced for 800 but now 1,000	2020	Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB)
Dunshaughlin- Colaiste Rioga	Announced for 600 but now 1,000	2021	Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB)
Gorey- Gorey ETSS	500	2021	Educate Together

SCHOOL CLOSURES

There were no school closures in 2021.

(The ASTI wishes to acknowledge, with thanks, the co-operation of the Planning and Building Unit, Department of Education and Skills, in the supply of this information)

OPERATION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (OHS)

Contact has been maintained with officials from the Department of Education & Skills (DES) for the last number of years and the ASTI continues to monitor the operation of the Teachers' Occupational Health Service (OHS) and Occupational Health – Illnesses Categories

The largest group of applications for retirement on medical grounds for 2021 is on the basis of psychiatric disorder & stress.

Year on year this has proved to be the most significant category for medical retirement applications for teachers. As with previous years musculoskeletal disorders and cancer-related conditions are the second and third most common causes.

It is worth noting that despite the significant effect of psychiatric disorders and stress in the teaching profession many schools still do not carry out necessary Mental Health Risk Assessments.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE (EAS)

The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) continues to provide a confidential and free-of-charge advisory and counselling service to teachers and their family members, including children over 16 years of age. The EAS is operated by Spectrum Life.

The Pandemic has had a profound effect on the employment assistance Service and we have seen a significant rise in contacts for mental health issues such as anxiety. The EAS identified a clear link between public health announcements and contacts to their service.

NCSE DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) was established to assist in the processing of industrial relations issues involving employees of the NCSE. This body is the equivalent of the Teachers' Conciliation Council for these workers. The first meeting of the NCSE Departmental Council took place on November 19th 2019. Represented on the Council are NCSE Management and the following unions: Association of Higher Civil and Public Servants (AHCPs); ASTI; FORSA; INTO and TUI. The ASTI is represented on the council by the Deputy General Secretary. The Council is currently discussing the proposals by the NCSE to change the nature of the employment of Visiting Teachers by the NCSE.

ICTU HEALTH AND SAFETY

The ASTI is represented on the ICTU Health and Safety Committee by Deirdre MacDonald and Executive Officer/Industrial Relations: Conor McDonald. Deirdre MacDonald has continued throughout 2021 & 2022 in her role as a board member of the Health and Safety Authority & Conor McDonald has been elected as the secretary to the ICTU Health & Safety Committee.

Following the re-constitution of the committee the priorities have now been established for the lifetime of the Committee:

- Mental health
- Return to work post-pandemic
- Priority of safety representatives (especially training) and LWRs
- Clean air regulations
- HSA strategy
- Working from home
- Workplace assault
- Occupational injury schemes

Sub-committees have been established to work on Safety Representatives recruitment and training, Mental Health Strategy, Legislative Review & Workers' Memorial Day. The ASTI are well represented on these groups by Deirdre MacDonald in her capacity as board member of the HSA and Conor McDonald in his capacity as Secretary to the ICTU Health & Safety committee.

The HSA strategy for 2022 – 2024 has been released and includes a growing public focus on safety representatives together with psychological risk assessments becoming a priority of safety inspections.

A public consultation process has been completed by the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) who have developed a Code of Practice to ensure that both employers and employees are aware of their requirements and entitlements in a remote working scenario.

At the end of a difficult year the ASTI's position at the heart of ICTU's Health & Safety Committee gave us direct representation particularly in relation to the clean air and the progression of clean air regulations.

RELATIONS WITH PARENTS

The ASTI continues to maintain cordial relations with parents' groups. Formal meetings have been held with the National Parents Council (post primary) and with the Parents' Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools. At these meetings issues of mutual concern to parents and teachers are discussed. The Deputy General Secretary has attended the conferences of parents' organisations and has contributed to their proceedings.

SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE



Annual Report for Convention 2022 Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Committee

Committee Members:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Deirdre Mac Donald | – Chairperson |
| Geraldine O'Brien | |
| Michael McGrath | |
| Lorraine Finn | |
| Eóin Ó hAodha | – Vice Chairperson |
| Mary Lyndon | |
| Eamon Dennehy | – President |
| Miriam Duggan | – Vice President |
| Kieran Christie | – General Secretary |

Executive Officer/Industrial Relations: Conor McDonald provides professional support to this committee.

The Covid Pandemic has brought an increased focus onto the question of air quality. Over the course of 2022 the ASTI has made significant representations to the Department of Education and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). We have remained active participants on the ICTU Health & Safety Committee and our chairperson, Deirdre MacDonald remains a board member of the Health & Safety Authority (HSA) – Ireland's statutory body.

A suite of guidance documents to assist schools in dealing with ventilation issues have issued and the Department of Education has significantly increased the funding for air quality filters. The documents include guidance on steps to be taken to improve ventilation, the deployment of CO2 monitors and room air cleaner guidance. All of this information can be accessed on the ASTI website.

The ICTU Health & Safety Committee has considered and made representations based on the recent actions in Belgium in relation to clean air. These include setting minimum air standard regulations and a requirement to provide visible CO2 monitors in public areas. We are hopeful that the laws will change to afford all workers a legal right to fresh air in their workplaces.

For schools it is particularly important to look at air quality in the context of room temperature. The issue of room temperature is not a guideline but covered in Law through Statutory Instrument No. 299/2007 - Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 Section 7 which states that an employer shall ensure:

- (c) *for other sedentary work, at every workstation where a substantial proportion of the work is done sitting and does not involve physical effort, a serious minimum temperature of 16°C is, so far as is reasonably practicable, achieved and maintained after the first hour's work*

As schools remained closed and teachers worked remotely the question of our right to disconnect came into ever increasing focus. The Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) began a public consultation to develop a Right to Disconnect Code of Practice during 2021 which the ASTI Health & Safety Committee was actively engaged in.

The ASTI have made extensive submissions to this consultative process and have assisted the submission by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). The code reaffirms the right of employees to disconnect from their work and to not receive or answer any work-related emails, calls, or messages outside of normal working hours.

The Code encourages and supports teachers to balance their working and personal lives and to adopt a 'Right to Disconnect' school policy, which includes best practice guidance around wellbeing, working hours, the use of technology and more.

Teachers are reminded to switch off from work, to monitor their working hours and to take breaks away from work devices. Teachers must take reasonable care of their health and safety in accordance with section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (SHWVA 2005).

A joint effort is required to implement the Code of Practice and remind both employers and employees of their statutory obligations. Given that school management have such a close interaction with teachers, their role in ensuring that teachers are able to disconnect from work should be clearly set out.

The ASTI are currently engaged in talks with the INTO & TUI to create an agreed policy for schools which is a fundamental requirement of the Code.

The role of Lead Worker Representative remains a cornerstone of the response to Covid and the role is built on the extensive evidence that workplaces with Safety Representatives (as legally provided for under the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005) statistically experience less injury and harm at work.

Under Section 25 of the 2005 Act, all staff are entitled to select a Safety Representative to represent them on safety & health matters. Section 26 of this Act requires schools consult to ensure co-operation with preventing accidents and ill health. Section 26 sets out the arrangements for this consultation on a range on safety and health issues.

The ASTI Safety Health and Welfare Committee is eager to expand our ability to communicate and interact with School Safety Representatives around the country. During 2022 we have significantly increased our database of Safety Representatives and encourage all Safety Representatives to contact the ASI Head Office to ensure they are registered as the Safety Representative in their school.

It is crucially important the representative nature of Health & Safety in schools remains at the forefront into the future. As such the committee recommends that all whole school and subject inspections should include a review of the Safety Statement to ensure it addresses & audits health, safety and wellbeing concerns in the psychosocial work environment, including organisation of work and workplace culture.

Furthermore the committee believes cognisance should be made of attempts to individualise a workplace health response rather than use the proper collaborative approach.

Finally the committee recommends that specified time be provided to Safety Representatives in line with time provided for Lead Worker Representatives and that sufficient training be prioritised and provided for Safety Representatives.

EXAMINATIONS

After a hiatus in 2020 and 2021 as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic, meetings with the State Examinations Commission resumed in 2022. Among the topics discussed were the following:

- Payment Rates
- Payment Timelines
- Proportion of Examiners who are not fully qualified
- Expansion of Online Marking
- RACE Annotations
- Recruitment of Contract Staff
- Rationale for changes in grading at Junior Cycle
- Release of Teachers for the marking of Second Components
- Modified Assessment Arrangements in light of Covid-19 disruption
- Dovetailing of skills required for Junior Cycle and senior Cycle Examinations

Other issues relating to State Examinations are dealt with in the sections in this Handbook: Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle.

EVALUATION AND INSPECTION IN SCHOOLS

Evaluation of Remote Teaching and Learning (ERTL)

In June 2021, the Inspectorate published the *Guide to the Evaluation of Remote Teaching and Learning*. The rationale for this Guide is as follows: schools will face contingencies into the future which may require partial or full closure and a shift to remote teaching and learning. Specifically, the Guide identifies three contexts:

- When schools are providing remote teaching and learning for all students when students may not attend school due to health restrictions
- When schools are providing remote teaching and learning for particular cohorts of students who are unable to attend school in person due to health restrictions
- When schools are providing remote teaching and learning for other contingency reasons

The Introductory section of the Guide provides a rationale and context for this additional evaluation model as follows:

'When students learn in a range of contexts – onsite in schools, remotely at home or a combination of both - it is important to ensure that teaching and learning are as effective as possible. Moreover, the nature of teaching and learning has adapted and changed in significant ways in the recent past. One of the most striking elements of that change is how schools have planned for and become more adept at using technologies and digital learning experiences and

devices to plan for and mediate the curriculum in both day-to-day on-site and remote learning contingency contexts. National and international research during the school closure period last year has highlighted how children and young people are impacted differently when it is necessary for them to learn in a distance learning context. In particular, the research has indicated that school closures can have a more significant impact on particular cohorts of children and young adults, including children from low-income families; immigrant children, refugee children, children from ethnic minority groups and children from the Travelling Community and those with special educational needs. School closures can also have a considerable impact on all children's sense of wellbeing, their connection with school and their feelings of self-worth. The lack of social contact can be particularly impactful for pupils/students with SEN or those at risk of disadvantage. This poses challenges for schools and for the Inspectorate as to how best to monitor, evaluate and support teaching and learning in a distance learning environment and how to ensure that all children and young adults are enabled to progress and flourish in their overall learning and development in such contexts. Underpinning the development of a model of remote evaluation is a commitment to ensuring that the learning and wellbeing of all children and young people, especially those with special educational needs and those at risk of educational disadvantage and/or early school leaving, are supported where the curriculum is mediated in a remote environment. Quality assuring and advising on a school's provision for remote teaching and learning, therefore, can support schools in meeting the social and emotional needs of their learners and can also provide an assurance that schools are meeting these important needs.'

The aims of the ERTL model are to:

- Support continuity in teaching and learning for pupils/students in primary schools, post-primary schools, special schools and centres for education
- Promote and maintain public confidence in the education system during periods of full or partial school closure
- Enhance the Inspectorate's advisory and evaluative engagement with schools during full or partial school closures
- Further enable the collection, on a national basis, of school-specific data regarding how schools are engaging with children and young people to support them in their learning
- Provide greater support for school improvement in providing for remote teaching and learning by enabling the provision of customised, context-sensitive advice to schools which will complement and support school self-evaluation
- Provide context-driven and real-time advisory support for schools grappling with remote learning
- Support positive innovation and change in how the curriculum is mediated in remote contexts.

The Framework of ERTL, or domains, which will be evaluated are:

- Learner outcomes
- Learner experience
- Teachers' individual practice
- Teachers' collective practice
- Leading learning and teaching

The ASTI made a submission on the ERTL model during the Departmental consultation process with stakeholders.

ASTI OBSERVATIONS ON PROPOSED GUIDE EVALUATION OF REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Rationale: The ASTI is not convinced that the rationale for this new model of evaluation is valid for the reason that the shift to remote teaching and learning remains a consequence of the COVID pandemic and by definition, can only be considered as a temporary – albeit prolonged – deviation from the model of education wherein teaching and learning takes place in schools. There is no contention that children/learners have been impacted differentially by pandemic generally and specifically by the shift to remote teaching and learning. This dynamic is primarily driven by class, home circumstances and wider societal inequalities. In this context, the ASTI is not convinced that there is a need for the proposed new model. In fact, it must put on record its view that this proposal is deeply insensitive in both its intent and timing to the work of schools – boards of management, senior school management, teachers, SNAs, and ancillary school staff.

Working cooperatively with school communities: The ASTI was not aware that the Inspectorate had engaged in two research phases with schools and had trialled the proposed model over two further phases. It must put on record its concern about this departure from standard practice whereby the teacher unions are informed of such research exercises and invited to contribute to same.

Evaluation Framework: In principle the five areas of the Framework are valid. However, the areas of Learner Outcomes and Learner Experiences are deeply problematic. Academic research, in particular by TCD and NUI Maynooth, as well as ASTI qualitative research, has concurred that, irrespective of the socio-economic context, across the student population the level of engagement in learning declined the longer the period of school closure. Material factors such as not having access to digital devices and broadband, lack of space in the home to study and other family circumstances are only one – albeit extremely concerning – dimension of this trend of disengagement. The latter was increasingly driven by the universal demoralisation and demotivation of young people due to missing school, missing the collective model of learning that the classroom represents, missing their friends and their normal life routines. The ASTI finds it inconceivable that the Inspectorate could attribute a causal relationship between learner outcomes in these circumstances and the individual and collective work of teachers. We strongly caution against any such attribution as it would lead to profound anger and demoralisation across the profession.

6 Key Questions: The six key questions underpinning the evaluation are, in normal circumstances, valid. In the context of the dramatic, un-planned, un-financed shift to remote teaching and learning they are inappropriate. The research referenced above has demonstrated that irrespective of the nature of the teaching, the extent of one-to-one instruction, individualised feedback and formative assessment, the drift to disengagement during school closure is extremely difficult to counter or, indeed, reverse. The international research is unequivocal on the importance of school, in particular, the classroom practice of the teacher, to motivate and sustain students in their learning. In this context, the ASTI would again underline its view that the introduction of an evaluation model for remote teaching and learning in the context of the pandemic is obtuse and insensitive.

PENSIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

The Pensions Sub-committee is elected biennially at Annual Convention. The sub-committee was last elected at Convention 2021 following a one-year term extension to the previous sub-committee, along with other ASTI committees, during the initial phase of the COVID pandemic. The current elected members of the sub-committee are: Gloria Helen (Chairperson), Bernardine O'Sullivan, Noelle Moran, Pauline Nagle and Geraldine O'Brien. Desmond O'Toole (Organisation and Development official) provides professional support for the work of the sub-committee. The ASTI President, Vice President and General Secretary are *ex officio* members of the sub-committee. The sub-committee has met three times since Convention 2021 on the following dates: 25th November 2021, 14th January 2022, and 18th February 2022. Two further meetings are scheduled to take place prior to Convention 2022. All meetings took place in a blended manner with some members attending in person and others online. The following key issues were addressed by the sub-committee in the last year:

Pay and Pension Parity:

Pay and pension parity secures the principle that any salary increases paid to serving teachers are applied pro-rata to the pensions of retired teachers. This continuing obligation was specifically acknowledged in the *Public Services Stability Agreement 2018-20 (PSSA)*, and then extended by its successor agreement to the end of 2022. Under these Agreements, the pensions of retired teachers were increased following the 1% increase in incremental pay and pensionable allowances received by serving teachers on the 1st October 2021. As a result, gross pensions were then increased by 1% of that part of the value of the pensions of retired teachers that was linked to incremental pay and pensionable allowances. The impact on pension parity of the latest sectoral pay increase, originally scheduled for 1st February 2022, is yet to be determined.

The ASTI remains strongly committed to the preservation of pay and pension parity and the Pensions Sub-committee has continued to support efforts to ensure that this principle is respected in the successor to the current national agreement which expires at the end of 2022.

Single Public Service Pension Scheme:

The Pensions Sub-committee has also maintained a particular focus on the pension arrangements for teachers who have joined the profession since 1st January 2013 and are members of the Single Public Service Pensions Scheme (SPSPS). These members face reduced pension benefits compared to their more established colleagues as their benefits are effectively based on their career average earnings, rather than on their final salary. The Pensions Sub-committee has continued to express concerns that the contributions made by the DES/ETBs to the SPSPS Scheme underperform the contributions made to earlier pension schemes and that they should be required to make meaningful and improved contributions to the 'referable amounts' set aside each year for members of the scheme, especially during the early years of post-2013 teacher's careers. To this end, the Pensions Sub-committee has been developing a position on the relative contributions and pension benefits of the different superannuation schemes for teachers. The sub-committee anticipates that it will shortly meet

with a representative of the Nevin Economic Research Institute to progress this effort. The sub-committee has also secured a commitment for these matters to be specifically considered at the next meeting of the three teacher unions on pension matters which is currently being organised.

Gender Issues:

Following a symposium hosted by government departments in January 2018 entitled "Rising to the Challenge: Addressing Ireland's Gender Pay Gap", the Pension Sub-committee examined the role that gender inequality plays in determining the pension entitlements of teachers. The Pension Sub-committee remains very conscious of the existence of gender-specific implications for pensions in professions which have a very large proportion of women employed within them. The Pensions Sub-committee met with representatives of the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI) on this issue in February 2020 to examine means by which the union might commission research that could provide evidence of the specific role that gender plays in determining teachers' pensions.

Work has continued, notwithstanding the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, and a joint meeting between the ASTI Equality Committee and representatives of the ASTI Pensions Sub-Committee took place on 16th February 2022. This meeting looked more broadly at the role that gender plays in determining teachers' pensions and directed that a research proposal now be prepared by officials which will be used to negotiate a specific research proposal with the NWCI.

Communications:

The ASTI continues to be very active communicating with members about pension and retirement issues. The successful annual programme of retirement seminars took place online again this year and a recorded presentation on the work of the Pensions Sub-committee given by the chairperson was included at the second evening of the retirement seminars which was run by Cornmarket. Feedback received from members who attended these seminars continues to be very positive. The pensions and retirement section of the ASTI website continues to provide detailed and accessible information on teachers' pension schemes. An article on the structure and key features of teacher pension schemes in Ireland was published in the November 2021 issue of *ASTIR*.

Other Matters:

Winding Down Scheme:

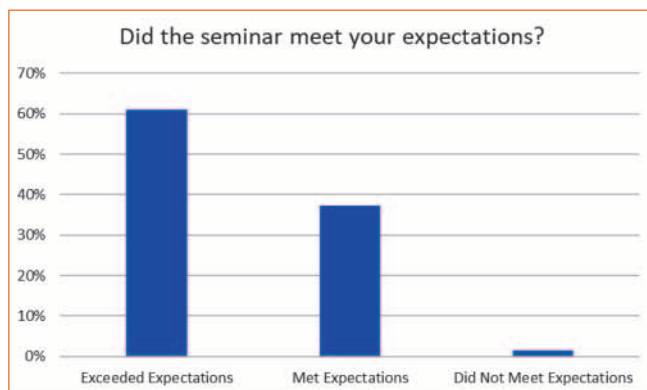
The sub-committee has been pressing for the introduction of a Winding Down Scheme for teachers approaching retirement which would gradually reduce working hours in the period leading up to retirement while maintaining the value of pension benefits. Following representations by the sub-committee a claim was tabled by the ASTI at the Teachers Conciliation Council (TCC) in 2019. The ASTI continues to press for a decision on this claim.

ICTU Retired Workers Committee: Two former members of the Pensions Sub-committee, Denis O'Boyle and Ger O'Donoghue, continue to serve on the ICTU Retired Workers Committee and provide regular reports to the Pensions Sub-committee on its work.

RETIREMENT SEMINARS

The ASTI continues to provide direct assistance and advice to members enquiring about retirement, including retirement on medical grounds. This support is provided by two Head Office officials and an extensive pensions and retirement section on the ASTI website. Furthermore, the ASTI held a series of six on-line retirement information evenings from November 2021 to February 2022, as well as two additional sessions delivered by Cornmarket. The information evenings attracted registrations from 155 ASTI members. These seminars ensure that members considering retirement have access to the information they need to make an informed decision on retirement.

Part I of the seminar was presented by Desmond O’Toole, ASTI Organisation, Development & Industrial Relations Officer, and covered topics such as retirement options, overview of pension scheme, how to retire, calculating your pension, and enhancing your benefits. Each of the six sessions lasted three hours and the official remained available for a further period afterwards for follow-up questions and private consultation. A representative from the Retired Secondary Teachers Association also spoke for some 10 minutes at the beginning of each seminar.



Part 2 involved two on-line sessions presented by Cornmarket representatives and covered topics such as AVCs and financial planning, preparing mentally for retirement, overall wellbeing and life after work. As part of these sessions, the Chairperson of the ASTI Pensions Subcommittee provided a pre-recorded overview of the sub-committee’s role and work programme. Each of these sessions were of 90 minutes duration.

Attendees are asked to fill out a short feedback questionnaire at the end of each seminar, and a summary of that feedback is provided herewith.

BUDGET 2022

The pandemic has highlighted how crucial a quality education service is for young people. The most recent OECD report *Education at a Glance 2021* finds Ireland, once again, in last place out of 36 countries for investment in second-level education as a percentage of GDP. It was therefore essential that the Government would commit to a significant increase in investment in education in Budget 2022. Prior to the budget, ASTI set out its priorities as below. Unfortunately, the government’s delivery in that regard was an utter disappointment.

ASTI priorities:

1 Significant increase in investment in second-level education as a percentage of GDP

In 2018, Ireland invested 1.1% of gross domestic product (GDP) in second-level education compared to the OECD and EU averages of 1.9%, according to *Education at a Glance 2021*. Expenditure per second-level student is \$10,634 compared to \$11,590 OECD average and \$11,543 EU average.

2 Equal pay for post-2010 entrants to teaching

The Government must commit to equal pay for post-2010 entrants to teaching if it is serious about recruiting and retaining second-level teachers at this time. A significant number of teachers have been subjected to pay discrimination for up to a decade. Ireland has experienced a serious shortage of second-level teachers in recent years.

3 Smaller class sizes

Research carried out by the ASTI in 2020 found that the majority of Junior Cycle classes are above the EU and OECD class size averages. This means many students are not getting the attention they deserve. Differentiated teaching, which is the foundation of inclusive education, is problematic in over-crowded classes. Large class sizes also impede the use of diverse teaching methodologies which are very much required for the Framework for Junior Cycle.

Additional teachers were deployed to schools during the pandemic to help schools to cope with Covid absences, support students at increased risk of learning loss, and to help manage the implementation of Covid mitigation measures. The fact is these additional teachers were always needed in our under-resourced schools. A positive first step in rebuilding our school communities would be to ensure these teachers form part of the permanent annual allocation of teachers to schools. This would allow schools to work towards reducing class sizes.

4 School building infrastructure

The pandemic has put the spotlight on school buildings. It is

now glaringly obvious that Irish second-level schools operate on a shoestring budget, with most schools having to fundraise to meet day-to-day meeting costs. An ASTI survey of school principals in 2021 found that in addition to smaller classes to reduce classroom overcrowding, principals believe their schools need:

- Adequate work-spaces for teachers
- Improved ventilation systems
- Upgraded toilet/sanitary facilities for staff
- Adequate canteen facilities for students
- Better heating systems
- More/ larger communal spaces

5 Restoration of guidance counselling to pre-recession levels

This service is over-stretched as there are simply not enough such teachers in our schools. The pandemic has highlighted the need to ensure student wellbeing is supported in a variety of ways including adequate access to one-to-one counselling services within the school community. We must also make provisions for more guidance counsellors to support students to make informed decisions and choices about their future learning and working lives in a rapidly changing global labour market.

6 Digital Technology

Students' unequal access to broadband and appropriate digital devices was repeatedly highlighted during the pandemic. The next national Digital Learning Strategy must include a dedicated strand of funding to ensure that both students and teachers have full access to broadband and appropriate digital devices. Each school should also have a dedicated leadership post to oversee the implementation of the school's digital learning strategy.

A particular shortfall contained in Budget 2022 was the failure to announce any reduction of the pupil-teacher ratio at second level. Modern curricula require that a significant amount of practical, scientific and experiential work occurs in classrooms every day. This is not sustainable in overcrowded classes.

ASTI has argued that as a minimum first step, the temporary additional teaching supports announced during the pandemic must become part of the permanent annual allocation of teachers to schools. Unfortunately, the Government failed to grasp the opportunity to take this step as part of Budget 2022.

The Budget provides an allocation to the Department of Education of €9.2 billion euro, up from €8.9 billion euro the previous year.

Capital allocation remained no more than steady.

While the budget did provide for an increase in the numbers of teachers, these were essentially accounted for by increases required by demographics.

Additional capitation funding is being allocated to voluntary secondary schools in the free education scheme, to rectify historical inconsistencies in capitation funding at post-primary level. ASTI has campaigned for this measure for many years and as such it is welcome.

Restoration of guidance and counselling teaching services for students to pre-economic crash levels has not been achieved. The need for further restoration of middle management posts in schools in 2020 was another serious omission.

Budget 2020 was a missed opportunity. It will have serious repercussions for school communities throughout the country for some time to come.

REDEPLOYMENT

There are two redeployment schemes currently in operation in second-level schools. In addition, a voluntary redeployment scheme is currently under discussion.

The scheme that affects the largest number of schools and teachers is redeployment scheme for teachers surplus to requirements other than in situations of school closure.

Redeployment scheme for teachers surplus to requirements other than in situations of school closure.

A scheme allowing for the redeployment of teachers into schools with teaching vacancies (other than in situations of school closure) was included in the Croke Park Agreement, which was accepted by ASTI members in January 2011.

Nominating teachers for redeployment

If a school or VEC has one or more teachers employed in excess of their allocation, they must notify the Director of the Redeployment Scheme of the teachers identified for redeployment. If a school or VEC believes that its surplus position is short-term or transient, it may present its evidence of this opinion to the Director, who may defer a decision in relation to redeployment.

Only permanent/CID teachers can be redeployed.

In the first instance the school or VEC will ascertain if any member of staff wishes to be considered for redeployment voluntarily. Those teachers who volunteer for redeployment will be offered vacancies first and can choose to refuse a redeployment vacancy.

At the same time, teachers will be identified for compulsory redeployment based on seniority and the school's curricular needs.

Any teacher nominated for redeployment should be provided with a statement by the school setting out the basis for its decision. This statement should include a list of all permanent/CED teachers in the school together with their teaching subjects. It should also include a statement of the curricular reasons, based on the curriculum audit, why the school believes "it is not possible to cope without" the services of any teacher below them on the Seniority List for Redeployment.

A teacher nominated for redeployment can appeal to the Director of the Redeployment Scheme if they feel the correct process and procedures were not complied with in their identification for redeployment.

Identifying vacancies

Each year schools and VECs must notify the Director of the Redeployment Scheme of any vacancies, permanent or temporary, that exist in their school. The Director will then try to assign redeployed teachers to these vacancies.

Assigning teachers to vacancies

A teacher identified for redeployment may be assigned to a school within a maximum radius of 50km from his/her existing school or, where they request, from their place of residence.

The Director of the Redeployment Scheme will seek to match a teacher to a vacancy that matches their qualifications and experience and will take into account the curricular needs of the school, the teacher's preference where more than one post exists, travelling time for the teacher and any other factor deemed relevant by the Director.

If the Director is unable to redeploy a teacher because there is no

suitable vacancy available, the teacher will not be redeployed in that year.

Teachers will transfer their reckonable teaching service for promotion purposes in the previous school to the receiving school, except in the case of teachers being redeployed from one voluntary secondary school to another voluntary secondary school.

Any post-holder who is redeployed will retain their post of responsibility allowance and will be required to carry out in-school management duties in the receiving school.

Redeployment in the case of school closures

The second redeployment scheme in operation in second-level schools deals with redeployment in the case of school closures. It was negotiated between the ASTI/TUI and the Department of Education and Science in 2007. The scheme covers all qualified permanent and CID teachers in recognised second-level schools who are surplus to requirements due to school closures.

Redeployment in 2021

There were 34 teachers redeployed in 2021: 7 “Ward” CID holders (2 of whom were voluntary); 9 arising from surplus in schools (of which 5 were voluntary); and 18 under the pilot voluntary redeployment scheme. 108 teachers applied for the pilot scheme.

Voluntary redeployment

The pilot voluntary redeployment scheme established in 2013 is to continue in 2022. The pilot voluntary redeployment scheme 2020 is confined to teachers in Clare, Cork and Mayo who wish to be redeployed in September 2022. to be redeployed. The scheme allows

Permanent/CID teachers who are employed in schools in these counties to express an interest in being redeployed to another post-primary school. **In addition, any teacher outside of Dublin who wishes to be redeployed to Dublin can apply.**

If a you apply for voluntary redeployment and a vacancy exists, you may be offered a redeployment to that vacancy. However, you will only be redeployed if a suitable teacher can be redeployed to your school to replace you.

Your school must indicate its willingness to release you and so accept a replacement teacher on redeployment. Principals should declare on the form the preferred subject options that the school requires as a replacement for you, if you are redeployed. These subjects do not have to be your subjects; this gives the school an opportunity to address a curriculum mismatch within the school.

The ASTI continues to press for the introduction of a purely voluntary redeployment scheme.

REDEPLOYMENT SURVEY

The following motion was passed at ASTI Convention 2021:

That a committee be formed to survey ASTI members regarding commuting, geographical proximity to their place of work and opportunities for redeployment. The results of this survey to be used to support a demand to the DES for implementation of a nationwide voluntary redeployment scheme.

The members of the Committee are Richard Terry (Chairperson), Fiona Barry, Niall Duddy, Barry Hennessy and Tony McGennis. The Deputy general secretary provides professional support to the Committee.

At the time of writing the committee is preparing a survey on redeployment and issues surrounding it such as commuting. The survey will ask if the wish to be redeployed and their reasons why. It will ask if members have applied for redeployment or have been redeployed and about their experience of the process. The survey will also try and establish commuting distances in order to assess the environmental impact of commuting distances and the lack of a comprehensive, voluntary, nationwide redeployment scheme.

CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION

The purpose of the ‘Scheme of Conciliation and Arbitration for Teachers’ is to provide a means acceptable to (i) the Ministers for Education and Skills and Finance, (ii) the Managerial Authorities of national and second level schools and, (iii) the Teacher Unions; for dealing with claims and proposals relating to the salaries and other emoluments and the conditions of service of teachers and other specified grades, and to secure the fullest co-operation between the parties in maintaining and improving the quality of the education service.

Meetings of the Teachers’ Conciliation and Arbitration Council (T.C.C) were held on five occasions over the past year.

Some of the issues discussed included the following:

[Claim to have the date restriction of 31 October 2018 lifted having been imposed by the DES for the claiming of outstanding qualification allowances.](#)

Resulting from an Adjudication Hearing on this claim, brought by the teacher unions under the Teachers Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme, a new deadline date has been agreed in respect of teachers who missed the original deadlines set under Circulars 0083/2017 and 0051/2018 for claiming outstanding qualification allowances.

Previously, in accordance with the terms of Circular 0083/2017 and Circular 0051/2018, the deadline for applying for an outstanding qualification allowance was 31 October 2018.

The purpose of Circular Letter 63/2021 is to notify Managerial Authorities and teachers of a revised final closing date of 30th April 2022 for receipt of applications for outstanding qualification allowances and of certain modifications to Circular 0008/2013 in relation to Qualification Allowances for teachers.

Full details are set out in **Circular Letter 63/2021**.

[Claim for establishment of an occupational injury scheme for teachers.](#)

Department of Education and Skills and the unions continue to engage on this matter.

The general review planned by the Department of Public Expenditure had been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Department of Education are unwilling to progress any scheme against the backdrop of any central views on elements of such schemes.

It was confirmed that a disagreement would be recorded and that the Official side would issue a formal response which would then allow the Staff side to decide how they wish to proceed.

That teachers acquire the right to opt in or out of the Supervision and Substitution scheme on an annual basis.

ASTI has vigorously pursued this claim in accordance with ASTI policy. Department resisting on the basis that it is a cost increasing claim.

Principal and Deputy Principal Appointment Appeals:

After several years of discussion and negotiation Circular Letter 0062/2021 sets out the Appeal System for the appointment of permanent Principal and Deputy Principal in recognised Post Primary schools.

Payroll Issues:

A number of payroll issues were raised at meetings of T.C.C. throughout the year.

Sick Leave:

Aspects of the implementation of the new sick leave arrangements including pregnancy related sick leave and critical illness issues were raised at a number of T.C.C meetings.

Section 28 of the Education Act: Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill 2019

The legislation to commence procedures under section 28 of the Education Act has made some progress through the Oireachtas. A student and parent charter is proposed. It was announced in July 2021 that the Government intends to amend the title of the Bill to the *Education (School Community Charter) Bill*. This is something the ASTI has campaigned for to reflect the fact that schools are communities, including teachers and other staff. The teachers' unions have repeatedly raised other concerns. ASTI had been informed that the legislation that will be enacted will be an enabling framework. Development of the framework will be done in consultation with stakeholders. ASTI re-iterated that it would not countenance variable school procedures which must be national or sectoral. Several amendments to the bill have been proposed by ASTI.

Bereavement leave:

Following changes to the civil service scheme, Staff side have sought application of the scheme to teachers. There has been no progress on the matter to date.

Partial Absences:

ASTI continually raised the matter of how partial absences are recorded. This matter was also comprehended by the provisions of the "Outcome of Department of Education and Skills and ASTI Discussions – 29 November 2016" document. It has still not been possible to reach agreement on this to allow for the publication of a Circular Letter.

Pre-retirement job sharing wind-down scheme

ASTI has pursued the re-introduction of a pre-retirement wind-down scheme at TCC. The initiative would be aimed at facilitating teachers who do not otherwise enjoy enhanced superannuation benefits, in reducing the amount of actual service commitment in the year's immediately preceding retirement. It would be intended to benefit individual teachers who would, rather than retire, wish to continue teaching on less than a full-time basis. The Department of Education and DPER are considering proposals submitted by ASTI.

Administrative requirements re Child Protection Complaints to BOM

ASTI raised several issues related to the administrative requirements associated with dealing with Child Protection complaints to schools.

Violence at Work Definition and Terms of Circular 0061/2017

ASTI has submitted that the below text from the ILO Convention 2019 should be inserted/reflected in Circular 0061/2017

The Convention recognizes that violence and harassment in the world of work "can constitute a human rights violation or abuse...is a threat to equal opportunities, is unacceptable and incompatible with decent work." It defines "violence and harassment" as behaviours, practices or threats "that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm." It reminds member States that they have a responsibility to promote a "general environment of zero tolerance".

The Department of Education and Skills are still considering the proposal.

Progression of green/ climate agenda in school administration and management

The ASTI raised this item as a general policy issue and increasingly an industrial relations issue in schools.

Availability of adoptive/ parental leave item

ASTI raised this item with regard to provision for Surrogate Parents.

The Official side expressed their concern and regard for parents in these circumstances. However, these considerations come under the remit of a decision by Government and no unilateral decision can be made.

Adjustment of salaries of teachers appointed as principals and deputy principals who had opted out of, but now undertake in their promoted posts, S&S duties

ASTI has continually raised the unjust situation where teachers, who had opted out of the Supervision and Substitution Scheme and had subsequently been promoted to the position of principal or deputy principal, were now undertaking S&S duties as part of their role but continued to have to pay the penalty for opting out of the scheme.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

BUILDING MOMENTUM – PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT 2021 -2022

The ballot of ASTI members on Building Momentum – A New Public Service Agreement 2021 -2022 was conducted in January/February 2021.

The Central Executive Council of the ASTI met on the 9th January 2021 to consider the proposals. After detailed consideration, CEC adopted the following motion.

"That CEC ballot members on 'Building Momentum' with a recommendation to reject the agreement."

Ballot Result:

ASTI members voted to reject the proposed public service agreement Building Momentum by 79% to 21%.

The result of the ballot on Building Momentum was as follows:

Electorate:	18033
Turnout:	5092
Spoiled papers:	14
Total Valid Poll:	5078
YES	1047 (21%)
No	4031 (79%)

However, under the Irish Congress of Trade Unions' aggregate vote process, the agreement was accepted by a majority of public sector unions. In that context, ASTI is comprehended by its terms.

Key excerpts and progress report regarding Building Momentum – A New Public Service Agreement 2021 -2022

Chapter 1:

Economic and fiscal context:

“Against the backdrop of the current economic and fiscal context, this agreement is an extension of the framework of public service agreements, including the most recent agreement (the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018 – 2020)”

“The delivery of school and third-level tuition in new ways, including online, in a very short space of time, to ensure continuity of learning for students, and to facilitate the calculated grading system for the leaving certificate examination, during the last academic year. The September return to classrooms was then managed and delivered with a determination to ensure that schools and colleges operate safely and can stay open.”

Maintaining the momentum for reform:

This agreement reflects a commitment by the parties to harness this momentum for change to meet the immediate challenges that present in the lifetime of the agreement, and to prepare for future challenges. These include:

Ensuring that schools remain open safely and that challenges in learning that may have arisen for children during the crisis are addressed.

Accommodating the potential of remote working where appropriate in line with the Programme for Government and establishing the public service as a driver of best practice in this area.

Addressing the challenges presented in the public service by digitisation and other new technologies, including the need to retrain, recruit, retain and develop a high performing workforce.

Sustaining an agile public service that is responsive to the changing needs of citizens, communities and businesses.

The parties to this agreement are committed to continue the co-operation with regard to flexibility and change to support effective responses to the challenges posed by COVID-19. The parties agree on the need to look beyond traditional ways of working, where necessary and appropriate, and to manage change to ensure high quality public services, high performance, the maintenance and development of staff skills and competencies, and the delivery of measurable outcomes for the public.

The potential for technology to transform service delivery:

Through the provisions of this Agreement, the parties agree to further embrace and support the use of technology through:

Engagement with new and emerging technology, software, mobile

applications and other tools in ways that are productive for employees, employers, and the public.

Implementation and Reporting:

Action plans, linked to the reform agenda outlined in the agreement will be developed for each sector of the public service and will be developed by sectoral management in consultation with unions.

These Plans will establish objectives, deliverables and timelines, and be submitted to the relevant departmental Secretary General by 31st March 2021. Plans will be published by the Department of Education and Skills.

In consultation with unions in relevant oversight or equivalent sectoral IR structures, sectoral management will subsequently report on:

- *Delivery on the sectoral action plan, giving detailed information on progress delivery, and*
- *Compliance with the industrial peace provisions of this agreement.*

The Secretary General of the DES will submit these reports to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform at least one month before any scheduled pay increase under this agreement. Reports will be published by the relevant departments.

Key Elements of the Government's Reform agenda for Education are appended to the agreement as follows:

Education Strategy 2021-2023, annual Action Plans for Education and underpinning strategies and developments, curricular and assessment reform including Primary curriculum; continued reform of the Junior Cycle, and Senior Cycle reform within Schools; National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy (2011 to 2020); Digital Strategy; Gaeltacht Education Strategy; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education Policy Statement 2017-2026; Modern Foreign Language Strategy “Languages Connect” 2017-2026; and Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development.

In June 2021, the Action Plan for Education was published in accordance with the provision within Building Momentum for development of sectoral action plans linked to the reform agenda in the Agreement (section 1.6 of Building Momentum).

Its provisions are set out below:

<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/136436/844e329a-8b75-4fda-bb6d-8619a1e64759.pdf#page=null>

Chapter 2:

Sectoral bargaining:

“A Sectoral Bargaining Fund will be established to be allocated within sectors under this Agreement. The purpose of the sectoral Fund process is to deal with outstanding adjudications, commitments, recommendations, awards and claims within the terms of the Fund and within the Exchequer funding limit in place. All public servants covered by the Agreement will be encompassed by this process.

To balance the need to protect the Exchequer and to address pressure points as identified by trade unions a quantum of cost to be expressed as 1% of basic pay will be allocated to this Fund. Grade or sector-based pay claims and outstanding adjudications and awards will have to be resolved within this process.

In agreement with sectoral management, each sectoral bargaining unit or union will have the option of using some or all of the sectoral fund to

address claims appropriate to the process or, in the alternative, to elect for the funds involved to be used as a sectoral pay round.

Where a sectoral bargaining unit opts to use the Fund to deliver a sectoral pay round, all the union/s encompassed by that sectoral bargaining unit agree that in so doing, they may not pursue any grade or pay or pay related claims relating to that sector for the duration of this agreement.

Implementation Process:

A series of steps will be followed to identify appropriate sectoral bargaining units (by end February 2021) how the bargaining fund will be used (March 2021) and finalised proposals (June 2021)”

As can be seen from the foregoing, the agreement contains a clause to address sectoral issues. The ASTI and TUI are regarded as one sectoral bargaining unit. A fund equivalent to 1% of basic pay will be allocated to a fund where Grade or sector-based pay claims and outstanding adjudications and awards could be resolved within the process. In the alternative, a sectoral bargaining unit such as teachers can elect for the funds involved to be used as a sectoral pay round whereby each member would receive a 1% pay rise. The equivalent of a 1% increase in annualised basic salaries became payable on 1st February 2022 as a Sectoral Bargaining Fund in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Agreement.

Initial discussions on the allocation of the Sectoral Bargaining Fund took place throughout 2021.

It was open to the ASTI and the TUI as a single bargaining unit to decide to either take the fund as a general 1% increase for all members or to apportion it in a different manner.

The ASTI retained an open mind in respect of intentions relating to the usage of the fund, whether as a means to settle claims or as an additional 1% general round increase.

In that regard, we engaged with the Department of Education to secure costings on a number of items that would inform decision making in that respect.

Some of the areas we wished to explore in that context were as follows:

The cost of restoration of PME allowances to post-2010 entrants to teaching.

The cost of an increase in part-time hourly rates payable to post-2010 entrants to teaching by reflecting the updated pay arrangements for those teachers such as including the skipping of incremental points on the post-2010 entrant pay scale.

The cost of restoration of the starting point for new entrants from the first to the third point of the salary scale.

The cost of restoration of incremental dates for ASTI members who had their points on the scale frozen and consequently adjusted during the ASTI/DES dispute of 2016/2017.

The cost of potential restoration of Posts of Responsibility to the second-level system which were lost during the programme of austerity implemented across the last decade or more.

We also asked what the arrangements would be regarding the payment of the 1% increase to emeritus members.

Another key matter of concern related to whether the use of the fund to enable the restoration of PME allowances to post-2010 entrants to teaching would also include new entrants to the profession in perpetuity.

At time of going to press, no decision had been made regarding the allocation of the Sectoral Bargaining fund.

Compliance with procedures and maintenance of Industrial Peace

“Participation in the sectoral bargaining process will require full compliance with the terms of the Agreement by the union concerned, including and importantly cooperation with and operation of dispute resolution procedures and maintenance of industrial peace.

Where issues are not resolved at sectoral negotiations the parties will follow the dispute resolution process set out in the Agreement.

Participation in the process and the implementation of its outcome will be discontinued for any group that engages in industrial action on matters covered by this Agreement.”

Chapter 3:

Pay:

This agreement is an extension of previous public service agreements, including the Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA) 2018-2020. This section sets out the agreed approach to public service pay for the period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022.

The provisions of previous agreements apply save where varied by this Agreement.

The Parties have reached agreement to provide for the following pay adjustments over the period of this agreement.

- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% or €500, whichever is greater, on 1 October 2021.
- The equivalent of a 1% increase in annualised basic salaries on 1 February 2022 to be used as a Sectoral Bargaining Fund in accordance with Chapter 2 of this Agreement.
- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% or €500, whichever is greater, on 1 October 2022.

Basic pensionable pay is to be taken to mean basic pay inclusive of allowances in the nature of pay, which are fixed periodic pensionable allowances and pensionable premium pay.

In accordance with Chapter 3 of the Agreement, a general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% or €500, whichever is greater, on 1 October 2021 was applied to all ASTI members.

Chapter 4:

Haddington Road Agreement and other matters:

The parties to this Agreement recognise and accept that certain measures introduced under the Public Sector Stability Agreements (PSSA), including the “Haddington Road Agreement”, are considered outstanding matters to be resolved as part of this Agreement and are to be addressed and implemented as follows.

Additional Working Hours:

An independent body will be established by end-March 2021 to assess issues arising in addressing this matter pertaining to the Haddington Road Agreement and make appropriate recommendations to be applied equitably across all affected grades, groups or categories and affected sectors. The body will consider, and fully take into account, submissions made by the parties to this Agreement and will be tasked to report by end-2021.

Roll out of the body's recommendations will be initiated within the lifetime of this Agreement. In this regard, to enable commencement of the recommendations during 2022, on the publication of the Report, an envelope of €150m under this agreement will be made available across all affected grades, groups or categories and affected sectors

All parties commit fully to this process, and the process and delivery of outcomes are contingent on the parties adhering to the provisions of the section of this Agreement Resolving Disagreements and Ensuring Industrial Peace.

At time of writing, the final report of the independent body established to assess issues arising in addressing this matter pertaining to the additional working hours under the Haddington Road Agreement has not become available.

New Entrant Teachers:

The parties agree that, in final conclusion to the arrangements put in place in September 2018 as part of the Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA) 2018-2020, the following measure will be implemented, to resolve in full the remaining salary scale issues pertaining to new entrant teachers.

New entrant teachers who have been recruited since 1 January 2011, after progressing to point 11 of the teaching salary scale will, on their next increment date, move to point 13.

New entrant teachers, recruited since 1 January 2011, who have already reached point 12 or higher on the teaching salary scale, will on their next increment date after the commencement of the Agreement, move one point further than they would under normal incremental progression.

This provision has been implemented for eligible ASTI members.

Chapter 5:

Resolving disagreements and ensuring industrial peace:

This section of the agreement sets out the architecture of the machinery to be availed of to resolve disputes that arise.

It provides for a tiered approach consisting of local engagement, a Public Service Agreement Group and a Tripartite Implementation Body.

The parties agree that the TIB is the final arbitrator in relation to matters encompassed by the Agreement.

The delivery of industrial peace is an essential requirement of this Agreement. Accordingly, all forms of industrial action are precluded in respect of any matters relating to remuneration or to any matter covered by this Agreement.

The benefits of the Agreement will be confined to those employees represented by unions in membership of ICTU or other unions or representative associations which have notified the WRC of their intention to comply with the Agreement.

No Cost Increasing Claims

The Parties agree that there will be no cost-increasing claims for improvements in pay or conditions of employment by trade unions during the period of the Agreement.

Review of Agreement:

The Parties affirm that public service pay and pensions and any related issues shall not be revisited over the lifetime of this Agreement save where the assumptions underlying this Agreement need to be revisited. In such circumstances the Parties commit to prior engagement.

Pension Parity.

The principle that there should be pension parity between serving and retired teachers has long been defended by ASTI. This is the concept that any increases in the pay of serving teachers are also applied to our retired members. ASTI pressed hard to ensure that this will be maintained for the duration of the agreement.

Subsequent to the release of the text of the proposed Agreement Building Momentum – A New Public Service Agreement 2021 – 2022, a letter was issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Key extracts state as follows:

“As you are aware, the policy on pension increases which has been in place since 2017 is as follows:

An equitable approach must be adopted for the various public service pensioner cohorts who are not only differentiated by amount of pension in payment (determined by grade and service) as heretofore but also by date of retirement (in particular pre- and post-end February 2012).

·Accordingly, for those who retired or will retire post end-February 2012, to the extent that they retired on reduced salaries, they will receive pension increases in line with the pay increases due to their peers in employment.

When alignment is achieved between pre- and post-end February 2012 pensioners, pay increases will continue to benefit pensions in payment.”

“Accordingly, I can confirm that the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform has given approval to the continuation of the above policy approach for the period to the end of 2022.”

Issues:

Vaccination of Teachers

ASTI Convention 2021 passed the following motion with the TUI and INTO passing similar motions at their Conventions.

ASTI Convention 2021

1. condemns the recent changes (issued on 30 March 2021) to the priority listing for teachers within the national vaccination programme, which have been announced by government without consultation with workers' representatives and
2. demands that:
 - a. the government re-instates education staff as a priority group within the national vaccination programme, considering the essential nature of this work and teachers daily contact with others from a large number of households in settings where social distancing is unworkable;
 - b. within the overall cohort of education staff, pregnant staff, those in higher risk categories, including those who work in special schools and special classes and home school community liaison teachers be offered vaccines first;
3. mandates a ballot of ASTI members for industrial action up to and including strike action unless government schedules the completion of the inoculation of all teachers by the end of the current school year.

An array of fluid and unpredictable events and circumstances contrived in the aftermath of the Convention to hamper progress on this matter.

Together with INTO and TUI, we sought meetings with Public Health officials, the Department of Education and the Taoiseach in order to advance our position. All to no avail in that they have no intention of budging on the issue at the time. One very important

gain was that vaccination was offered to pregnant women and we secured their entitlement to work remotely until the end of the school year.

In wider society, uncertainty and confusion developed around the rollout programme for society generally. The use of the ASTRA Zeneca vaccine was suspended for a time and then only made available to those over sixty years of age. The Johnson and Johnson vaccine was suspended and then was accepted to be used on those over fifty years. There were supply issues. A number of revisions of the national roll out plan were announced.

The situation moved on. The key and realistic objective became one whereby all school staff would be offered vaccination prior to return to school in August.

In the event, the national vaccination programme gathered pace and by August 2021 the matter had become well contained.

Failure to protect staff in early pregnancy

Upon return to school in August 2021, there was considerable public controversy regarding pregnant teachers, many of whom were not and could not be vaccinated. ASTI was to the forefront of the work in condemning failure to protect staff in early pregnancy and certain cohorts of immune compromised members who were not currently eligible for vaccination. With increasing concern in respect of very high rates of community infection and growing unease about the transmissibility of the delta variant being central to regular public health messages from NPHET, we were alarmed that this small cohort of the school workforce were being sent back to school settings prematurely, prior to getting the opportunity to achieve significant vaccine protection. While acknowledging that the vast majority of our members had received vaccines in advance of schools reopening, it was incredible that government expected vulnerable members in the early stages of their pregnancy to return to school buildings without vaccine protection.

We called on the Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD, and public health officials, to engage with these workers directly and to provide short term relief, enabling them to work from home for a short period of time until they have the same opportunity as all other education workers to build up immunity against Covid-19.

For the entirety of the previous academic term, all pregnant teachers were permitted to work from home.

We condemned the failure of the Minister for Education and the Department of Education to provide alternative time-bound working arrangements for such teachers.

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee changed its advice shortly thereafter to allow and advise all pregnant women to be vaccinated. It was particularly disappointing that the only advice the Minister for Education could offer was to take pregnancy related sick leave.

Ventilation in schools:

ASTI has consistently raised issues with the Department of Education and Public Health Officials with the objective of keeping schools as covid-19 secure as possible since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We called for quick enactment of Workplace Ventilation Bill 2021 which provides that all workers be given the right to sufficient fresh air in enclosed places of work and also provides that workers can seek to have their workplace inspected by the Health and Safety

Authority. The legislation also provides that the Health and Safety Authority can issue Improvement Notices where high levels of CO2 are detected.

The urgent enactment of such legislation to provide greater levels of protection for all of our members and everyone involved in school communities is critical.

Following strong and sustained representations by the ASTI regarding the issue of ventilation in schools, the Minister for Education Norma Foley announced a once-off Covid-19 funding measure of €17m for minor works in second-level schools in December 2021.

ASTI has been raising major concerns relating to ventilation in schools throughout this pandemic, especially the need for funding for the provision of HEPA filters in schools.

The funding can be used for small-scale ventilation improvements as well as minor works requirements.

The ASTI continues to raise this issue with the Department of Education and Public Health Officials with the objective of keeping schools as Covid-19 secure as possible.

It was unfortunate that this announcement came so late. School leaders and teachers have been enormously overworked in order to ensure schools could remain open in so far as possible. Not all classrooms have a CO2 monitor and schools are struggling with the challenges of ventilation and classroom temperature this winter. ASTI will maintain the pressure as more needs to be done.

Temporary emergency substitution arrangements involving teachers already working in schools.

On November 29th 2021, the Minister for Education announced a suite of measures to assist in the provision of additional substitution cover for schools. These measures included a temporary emergency substitution arrangement involving a 35 hours maximum commitment by teachers already working in the school between now and the end of February 2022, over and above their contractual obligations.

ASTI voiced its strong objection to the fact that the scheme was constructed on the structures provided by the discriminatory and unequal pay scales that divide and besmirch the profession.

Participation in the scheme was voluntary.

It allowed teachers to provide substitute cover over and above the maximum number of 22 hours per week available to them.

Payment to be made for hours that are delivered under this arrangement. Any hours undertaken were in addition to and did not affect a teacher's existing contractual obligations in terms of her/his commitments to the school(s) and S&S rota arrangements as already agreed and scheduled for the school year.

The arrangement was open to all post primary teachers employed in a school and/or ETB. This includes job-sharing teachers, part-time teachers, substitution teachers and teachers who were on career break.

Before undertaking the additional hours provided under these temporary emergency arrangements, any teacher who was working on fewer than 22 hours per week must first have worked 22 contact hours before utilising these hours

Payment:

Payment was based on the Personal Rate of Pay (to include allowances if applicable). This payment will be non-pensionable. There is no entitlement for these hours to be included in any calculation for incremental progression, service history, CID or reckonable service for pension purposes.

The Personal Rate of Pay for a post-primary teacher is the appropriate personal annual salary (i.e. relevant point on the Common Basic Scale plus qualification and other allowances, where applicable) divided by 735 per hour for each hour worked.

A once-off payment covering all hours delivered under this arrangement to be made to the teacher.

Protocol for changes to work practices at school level

CEC passed the following motion at its meeting in May 2021.

Motion 1

That the CEC establish a subcommittee to formulate a consultation protocol for members considering proposed changes to work practices at school level. On the adoption of the protocol, the ASTI immediately communicate this new protocol with teachers and school management.

The sub-committee drafted a protocol in fulfilment of this motion and it was amended and ratified by Standing Committee in November 2021.

Each school has been issued with copies for display on ASTI staff notice boards.

The text of the protocol is here:

<https://www.asti.ie/your-employment/terms-and-conditions/changes-to-work-practices/>

PROTOCOL ON CHANGES TO WORK PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS

Changes to work practices within schools are always best achieved in a spirit of consensus and collaboration. Consultation should be the bedrock of all changes to work practices. Schools where good communication is normal are invariably places where staff morale is higher and the operation of the school is efficient.

Good Practice: Achievement of Consensus

When change is to be initiated in a school it should follow a process that ensures:

- (a) written copies of the proposals are circulated by management to staff as appropriate
- (b) a forum is provided for the entire staff to discuss the proposed changes
- (c) meaningful consultation takes place which allows and respects all points of view

- (d) adequate notice of discussion is provided and documentation is available to all concerned in a timely manner
- (e) sufficient time is allowed for all participants to make their views known and be considered
- (f) inclusive participation for all, including those with a precarious employment status
- (g) an ASTI members' meeting can take place where teachers' terms and conditions are affected by the proposed changes

- (h) members can carefully consider and attempt to quantify the full impacts of any proposal through the lens of:
 - Additional workload – intensity/difficulty of work
 - Time demands and whether time neutral
 - Flexibility requirements
 - Teacher welfare
- (i) secret balloting happens on major questions that have relevance to workplace terms and conditions

Note: ASTI members are encouraged to review the impact of the implementation of workplace change after an appropriate period of time to ascertain if the measures have achieved the expected outcomes.

Consensus

The term consensus is set out in a letter from the Labour Relations Commission dated 12th January, 2011. The definition of consensus is as follows:

In this context consensus does not mean a simple majority or veto but is provided where general agreement and support has been granted.

It is clear from the above that consensus does not require unanimity but requires significantly more than a simple majority.

The required process in relation to the achievement of consensus is that:

- ASTI to convene a meeting of school members
- This meeting is to address any issues in relation to the matter
- At this meeting a decision to be taken by ASTI members in attendance as to whether to accept or reject each option requiring consensus presented by management
- The position of the ASTI members as determined at the school members' meeting should be communicated to all ASTI members in the school and should also be communicated to management
- If the ASTI position is to reject a proposed option then there can be no consensus in respect of this proposal
- In the absence of a consensus in respect of a proposed change, staff would expect that the status quo would be maintained

Note: In dual union schools a meeting should be held with the representatives of the other union(s) in relation to any proposal that requires consensus in order to inform them of the ASTI position (as determined above).

ASTI SUBMISSIONS

DRAFT TEACHER SUPPLY ACTION PLAN, FEBRUARY 2021

ASTI OBSERVATIONS

Introductory observations

The ASTI is fully appreciative of the enormous strains and pressures which the pandemic is imposing at all levels of educational planning, including in the Department of Education and Skills. At the same time, there is an onus on the Department to identify the post-pandemic challenges and contingencies and prepare for same. Teacher supply remains a major challenge. It has been hidden rather than diminished in the shift to remote teaching. It continues to impact on schools: principals cannot get substitute teachers and PME students are timetabled for teaching as distinct from placement. It is of note that the 2018 OECD PISA Vol that —

The ASTI must also put on record its view that insufficient account is taken by the Department of the negative impact of externalities such as unequal pay for post-2011 entrants to the profession, the high cost of rental accommodation and inadequacy of current salary levels to secure mortgages for first-time buyers, the high financial and wellbeing costs of long commuting on teacher, and the cost of child-care on teacher supply dynamics. There is a palpable sense across the profession that the Department is failing to provide leadership in highlighting these issues and their immediate and longer-term impact on the attractiveness on teaching as a profession.

Data Collection and Analysis

These actions are both practical and necessary. The ASTI is, however, concerned about the 'ongoing' nature of these actions. In particular, in relation to Action 1 - *Develop projections for teacher supply and demand at primary and post primary levels inclusive of regional and national dimensions* – the publication in November 2020 by the DES of the revised projections of full-time enrolment at primary and second-level 2020-2038 provides the evidence base for decision-making and budgetary planning.

Promotion of the Profession /Development of Recruitment Portal

The current set of initiatives for promoting the profession, including 'Teaching Transforms', need to be evaluated in order to ensure effectiveness and higher levels of awareness. ASTI receives many queries from Irish teachers working abroad who considering returning home. The former is primarily focused on salary levels and working conditions. Opportunities for promotion and recognition of non-classroom teaching activities are also frequently referenced. Several such teachers cite the heavy workload of Irish teachers as discouraging. The latter combined with the inferior salary of post-2011 teachers and limited opportunities for promotion serve as strong disincentives to return.

Diversity in the teaching profession must be viewed as a priority objective for the Department of Education and Skills. There is already evidence from the HEI teacher education departments and colleges that the costs of the PME is already skewing the socio-economic profile of entrants to the profession in favour of students from higher SES groups. The ASTI has repeatedly made this point in its various submission to consultations on teacher supply. Students on PME placement should receive a training allowance as is the case with student nurses.

Promoting diversity in the profession will required expanded access to the HEAR and DARE projects as well as to the existing projects in NUIM and Marino Institute. The Department of Education and Skills should commit to funding similar projects in each of the ITE institutions to ensure wider access to teaching across the country.

As regards Action 10, recruiting teachers from other jurisdictions, the ASTI must put on record its view that the costs of registration (document preparation and fee) as well the lengthy time-frame for same is discouraging. ASTI receives many queries from teachers qualified in EU and non-EU countries in relation to problems they experience in getting their qualifications recognised by the Teaching Council. The Council needs to reduce costs and reduce delays for teachers seeking registration from other states.

Higher Education

The ASTI strongly supports Action 12 - to conduct qualitative longitudinal studies of the impact of, and outcomes for graduates on, ITE programmes. This research, if it is to have both validity and utility, must also include working conditions, remuneration and opportunities for promotion. A recurring theme in ASTI commissioned research on teachers is the view that society does not value the work of teachers. This perception is pervasive across the profession and is frequently expressed to ASTI head office staff by Irish teachers working abroad. The Department of Education and Skills must be cognisant of its responsibilities to support the wellbeing of the profession, including countering the negative and inaccurate commentary on aspects of teachers' working conditions.

Action 15 – to upskill teachers in identified targeted areas – should also include a post-graduate diploma for teachers of SPHE/RSE. Not only is the NCCA currently extensively re-developing these curriculum areas, the latter require a strong knowledge base, pedagogical expertise and a high level of teacher self-efficacy. It is unacceptable that no such diploma currently exists for this curriculum area. The pandemic has dramatically highlighted the role of schools in fostering and sustaining students' wellbeing. SPHE/RSE are foundational areas of the curriculum in this regard. Investment in teacher education programmes in this knowledge/curriculum area would greatly enhance the capacity of schools to meet wellbeing goals and wider educational objectives.

Action 16 (c) in relation to student supports is critical: it should be prioritised and commence immediately rather in Q1 next year. The pandemic has had a hugely damaging impact on family finances while sectors such as retail and hospitality, traditionally the source of personal income for college students, have been shut for over a year. Students commencing ITE in Autumn will need financial support. The Department must act now to ensure that students

aspiring to commence the PME in Autumn are not prevented from doing so by lack of financial resources to pay the college fees.

Policies and Arrangements affecting Teacher Demand and Supply

In relation to Action 19 – consider measures to incentivise retired teachers to return to teaching – the ASTI can categorically state that workload and working conditions are major ‘push’ factors out of the profession. Until and unless these core issues are addressed the ASTI cannot envisage that this particular action will have any success.

The ASTI requires clarification of what is intended in Action 20 - review current brief absence arrangements with a view to maximising classroom contact time and addressing the challenges for schools in recruiting substitute teachers. The current arrangements for brief absences are a major source of frustration to teachers and are widely perceived as undermining teacher autonomy. Any move to further restrict teachers’ entitlements to brief absences will be resisted by the ASTI because such a measure would signify an unacceptable move towards the deterioration of working conditions.

Similarly, the ASTI requires clarification of what is intended in Action 21 - continue to work with the Department support services in relation to the delivery of CPD with a view to maximising classroom contact time and addressing the challenges for schools in recruiting substitute teachers. The ASTI policy on mandatory CPD, i.e., CPD to support curriculum change, is that it must take place during the working day. The current shift to remote teaching and learning should not be interpreted as endorsing a permanent shift to online CPD or CPD outside of working time. Enabling teachers to meet with fellow professionals, to develop professional relationships and to build a culture of lifelong learning is central to quality assurance in the profession. It would be short-sighted in the extreme to restrict teachers’ opportunities for CPD to an online model only.

Again, the ASTI requires clarification of what is intended in Action 22 - review State examination related employment with a view to maximising classroom contact time and addressing the challenges for schools in recruiting substitute teachers.

In relation to Action 24 - promote the use of electronic and video technology for teacher recruitment and interviewing processes – the ASTI must put on record that any such move would require full consultation and agreement with the teacher unions, as well as agreed protocols around the interview process and the appeals process.

Concluding observations

The pandemic has imposed innumerable challenges on the education system. At the same time, all of the stakeholders must be concerned about ensuring a strong recovery from the crisis. The problem of teacher supply has not been averted by the crisis. The proposed Action Plan has many sound proposals which will have impact. At the same time, the ASTI has concerns and questions around some of the proposed actions. These must be addressed in order to sustain the confidence of the teaching profession in the wide array of responses to the current supply problem. The latter is not simply one of insufficient supply of teachers in certain subject areas. Rather, it is a wider question of the attractiveness of teaching as a profession. Factors such as remuneration, pay inequality, working conditions, workload, the status of the profession all impinge on the supply side. They must be central to the solution.

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AGAINST RACISM

A.S.T.I. SUBMISSION

JUNE 2021

Introduction

The ASTI welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the public consultation process on the second National Action Plan against Racism. This consultation constitutes a vitally important moment for our polity and society. Globally, we are witnessing dangerous trends of exclusionary nationalism, racism, xenophobia, misogyny, reductions in protections for minorities and a disregard for international human rights norms and protections. No country is immune to these trends. We cannot be complacent in Ireland that our historical experience of colonialism renders us less susceptible. Ireland in recent decades has been a leader in progressive social change aimed at realising the values of equality, respect, diversity, dignity for all. Internationally, Ireland is highly respected for our development aid policy which is focused on human dignity and leaving no one behind. Ireland’s recent election of the UN Security Council is a testament to this international esteem.

Racism in Ireland

The ASTI highly commends the clarity with which the Consultation Paper defines racism, its systemic nature and intersectionality with other inequalities and oppressive practices. The international norms established in the UN Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) must frame and infuse the National Plan: they should not be compromised by any privileging of one form of racism over another. The Guiding Principles in the Interim Report to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth are premised on these international norms and are indicative of the commitment of the Irish government to confront racism in our diverse and democratic state.

The transformative role of education

As a teacher trade union, ASTI is deeply aware of the transformative role of education in shaping the values and social practices in our society. It strongly believes that education and young people must be central to the National Action Plan. The positive experience of Irish schools in integrating migrant students, in particular since the 2004 EU enlargement, has been well documented.¹ The dominant ethos of inclusion across the school sector, underpinned by legislation, societal norms and schools’ mission and vision is a real strength in our society and must be acknowledged and supported by the National Action Plan. At the same time, there are strong and legitimate critiques around this process which must be addressed. Societal understanding of racism is constantly evolving. In particular, young people from diasporic migrant families are articulating their experience of school and growing up in Ireland. This voice is hugely important in informing policy and the political actors. In this submission, the ASTI will focus on those areas which it considers are most central to ensuring that our schools are able to become the inclusive communities they aspire to be.

Teacher professionalism

Education is, at its core, based on relationships. Learning is primarily a social practice as has been dramatically demonstrated by school

closures and the shift to remote teaching over the last twelve months. Teachers are agents of change for young people: when they teach they motivate, support, assist and socialise young people. Teacher professionalism in Ireland is internationally acknowledged and is the driving force for the quality education that is our hallmark. At the same time, the state does not provide sufficient supports to the profession to support their continuously evolving role. Teachers have heavy workloads and work in institutions which are acknowledged as experiencing ‘innovation overload’.² Supports such as access to CPD, professional time for non-teaching work, career progression and mobility are significantly under-developed in comparison to other EU and OECD systems.

Career-long learning or CPD is particularly significant in the context of the National Action Plan against Racism. Teaching culturally diverse classrooms requires deep understanding of cultural diversity. Understanding relates to teachers’ beliefs and values which form the foundation of their relationships with students. As part of any teacher professional development, teachers need time to engage in explicit reflection on their beliefs and values in dialogue with their peers. This is, moreover, an iterative process as teachers gain experience and pedagogical skills. Unfortunately, the dominant model of teacher professional development in Ireland is the ‘transmission model’ wherein information is provided to teachers on new curriculum. Increasingly, the Department of Education is providing this model outside of teachers’ working time. This model is no longer fit for purpose: teachers need time in their working year to engage in formal and informal learning to address the complex and inter-related issues shaping their students’ lives and development – wellbeing, online lives, existential angst in relation to climate change, relationships and sexuality, diverse learning needs including disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic status, community environments and educational disadvantage, and racism. While this is not an issue which the National Action can directly address, it is important that the ASTI identifies in this submission the barriers to teacher professionalism and transformative practices in the classroom.

School leadership

School leadership is determinative on all aspects of school life, in particular the school’s ethos and culture. The personal commitment of school leaders and other members of the school management teams to an ethos of diversity is critical in realising an inclusive school culture. A defining feature of school leadership in recent years is role expansion and intensification in response to rapidly changing societal and educational demands. At the same time, school leadership is significantly under-resourced in second-level schools. The ASTI has reiterated its concern that not only is there insufficient numbers of middle leadership posts (Assistant Principals), in voluntary secondary schools the latter do not have reduced teaching timetables to enable them to engage in their post duties. This is an untenable situation and is undermining the capacity of schools to meet needs and achieve goals.

Curriculum matters

The curriculum defines what and how students learn. It is by its nature multi-layered and depends on high levels of teacher professionalism to meet all its learning goals. Curriculum change has been a constant feature of second-level education for over a decade. The implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle in 2015 was a fraught process for many reasons. The key lesson from this experience is that curriculum change must simultaneously be accompanied by comprehensive implementation supports and strategy. The need for curriculum to be responsive to cultural diversity has been underlined by the introduction of the Traveller

History and Culture in Education Bill, 2018. The Inter-cultural Education Strategy 2010 -2015 has many strong features, not least its emphasis on the role of school leadership, teacher professional development and the need for ongoing research. Regrettably, this Strategy is rarely referenced in the school context: not because its actions and recommendations are not relevant but, rather, it never received the system-supports which such as strengthened school leadership, teacher training, dedicated resources for English as an Additional Language (EAL) or system-wide research. The second national Action Plan should contain actions to ensure that schools receive the necessary supports to implement a revised Inter-cultural Education Strategy.

Anti-racism policy in schools

The Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2018 provide protections for individuals from certain kinds of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment that can happen in education situations in Ireland. The 2018 Admissions to Schools Act proscribes discrimination in terms of admission to a school. The 2013 National Anti-Bullying Procedures are explicit in terms of racist bullying. Bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. These procedures make clear that this definition includes cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying and racist bullying. Research by the DCU Anti-Bullying Centre confirms that while the 2013 Procedures provide a clear framework for responding to allegations or incidents of bullying, concerns exist around the capacity of schools to engage in the prevention and intervention approaches recommended in the Procedures. The latter are central to the concept of the inclusive school and the creation of a positive school environment which foregrounds respect, dignity and safety for all students. The ASTI can absolutely confirm this research finding. Austerity measures in the last decade has resulted in second-level schools losing middle-management posts. The latter are key to ensuring that whole-school policies such as that specified in the 2013 Procedures are delivered, monitored and regularly reviewed.³

In its submission to the Departmental consultation on the 2013 Anti-Bullying Action Plan, the ASTI underlined the need to support the Procedures with a national programme of inservice for teachers. This did not happen. The need for such a programme has not diminished with time. If anything, the changed societal landscape - in particular the growing emphasis on mental health and wellbeing, living safely and ethically in the online space, the need to have specific measures to protect the dignity of minorities and of LBG+ students - is infinitely more complex and challenging than that which prevailed as recently as 2013. Huge advances have also taken place in relation to research on anti-bullying intervention measures, while at system level, schools must implement a Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice. The latter identifies bullying, aggression and violence as key risk factors for students’ wellbeing. The Framework is a complex and multi-faceted approach to student wellbeing. It is predicated on complex organisational practices such as ‘collaborative problem-solving approaches’, ‘school-based screening and intervention tools to assess social, emotional and behavioural difficulties’, ‘policies and plans setting out how inclusive practice will be implemented in a way that fosters school connectedness, acceptance and celebration of diversity’. This Framework was not accompanied by a national training programme either. No additional resources in the form of additional middle-management posts or Guidance Counselling posts were provided to ensure the effective implementation of this Framework in each school. Schools cannot meet these holistic policy goals in the

absence of significant investment in human resources in our schools.

Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy

The National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017- 2021 is an ambitious strategy which recognises the severe marginalisation, disadvantage and discrimination faced by both ethnic minorities. The educational statistics are stark: 13% of Traveller children complete second-level education compared to 92% in the settled community. Of those Travellers who drop out of second level education, 55% have left by the age of 15. The number of Traveller children who progress to third level education represents just 1% of the Traveller community. Moreover, it noted a reluctance to continue in mainstream education as Travellers feel that it is not associated with any positive outcomes because of the high level of discrimination faced by Travellers when seeking employment.

The Strategy states that a key reason for such low levels of educational progression are the negative experiences of Traveller children in school. Many Traveller children are on 'reduced timetables', a practice which is no longer acceptable. Anti-Traveller prejudice is insufficiently acknowledged in school communities and, as such, remains un-addressed. School leadership and teacher training are absolutely critical to ensuring that all students, in particular those from ethnic minorities, feel safe, respected and valued in school. The recent Ombudsman for Children's report on the living conditions for children in a local authority halting site graphically underlines how the former impact of Traveller children's education.⁴

Good quality data

Having good equality data is important to address racism and to monitor the differential educational and post-school outcomes for migrant students. It is of note that the Interim Report is adamant that ethnic equality monitoring is a key tool in uncovering the prevalence of racial discrimination and its impact on lives. It is ironic that information on the achievement of 15-year olds from ethnic minorities is provided by the OECD PISA biennial studies rather than from the State Examinations Commission. The latter does not provide disaggregated data and, in the opinion of the ASTI, this is problematic as so much education policy is informed by data relating to examination outcomes.⁵ The Department of Education's Statement of Strategy 2021 – 2023 underlines the need for policy to be underpinned by evidence, research and evaluation.⁶

Diversity in the teaching profession

There is unanimity in the research on the need for the teaching profession to reflect the cultural diversity of society.⁷ This is a particularly important area of education policy and it is a matter of concern that the 2020 Teacher Supply Action Plan does not reference this need. In Ireland, 99% student teachers identify as 'white Irish', as compared to 85% of the population. In 2014, only one person from the 2,437 students who applied for primary teacher training identified as being from the Traveller community.⁸ Entry to the teaching profession is largely predicated by social class. Apart from the high costs of initial teacher education for individuals (the 2-year PME ranges from €11,000 to €16,000), barriers which migrant school-leavers face include lack of familial experience of third-level education, knowledge of the Irish education system – both forms of cultural capital - and the high academic standards required to access initial teacher education.

The research is unequivocal on the benefits of having a diverse teaching profession. In particular, it highlights that teachers from diverse backgrounds set high expectations for students from marginalised groups, and act as mentors and advocates for them, often with transformative results. Moreover, it has also been shown that the advantages of a more diverse teaching profession extend beyond the experience of students from minority groups, bringing crucial benefits to the entire student cohort. This is because internalised and unconscious beliefs about inferiority and difference are overcome when children see people from disadvantaged groups as professionals and authority.

In 2017 the Department of Education in partnership with the Higher Education Authority, funded six centres of teaching excellence across Ireland, under the Programme for Access to High Education (Path) scheme, to widen access to initial teacher education for underrepresented groups. The Department must continue with interventions of this nature to ensure diversity in the profession.

Conclusion

Schools are, primarily, communities. They serve to nurture and meet the social, developmental and educational needs of young people. The principle of inclusion is enshrined in education legislation and underpins education policy. Schools are assigned significant responsibilities in terms of young people's well-being and positive mental health. Addressing and preventing bullying, including identity-based bullying or racism, is a priority for school leaders and teachers. At the same time, policy makers must acknowledge the barriers to schools' capacities to achieve the complex mission of inclusion and wellbeing. In this submission, ASTI has highlighted these barriers. It is simply not sustainable to attribute more and more responsibilities to schools and *not* provide the necessary resources to sustain their capacity to discharge same. 'Innovation overload' is an acknowledged problem in our education system. Lack of investment is leading to heavy workload, high levels of occupational stress and is damaging morale. It is no surprise that in ASTI research

Notes

- 1 The role of principals in creating inclusive school environments: insights from community national schools in Ireland: School Leadership & Management: Vol 38, No 4 (tandfonline.com) (this 2018 paper provides a comprehensive résumé of Irish research to that date)
- 2 <http://www.asti.ie/document-library/teachers-work-work-demands-and-work-intensity-march-2018/>
- 3 <https://www.asti.ie/document-library/school-bullying-and-the-impact-on-mental-health/>
- 4 <https://www.oco.ie/news/ombudsman-for-childrens-office-launches-no-end-in-site-an-investigation-into-the-living-conditions-of-children-on-a-local-authority-halting-site/>
- 5 <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/>
- 6 <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/56137-department-of-education-statement-of-strategy-2021-2023/>
- 7 http://publications.europa.eu/resource/cele/ee14cd84-ffa7-11e5-b713-01aa75ed71a1.0003.01/DOC_1
- 8 <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/lessons-in-diversity-the-changing-face-of-teaching-in-ireland-1.4120546>

LEAVING CERTIFICATE REFORM JOINT OIREACHTAS COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE A.S.T.I. SUBMISSION TUESDAY 6th OCTOBER 2021

INTRODUCTION

In the last twenty months, the COVID-19 pandemic, school closure and the return to the classroom has dramatically demonstrated the vitally important work of teachers and schools. Across society, there is a renewed appreciation of the centrality of school to young people's lives and that of the wider community. What happens in schools is very much determined by the curriculum in the broadest sense. This is why teachers frequently respond cautiously to proposals for curricular reform. Teachers know that transformative curriculum change takes place in the classroom and that, ultimately, the teacher is the facilitator of this change. Teachers need to be convinced of the rationale for change; feel that their views and experiences are listened to; trust that adequate resources will be provided to support change; and – most importantly – that change will deliver better learning outcomes for students.

The ASTI's submission to this consultation process will focus on the six areas as requested by the Joint Committee. However, it is incumbent on the ASTI to provide the Joint Committee with its understanding of the systemic issues which, unaddressed, will negatively impact on the process of senior cycle reform.

SYSTEMIC ISSUES IN IRISH EDUCATION IMPACTING ON THE CURRICULUM

Investment in education: Investment in education matters. It means that schools have enough teachers, enough classrooms, enough laboratories, technology suites, etc, to deliver a curriculum which is broad, flexible and can be tailored to suit the diverse needs of students. The pandemic has exposed that many of our second-level schools are over-crowded, lack communal space for eating, relaxing and studying, for outdoor activities, etc. It has also highlighted that ventilation, heating, lighting and noise containment is frequently inadequate. These are very basic issues but they impact on all aspects of school life in particular subject choice for students – especially in relation to STEM subjects, range of programmes provided, access to PE and games, availability of hot meals for students, and space for dedicated facilities for students with special educational needs. The Department of Education's own demographic projections indicate that by 2024, there will be 39,000 more students in second-level schools than in 2020.¹

Teacher supply: Prior to March 2020, the most pressing issue in education policy was teacher supply. In November 2018, a National Action Plan was published which requires renewed attention. The high cost of initial teacher training is having a negative impact on supply. Currently, the 2-year Post-graduate Masters in Education/PME costs between €11,000 and €14,000. Student teachers complete a 20-week practice placement (10-weeks block-release) which attendant accommodation and commuting costs.

Academic research has identified the high costs of initial teacher education as one of the reasons for a lack of diversity in the teaching profession. The latter is increasingly identified as a major challenge in the context of wider social policy on integration, inclusion and diversity.

Attractiveness of teaching as a profession: Several factors are key in determining attractiveness, including salary. While teachers want to teach because they want to work with and help young people, they also know that their work is important and should be appropriately remunerated. It is expensive to train as a teacher: it is totally demoralising to do the same work for a lower salary scale and inferior pension entitlements. Unequal pay structures have been repeatedly described by the ASTI as having a corrosive impact on the profession. The status of the profession is also critical. Negative media commentary and ill-founded expectations of the work of teachers and schools' damages morale. Workload is also critical. Indeed, after unequal pay, workload is cited in ASTI surveys as a major cause of work dissatisfaction. 'Intensification', 'innovation overload' and teacher wellbeing are now dominant in the discourse among teachers.

CURRICULUM CHANGE AT SENIOR CYCLE

Note: The ASTI made a detailed submission to the NCCA's public consultation in autumn 2019 on the review of senior cycle.² This submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee is largely based on that earlier submission. Given that the Minister for Education has not yet published her response to the Advisory Report arising from the NCCA's public consultation, the ASTI considers that it should not speculate but rather engage with six areas of interest as highlighted by the Committee.

Assessment options: Assessment is not separate to the curriculum: rather, it is an intrinsic component, the core purposes of which is to establish progress in learning. Teachers engage in assessment every day as they observe their students, provide feedback on their learning, and set and mark homework. More formal assessment takes place to mark the end of the completion of programmes of study, namely the Junior Cycle and the Senior Cycle. The Leaving Certificate examination typically includes a written examination paper *plus* a second assessment component. The latter includes oral/aural examinations, project work, portfolio and practical work. The NCCA's review of senior cycle has identified three major problems: the timing of the assessment; the range of assessment types; and the balance of marks awarded to the two components. What is not identified as problematic is the externally assessed nature of the assessment process.

The strengths of the current model of external assessment of the Leaving Certificate examination were stated in the NCCA's consultation paper. They include a high level of public trust; its capacity to serve as a valid and objective statement of students' academic achievement; its fairness, impartiality and transparency. What is deeply problematic about the current model is the fact that the Leaving Certificate examination is the sole pathway for school-leavers to higher education. The landmark report on this issue by Professor Áine Hyland in 2011 recommends options such as the 'decoupling' of the entry to higher education from the examination; changes to the examination; or variations on the current point system.³ The ASTI believes that it is time to revert to Professor Hyland's recommendations to address the acknowledged problems in the Leaving Certificate examination.

Key subject areas and digital learning: The shift to remote teaching during the last twenty months has demonstrated both the potential and limitations of digital learning. Digital literacy is a key skill across all subject areas. It comprehends practical technical skills,

collaboration skills, social and cultural skills, critical thinking, and understanding bias to enable young people to participate fully and ethically in a digitalised social world. The key issues are ensuring equal access to broadband and digital devices; teacher professional learning; whole-school policies and leadership for the school's digital strategy.

Access, Equality and Wellbeing Supports: Access and equality in education are interrelated. The 2018 Admission to Schools Act ensures equal access. However, the legislation does not address the ongoing problems in the capacity of schools to meet the needs of students with special educational needs. This problem has also been highlighted in the recent policy focus on reduced timetables. There is a need for a more proactive model of engagement by the NCSE⁴ and the Department of Education with schools to ensure that schools have the human teaching and SNA allocation, accommodation and specialist facilities in place when students commence school. A more entrenched problem is the paucity of school and community psychological/mental health services for young people. Students with emotional and behavioural disorders represent the majority of students with special educational needs. Professor Paul Downes, DCU, has previously highlighted to the Joint Oireachtas Committee the need for counselling services in Irish schools; the latter are mainstream in most European countries.⁵ The Department of Education's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice⁶ is, regrettably, largely aspirational as it is not underpinned by necessary human resources such as counsellors, dedicated leadership posts, teacher training for SPHE/RSE⁷ or whole-school teacher training.

Higher and Further Education Requirements, Vocational Options and Career Paths: The senior cycle curriculum should be flexible to give students greater choice and support their post-school transition to higher education, further education and training, or employment. The NCCA's advisory report underlines the need to reduce the 'ring-fencing' between the three Leaving Certificate programmes. The ASTI broadly support this proposal but believes that Transition Year must remain a stand-alone programme and be available to all students. The senior cycle curriculum should have sufficient options to enable students to combine academic, vocational and other forms of learning in a manner which best meets their needs. Central to this ambition is the availability of an adequate career guidance and counselling service in schools. The choices students make in relation to post-school destinations have long-term implications: moreover, these choices are made early on in their education. The Department published a review of the service in 2019 which contained eighteen recommendations four themes: improvement in career guidance tools and career information, better engagement with enterprise, inclusion and enhanced governance structures.⁸ Apart from slow movement towards restoring allocations to the pre-2009 'crash level', no progress has been made.

Irish Language and Irish Medium Education: The Irish language is a foundational pillar of Irish education: it must continue to be nourished and supported to ensure not only its inter-generational transmission but, of equal importance, to give young people access to their heritage, culture and patrimony. Curriculum, assessment and classroom practice are important and have a major impact on young people's response to the language. That is why it is important to get curriculum 'right'. More can and should be done to enable young people to attend the Gaeltacht summer courses. For many families the cost is prohibitive. The hugely positive impact of 'the Gaeltacht experience' on attitudes to the language should be harnessed. Grants should be made available to educationally disadvantaged students to attend the Gaeltacht summer courses.

Grants should also be available to student teachers of Irish to meet the costs of their mandatory Gaeltacht placement. In order to meet Teaching Council registration requirements, teachers of Irish must have a verifiable immersive experience of at least one month in an area designated as a Gaeltacht area, at a cost of at least €650 a week. As far back as 2012, the Teaching Council called for financial support for teachers for this course. The ASTI has also made the case that serving teachers should be facilitated to regularly attend upskilling courses in Gaeltacht areas.

The aim of the Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022 is to support the use of the Irish language in Gaeltacht communities through strengthening Irish-medium education provision. The first reports are encouraging and demonstrate that schools can be highly innovative when they are given the necessary supports.⁹ The ASTI is fully supportive of these initiatives and sees scope for the model to be extended to English-medium schools.

International Evidence and Best Practice: The ASTI supports the principle of evidence-based change in education. The perception by teachers that the change agenda is often set elsewhere leads to mistrust and disengagement. While we can and should learn from other systems, we also need to value and trust what is good in our own education system. The Irish education system has benefited from engaging with the international evidence and best practice through, for example, the EU 2020 policy cooperation framework and will continue to do so within the successor programme, the European Education Area 2025.¹⁰ Policy guidance and technical expertise from multi-lateral organisations such as the OECD and UNESCO is also significant. Policy learning should not be confused with policy borrowing. In this regard, the ASTI must put on record its rejection of the model of school accountability in the Education (Parents and Students' Charter) Bill, 2018. It is premised on a market model of service provider-and-client. It totally fails to reflect the community or social dimension of education. It is, moreover, contrary to the Inspectorate's model of accountability and evaluation which is based on school improvement based on school self-evaluation and teacher professionalism.

CONCLUSION

Curriculum change should be incremental rather than radical. Achieving educational change that is deep and lasting takes time. Moreover, there is inadequate appreciation of the time required to sustain change. Teachers' experience of curriculum change at junior cycle has left them wary and concerned. Teachers will engage with change when are convinced of its necessity and rationale: most importantly, when they consider that it will enhance students' learning and achievement.

For the third year in a row, the OECD Education at a Glance report demonstrated that Ireland was at the bottom of the global ranking for investment in education: Ireland ranked last out of 34 countries for investment in education as a percentage of GDP: 1.2% of GDP compared to the OECD average of 2% and the EU average of 1.9%. This appalling record of under-investment has had a cumulative impact on teachers' working conditions. The aforementioned ASTI research underlines the growing problem of teachers' work is becoming increasingly intensified, with teachers expected to respond to greater pressures and comply with multiplying innovations in conditions that are at best stable and at worst deteriorating. ASTI research, *Teachers' Work: Work Demands and Intensity of Work*, found that teachers' working week averages at 40 hours, indicating that in addition to the class-contact time of 21 hours and 20 minutes, teachers were spending a further 20 hours working outside of the school day.¹¹ Of that additional out-of-school time, 60% of it was spent on preparation for classroom teaching

and marking students' work. This workload is unsustainable and teachers are not positively disposed to any curriculum change which would add to workload.

Notes

- 1 <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-education/?referrer=http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/projections/projections-of-full-time-enrolment-primary-and-second-level-2020-20381.xlsx>
- 2 <https://www.asti.ie/document-library/asti-submission-to-ncca-senior-cycle-review-consultation/>
- 3 https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/04/Aine-Hyland_Entry-to-Higher-Education-in-Ireland-in-21st-Century-2011.pdf
- 4 National Council for Special Education
- 5 https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint_committee_on_education_further_and_higher_education_research_innovation_and_science/submissions/2020/2020-12-17_opening-statement-dr-paul-downes-director-educational-disadvantage-centre-institute-of-education-dublin-city-university_en.pdf
- 6 <https://assets.gov.ie/24725/07cc07626f6a426eb6eab4c523fb2ee2.pdf>
- 7 Social Personal and Health Education/Relationships and Sexuality Education
- 8 <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/24951/dffde726604b451aa6cc50239a375299.pdf#page=1>
- 9 <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/e9253-report-on-case-study-schools-participating-in-the-gaeltacht-school-recognition-scheme/>
- 10 https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en
- 11 <https://www.asti.ie/document-library/teachers-work-work-demands-and-work-intensity-march-2018/>

STEM EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2022 – 2026

JANUARY 2022

INTRODUCTION

The development of the next phase of the STEM Education Implementation Plan has assumed a heightened significance in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, the centrality of science in responding to the unprecedented health challenge, the economic dislocation, disruption to global production and supply chains, and the role of science in informing decision-making has impacted deeply on the public consciousness. The pandemic has also graphically clarified that science and technology are not neutral practices but, rather, can be deployed to serve private and corporate ambitions with little regard to public wellbeing, democratic political cultures or, indeed, the very concept of scientific fact itself.

The ASTI had previously engaged in the consultation process for the development of STEM education policy. In this submission, the ASTI will provide some overall observations on education policy implementation and on specific actions under the four pillars identified in the consultation process.

IMPLEMENTING EDUCATION POLICY

Much has been learned in recent years on implementing education policy. The experience of implementing the Framework for Junior Cycle has served to underscore the necessity for policy makers to

strengthen stakeholder engagement and ensure a conducive context for change. Indeed, these were key points in the subsequent OECD study of the senior cycle review process. Wider stakeholder engagement should not diminish the voice of teachers in the change process. When that voice is diminished, teachers feel alienated and demoralised. As the professionals who are charged with delivering on national policy goals and objectives, their unique experiences and expertise must hold weight in the policy process.

Creating conducive conditions for change is also critical. Investment in schools and in the teaching, profession is the key. Investment in schools means that schools have adequate accommodation, specialist workshops/laboratories, uncrowded classrooms and resources for each subject area. Investment in the teaching profession requires that the student: teacher ratios are proportionate; those teachers have sufficient non-class-contact time to discharge their duties; that teachers' workload is sustainable (heavily dependant on class size); and that they have access to relevant CPD during their working time.

Year on year, the OECD Education at a Glance report provides detailed evidence that Ireland is not keeping pace with competitor economies. In fact, it has been at the bottom of 27 EU and 36 OECD states for investment for a number of years in a row. The alarm bells on this appalling investment record were trenchantly sounded by IBEC in response to the 2021 OECD Report: *"Investment in education and skills is the cornerstone of a strong and dynamic economy and society. Talented people, the availability of key skills, and the ability to connect with education through lifelong learning and research activity are a positive feature of Ireland's competitive offering."*¹

Annual research commissioned by the ASTI with Red C Marketing provides unequivocal evidence that schools are really feeling the impact of under-investment. In the 2020 survey, the majority of teachers stated that large classes have a negative impact on teaching and learning and on the disciplinary climate. At least 4 in 5 teachers stated that class size inhibits the range of teaching strategies used and opportunities for students to engage in group and other collaborative work.²

Under-investment is having a significant negative impact on the profession. Between 2009 and 2020, teachers' level of job satisfaction dropped from 77% to 48%. The main source of job dissatisfaction was workload. Other factors also impact such as little space in education policy for teacher wellbeing; unequal pay for post-2010 entrants; constant innovation and change in education; and not having enough human resources in schools to meet needs. (This latter factor includes not having enough professional time and insufficient professional supports for students) Combined, these factors make teachers resistant in the face of change as they do not have confidence that adequate resources will be provided.

The above statements must be of concern to policy makers irrespective of the particular policy area. It is incontestable the STEM education policy is really important for the economy, for an informed citizenry, for climate change. However, implementing this policy requires sustained investment and collaboration with the teaching profession.

NURTURE LEARNER ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Learner engagement is at the heart of learning. Cultivating and reinforcing this engagement is at the core of teaching. It is simultaneously a task for the individual teacher and the wider

school community. This applies across all subject and programme areas. One of strengths of Irish second level schools is the commitment by teachers and schools to **curriculum enrichment programmes** such as Young Scientist Exhibition, Young Social Innovators, School Green Flag, CIF School Challenge, Take Action for Climate Change, EcoUNESCO, etc. However, teachers' commitment to these activities cannot be taken for granted. ASTI research has frequently found evidence that workload and other duties such as supervision and substitution is eroding any spare time that teachers have. This is a serious development but one, it would seem, that is ignored by the employer.

Quality **guidance counselling service** in schools is fundamental to supporting learner engagement and in making subject choices. The Framework for Junior Cycle locates this service as one of the pillars of the wellbeing programme. However, the restoration of guidance posts in schools post-2009 austerity cuts has not kept pace with demand or demographic growth. As noted in its 2019 Review of the Career Guidance, research among guidance counsellors suggests that initial consideration of career choices usually occurs during the Junior Cycle.³ The importance of the availability of adequately staff Guidance Counselling service in schools cannot be overstated. It is of particular significance for subjects which are highly gendered or perceived as difficult, or both. STEM subjects fall within these categories.

Resources for teaching science require a national audit. Some schools have state-of-the art laboratories while do not others. This disparity between schools is unacceptable and impacts on teaching and learning. Moreover, many schools are over-crowded and do have enough laboratories. Numbers of students taking STEM subjects are frequently constrained by space and many students have to make subject choices at an unacceptable early stage of their education. Another major problem, and one that is really negatively impacting on all science teachers, is the non-availability of laboratory technicians. This deficiency is causing huge additional work for teachers, limits the range of experiments for students, and causes concerns around health and safety in the classroom.

Increased partnerships between schools, businesses, public sector bodies, etc., is critically important. Such partnerships are already well established in terms of curriculum enrichment activities and are highly valued as constituting learning opportunities for all. However, from the teachers' perspective they take time – and that is the one resource which teachers are in dire shortage of. STEM subjects should have dedicated co-ordinators such as those provided for senior cycle programmes to engage in the outreach, research and planning essential to effective partnerships.

The number of leadership posts in schools must be increased to **strengthen the leadership capacity** for leading in teaching and learning. It is worth reiterating the role under this domain of leadership: promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment; foster a commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the holistic development of each student; manage the planning and implementation of the school curriculum; foster teacher professional development that enriches teachers' and students' learning.⁴

ENHANCE TEACHER CAPACITY

Education is, at its core, based on relationships. Learning is primarily a social practice as has been dramatically demonstrated by school closures. Teachers are agents of change for young people: when they teach, they motivate, support, assist and socialise young people. Teacher professionalism in Ireland is internationally acknowledged

and is the driving force for the quality education that is our hallmark. At the same time, the state does not provide sufficient supports to the profession to support their continuously evolving role. Teachers have heavy workloads and work in institutions which are experiencing 'innovation overload'. **Professional supports** such as access to CPD, professional time for non-teaching work, career progression and mobility are significantly under-developed in comparison to other EU and OECD systems.

High quality teaching is essential for quality education. Teachers must deploy multiple pedagogical approaches to enable students to develop mastery of challenging content, to problem-solve, communicate and collaborate on their learning, to remain motivated and develop agency. In turn, effective professional development is needed to help teachers develop their pedagogical skills and their content knowledge. The dominant model of teacher professional development in Ireland is the 'transmission model' wherein information is provided to teachers in once-off or short sessions on new curriculum. Increasingly, the Department of Education is providing this model outside of teachers' working time. This is unacceptable and is undermining teachers' wellbeing.

The literature on teacher learning has identified seven widely shared features of effective teacher learning.⁵ Such professional development:

1. Is content focused
2. Incorporates adult learning theory
3. Supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts
4. Models effective practice
5. Provides coaching and expert support
6. Offers opportunities for feedback and reflection
7. Is of sustained duration

These seven features are central to the concept of schools as professional learning communities. This vision will never be realised if issues of workload, professional time, access to mentoring/coaching, and wellbeing are not addressed.

Enhancing teacher capacity cannot be reduced to a focus on teachers' professional learning. It must also comprehend wider ambitions for the profession. It is a matter of extreme concern to the ASTI that the **attractiveness of teaching as a profession** is dramatically diminishing. Several factors are key in determining attractiveness, including salary. While teachers want to teach because they want to work with and help young people, they also know that their work is important and should be appropriately remunerated. It is expensive to train as a teacher: it is totally demoralising to do the same work for a lower salary scale and inferior pension entitlements. **Unequal pay structures** are having a corrosive impact on the profession. The public perception of the profession is also an important dimension of its attractiveness. Negative media commentary and ill-founded expectations of the work of teachers and schools' damages morale. Workload is also critical. Indeed, after unequal pay, workload is cited in ASTI surveys as a major cause of work dissatisfaction. Intensification of work, innovation overload and teacher wellbeing are the dominant themes in teacher discourse today.

Long-standing problems in **teacher supply** underline the diminishing attractiveness of teaching as a profession. Prior to March 2020 it was the most pressing issue in education policy. This problem was, and remains, particularly acute in STEM subjects. The high cost of initial teacher training is having a negative impact on supply. Currently, the 2-year Post-graduate Masters in Education/PME costs between €11,000 and €14,000. Student teachers complete a 20-week practice placement (10-weeks block-

release) which attendant accommodation and commuting costs. Academic research has identified the high costs of initial teacher education as one of the reasons for a lack of diversity in the teaching profession.

SUPPORT STEM EDUCATION PRACTICE

The professional learning, skills and expertise that has been acquired by teachers and students during the shutdown of schools has been phenomenal. This is particularly the case in relation to using digital technologies to teach and to learn. However, it is deeper than the acquisition of digital skills: teachers have also engaged in reflection on their teaching, on effective methodologies, on diversity in students' learning. Smart policy should build on this learning by making sure that effective professional learning models are developed not just for STEM subjects but across the curriculum. At the same time, the ASTI also point out that there were downsides to remote teaching in terms of teachers having to create digital learning content, teach students without suitable digital devices or poor broadband, being 'always on' and, for most, an exponential increase in workload. These negative experiences can be addressed by good education policy. In this regard, it is fortuitous that the **National Digital Learning Strategy** is also currently under preparation. The Department of Education must ensure a high degree of coherence between both policies as the use and application of digital technologies is particularly germane to STEM subjects. Underpinning both must be an explicit focus on the social context of all science and technology, and the concomitant requirement for enabling students to recognise, understand and engage with the deeply complex ethical issues attendant on science and technology. The key skills embedded in the junior cycle subject specifications provide a template in this regard.

USE EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT STEM EDUCATION

The ASTI supports the principle of evidence-based change in education. The perception by teachers that the change agenda is often set elsewhere leads to mistrust and disengagement. While we can and should learn from other systems, we also need to value and trust what is good in our own education system. The Irish education system has benefited from engaging with the international evidence and best practice through, for example, the EU 2020 policy cooperation framework and will doubtless continue to do so within the successor programme, the European Education Area 2025.⁶

Policy guidance and technical expertise from multi-lateral organisations such as the OECD and UNESCO is also significant. Policy learning should not be confused with policy borrowing. In this regard, the ASTI must put on record its rejection of the model of school accountability in the Education (Parents and Students' Charter) Bill, 2018. It is premised on a market model of service provider-and-client. It totally fails to reflect the community or social dimension of education. It is, moreover, contrary to the Inspectorate's model of accountability and evaluation which is based on school improvement based on school self-evaluation and teacher professionalism.

CONCLUSION

Phase 3 of the STEM Education Policy Statement is focused on implementation. This phase of education policy is the most critical, the most challenging and depends, above all, on the professionalism of teachers. The latter is not simply a matter of quality and standards in teacher education. Far too little attention is given in Irish education policy to that other dimension of teacher professionalism, namely, teachers' working conditions. As has been reiterated above, these are increasingly experienced as negative by teachers and, cumulatively, undermine the attractiveness of teachers as a profession. Workload, work intensification, lack of professional time, unequal pay, poorly resourced and overcrowded schools and, increasingly, the key issue for many teachers, a complete lack of attention in education policy to teachers' wellbeing, are impacting on teachers' response to curriculum change, demands for innovation and upskilling. The role of the ASTI as a teachers union is to communicate these concerns, to advocate that they be addressed and to engage with the policy makers to this end.

Notes

- 1 <https://www.ibec.ie/connect-and-learn/media/2021/09/17/ireland-cannot-become-complacent-with-investment-in-education>
- 2 <https://www.asti.ie/document-library/class-size-and-the-physical-environment-in-our-schools-the/>
- 3 <https://assets.gov.ie/24951/dffde726604b451aa6cc50239a375299.pdf>
- 4 <https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/education/2018/03.pdf>
- 5 https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Effective_Teacher_Professional_Development_B
- 6 https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en

NON-PERMANENT TEACHERS

NON-PERMANENT TEACHERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Non-Permanent Teachers Advisory Committee meets approximately 4 times a year. The Committee represents teachers who are working in fixed-term teaching positions and part-time (casual and non-casual) teaching positions. The main focus of the Advisory Committee's work is the proper and fair implementation of the Protection of Employees (Part-Time Work) Act and the Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act. The other function of the Committee is to advise Standing Committee on matters of concern to non-permanent and part-time teachers.

The Committee members are as follows:

- Lorraine Finn - Chairperson
- Michael McGrath
- Órlagh Nic Eoin
- Cian O'Grady
- Michelle Ryan
- Kevin Wall
- Eamon Dennehy - President
- Miriam Duggan - Vice-President
- Kieran Christie - General Secretary

Executive Officer/Industrial Relations: Bernard Moynihan provides professional support to the committee.

The main issues which are dealt with by the Committee are:

- Issue around teaching and learning due to Covid restrictions.
- Increasing casualisation of Teaching profession.
- Predicted Grades.
- Teacher allocation.
- Cyber Bullying.
- Implementation of the Ward Agreement.
- Building momentum Pay Deal.
- Successful cases taken by the ASTI.
- Communication strategy of the ASTI with Non-Permanent members.
- New entrants to teaching.
- The Pupil:Teacher ratio.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions is the largest civil society organisation on the island of Ireland, representing and campaigning on behalf of some 800,000-working people. There are currently 44 unions affiliated to Congress comprising Unions from Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Congress Mission

Congress will strive to achieve economic development, social cohesion and justice by upholding the values of solidarity, fairness and equality.

The primary instrument for the achievement of this mission will be the organisation of workers in unions. Congress will also construct and advocate for a platform of policies capable of delivering our vision of a just society. We will engage with Government, employers, civil society organisations, voluntary groups and international bodies to promote its attainment. We will support unions in their efforts to secure a fairer distribution of the wealth their members create.

Arising from this there are four key objectives:

1. To build capacity in recruitment, organisation and advocacy;
2. To improve Congress capacity to regulate relations between affiliated unions;
3. To achieve the financial viability of Congress;
4. To create a broad base of support or empathy with a concept of the common good which will help us to translate our vision of a just society into reality.

Working Together

Congress seeks to shape and influence government policy in key areas, such as taxation, employment legislation, education and social policy. In general terms, the role of Congress is to:

- Represent and advance the economic and social interests of working people;
- Negotiate national agreements with government and employers, when mandated to do so by constituent and member unions;
- Promote the principles of trade unionism through campaigns and policy development.
- Provide information, advice and training to unions and their members;
- Assist with the resolution of disputes between unions and employers;
- Regulate relations between unions and ruling on inter-union disputes.

Congress also pursues these objectives at both the EU and the global level. Congress is the sole Irish affiliate of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the representative body for trade unions at European level and is also affiliated to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL:

The ICTU Executive Council meets on a monthly basis. Kieran Christie, General Secretary, currently represents ASTI on the Council. Amongst the issues dealt with at these meetings are the following.

- Economic Analysis of the Irish Economy including Northern Ireland
- Trade Union Organisation
- Industrial Disputes
- Climate Action – A Just Transition
- Public Sector and Private Sector Employment Policy
- International Matters
- Social Justice Issues
- Trade Union (Workers') College
- Collective Bargaining /Legislative Changes
- Pensions
- Pre-Budget Submissions.

Throughout 2021 Congress was actively campaigning with regard to a variety of issues.

Housing: Raise the Roof Campaign:

Raise the Roof is comprised of trade unions, housing and homeless agencies, women's groups, political parties, representatives of older people, children's advocacy groups, community organisations, student unions, Traveller groups, housing academics and experts.

Key Pillars of the campaign are as follows:

Declare an Emergency

The housing situation should be declared as an emergency and the Government should urgently endorse the range of measures outlined in this document.

Deliver Affordable Homes for All

An entire generation of young families and workers has seen the chance of a secure, affordable home stolen from them. The years of failure mean that an average priced home in Dublin is now beyond the financial reach of more than 85% of the population. Meanwhile, over 75% of renters stay in the sector because they cannot access public housing or find affordable homes. Many are paying up to 50% and more of their income on rent.

Investment in public housing was slashed by almost 90% after the 2008 crash and was never restored. But instead of building new homes the Government wastes money on subsidies to private landlords and expensive leasing deals with global investment funds.

Over €1 billion - a third of the 2021/2 housing budget - will be squandered on these subsidies, instead of building the affordable homes people need. Official figures show the State and local authorities can deliver affordable homes for almost *half* the cost of private developers and that we have enough public land to build over 100,000 new homes.

Public Land for Public Housing

In 1975 local authorities **built 8,794 new homes**, when resources were scarce. Less than 1000 homes were built in 2019, during the biggest housing crisis in our history. This is because the Government has outsourced housing to private developers, who seek high prices and profits. We need to invest in building **high quality 'green' public housing on public land** to solve the crisis.

In line with the recommendation from the ESRI, the State must now dramatically increase investment in housing and, in conjunction with local authorities, embark on an ambitious five year programme to build the tens of thousands of public, affordable and cost rental homes that we need. The State-led housing programme must have an explicit **mandate to deliver affordable homes** with 'affordability' clearly defined and tied to income levels.

There must also be a guarantee that all **public land is retained in public ownership** and used exclusively for public/affordable homes along with robust measures to tackle **land hoarding** and speculation.

A Secure Tenancy Model for Renters

Soaring rents and lack of security leave tenants exposed to eviction and homelessness. Tenants here face some of the highest rents in the EU but have less protection. We need to develop a **Secure Tenancy Model** by introducing a rent freeze, banning 'no fault' evictions and creating tenancies of indefinite duration. Tenants need fair rent and stronger protection, including **students** in 'digs accommodation'.

Ending Homelessness

Evictions are the single biggest cause of family homelessness and over a third of the 10,000 people listed as **homeless are children**. The rate of **female homelessness** is more than double that of other EU states, **while 60% of homeless families** are headed by lone parents, most of them women. **Travellers** make up less than 1% of the population, but 11% of homeless people in Dublin. The Expert Review on Traveller Accommodation must be implemented without delay.

A Right to Housing

The Right to Housing exists in some 81 countries worldwide and many experts believe this would help resolve the current crisis and create **a fairer housing system**. It would protect people threatened with homelessness and ensure **official policy treats housing as a human right and 'a public good'**, like education and health care. The Government must hold a referendum to establish a **Right to Housing** to ensure the State meets its obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights and the European Social Charter.

A Local Authority Led Response

The Government should develop a local authority led emergency response to the housing crisis across multiple local authorities to draw together and co-ordinate both internal and external expertise to (better) manage both the existing social housing portfolio, including addressing the issue of voids and the refurbishment of existing units and to meet social housing targets.

Full information on the campaign can be found at <https://www.raisetheroof.ie/>

Energy Sector Group:

With climate change now a key issue at home and abroad, the Energy Sector Group has campaigned to ensure that the practice and principles of Just Transition are embedded in the official policy response.

The idea of Just Transition arose from the global trade union movement and seeks to ensure that we "...secure the future and livelihoods of workers and their communities in the transition to a zero-carbon economy. It is based on social dialogue between workers and their unions, employers, government and communities.

"A plan for Just Transition provides and guarantees better and decent jobs, social protection, more training opportunities and greater job security for all workers affected by global warming and climate change policies."

The ILO has also published *essential guidelines on implementation of a Just Transition*.

The Energy Group has published a report on Just Transition in Bord na Móna and will shortly publish a briefing setting out the key measures needed to deliver a genuine Just Transition across the economy and society.

The Energy Sector Group is also a founding member of the Just Transition Alliance.

Further information can be found at <https://www.ictu.ie/campaigns/energy-sector-just-transition>

YOUTH CONNECT:

YouthConnect is the educational, engagement and student support program of the ICTU developed in collaboration with the teaching unions and the Irish Second-level Students' Union. The program focusses on raising awareness of the realities of the workplace and their rights within it, while seeking to empower and engage students within their school and the local community, in particular with their school student council.

Further information can be accessed at <https://www.cliste.ie/school-workshops-youth-connect/>

THE NEVIN ECONOMIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE:

The Nevin Economic Research Institute, with offices in Dublin and Belfast, is a research organisation which, at its core, has a vision of the achievement of a better, fairer society. It aims, through the provision of world-class research and analysis, to contribute towards the construction of alternative perspectives and possibilities that will lead to the creation of an economy that works for society. It is supported by a number of unions affiliated to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

The Institute is part of the Trade Union related Research Institutes - TURI - which is a joint initiative of the ETUI and the Hans Böckler Foundation .

The remit of the Institute is to:

- advance knowledge and understanding of economics and the social sciences, with particular reference to the economic and social conditions in or affecting the island of Ireland;
- undertake, to the benefit of the public, research and analysis on the impact of economic policy development and its effects towards the attainment of a more equitable and just society;
- publish and promote research findings in order to advance awareness and comprehension of economic theory;

- undertake activities to ensure a broad dissemination of the research and analysis; and
- provide education, training and capacity building programmes to increase understanding of economic and social science policy among the general public.

The Nevin Economic Research Institute was established to provide analysis and policy solutions for the economic and social issues that affect working people and their families.

- Their current work focuses on six broad themes.
- Economic Development
- Wages and Incomes
- Employment and the Future of Work
- Taxes and the Welfare State
- Climate and the Just Transition
- Special Focus: Brexit

They disseminate their research in these areas through a number of outputs designed to appeal to policymakers, researchers, supporters and the public at large. These research outputs include:

- A Working Paper Series
- A Research in-Brief Series
- A Report Series
- A Report in-Focus Series
- A NERI Long-Read Series

In addition to this they also provide a range of other resources including

- A Blog
- A Video and Podcast Series
- A Seminar Series
- An Education Programme (Understanding our Economy)

The Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI) continues to be a strong progressive voice in the country's economic debate. NERI research was a core element of the ICTU pre-budget submission. Access to extensive material produced by the Nevin Economic Research Institute is available at <https://www.neriinstitute.net/>

ICTU DISABILITY COMMITTEE

The 17 member Disability Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions is charged with promoting the interests of persons with disabilities, both within the workplace and in wider society.

The ASTI was represented on the Committee by Paul O'Reilly and by the Deputy General Secretary until November 2021. The ASTI is now represented by Geraldine O'Brien and by the Deputy General Secretary.

The annual Congress Disability Seminar took place as a Webinar on December 9th 2021. The year's theme was, "Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID19 world", and in the webinar examined the employment landscape for disabled people

Among the speakers were:

- Kevin Callinan, President, ICTU
- Marion Wilkinson, Senior Policy / Public Affairs Advisor, National Disability Authority
- Christabelle Feeney, Director, Employers for Change
- Claire Hayes, Coordinator, Toward Work
- Stephen McGlew, Department for Communities (Northern Ireland)
- Una Wilson, Equality Commission (Northern Ireland)
- Peter Brennan, SIPTU

ICTU WOMENS COMMITTEE

The ICTU Women's Committee has 32 members (2-year term of office) and is currently chaired by a representative from Forsa. ASTI is represented by Adrienne Healy, Standing Committee and, and Moira Leydon, Assistant General Secretary. Moira Leydon serves as secretary to the Committee. The role of the Committee is to advise Congress on gender equality issues, in particular, in the workplace; advocacy on gender equality via public consultations and submissions; contribution to relevant trade union campaigns.

During the year, the Women's Committee focused on following issues and made recommendations to Congress on the following issues:

- Gender-based violence
- Gender pay gap
- Costs of childcare
- Monitoring implementation of the National Strategy on Women and Girls
- Engagement with Joint Oireachtas Committee charged with implementing the recommendations from the Citizens Assembly on gender equality
- Sexual harassment in the workplace
- Reproductive health issues in the work place, including menopause, pregnancy loss leave, surrogacy
- Transposition of EU Directive on work-life balance and right to remote work and right to disconnect
- Far right extremism and threat to women's rights

ICTU GLOBAL SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

The ICTU Global Solidarity Committee has 32 members and is currently chaired by a representative from SIPTU. ASTI is represented by Ann Piggot, and Moira Leydon, Assistant General Secretary. The role of the Committee is to advise Congress on global solidarity and sustainable development issues, including developing motions and policy from Congress BDC.

During the year, the Global Solidarity Committee focused on following issues and made recommendations to Congress on the following issues:

- Sustainable Development Goal 8 – decent work for all
- Business, human rights and due diligence
- Just transition and climate change
- Human trafficking and migrant workers
- Child labour and global campaign for the elimination of child labour
- Irish Aid development aid programme and human rights
- New social contract and work of international trade union federations

The Committee also had two long-standing campaigns, Justice for Colombia and Justice for Palestine, including the ICTU policy of boycott, divest and sanctions which aims to put pressure on Israel to ensure that it complies with international law and respect the human rights of the Palestinian people.

The 2019 Global Solidarity Summer School focused on the work of the International Labour Organisation in recognition of its centenary celebration.

EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL /ETUCE

Established in 1977, the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) is the teachers' social partner at European level and a defender of teachers' interests to the European Commission. ASTI is an affiliate.

In November 2010 a new European Structure was adopted by the Extraordinary Conference / General Assembly, at which ETUCE became an integrated part of Education International, EI. ETUCE is now the EI Regional Structure in Europe.

Following the new structure, ETUCE represents 132 teacher unions in 50 countries. In total numbers, ETUCE represents 11 million members all over Europe.

ETUCE is composed of national trade unions of teachers and other staff in general education - early childhood education, primary education, secondary education, vocational education and training as well as higher education and research. ETUCE is also a European Trade Union Federation of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

The aims of the ETUCE are:

- To promote and implement the aims of Education International (EI) in the European Region
- To advise the EI Executive Board on policies and activities to be undertaken by EI in the European Region, including the development of responses to proposals and policies which emanate from other international bodies such as OECD or UNESCO
- To develop and maintain positive relationships with organizations in Europe which have similar aims and objectives, including ETUC and PERC/ITUC
- To determine and promote policies in relation to the Council of Europe, and any such other European inter-governmental body, which addresses issues of concern to education unions
- To promote the development of strong independent and democratic education unions throughout the European Region

- To determine and promote policies in relation to European Union (EU) and EFTA matters
- To represent member organizations in EU consultative structures and at EU meetings
- To respond to proposals, policies and decisions of the EU affecting the members of education unions in Europe
- To develop and implement projects and programs designed to further the interests of education unions in the European Region and, especially, in the EU/EFTA countries
- To be the social partner for education workers in the EU Social Dialogue process
- To be the trade union federation representing the education unions in the ETUC structures

On the 5th and 6th of July, 2021, an ETUCE Extraordinary Conference took place remotely. Ann Piggott, President and Kieran Christie, General Secretary represented ASTI at the event. They were joined by representatives of Education Trade Unions from across Europe, representing more than 11 million teachers and other education personnel, gathered virtually to discuss the future of the education sector in Europe.

Larry Flanagan, ETUCE President and chair of the Conference, opened the Conference by welcoming the education trade unions' delegates and members, and inviting the participants to respect a moment of silence for recently deceased colleagues. *"Teachers and education trade unions should be proud of what they have achieved during these difficult times of global pandemic"*, he said.

A number of guest speakers addressed the conference.

The theme of the Conference *"For an Education-led recovery"* was introduced by Susan Flocken, ETUCE Director. She insisted that this crisis has challenged teachers and other education personnel in unprecedented ways and that it is the role of the education trade unions in Europe to adopt strategies to support their work.

Themis Christophidou, Director-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture at the European Commission, presented the initiatives implemented by the European Commission to support teachers in Europe.

David Edwards, General Secretary of Education International, provided examples of the impact of the crisis on human rights and democracy in the world and underlined the importance of education trade unions for a sustainable and democratic recovery.

Luca Visentini, General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation emphasised the importance of a strong collaboration between trade unions at the European level, as well as the crucial role played by trade unions in protecting workers' rights.

Andy Hargreaves, Adviser in Education to the First Minister of Scotland gave an engaging and thought-provoking talk on strategies for students' engagement and post-pandemic education in these times of convergence of crises.

A presentation on Education and Climate Change and the role of teachers in addressing this global challenge, by Ms Lučka Kajfež Bogataj, Professor at Ljubljana University and joint recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 also took place. She stated *"There is no vaccine for climate change. Climate change is already here, and it will not go away. We need to act now. As teachers we should address the root*

causes of climate change, as well as the amplified inequalities caused by its effects. With the proper approach, we can have an impact. We can do more. We can do different. Each one of us."

Howard Stevenson, from the University of Nottingham, gave a presentation on Trade Union Organising. He stated: "Organising is what we do. There will be no education-led recovery unless movements, depending on strong trade union organising, are created."

The delegates debated the demands of the education trade union sector in Europe for social change in the context of climate change education, equality and inclusion, artificial intelligence, and digitalisation. They discussed and endorsed strategies on how to address the existing and future challenges of the teaching profession in the context of the COVID-19 recovery. Important policy documents were adopted giving ETUCE and its member organisations a solid basis to implement its work programme during the current mandate.

The Resolutions and Action Plans that were adopted are intended to support the work of teachers and other education personnel in Europe and inspire other actors in education to use this pandemic as an opportunity to further enhance trade union capacity and fight harder for teachers' rights. The education sector has a key role to play in planning the recovery and the adopted strategies support this effort.

The following Resolutions and Action Plans were adopted by the ETUCE 2021 Extraordinary Conference:

- **Resolution "For an Education-led recovery"**. For full text of this resolution see: <https://www.csee-etuce.org/en/resources/resolutions/4530-for-an-education-led-recovery-2021>
- **Resolution "Artificial Intelligence in the Education Sector"**. For full text of this resolution see: <https://www.csee-etuce.org/en/resources/resolutions/4532-artificial-intelligence-in-the-education-sector-2021>
- **Resolution "For a sustainable future of Europe: the role of education trade unions in Europe in addressing education and environment for social change"**. For full text of this resolution see: <https://www.csee-etuce.org/en/resources/resolutions/4533-for-a-sustainable-future-of-europe-the-role-of-education-trade-unions-in-europe-in-addressing-education-and-environment-for-social-change-2021>
- **ETUCE Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**: This Action Plan aims at presenting a comprehensive and sustainable strategy for ensuring equality, inclusion and non-discrimination in education and society that can be implemented by all ETUCE member organisations and is based on concrete actions.
For full text of this resolution see: <https://www.csee-etuce.org/en/resources/policy-papers/4534-etuce-action-plan-on-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-2021>
- **ETUCE Action Plan on Organising and Renewal**: This Action Plan present a comprehensive and sustainable strategy to ensure that all ETUCE member organisations are supported in their efforts to address, within their structures, issues of renewal and organising.
For full text of this resolution see: <https://www.csee-etuce.org/en/resources/policy-papers/3994-etuce-action-plan-on-organising-and-renewal-2020>

TEACHING COUNCIL

Annual Convention Report 2022

Meetings were held solely online prior to September 2022 when they commenced being held in hybrid format with members attending in person and others joining online.

New Registration Database – NOVUS:

Miller, the old database, closed on the evening of October 6th 2021 and NOVUS, the new database and portal, went live on October 14th 2021. Registration services were unavailable during this period and there was a communication of same to all registered teachers and on social media etc.

Emails with unique portal registration links for the new system have issued to all registered teachers and large numbers have registered. If you haven't registered, please search back through your Teaching Council emails and each registered teacher should be able to find the email with his/her personalised link in an October mailing.

Online applications will now be submitted for registration, qualification assessment, renewal, vetting, Droichead, extension requests, change of details.

Teacher Supply:

As of 1/2/22 there were 112,579 teachers currently registered with the Teaching Council and the break-down is as follows:

- Route 1 – Primary 52,445
- Route 2 – Post-Primary 47,687
- Route 3 – Further Education 16,555
- Route 4 – Other 1,369

There are over 9,000 teachers registered with Sub Seeker for substitution purposes with almost 3,500 of those at post-primary.

Upskilling: There will be an increase of places offered on upskilling programmes currently running in the subjects of Physics, Mathematics and Spanish. A call for a new upskilling programme in Irish will also be issued by the Higher Education Authority over the coming months.

The next Consultative Forum on Teacher Supply is planned for May 2022.

Accreditation of new programmes of Initial Teacher Education:

The following 3 teacher education programmes were approved by Council in the last year:

- *Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Art, Design and Graphics*
Galway Mayo Institute of Technology
[4-year concurrent teaching qualification]
- *BA Computer Science & Mathematical Studies*
NUI Galway
- *Bachelor of Science (Education) in Mathematics and Computer Science*
University of Limerick

Curricular Subject Registration Requirements:

Registration requirements have been approved for the new curricular languages of Lithuanian, Polish, Chinese and Portuguese.

Registration renewal:

Although the Council, and teachers on the register, would like an automatic registration renewal option for ease for teachers and administration it is not possible due to the legislative requirements. 97% of renewals are processed online. In total approximately 100,000 teachers renewed their registration during 2021.

Conditional Registration:

A teacher granted conditional registration is given 3 years to comply with the shortcoming, after which they can apply for an extension if for some reason they have been unable to fulfil their conditions during this period. Automatic emails/SMS are issued from the database at 6, 4, and 3 months in advance of conditions expiring. A 28-day notification is issued by tracked post to teachers who have not engaged.

Vetting:

The vetting and re-vetting processes are continuing and teachers are given 5-6 months of advance notice.

Fitness to Teach:

Investigation Stage:

At time of writing there were approximately 25 live complaints before the Investigating Committee. These complaints are at various stages of investigation. Some take longer than others to process for various reasons such as seeking more information, difficulty in getting information, ambiguity regarding whether local procedures have been exhausted, granting a request for deferral or waiting on the outcome of court procedures.

Most cases do not make it beyond Investigating Committee. The vast majority of allegations end at Investigation Committee stage without a referral to Disciplinary Committee as it is decided that the teacher does not have a case to answer.

The IC has 11 members, 7 of whom are teachers. It is written into the Teaching Council Acts that the Deputy Chairperson of the Council shall chair the Investigating Committee.

How the process works:

When a complaint comes into the Teaching Council the Director of Council can refuse the complaint on 4 grounds namely if the complaint is deemed frivolous, vexatious, bad faith or abuse of process. However, a complainant has 21 days in which they can appeal the Director's decision. In the event of the appeal of a complaint that the Director has refused, this complaint will come before the Investigating Committee on appeal.

Regarding any complaint which comes before the Investigating Committee there are initial decisions which must be taken:

- Does the complaint relate to the teacher's fitness to teach?
and
- Have local procedures been exhausted? Currently this indicates section 24 Procedures (disciplinary procedures) as section 28 of the Education Act which will legally mandate schools to use local complaints procedures has still not been enacted. In some cases, it becomes apparent that the section 24 procedures have not been commenced or are not contemplated by the school and in such cases, they are deemed exhausted.

If a complaint does not relate to a teacher's fitness to teach, or if a complaint is the subject of section 24 procedures at the school, it can be refused by the Investigating Committee at this point.

Regarding the above considerations:

1. Schools sometimes choose not to contemplate local procedures and legally they cannot be compelled to do so (in the absence of Section 28 being commenced) which can result in cases being dealt with at regulator level. Many complaints which are submitted to the Council would be much appropriately placed, in the Teaching Council's view, at school level where they could be addressed and resolved at local level.
2. Once it is established that the allegation, if true, would relate to fitness to teach and that there are no school procedures in train the Act specifies that the Teaching Council 'shall' investigate. The Act does not give any authority to the Investigating Committee to decide to investigate or not to investigate a particular complaint. Once the 2 conditions above are satisfied the Investigating Committee is compelled to investigate. This is a bind on the committee within the Act.

Disciplinary / Inquiry Stage:

There are approximately 15 inquiries pending at Disciplinary Committee level. 5 inquiries were held in 2021. The calendar of inquiries is available to view on the Teaching Council website beneath the Fitness to Teach tab.

3 Findings and Decisions have been published in 2021 and are available to view on the website under the same tab. In one case the registered teacher is named but this is not the case for the two other inquiries' findings. Council decisions regarding the publishing of registered teachers' names (subjects of inquiries) are taken on a case by case basis.

'Section 46B of the Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015 provides that the Teaching Council shall, 'if satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so', publish details of the findings and the decisions, in relation to sanction, of Inquiry Panels of the Disciplinary Committee. Details will remain on the website for varying periods ranging from 6 to 24 months, depending on the seriousness of the sanction (if any).'

Section 28 of the Education Act 1998:

The difficulty in relation to the non-implementation of Section 28 of the 1998 Education Act still remains. Section 28 compels school management to employ procedures to deal with complaints at local level.

As a result, until such time as Section 28 is commenced, a teacher can be complained about to the Teaching Council without any attempts to resolve the issue at school level.

The Teaching Council, unions and other bodies represented on the Council have written to different Ministers for Education in this regard over the past number of years with no resolution to date.

The last Minister for Education published the Student and Parent Charter Bill 2019 and it was the Minister's intention that as part of that Bill, local procedures would be statutorily commenced to fulfil the implementation of Section 28.

ASTI members of the Teaching Council are very aware that our union is fully supportive of putting in place a complaints procedure that would ensure that complaints would, in the main, be dealt with at school level without the need to complain to the Teaching Council.

ASTI members of Council are also acutely aware that there are many aspects of the 2019 Bill to which ASTI is opposed. ASTI reps on Council will continue to highlight the difficulty of the lack of Section 28 procedures for our members who are the subject of

complaints while welcoming and fully supporting our union's call for the separating out of the local complaints procedures from the Charter.

Droichead:

Latest available figures show there are over 1600 teachers completing Droichead induction in just under 600 post primary schools in the 2021/2022 school year. This is an increase of 100 teachers and an increase of 50 participating schools compared to 2020/21.

Cosán:

The Cosán Action Plan was launched at a virtual event co-hosted by the TC and DE on 14 October 2021. The event included the official launch of the Cosán Action Plan. There have been slow developments in this space due to the pandemic. Series 3 of Cosán workshops were to be rolled out this year but due to the impact of Covid-19 on schools it was decided to postpone same until the next academic year.

Data Breach:

The Teaching Council was fined €60,000 by the Data Protection Commission in two separate fines (€40,000 and €20,000) after the personal data of 9,735 teachers was leaked in a phishing scam. The breach occurred 2 years ago when 2 staff members opened a mail which allowed for emails from the Council servers to a malicious email address.

Systems at the Council have been tightened up in terms of security etc and hopefully something like this will never happen again.

Teachers' Research Exchange (T-REX):

T-REX is an online network for teachers and other educational researchers. It's aim is to support collaboration between research, policy, practice and between schools and HEIs. While this is a positive initiative it has been a matter of concern for teacher members of Council that teachers are very involved in the funding of this initiative but the take-up on it is very, very low. This is most likely due to teachers not having time to engage.

To date this project has been co-funded by the Teaching Council, the NCCA and the Centre for Effective Services (CES).

Quite controversially, Council members did not approve the annual funding requested for T-Rex in the last year. Concerns expressed by members are currently being addressed and it is expected that a further amended funding proposal will come to a future meeting of Council.

Recruitment of New Director:

The current Director's term of office was to come to a natural end next May and preliminary work has begun on the recruitment of a new Director. However, the current Director actually finished in the role in January 2022 having been successful in a recruitment competition at the Department of Education. The Deputy Director is acting Director currently until a new Director is formally appointed.

Thanks and Best Wishes:

This is the current ASTI nominees' final Teaching Council report to Convention.

Reflecting over our six years as ASTI nominees on Council, much has happened, but two significant developments stand out:

On many of the current ASTI members joining the Council, Droichead (teacher induction) as proposed, at that time,

was that this induction would be evaluative and teachers would therefore be involved in decisions regarding people attaining/not attaining their teacher qualification. After a tense year of negotiation at Council this policy changed to non-evaluative mentoring and that was significant. This was very welcome by ASTI members. Feedback on the Droichead initiative is in the main very positive in the secondary school sector.

A motion was passed by Council separating Cosán and teacher registration i.e. it is the current position of Council that what will result in continuous teacher professional learning will not be linked to annual teacher registration.

It is often a difficult task to be a member of the Teaching Council and elected ASTI members and nominees deserve our support always. We wish our new nominees, our President Eamonn Dennehy, and Standing Committee member Anne Loughane the very best as they join membership of the Council and outgoing nominees and ASTI Council members are certainly committed to fully supporting our new nominees and to a full handover. We commit to being at the end of the phone any time you need us regarding legacy issues still in train.

Can we take this opportunity to thank our General Secretary Kieran Christie, ASTI Presidents 2016-222 and to Moira Leydon, Education and Research Officer, for all of your support for us in our work on the Council. Thanks also to our elected members of Council for their commitment and support.

And lastly, but certainly not least, thank you to our wider union membership for supporting us in our representation of your interests at regulatory level over the last 6 years.

Thank you Convention, and ASTI,
John Holian and Noelle Moran.

ASTI Nominees to the Teaching Council, 2016 – 2022.

BRITISH AND IRISH GROUP OF TEACHER UNIONS

The Presidents and General Secretaries of the teacher unions associated with BIGTU met virtually on three occasions during 2021

Unions who participate in the BIGTU meetings are ASTI, TUI, INTO, IFUT, Ulster Teachers' Union, Scottish Secondary Teachers' Union, University and College Union (UK), Educational Institute of Scotland, National Education Union (UK) and NASUWT (UK).

The BIGTU group of unions seeks to exchange information on developments in their respective jurisdictions.

Sharing of ideas and approaches regarding the Covid-19 pandemic across the jurisdictions dominated much of the discussion this year.

A co-ordinated approach for meetings of Education International and ETUCE is also sought.

ASTI General Secretary, Kieran Christie, gave an update on issues relating to unequal pay for post 2010 entrants to teaching in the Republic of Ireland.

The COP 26 -United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow was also discussed as it was being held within the jurisdiction of constituent members.

It was agreed that the BIGTU group would issue a press release to draw attention to the pedagogical opportunity presented by the event and in particular to support the realisation of the UN's sustainable development goals. The event provided a great opportunity for professional associations and education unions to increase engagement with young people who are very interested in the future of the planet.

The text of the Statement/Press Release is set out below.

BRITISH AND IRISH GROUP OF TEACHERS' UNIONS

Group members: Ireland – ASTI, IFUT, INTO, TUI United Kingdom – EIS, NASUWT, NEU, SSTA, UCU, UTU

British and Irish Teaching Unions call for quality Climate Education Tuesday, 2 November 2021

The British and Irish Group of Teacher Unions (BIGTU) collectively represents almost one million education practitioners and staff, all of whom are committed to the children and young people we teach and support. We are passionate about children's development and in the role of educator, take great responsibility to prepare the students for the future.

Our twenty-first century world faces major social and environmental problems on a global scale. Faced with this unprecedented challenge, a collective effort is needed to radically bring about a low-carbon transition. As reported by Education International in its recent analysis of 73 updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) presented for the COP, no country is doing enough to meet the criteria - the United Kingdom ranks 42nd out of 73 countries, while the EU (including the Republic of Ireland) ranks 53rd. This is a cause of deep concern for us as General Secretaries of education unions.

We recognise the need to rethink education as part of the overall solution. In the words of Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Therefore, it is imperative that education systems are strengthened to face the climate crisis through increased funding, improved infrastructure, and continuous professional development for teachers.

The aforementioned report notes that only seven of the 73 NDCs refer to teachers (not including the UK and Ireland) and none mention engaging teachers or teacher unions as a climate stakeholder group. BIGTU is alarmed teachers and education systems have been overlooked in these critical national climate action plans.

As Ireland delivers its National Statement on Climate Change and the UK Department of Education (DfE) Sustainability Unit announces its strategy this week as part of COP 26, BIGTU reiterates our call on the UK Government, the Governments of the devolved administrations, and the Irish Government to work up to the vision outlined by Education International in its Manifesto for climate education to ensure that Climate Change Education is fully embedded in our education systems.

We have previously highlighted a number of specific actions that we believe must be addressed to enable significant, sustainable change and we take this opportunity to restate our key demands.

1. Governments ensure quality climate change education (CCE) for all.

2. Every student transitions from formal education climate-literate and equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to tackle climate change, adapt to uncertainties, and take part in building a more sustainable future.
3. Quality climate change education is based on science, and addresses the ethical, cultural, political, social, and economic dimensions of climate change.
4. Teachers are trained and supported to provide quality climate change education.
5. Schools and learning environments are transformed, to support quality climate change education.

Our committed educators are agents of change and can be at the forefront of the fight against climate change but in order to realise the goals of our action plans, they must have access to the resources and environments required to do so.

We are in an extremely precarious situation that demands immediate action. It is our hope, therefore, that you consider our views, as the voice of the teaching profession to initiate change in a timely manner.

Signed by:

Larry Flanagan, General Secretary, Education Institute of Scotland (EIS), Chairperson BIGTU

John Boyle, General Secretary, Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), Secretary, BIGTU

Dr Mary Bousted, Joint General Secretary, National Education Union (NEU)

Jo Grady, General Secretary, University and College Union (UCU)

Jacquie White, General Secretary, Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU)

Kieran Christie, General Secretary, Association of Secondary Teachers' in Ireland (ASTI)

Frank Jones, General Secretary, Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT)

Dr Patrick Roach, General Secretary, NASUWT

Kevin Courtney, Joint General Secretary, National Education Union (NEU)

Seamus Searson, General Secretary, Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (SSTA)

Michael Gillespie, General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)

RSTA

ASTI works in tandem the Retired Secondary Teachers Association and supports their endeavours

A meeting is scheduled annually between the Officers of ASTI and the Officers of RSTA. This enables discussion of matters of mutual interest.

Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, ASTI provided use of room facilities for meetings during the year. ASTI also hosted very successful functions for RSTA members. It is to be hoped that a return to normality in the coming period of time will allow for resumption of such provision.

One area on which ASTI has worked closely in recent years with the RSTA has been ensuring that pension parity is maintained for the duration the current pay agreement, Building Momentum.

Among other issues raised by the RSTA with ASTI have been the need for pensioner representation on national fora.

RSTA has joined in the campaign to secure the appointment of a Commissioner for older people and asked for ASTI support.

The RSTA is affiliated to the Alliance of Retired Public Servants. The Alliance represents retired public servants in pension negotiations with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

ASTI provides an annual financial subvention to the RSTA.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

The ASTI is a member of Amnesty International and responded to various campaigns and issues as they arose during the year. The major focus of the ASTI's contribution is on teachers and education personnel whose human rights have been abused or denied by Governments. The ASTI sent letters of complaint to Heads of State in a number of countries on behalf of teachers, who had been harassed, detained, tortured and murdered by security forces.

AFFILIATIONS

The ASTI was affiliated to the following:

- a) Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- b) The People's College
- c) Education International
- d) Standing Committee on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS)
- e) AONTAS – National Adult Education Association
- f) Educational Studies Association of Ireland
- g) National Women's Council of Ireland
- h) Irish Labour History Society
- i) National Adult Literacy Association
- j) Amnesty International
- k) Reading Association of Ireland
- l) National Irish Safety Organisation
- m) The Children's Rights Alliance

POLITICAL LOBBYING

The ASTI is a registered lobbyist and lobbies on behalf of members on issues of concern to teachers.

The union engaged in lobbying activities in relation to a number of issues in 2021, including:

- Covid-19 and second-level schools
- Teacher workload and wellbeing
- Investment in education
- Changes to Senior Cycle and Junior Cycle programmes
- Pay equality for post 2010 entrants
- Education of students with special education needs
- Resources for schools for gender-based violence / cyber violence education

All lobbying activity co-ordinated or undertaken by ASTI Head Office is reported to the Standards in Public Office Commission in accordance with the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 (except where an activity is exempted under the Act). The ASTI's submissions to the Standards in Public Office Commission can be viewed at www.lobbying.ie.

ASTI / TUI DISPUTES

Since 2016, ASTI has lodged complaints with the ICTU regarding two separate matters. The first was in respect of the recruitment by TUI of ASTI members during our dispute in 2016/2017.

DISPUTE NO. I

In February 2021, the TUI made a payment to ASTI of €280,000 to bring this matter to an end. It drew a line under what has to be the most unjustifiable actions ever taken by the TUI.

In June 2017, ASTI submitted this complaint to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) regarding losses of membership. We contended that, under ICTU rules, the Teachers Union of Ireland were prohibited from recruiting any ASTI members while the ASTI was in dispute with our employers.

We lodged the complaint to defend the most basic trade union principle that during disputes, there must be a barrier for those who might accommodate workers in abandoning their union and move to another. It was felt that such action on the part of the TUI undermined the most basic of tenets of the trade union movement.

An ICTU Disputes Committee was established to investigate our complaint.

The Committee reported to the ICTU Executive Council in April 2018 and the report was adopted.

It found that the TUI had been in breach of paragraph 46 of the Constitution of the ICTU.

The ICTU Disputes Committee made no finding against the ASTI.

The key elements of paragraph 46 provide as follows:

“For the purpose of developing and maintaining co-operative and friendly relations between affiliated organisations the following provisions shall be observed by affiliated organisations in respect of transfer of members:

(b) No member or ex-member of another Union should be accepted until that Union has been consulted.

The paragraph provides procedures to be followed by unions in accepting members by way of transfer from another union and sets out the circumstances in which such transfers should take place.

Crucially, these provisions are designed to ensure that trade unions act appropriately and in solidarity when a colleague union is engaged in an industrial dispute. The TUI showed an astonishing lack of vigilance in respect of this important principle.

Particularly at issue was the fact that the provisions of the ICTU Constitution requires that when a union receives an application for membership from a person who is, or was a member of another union, they are required to consult with the other union before consideration is given to admitting them into membership. The TUI failed to meet their obligations in this regard. ASTI received no such communication. It must also be remembered that ASTI was involved in a trade union dispute throughout the period.

It was established that the transfer of 1059 members was involved.

Standing Committee considered the Disputes Committee report in April 2018 and it was decided that ASTI would not appeal.

However, TUI did not accept the findings and appealed.

A further Disputes Committee was set up and undertook its work over the summer of 2018.

This second ICTU Disputes Committee did not uphold the TUI appeal. The acceptance by TUI into membership of current/former ASTI members did not adhere to the requirements of the Congress Constitution.

Subsequent to this, the TUI accepted the findings.

Discussions between the parties followed to seek to advance the terms of the Disputes Committee report.

As part of that process, the TUI published a letter to all of their members to advise them of a finding of the Disputes Committee in the following terms:

“that the TUI write to members and advise them that members have been admitted into the membership of the TUI in breach of the rules of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and that they can apply to re-join the ASTI.”

Following this communication to TUI members, a period of time elapsed and further discussions took place regarding implementation of the other aspects of the Disputes Committee report. In particular, the original Disputes Committee required the TUI to make a financial settlement with ASTI which reflects the loss of membership subscription involved.

It was remitted to the General Secretary of the ICTU, Ms. Patricia King, to assist in determining the structure of the settlement necessary. Discussions broke down and eventually in November

2019, the Executive Council of ICTU issued a recommendation regarding the matter. The recommendation was that the TUI should pay the ASTI €279,798.75 cent.

The payment by the TUI of €280,000 to the ASTI, in settlement of what has been dubbed in the Media as a ‘poaching’ dispute amongst teacher unions, brought an end to a damaging affair in terms of the advancement of the interests of teachers. It has to be hoped that such unacceptable behaviour will never be repeated.

DISPUTE NO. 2

The origin of this dispute emanates from the events that took place in 2017.

It had become abundantly clear that long held understandings regarding organising in the different sectors of the education service were not adhered to.

These understandings in respect of organising within the sectors had been in existence for several decades by reference to an ICTU Disputes Committee Report dating from 1983. The understandings of ASTI and TUI at the time were set out therein and it is clear from the body of the text what the views of both parties were.

In particular, the TUI were stated to have the view that *“The ASTI have members in the Secondary Sector. The TUI members are in the Vocational Sector.”*

They go on to state that *“There is mobility between the Secondary and Vocational Sectors with both Unions encouraging members moving from one sector to the other to join the appropriate Union”*

No further talks had taken place or agreement reached since then to provide a basis for either party to deviate from the aforesaid position.

For completeness, in Community Schools and Comprehensive schools it is the ASTI’s understanding that both unions are free to organise in that sector.

Additional data in support of these understandings:

In July 2017, the Department of Education issued a Circular to schools regarding the application of the Lansdowne Road Agreement and the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2013 and 2015. (Appendix C). It is clear that their general understanding of the position was in line with the understanding set out above.

Voluntary Secondary Sector: ASTI

ETB Sector: TUI

Designated Community Colleges TUI and ASTI (Notably in accordance with ICTU determination by Disputes Committee report 83/7 as above)

Community and Comprehensive Schools: TUI and ASTI

TUI Website:

In February 2019, the TUI website stated the following:

TUI is a unified and democratic body but one with a very diverse membership. TUI members are to be found in Vocational Schools, Community Colleges, Comprehensive and Community Schools at second level. TUI members also form the largest single body of third level lecturers in Ireland working in Institutes of Technology and third level institutions.

TUI represents teachers/lecturers employed in

Vocational Schools/Community Colleges
 Community & Comprehensive Schools
 Institutes of Technology
 Youthreach
 Colleges of Education

Objective:

ASTI's objective in lodging this complaint was no more than a reinstatement of the delineations already set out in this document together with a development of the model to cater for Educate Together Schools.

ASTI proposed the re-establishment of the traditional spheres of influence in the second-level education service.

In early 2020, a further ICTU Disputes Committee was established to deal with this complaint. The Disputes Committee held a meeting with the parties in February 2020. It was proposed at that meeting that a joint working Group be set up tasked with seeking to devise and scoping out the optimal organisational and representational structures required to deliver the best outcomes for current and potential members in the sector, now and into the future.

The work of the JWG was very severely impacted by the outbreak of the Covid 19 Pandemic.

The work of the group, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Mike Jennings, commenced its work in September 2020.

During this process, proposals were put forward by the Chairman that were not workable from the perspective of ASTI representatives.

Mr Jennings reported to the Disputes Committee in November 2020. In turn, the Disputes Committee reported to the Executive Council of ICTU. Notwithstanding that ASTI had not supported the proposals/recommendations of the Chairman of the Joint Working Group, the Disputes Committee decided to adopt them as the outcome of their deliberations. Having considered the matter, the Executive Council also adopted the proposals. In general terms, they would open all segments of the second-level sector to recruitment of members by ASTI and TUI.

Ms Patricia King
 General Secretary ICTU
 27th November 2020

RE: ICTU Disputes Committee: ASTI v TUI (Case 2)

Dear Patricia,

I am writing to you in my capacity as the Chairperson of the Disputes Committee established by the Executive Council to investigate a complaint by the ASTI that the TUI was acting in breach of established spheres of influence at second level schools in the Republic of Ireland.

When the Disputes Committee met with the ASTI and TUI in February 2020, we formed the view that the matters in dispute would be best resolved by the establishment of a Joint Working Party made up of the two unions and chaired by independent person. The Executive Council of Congress endorsed this view and appointed Mike Jennings to chair the Joint Working Group.

At the Executive Council meeting held on the 18 November 2020 I reported that the Disputes Committee had received and considered the report from Mike Jennings. Furthermore, we informed the Executive Committee that these report recommendations now constitute the findings of the Disputes (No. 2) Committee. In this regard I note the decision of the Executive Council to accept these findings with provision, to allow a working week, to receive any further comments/observations from Executive members should they so wish. Following the meeting arrangements were made to provide the members of the Executive Council with the details of his recommendations

I confirm that I have not received any observations. For the purposes of clarity and for the record the follow constitutes the findings of the Disputes Committee:

1. Both the TUI and the ASTI will be permitted to recruit and represent members in Community and Comprehensive Schools, in Educational and Training Board Schools, in Voluntary Schools and in Educate Together Schools;
2. That in order to ensure the effective implementation of the new arrangements in point one and in order to avoid conflict in any school setting the following will apply;
3. No transfer from either union to the other, shall take place for a period of at least six months;
4. During this period both unions should engage with sincerity and genuine purpose in a process to design, and agree upon, a set of protocol(s) governing open recruitment of new members by both unions;
5. The negotiation of this protocol(s) will likely need the assistance of an outside intermediary and or facilitator and the TUI has agreed to bear the financial cost of procuring such assistance. The intermediary / facilitator, if one is engaged, must be chosen by agreement between the ASTI and the TUI;
6. The protocol(s) to emerge from such an engagement should include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following;
 - a. Should any application for membership of either union be made by a current member of the other union, written permission shall be requested by the receiving union from the General Secretary of the other union for such a transfer. Should permission for the transfer not be forthcoming then, for at least the first year of this agreement the union applying shall not proceed with the transfer. This does not restrict the entitlement of the requesting union to seek an explanation of the refusal to accept the transfer of membership;
 - b. In schools where either union is of the view that the presence of two unions is likely to give rise to conflict between the unions both unions shall arrange appropriate training for local representatives in conflict avoidance / resolution. In so far as possible such training will be school based or, at least, locally based and, for the first full year of the implementation of this protocol(s), the cost of this training shall be borne by the TUI;
7. At national level both unions shall establish a Joint Working Group whose purpose shall be to oversee and manage the new. This Joint Working Group shall be tasked with maintaining the highest degree possible of harmony between the two unions, identifying the need for training at school/local level, and promoting and overseeing the implementation of this agreement. The Joint Working Group shall meet regularly and frequently, shall devise its own standing orders / modus operandi and be composed of an equal number of representatives and full-time officials (one of whom in each case shall be the General Secretary of his/ her nominated representative).

I would be obliged if you could arrange to have our findings conveyed to the ASTI and the TUI.

Yours Sincerely,

Eoin Ronayne
 Deputy General Secretary

Standing Committee considered the report at its meeting in December 2020. It was decided to appeal the report. The grounds for our appeal are set out in detail in our submission in accordance with Paragraph 45 (xiv) of the ICTU Constitution

Key extracts of the Grounds of Appeal lodged are set out below:

Paragraph 45 (xiv) of the ICTU Constitution provides as follows:

45 (xiv) If one of the parties to the Report considers that the Report adopted by the Executive Council should be the subject of appeal on the grounds that the Disputes Committee failed to take cognisance of certain facts, or was improperly constituted, or did not act in accordance with the constitution of Congress, such appeal should be lodged with the Executive Council within one month of the date of issuance of the adopted Report.

Where an appeal is received, it shall be considered by the Executive Council which shall decide whether sufficient grounds for appeal have been adduced. If they consider there are not sufficient grounds for the appeal they shall so notify the appellant Union. If they consider that grounds for appeal do exist they shall either: (a) consider the appeal, or (b) refer the appeal to a reconstituted Disputes Committee, in which case they shall notify the parties that the appeal is under consideration, and state the grounds on which the appeal is being considered.

The Executive Council having considered the appeal, or having received the Report of the reconstituted Disputes Committee on the appeal may: (a) endorse the Report adopted, or (b) amend the Report previously adopted, or (c) adopt a new Report, provided that such new Report has been prepared by the reconstituted Disputes Committee, following a new investigation of the dispute. The decision, arising from the appeal shall be circulated to the Unions concerned which shall be obliged to implement the decision.

ASTI appealed the Report adopted by the Executive Council under the following headings in keeping with the allowable grounds of appeal provided for within the text of Clause 45 (xiv)

(1) The Disputes Committee failed to take cognisance of certain facts.

- (a) The ASTI membership is composed exclusively of post-primary teachers. The TUI membership contains some post-primary teachers but a substantial portion of their membership is composed of personnel who work as lecturers and researchers in third level colleges and universities. Accordingly, the findings set out in Report of the Disputes Committee, adopted by the Executive Council, fails to take into account that the recruitment and representation benefit being provided is not of equal value to both unions. ASTI is being asked to share the entirety of the workplaces in which we operate while the TUI is required to concede only a portion of theirs. Accordingly, all other things being equal, the potential to enlarge each union on the basis of an equal proportionate transfer of members from one to the other is much more advantageous for the TUI to exploit.

- (b) Paragraph 6 of the Disputes Committee findings refers to an agreement in relation to the arrangements. ASTI is of the view that no agreement would likely emerge regarding a baseline of arrangements that are being imposed without consent. ASTI would point out that prior to the Disputes Committee adopting their findings, we had communicated to the Chairman of the Joint Working Group, from which the findings largely emanate, in the following terms:

“It is regrettable that the process has concluded without agreement.”

- (c) The Disputes Committee report references the Joint Working Party chaired by Mr. Mike Jennings. I can confirm that it has come as some surprise to ASTI that what were proposed recommendations presented to both unions, morphed into actual recommendations for settlement of the dispute, despite the fact that they did not command the agreement of both parties to recommend same to their respective Executives. ASTI would have expected that the report of an entity entitled a Joint Working Group would have been more inclined to report whether agreement had been achieved or otherwise. Indeed, it is difficult to understand that the document containing proposals presented to both parties by the Chairman was the entirety of the report presented to the Disputes Committee, without any other detail or contextualisation of the deliberations of the working group or clarification of the respective positions of the parties regarding its contents.

Accordingly, ASTI seeks that the entirety of the report of the Disputes Committee, adopted by the Executive Council, be set aside and nullified.

(2) The Disputes Committee was improperly constituted.

The ICTU Constitution provides the detail on the proper constitution of a Disputes Committee at

SECTION VII – DISPUTES BETWEEN UNIONS

The relevant paragraphs are set out as follows for convenience.

45 (ii) Where the dispute is so referred, the Disputes Committee shall consist of a Chairperson who shall be a member of the Executive Council, and four other members appointed from a Panel of Disputes Committee members.

(iv) A Disputes Committee constituted in accordance with this paragraph shall have a quorum consisting of the Chairperson and not less than two panel members. Provided that a quorum is present the Disputes Committee may proceed with the investigation and the preparation of a report and recommendations, and in general, be empowered to act as if the Committee was constituted in accordance with sub-paragraph 45 (ii) above.

(v) The Chairperson and each of the panel members of any Disputes Committee shall be members of different Unions. No member of the Panel who is a member of a Union directly involved in a dispute shall be selected as a member, or as Chairperson, of the Disputes Committee which investigates that dispute.

(vi) The Panel of Disputes Committee members shall consist of persons nominated in writing by affiliated Unions. Each affiliated Union shall be entitled to nominate a person or persons to the Panel. A person, to be eligible for nomination, must be: (a) a member of the Union submitting the nomination, at the time the nomination is submitted; (b) resident in Ireland; (c) available and willing to act as a member of a Disputes Committee in accordance with this

Paragraph. The submission of a nomination shall be regarded as certification by the nominating Union that the person or persons nominated fulfil the conditions of eligibility.

(vii) A member of the Executive Council shall not be eligible for nomination to the Panel, and if a member of the Panel is elected to the Executive Council he/she shall cease to be a member of the Panel.

The membership of the Disputes Committee became known to the ASTI at a meeting convened to hear our complaint on 10th February, 2020.

The membership of the Disputes Committee was as follows:

Mr. Eoin Ronayne - Chairman
Ms. Fionnuala Ní Bhrógáin
Mr. John King

When one looks at the composition of the Disputes Committee it is clear that Mr. Eoin Ronayne as Chairman is in accordance with the requirements set out in the ICTU Constitution at paragraph 45 (ii) as follows:

45 (ii) Where the dispute is so referred, the Disputes Committee shall consist of a Chairperson who shall be a member of the Executive Council, and four other members appointed from a Panel of Disputes Committee members.

Mr. Eoin Ronayne is a member of the Executive Council as required. However, Paragraph 45 (vii) provides as follows:

45 (vii) A member of the Executive Council shall not be eligible for nomination to the Panel, and if a member of the Panel is elected to the Executive Council he/she shall cease to be a member of the Panel.

It is clear from the foregoing that no member of the Disputes Committee, who is not its chairperson, can be also a member of the Executive Council.

Ms. Fionnuala Ní Bhrógáin and Mr. John King are both members of the Executive Council of Congress and as such were debarred from acting in the capacity of Dispute Committee members. It should be further noted that both were members of the Executive Council for the entirety of the tenure of the Disputes Committee.

Accordingly, ASTI seeks that the entirety of the report of the Disputes Committee, adopted by the Executive Council, be set aside and nullified.

3. The Disputes Committee did not act in accordance with the constitution of Congress.

At 2 above, ASTI contends that the Disputes Committee was improperly constituted. It is abundantly clear that the individuals involved are above reproach and acted entirely in good faith. This is entirely accepted by ASTI. However, it follows that they could not possibly have acted in accordance with the Constitution of Congress as they lacked eligibility to undertake the task assigned.

Accordingly, ASTI seeks that the entirety of the report of the Disputes Committee, adopted by the Executive Council, be set aside and nullified.

On 29th April, 2021, the Disputes Committee set up to hear the ASTI appeal reported. Their report was as follows:

Irish Congress of Trade Unions Disputes Committee Report 01/21

Parties: ASTI and TUI

Date of Hearing(s): 29 April 2021

Dispute: Appeal by the ASTI of a Disputes Committee Report adopted by the Executive Council concerning spheres of influence /representational rights in second level schools in the Republic of Ireland.

Committee: Paddy Kavanagh (Chair and Executive Council Member), Ashley Connolly (FORSA) and Kevin Figgis (SIPTU).

1. Introduction
2. We have been asked to hear the appeal from the ASTI of a Disputes Committee Report adopted by the Executive Council, concerning spheres of influence / representational rights in second level schools in the Republic of Ireland.
3. In December 2020 the Executive Council of Congress approved the report under appeal. The ASTI and TUI were then notified of the decision taken by the Executive Council and provided with a copy of the report. On the 22 December 2020 the ASTI wrote to Congress seeking to appeal the report and providing grounds for their appeal.
4. The Executive Council agreed to allow the appeal, leading to the formation of this Disputes Committee. As part of our deliberations written submissions were sought from both the ASTI and the TUI. We met with both unions on the 29 April 2021. The Disputes Committee also sought and held a meeting with Mike Jennings, who had been appointed by the Executive Council to chair a Joint Working Group comprised of the two unions concerned. This meeting was held on the 8 April 2021.
5. Background
6. There is an extensive background to the matters under consideration in this report. We believe that a summary of the background provides an important context to this report and the conclusions that we have reached.
7. On the 29 June 2017 the ASTI wrote to Congress complaining that the TUI had been accepting into membership members and former members of the ASTI, contrary to the provisions of the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. On foot of this complaint the process provided for in Constitution of Congress was initiated. A preliminary meeting between the parties took place on the 14 August 2017. As there was no resolution of the dispute at that meeting, a Disputes Committee was formed to investigate the claim made by the ASTI.
8. The Disputes Committee was appointed by the Executive Council and comprised Phil Ní Sheaghda (Chair and Executive Council Member), Adrian Kane (SIPTU) and Ian McArdle (CWU). The report of their investigation and findings (Disputes Committee Report 01/2018) was approved by the Congress Executive Council at its meeting of the 18 April 2018.
9. On the 14 May 2018 the TUI notified Congress that it wished to appeal this report. The Executive agreed to allow the appeal and appointed three members of the Executive Council to comprise the Disputes Committee. The Executive Council appointed Ciaran Rohan (AHCPS and Executive Council), Paddy Kavanagh (Connect and Executive Council) and Anne Speed (UNISON and Executive Council). Ciaran Rohan acted as Chair. The TUI appeal was heard on the 31 July 2018. The TUI appeal was not upheld and a Disputes Committee report 02/2018 was approved by the Executive Council at its meeting

- on the 19 September 2018.
10. The main findings in Disputes Committee Report 01/2018 have now been implemented. As part of this, the TUI was required to make a financial settlement with the ASTI. The amount of money to be paid by the TUI was agreed by the Executive Council on foot of a recommendation from the Congress General Secretary. The Executive Council decided that €279,798.75 was the appropriate amount. This money was remitted to Congress by the TUI in the first instance and paid to the ASTI in March 2021.
 11. On the 11 June 2018 the ASTI wrote to Congress complaining that the established spheres of influence / representation rights in second level schools had been contravened by the TUI. The ASTI requested that the appropriate mechanism be put in place to investigate their complaint. It was subsequently agreed by both unions that no further action would be taken in respect of this complaint while the appeal of Disputes Committee Report 01/2018 was underway. On the 22 November 2019 the ASTI wrote to Congress requesting that the process to hear their complaint be commenced.
 12. The Executive Council was advised of the request of the ASTI and again decided to appoint three members of Executive Council to comprise the Disputes Committee. The Executive Council appointed Eoin Ronayne (FORSA and Executive Council), John King (SIPTU and Executive Council) and Fionnuala Ni Bhréagáin (CWU and Executive Council). Eoin Ronayne acted as chair. The appointment of three members of the Executive Council reflected the seriousness that the Executive Council attached to the case.
 13. A hearing of the ASTI complaint was arranged for the 10 February 2020. At that meeting it was suggested that the issues between the parties were such that they would be better resolved by way of a structured dialogue between the two unions. It was suggested by the Disputes Committee that a Joint Working Group be formed, comprising of representatives of the two unions and chaired by a person to be appointed by the Executive Council. Both unions agreed with the suggested approach.
 14. The Executive Council in February 2020 agreed to appoint Mike Jennings as Chair of the Joint Working Group. Terms of reference for the group were agreed. Kieran Christie and Anne Piggott represented the ASTI and Michael Gillespie and Martin Marjoram represented the TUI. The terms of reference tasked the Joint Working Group 'with seeking to devise and scoping out the optimal organisational and representation structures to deliver the best outcomes for current and potential members in the sector, now and into the future'.
 15. The work of the group commenced in February 2020. However, this work was stalled due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. Mike Jennings re-engaged with the two unions when public health restrictions eased in October 2020.
 16. We met Mike Jennings on the 8 April 2021 and he confirmed that he held intensive discussions with the parties over the month of October 2020. Towards the end of October 2020, he felt that based on discussions up to that point, it was not likely that agreement would be reached between the two unions. In these circumstances he sought the agreement of both unions to develop proposals for their consideration. Both unions consented. Mike Jennings sent his proposals to both unions on the 30 October 2020.
 17. Both unions responded to Mike Jennings on the 12 November 2020. While the TUI sought specific clarifications, both the President and General Secretary indicated that they were disposed to recommend the Chair's proposals for acceptance to their Executive. The ASTI members of the Joint Working Group were not in a position to recommend the proposals for acceptance as they believed that the Chair's first recommendation had rendered consideration of the remaining recommendations moot.
 18. In light of this, Mike Jennings then wrote to the General Secretary of Congress on the 14 November 2020. He reported that his recommendations did not form the basis of agreement between the unions and in his view that it was appropriate to hand the matter back to Congress. The report compiled by Mike Jennings was provided to the Disputes Committee.
 19. The Chair of the Disputes Committee, Eoin Ronayne, gave a verbal report to the Executive Council on the 18 November 2020. He reported that the Disputes Committee had considered Mike Jennings report and recommendations. He stated that the Disputes Committee was agreed that the recommendations relating to the representation and organisation of teachers at second level that were contained in the report compiled by Mike Jennings should be adopted as the outcome of the Disputes Committee process. A written report was sent to members of the Executive Council following the meeting. Members of the Executive Council were asked to revert to Eoin Ronayne within one week with any observations.
 20. Eoin Ronayne wrote to the General Secretary of Congress on the 27 November 2020 confirming that he had received no observations. In this letter he set out for the record the findings of the Disputes Committee. This letter was copied to the ASTI and the TUI.
 21. As mentioned earlier we met with the ASTI and the TUI on the 29 April 2021. At the commencement of the meeting, we asked the unions if they had any objection to the composition of the Disputes Committee. Both unions confirmed that they had no objection.
- ## 22. The ASTI Appeal
23. On the 22 December 2020, the ASTI informed Congress that it wished to appeal the report of the Disputes Committee established to investigate issues arising from spheres of influence / representational rights in second level schools in the Republic of Ireland. The arguments made by the ASTI in support of their appeal are detailed in the following paragraphs.
 24. The ASTI claimed that the Disputes Committee failed to take account of certain facts. In support of this they cite the following:
 - The ASTI is composed exclusively of post-primary teachers. In contrast the membership of the TUI is mixed and made up of post primary teachers and lecturers and researchers in third level colleges and universities. The ASTI argue that moving to a situation where there are shared recruitment rights between both unions across all parts of the second level sector is of greater value to the TUI and, as such, the ASTI is significantly disadvantaged. The proposal is 'lopsided'. In the course of the hearing held with the unions on the 29 April 2021 the ASTI claimed that it was deeply concerned that Congress was prepared to stand over a situation where one union could freely take into membership the members of another union;
 - The ASTI claimed that it had made clear to the Chair of the Joint Working Group that his recommendations could not

be recommended for acceptance as it was unlikely that an agreement between the two unions could be reached on a protocol for the future recruitment of members in the sector;

- The ASTI further claimed that it came as a surprise to them that the recommendations proposed by the Chair of the Joint Working Group ‘morphed into actual recommendations for settlement’. The ASTI claimed that this ignored the fact that proposals could not be accepted by the ASTI; and
 - The ASTI further claimed that the proposals of the Chair of the Joint Working Group cut across issues already examined and determined in the context of Disputes Committee Reports 01 /2018 and 02/2018.
25. The ASTI claimed that the Disputes Committee was not properly constituted. The ASTI argued that because the Disputes Committee was comprised of three members of the Executive Council it was not constituted in line with Paragraph 45 of the Congress Constitution and Standing Orders.
26. The ASTI further claimed that because the Disputes Committee was not properly constituted the members of the Disputes Committee ‘could not possibly have acted in accordance with the Constitution of Congress as they lack eligibility to undertake the task assigned’.

27. The TUI Response

28. We provided the TUI with a copy of the ASTI submission and afforded them the opportunity to comment.
29. The TUI contested the view/ assertion that the proposal for ‘open recruitment’ across the sector would ‘disproportionately favour the TUI’. In support of this they cite the following:
- The serving membership of the TUI is 19,091 of which 14,662 (77%) are in post primary / second level schools. The TUI has calculated that the serving membership of the ASTI is approximately 16,000 therefore the difference between the serving membership of two unions at second level is relatively small;
 - The TUI claimed that the post primary sector is growing and that because of agreed pupil teacher ratios the number of teachers in the sector will continue to grow over the coming years;
 - The TUI claimed that the bulk of the growth in teacher numbers will be in schools that are traditionally organised exclusively by the TUI. The proposal for open recruitment therefore provides the ASTI with an opportunity to recruit members in areas of the sector that were previously not open to them. The TUI claimed that the ASTI contention that open recruitment disproportionately favours the TUI is mistaken;
 - The claim that the TUI gains ‘a competitive advantage’ over the ASTI by open recruitment in the sector is not borne out by the facts.
30. In response to the contention by the ASTI that the Disputes Committee was not properly constituted the TUI point out that it is worth bearing in mind that a previous Disputes Committee has been constituted in a similar manner and no objections were lodged at that time.

31. Findings

32. We have given very careful consideration to the arguments set out by both the ASTI and the TUI. The focus of our deliberations however, has been to determine if the ASTI has pointed to matters that would support their contention that

the findings of the previous Disputes Committee should be set aside.

33. The first part of the ASTI appeal is the contention that the Disputes Committee did not take account of certain facts in reaching its conclusion.
34. There are a number of points to consider here. It is clear to us that the Disputes Committee was keen to ensure that any report that it would make to the Congress Executive Council would take account of all the relevant issues between the two unions. The decision to recommend the appointment of a Joint Working Group comprised of the two unions is evidence of this. As part of our investigation, we met with Mike Jennings who was appointed by the Executive Council to Chair the Joint Working Group. He confirmed that he had met with both unions on a number of occasions and had sought and received a significant amount of written material.
35. The ASTI has argued that ‘open recruitment’ would give significant competitive advantage to the TUI and this was not taken account of by the Disputes Committee.
36. The TUI has confirmed that they have 14,662 serving members at second level. The ASTI has 16,572 members. It is not disputed that as a result of demographic change there is significant growth in the number of pupils entering second level education. This will continue in the short to medium term. As a result of agreements on teacher pupil ratios, the number of teachers at second level will increase. It is accepted that much of the growth will happen in areas which would have been exclusively organised by the TUI. It does not follow therefore that ‘open recruitment’ will confer any advantage on the TUI. We note that the Disputes Committee, while recommending ‘open recruitment’, did require the development of an agreed protocol between the TUI and the ASTI. This is further evidence that the Disputes Committee did not wish to see membership growth in one union at the expense of the other and that the protocols to be developed and agreed would set the ‘rules of the game’.
37. The ASTI has argued that the Disputes Committee did not take account of the fact that it had informed Mike Jennings that the ASTI did not accept his recommendations. The ASTI further argued that his recommendations cut across matters that had been already decided.
38. We are satisfied that the Disputes Committee received a full report from Mike Jennings which fully reflected the attitude of both unions to his recommendations. With regard to the matter of Mike Jennings ‘cutting across’ an issue already decided, we note that the Disputes Committee in its report makes no reference to the matters that were the subject of Disputes Committee Reports 01 /2018 and 02/2018. We understand that these reports have been accepted by both unions and fully implemented.
39. We are satisfied that the Disputes Committee has taken account of all of the pertinent facts in the case. This is evidenced by the approach taken by the Disputes Committee in coming to its conclusions and by the conditions that it has attached to them.
40. The second and third parts of the ASTI appeal are related. The ASTI contend that the Disputes Committee was not properly constituted. Specifically, that because the committee comprised three members of the Executive Council its composition was not consistent with the provisions of the Congress Constitution and Standing Orders. The ASTI further contends that because the Disputes Committee was not properly constituted, the members of the Committee could not possibly

have acted in accordance with the Constitution of Congress as they lacked eligibility to undertake the task.

41. At the meeting held on the 29 April 2021 the ASTI conceded that they had participated in a previous Disputes Committee process where the committee was comprised of three members of the Executive Council and had raised no objections. The ASTI also confirmed it had raised no objections to the composition of the Disputes Committee at any stage during the process. The ASTI further confirmed that it had only come across this potential inconsistency during the preparation of the appeal.
42. It is our view that the motivation of the Executive Council in appointing the members of the Disputes Committee was to acknowledge the seriousness of the dispute and the importance of seeking, to the greatest extent possible, a satisfactory outcome.
43. It is important to recall that at no stage during the process did the ASTI object to the composition of the Committee. It is also a fact that the ASTI had willingly and actively participated in an earlier process in which the Disputes Committee was also comprised of three members of the Executive Council. We are minded to observe that if we were to accept the argument of the ASTI it could be argued that Disputes Committee Report 02/2018 should also be set aside.
44. **Decision**
45. The Disputes Committee has given detailed consideration to the oral and written evidence presented. Having considered all of the evidence it upholds the findings of the Disputes Committee Report concerning spheres of influence / representational rights in second level schools in the Republic of Ireland.

Standing Committee have considered the disappointing outcome of the appeal. The President and General Secretary unsuccessfully sought to persuade the ICTU Biennial Delegate Conference held in Belfast in October 2021 not to adopt the report provided regarding this matter. ASTI lawyers have provided advices in that regard and correspondence has been entered into with ICTU in that context. At time of writing, preparations are in train to challenge the outcome in the Courts.

LEGAL CASES

COMPLAINT TO EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF SOCIAL RIGHTS

In April 2019, ASTI made a complaint to the European Committee of Social Rights under the auspices of the Council of Europe based in Strasbourg.

The intent behind this complaint is to ask the European Committee of Social Rights to find that Ireland is not in conformity with Article 5 of the European Social Charter in that the government, by according favourable treatment to a rival trade union as regards pay and increments for its members, is interfering with the right to freedom of association guaranteed to teachers thereby. The basis of the complaint is as follows:

Background

In September 2008, Ireland was facing a severe monetary crisis and austere fiscal measures were introduced in a series of Financial

Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts (the “FEMPI” Acts) commencing in 2009. These involved, *inter alia*, reductions in public service pay (including that of teachers), the imposition of a pensions levy and the freezing of increments.

As the financial situation improved, the Irish government engaged in gradual pay restoration through a series of Public Service Agreements - the Public Service Stability Agreements 2013-2018 (being the “Croke Park Agreement” 2010-2014, the “Haddington Road Agreement” 2013-2016 and the “Lansdowne Road Agreement” 2013-2018) and the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020 (the “PSSAs”) - and consequent amendments to the FEMPI Acts.

FEMPI Act 2013

Under the FEMPI Acts, the reductions in pay and the freezing of increments initially applied to all public sector workers (including teachers) regardless of which trade union the workers were members. However, by 2013 the FEMPI Acts were reflecting government cognisance of the fact that different unions might adopt different attitudes/approaches to FEMPI measures. Thus, the FEMPI Act 2013 differentiated as between public servants “to whom a collective agreement relates” and those to whom no such agreement relates, providing that the suspension of increments and pay scales for which that (FEMPI 2013) Act provided should apply to the former group “only to the extent specified in the agreement or...with such modifications as are specified in the agreement”.

Circular Letter 0030/2016 of 22 April 2016

As regards teachers, this distinction (as between public servants “to whom a collective agreement relates” and those to whom no such agreement relates) is first drawn in Department of Education and Skills Circular Letter 0030/2016 of 22 April 2016 (“CL 0030/2016”). In circumstances where the Haddington Road Agreement had included measures which provided for various public sector increment deferrals (and no increment measures had been provided for under the terms of the Lansdowne Road Agreement), this Circular Letter (CL 0030/2016) announced the expiry of increment measures under the terms of that (Haddington Road) agreement, stating that no increment would be deferred beyond 1 July 2017 as a result of measures contained in that (Haddington Road) agreement. However, it (CL 0030/2016) went on to state that “[i]ncremental progression may...be suspended for certain grades” and announced the suspension of incremental progression for a further year, until 1 July 2018 “for Grades not covered by the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013-2018 (Haddington Road Agreement/Lansdowne Road Agreement)”. In that way and although no distinction was expressly drawn between members of different trade unions in CL 0030/2016, incremental progression was to resume on the 1st July 2017 for those teachers covered by the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013-2018, whereas, for those who were not, incremental progression was to be suspended until the 1st July 2018.

Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017

The 2017 Act subsequently went on to draw a distinction between public servants who are covered by the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020 (“covered public servants”) and those who are not (“non-covered public servants”), providing for restoration – further to restoration provided for under the FEMPI Act of 2015 – of the basic salaries of public servants (including teachers) which were reduced by the FEMPI Acts of 2009, 2011 and 2013. However, where a recognised trade union, such as ASTI, has not notified Ireland’s Workplace Relations Commission (“WRC”) in writing of its assent to be bound by the Public Service Stability Agreement

2018-2020, the members of that trade union (and those non-members who are in the same grade or category) are treated as “non-covered public servants”: see section 3 of the 2017 Act.

Non-covered public servants secure the same pay progression as covered public servants but at a much slower rate. Moreover, such (non-covered) public servants will not receive any incremental increases for the duration of the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020 (i.e., until 31 December 2020): see section 22 of the 2017 Act.

The Croke Park Hours

Under the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 (the “Croke Park Agreement”) and continued under the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013 – 2016 (the “Haddington Road Agreement”), the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013 – 2018 (the “Lansdowne Road Agreement”) and the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020, an additional 33 hours per annum was required of teachers to “...facilitate, at the discretion of management, school planning, continuous professional development, induction, substitution and supervision (including supervision immediately before and after school times)” (the “Croke Park hours”).

Industrial Action

In May of 2016, ASTI members voted “not to fulfil the... Croke Park hours” and a directive to engage in industrial action issued on foot of that ballot, when “ASTI members were directed not to fulfil the 33 Croke Park hours as set out in [Circular Letter] 0025/2011 and as amended in [Circular Letter] 0043/2014 with effect from 11th July, 2016”. By virtue of that Industrial Action, ASTI members were “grades not covered by the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013-2018” (“non-covered public servants” for the purposes of the 2017 Act), with effect from 11 July 2016.

Circular Letter 0045/2016 of 14 July 2016

Against the background of the above, an explicit distinction was drawn between ASTI members and those of the Teachers Union of Ireland (“TUI”) in Department of Education and Skills Circular Letter 0045/2016 of 14 July 2016 (CL 0045/2016), attached hereto at Appendix 4.

By virtue of CL 0045/2016, only TUI members were to receive the payroll adjustments provided for in the Public Service Stability Agreements, 2013-2018 which included a gross additional payment of €1,592 integrated into salary and the restoration of incremental progression together with protection against compulsory redundancy. This is because TUI had agreed to be bound by the relevant Public Service Agreements and as such were deemed to be encompassed by its terms. However, insofar as ASTI members were concerned, incremental progression was suspended, they did not receive a “moiety” which was paid to teachers who were covered by the Lansdowne Road Agreement and they were deprived of alleviation measures which were applied to other teachers who lost pensionable salary both through the FEMPI Act 2013 pay reduction and the withdrawal of the Supervision and Substitution allowance under the Haddington Road Agreement, any beneficial measures introduced following a review of usage of the Croke Park hours to take place in the 2016/2017 school year, improved Fixed-Term and Part-Time arrangements which had been conferred on teachers in 2015, protection against compulsory redundancy and entitlement to “ex-gratia” payments in redundancy situations (per CL 0045/2016).

Suspension of Industrial Action

On 10 June 2017, ASTI suspended the Industrial Action. Consequently, since that date (10 June 2017), ASTI members have been treated as “covered public servants”. Thus, as of that date and insofar as ASTI members were concerned, incremental progression was restored, as was the “moiety” which was paid to teachers who were covered by the Lansdowne Road Agreement and alleviation measures which were applied to other teachers who lost pensionable salary both through the FEMPI Act 2013 pay reduction and the withdrawal of the Supervision and Substitution allowance under the Haddington Road Agreement. Other measures introduced included improved Fixed-Term and Part-Time arrangements which had been conferred on teachers in 2015, protection against compulsory redundancy and entitlement to “ex-gratia” payments in redundancy situations (per CL 0045/2016) were all implemented for/conferred on ASTI members. However, ASTI members are subjected to continuing disadvantage, insofar as their incremental dates are concerned.

Since formal lodgement of the foregoing complaint, ASTI has been asked for some supplementary information and documentation on an intermittent basis. The on-going pandemic appears to have delayed progress significantly.

In September 2021, ASTI was informed that it is expected that a determination regarding the complaint will be issued in 2022.

ASTI -v- Minister for Education - FEMPI CASE

In January/February 2019, the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) undertook industrial action in support of a general pay claim for their members. Some members of SIPTU also took industrial action during the summer of 2019. The clear implication of this from an ASTI point of view was that the application of FEMPI legislation to ASTI members in 2016/2017 was arbitrary and unfair as the Government clearly declined to implement the terms of FEMPI legislation in the context of those disputes.

In April 2019, ASTI sought to explore legal avenues for the ASTI and its members arising from this unequal treatment as between ASTI members and INMO members in the context of pay increments within the public sector. Legal advice received concluded that while there were significant legal difficulties with the position adopted by the Government, it would be difficult to establish a successful legal challenge in a case of this kind given the requirement to present novel arguments largely in the area of constitutional claims and rights.

Nonetheless, it was decided at the time to initiate proceedings to leverage any possibilities that may arise and also in the context of the then forthcoming discussions on the Building Momentum Public Service Agreement. The INMO action strengthened the political argument in favour of reinstatement of the losses to ASTI members but, unfortunately, not the legal argument.

During 2021, ASTI asked its lawyers to make a further assessment of the case. We were advised that Senior Counsel was firmly of the view that the ASTI’s action had a minimal prospect of success.

Consequently, Standing Committee decided to withdraw from these legal proceedings.

Standing Committee in the aftermath of the decision to withdraw the High Court Challenge, passed the following motion:

“That the reversal of the impositions on members under the FEMPI legislation due to their support for lesser-paid teachers remain part of the ongoing “Equal Pay for Equal Work” campaign.”

EDUCATION

REPORT OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Members of Committee: Edel Farrell (Chairperson), Richard Egan, Ciaran Kavanagh, Deirdre Mac Donald, Pauline Nagle, Séan O'Neill, Sarah Withero, Geraldine O'Loughlin.

AGS/ERO provided the professional support for the work of the Education Committee.

Curriculum review

Senior cycle curriculum review: The Committee examined presentations made to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on assessment in the senior cycle curriculum.

School bullying

In August 2021, the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science published a report on 'School Bullying and the Impact on Mental Health'. This is a landmark report in that it responds to the United Nations initiative of designating the 4th November as the UN Annual Day against Violence and Bullying at School including Cyberbullying. The introduction to the Report states that "it is imperative that the twin issues of school bullying and mental health are treated as a matter of top priority by the Department of Education. Irish schools must be inclusive places of learning where all students feel accepted, safe, and respected." The Report provides 10 key recommendations to the Minister for Education who has responded by setting up a Working Group to review and develop current Departmental policy. The Education Committee has examined the Joint Oireachtas report and will contribute to the ASTI's contribution to the Departmental Working Group.

Artificial Intelligence and digitisation in education

The Education Committee commenced a discussion on AI in education, in part arising from a need to consider the longer-term impact of the shift to remote teaching on schools but, also, to obtain a wider understanding of AI and its potential impacts on teaching and learning, on schools and on education more generally. The Committee examined a number of papers focused on the potential impacts of AI on education, most notably the 2018 OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030, 'Preparing for the Future – AI and Education', and the 2021 OECD Digital Education Outlook, 'Pushing Frontiers with AI, blockchain and robots'. Key themes in these reports are learning analytics, personalised learning, out-of-school learning, assessment modalities, data gathering, role of the teacher, including in relation to other.

The Education Committee also noted the response of the European Trade Union Confederation for Education (ETUCE)* in response to the proposal from the European Commission in August 2021 for a Council Recommendation on blended learning. The latter is proposed as part of the implementation of the EU

Digital Education Action Plan and the European Education Area 2030. Essentially, this proposal is aimed at promoting blended learning as the norm in educational practice at school level. Blended learning is defined as:

"When a school, educator or learner takes more than one approach to the learning process:– blending school site and distance learning environments; and – blending different tools for learning that can be digital (including online) and non-digital as part of learning task"

The ETUCE report was highly critical of the timing of this Proposal and the lack of consultation with education trade unions. It also criticised the deterministic approach to technology and stated that insufficient acknowledgement had been given to the analysing the challenges related to blended learning and the limitations that its implementation entails. ETUCE stated that while blended learning can be an approach, among many others, to enhance quality and inclusion in education, its positive impact is neither automatic nor un-contested. It also pointed out that the current use of blended learning in primary and secondary education is still substantially characterised by the emergency settings of the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore, much more consideration is required before the elaboration of a Council Recommendation. ETUCE has recommended that the following must be agreed in advance:

- i. A clear and commonly agreed definition of blended learning
- ii. Meaningful consultation and social dialogue with education unions
- iii. Protect the importance and centrality of face-to-face teaching and learning in education
- iv. Respect the role of teachers and education personnel, ensure decent working conditions and respect the professional autonomy of teachers
- v. Provide adequate initial and continuous professional development to teachers and education personnel
- vi. Ensure that blended learning does not hinder equal access to quality education, including education institutions, for all students without any distinction
- vii. Protect the health and safety of teachers and education personnel in blended teaching environments
- viii. Effectively address the challenges related to increasing trends of privatisation and influence of the EdTech sector in education
- ix. Ensure adequate public investment at regional, national and European level for quality and inclusive education
- x. Ensure the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights

* The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) represents 127 Education Trade Unions and 11 million teachers in 51 countries of Europe.

Access to higher education

Noting that ASTI CEC had adopted a policy supporting open access to higher education, the Education Committee decided to examine the wider question of access to higher education. It will prepare a

comprehensive report for Standing Committee, including the area of open access. To date, it has prepared a short concept note on open access.

Concept note on open access

Context

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (2011) identifies widening access as both a key priority and a challenge. A priority largely because of the economic imperative: a challenge because of sustained increase in demand coupled with increasing diversity of learners. The latter is both an economic and social imperative. The National Action Plan on Access to Higher Education (2015) contains targets for raising participation of currently under-represented groups, namely, lower SES (unskilled/semi-skilled), students with disabilities, Traveller community, FET students and mature students, in particular learners from adult community education backgrounds. In addition, demographic projections indicate that demand for HE will continue to increase by at least 30% over the current decade. Globally, there is unprecedented social demand for access to higher education. Accordingly, admission policy to HE – while currently focused on COVID-19 contingencies – will become a key policy concern for government which has already demonstrated its prioritisation of HE by establishing the new Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS)

Admission policies for access to HE in Europe

Admission systems to higher education are the key point for determining which students go into which type of higher education institution. Based on how admission systems are designed, they allow access to a smaller or larger number of students and also shape participation by social background. However, the admission system is neither simply the transition point between upper secondary schooling and higher education nor simply a matter of procedures and regulations. Typically, national admission systems are seen as a dynamic interplay between three factors: how the schooling system is organised, how higher education institutions recruit students, and how prospective students make choices about where to go. Admissions systems in Europe are described in the following typology:

Type 1: Selection by schools: the school system has a high influence. At least one pathway through secondary schooling does not lead to a qualification enabling higher education entry and, additionally, HEIs are not able to use additional criteria for further selection of applicants.

Type 2: Selection by HEIs: little pre-selection occurs within the schooling system, but HEIs generally use additional criteria for making recruitment decisions.

Type 3: Least selection: if neither the school system limits students nor the HEIs select them, then students have the widest choice of whether they study or not. IRELAND in this type.

Type 4: Double selection: the final constellation is a hybrid of types 1 and 2. It consists of countries where both the school system and HEIs select students and therefore limit their decision spectrum.¹

Open access

The most commonly held definition of open access is a system wherein all students have the opportunity to attend a higher education institution regardless of their previous schooling, grades, or skills. The rationale for open access is that it promotes equity by removing barriers to enter higher education. However, both the OECD and the EU caution that removing selection barriers at third level does not necessarily create equity because widening participation means providing access to students who may not be as well prepared, on average, as previous student cohorts for the cognitive/academic demands of the chosen course. In Ireland, regardless of the sector or level that a student enters, students with lower Leaving Certificate examination points are less likely to progress to the following academic year.² The 2015 EU Report on Dropout and Completion in Higher Education in Europe identified three challenges for all higher education systems, irrespective of the nature of admission. Overall, the OECD and EU research underline the importance of equity policies at secondary level of education in order to ensure ‘study success’ at third level. ‘Study success’ comprises:

- Completion: to have students successfully complete their study programme with a degree.
- Time-to-degree: to have students complete their study programme within a reasonable time period.
- Retention or dropout: the aim to have students re-enrol in a study programme until they complete their degree and to reduce the likelihood they drop out before completing their programme.

Digital Strategy for Schools

The Education Committee contributed to the preparation of the ASTI submission to the Departmental consultation on the next digital learning strategy for schools. (see ICT in Education report)

Consultation on National Access Plan to Higher Education

The Education Committee contributed to the preparation of the ASTI submission to the Departmental consultation on the second National Access Plan to Higher Education. (see ASTI Submissions section)

STEM Education

The Education Committee contributed to the preparation of the ASTI submission to the Department of Education’s implementation plan, phase 2022-2026.

Global Report on Teaching Profession

The Committee discussed the Education International report on the teaching profession and noted the global trend of heavy workload, poor public status, impaired wellbeing and low morale.

¹ EU Commission Study on the impact of admission systems on the outcomes of higher education 2017, Vol 1

² HEA An analysis of completion in Irish Higher Education 2019

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STUDIES

OECD Education at Glance 2021

Education at a Glance – EAG - is the OECD statistical handbook on education in 35-member countries. It has been published annually since 1992. The 2021 edition included a focus on outcomes of educational institutions, access to education, financial resources, teachers and school organisation. A specific chapter is dedicated to the Sustainable Development Goal 4 - *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*

Key indicators from Ireland include:

- Ireland once again ranked in last place out of 36 countries for investment in second-level education as a percentage of GDP.
- In 2018 Ireland invested 1.1% of GDP in second-level education compared to the OECD and EU averages of 1.9%, according to the report.
- Overall, Ireland invested 3.4% of GDP in primary, second and third-level education in 2017 compared to the OECD average of 4.9% and EU average of 4.5%.
- Ireland is one the best performing countries when it comes to enrolment in second-level education; 93% of 15-19 year olds are enrolled in second-level compared to the OECD average of 84%. Participation in further education is also higher in Ireland: 45% of 20-24 year olds are full-time students compared to the OECD average of 41%.
- Ireland comes in second place out of 36 OECD countries for performance in reading tests. More than 85% of 15-year-olds in Ireland performed at Level 2 or above in an OECD reading assessment, ahead of countries such as Finland and Canada.

ASTI Press Release: Ireland remains at the bottom of global ranking for investment in education 16th September 2021

The OECD report *Education at a Glance 2020*, published today, once again ranks Ireland in last place out of 36 countries for investment in second-level education as a percentage of GDP.

In 2018, Ireland invested 1.1% of GDP in second-level education compared to the OECD and EU averages of 1.9%, according to the report. (p.254)

Expenditure per second-level student is \$10,634 compared to \$11,590 OECD average and \$11,543 EU average. (p.234)

Before the pandemic, total public expenditure on primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education in Ireland reached 2.3% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2018, which was lower than the OECD average of 3.2%. (Ireland report, p.5)

Commenting on the report, ASTI President Eamon Dennehy said that ongoing failure to invest in our schools will have long term social and economic consequences both for individuals and our society:

“If we take GDP as a measure of national wealth, it is unacceptable that a rich country like Ireland remains at the bottom of the global rankings. The pandemic has dramatically underlined how important schools are to children, families and communities. It has also demonstrated that large classes, insufficient staffing, inadequate accommodation and ventilation are undermining the capacity of schools to provide a safe environment for quality education.”

Mr Dennehy said a key objective of Budget 2022 must be to increase investment in education. “We need more classrooms, more communal spaces, better ventilation and overall physical infrastructure. Above all we need more teachers to provide the range of learning and wellbeing opportunities demanded by current education policy.”

Equity is an important policy goal

The report shows that, across a number of indicators, equity is a strong feature of our education system. School retention is high: 93% of 15-19 year olds are enrolled in second-level compared to the OECD average of 84%. Ireland has less children from lower socio-economic groups performing at the lowest level in the OECD PISA study – 16% compared to the OECD average of 29%. (Ireland report, p.1)

A positive equity outcome is also indicated in terms of the smaller than OECD average difference between native-born and foreign born 15-29 year olds who are neither employed or in education or training (NEETs). In Ireland, the difference is 2 percentage points compared to the OECD average of 5%. (Ireland report, p.4)

COVID-19 and schools

The supplementary report on the state of global education and the impact COVID-19 notes the additional steps taken by countries including Ireland to support remote learning and safe re-opening of schools. However, the short and long term impacts of the pandemic are still unclear and the loss of learning opportunities must remain a high priority. The recovery must focus on addressing inequities exposed by the shift to remote teaching and learning. The ASTI President said that the contingency measures delivered by the government over the last year demonstrate that further investment in education is both possible and necessary.

EDUCATION CONSULTATIVE STRUCTURES

ASTI CURRICULUM REPRESENTATIVES 2022-2023

Accounting	Noelle Moran	Eamon Scully
Agricultural Science	Peter Keaney	Ciarán Dunne
Applied Mathematics	Tony McGennis	Patrick Conroy
Applied Technology	Adrian Guinan	Vacant
Biology	Margaret McGagh	Maura Cullinan
Business/Business Studies	Joan O’Brien	Imelda Mulhall

Chemistry	Mary Mullaghy	Jacinta McKenna
Classics/Classical Studies	Vacant	Vacant
Computer Science	Geraldine O'Brien	Vacant
Drama	Vacant	Vacant
Engineering/Engineering Technology	Eamon Dennehy	Donal Cremin
English	Kate Barry	Siobhan O'Donovan
French	Daniel Howard	Barry Hennessey
Gaeilge	Anne Loughnane	Aodán Mac Cárthaigh
Geography	Margaret Fitzpatrick	Edmund Hussey
German	Pamela Conway	Clodagh Mackie
Graphics/Design & Communication Graphics	Liam Quinn	Paul Glynn
Guidance & Counselling	Joan Colbert	Michael Gleeson
History	Gerard Hanlon	Philip Irwin
Home Economics	Maura McCaul	Joan Carr
Italian	Vacant	Vacant
LCA	John Sheedy	Vacant
LCVP	Kevin Dunphy	Vacant
Mathematics	Niall Duddy	Pauline Nagle
Music	Mary McFadden	Áine Balfe
Physics	John Conneely	Kevin Dunphy
Physical Education	Fergal Lyons	Andrew Levis
Politics & Society	Patrick O'Driscoll	Donal McCarthy
Religious Education	Roisin Dignan	Vacant
Science	Michael McGrath	Shane Curran
Spanish	David McArdle	Daniel Howard
Special Education	Marina Cusack	Pat Knightly
School Chaplain	Simon Kelliher	Karol Torpey
Visual Art/Art	Veronica Lavin	Vacant
Transition Year	Margo McGann	Pauline Nagle
Wellbeing/CSPE	Vacant	Vacant
Wellbeing/SPHE	Karen Ryan	Orla O'Sullivan
Wood Technology/ Construction	Peter Masterson	Vacant

SUBJECT REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: Mathematics
REP: Elaine Devlin

There have been no meetings, discussions or communication with NCCA since Covid started. As far as the reps in maths are concerned there have been no developments, notwithstanding that changes/adjustments were made without teacher consultation to examination papers.

SUBJECT: Science
REPS: Michael McGrath & Shane Curran

There has been no Junior Cycle Written Exam for the past 2 two years and no changes have been made to the Subject Specifications. A welcome development has been the dropping of CBA 2 and the Assessment Task for this year's Candidates.

SUBJECT: History
REPS: Gerard Hanlon & Philip Irwin

No changes have occurred in history at either level.

SUBJECT: Geography
REPS: Margaret Fitzgerald

There has been no change in syllabus since Convention 2021.

SUBJECT: Classics, Classical Studies, Ancient Greek & Latin
REP: Jim O'Dea

The new Junior Cycle Classics course will be examined for the first-time next June. This new course replaces the old course which remained basically unchanged since its introduction in the 1980s.

This new course will have significant impact on the Leaving Certificate subjects of Ancient Greek and Latin, which have not been reviewed in the past 40+ years. As a result of this new JC course, where if pupils opt for an Ancient Greek or Latin module, pupils should effectively have only the language level achieved in First Year under the old course. Consequently, the NCCA have been working on a new syllabus for LC Classics course. The new courses should be signed off on before Convention this year and should be taught to Fifth Year pupils this September and be examined for the first time in 2024. Like most other courses Ancient Greek and Latin will have a research component carrying 20% of the overall marks.

The new LC Classical Studies course is currently being taught to Fifth Years and is due to be examined in the LC for the first time in 2023.

The last 6 years have seen a complete overhaul of Classical Studies, Ancient Greek and Latin both at JC and LC. This overhaul was long overdue and at long last there is a flicker of light at the end of the tunnel.

SUBJECT: Spanish
Rep: David McArdle

Syllabi Report:

There are no changes to the Junior and Senior Cycle Syllabi since Convention 2021.

However, there have been changes to the Written Papers for Leaving Cert which are outlined below.

REPORT ON EXAM PAPER CHANGES:

Leaving Certificate Spanish – HIGHER LEVEL

Oral Examination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No adjustment to General Conversation - Study 3 out of 5 Roleplays
Aural Examination – Total Marks 80
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No adjustment
Written Examination – Total Marks 185
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No change of paper layout from examination 2021 - Section A: Q2 Short Comprehensions: Answer (a) or (b). - Section B: Q5: Choice of 3 Opinion Pieces - Section C: 1 a) Dialogue: 6 shortened turns (instead of traditional 5) and answer any 5. - Section C: 1 b) Formal Letter: Choose any 5 out of a possible 8 points. - Section C: 2 a) Diary Entry: Choose between any 4 of 5 points. - Section C: 2 b) Note: Choose between any 4 of 5 points. <p>NOTE: Chose any one part from Section C i.e. Dialogue OR Formal Letter OR Diary Entry OR Note</p>

Leaving Certificate Spanish – ORDINARY LEVEL

Oral Examination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No adjustment to General Conversation - Study 3 out of 5 Roleplays
Aural Examination – Total Marks 100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No adjustment
Written Examination – Total Marks 170
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No change of paper layout from examination 2021 - Section A: Q1 Comprehensions: Answer Questions 1 and 5. Choose 1 out of Questions 2, 3 or 4. - Section B: Q1 Letter: Choose any 5 out of a possible 8 points. - Section B: 2 a) Diary Entry: Choose between any 4 of 5 points. - Section B: 2 b) Note: Choose between any 4 of 5 points. <p>NOTE: Section B – Candidates do Question 1 AND choose either Q 2(a) OR Q 2(b)</p>

Junior Cycle Spanish – Common Level

Examination will go ahead with no adjustments as of 1st March 2022.

SUBJECT: Accounting
Reps: Noelle Moran & Eamon Scully

There has been no change in syllabus since Convention 2021.

SUBJECT: Business
Reps: Mary Mullaghy

There have been no changes in syllabus since Convention 2021.

SUBJECT: Physical Education
Reps: Andrew Phelan

Major changes are on the way for Junior Cycle Physical Education. A new 135-hour JCPE course is all but finished the development stages and is just awaiting approval. This new course will completely replace all current options at JC level for PE. There will only be this one course. There will no longer be a choice on whether to take PE as a short course or to follow the old curriculum that many of us will be familiar with. The new course with its 135 hours makes this longer than a short course but shorter than a full subject. The course follows all the 'new' Junior Cycle Criteria and lingo complete with two CBA's. I raised several concerns around this new development, such as questioning the rationale for such changes, why PE wasn't being kept as a full subject? Who could teach elements of this new course? Why 2 CBAs in line with other subjects when we only have 135 hours? I also highlighted the fact that any new course, if it is to include formal assessment should incorporate and reflect the changing participation environment from which our students were coming, for example the option to include boxing, martial arts, golf etc. In general, I feel as though this was development for development's sake, without any real substantial changes that would benefit the students. It was simply to bring PE in line with the new JC Framework given that fewer than 10% of schools had opted for the short course in PE. Furthermore, I felt that the consultation process was, although very courteous, professional and with really good people, it was not true consultation but rather box ticking without any real debate or opportunity to propose anything outside the very narrow box of the proposed changes. Tinker with the edges, YES, propose something vastly different, NO.

SUBJECT: Biology
REPS: Siobhan Devaney & Lily Cronin

The draft specification for LC Biology is complete. It was completed in September 2021.

It then was looked over by the Board for Senior Cycle in October 2021.

Following on from there, it was sent to the NCCA council and they approved it for public consultation.

It is currently being sent for public consultation but this has not commenced yet.

SUBJECT: Physics
REPS: John Conneely & Kevin Dunphy

A new draft specification has been completed for Leaving Certificate Physics (2019-2021). The draft was to be published (Dec 2021) and go into the public domain as part of the consultation process for development of a new Physics Specification. However, commencement of the consultation process has been delayed until conditions more conducive for teachers, students, and other stakeholders to engage with the draft, exist.

Further, it is expected that in the coming weeks, the Minister for Education will be in a position, to make an announcement on the redevelopment of Senior Cycle. In the light of this, the NCCA Council, at its most recent meeting on 28th February 2022, decided that it would open the consultation process at some point following the Minister's announcement on senior Cycle.

SUBJECT: Gaeilge
REPS: Anne Loughnane & Eithne Coyne

Gaeilge

The ASTI hosted two online consultations with teachers of Gaeilge, in October '21 and more recently in January '22, following the NCCA's publication of draft specifications for Senior Cycle Gaeilge. We engaged in this consultation process with members in order to obtain a wide spectrum of views prior to submitting the ASTI response to the draft specifications. The NCCA consultation process is now closed.

The Framework for Junior Cycle continues to be challenging for teachers. Research recently conducted by the ASTI found that, almost seven years on, many teachers have strong reservations about the Junior Cycle specifications, in terms of the balance between content and skills, clarity of learning outcomes, and assessment modalities, including the Junior Cycle examination. Above all, teachers were profoundly concerned about progression to Senior Cycle. This theme dominates ASTI research and influences teachers' views on curriculum change at Senior Cycle.

The strongest message delivered by teachers of Gaeilge related to the Senior Cycle T1 & T2 draft specifications was the need to comprehensively review the implementation of the Gaeilge specifications for Junior Cycle, in advance of decision-making on the Senior Cycle. Teachers are very concerned about the implementation of the Junior Cycle specifications for many reasons, including:

- An excessive amount of literature in both T1 and T2 specifications
- No Foundation Level course for weaker students
- The late issuing of sample marking papers

The Teanga 1 specification is aimed at students in Gaeltacht schools and schools which operate through the Irish language - Gaelcholáistí and Aonaid Ián-Ghaeilge - while Teanga 2 is aimed at schools that operate as English-medium schools. Teachers are uneasy about the decision-making process at school level, as to which specification would be provided. Clarity is required on this matter, as many teachers are of the view that requiring all students in an Irish-medium /Gaeltacht school, irrespective of their academic strengths, to complete the Junior Cycle examination would be unfair and demoralising.

The ASTI will continue to engage with the NCCA on these matters.

SUBJECT: Chemistry
Reps: Mary Mullaghy & Pauline Nagle

Report from ASTI representatives on the NCCA Leaving Certificate Chemistry Development Group. We wish to voice our concerns and frustrations at the manner in which the specifications for the Leaving Certificate Chemistry were developed despite pointing out the issues on numerous occasions. The problem areas may be summarised as follows:

1. Template being used for designing the new specifications.

The current Leaving Certificate syllabus in Chemistry is a clear detailed document. It has stood the test of time and the content to be taught and laboratory practical work to be carried out by students are clearly specified and are easily interpreted by science teachers. All three Leaving Certificate syllabi for the Senior Sciences are designed using a common template of four columns: Content; Depth of Treatment; Laboratory Practical Activities and Science, Technology and Society (STS) applications. Unfortunately, the NCCA insists on forcing the new specifications into a template which had been proven to be fundamentally flawed. Evidence for the fundamental flaws in the template being used by the NCCA for designing specifications are:

- The Hyland Report (2014). Professor Hyland points out very clearly that "more detailed information about the depth of treatment of subjects and the requirements for examination must be provided at national level in Ireland to bring the syllabi into line with international good practice." (p. 5 Hyland Report). The full report may be found at <https://www.ista.ie/the-hyland-report-2/>
- Listening to the Voice of Science Teachers (2019). This report is based on the results of a survey carried out by the Irish Science Teachers' Association and was completed by 762 science teachers. Analysis of the results of the survey showed that 85% of science teachers were dissatisfied with the template used to design the Junior Cycle science specification. This report may be found at <https://www.ista.ie/jcscience-report/>
- Leaving Certificate Agricultural Science specification. The Leaving Certificate Agricultural Science specification will be examined for the first time in June 2021. Major problems in interpreting the specification have been highlighted by the Irish Agricultural Science Teachers Association (IASTA). This organisation has sent a detailed submission to the Minister for Education (2019) and also an IASTA Report (2021) based on a survey of its members. Details of the submission may be found at <https://www.iasta.ie/2020/10/31/open-letter-of-minister-norma-foleyagricultural-science-teacher-guidelines-sample-papers/>

Details of the IASTA report that is based on a survey of its members may be found at: <https://www.iasta.ie/2021/01/29/iasta-members-survey-reveals-significantissues-with-new-specification-the-individual-investigative-study/>

It is extremely frustrating for us as teacher representatives to see the current excellent Leaving Certificate Chemistry syllabus being destroyed and replaced with a flawed and vague document which we know teachers will struggle to interpret and teach. We feel that the proposed draft specifications will damage the subject and undermine teachers' confidence in teaching it. Despite our concerns being voiced at subject development group meetings, we were possibly heard but rarely heeded. The NCCA has provided no justification or documentary evidence for its insistence on using the flawed template of specification design. Indeed, it is worth noting that the NCCA has not responded to any of the three items of documentary evidence listed above.

2. Mandatory Student Experiments

The current Leaving Certificate Chemistry syllabus has a clearly specified list of mandatory student experiments. These experiments ensure that all students acquire fundamental laboratory skills. In the draft specifications these mandatory experiments are embedded within learning outcomes using vague

terminology such as “design, plan and conduct” and “investigate using primary data”. These vague terms will further undermine teachers’ confidence in interpreting the specifications. We need a clear list of mandatory experiments as provided in the current syllabus to provide clarity to both teachers and students.

3. Removal of Science, Technology and Society

One of the main aims of science education is that students should be able to relate the science they learn in school to science in our everyday lives. International best practice in curriculum design involves STS as an integral part of curriculum specifications. The removal of the STS column and references to STS in the proposed new specifications will result in the Leaving Certificate Chemistry specification that will resemble the syllabus that was taught in the 1980s. The introduction of STS into the current Leaving Certificate Chemistry syllabus led to a reversal in the decline in the number of students studying Chemistry and was one of the key recommendations of the Task Force of the Physical Sciences (2002) set up by the Irish Government. Its removal makes no sense and will result in specifications that will be dry and boring.

4. Rushed pace of work

As predicted last year the incomplete draft specifications were taken out of our hands before we had time to ensure that they were finished. Due to the pandemic, we had online meetings of only two hours duration. Given that there is still a huge amount of work to be done, we cannot understand why everything is being rushed.

Conclusion

All teachers are under enormous levels of stress at the moment. We cannot allow increased levels of stress to be placed on teachers by asking them to teach a vague and poorly designed Leaving Certificate Chemistry specification. The commencement of the consultation was delayed to ensure that this important stage of the work could take place when conditions are more conducive for teachers, students and other stakeholders to engage. The Minister has been considering the Senior Cycle Review: Advisory Report that was submitted to her by NCCA. At the time of writing this it is expected that the Minister would be in a position to make an announcement on the redevelopment of Senior Cycle in the coming weeks. The NCCA Council decided that it would be appropriate to await the Minister’s announcement before proceeding to consultation on the draft specifications to ensure that they reflect policy objectives contained in the announcement on the redevelopment of Senior Cycle

SUBJECT: Applied Mathematics
Reps: Tony McGennis & Christy Maginn

The new course is up and running - 5th year groups, who will be sitting the Leaving Cert in 2023, started with the new specification in September.

There is an extensive programme of CPD for teachers, especially useful in new areas such as Networks and Graphs.

Input was given to SEC about the Leaving Cert exam, and our suggestions (along with those of the subject association) were taken on board. The number of questions to be answered in 2021 (and 2022) was reduced from 6 to 5.

SENIOR CYCLE

NCCA undertook a review of Senior Cycle education in recent years in which there were a number of cycles of consultation. ASTI ensured that we were well represented at all stakeholder events to which we were invited. We ensured that the voice of the ASTI was strong and we will demand that we are listened to at all stages of development.

ASTI also commissioned a piece of research by Dr Brian Fleming on the approach by NCCA to the consultation process. It was an excellent piece of research and well received.

In particular, it identified that issues such as initiative overload, increasing workload and lack of capacity at school level must be addressed before major change at Senior Cycle can take place.

Among its key recommendations is one whereby there is a need to consider an appropriate timeframe for introducing change at Senior Cycle. According to the author, “schools are in need of a breather from the current pattern of ongoing innovation and additional workload”.

There is a need to evaluate the impact of the Framework for Junior Cycle on the learning that is taking place in classrooms. There is also a need to examine implementation issues that are problematic.

Dr Fleming’s research has provided a solid foundation for our approach to proposals that are made in this regard in the coming period.

Dr. Fleming’s report can be accessed at www.asti.ie

ASTI has long argued that change at Leaving Certificate should only be considered when a comprehensive analysis of the impact of a full cycle of implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle has taken place.

CEC, at its meeting in May 2021 passed the following motion:

That the ASTI conduct a survey of its members on their experience of implementing the Framework for Junior Cycle and that this survey be developed by a sub-committee of CEC and its findings utilised in enabling the ASTI in planning its response to proposed changes at Senior Cycle level.

A report from the NCCA to the Minister for Education on the outcome of the NCCA review of the senior cycle referenced above was provided to her in 2021. The Minister has not published the report at time of writing. Upon publication, ASTI will study it in detail and work to ensure that our policy positions regarding Senior Cycle will be protected and advanced.

EXAMINATIONS

Leaving Certificate 2021.

On the 17th February 2021, the Minister for Education made an announcement regarding Leaving Certificate 2021.

Key features were as follows:

The Government had decided on a dual approach regarding the Leaving Certificate Examinations. (Leaving Certificate and SEC Accredited Grades)

All students could opt to take Leaving Certificate Examinations, including written examinations and related additional components.

In addition, a system of accredited grades was being provided. Leaving Certificate 2021 results were awarded on the basis of the better of

either

- Students' performance in Leaving Certificate examinations in any subject taken by them in the conventional examinations, including, where appropriate, their performance in the completion of additional components (coursework, orals, etc.)

or

- Students' SEC accredited grades in each subject based on schools' estimates of students' likely performance and a national standardisation process.

The State Examinations Commission operated both Leaving Certificate option pathways.

Established Leaving Certificate:

The established Leaving Certificate took place including orals and coursework. Orals were held during the Easter break or shortly thereafter. They were conducted by way of recording by qualified teachers in the school or sourced locally and sent for external marking. The conduct and recording of the orals was a paid function. In some subjects, the holding of practical examinations was not feasible due to public health considerations in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The written Leaving Certificate examinations took place in June, 2021.

SEC Accredited Grades:

Teachers were asked to estimate a mark for each student in their class.

An alignment process took place similar to 2020 Calculated Grades process and the school's marks for each student in each subject were transferred to the State Examinations Commission for standardisation.

Teachers were not asked to provide a rank order list of their students.

The professional judgement of each of the candidate's teachers was not subject to appeal.

A right for students to appeal in respect of their Accredited Grade which comprised a process review focused on examining possible errors in the transmission and processing of student data was available.

Provision as far as practicable for out-of-school learners or students studying one or more subjects outside school to apply to receive Accredited Grades through the devising of an appropriate and practicable process was put in place

Indemnification of teachers and school leaders was provided in the operation of the process.

Schools were closed to all students from 28th May, 2021 to allow for the conclusion of the work necessary at school level within the process.

Legislation was passed by the Oireachtas to provide for

- a) the involvement of the SEC in this process.
- b) penalties regarding canvassing of teachers
- c) Indemnity

From an ASTI perspective, we were committed to ensuring that ways are found that enable students to progress in their lives in the context of the pandemic.

We expressed bitter disappointment that Accredited Grades were not to be underpinned in any way by externally validated elements such as coursework, projects, etc. It was our view that Accredited Grades would prove a very challenging proposition for all concerned given the lack of credible data in many instances. The ASTI concern was also that the established Leaving Certificate would be side-lined or downgraded in this process. We demanded that the second components, coursework, project work, orals and aural would proceed and welcomed the fact that this principle was conceded.

We also successfully insisted that no gap-filling of the established Leaving Certificate using estimations gleaned from the SEC Accredited Grades process would take place in a context whereby second components, coursework, project work, orals and aural would run.

There were also some important gains for the ASTI. These included

- The removal of a requirement for teachers to place their students in rank order merit in their class.
- The fact that at ASTI insistence, second components – coursework, project work, orals, aural etc. were proceeding
- Adjustments of the 2021 Leaving Cert written exams were put in place
- No mixing of estimations gleaned from Accredited Grades Process was allowed for the established Leaving Cert.
- A full indemnity for teachers and school leaders as achieved by the ASTI in the 2020 Calculated Grades process was put in place.
- Protections against canvassing of teachers as achieved by the ASTI in the 2020 Calculated Grades process were also put in place.

ASTI believes that this State Examinations Commission Accredited Grades process should never have been developed as being more than a contingency measure. It was regrettable that it took a very public walkout from the discussions by ASTI to address the lack of visible planning in relation to the established Leaving Cert 2021 second component exams and what at the time was the inevitability of their cancellation, which would have led to an emasculation of the established Leaving Certificate as we know it.

Leaving Certificate 2022

In June 2021, Minister for Education, Norma Foley announced that there would be adjustments made to the assessment arrangements for students due to sit State examinations in 2022, to take account of the disruption to their learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In August, the Department of Education published the document "Assessment Arrangements for Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Examinations 2022".

This document set out the adjusted assessment arrangements for post-primary students taking certificate examinations in the 2021/22 school year. These arrangements were designed to take account of the disrupted learning experienced by students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The document detailed the adjusted assessment arrangements for every subject/ module descriptor in the Leaving Certificate

Established, Leaving Certificate Applied, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and Junior Cycle programmes.

These arrangements included, where relevant:

- revised dates for the submission of coursework, for the school year 2021/22
- updated lists of prescribed materials for examination in 2022
- the new assessment arrangements in Junior Cycle subjects being examined for the first time in 2022 including: Technology Subjects, Jewish Studies, Classics and Religious Education

The adjustments put in place left intact the familiar overall structure of the examinations, while incorporating additional choice for students in the examinations.

There will be no change to the length of the written examinations. It is intended that an alternative set of Leaving Certificate examinations will be run in 2022, shortly following the main set of examinations. These examinations will be limited to certain students who are unable to sit the main set of examinations due to close family bereavement, COVID-19 illness and certain other categories of serious illness to be determined.

A Leaving Certificate Applied 2021-22 Summary Advice Note was also published. This summary advice note sets out the key curriculum and assessment arrangements for LCA Year 1 and Year 2 students in the 2021/22 school year and can also be accessed at www.asti.ie

On 1st February 2022, the intention to make further adjustments to the Leaving Certificate examinations for 2022 was announced to take account of the disruption to teaching and learning experienced by the Leaving Certificate class of 2022. As advocated by the ASTI, the adjustments are the same as those that were implemented in March 2021 for Leaving Certificate 2021.

Full details of the further adjustments made to the examinations are published on gov.ie/leavingcertificate and on www.examinations.ie.

A subject-by-subject guide is available in the document, 'Further Adjustments to the Written Examinations'. In addition to the document, a useful guide to these changes are the 2021 examination papers, which are available from the Examination Material Archive on www.examinations.ie.

There are no plans to offer SEC Accredited Grades.

Leaving Certificate Oral Examinations and the practical performance tests in Leaving Certificate Music 2022.

The Department of Education and the State Examinations Commission announced in December 2021 new arrangements for Leaving Certificate Oral Examinations in Irish and the Modern Foreign Languages and the practical performance tests in Leaving Certificate Music.

These examinations will take place outside of school time over the first week of the school Easter holidays, with the examinations running in schools during the six-day period Saturday 9 April to Thursday 14 April 2022 inclusive.

All aspects of the examinations will be conducted in accordance with the prevailing Public Health advice.

It is planned that the Junior Cycle Music practical performance test and the Home Economics practical test will take place during school time as normal.

This change, for 2022, is being made in response to the need to take steps to limit teacher absences from schools given current challenges associated with sourcing substitute teachers and in the context of the on-going pandemic.

Overview of 2022 Delivery Model

For the 2022 Leaving Certificate examinations, Oral tests will be held in Irish, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Russian and, for the first time, Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Lithuanian and Portuguese.

In a change to the normal (pre-Covid) arrangements, the Oral tests and the Music Practical examination, will be organised over a six-day period commencing on Saturday 9th April and concluding on Thursday 14th April 2022.

The tests will be conducted by visiting examiners, recruited and appointed to schools by the SEC.

In the event that it is not possible to facilitate all of the tests in the 6-day period, two contingency days have been identified. The contingency days are Thursday 7th and Friday 8th April in 2022. Decisions on the use of the contingency days will be made by the SEC in conjunction with the SEC examiners. The SEC will need to be satisfied that it is not practicable to hold the tests without availing of one or both of those contingency days. It will not be up to individual schools to seek to arrange tests on these days in the first instance.

Reacting to the announced arrangements for oral exams in Irish and modern foreign languages and the music practical exam for Leaving Certificate 2022 to be held during the Easter holiday period ASTI noted that the arrangements are a further challenge to the system, the teachers and the students for whom the Easter break will be cut short.

ASTI is particularly mindful of the pressure on teachers to be available during the practicals. We also heard concerns from our members regarding availability during weekends. In that regard, we also raised issues relating to payment rates, Examination Aide provision and payment, musical accompaniment for students and payment issues related to the provision of this service.

JUNIOR CYCLE

Junior Cycle Framework Implementation Committee:

The Junior Cycle Framework Implementation Committee should meet quarterly to discuss relevant matters related to Implementation. In 2021, in the context of the on-going Covid-19 Pandemic, only one meeting took place.

The President, Vice President, General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary: Education/Research represented ASTI.

ASTI raises several matters of concern with the Department of Education and Skills.

These included the following:

The provisions of Circulars relation to the implementation of the Junior Cycle Framework

Issues related to Continuous Professional Development.

Workload

Professional Time.

Recording of Classroom Based Assessments and Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement

Subject reviews

Scheduling of JCT symposiums on Saturdays

Management Resource Hours – quantum of hours available - the usefulness of hours not divisible by 40 minutes.

Longitudinal Study

Provision in Special Schools

Supports in smaller schools where there are very few post - holders

Time available for subjects.

Core status of History and other subjects.

Role of Junior Cycle Co-ordinator

Lack of external oral examinations

Mixed information and misinterpretation of the implementation by stakeholders

Code of practice/protocol for filming of students and teachers

Time window for conducting Classroom Based Assessments

Issues associated with the number of CBAs and over assessment

Data Protection issues

Adult learners.

Administration Grant

Issues related to sample papers issued by SEC.

Junior Cycle Appeals

Reporting Templates

Wellbeing

Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings. (See below)

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE 2021

The Government decided that the Junior Cycle examinations would not run in 2021.

It was widely regarded that the arrangements put in place in 2020 were appropriate in light of the pandemic. Guidance for Assessment and Reporting on Students' Learning – Junior Cycle was published in March 2021.

The guidelines set out arrangements to support schools and centres for education in their approach to reporting on the learning achievements and progress of students who are completing their Junior Cycle programme of study in 2021.

The use of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) was not considered appropriate as a reporting and certification mechanism in 2021.

Junior Cycle students' progress and learning achievements were recognised in two specific ways designed to meet the current exceptional circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

For each student certification involves two elements

- A State Certificate of Completion of the Junior Cycle from the Department of Education. This certificate to state that the

student has completed the Junior Cycle programme of study. For each student the certificate to include the list of subjects, short courses and/or priority learning units studied by them during their Junior Cycle programme.

- A School Report detailing the learning achievements of the student during their Junior Cycle programme. Students to receive a written report on the broad range of learning that they have achieved in each subject, short course and/or priority learning unit at the end of Junior Cycle. This assessment of their learning to be provided by their teachers. Schools had autonomy, following consultation with the teachers of third-year students, regarding how this assessment was to be arrived at and the format in which the report is provided.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) developed some sample templates for reporting on Junior Cycle.

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE 2022

Unlike 2020 and 2021, the intention at time of writing is to hold Junior Cycle examinations in the normal way.

In August 2021, the Department of Education published a document "Assessment Arrangements For Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Examinations 2022".

The document can be accessed at www.asti.ie

This document sets out the adjusted assessment arrangements for post-primary students taking certificate examinations in the 2021/22 school year. These arrangements are designed to take account of the disrupted learning experienced by students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The document details the adjusted assessment arrangements for every subject/ module descriptor in the Leaving Certificate Established, Leaving Certificate Applied, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and Junior Cycle programmes.

These arrangements include, where relevant:

- revised dates for the submission of coursework, for the school year 2021/22
- updated lists of prescribed materials for examination in 2022
- the new assessment arrangements in Junior Cycle subjects being examined for the first time in 2022 including: Technology Subjects, Jewish Studies, Classics and Religious Education

The adjustments put in place will leave intact the familiar overall structure of the examinations, while incorporating additional choice for students in the examinations.

There will be no change to the length of the written examinations.

There will be no second sitting of the Junior Cycle examinations in 2022.

JUNIOR CYCLE

Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings:

The matter of scheduling of Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings in schools remains a big issue for ASTI. Some schools continued to attempt to organise such meetings entirely outside normal school tuition hours.

The Appendix to the Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation (July 2015) and Circular Letter 0015/2017 both state:

“The 40 minute professional time period provided within timetable is available to teachers on the basis that they will use this time flexibly including bundling time periods and carrying forward time to facilitate professional collaboration. Teachers may also use the time periods for individual planning, feedback or reporting activities relating to Junior Cycle. In particular, time periods will need to be bundled to facilitate Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings. Since professional collaboration meetings can only be held when the relevant subject teachers can be present, a limited number of meetings may need to draw on teachers’ bundled time to run beyond normal school tuition hours for some of the duration of the meeting”

In addition, a further clarification relating to SLAR meetings was provided by the Department of Education and Skills to ASTI in December 2015. It stated as follows:

“The Department confirms that any attempt to impose the organisation of SLAR meetings entirely outside school hours would contravene the agreement. The intention is that SLAR meetings will be scheduled to commence within the timetable, involving the inclusion of a normal timetabled period. However, given the required duration, flexibility to run beyond the normal school day for some of the duration of the meeting is required. This flexibility is essential to the feasibility of organising SLAR meetings.”

In November 2019, ASTI conducted a ballot of members on the scheduling of *Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings*. ASTI members voted by 93% to 7% in favour of authorising Standing Committee to issue the following directive to members.

ASTI Directive

In the context of section 9.7 of the *Appendix to Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation on Junior Cycle Reform*, ASTI members are hereby directed to only attend *Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings* on the basis that they must be scheduled to start and end within normal school tuition hours, and only a limited number may run beyond school tuition hours for some of the duration of the meeting.

Notes:

All members are required to adhere to this directive. Where a member of ASTI becomes aware that another member is in breach of the above Directive, he/she should report this in writing to the ASTI General Secretary so that the matter may be formally investigated by the union.

Breaches of the directive may result in union disciplinary sanction.

The purpose of this ASTI Directive is to ensure that all *Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings* are held in accordance with the provisions of section 9.7 of the *Appendix to Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation on Junior Cycle Reform*.

JUNIOR CYCLE WELLBEING PROGRAMME FOR THE 2021/2022 SCHOOL YEAR.

Circular 0076/2020, which set out the arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to the school year 2020/21, advised that, in view of the various challenges facing schools on resumption in September 2020, schools were being given the option to defer the increase of wellbeing provision at Junior Cycle for students entering first year, from 300 to 400 hours by one year, until the 2021/22 academic year.

Following representations from the ASTI, it is recognised that the disruption caused by the further school closures in 2021, as a result of the pandemic, presented challenges in moving to this level of provision from September 2021. In view of this schools are being given the option to defer the increase of wellbeing provision at Junior Cycle, for incoming first years, from 300 to 400 hours by one further year, until the 2022/23 academic year. In planning their Wellbeing programmes, schools should note that from September 2022 onwards, the use of the Junior Certificate syllabuses for SPHE and CSPE should be discontinued.

SCoTENS

SCOTENS – Standing Conference of Teacher Educators, North and South - is a network of 38 colleges of education, university education departments, teaching councils, curriculum councils, education trade unions and education centres on the island of Ireland which have a role in teacher education. SCOTENS was established in 2003 to create a space for teacher educators – North and South– to come together and discuss issues of common interest and develop ways of co-operating. The four teacher unions share representation on a rotational basis on the Steering Committee for SCOTENS. IFUT is currently the union representative for the South of Ireland.

The SCoTENS annual conference is a key fixture in the education calendar on the island of Ireland. The annual SCoTENS conference provides a forum where teacher educators across the island of Ireland can engage in open, critical and constructive analysis of current issues in education with a view to promoting a collaborative response to these issues. The 2021 online SCOTENS conference theme was *“All in this together! Teacher education and social justice”*. The conference addressed the following questions:

- How can teachers, teacher educators and education leaders be both educators and advocates for social justice?
- To what extent can and should education be held to account for reducing inequalities?
- How can education itself, through schooling and teacher education, help redistribute educational and other opportunities?
- In what ways is education in the form of schooling, teacher education, accountability systems, assessment procedures, curriculum reform etc. complicit in constraining the democratic ideal?

ASTI is represented at the Conference by the Deputy General Secretary, Diarmaid de Paor and Assistant General Secretary, Moira Leydon.

The SCoTENS Seed Funding Programme promotes and funds a range of research-based initiatives with a view to establishing sustainable North-South partnerships and projects.

The North/South Student Teacher Exchange project, brings student teachers from Dublin to do a key part of their assessed teaching practice in Belfast schools, and Belfast student teachers to do the same in Dublin. Its membership is open to all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that offer programmes of Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

Shared Island Initiative

In October 2020, An Taoiseach, Michéal Martin, launched the Shared Island initiative. The initiative aims to harness the full potential of the Good Friday Agreement to enhance cooperation, connection and mutual understanding on the island and engage with all communities and traditions to build consensus around a shared future.

In October 2021, the first Shared Island Dialogue on Education – Learning from each other: The future of education on a shared island – was hosted by the Minister for Education. The Dialogue brought together 130 persons representing education and civil society stakeholders, from North and South, to discuss opportunities for, and challenges to, deeper cooperation on the island across a range of education, higher and further education, skills and research areas. Themes included innovative connections by young people on the island and on addressing educational underachievement, including student voice; addressing educational underachievement; accessibility issues and matching skill needs across the island; sharing research and collaboration.

The ASTI was represented by the General Secretary, Kieran Christie. Below is the text submitted by ASTI in advance of the first Dialogue identifying potential areas for teacher union engagement.

1. Introduction – good foundations already in place

Important to underline that there is already long-standing frameworks for cooperation between teacher unions on the island. With exception on NEU, all of the education unions on the island are affiliates of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. This 'political space' provides consistent opportunities for dialogue and networking.

BIGTU – British and Irish Group of Teacher Unions – is a long-standing forum between all of the education unions in the jurisdictions of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England. Meetings take place at least once a year on a rotational host basis.

Almost all of the education unions on the island are members of SCoTENS and participate in its Steering Committee on a rotational basis. Unfortunately, SCoTENS has experienced funding difficulties in recent years which undermines its potential impact.

Many of the education unions are members of ESAI – Educational Studies Association of Ireland – which provides a platform for dialogue and networking.

2. Areas for potential cooperation

Outside of national curriculum and examination policy and practice, there are a number of areas for potential learning and cooperation. They include:

(1) Addressing educational disadvantage

Addressing educational disadvantage is increasingly challenging for education systems due to greater societal recognition of emerging forms of marginalisation and exclusion.

(2) Meeting the challenge of inclusion, diversity and equality

Society North and South has changed significantly in terms of ethnic diversity, religious diversity, recognition of neuro-diversity and disability, recognition of the spectrum of human sexuality and of family composition.

(3) Digital strategies

COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the need for education systems to have robust digital learning infrastructures in place to support students' learning both in and out of school. Teacher professional development is a critical dimension of national digital learning strategies.

(4) Teacher education

SCoTENS already provides a platform to cooperation on career-long teacher education. Research projects and teacher exchanges are practical approaches to teacher learning.

(5) Education for Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 requires learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, global citizenship.

(6) Culture and creativity

Arts, culture and creativity recognise no boundaries and are inherently safe spaces for discussion, engagement and critique.

(7) Wellbeing and anti-bullying

Wellbeing and anti-bullying are core policy areas at system and school level.

Modalities for co-operation and learning from each other

Policy for all of the above areas is increasingly informed by learning from other systems and models. We need to think proactively and pragmatically how educators at all levels can better learn from each other to create better outcomes for young people and students. Modalities for such cooperation include:

School partnerships Chief problem for schools is lack of professional time for teachers to engage in the planning and implementation processes for partnerships. Funding is also an issue in terms of facilitating in-person student and teacher engagement.

Supports for schools to engage in shared island projects: Key problem in schools is lack of teacher time to engage in extra-curricular/non-classroom professional work. System needs to incentivise schools to engage in projects by providing a teaching allocation commensurate with the project demands.

Finance is also problematic. Transport to, and taking part in, events is costly for schools and students. Should be financial support commensurate with the project.

Teacher learning and professional networking: Need to create opportunities AND incentives for shared teacher learning. Literature underlines that relevance/need is the key factor in terms of motivation for teacher learning. Need to research proposals carefully. Teaching Council already has good model/ Cosán for teacher learning – could draw on this.

Digital skills: Content development by teachers accelerated during remote schooling. This area could serve as a practical space for teachers to co-create content. Teachers would need incentives to engage in such co-creation. Time is the critical resource.

Conferences/seminars: Hugely important for learning and networking. Financial assistance to teacher unions, school management bodies, teacher professional associations would enable regular cross-border dialogue to take place.

EDUCATION DISADVANTAGE

CONSULTATION ON NATIONAL ACCESS PLAN TO HIGHER EDUCATION 2022 – 2026 JUNE 2021

1. OPENING OBSERVATIONS

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (2011) identifies widening access as both a key priority and a challenge. A priority because it is a social and economic imperative: a challenge because of sustained increase in demand coupled with increasing diversity of learners. Ireland is not unique in this regard: globally, there is unprecedented social demand for access to higher education. As noted in the Foreword to the Consultation Paper, “as a society we can acknowledge and celebrate the enormous strides in broadening access to higher education.” Ireland’s higher education attainment rate – 52.6% for 30-to-34 year olds – is now among the highest in the EU. Wise policy choices in the past sustained this expansion, most notably the introduction of free second-level education in 1967, the establishment of regional technical colleges, and until the last decade or so, sustained investment in higher education. These investment decisions were not made in isolation but rather were, sequentially, dimensions of a wider national project for economic and social development. Arguably, we are at a similar pivotal moment in terms of widening access and securing financial sustainability in the higher education system.

2. WIDER POLICY CONTEXT

Financial sustainability of higher education

Before referring to the policy space most relevant to the ASTI, namely the transition of school-leavers to higher education, the ASTI wants to draw attention to wider policy issues which are of relevance to the next Access Plan. Chief among these is the continuing failure of the Government to address the funding crisis in higher education. Five years after its publication in 2016, the Report of the Expert Group on the Future Funding of Higher Education literally remains ‘on the shelf’.¹ Other reports have warned of serious and irretrievable implications for the future sustainability of some third-level institutions in the absence of investment.² Given these grave warnings, and notwithstanding the digital shift and the possibilities for widening access, it is difficult to envisage how a second Access Plan will translate ‘on the ground’ in the absence of decisions re future investment.

Costs to families, including student contribution

It is difficult to discuss access issues without addressing the costs imposed on families and individuals by the under-graduate fee or student contribution. Introduced in 2011, the contribution is currently €3,000 per year and represents the second highest third-level fees in the EU. While 40% or so of students receive some form of assistance via the SUSI grant scheme, all students are impacted by the exorbitant rental costs, high costs of public transport and overall high costs of living. Proposals for addressing this issue are contained in the 2016 report.

Quality of students’ learning experience

Another policy concern of ASTI is the impact of current under-funding on quality. High student:staff ratios have direct implications

for the quality of the learning experience. The 2016 QQI report elaborated on this situation and noted that when scaled up to a macro level, the impact of increasing student–staff ratio potentially has much wider implications. Similar concerns are expressed about staff overload and how impending retirements and lack of promotions is exacerbating the already heavy imbalance between senior and junior members of staff in departments.³ Moreover, this constrained funding environment is already impacting on the attraction of Ireland as a destination for international students. Again, it is hard to envisage the realisation of the aspirations of the next Access Plan if well-documented problems of quality are not addressed.

Dynamic factors impacting on social demand for higher education

Finally, while the overall vision of the current national access plan - to ensure that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland’s population - remains valid, it should be underpinned by a statement acknowledging ongoing demographic change, including an ageing population; trends in international migration; the wider EU project of achieving the European Education Area by 2025; the digital transition and future changes in the nature of work and labour markets.

3. TRANSITION, ACCESS AND INCLUSION – SYSTEMIC ISSUES IN SECOND-LEVEL

There a number of systemic processes at work in second-level education which impact on transitions to higher education. Some of these are more amenable to intervention than others. Cumulatively, such interventions do have impact and should be supported by both the Department of Education and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. Several of the interventions below are already identified in the National Action Plan for Education, 2016 and its subsequent iterations.

Meeting the needs of disadvantaged students in all schools

Evaluations of DEIS have confirmed that achievement gap between students in DEIS and non-DEIS schools is narrowing.⁴ The implementation of new measures for identifying DEIS schools will also be important.⁵ However, what is of enduring concern to the ASTI is the unwillingness of the Department of Education to adopt a more nuanced or ‘tapered’ approach to ensuring that schools with high numbers of disadvantaged students but which are not in DEIS. Such an approach was recommended by the ESRI in 2015.⁶ Given that it is accepted that the majority of disadvantaged students are not in DEIS schools, the Department’s unwillingness to implement the ESRI’s recommendation is all the more difficult to accept. The ASTI is strongly of the view that participation rates of disadvantaged students in higher education will not improve until the needs of all disadvantaged students are prioritised irrespective of their school’s status. The influential biennial OECD PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) repeatedly underlines that equity is at the heart of successful education systems and students’ achievement outcomes. It is therefore of concern that differences in achievement of Irish 15-year olds are more pronounced *within* schools rather than between schools.⁷ The imperative for a ‘tapering’ approach, as recommended by the ESRI, can no longer be ignored

Resource the career guidance service

As noted above, Ireland has one of the highest transition rates to higher education in the EU. While this is a national achievement to

be proud of, there are trends which are of concern. Chief among these is the inadequacy of supports available to students for making informed decisions for post-school choices. ESRI research has documented the post-school transition process and the importance of career guidance for making key decisions about life after school.⁸ Students are broadly positive about the guidance they receive but feel it is overly centred on higher education entry. They would like guidance provision to be made available at an earlier stage and to have more time for individual sessions with the guidance counsellor. Moreover, clear social class differences are evident in young people's decision-making processes. Disadvantaged students are more reliant on school-based guidance service in terms of decision-making. The ASTI has repeatedly called for the full restoration of guidance posts to pre-2009/austerity level.

It is also worth putting on record that a report commissioned by the then Minister for Education and Skills, Joe Mc Hugh, on aspects of career guidance in Ireland also remains 'on the shelf'. Ironically, the background to this review was a recommendation in the National Skills Strategy 2025 for a review of guidance services, tools and careers information. Under-resourced guidance counselling services in schools cannot meet the ambition for a whole-school approach to career guidance. The failure to adequately invest in this service means that students do not get the one-to-one and small-group service that works best in guidance practice.

One of the outcomes of inadequate career guidance in schools is low progression rates in some course areas. While the most recent HEA progression data found that 85% of all new entrant undergraduates progressed to 2nd year, there was significant disparities between course levels.⁹ Non-progression rates were up to 27% at Levels 6 and 7 compared to 11% at Level 8. This disparity is largely attributed to students being both under-prepared for the demands of the course, especially in terms of mathematical achievement/skills, but also in terms of having incomplete information on the course content and potential career paths.¹⁰

Supporting students with special educational needs

Significant progress has taken place since 2017 in the model for allocating additional supports to schools to meet the needs of students with special educational means. This is a positive development in the system. However, two areas of implementation have not been addressed and are impacting on the capacity of schools to meet students' needs. In the first instance, no national training programme has been provided for teachers despite the requirement for changes to pedagogical practices. The failure to roll out a national training programme for all teachers is deeply problematic as the new model prioritises classroom teaching over the withdrawal of SEN students for one-on-one/small group tuition. ASTI-commissioned research in 2019 found that while 60% of teachers appointed to Special Education Teacher (SET) role had a relevant qualification, less than 20% of overall profession had such a qualification.¹¹ Another issue of concern to the ASTI is the fact that insufficient time is assigned within the additional allocated hours to Special Needs Co-ordinators. This is deeply dysfunctional for schools given that the national prevalence average for SEN is 20% of the overall student cohort. Schools struggle to realise the goal of inclusive classrooms and inclusive learning communities and undoubtedly this impacts on SEN students' experiences, their ambitions for their post-school lives and their overall sense of wellbeing.

Moving beyond linear pathways

At the same time, it is clear that we can no longer think solely in terms of linear pathways from school to higher education. The

questions of pathways and choice are central to the NCCA's advisory report on senior cycle education. Similarly, the development of a Level 5 and Level 6 pathways, as set out in the new FET strategy, will provide choice and progression for school-leavers.¹² The changes to the CAO system whereby students can indicate both FET and HE preferences is critical in creating both parity of esteem and giving students choice. Equally, it will be critical to ensure sufficiently diverse pathways from FET to HE in order to provide real choices to school-leavers and provide additional avenues for access to higher education.

Admission policies to higher education

Admission systems to higher education are the key point for determining which students go into which type of institution. They allow access to a smaller or larger number of students and also shape participation by social background. However, the admission system is neither simply the transition point between upper secondary schooling and higher education nor simply a matter of procedures and regulations. Typically, national admission systems are seen as a dynamic interplay between three factors: how the schooling system is organised, how higher education institutions recruit students, and how prospective students make choices about where to go.¹³ In the Irish context, all three dimensions are explicit in the CAO admission system. The latter is increasingly acknowledged as having a detrimental 'backwash' impact on the senior cycle curriculum and on the nature of students' learning experience. It is also a route which does not take into consideration the complex array of barriers which specific categories of students' experience, in particular, Traveller children, children from migrant backgrounds and ethnic minorities such as Roma children. Within the ASTI, there is growing momentum for a review of the CAO-model because of its impact on the curriculum and its effectiveness as an admissions system. It is interesting that a word-search for CAO in the HEA's consultation document has no results.

Recently, in the context of the accredited grades model arising from the pandemic, ASTI has looked at the possibilities of open access systems as alternatives to the CAO. Open access means that all students have the opportunity to attend a higher education institution regardless of their previous schooling, grades, or skills. The rationale is that it promotes equity by removing barriers to enter higher education. However, both the OECD and the EU caution that removing selection barriers at third level does not necessarily create equity because widening participation means providing access to students who may not be as well prepared, on average, as previous student cohorts for the cognitive/academic demands of the chosen course. In Ireland, regardless of the sector or level that a student enters, students with lower Leaving Certificate examination points are less likely to progress to the following academic year.¹⁴ Hence the importance of the alternative entry routes currently in operation by third level institutions. The ASTI recommends that the HEA further investigate open access models in order to provide a knowledge base for inevitable future policy discussions on the role of the CAO on the second level curriculum.

Increasing diversity in the teaching profession

Teachers serve as role models to their students in myriad ways, including guiding young people in terms of developing their aspirations and plans for learning and careers after school. Given the increasing diversity of our society, it is important that teaching as a profession become more representative of the population.¹⁵ There is also evidence from the literature on educational disadvantage on the need for schools to have teachers who come

from lower socio-economic groups and other marginalised communities. There are a number of initiatives in place which require to be extended to larger numbers of potential student teachers. The national Teacher Supply Action Plan has also identified the importance of diversity. A specific concern of the ASTI is that the costs of the two-year Professional Master of Education, introduced in 2014, is actually reducing diversity in the profession because of its cost – typically ranging from €11,000 to €16,000 for the programme.

CONCLUSION

In this submission the ASTI has focused on those systemic aspects of second-level education which impact – directly and indirectly – on post-school transitions and access to higher education. Not only are these issues identified in the research as problematic, current education policy and national action plans contain actions to address these issues. It is now time to address these outstanding issues in order to address equity issues but also to improve overall post-school options for young people.

Notes

- 1 <https://www.education.ie/en/publications/policy-reports/investing-in-national-ambition-a-strategy-for-funding-higher-education.pdf>
- 2 [https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Quality%20in%20an%20Era%20of%20Diminishing%20Resources%20Report%20\(FINAL%20Mar](https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Quality%20in%20an%20Era%20of%20Diminishing%20Resources%20Report%20(FINAL%20Mar)
- 3 <http://www.universitytimes.ie/2016/04/crisis-point-of-third-level-institutions-may-have-serious-and-irretrievable-implications-says-report/>
- 4 <https://www.erc.ie/2019/01/07/new-report-on-the-evaluation-of-deis-at-post-primary-level/>
- 5 <https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/DEIS-Delivering-Equality-of-Opportunity-in-Schools-/DEIS-Review-Report.pdf>
- 6 See footnote 4 above
- 7 https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/pisa-2015-results-volume-i_9789264266490-en
- 8 <https://www.esri.ie/system/files?file=media/file-uploads/2015-07/RS36.pdf>
- 9 <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/A-STUDY-OF-PROGRESSION-IN-IRISH-HIGHER-EDUCATION.pdf>
- 10 <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/02/HEA-Analysis-of-Completion-in-Irish-Higher-Education-Report-Release.pdf>
- 11 <https://www.asti.ie/document-library/achieving-inclusive-schools-the-teachers-perspective-april-2019/>
- 12 https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/64d0718c9e/solas_fet_strategy_web.pdf
- 13 <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/9cfd9c1-98f9-11e7-b92d-01aa75ed71a1>
- 14 <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/02/HEA-Analysis-of-Completion-in-Irish-Higher-Education-Report-Release.pdf>
- 15 <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/lessons-in-diversity-the-changing-face-of-teaching-in-ireland-1.4120546>

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

NCCA Report for Convention Handbook 2022

The Council is a representative structure. The membership is determined by the Minister for Education. The 25-member council comprises nominees of the partners in education, industry and trade union interests, parents' organisations and one nominee each of the Minister for Education and the Minister for Children

and Youth Affairs. The current Council was appointed by the Minister to 28 February, 2022.

Introduction

The NCCA is the statutory advisory body to the Minister of Education. Its remit is to advise the Minister on curriculum and assessment from early childhood to the end of second level.

The focus of this report from the Council is on the main developments at Second Level over the past year with particular emphasis on the continuing role out of the new Junior Cycle and the review of Senior Cycle. The first meeting of this Council took place in May 2019. The ASTI representatives on Council are:

Máire G. Ní Chiarba and Ed Byrne.

Meetings

As was the case last year the NCCA has been heavily impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. All meetings since last year's Convention report have taken place in the virtual space. There have been seven meetings of the council in this time, the 16th of March, the 6th of May, the 17th of June, the 22nd of September, the 2nd of November and the 8th of December all 2021 and the 18th January 2022. The process of online meetings is not conducive to vigorous discursive debate.

THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Prof Mary O'Sullivan	Chairperson
Teresa Hagen.	Ministers of Education nominee
Sheila Garrity.	Minister of Children and Youth Affairs nominee
Michael Redmond.	JMB/ Deputy Chairperson
Patricia Gordon.	JMB
Deirbhile Nic Craith.	INTO
Joe McKeown.	INTO
Carmel Browne.	INTO
Anne McHugh.	ETBI
Fergal Kelly.	CBSMA
Finn OMurchu.	NABMSE
Joyce Purdue.	CIBE
Michael Delargey.	IFUT
Meadhbh Costello.	IBEC
Brian Tubbert.	ICTU
Aine Lynch.	NPCp
Geoff Browne.	NPCpp
Edel Ní Chorrain.	Foras na Gaeilge
Elaine Sheridan.	SEC
Orlaith O'Connor.	DE
Máire G Ní Chiarba.	ASTI
Ed Byrne.	ASTI
David Duffy.	TUI
Liz Farrell.	TUI
Aine O'Sullivan.	ACCS

JUNIOR CYCLE

Much of the work of council could be described as pared back in the last twelve months. The executive continued to prepare reports and online consultations did take place, however consultation evenings were not possible due to restrictions caused by the on-going pandemic. Many of the specifications for Junior Cycle Subjects had already been accepted and were operational in schools. Despite this very few of these specifications have been put to the test in a state exam due to the cancellation of the

Examinations in the last two years. The issue of the four hundred hours of wellbeing at Junior Cycle was put in abeyance due to the on-going crisis that is Covid, it is expected schools will implement the four hundred hour programme from September 2022.

Within the sphere of wellbeing some reports were published. The draft report on SPHE and RSE (Social, Personal and Health Education and Relationship and Sex Education) was presented to council for discussion, it has proven to be a difficult area to get agreement on, many concerns about age/ stage development have been expressed. It is somewhat disappointing to learn that those trying to pull the strands of a workable course together have been subject to online abuse. Another area within the wellbeing sphere has been the proposed reformed Junior Cycle Physical Education course, the proposal came before council for acceptance and despite concerns by members of both second level teacher unions with regards to the provision of two class room assessments the proposal was passed by an overwhelming majority.

The council also discussed and found favour in the creation of an Arts Priority Learning Unit. (PLU) bringing the PLUs for those with Special Educational Needs to five.

The review of Junior Cycle by the academic team from the University of Limerick continues. They have made a number of updated reports to council. When questioned on the lack of Examinations in the last two years the team indicated they had enough to be going on with and don't feel hindered by the lack of assessment material. Due to the cancellation of the Junior Cycle Examinations in the past two years, some fifteen new specifications have been introduced to schools that subsequently have never been examined externally. The council has recently started to look at the topic of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as a cross curricular specification. The question now seems to be is the Junior Cycle Sustainable.

Plan of Work

The re-assignment of NCCA staff to the HSE on a temporary basis has had a significant impact on the NCCA's Plan of Work and will continue to do so in 2022. Staff members are providing support to the HSE Covid-19 Risk Assessment Teams. These staff members volunteered to be re-assigned for 50% of their work time. They are from the Early Childhood and Primary and Post-Primary Teams and include Education Officers and Directors.

SENIOR CYCLE DEVELOPMENTS

Senior Cycle Review: Advisory Report

Following a presentation of the report the NCCA council discussed the review of senior cycle with the intention of sending the report to the Minister. The ASTI representatives did not feel able to give their consent to this action for many reasons as outlined in detailed reports to Standing Committee during the year.

The report makes some mention of learnings from the Covid crisis and the responses. We pointed out that the the pandemic was a crisis from which no precedent should be set.

The reform was supposed to take cognisance of the learnings from Junior Cycle. This currently is not possible as the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement and the Junior Certificate examination have failed to materialise in the past two years. The much vaunted assessment model can tell us little if anything about the likely path Senior Cycle should take.

The ASTI passed, at its annual convention 2021, a motion not to engage with senior cycle reform until a comprehensive longitudinal study of the changes to Junior Cycle had reported and discussions had taken place. This position was relayed to NCCA Council.

Both during the presentation of the report and the discussion that ensued Council was told on several occasions that the Senior Cycle Board of Studies fully supported this report.

The Advisory Report was approved by Council. The ASTI representatives on Council asked for their dissent to be recorded.

The Senior Cycle Review: Advisory Report was subsequently issued to the Minister for Education.

At its November 2021 meeting the Minister for Education, Norma Foley addressed Council very briefly. She thanked Council and stated that she had been most impressed by the body of work done on Senior Cycle Review. She said that Senior Cycle holds and has held a significant status, confidence and respect in the community. She is currently deliberating on the Senior Cycle Review Advisory Report.

At the time of going to print the Minister for Education had not indicated when she would respond to the Report.

Consultation Report on the Background Paper and Brief for the Review of Leaving Certificate Arabic

It is hoped that this report will provide direction and guidance to the development group in progressing work on the new specification for Leaving Certificate Arabic.

Consultation Report on the Background Paper and Brief for the Review of Leaving Certificate Classical Languages: Ancient Greek and Latin

It is hoped that this report will provide direction and guidance to the development group in progressing work on the new specifications for Leaving Certificate Ancient Greek and Latin.

Draft Specifications for Leaving Certificate Classical Languages

There are two Specifications: Ancient Greek and Latin
Both were approved by Council for consultation.
The period for consultation began in October 2021.

Draft Specification for Leaving Certificate Arabic

Council approved the Specification for consultation.
Consultation took place in Q4, 2021.

Leaving Certificate Gaelige, T1 and T2

The consultation on the draft specifications was extended and closed on November 30th, 2021.

Draft Leaving Certificate Biology Specification

The Development Group met on sixteen occasions.
The Biology Specification is designed for a minimum of 180 hours of class contact time.
There will be two assessment components at each level: written examination and a Biology in Practice Investigation. Both components will be set and assessed by the SEC.

Draft Leaving Certificate Physics Specification

The Development
The consultation period for both Biology and Physics was from November 15th, 2021 to February 8th, 2022.

The ASTI members of Council were most concerned that the State Examinations Commission was not represented at any Council meeting between October 2020 and November 2021. This concern was raised on several occasions by the ASTI representatives.

Council Members:

Máire G. Ní Chiarba
Ed Byrne

CNMM Ráiteas Tosaigh Comhchoiste na Gaeilge, na Gaeltachta agus Phobal Labhartha na Gaeilge

Méitheamh 2021

Introduction

Founded in 1909, the ASTI is one of the oldest education unions in the state and has a long and distinguished historical record of support for the Irish language in the curriculum and the wider education system. Education performs multiple roles in any society and our schools are central to the wider intergenerational cultural process of preserving, transmitting and enriching the Irish language. The establishment of Gaelscoileanna has been absolutely critical in this regard while the wider 20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030 has provided a supportive external environment. More recently, the policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022 is proving to be an innovative and effective approach to supporting the teaching and learning of Irish in Gaeltacht schools, not least because it is premised on an acknowledgement of multiple pressures on the language in Gaeltacht communities. The current concerns around the model of teaching Irish in senior cycle are, in some respects, not unexpected. They emanate from a number of contexts and are also reflective of the profound commitment of teachers of Irish to the language. In this submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee, the ASTI will set out its understanding of the context for current concerns around Leaving Certificate Gaeilge and posit some solutions to same.

Context

The review of the senior cycle curriculum commenced in 2017 and is a work-in-progress. At this point in time, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment/NCCA has submitted an Advisory Report to the Minister for Education on issues to be considered in future senior cycle policy. It is not a set of recommendations; the latter will only emerge following further research, piloting and consultation. At the same time, the NCCA has been updating subject specifications (formerly known as syllabus) concomitant with changes taking place in the junior cycle curriculum. In September 2017, revised Gaeilge specifications commenced in second-level schools based on the Teanga 1 and Teanga 2 model.

The rationale for this model emanated from an acknowledgement in the NCCA's consultation process that students in Irish-medium schools should have a curriculum which reflected their learning needs and was sufficiently challenging, on the draft JC Gaeilge specification. The NCCA subsequently prepared the draft T1 agus T2 specifications which were accepted by then Minister for Education and Skills. The main concerns of Gaeilge teachers with the new specifications are similar to that of other subject teachers: insufficient guidance re content/depth of treatment; multiple and overlapping learning outcomes; insufficient guidance on realising key skills and formative assessment practices. Notwithstanding the introduction of the Framework for Junior Cycle in September 2015,

teachers continue to identify these issues as problematic and the profession as a whole has experienced increased workload arising from curriculum change. The disruptions of the pandemic have, of course, added to this difficult situation.

Specific concerns around the draft Leaving Certificate Gaeilge specifications

The publication of draft T1 agus T2 specifications for Leaving Certificate Gaeilge has led to a high level of debate among Gaeilge teachers and the wider Irish language education agencies. The reason for this is simple: the Leaving Certificate is a high-stakes examination. Following discussion with a number of Irish language education agencies, including Greasán na Múinteoirí Gaeilge, the ASTI hosted a consultation event with its members followed by a survey. The primary concerns emerging from the ASTI consultation process are:

Need to extend the consultation period: This issue has now been addressed and the period extended to the end of 2021. This is a welcome and necessary development.

Need to review the implementation of T1 agus T2 model in junior cycle before proceeding to implementation of similar model in senior cycle: As noted above, teachers continue to struggle with implementation of the new model of curriculum represented by the subject specifications. There is concern across the profession that research on the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle must be conducted in advance of change to the senior cycle curriculum. Gaeilge teachers are particularly concerned that the complexities of the T1 agus T2 model require research in order to ensure that current problems are not replicated in the Leaving Certificate programme and its high-stakes examination.

Gaeltacht Schools Recognition Scheme: There is widespread concern that schools receiving additional resources within the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme/Gaeltacht Education Strategy 2017-2022 will be required to provide T1 and, where necessary, T2 specifications. In theory, students being taught Irish could be considered as having the necessary range of language skills for T1. In practice, teachers have pointed out that there is significant diversity among the student cohort in Irish-medium schools and T2 will also be required. In these circumstances, teachers are concerned that teaching two specifications will be problematic. The Department of Education must engage with schools in the Scheme to address these legitimate concerns.

Need to re-introduce Foundation Level Gaeilge: Foundation Level Gaeilge at junior cycle was discontinued when the Framework for Junior Cycle was introduced. Four years into the Gaeilge specification, teachers remain more convinced than ever that this additional level should be retained at senior cycle. Differentiation in teaching is almost impossible given the negligible Irish language skills of some students, low level of interest in learning the language and subsequent disengagement in the classroom.

Proposal to reduce marks for Oral Competency from 40% to 35%: The vast majority of teachers are opposed to this proposal, not least because no increase in the marks for aural competency is contained in the draft specifications. Their opposition emanates from their belief that the current marking structure serves as a strong motivation for students to develop their communicative skills even if they find the reading and writing aspects of the course and the written examination challenging.

Need to address the concerns around specifications: All subject teachers are continuing to struggle with the specification model. There is need to address their concerns re depth of treatment, range and

coherence of learning outcomes, approaches to key skills in the current draft Gaeilge specifications.

ASTI recommendations

1. Need for research on junior cycle Gaeilge curriculum: In the feedback to the ASTI's survey and seminar, a strong message came from the Gaeilge teachers that, in the absence of research on the implementation of the T1 agus T2 at junior cycle, they are not supportive of introducing this model at senior cycle. This is perhaps the strongest message ASTI received. A key strand of this research should focus on the range and coherence of the learning outcomes; differentiation in the classroom; and how to develop students' communicative skills. As regards the latter, teachers still state that there is too much focus on the literature in the specification.

2. Retain 40% of marks for Oral competency in the Leaving Certificate examination: The rationale for decision in 2007 by the then Minister for Education to increase the marks for the Oral examination from 25% to 40% was to promote and improve students' communicative competency. Teachers are unanimous that this decision has had hugely positive results in terms of students' motivation in the classroom and achievement in the Leaving Certificate examination. They are not convinced by arguments that other language subjects have lower mark allocation. The Irish language in the school curriculum has an acknowledge complex, dynamic and challenging external socio-linguistic environment. It is a language, moreover, which needs protection and support given this environment. Innovations such as the current marking system are necessary to sustain motivation, engagement and learning for what is, for most students, a core compulsory subject.

3. Gaeltacht Schools Recognition Scheme: The Department of Education needs to engage with schools in this scheme to provide the additional resources to enable maximum uptake of T1 while also facilitating provision of T2 to students.

4. Need to re-introduce Foundation Level Gaeilge: Foundation Level Gaeilge was introduced in 1996 to enable students who struggled with learning Irish at Ordinary Level. Foundation Level fulfilled matriculation requirement but did not generate CAO points. Teachers believe that it is time to revisit this intervention in order to meet the needs of students who are struggling.

5. Teacher CPD and resource availability: A core problem for teachers in terms of CPD is time. Teachers have for some years now been finding it extremely difficult to be released from school for non-mandatory inservice training. (The latter refers training to support the introduction of new specifications.) Problems in teacher supply are impacting on schools. Increasingly, teachers are expected to engage in non-mandatory learning exclusively out of working hours. This situation is becoming untenable. ASTI research in 2018 found that teachers were working an average of 40+ hours per week. * They simply do not have time to engage in further learning outside of working hours. This is an issue which is impacting on the whole profession. The ASTI believes that the Department of Education must engage with the teacher unions to address core and pressing issues such as workload, professional time/time for non-teaching work, including training.

* <https://www.asti.ie/document-library/teachers-work-work-demands-and-work-intensity-march-2018/>

Conclusion

The ASTI is extremely concerned that solutions be found to the current set of concerns around the draft Leaving Certificate Gaeilge specifications. The extension of the consultation period provides a space for the emergence of deeper knowledge and understandings

which will inform such solutions. Irish is a core subject and lingering concerns or uncertainty around the nature of the subject specifications or the high-stakes Leaving Certificate examination would be demoralising for teachers and students alike. It would also represent a failure of leadership at Departmental level. Timely and practical solutions can be found.

Leagán Gaeilge

Réamhrá

Is é Cumann na Meánmhúinteoirí in Éirinn, a bunaíodh i 1909, ceann de na ceardchumann is sine sa stát, le stair fada inmholta ag tacú leis an Gaeilge sa churaclam agus sa chóras oideachais i gcoitinne. Tá an-chuid ról ag an oideachas i ngach sochaí agus tá páirt lárnach ag ár scoileanna sa phróiseas leathan chultúrtha idirghlúine chun an Ghaeilge a chaomhnú, a shabhrú agus a scaipeadh. Bhí ról an-thábhachtach ag bunú na nGaelscoileanna sa phróiseas seo agus cothaíonn an Straitéas 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010-2030 comhshaol seachtrach tacúil don obair seo.

An Comhthéacs

Sa bhliain 2017, thosaigh an t-athbhreithniú ar an gcuraclam don tsraith shinsearach atá fós idir lámha. Faoi láthair, tá Tuairisc Comhairleach curtha ar aghaidh ag an An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta (CNCM) chuig an Aire Oideachais ag díriú ar ábhair mhachnaimh a bhaineann le polasaithe don tSraith Shinsearach amach anseo. Ní sraith moltaí é an Tuairisc seo, tiocfaidh na moltaí in am tráth nuair a bheid níos mó fianaise ar fáil de bharr thaighde, tástáil phiolotach agus comhairliúcháin. Ag an am céanna, tá an CNCM ag uasdátú sonraíochtaí ábhar (an siollabas mar a bhí) i bpáirt leis na hathruithe atá ar siúl sa churaclam don tSraith Shóisearach. I Meán Fómhair 2017, tugadh isteach na sonraíochtaí athbhreithnithe don Ghaeilge bunaithe ar an gcóras T1 agus T2 i scoileanna dara leibhéal.

D'eascair bunús an chórais seo as an aitheantas i bpróiseas comhairliúcháin an CNCM nár mhór curaclam dúshlánach go leor a chuir a riachtanais fhoghlama san áireamh sa dréachtsonraíocht don Ghaeilge don tSraith Shóisearach a chur ar fáil do dhaltai i scoileanna lánghaelacha. Ina dhiaidh sin, d'ullmhaigh an CNCM na dréachtsonraíochtaí T1 agus T2 lenar ghlac an t-Aire Oideachais. Tá múinteoirí Gaeilge buartha faoi ghnéithe na sonraíochtaí nua díreach mar atá múinteoirí na n-ábhar eile – easpa treorach ar mhéid an ábhair/easpa doimhneachta i láimhseáil an ábhair; orthaí foghlama iomadúla ag teacht trasna ar a chéile; easpa treorach chun bunscoileanna agus cleachtais a bhaineann le measúnú múnlaiteach a chur i gcrích. Cé gur tosaíodh an Creat don Sraith Shóisearach i Meán Fómhair 2015, aithníonn múinteoirí na deacrachtaí a bhaineann leis na gnéithe seo agus an méadú mór ar an ualach oibre a tharraing na hathraithe seo sa churaclam ar mhúinteoirí agus ar bhaill ghairm na múinteoireachta i gcoitinne. Ar ndóigh, chuir srianta na pandéime leis na deacrachtaí seo.

Inní ar leith faoi dhréachtsonraíochtaí na Gaeilge don Ardeistiméireacht

D'eascair leibhéal ard díospóireachta i measc múinteoirí Gaeilge agus gníomhaireachtaí oideachasúla eile Gaeilge as foilsíú na ndréachtsonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2 don Sraith Shinsearach. Ríthábhacht na hArdeistiméireachta mar scrúdú is cúis leis seo. Tar éis dul i dteangmháil le roinnt gníomhaireachtaí oideachasúla Gaeilge, Gréasán na Múinteoirí Gaeilge san áireamh, d'eagraigh Cumann na Meánmhúinteoirí in Éirinn ócáid chomhairliúcháin le baill an Chumann agus rinne an Cumann suirbhé de na baill ina dhiaidh sin. Is iad siúd na cúiseanna inní is mó a nochtáíodh sa phróiseas seo:

Gá le síneadh ama ar an tréimhse comhairliúcháin

Tá an CNCM tar éis tréimhse ama an chomhairliúcháin a shíneadh go dtí deireadh na bliana. Cuirimid fáilte roimh an gcinneadh riachtanach sin.

Gá le hathbhreithniú ar fheidhmiú an chórais T1 agus T2 sa tSraith Shóisearach roimh dhul ar aghaidh le feidhmiú chórais den chineál céanna don tSraith Shinsearach

Mar a phléamar níos luaithe, tá múinteoirí fós ag streachailt le feidhmiú an chórais nua curaclaim a léirítear sna dréachtsonraíochtaí do na hábhair éagsúla. Tá imní forleathan ar bhaill ghairm na múinteoireachta go gcaithfear taighde a dhéanamh ar fheidhmiú Chreat na Sraithe Sóisearaí sula ndéanfar aon athrú ar churaclaim na Sraithe Sinsearaí. Tá imní ar leith ag cur as do mhúinteoirí Gaeilge go bhfuil gá le taighde ar chastacht an chórais T1 agus T2 chun a chinntiú nach ndéanfar fadhbanna reatha na Sraithe Sóisearaí a mhacasamhlú i gclár na hArdteistiméireachta agus an scrúdú rithábhachtach sin.

An Scéim Aitheantais do Scoileanna Gaeltachta

Tá imní forleathan ann go mbeidh dualgas ar na scoileanna a fhaigheann acmhainní breise faoin Scéim Aitheantais do Scoileanna Gaeltachta/ An Straitéis d'Oideachas sa Ghaeltacht 2017-2022 sonraíochtaí T1 agus, nuair is gá, sonraíochtaí T2 a chur ar fáil. Go teoiriciúil, bheadh an raon riachtanach de scileanna teanga do T1 ag daltaí ag foghlaim na Gaeilge sna scoileanna sin. Go réalaióch, áfach, tharraing múinteoirí aird ar an éagsúlacht suntasach idir daltaí i scoileanna lánghaelacha ionas nach mór T2 a sholáthar leis. Sa chás seo, tá imní ar mhúinteoirí go gcruithíodh an dá shonraíocht fadhbanna. Caithfidh an Roinn Oideachais dul i dteangmháil leis na scoileanna sa scéim chun dul i ngleic leis an imní seo.

Ní mór an Bonnleibhéal sa Ghaeilge a chur a thabhairt ar ais

Cuireadh deireadh leis an mBonnleibhéal sa Ghaeilge ag leibhéal na sraithe sóisearaí nuair a thosaigh Creat na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Tá an dréachtsonraíocht don Ghaeilge ann le ceithre bliana anuas agus tá múinteoirí níos cinnte ná riamh faoi ghéarghán an leibhéil breise seo a choimeád ag an leibhéal sinsearach. Tá sé nach mór dodhéanta idirdhealú a chleachtadh sa mhúinteoireacht mar gheall ar na scileanna fánacha teanga atá ag daltaí áirithe, an leibhéal íseal suime i bhfoghlaim na teanga agus an neamhshuim sa seomra ranga a leanann é.

An moladh faoi na marcanna a laghdú d'inniúlacht sa teanga labhartha ó 40% go 35%

Tá tromlach mór múinteoirí an Chumainn i gcoinne an mholta seo, go háirithe toisc nach luaitear aon ardú sna marcanna d'inniúlacht sa teanga labhartha sna dréachtsonraíochtaí. Eascraíonn an cur in aghaidh seo as a dtuairimí daingne gur spreagadh láidir do dhaltaí is ea an struchtúr marcála mar atá chun a scileanna cumarsáide a fhorbairt, fiú má tá na gnéithe scríbhneoireachta agus léitheoireachta den chúrsa agus an scrúdú scríofa dúshlánach dóibh. Tá sé suntasach gur theastaigh ó thromlach na múinteoirí sa suirbhé na marcanna d'inniúlacht sa teanga labhartha a ardú os cionn 40%.

Ní mór dul i ngleic leis an imní faoi na dréachtsonraíochtaí

Tá múinteoirí na n-ábhar go léir fós ag streachailt le córas na ndr éachtsonraíochtaí. Ní mór dul i ngleic lena n-ábhair imní a bhaineann leis an easpa doimhneachta i láimhseáil an ábhair, raon agus comhleanúnachas na dtorthaí foghlama, agus an cur chuige i leith na mbunscileanna sa dréacht is déanaí de na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge. Cúis mhór gearáin i measc múinteoirí is ea an méid

iomarcach litríochta éigeantach atá ar an gcúrsa faoi láthair. Cruthaíonn sé brú ama sa seomra ranga agus laghdaíonn sé an t-am atá ar fáil don chleachtadh ar scileanna cumarsáide. Is ábhar mór frustrachais é do mhúinteoirí Gaeilge a thuigeann go maith an tábacht a bhaineann le deiseanna a thabhairt do dhaltaí a gcumas labhartha sa teanga a chur i gcrích mar bhunchloch do mheon dearfach i leith na teanga le linn a saol fásta.

Moltaí Chumann na Meánmhúinteoirí in Éirinn

1. Ní mór taighde a dhéanamh ar churaclaim na Gaeilge don tSraith Shóisearach

San aiseolas ón ócáid chomhairliúcháin agus ón suirbhé, tháinig teachtaireacht láidir ó na múinteoirí Gaeilge nach dtacaíonn siad, gan taighde a dhéanamh ar fheidhmiú T1 agus T2 don tSraith Shóisearach, leis an gcóras a thabhairt isteach don tSraith Shinsearach. B'é sin an teachtaireacht ba láidre a seoladh chugainn. Ba chóir go ndíreofaí bunshnáth den taighde seo ar raon agus comhleanúnachas na dtorthaí foghlama, idirdhealú sa seomra ranga, agus modhanna chun scileanna cumarsáide na ndaltaí a fhorbairt. Maidir leis an bpointe deireanach, chuir múinteoirí in iúl go bhfuil an iomarca béime fós ar litríocht sa sonraíocht.

2. 40% de na marcanna a choimeád d'inniúlacht sa teanga labhartha don scrúdú Ardteistiméireachta

Sa bhliain 2007, bunaíodh an cinneadh a rinne an t-Aire Oideachais ag an am na marcanna don Scrúdú Béil a ardú ó 25% go 40% ar chumas cumarsáide na ndaltaí a fheabhsú agus a chur chun cinn. Tá múinteoirí d'aon ghuth gur tháinig torthaí iontacha dearfacha ón gcinneadh sin maidir le spreagadh na ndaltaí sa seomra ranga agus na torthaí a bhain siad amach sa scrúdú Ardteistiméireachta. Ní ghlacann siad leis na hargóintí go bhfuil marcanna níos ísle ag dul do theangacha eile don Scrúdú Béil. Baineann comhshaol casta, siorathraiteach, seachtrach, dúshlánach, sochtheangeolaíoch leis an nGaeilge sa churaclaim scoile. Teastaíonn cosaint and tacaíocht ón teanga sa chomhshaol seo. Tá nualaiócht cosúl leis an gcóras marcála mar atá sé faoi láthair riachtanach chun spreagadh, spéis agus foghlaim na ndaltaí a chothú, san ábhar búnúsach seo atá éigeantach don chuid is mó daltaí.

3. An Scéim Aitheantais do Scoileanna Gaeltachta

Ní mór don Roinn Oideachais dul i dteangmháil le scoileanna sa scéim seo chun acmhainní breise a sholáthar chun an méid is mó daltaí a mhealladh isteach sa chóras T1 chomh maith le T2 a sholáthar go héasca do dhaltaí.

4. Ní mór an Bonnleibhéal sa Ghaeilge a thabhairt ar ais

Bunaíodh an Bonnleibhéal sa Ghaeilge sa bhliain 1996 chun cabhrú le daltaí a bhí ag streachailt le Gaeilge sa Ghnáthleibhéal. Chomhlíon an Bonnleibhéal na riachtanais máithreánacha ach níor thuill sé pointí don Oifig Lárnach Iontrála.

5. Forbairt Leanúnach Proifisiúnta do mhúinteoirí agus soláthar acmhainní

Fadhb bhúnúsach ama do mhúinteoirí is ea an Fhorbairt Leanúnach Proifisiúnta. Le blianta anuas, tá sé an-dheacair do mhúinteoirí scaoileadh ón scoil a fháil i gcomhair thraenáil inseirbhíse neamhéigeantach. (Ciallaíonn traenáil éigeantach an tacaíocht a thugtar chun dréachtsonraíochtaí nua a thabhairt isteach). Cruthaíonn an ganntanas múinteoirí fadhbanna i scoileanna. Tá an t-ionchas ar mhúinteoirí I gcónaí ag méadú chun dul i mbun foghlama neamhéigeantach go hiomlán lasmuigh d'uaireanta oibre. Ní féidir leanúint le cúrsaí mar atá faoi láthair. Rinne Cumann na Meánmhúinteoirí in Éirinn taighde i 2018 a fuair amach go raibh

múinteoirí ag obair níos mó ná 40 uair sa tseachtain ar an meán. Go simplí, níl an t-am acu dul i mbun foghlama breise lasmuigh d'uaireanta oibre. Tá na cúrsaí seo ag dul i bhfeidhm ar ghairm na múinteoireachta i gcoitinne. Creideann an Cumann go gcaithfidh an Roinn Oideachais dul i dteangmháil le ceardchumainn na múinteoirí chun dul i ngleic leis na ceisteanna bunúsacha, práinneacha seo cosúil leis an ualach oibre, am proifisiúnta/am d'obair lasmuigh den mhúineadh, an traenáil san áireamh.

<https://www.asti.ie/document-library/teachers-work-work-demands-and-work-intensity-march-2018/>

6. Dréachtsonraíocht tomhaiste a chinntiú

Ag eascairt as Moladh 2 thuas, ní mór don CNCM dul siar ar na dréachtsonraíochtaí chun a chinntiú go mbainfear amach cothromaíocht cuí idir scileanna cumarsáide labhartha, léitheoireachta agus scríbhnoireachta, i.e. an méid litríochta. Tá múinteoirí an-bhuartha cé go dtugtar tús áite go hoifigiúil do labhairt na teanga go bhfuil an lámh in uachtar sa seomra ranga ag an méid litríochta atá le clúdú ar an gcúrsa.

An Críoch

Tá Cumann na Meánmhúinteoirí in Éirinn an-bhuartha go bhfaighfí réiteach ar na húdair inní a bhaineann leis na dréachtsonraíochtaí do Ghaeilge na hArdeistiméireachta. Tugann an síneadh ama ar an tréimhse comhairliúcháin deis agus spás chun teacht ar eolas agus tuiscint níos doimhne a ligfear do réitigh teacht chun solais. Ábhar bunúsach, croílár is ea an Ghaeilge agus thiocfadh laghmisneach ar dhaltá agus múinteoirí araon dá ligfí don éiginnteacht agus inní a bhaineann leis na dréachtsonraíochtaí nó an rithábacht a bhaineann le scrúdú na hArdeistiméireachta fanacht. Teip cinnireachta ag leibhéal na Roinne a bheadh ann. Ní mór teacht ar réitigh phraicticiúla in am cuí.

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – ESD

In spring 2021, the Department of Education engaged in a public consultation on its second strategy for education for sustainable development. The first strategy was *'Education for Sustainability: The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland 2014-2020'*.

The aim of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development is to ensure that education contributes to sustainable development by equipping learners with the relevant knowledge (the 'what'), the key dispositions and skills (the 'how') and the values (the 'why') that will motivate and empower them throughout their lives to become informed active citizens who take action for a more sustainable future. The strategy sets out 8 action areas for the education system – from early childhood care and education to higher education as follows:

Leadership and coordination • Data collection and baseline measurement • Curriculum at pre-school, primary and post primary • Professional development • Further Education and Training • Higher Education and Research • Promoting participation by young people • Sustainability in action.

The teacher unions are represented on the national Advisory Group by ASTI Assistant General Secretary/Education and Research, Moira Leydon.

ASTI submission to consultation
<https://www.asti.ie/document-library/asti-submission-to-consultation-on-education-for-sustainable/>

ASTI Submission to

CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NEW IRISH AID DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION STRATEGY 2021- 2024

Introduction

The ASTI is the largest second-level teachers union with representatives in voluntary secondary, community and comprehensive schools and colleges. It has a strong record of engagement with, and support for, development education and global citizenship programmes and practices across the second-level curriculum. As a committed member of the ICTU's Global Solidarity Committee, it remains engaged with global justice issues, the SDG 2030 Agenda and the international dialogue on global citizenship education and priorities. As an education union, the ASTI shares many of Irish Aid's strategic goals and is committed to promoting these goals at national, regional and international level. ASTI is an affiliate of Education International and is a member of the Board of the Irish Forum for Global Education. ASTI is a member of IDEA and contributed to the preparation of its submission to this consultation. Accordingly, throughout its replies below, it will reference sections of IDEA's submission.

Question 1. How can Irish Aid support life-long learning and increase public understanding of and engagement with development and global citizenship issues as well as increasing awareness of the Irish Aid programme?

There is a multiplicity of definitions associated with global citizenship. This is not necessarily a disadvantage as multiple 'narratives' reach and influence multiple communities. The challenge is to reach beyond the established communities of engagement and practice. The adult and community education community are a growing, dynamic and socially diverse community which is informed by similar values to that of Irish Aid. Adult learning is transformative and benefits individuals, local communities and the wider society. However, it is chronically underfunded and is frequently 'invisible' in the wider society concerns around education. Irish Aid could strengthen the capacity of this sector to promote engagement with global citizenship issues by ensuring a dedicated funding stream for this sector, taking into account the need to respect its modalities of delivery and outcomes and the centrality of the pedagogical methodologies, inspired in large part by Freirean principles, to both.

The establishment of the new Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science is a major development and represents a unique opportunity for Irish Aid to develop a sectoral strategy for institutions of further and higher education and the communities they serve. Staff and graduates from these institutions occupy influential occupational, social and political positions, are individually and collectively influential in relation to national policy, politics, regional and global relationships.

Question 2. Are there other groups or organisations we should seek to work with in order to build this awareness and engagement?

The trade union movement is the largest civil society movement on the island of Ireland. It has a diverse 'eco-system' comprising trade union affiliates, Trades Councils, labour history projects, a Union Learning programme and several affiliated colleges/community hubs, and the People's College. The Irish

Congress of Trade Unions has a strong track record of internationalism, global solidarity and social justice. Affiliates to Congress have their own learning programmes, global solidarity committees, and access to a large and diverse membership through their publications and communications. SIPTU, Mandate, FORSA, UNITE, and the INTO have purpose-built union learning centre which provide blended learning to thousands of workers every year. Significantly, Irish trade unions are globally connected with the international trade union structures and have significant influence on global policy agendas. Irish Aid should engage with the ICTU to develop a framework for engagement which would harness the potential of the aforementioned eco-system to create greater awareness and engagement with GCE. A similar approach should be made to USI.

Question 3. What has changed in the external environment since 2017, both in the education sector and broader societal changes nationally and globally, and how should that be reflected in our priorities, our relationships and in our revised strategy?

Changes in the external environment are a constant. Since 2017, the climate and ecological crisis has worsened and, in turn, is driving other destructive trends, in particular, global poverty, forced migration, conflict, disease and hunger. The COVID-19 pandemic has, in turn, had a devastating impact on the poorest countries and is already reversing the progress made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, especially with regard to SDGs 4 – inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all – and SDG 8 – promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Future strategy must reflect the dynamic and potentially disastrous consequences of the failure of governments and the international community to address and mitigate these trends. Equally, the resurgence of populism, xenophobia, ethno-nationalism and racism are undermining democratic values and cultures and fuelling a disrespect for the rule of law, human rights and international human rights conventions and institutions which seek to hold governments to account. Irish Aid strategy must explicitly acknowledge these threats and provide guidance and support to educators across the education system – formal and informal – to counter these deeply divisive and threatening developments.

In terms of education in Ireland, it is of note that the Programme for Government is committed to holding a Citizens Assembly for Education. This process constitutes a unique opportunity for Irish Aid to engage with the issues and actors across all education sectors. The future strategy should prepare for this event and provide space for the widest range of policy actors and agencies to engage in discussion on GCE and its contribution to the future of education in Ireland. The Programme for Government also commits to the implementation of the Education (Parent and Student Charter) Bill which is aimed at ensuring that parents and students are consulted and contribute to decision-making on the school's policies, practices and activities. While the ASTI has significant reservations in relation to this legislation, it is consistent with the wider government policy outlined in the National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in decision Making 2015-2020. This wider societal policy should be examined by Irish Aid in the development of its future strategy.

ASTI endorses the recommendations provided by IDEA under this question as regards the second-level education system. Barriers to more systematic integration of GCE into subject teaching include lack of awareness of CPD opportunities and the range of CPD programmes available. Currently, there is no dedicated under-

graduate diploma programme available for teachers who teach CSPE or who wish to engage more with development education in their subject areas. Irish Aid should engage in dialogue with the Teaching Council with a view to introducing accredited programmes for second-level teachers in development education and GCE. ASTI strongly endorses IDEA's recommendation for more engagement with the growing body of research on young people's education and wider lives, e.g., the ESRI's 'Growing up in Ireland' and the research output of the Initial Teacher Education departments in the HEIs on the impact of COVID-19 on the educational experiences of learners. TCD and NUI Maynooth have produced a series of reports which provide deep insights into how students perceive aspects of their learning experience and their understanding of the curriculum.

Question 4. What do you consider to be the key areas of progress made since 2017 in the implementation of the Irish Aid Strategic Planning process? Are there any key lessons learnt or gaps in the current response?

The ASTI endorses IDEA's comments under this question. In general, it would be helpful if there was more collaboration between agencies such as WWGS and the Departmental Curriculum Support Structures such as the PDST. The development of the second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development provides an important opportunity for identifying strengths and weaknesses across the education system in relation to development education and GCE. Policy coherence is essential across the new Strategy and the future Irish Aid strategy: this is a salient point in the context of both strategies relying to a large degree on the same policy actors and institutions.

Question 5. With reference to the five output areas of the current Irish Aid Development Education Strategic Plan, what do you consider the key priorities for 2021- 2024 should be?

The ASTI endorses IDEA's comments under this question. A key priority for the strategy must be a response to the resurgence of populism and authoritarian political ideologies as stated under Question 3 above. There is sometimes an under-estimation of the diversity of our school communities and an under-appreciation of the need for schools to have clear guidance on how to respond to racism. It is extra-ordinary that there are no Departmental procedures on countering racism in schools. Similarly, there is an under-estimation of the degree to which young people are exposed to violent extremism and radicalisation. With the exception a project in the Initial Teacher Education department in NUI Maynooth, there is no research on this phenomenon among Irish adolescents. This is a dangerous situation for Irish democracy, for our international aid programme and for the wider society. The Irish Aid strategy must play a role in responding to this growing threat. The strategy should also address the issue of digital literacy and the need for a comprehensive training programme for students. It is of concern that the recent OECD PISA report found that just 15% of Irish 15-year-olds can distinguish fact from opinion in a reliable way. The future Irish Aid strategy should have a strong focus on digital literacy skills as a key pillar for effective development education outcomes.

Question 6. Irish Aid is considering changing the name of the programme and strategy to Global Citizenship Education; do you have any comments or concerns in relation to this suggestion?

The ASTI endorses IDEA's comments under this question.

Terminology changes over time and at present, there is a multiplicity of terms. While this can cause some confusion, on the other hand, it leads to healthy critique and dialogue. The new National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development should be borne in mind in terms of developing a position paper as recommended by IDEA.

Question 7. What opportunities have arisen from the COVID-19 experience and how can we learn from it in order to reach a broader audience?

The pandemic has been, and will continue to be, transformational at every level of our lives. Globalisation as a meta-ideological and political narrative is under sustained critique. Inequalities hidden or justified by economic narratives are exposed as never before. The residual role of the state in the neo-liberal paradigm has been transformed overnight to that of the interventionist state. Global cooperation in containing the virus and developing vaccines has exposed the need for international institutions and collective action. Science has demonstrated its capacity to contribute to solving some of the most pressing global problems. These are the 'positives' which must be built on to counter the many 'negatives' emerging under the shadow of the pandemic. Chief among the latter are the millions of children not in school; the reversal of progress towards the achievement of the SDGs; economic slow-down and growing poverty; reversals in the progress towards gender equality. We will continue to learn from the lessons of the pandemic for a long time to come. Irish Aid's strategy cannot address future learning but it can harness the learning we have individually and collectively gained in the last twelve months.

Question 8. How can technology and digital outreach help us?

The ASTI endorses IDEA's comments under this question. Digital literacy must become the norm for all of our citizens. It is a democratic right given that individuals cannot participate in a meaningful way in society, in the polity and increasingly in the economy without digital skills. The 'digital divide' is a function of existing inequalities. Governments can and must address this fundamental challenge. The capacity of individuals, social actors, and states to develop the knowledge and skills to sustain democratic societies in a future in which Artificial Intelligence will be increasingly determinate is a profound challenge for our times.

ICT IN EDUCATION

National Digital Learning Strategy

The first Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020 expires at the end of the 2020/2021 school year and the development of a new strategy is currently underway. The new strategy will take into account the system-wide experience of remote teaching and learning, including progress made to date in embedding digital technologies in classroom learning, new developments in digital technologies as well as the emerging policy framework at EU level. The latter includes the EU Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027. This Plan also aims to raise awareness about the opportunities and risks of using AI and data in education and training. The Department of Education has established a Steering Committee of the education stakeholders to contribute to the work of the Department of Education's working group. The ASTI is represented on the Steering Committee by AGS/ERO.

A.S.T.I SUBMISSION TO NATIONAL DIGITAL LEARNING STRATEGY June 2021

Executive Summary of ASTI Submission

Digital acceleration and learning from the pandemic

The context for the second digital strategy is significantly more challenging than even six years ago. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a global digital transformation. The shift to remote teaching had underlined the potential and limitations of digital technologies in education. It has also exposed an unacceptable digital divide overlying other education inequalities. A significant body of research is already available on teachers, students and parents' experiences of remote learning which should inform future strategy.

Building on strengths and addressing limitations

The current strategy has a number of strengths including a humanistic vision and core principles. The principle 'no one left behind' must be included to address the education digital divide. Teachers' response to remote teaching was one of professionalism, innovation, resilience and care. Significant learning has happened. This is a strength. However, that strength is undermined by unaddressed systemic problems of teacher workload, curriculum overload, unequal pay and lack of professional time. ICT infrastructure also needs to be significantly upgraded to remove digital divide.

Challenges schools faced in the integration of digital technologies into teaching, learning and assessment practices

Systemic challenges include lack of professional time for teachers; access to professional learning, in particular, collective learning in the school/practice context; insufficient leadership posts; curriculum change experienced as 'innovation overload'; implementation policy not supported by conducive conditions; excessive workload; poor working conditions for teachers, in particular unequal pay scales for post-2011 entrants.

Key areas and priorities that should be addressed in the development of the new digital strategy for schools

The key areas that must be addressed are financing to strengthen the ICT infrastructure and address the digital divide; ensuring all teachers and students are provided with laptops/adequate digital devices; investing in the teaching profession by providing professional time, reducing workload and ensuring access to professional learning beyond that of the transmission of information; increasing the number of leadership posts in schools; developing vision for digital literacy and providing guidance on how it is integrated into subjects and the wider curriculum.

I. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically accelerated what is ubiquitously acknowledged as the digital transformation. The latter comprises processes of digitalization, robotization, the Internet of Things, and Artificial Intelligence which are already changing the way we live, work, communicate, learn, even love! Genetic engineering and nano technology are changing what it means to be a human being. Profound ethical and philosophical issues are emerging which require new concepts, new philosophical paradigms and new modes of global cooperation, governance and regulation. By dramatically exposing systemic inequalities and divides, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced equity to the forefront of education policy. In these circumstances, developing a digital strategy for schools assumes an unprecedented urgency and importance. Such a strategy can no longer focus exclusively on enabling the integration of digital

technologies to support quality teaching and learning. Rather, it must also provide guidance on how schools as institutions and teachers as educators can prepare young people to live and flourish in a world in which almost all aspects of human experience are impacted by digital technologies. The 2020 OECD Report – Educating 21st Century Children: Emotional Wellbeing in the Digital Age – sets out high priority issues for policy-makers which are of relevance to the development of Ireland’s second digital strategy.¹ Equally significant is the PISA-based 2021 OECD Report - 21st-Century Readers: Developing Literacy Skills in a Digital World.²

2. Building on current strengths

A major strength of the current strategy is its articulation of a clear vision statement, namely, to realise the potential of digital technologies to enhance teaching, learning and assessment so that Ireland’s young people become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens to participate fully in society and the economy. A further strength is the fact that the strategy is its alignment with and adaption of the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework in Education and the EU Digital Competency Framework. At the same time, given the ‘digital acceleration’ driven by the pandemic, the vision will need to be built upon to reflect the changing circumstances.

The principles set out in the current digital strategy are strong. However, in light of system knowledge of the digital divide, they need to be supplemented by that of ‘no one left behind’. This principle is central to Sustainable Development Goal 4 and requires considerations of equity to be paramount at all levels of education policy and practice.

The shift to remote teaching has demonstrated a hitherto under-acknowledged strength in Irish education, namely, the quality of, and the high level of trust in, the teaching profession. Both the ongoing academic research and the extensive public discourse has highlighted the high standards of teacher professionalism, their capacity to adapt to change, their readiness to upskill, and above all, their ethical concerns regarding the holistic wellbeing of their students.³ This has significant implications for the morale and status of the teaching profession and its attractiveness to younger generations.

The shift to remote teaching and learning can also, in policy terms, be viewed as an unprecedented opportunity for learning about how ICT is being used by teachers and students; its potential and limitations; barriers and enablers; optimum modalities for its integration into classroom teaching; skills which teachers require. Again, the ongoing research of academics, teacher unions and other education agencies are important sources of evidence for developing the next digital strategy, as is the OECD 2021 PISA-related report.

3. Addressing current weaknesses

From the perspective of the ASTI, the major weakness in current education policy remains underinvestment in schools. Volume 5 of PISA 2018 provides strong empirical evidence of the limitations imposed on schools due to under-investment. 4 Key findings for Ireland include:

- 56.5% of Irish students were in schools where the principal agreed or strongly agreed that the number of digital devices connected to the internet was sufficient compared to the OECD average of 67.2%
- 45.3% of Irish students were in schools where the principal agreed or strongly agreed that the number of digital devices

for instruction was sufficient compared to the OECD average of 59%

- 45.4% of Irish students were in schools where the principal reported that an effective online learning support platform was available compared to the OECD average of 54.1%.
- 47.4% of Irish students were in school where the principal agreed or strongly agreed that professional resources were available for teachers to learn how to use digital devices instruction compared to the OECD average of 64.7%

Ireland was ranked at or above the OECD average on two scores:

- 75.9% of Irish students were in schools where the principal agreed or strongly agreed that the school’s Internet bandwidth or speed is sufficient compared to the OECD average of 67.5%
- 71.9% of Irish students were in schools where the principal agreed or strongly agreed that the availability of appropriate software is sufficient compared to the OECD average of 71.3%

Teachers are the most important resource in education systems and investing in the profession in Ireland falls markedly below that of comparator OECD countries. Investing in the profession includes several dimensions, including allocation of professional (i.e., non-teaching time), access to professional learning resources, provision of incentives to integrate ICT, access to online learning support platform and availability of technical staff to support ICT infra-structure. On each of these dimensions, Irish schools were less well served than comparator OECD countries.

- 51.1% of Irish students were in schools whose principal agreed that teachers have sufficient time to prepare lessons integrating digital devices compared to the OECD average of 60.9%
- 47.4% of Irish students were in schools whose principal agreed that effective professional resources were available for teachers to learn how to use digital devices compared to the OECD average of 64.7%
- 36.2% of Irish students were in schools whose principal agreed that teachers are provided with incentives to integrate digital devices in their teaching compared to the OECD averages of 56.7%
- 20.7% of Irish students were in schools whose principal agreed that the school has sufficient qualified technical assistant staff compared to the OECD average of 54.1%
- 45.4% of Irish students were in schools whose principal agreed that an effective online learning support platform is available for teachers compared to the OECD average of 54.1%.

The OECD PISA model is, of course, subject to acknowledged limitations and can never fully capture the complexities of education systems. Nonetheless, it does represent a moment-in-time overview and one which, moreover, took place at least two years after the introduction of the national digital learning strategy. In this regard, its findings are of significance and confirm the findings in the annual OECD Education at a Glance reports of significantly lower levels of investment in Irish education.

4. Challenges schools faced in the integration of digital technologies into teaching, learning and assessment practices

From the ASTI perspective, schools faced a number of challenges in achieving the objectives of the national digital learning strategy. Some of these challenges were already flagged in the 2008

Inspectorate report, “ICT in Schools”.⁵ In fact, many of the recommendations of this Report such as the need for greater uptake of ICT training by teachers, a designated ICT co-ordinator in schools, a national structure for ICT technical support and maintenance in schools, more coherent school policies around ICT usage, remain central notwithstanding the evident changes which have taken place in schools with the implementation of the Digital Strategy Action Plans in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Professional time for teachers: Professional time for teachers is emerging as one of the biggest concerns in the second-level teaching profession. Along with class size, lack of professional time to engage in non-classroom is creating unsustainable workloads for teachers. The latter is demoralising teachers’ morale and impacting negatively on their wellbeing. Research commissioned by the ASTI in 2018 confirmed that teachers’ average working week was 40+ hours.⁶ Over two-thirds of the nonclassroom work was associated with preparation for classroom teaching, including lesson plans, marking homework, compiling resources, etc. Teachers do not have spare time in their working day to engage in meaningful collaborative work with colleagues across the wide and constantly expanding range of national strategies and associated school policies, implementation and evaluation practices.

Access to professional learning: Access to professional learning is, in the main, contingent on time and availability of suitable learning opportunities and resources. The research on effective professional learning underlines the importance of context, support or ‘scaffolding’, and peer-learning activities.⁷ It is the ASTI’s experience that teachers feel overwhelmed by the demands placed on them and under-supported to meet such demands. With the exception of mandatory curriculum change, teachers are expected to engage in most learning activities outside of school time, including the universally unpopular Croke Park hours. This is not a sustainable model for the future development of the teaching profession. Teachers need time to engage in learning during their working day. They need access to quality learning opportunities which meet identified criteria for effectiveness. They need to be incentivised to sustain career-long learning in terms of accreditation, financial support and allowances. They need a career structure which allows them to use their learning outside of classroom teaching in collaboration with their peers. All of these stipulations apply to the future digital learning strategy.

Reflecting on the above, the ASTI is strongly of the view that the Department of Education must enlarge its vision for teachers’ professional learning. It must move beyond a provider role (provision of support services or agencies) to an enabling one, namely creating and maintaining the conditions for career-long teacher learning. The literature on teachers’ professional learning is unequivocal on importance of transformative rather than the transmissive modalities.⁸ The recent ERC research on teacher professional learning, while noting that insufficient research has been conducted on Irish teachers, identifies systemic barriers to all forms of teacher professional learning.⁹ It is of note that the recent OECD report on the review of senior cycle stated that most second-level teachers are mainly focused on the transmissive rather than the transformative model.¹⁰ (p.43) The Department of Education is the only agency capable of addressing these barriers.

Leadership in schools: Quality and quantity matter in school leadership. Quality matters because schools are complex communities and require experienced and committed teachers. Quantity matters for the same reasons. Irrespective of the quality, if there are insufficient numbers of personnel in leadership structures the latter will not effectively meet the complex demands of the community. The ASTI has been consistent in its view that

there currently insufficient Assistant Principal 1 and 2 posts in schools. The role of middle-management in coordinating digital learning policy was highlighted in the 2008 DES report which stated:

“It was clear from the case-study school evaluations that the use of ICT was more efficient if someone in the school had direct responsibility for its management and coordination. Furthermore, efficiency was found to be optimal in those schools where the role of the co-ordinator was clearly defined and the relevant tasks were discharged accordingly.” (p.75)¹¹

It is of note that research conducted by the ASTI in May 2020 of teachers’ experience of remote teaching found that those schools which had dedicated Digital Learning Teams in place experienced considerably less stress as whole-school practices were already in place around teaching methodologies, using VLPs, remote meetings, etc. The Digital Learning Framework itself priorities the centrality of school leadership to achieving the outcomes of the Strategy.¹² It would be risible for the Department to assume that current number of leadership posts in schools will be capable of delivering the objectives of the next Strategy.

System capacity: Over the last decade and more there has been a continual stream of new strategies, frameworks, initiatives and curriculum change in the education system. Teachers have experienced this process as ‘initiative overload’. The latter, moreover, occurred in a context of fiscal austerity resulting in larger classes, reductions in school leadership posts, decreases in capitation funding to schools, and cuts to salary. The introduction of unequal pay scales in 2011 remains a corrosive force across the teaching profession: not just for new entrants who do the same work for less pay. The profession’s concerns about teachers’ individual and collective capacity to meet this unending process of change have been ignored. This refusal to engage with the lived experience of teachers has, in turn, undermined their morale and level of job satisfaction. Successive ASTI-commissioned research has found that teachers’ levels of job satisfaction dropped from 77% in 2009 to 48% in 2020.¹³ There is an urgent need for greater policy alignment and attention to system capacity as noted in the aforementioned OECD report. Teachers cannot continue to experience change in the current fragmented manner. There is a need for a top-level policy dialogue on this systemic problem in advance of any new national strategy.

3. Your comments and observations on the key areas and priorities that should be addressed in the development of the new Digital Strategy for Schools.

The new digital strategy for schools has to be an ambitious strategy. The pandemic has catalysed a global debate on how education, knowledge and learning have to be reimagined in a world of increasing complexity, precarity and interdependence. The vision underpinning the digital strategy will be critical in terms of overall purpose and direction to the education system. Equitable quality inclusive education for all must be central to that vision. The ASTI sets out the key areas which the strategy should address and lists priorities in these areas.

Key area 1: Invest in ICT infrastructure and address the digital divide

Investment in the ICT infrastructure in schools with a particular focus on addressing the digital divide is a priority. All students and all teachers must be provided with the appropriate digital devices to ensure that the potential of technology to enhance teaching and learning is realised. This is a fundamental point. The research during the pandemic repeatedly highlighted the lack of suitable devices for learning across the large sections of the student population. Blended learning – class-based learning supplemented by online interaction and activities – will be utilised in response to future shocks and

students' opportunities to engage in this form of learning should not, and cannot be,

contingent on their families' income level. Similarly, teachers should not be required to depend on personal digital devices for their daily work. In a survey conducted by ASTI in May 2020, just 61% of teachers had been provided with a school laptop.¹⁴ Measures to address the digital divide must be to the forefront of the new Strategy. Procurement policies must be based on the premise of no one left behind. 'Joined-up' government initiatives are required to ensure that low-income households have access to, and can afford, broadband. A key part of the ICT infrastructure in schools is the availability of technical assistance. The latter is problematic for most schools in terms of access, cost and timeliness. It is common knowledge that schools depend on teachers who are 'good with computers' to sort out problems. This is not an acceptable model. The new strategy should provide options to schools based on a multi-annual funding model.

Key area 2: Invest in the teaching profession

Investing in the teaching profession first and foremost requires that schools have adequate numbers of teachers to teach the curriculum. In our second-level schools there is a dual problem of a high pupil: teacher ratio and a teacher supply problem. In addition, teachers' working day is almost exclusively occupied with classroom teaching with minimal time for other professional work. ASTI research demonstrates that the majority of teachers – 87% - teach full-time hours.¹⁵ Teacher workload is consequently massive. Earlier ASTI research in 2018 found that teachers' average working week was 40+ hours.¹⁶ In turn, this excessive workload is impacting on the morale and wellbeing of the profession, manifested in declining levels of job satisfaction and problems in supply and retention.

It is important that the ASTI present this context to the Department of Education in this and other policy submissions. System capacity should be a major concern for the Department of Education and the wider government. The former is constituted not just by the quality of the profession, teachers' knowledge and pedagogical skills, their passion for their work and motivation to help their students flourish. It is also determined by teachers' working conditions, in particular the time they have to conduct their multiple roles; the availability of teaching resources and the quality of the school environment; their level of remuneration; and opportunities for career progression and leadership. The OECD report on senior cycle is explicit on the need to factor in generic implementation supports into the process of policy-making from the outset. From the ASTI's perspective, problems of teacher workload, unequal remuneration, lack of time for non-classroom teaching work and deteriorating morale are highly problematic in terms of enabling transformative change processes in our schools.

Teachers' professional learning is absolutely an important pillar in any new strategy. However, exclusively focusing on teachers' professional learning as the only modality of investing in the profession is both short-sighted and ineffective. Creating sustainable working conditions will increase motivation and capacity for individual and collective teacher learning. A weakness in the current model of professional learning is its individualist premise. All of the research underlines that teachers learn best when they have opportunities for both individual and collective learning in their school/practice context.¹⁷ This embedded model requires time across a number of dimensions – school-release time to engage in learning and teaching-release time to engage in teacher collaboration. Leadership is also critical in this regard: schools must have leadership structures in place which can encourage, support and build on both forms of learning. The Department of Education

should introduce a free post-graduate programme for leading digital learning.

In the context of the digital strategy, it is important to distinguish the range of skills that are necessary for teachers. Technical skills are important but teachers equally need to develop pedagogical skills for teaching in digitally enriched environments. The current strategy acknowledges this imperative in terms of the TPACK framework. The observations contained in the current strategy on teachers' professional learning and school development remain both pertinent and un-addressed.

The ASTI is also concerned that there are unrealistic expectations concerning the capacity of teachers to develop their own digital content. This proved very challenging for many teachers during remote teaching. It is also time-consuming. Scoilnet should be upgraded to provide digital resources for all subject areas.

Further dialogue is required around the boundaries of teachers' work in a digitally enriched environment. Synchronous and asynchronous teaching, individualised learning, content preparation, communication with students and parents, communications from school management are all issues which impact on teachers' workload and working conditions. The right to disconnect is another key issue as is the requirement for agreed protocols around inspection/evaluation of remote teaching and learning. All have an industrial relations dimension. The Department of Education needs to engage with the teacher unions and school management bodies to address these and other emerging issues arising from the digital transformation.

Key Area 3: Leadership in schools

The ASTI has already referred to the importance of school leadership in schools. The biggest problem at present in terms of school leadership is the inadequate number of Assistant Principal Posts in schools. Across a range of policy areas, schools are unable to fully deliver on core strategic objectives because of inadequate leadership capacity. Evaluation and inspection reports from the Inspectorate on, for example, special educational needs, whole-school guidance and frameworks for wellbeing highlight the centrality of school leadership for effective implementation, guidance, review and collective learning in the iterative process of School Self-Evaluation. The ASTI is aware that many teachers are not engaged in a meaningful way with the SSE process due to workload, time constraints and poor communication structures. The next digital strategy will require sustained school leadership to build on the massive experiential learning of both teachers and students over the pandemic. It is imperative that the number of Assistant Principal Posts in schools are restored to pre-austerity levels and that teachers in all schools are provided with reduced time-tables to enable them to deliver on their leadership roles.

Key Area 4: Digital literacy skills for all learners

A consistent finding from research on remote teaching has been the wide variation in students' skills in using digital technologies. However, the concept of digital literacy skills incorporates more than technical competence in using software applications. The PDST defines digital literacy as a set of eight competences that enable participation in a digital world.¹⁸ This definition is more comprehensive than that contained in the current strategy. It would be important for the next strategy to adopt a definition of digital literacy which identifies all of the domains – technical, cognitive, social, ethical, wellbeing – which require to be addressed. Some of these competencies are, to some degree, reflected in revised specifications across both the junior and senior cycle. However, the next strategy must give clear guidance to schools on how best to

both make visible and embed digital literacy across the curriculum and within subjects and programme areas. A further requirement is that of alignment with other Departmental strategies, most notably the Wellbeing Policy Framework and Statement of Practice, the revised the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy and Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development. Policy developments in the European Union will also have import for the strategy, in particular the EU Digital Decade framework and the EU Education Area by 2025.¹⁹

All too often the ethical dimension of students' digital skills is confined to concerns about cyberbullying. The latter is a pervasive negative phenomenon in young people's lives and requires coherent societal responses. However, young people also need skills to live in a world where the very idea of knowledge and objective facts is under threat. It should be of profound concern to all that PISA 2018 results show that when students undertook literacy tasks which required them to understand implicit cues pertaining to the content or source of the information, an average of just 9% of 15-year-old students in OECD countries were able to successfully distinguish facts from opinions.²⁰ (While this figure is up from 7% in 2000, in the meantime digital transformation has been exponential) And while Irish 15-year olds scored above the OECD average in this and other tasks, there is no room for complacency given the knowledge we now have of the operation of digital platforms in political, social and cultural spaces. Algorithms that divide users into social media echo chambers that amplify some views and insulate from opposing arguments that may alter beliefs are not design flaws. It is the operating model. The recent cyber-attack on the HSE is a wake-up call about the need to equip all citizens with digital literacy skills to protect not only individual privacy but equally create a collective response to societal threats such as cyber-attacks and the 'dark web'.²¹ The 2021 amended OECD Recommendation on the Protection of Children in the Digital Environment provides good guidance on overarching policy frameworks which have practical import for the next Irish strategy.²² Finally, digital literacy also implies understanding and competences in terms of coding and writing software. Such skills will increasingly become demanded of significant sections of workforce.

Conclusion

The next digital media strategy must address the challenges which impacted on the implementation of the previous strategy. The latter are, in turn, consequent on investment strategies which have placed Ireland at the very bottom of 35 OECD countries in terms of percentage of GDP invested in second-level education.²³ Investment strategies impact on equity in education systems and the pandemic has exposed a digital divide which mirrors other inequalities. Equity must be the underlying principle of the next strategy.

The ASTI cannot emphasise enough that teachers' experience of curriculum change is primarily one of fragmentation with little or no guidance, support or time to integrate multiple strategies. 'Curriculum overload' is consequently their dominant experience. It is of critical importance that the curriculum adaptations required under the next strategy are not 'add-ons' but rather are integrated into current subjects and programmes. Prior to the pandemic, the majority of teachers were using ICT in the classroom on a daily basis: there is already a profession-wide knowledge base which the strategy should build on. The transformative rather than the transmissive model of teacher learning must become the pillar for the next strategy. Leadership within the school community will be central in this regard. Finally, teachers' working conditions, their workload, their level of remuneration and the invidious two-tier pay system are of crucial importance in creating the conditions for transformative change in our schools.

Notes

- 1 https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/educating-21st-century-children_b7f33425-en#page14
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EDUCATION (SCHOOL COMMUNITY CHARTER) BILL 2019

The Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill 2019 was initiated in the Seanad and had passed second stage at time of the General Election early in 2020.

The proposed legislation required that every school must publish and operate a Student and Parent Charter in accordance with national guidelines published by the Minister.

These guidelines are to be published after consultation with the education partners including the ASTI.

The Government has proceeded with the process of enacting such legislation. At time of writing, the bill is awaiting Dáil Committee Stage.

One significant development that was announced in July 2021 is the intention to amend the title of the Bill to the *Education (School Community Charter) Bill*. This is something the ASTI has campaigned

for to reflect the fact that schools are communities, including teachers and other staff. Indeed, schools are vibrant learning communities that rely on full equality of participation of all stakeholders.

The Department of Education claims that the legislation would be intended to address concerns of students and their parents at an early stage in the school and there are a number of provisions in the Bill which help achieve this aim in relation to providing information to students and their parents, consulting students and their parents on school plans and policies and responding to feedback.

The Bill provides for new standard school grievance procedures to be set out in the national charter guidelines. Each school will be required to implement the new standard grievance procedures. Section 28 of the Education Act, 1998 is being replaced and the new Section 28 as provided for in the Bill sets out that the grievance procedures will set out the requirements to be complied with by the school and the student or parent, how grievances will be investigated and the giving of reasons for decisions in relation to grievances.

ASTI has been very pro-active in seeking substantial changes to this legislation. All political parties have been lobbied. As part of the Oireachtas process, the ASTI has submitted two written submissions on the draft legislation, and also gave an in-person presentation to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills in spring 2020. The ASTI believes that the introduction of the Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill 2019 represents a disturbing departure from the established culture of high trust in the teaching profession. Teachers are largely excluded from the draft legislation. What is more, the language is resonant of policies that seek to commodify education as primarily a relationship between providers and consumers. The ASTI argues that any proposed legislation seeking to regulate the relationships between school community partners must get the balance right: one that sustains teachers' high professionalism and facilitates more effective communication, engagement and decision-making by all members of the school community. The necessary supports and resources for schools, school leaders and teachers must also be in place prior to the implementation of such legislation.

The bill also promises to address the necessity to introduce statutory provisions that provide for procedures for dealing with grievances of students (over 18) or their parents relating to the school.

This is something that ASTI has supported in order that such procedures will align with the provisions of the Teaching Council Act. However, this is a matter that should have been dealt with separately as a single piece of legislation.

ASTI is determined to ensure that any discussions that might arise on the national guidelines will provide workable and respect fair procedures. They must not add enormously to the already creaking and overburdened bureaucracy that is smothering schools.

Standing Committee are monitoring all developments closely related to the enactment of this legislation. They have set up sub-committee to consider the matter in detail. Arising from this work it was decided to conduct research on the role of charters in driving marketisation of education, including UK, EU and other jurisdictions. This research was undertaken by Dr Cairíona Fitzgerald, a Research Assistant in the Education Research Centre and was published in January 2022. Her research found that charter-type models used in education are largely based on market-led

mechanisms. The report, 'Review of Charter-type Models of Regulation and Accountability' by Dr Cairíona Fitzgerald, states that market-led accountability mechanisms treat schools as measurable entities with outputs that can be used for evaluation, ranking and comparison. This has negative consequences for students, teachers and society

A summary of the key findings in 'Review of Charter-type Models of Regulation and Accountability' by Dr Cairíona Fitzgerald are as follows:

- Across Europe, there is evidence of charter-type models in education. Charter models generally mean market-led forms of accountability.
- Over-reliance on market-led mechanisms to drive and develop education accountability processes has implications for teacher professionalism, school leadership and workload, school culture and relationships.
- In the long term, market-led accountability measures have implications for teacher morale and the attractiveness of teaching as a career.
- Market-led reform promotes school leaders as managers focused on performance and output rather than as pedagogical leaders.
- When schools have had to accommodate market-led reforms, students' and teachers' overall well-being has suffered.
- Market-led reforms widen the education inequality gap.
- "Intelligent" accountability can counterbalance charter-type models of accountability in education.
- Trade unions can play an important role in teachers' collective navigation of the accountability agenda.
- Improving education requires investing the necessary funds and resources where they are needed most, and providing the relevant CPD opportunities for teachers and school leaders to support them in their work.

In January 2022, ASTI circulated and publicised the findings in 'Review of Charter-type Models of Regulation and Accountability' by Dr Cairíona Fitzgerald to the public press and within the political system. ASTI will remain proactive to ensure that our objectives are achieved regarding this legislation.

TEACHER EDUCATION

The Teaching Council, as the professional standards body for teaching in Ireland, has several functions relating to teacher education: initial teacher education programmes, accreditation of such programmes, induction of newly qualified teachers into the profession, continuing professional development of teachers. The major recent policy developments in teacher education are summarised below.

Droichead – induction of newly qualified teachers

The Teaching Council's revised policy makes explicit the nature of *Droichead* as a non-evaluative professional induction process. This means that neither principals, school colleagues nor external school colleagues will be engaged in the evaluation of NQTs for registration purposes. At the conclusion of the induction process, the NQT and the Professional Support Team make a joint declaration that they have engaged in a quality teaching and learning process. The revised policy gives flexibility to schools in terms of

the role of the principal, the way in which the model can operate in different schools, the size of the professional support team (PST), and the use of an external PST member to act as a mentor where necessary. Support is provided to schools to implement Droichead in terms of three days' release time with paid substitution to allow Professional Support Team members to attend NIPT training and additional release time for schools with multiple NQTs.

Céim – standards for initial teacher education

In November 2020, the Teaching Council launched the revised standards for programmes of initial teacher education in *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*. The first set of standards were issued in 2011 and the first cycle of reviews completed in 2015. In preparation for the next cycle of the review and accreditation process, the Council has reviewed its policy on standards for initial teacher education programmes of ITE based on a consultation process with all key stakeholders and commissioned research on school placement.

All new primary and post-primary programmes submitted to the Council for accreditation must now be in alignment with *Céim*. Existing programmes realigned in accordance with *Céim* September 2022 for first year student teachers.

Pandemic and teacher education

The pandemic and school closure impacted on several aspects of teacher education, primarily student teacher placement and induction of newly qualified teachers. In both areas, the Teaching

Council revised aspects of the programmes to ensure that student teachers and newly qualified teachers continued to meet the conditions for qualification and registration. In advance of the 2020-21 academic year, advisory notes were developed by the Department of Education and the Teaching Council to provide guidance and flexibility for school placement so that higher education institutes could adapt and adjust arrangements to overcome the limitations imposed by the pandemic. Subsequent Teaching Council research found that there were wide variations in the higher education institutes approach to school placement depending on timing and on schools' willingness to accept students during periods of severe restrictions owing to public health advice. Some managed to have students in their host schools in the period from September to December 2020. Most however, especially those with larger numbers of students, were obliged to plan for school placement with a mix of in-school and remote experience for their students.

Due to the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on schools, an emergency time bound measure was put in place for the remainder of the 2021/2022 academic year. These are short-term measures and are subject to review and include changes to conditions relating to the primary school supply panels and principal release days and amendment Section 1.3 of the Post-Qualification Professional Practice Conditions Transitional Arrangements 2021/2022 wherein applications for the Droichead process will be accepted for the school year 2021/2022 for teachers registered under Primary, or Route 4 Other, with the condition of Droichead or Probation attached to their registration.

COMMUNITY AND COMPREHENSIVE

COMMUNITY AND COMPREHENSIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT TO CONVENTION 2022

COMMITTEE MEMBERS UNTIL DECEMBER 2021

Vacant	Area 1
Sandra Fay	Area 2
Ian McColgan	Area 3
Mary Lyndon	Area 4
Ann Taylor	Area 5
Dermot Brennan	Area 6
Geraldine O'Brien	Area 7
Roisin Doyle	Area 8
Vacant	Area 9
Liam McHugh	Area 10

COMMITTEE MEMBERS FROM DECEMBER 2021

Sinead Keegan	Area 1
Vacant	Area 2
Ian McColgan	Area 3
Peter Masterson	Area 4
Annemarie O'Mahony	Area 5
Dermot Brennan	Area 6
Geraldine O'Brien	Area 7
Jackie Wallace	Area 8
Padraig Curley	Area 9
Liam McHugh	Area 10

The President, Vice President and Honorary National Organiser also attend meetings of this Committee and Breda Lynch, Executive Officer: IR provides professional support to the Committee.

The Advisory Committee has met on three occasions since last Convention.

For information, the role of the area representative is as follows:

- 1 Advise School Stewards and members in individual schools how to deal with problems;
- 2 Prior to all meetings, the Advisory Committee gather reports from schools with particular reference to implementation of ASTI policies, unresolved issues, grievances and matters which in the view of the Area Representatives require consideration by the Committee;
- 3 Make reports on the basis of 2. above to all meetings of the Committee;

- 4 Visit all schools in their area once a year, if possible;
- 5 Maintain regular contact with the school stewards in the school in their area.

COMMITTEE ELECTION PROCESS

The term of this committee is two years. The election process includes writing to all schools within the Community and Comprehensive sector, asking for nominations to be submitted for election in the ten committee areas and when there is more than one nominee for an area, ballot papers are issued to schools within each area in order for committee members to be elected. This process took place in December 2021/January 2022. There is one vacancy at the time of going to print.

COMMUNITY AND COMPREHENSIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE: A LINK BETWEEN ASTI HEAD OFFICE AND THE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee notes that members working in the Community and Comprehensive sector are required to deal with extra layers of management, including the Chief Executive Officer and the ETBI. The Committee Area Representatives have regular contact with members in their areas and they then report back to this Committee. Committee members keep teachers in their areas updated on all developments, especially those affecting teachers working in the Community and Comprehensive sector. It should be noted that in the Community and Comprehensive sector that there is continued competition with the TUI for trade union membership and that this Committee is a method of monitoring ASTI membership numbers versus TUI numbers.

Ongoing work of the Committee

In predominately dual-union Community and Comprehensive Schools and Colleges, School Stewards are asking for increased support from Head Office as some members in these Schools and Colleges are experiencing extreme difficulty in finding a teacher willing to act as School Steward particularly as a result of the additional layers of school management. The committee planned to visit some of the schools to offer such support, but ongoing issues with Covid 19 made this difficult.

Recruitment

Recruitment in Community and Comprehensive Schools and Colleges is very challenging. Concern was raised at our meetings regarding the fact that many teachers are refusing to join either union. This is concerning for the teachers involved as they have no protection in the event of a spurious complaint against the teacher/s by a student or parent/guardian of a student. In such cases the union can provide advice and support, both at school level and with the Teaching Council if necessary. There are many other benefits available to members.

Teaching Council Elections

Members in the Community and comprehensive sector are anxious that there should be an ASTI member in every constituency of the next Teaching Council Elections. Candidates will need the full backing of the Union.

Posts of Responsibility

Members reported continuing frustration with Posts of Responsibility. Concerns were brought to the committee about the selection process and the limitations of the appeal process. The continuous expansion of the duties attaching to the posts has also been raised as a matter of concern.

COMMUNITY AND COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS

Tables 6 to 9 set out the growth in ASTI membership in the Community and Comprehensive Sector. Overall membership in this sector has grown from 2,305 in 1997 to 3,294 in 2021. Membership growth in this sector has improved at an increasing rate to 2020, but has seen a marginal reduction during 2021.

Table 6: Total Membership in Community and Comprehensive Schools and Colleges (2017 to 2021)

	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
Total membership	3,079	3,095	3,182	3,363	3,294
Full members ¹	2,343	2,294	2,289	2,285	2,208
Job Sharers	118	115	104	103	93
CID non-full	118	115	121	137	142
Associate pro-rata	432	493	563	699	739
Associate non-pro rata	35	43	49	86	79
Members on leave	26	21	29	31	20
Student members	7	14	27	22	13

¹ Includes CIDs 18hrs+

Table 7: Membership in Community Schools (2017 to 2021)

	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
Total membership	2,118	2,125	2,172	2,310	2,263
Full members ¹	1,688	1,643	1,631	1,627	1,571
Job Sharers	91	90	79	78	73
CID non-full	89	84	88	96	101
Associate pro-rata	203	252	306	412	441
Associate non-pro rata	25	34	34	60	55
Members on leave	18	13	19	22	14
Student members	4	9	15	15	8

¹ Includes CIDs 18hrs+

Table 8: Membership in Comprehensive Schools (2017 to 2021)

	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
Total membership	314	324	321	326	320
Full members ¹	259	260	255	250	242
Job Sharers	9	8	7	7	5
CID non-full	12	13	12	15	14
Associate pro-rata	25	40	36	47	53
Associate non-pro rata	3	0	1	3	4
Members on leave	3	3	4	1	1
Student members	3	0	6	3	1

¹ Includes CIDs 18hrs+

Table 9: Membership in Community Colleges (2017 to 2021)

	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
Total membership	647	646	689	727	711
Full members ¹	396	391	403	408	395
Job Sharers	18	17	18	18	15
CID non-full	17	18	21	26	27
Associate pro-rata	204	201	221	240	245
Associate non-pro rata	7	9	14	23	20
Members on leave	5	5	6	8	5
Student members	-	5	6	4	4

¹ Includes CIDs 18hrs+

EQUALITY

REPORT OF THE EQUALITY COMMITTEE TO CONVENTION 2022

The Equality Committee advises Standing Committee on such equality matters as are remitted to it by Standing Committee and on such other equality issues as the Committee itself wishes to investigate.

The Committee shall consist of the President, President-Elect, where applicable and Vice-President for the time being and nine members duly elected at Annual Convention every second year.

The members of the Committee are:

Philip Synnott Chairperson
 John Byrne
 Maura Greaney
 Gloria Helen
 Mary Lyndon
 Noelle Moran
 Tony McKernan
 Orla O'Callaghan
 John Sims

The Deputy General Secretary provides professional support to the Committee.

The Committee has met remotely and in person on 6 occasions since Convention 2021.

I. RULE CHANGES:

At ASTI Convention 2021, rule changes relating to the work of the Committee, proposed by Standing Committee were passed. These motions originated as proposals from the, then, Equal Opportunities Committee. The first rule change was to include the promotion “of equality in education and in society as a whole” in the objects of the Association. The other change was to replace the name “Equal Opportunities Committee” with the more dynamic and progressive term “Equality Committee”. The passing of these changes by overwhelming majorities underpins the ASTI’s commitment to the establishment of an inclusive and equal union, education system and country.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Equal Opportunities Committee has made recommendations at several Conventions and Convention has consistently adopted the reports containing these recommendations. The rule changes discussed above are among those recommendations.

Outstanding recommendations which the current Equality Committee is progressing are

The adoption of an equality-proofing policy which would examine structures, rules, policies, procedures and outcomes of negotiations to ensure that they disadvantage no group within the ASTI.

Training courses in leadership roles within the union.

Consultation with branches about quotas and thresholds for CEC and Standing Committee.

In line with the above recommendations, the Committee is progressing with the organisation of training for Equality Officers and commencing consultation with branches on quotas and thresholds,

3. PROMOTION OF EQUAL TREATMENT

3.1 Promotion of Equal Treatment on Gender Ground

3.1.1 within the ASTI

3.1.2 within the teaching profession

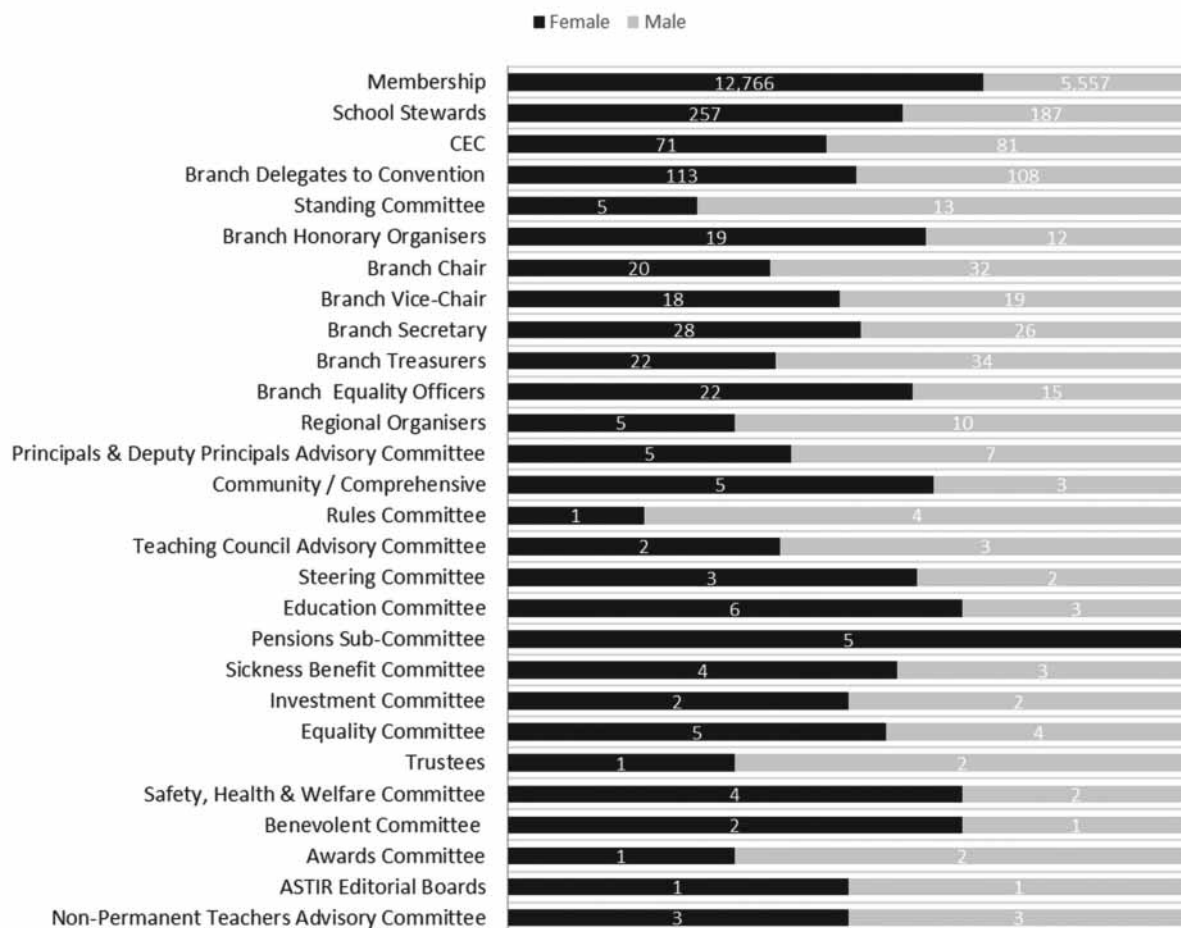
3.1.3 within the workplace.

3.1.1 Within the ASTI.

The committee continues to gender profile the occupancy of offices, committees and engagement of members within the union.

It should be noted that nearly 70% of the members are female. We are aware that there may be ASTI members who do not identify as either male or female and we are examining an inclusive approach towards this issue.

GENDER PROFILE WITHIN ASTI



*Ex Officio members of committees have been omitted from this list.

The Gender occupancy of committees and offices reveals a consistent pattern of under- representation of females in key positions of influence within the union:

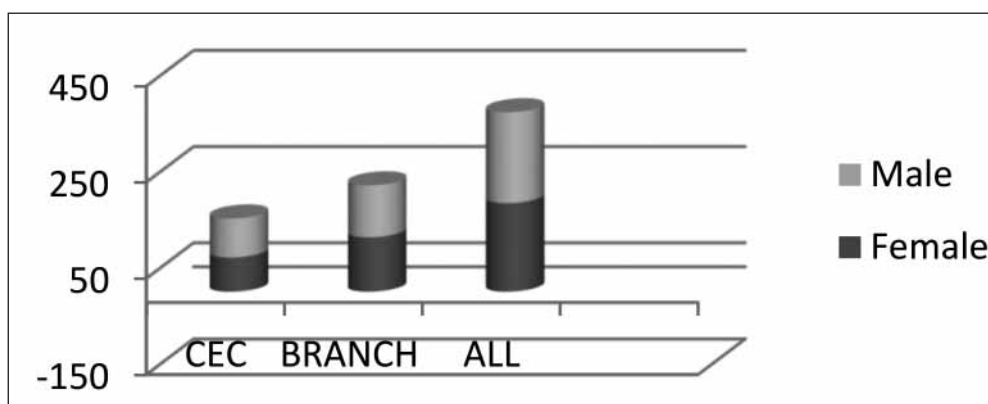
- Standing Committee
- Branch Chairs
- Other Branch Treasurers

This under-representation is also reflected in the gender breakdown of delegates attending ASTI Convention. While there are 5 more female Branch Delegates to Convention 2021 than male, this is offset by the 10 more male CEC Members. While this leaves us with a situation of near parity in the delegates, these figures must be read in the context where 70% of ASTI members are women.

Gender Profile of Delegates to ASTI Convention 2022

	Female	Male
CEC	71	81
Branch Delegates	113	108
All Delegates	184	189

CONVENTION 2022



These observations are not new. The measures adopted by the ASTI to seek a more balanced representation between males and females have not closed the gap.

3.1.2 Within the teaching profession.

- a) Efforts to reverse the withdrawal by the DES of compensatory leave for teachers whose maternity leave overlaps with holiday periods.

The claims were lodged under the Maternity Protection of Employment Act, 1998-2004, where it was argued that the failure to distinguish between a statutory entitlement to maternity leave and an entitlement to holiday leave infringes members' statutory rights.

Similarly, the same complaint has been lodged under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2004, arguing again, that the withdrawal of such leave facilities indirectly discriminates against female teachers – as only women could benefit from this leave provision.

In December 2018, the INTO lost several similar claims (under the Employment Equality Acts) which it had lodged on behalf of its members. On 18th April, 2019, the WRC issued its decision on the ASTI Employment Equality cases. It ruled against the ASTI. On advice, neither union decided to appeal. However, the INTO won an appeal at the Labour Court on their claim under Maternity Protection Act. The Department of Education and Skills appealed this matter to the High Court. The High Court ruled against the INTO but it referred the matter back to the WRC.

The ASTI claims are still active and we continue to pursue them.

- b) Actions to try and overturn the imposition of pay cuts to job-sharing teachers on less than €65,000.

The ASTI lodged claims under the Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2004 and under the Protection of Employees (part-time work), Act 2001, challenging the imposition of higher-pay cuts under the FEMPI legislation to job-sharing teachers. On legal advice, these claims were withdrawn. However, the ASTI has lodged a challenge in the High Court to the imposition of these as breach of contract. This claim has been lodged and we are awaiting developments.

3.1.3 Within the workplace.

- a) Menopause.

The committee is aware of the ongoing public discussion of the menopause and how it affects women in the workplace. With 70% female membership of the ASTI, it is important that the Union monitor closely all developments in this area. The Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD, has undertaken to develop a Menopause Workplace Policy and to provide specialist support (including dedicated specialist menopause clinics) and to develop and launch a national awareness campaign. The Equality Committee will be an active participant in this ongoing and important discussion.

- b) Breastfeeding.

At the time of writing, the Committee was seeking information from members concerning the implementation of Circular letter 0054/2019 which entitles teachers to avail of breastfeeding breaks without loss of pay for up to one hour per day for the purpose of breastfeeding or lactation, within a 104-week period after the birth of a child.

1.2. Promotion of Equal Treatment on Disability Ground.

The Committee continues to support measures to address the issues of stress and mental health in schools which are being developed by the Safety Health and Welfare Committee.

1.3 Promotion of Equality on Membership of the Traveller Community Ground:

ASTI contributes to the workings of the Yellow Flag Programme – an award for schools which promotes opportunities for students from a traveller background.

ASTI continues to meet with Pavee Point to discuss how best to address issues facing traveller students in the Irish education system. We are seeking to arrange talks with management bodies, parent groups and other unions in relation to this issue.

1.4 Promotion of Equal Treatment on Age Ground.

- a) Pay cuts for new entrant teachers since 2010.

The Committee continues to demand a full restoration of a single incremental scale, together with payment of allowances to all teachers, in order to correct the iniquitous situation created by pay cuts imposed on such teachers.

b) Pensions

The Committee continues to emphasise the importance of maintaining parity between pensions and salaries. Representatives of the Committee met with representatives from the Pensions Sub-Committee in February to discuss areas of mutual interest and concern.

c) Posts of Responsibility

The Committee has asked the ASTI to obtain survey data on possible age and gender discrimination in appointments to posts in Irish second-level schools. There is a sub-committee of Standing Committee preparing such a survey. See section Posts of Responsibility in this handbook.

The Standing Committee Sub-committee on Posts of Responsibility met with the Committee in February as part of their work in developing a survey of members and a report for Annual Convention.

2. COLLABORATING WITH THE WORK OF NGOS AND STATE BODIES IN PROMOTING EQUALITY.

2.1 *National Women's Council of Ireland.*

The ASTI is represented on the NWCI by Lorainne Finn and Sheila Flynn.

2.2 *ICTU.*

The ASTI is represented on the Women's Committee of the ICTU by Adrienne Healy and by the Assistant General Secretary. It is represented on the ICTU Disability Committee by Geraldine O'Brien and by the Deputy General Secretary.

2.3 *ETUCE.*

The ASTI is represented on the Standing Committee for Equality of the European Trade Union Committee for Education by the Deputy General Secretary.

2.3 *Violence Against Women*

The General Secretary and the Deputy General Secretary have represented the ASTI at the annual launch of White Ribbon Ireland (the national movement of the world's largest male-led campaign to end men's violence against women) for the past few years. The Committee continues to work with the campaign which acknowledges the importance of schools in promoting a culture which does not tolerate any violence against women.

The ASTI continues to seek amendments to the Assault Leave Circular 0061/2017. Teachers are only entitled to claim assault leave when they have suffered physically from the assault. Psychological effects are not eligible. While this omission affects all teachers it can have a particularly devastating effect on women teachers who have been sexually assaulted in schools.

3. EQUALITY ISSUES FOR STUDENTS

The Committee also devoted time to the discussion of equality issues as they affect schools and students. Among the issues discussed were:

- Issues facing LGBTQI+ students
- Inequalities which have been highlighted during remote learning

- Hidden Disabilities
- Grind Schools

The Committee is committed to maintaining the beneficial effects of education in mitigating inequality.

4. REFUGEES/ASYLUM SEEKERS/ IMMIGRANT TEACHERS

The Committee has agreed that the issue of refugees and asylum teachers, and particularly students and teachers, should be a priority in its work.

The ASTI has been working (along with our sister unions the INTO and TUI) with the Migrant Teacher Bridging Programme. We address the teachers on this programme and explain to them the role of trade unions in supporting them and the importance of trade union membership.

5. HOMELESSNESS/POVERTY

The Committee has become increasingly alarmed at the effect of homelessness and poverty on many of the students attending our schools. They hope to prioritise this issue in the coming period. The Deputy General Secretary has met with Focus Ireland in relation to educational issues facing homeless students in secondary schools. It is hoped that resources to assist these students will be developed.

6. COVID 19

The Committee is acutely aware of the inequalities in Irish education that have been highlighted so dramatically by the Covid-19 crisis. The Committee continues to monitor the situation and to call for resources to reduce these inequalities. The Committee has begun to examine the issue of vaccinations and equality issues that may arise as a result of their widespread introduction.

9. SCHOOLS' ADMISSION POLICIES

The Committee continues to monitor the admission policies of schools to ensure that they are compliant with equality legislation.

10. STATE EXAMINATIONS

It has been brought to the Committee's notice that some material produced in connection with state examinations may contain gender bias. The ASTI has brought this material to the attention of the State examinations Commission. The Committee will continue to monitor this situation.

11. SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

It has been brought to the Committee's notice that some school textbooks (in particular, Home Economics textbooks) continue to use outdated and offensive language in reference to people with disabilities. The ASTI has raised this issue with relevant parties.

INTERNAL UNION MATTERS

FINANCE

END OF YEAR BRANCH BALANCES

In recent years, the Registrar of Friendly Societies, who grants the ASTI and other recognised trade unions their legal status and, thus, their protection under the industrial relations legislation, has sought increasingly detailed information about funds which unions allocate to branches. Each union is required to make a return to the Registrar for each financial year giving details of its finances. Failure to comply with this requirement could mean the withdrawal of legal recognition. The Registrar has insisted that unions provide a statement of their branches' bank balance at the end of the calendar year with each annual return. The end of year branch balances received from 22 branches in Head Office at time of going to print had a total of €173,617 in their various accounts at 31st December, 2021.

BRANCH AUDITS

Rule 49 states:

"All branch bank accounts shall be opened in the name of the branch and all monies lodged shall be in the name of the branch. Each branch shall, not later than November 1st hold an audit of the accounts of the branch, and a duly authenticated copy of the Balance Sheet shall be sent to the General Secretary, and shall be available for examination by members of the branch, within a month from the date of the audit. Such an audit shall be carried out by the Auditor to be appointed at a meeting of the branch. No Branch Officer shall be eligible to act as Auditor of the branch accounts."

It is a requirement under the Rules and Constitution that the branch audit be completed and forwarded to the General Secretary. At time of going to print, audits for 34 branches were submitted to the General Secretary in respect of the financial year ended 30th September, 2021.

BRANCH CENTRAL FUND

In accordance with Rule 154 Convention 1994 established a special Central Fund to be known as the Branch Central Fund. In the report adopted by CEC in January 1994 it was agreed that branches should not as a rule retain more than €2,539.48 at any one time in a branch current or deposit account. This limit was increased to €5,000 at Convention 2015. Any surpluses should be forwarded to the Branch Central Fund. Convention 2019 agreed that 0.72% per annum from each member's subscription should be allocated to the Branch Central Fund. Branches wishing to undertake a project which would promote the aims and objectives of the ASTI but where their funds are insufficient to finance such a project can apply to the Branch Central Fund for a grant.

The income to the fund in 2021 was €81,852 made up from a €36,226 allocation from members' subscriptions, €2,016 Compensation for loss of income and €2,861 negative deposit interest. Surplus from Branches was €46,471. The balance in the Branch Central Fund on 31st December, 2021 was €602,486.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

At Convention 2021 Michael Barry (Cork North) Gerry Breslin (Sligo) & Bernadine O'Sullivan (Dublin North-West) were elected as Trustees of our association for a two-year term. Throughout 2021 the Trustees have been in regular contact with the Honorary National Treasurer, Pádraig Murphy, and the Investment Committee to consider our associations investment and financial position. Two meetings were held with the Investment Committee in 2021. The first meeting was held on the 11th of March. We were given an update and summary of all investments held by the ASTI. A further meeting was held on the 2nd of December. We were informed that a further €125k was transferred in October from the Sickness Benefit and Benevolent Fund. Three more payments of €125k euros are to be made to the Vantage 70 C Fund in 2022. These investments are being made to counter the negative interest rate of -0.5%. These deposit interest penalties are currently costing the ASTI substantial sums of money. Some examples are as follows: the Contingency Fund -€2,855 and the Publication Account -€4,236

The Trustees had a meeting with our auditors, HLB Sheehan Quinn on the 27th of November 2021. We appraised the auditors of any significant events/transactions in the year to date. We discussed issues which arose from the Management Letter submitted by the auditors in respect of the previous annual audit and to confirm (or otherwise) that the recommendations made in such letter as to the improvements in the system of internal controls have been affected. Examples are as follows: Cash Investment Strategy, Standing Committee Allowances, upgrading the computer system, payroll process and employment contracts. Further to these matters it was brought to our attention that there was a proposal from Standing Committee to award a one-off Christmas gift to ASTI Committee, CEC and Annual Convention Members. It was the opinion of the Trustees that this use of funds was contrary to what we would consider to be the appropriate use of ASTI funds for which we have a duty to safeguard. We communicated our views to the General Secretary, President and Standing Committee.

The Treasurer presented financial statements up to the 30th of September 2021. No issues were arising from these accounts. The following observations can be made with regard to the General Fund, the surplus of income over expenditure as of 30th of September 2021 was €927,986 expected to rise to €1,225,490 at the end of 2021. Whereas in 2020 the surplus was €850,952 for the full year. These figures reflect a steady increase in membership which is to be welcomed. We note an increase in legal fees which by September 2021 had surpassed the estimate for the full year. We also note a substantial increase in the Fitness to Teach legal fees. These costs were quite variable but support for our members is paramount, and they must have access to the appropriate legal advice when difficulties arise. All fund balance sheets are positive as of September 2021 reflecting the solvency of each fund. A summary of the balance sheets of the ASTI as of 30th September 2021 is c.€11.5m as compared to €10.3m in 2020.

We wish to acknowledge Pádraig Murphy (Honorary Treasurer) for his work in administering the funds of the ASTI. We would like to thank our General Secretary Kieran Christie, and President Eamon

Dennehy for their assistance and support throughout the year. We would also like to thank Jacqueline Kearns (Executive Officer: Administration), Elaine McLoughlin and Danielle Gillard.

Trustees: Michael Barry, Gerry Breslin, Bernadine O'Sullivan

MEMBERS' BENEFIT SCHEMES

BENEVOLENT FUND

The five administrators of the Fund are Sinéad Corkery, Adrian Guinan and Geraldine O'Brien, elected by CEC, and the President and Honorary Treasurer, both ex-officio.

The administrators met four times during the year to consider claims and sanctioned 11. Seven were for exceptional circumstances and four for deceased members. The total amount of monies sanctioned for payment was €108,000.

SICKNESS BENEFIT FUND

The Sickness Benefit Committee met four times during the year. Claims for benefit totalled 310. In ten cases no award was made as the conditions set out in the Rules were not met.

For the year 2021, of the claims for which awards were made, 17 were for illness, 77 for dental treatment, 214 for optical treatment and two for otological treatment. The total amount paid out in claims for 2021 was €50,940 compared with €36,363 in 2020.

The elected Committee members are:

David Briscoe, Róisín Doyle, Mary Lyndon, Margaret McGagh, Tony McKernan, Geraldine O'Brien and Gerard O'Donoghue.

SALARY PROTECTION SCHEME

The Salary Protection Scheme for ASTI members has been in operation since the 14th February 1977. It was last reviewed on 1st June 2018 and the terms and conditions will again be reviewed on 1st June 2024. The Scheme provides members with an income in the event that they are unable to work as a result of injury or illness.

During 2021 a total of 68 Disability claims were notified. (3 of these cases did not proceed to claim and a further 2 claims returned to work before exhausting sick pay at full rate). 31 of these claims were admitted by the end of 2021, 31 claims were being processed. One claim was not paid as it was for a medical condition excluded when joining. A further 22 claims, notified in 2020, were admitted in 2021, bringing to 1,354 the total number of members admitted as claimants under the Disability element of the Scheme. Currently 100 members are in receipt of benefit amounting to €2,300,000 per annum. Since its introduction, a total in excess of €131,000,000 has been paid under the Disability element of the Scheme.

The total paid out under the Death Benefit element of the Scheme in 2021 was €967,000 in respect of 7 member's claims (including 1 Terminal Illness claim). A total of 4 member's death claims were notified in 2021 and there are 5 death claims awaiting settlement

at the end of 2021 with total benefit due of approximately €684,000. Since this element was introduced in 1981, a total of 322 claims have been admitted with payments to the families of deceased members amounting to approximately €29,400,000.

A Specified Illness benefit was introduced at the 1st June 2014 Scheme review. In 2021 17 claims were settled with a total benefit of €305,098 paid. Twelve claims are awaiting settlement and two claims notified in 2021 were declined. Since the introduction of this benefit in June 2014 a total of 130 claims have been paid with a total benefit paid of approximately €2,134,000

FOUR TEACHER UNIONS

The Presidents, General Secretaries and Deputy General Secretaries of the four teacher unions ASTI, INTO, TUI and IFUT hold regular meetings to discuss matters of common interest. There have been five formal meetings in the past year. These meetings are intended to provide opportunities to share information and ensure that where possible there is a joint position on issues that affect teachers. In particular, they are very useful to ensure that the staff side are well prepared for Teacher Conciliation Council meetings. A very sizable portion of discussions this year related to Covid-19 matters.

Other issues discussed included the following:

- Pay inequality
- Climate Change
- Public sector pay/pension talks
- Redeployment issues
- Pension issues
- Compulsory Retirement Age
- Special Educational Needs provision
- Integrated Workplace Health Management Initiative
- HSA Work Positive Process for Schools
- Maternity Leave
- Teacher wind-down scheme
- Teaching Council/Registration issues
- Teacher disciplinary issues
- Supervision and Substitution
- Partial Absences
- EI/BIGTU/ETUCE
- Third level funding
- Second level funding
- Junior Cycle Implementation issues
- Posts of Responsibility
- Fixed Term Teachers and CIDs
- Teacher Secondment
- Sick Leave
- Assault Leave
- Adoptive Leave (Surrogacy)
- Occupational Injury
- International union issues
- ICTU business
- Probation management
- Equality issues
- Payroll issues
- International issues
- Global Schoolroom

LEGAL AID GRANTS

LEGAL AID APPLICATIONS

In 2021, there were 10 applications for legal aid of which 10 were approved. In 2020, there were 18 applications for legal aid of which 14 were approved.

The applications related inter alia to the following issues:

- Allegations/complaints against members
- Bullying/harassment issues
- Dismissals or threatened dismissals
- Disciplinary Issues
- Equality issues
- Teaching Council Issues

GUIDELINES FOR GRANTS FOR LEGAL AID

The following are the guidelines for applications for grants for legal aid:

ASTI Rule 159(c) provides that “grants on account of legal expenses incurred by members arising out of or in connection with their professional duties” may be paid from the General Fund in accordance with the provisions of Rules 179 to 182.

These Rules provide that, before a member takes any steps (other than entering a notice of appeal), a member must submit the request for a grant in writing to the General Secretary. Standing Committee (or CEC) may refuse a grant or allow portion of a grant or state the maximum sum which will be made available. Each application for a grant for legal aid will be assessed on its own merits and in its own circumstances. The increasing number of applications for grants for legal aid, however, requires that there must be some measure of standardised response which also takes into account the broader interests of the Association. Guidelines are issued to members to help to ensure that there is – *consistency of approach and clarity with regard to the degree of support which may be available to individual members.*

The following general principles apply:

1. Insofar as possible, the advice and assistance will be provided through the ASTI solicitors.
2. In principle, Standing Committee will follow the advice of the ASTI legal advisors in deciding whether or not to support an action or to continue to support an action.
3. A grant will not normally be approved by Standing Committee where the issue could be addressed through the agreed industrial relations procedures and the provisions of the procedures have not been exhausted.
4. An initial grant for legal aid will cover the cost of a consultation with the solicitors and any consequent correspondence. The member concerned will be accompanied and assisted by an ASTI representative. The initial grant may also cover the cost of a Barrister’s advice, if required.
5. A further application for a grant will be required for legal representation in a court or other quasi legal forum.
6. Such legal aid grant is provided to cover the legal costs of the member who made the application only.
7. A further application will be required if a grant is required to cover the legal costs of a third party.

8. In the case of legal proceedings, a specific cash limit will be set on the grant to be paid. This limit may not cover the member’s full costs in the proceedings but will not exceed, except in exceptional circumstances, the member’s costs in the proceedings, based on estimates provided by the legal advisors. The limit may only be exceeded by obtaining further specific approval.
9. The ASTI will not pay a grant to cover the costs of any damages awarded against a member.
10. The ASTI may only pay the legal costs involved in an agreed settlement of a case.
11. That, as a matter of principle, a grant for legal aid to a maximum of €5,000 will be made to members on receipt of a request submitted in accordance with the Rules, who is accused of behaviour which may lead to a criminal investigation in order to pay legal costs which arise in relation to the protection of their continued employment.
12. Except in cases of emergency, requests for legal grants should be forwarded to the General Secretary at least 5 days prior to the meeting of Standing Committee for which it is relevant.

PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

One Principal and one Deputy Principal is elected in each of nine regions, based on Standing Committee Regions, to the ASTI Principals and Deputy Principals Committee. It is recommended that there should be gender balance and that the Principal and Deputy Principal should not be from the same school. The term of office is two years and members serve a maximum of three terms. The 2019-2021 Committee was elected at the Principals and Deputy Principals Seminar on the 6th November 2019.

The Committee members for the period 2019-2021 are listed below.

SC Region	Principal / Deputy	Name
1 and 2	Principal	Vacant
	Deputy Principal	Jimmy Staunton
3 and 4	Principal	Mary Kelly
	Deputy Principal	Vacant
5	Principal	John O’Donovan
	Deputy Principal	Liam Hassett
6 and 7	Principal	Aaron Wolfe
	Deputy Principal	Peter Hyde
8 and 9	Principal	Shane Hallinan
	Deputy Principal	Vacant
10 and 11	Principal	Rob Halford (Until August 2021)
	Deputy Principal	Kathleen Burke
12, 16 & 17	Principal	Vacant
	Deputy Principal	Jean Marie Ward
13 and 14	Principal	Vacant
	Deputy Principal	Robert Browne
15 and 18	Principal	Sarah Green
	Deputy Principal	Patricia MacManus

John O'Donovan is Chairperson of the Committee. The President and the Vice-President are also members of the Committee. The Deputy General Secretary provides the professional support to the Committee.

Meetings were held throughout the year at which many issues were discussed. However, Covid 19 and its repercussions for schools, teachers and students again dominated the discussions throughout the year. Naturally, the Committee paid particular attention to the effect of the pandemic on the work of Principals and Deputy Principals.

The Committee raised many issues of concern for ASTI members who are in school leadership positions. These concerns have all been forwarded to the Department of Education and Skills through the General Secretary and the President.

CONCERNS ABOUT STATE EXAMINATIONS:

Many concerns continued to be raised about the introduction of Calculated Grades. The continuation of the indemnity provided by the Department of Education and Skills and negotiated by the ASTI was welcomed by the Committee.

Many of the same issues which arose in 2020 were again discussed by the Committee in the year gone by; this time in relation to the 2021 examinations.

These issues were many and so varied and it is not possible to list them all here. They include:

- Students studying a subject(s) outside school
- Issues around special accommodations for students with special needs
- Equality issues
- Second Components
- Students who have struggled to attend school and therefore have little data relating to their performance
- Incomplete course – particularly for those students who wished to sit the exam

Of course, added to these and many other issues, was the moving of some of the oral examinations to the Easter Break. This places yet another burden on Principals and Deputy Principals without consultation or recompense.

WORKLOAD:

The workload for Principals and Deputy Principals has always been an issue for the Committee. In the years just gone this has become a matter of critical concern. The pandemic has led to a now intolerable situation. The demands placed on school leaders by the changes in the conduct of the State Examinations, the re-opening of schools, the ongoing fall-out from trying to run a school remotely, the fact that Principal Teachers can be contacted in relation to cases at any time and the moving of examinations to the Easter Break are all contributing to health, safety and welfare issues for school leaders.

REMUNERATION ISSUES:

The Committee discussed issues related to salaries and allowances for Principals and Deputy Principals. These included:

- Restoration of the Allowance for newly appointed Principals Serving as Secretary to a Board of Management.

- A Step-Down Scheme for Principals and Deputy Principals
- An examination of the basis for the allowances paid to Principals and Deputy Principals. These allowances are based on the number of teachers employed in a school. However, in recent years up to one third of employees may be in grades other than teaching grades, in particular as SNAs.
- New Principal and Deputy Principals who had opted out of the Supervision and Substitution Scheme and were continuing to pay the penalty for this despite the fact that they are now required to undertake supervision and substitution duties.

NEW ENTRANT TEACHERS:

The Committee reiterated their commitment to the restoration of all pay to New Entrant Teachers.

OTHER ISSUES:

Among other issues raised by the Committee were.

- The Public Sector Agreement/Building Momentum (including the use of the local bargaining 1%)
- Redeployment (including voluntary redeployment)
- SLARs
- Induction
- Principal Deputy Principal Appeals
- HEPA Filters

REPRESENTATION OF PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS:

During the year, the ASTI represented a number of Principals and Deputies in relation to difficulties they were having with Boards of Management and/or Trustees.

STANDING COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

General Election 2022

The terms of office for regionally elected representatives for Standing Committee regions 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18 expire at the conclusion of Annual Convention 2022. The General Secretary duly notified all branch secretaries in these regions and valid nominations for representatives to serve until Annual Convention 2024 had been received by the due date (7th January 2020) as follows:

Region 2	Róisín Doyle
Region 4	Geraldine O'Brien
Region 6	No nomination received
Region 8	Paul O'Reilly
Region 10	Eamon Ryan
Region 12	Ray Nolan
Region 14	Ray St. John
Region 16	Maria Markey Green
Region 18	Sinead Corkery

At the time of going to print, an election was due to be held in Region 6 as no nomination had been received. The formal

announcement of elections to Standing Committee will be made at Annual Convention.

2 by-elections to fill casual vacancies which arose on Standing Committee have taken place since the last Convention report.

BY-ELECTIONS

Region 11

Arising from the resignation of Peter Keaney from Standing Committee on 10th October, 2021, a vacancy arose for a representative for Region 11. One candidate, David Wynne, was validly nominated for election and was deemed elected.

Region 12

A by-election was held for Region 12 with Ray Nolan formally declared elected on 15th November, 2022.

THE REPORT OF HONORARY NATIONAL ORGANISER

Dear Delegates

I write this report as the global COVID-19 **pandemic** shows signs of improvement in Ireland and schools have slowly started to return to somewhat normal operations. ASTI Membership has held strong during the pandemic with a sizable increase in 2020 and a very slight decrease in 2021. As of 31st December 2021 the total membership was 18,323. The figure for student membership has continued to grow over the past 2 years despite the fact that 3rd level education was mostly online and any recruitment visit to a campus was not permitted. Of the total of 18,323 ASTI members, 12,766 are female members and 5,557 are male.

With the proposed lifting of restrictions, it is my intention to visit branches and schools, in particular those schools where we do not have a school steward at present and where there are many non-members. There is a record high number of PMEs and NQTs in our staffrooms now due to the increasing enrolments at 2nd level. A large proportion of this cohort don't seem to place membership of a union high on their agenda. As the camaraderie of the large staffroom no longer exists, it has become increasingly difficult for colleagues to enjoy a casual chat and to mention the many benefits of union membership thus encouraging these teachers to join the ASTI. Hopefully, with the easing of restrictions, we will return to full staffrooms again.

A detailed analysis of the categories of ASTI Membership reveals a worrying trend. In December 2017 our overall membership (16,440) hit a low point following resignations during our industrial dispute. In that year the total number of teaching members, was 14,407. Of that number 2,612 did not have a full hours contract (18%). At 31st December 2021 the total number of teaching members had increased to 16,154. However, the number of members on full hours remained static. Of the 16,154 teaching members, 4,260 did not have a full hours contract (26%). This means that today in our schools more than 1 in 4 of our ASTI colleagues do not have a full hours contract. The majority of non full hour members also do not even have a low hour CID. Associate pro-rata and non-pro-rata contracts account for 3,434 out of the 4,260. Many wait for several years to achieve a CID.

I appeal to each and every delegate reading this report to become aware of the increasing level of casualisation of the teaching

profession in your own staffroom. Be mindful of colleagues on your staff that have remained for several years on less than full hour contracts. They need the permanent members of staff to be a voice for them in achieving full hour contracts. By reducing the number of years our members spend on non full hour contracts, new entrants to the teaching profession may come to realise yet another benefit of being a member of the ASTI.

As I have said several times before working together we will continue to be a strong voice in the protection of our valued members.

“Ní neart go cur le chéile”

Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir

Michael McGrath HNO

PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION

During the 2021 period the ASTI Communications Office was involved in the following activities:

- Writing and issuing news releases and statements to the media.
- Briefing the media / responding to media queries.
- Organising media interviews for radio, television, newspapers, and online media.
- Promoting ASTI activities and policies.
- Developing campaigns on key issues such as the safe re-opening of schools.
- Undertaking research for publicity purposes.
- Monitoring media coverage of ASTI.
- Maintaining a network of regional ASTI spokespersons.
- Briefing media spokespersons.
- Writing, editing and producing ASTI publications including ASTIR and Nuacht.
- Designing publications/liasing with designers.
- Monitoring Dáil debates and political developments.
- Co-ordinating political lobbying.
- Developing the new ASTI website.
- Updating and maintaining ASTI website on a daily basis.
- Continued development of ASTI social media presence.
- Organising photo opportunities at ASTI events throughout the year.
- Producing online videos.

List of Press Statements 2021

No credible level of assurance that schools will be safe next week - 6th January, 2021.

ASTI directs members to teach classes remotely - 7th January, 2021.

ASTI Executive recommends rejection of proposed public service agreement - 9th January, 2021.

Update: ASTI Executive discusses Covid-19 and schools - 23rd January, 2021.

ASTI enters exams discussions - 5th February, 2021.

ASTI members vote to reject Building Momentum agreement - 10th February, 2021.

ASTI agrees return of special education classes - 10th February, 2021.

Leaving Cert 2021 proposal not viable - 11th February, 2021.

ASTI re-enters discussions on Leaving Cert - 13th February, 2021.

Re-opening of schools - 23rd February, 2021.

ASTI shocked and dismayed at reports of changes to vaccination programme - 30th March, 2021.

Rebuilding school communities: Smaller classes, increased access to mental health services essential, say teachers - 31st March, 2021.

Statement on urgent motion – 6th April, 2021.

High-risk teachers heading back to ‘choc-a-block’ classrooms, says ASTI President - 6th April, 2021.

Young people’s pandemic ‘trauma’ must be countered by investing in under-funded schools - 7th April, 2021.

Joint Unions Press Release - Teacher unions pass emergency motions demanding teacher vaccination - 7th April, 2021.

Joint Unions Press Release - ASTI, INTO and TUI demand urgent meeting with government on teacher vaccination - 9th April, 2021.

Teacher unions call for vaccine meeting with Taoiseach - 19th April, 2021.

Outrageous treatment of Debenhams workers must not be repeated - 21st May, 2021.

‘You’ve shown tremendous resilience. Now look after yourself and stay focused’ - ASTI President’s message to Leaving Cert students - 9th June, 2021.

‘Enhanced investment and recruitment the key to a successful and sustained reopening of schools’ – ASTI President - 2nd August, 2021.

Teacher unions condemn failure to protect staff in early pregnancy - 25th August, 2021. (Joint Union statement)

ASTI President congratulates Leaving Cert students - 3rd September, 2021.

ASTI disappointed and dismayed with CO2 monitors delay - 15th September, 2021.

Ireland remains at the bottom of global ranking for investment in education - 16th September, 2021.

Education Budget 2022: Key areas requiring urgent investment not addressed - 12th October, 2021.

ASTI joins British and Irish group of teacher unions in call for quality climate change education - 2nd November, 2021. (Joint Union Statement)

ASTI dismayed at Minister’s unfair emergency substitution arrangements - 29th November, 2021.

ASTI comment regarding oral exams announcement - 20th December, 2021.

ASTI seeks ventilation and heating as priorities in school review - 22nd December, 2021.

Health and safety must be the priority for the reopening of schools - 3rd January, 2022.

ASTI expresses dismay at lack of progress on school safety – 4th January, 2022.

ASTI committed to externally-assessed Leaving Cert 2022 in line with expectations – 10th January, 2022.

School charter Bill could harm student wellbeing, widen inequalities - 19th January, 2022.

PUBLICATIONS

ASTIR

ASTIR - Member’s tribute to the blackbird poet – January, 2021

ASTIR – ASTI receives financial settlement in membership case – March, 2021.

ASTIR – ASTI goes online for Convention 2021 – May, 2021.

ASTIR – Welcome to the ASTI – September, 2021.

ASTIR- When the dawn is come – November, 2021.

ASTIR – Education at a Glance 2021 – November, 2021.

ASTIR – Pink and Blue Power saves lives - January, 2022.

Nuacht

Nuacht No. 1 - January, 2021 – Ballot Special

Nuacht No. 2 – March, 2021 – Convention Special

Nuacht No. 3 – September, 2021 - ASTI has led the campaign to ensure Safety, Health and Welfare of school communities

Additional Publications

ASTI Guidelines on the use of Information Technology by teachers in a Covid-19 context – January, 2021.

ASTI Charter Review - Accountability and Regulation in Education: A Better Way – Dr. Caitriona Fitzgerald – December, 2021.

ASTI Convention 2021 Preliminary Agenda

ASTI Convention Handbook 1, 2 and 3, 2021

ASTI Advantages Cornmarket Rewards Flyer – June, 2021.

ASTI/RedC Survey - Rebuilding our School Communities – Teachers’ Priorities - March, 2021

ASTI Planner 2021/2022

ASTI Recruitment - Membership Application form

ASTI Recruitment - Change of Membership form

ASTI Poster: Why should you join the ASTI

ASTI Information Leaflet for School Stewards You and the ASTI Information Leaflet – June, 2021.

ASTI Information Leaflet on Contract Information for Non-Permanent Teachers – June, 2021.

ASTI Information Leaflet – Pension Information – June, 2021.

ASTI Information Booklet on Teachers Welfare Rights and Responsibilities (Reprint)

ASTI Protocol to Changes to Work Practices in Schools (Poster) – December, 2021.

ASTI Diary 2022

ASTI Faisnéis Chonartha Maidir Le: Múinteoirí Neamhbhuana, lena n-áirítear – January, 2022.

ASTI - ASTI agus tusa – January, 2022.

ASTI - Faisnéis maidir le Pínsinn – January, 2022.

ASTI ONLINE ACTIVITIES

The ASTI website mirrors all areas of the ASTI's work including campaigns, industrial relations and legal issues, information and advice for teachers, education policy, and teachers' rights and entitlements, publications including Nuacht and ASTIR, and latest news.

The new and improved ASTI website was launched in 2020. Key features are improved navigation/ search options such as an A-Z of teachers' terms and conditions. The site also has an ASTI events calendar and a facility for members to view the current most frequently asked questions from ASTI members. Teachers can now join the ASTI online.

Throughout the pandemic, the website FAQs continued to provide members with up-to-date information on pandemic-related issues and arrangements. The FAQ page 'Leaving Cert 2021' and the FAQ page 'Re-opening of Schools' were amongst the top five most visited pages during the year. Other most-visited pages related to pay, pensions and retirement.

In 2022 the ASTI will launch MyUnion, a new online facility on the ASTI website which will allow ASTI members to access and change information relating to their membership without having to contact head office. Members will be able to change their address/ contact details/ work details and to view contact information for their main elected representatives. A new publications service will offer members the opportunity to choose whether they wish to receive a hard copy or digital copy of a range of ASTI publications. ASTI activists including school stewards and branch secretaries will be provided with access to additional online facilities which will support them in their role. The implementation of this new online facility will greatly assist the ASTI in meeting the needs and service level expectations of ASTI members.

Facebook and Twitter

The ASTI's presence on social media continued to grow over the course of the past year. In January 2022, the ASTI Facebook page has 8,288 page likes and a following of 8,847 subscribers.

In late January 2022, the ASTI Twitter page increased to over 12,900 followers.

Social media tools are increasingly used by the ASTI to support activities and campaigns. In addition, teachers use Facebook and Twitter to receive news updates, access information on the ASTI website via links, and address questions to the ASTI and fellow ASTI members. ASTI members can also debate decisions taken and join in ongoing campaigns.

CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND MEETINGS

SINCE ANNUAL CONVENTION 2021 THE ASTI HAS HELD THE FOLLOWING ON-LINE AND IN-PERSON CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND MEETINGS:

CEC

Two meetings were held on Saturday 15th May 2021 and on Saturday 22nd January 2022.

SUBJECT REPRESENTATIVE MEETING:

ASTI subject representatives meeting was held on 10th November 2021.

COMMITTEES / SUB COMMITTEES:

The following committees and sub-committees held a number of meetings as required by rule or demands of business in hand. Reports on these committees are contained in the appropriated sections of this handbook.

- Standing Committee / Special Standing Committee
- Steering Committee
- Education Committee
- Equality Committee
- Principals' & Deputy Principals' Advisory Committee
- Safety, Health & Welfare Committee
- ASTIR Editorial Board Sub-Committee
- ASTI Awards Committee
- Community & Comprehensive Advisory Committee
- Non-Permanent Teachers' Advisory Committee
- Investment Committee
- Rules Committee
- Sickness Benefit Committee
- Benevolent Committee
- Business of CEC Sub-Committee
- Pension Sub-Committee
- Rules Committee
- CEC Sub-Committee JC Survey
- Teacher Council Advisory Committee

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVES TRAINING COURSES

Four training courses were held as follows:

- Wednesday 10th November 2021
- Wednesday 17th November 2021
- Wednesday 24th November 2021
- Wednesday 1st December 2021

SCHOOL STEWARDS TRAINING COURSES

Four training courses were held as follows:

- Tuesday 5th October 2021
- Tuesday 12th October 2021
- Tuesday 19th October 2021
- Thursday 11th November 2021

RETIREMENT SEMINARS

Six Retirement Seminars were held by the ASTI as follows:

- Tuesday 9th November 2021
- Thursday 16th November 2021
- Tuesday 30th November 2021
- Tuesday 11th January 2022
- Tuesday 18th January 2022
- Tuesday 1st February 2022

Two Retirement Seminar were held by Cornmarket as follows:

- Tuesday 7th December 2021
- Tuesday 8th February 2022

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Leadership training was held as follows:

- Saturday 18th September 2021
- Saturday 6th November 2021

Covid-19 Lead Worker Representative

- Tuesday 21st September 2021

	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
Total membership	16,440	16,849	17,411	18,452	18,323
Full members ¹	11,470	11,421	11,381	11,697	11,386
Job Sharers	625	595	572	553	508
CID non-full	636	636	643	689	694
Associate pro-rata	1,726	2,104	2,412	2,947	3,130
Associate non-pro rata	213	198	288	339	304
Members on leave	135	157	184	167	141
Student members	37	61	95	109	132
Emeritus members	1,531	1,606	1,764	1,880	1,959
Honorary life members	67	70	72	71	69

Table 2: Annual change in total membership on previous year (2012 to 2021)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Increase		531	466		792
Decrease	503			227	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Increase		409	562	1,041	
Decrease	1,932				129

Table 3: Annual change in full membership on previous year, including full CIDs (2012 to 2021)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Increase	370		144	391	
Decrease		192			20
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Increase				316	
Decrease	1,295	49	40		311

Table 4: Total members other than full members (2012 to 2021)

Category Total	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	4,368	5,091	5,413	4,795	5,607
Category Total	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	4,970	5,428	6,030	6,755	6,937

Table 5: Total Associate Pro rata Contract & Non-Pro rata Contract Members (2012 to 2021)

Category Total	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	2,112	2,479	2,696	1,840	2,523
Category Total	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	1,939	2,302	2,700	3,286	3,434

MEMBERSHIP

Overall membership has remained broadly steady during what has been an extraordinarily difficult year in schools. There has been a small reduction in membership of 129 (+1,041) to 18,323 (18,452) in 2021 (2020) from the point reached last year. This represents a reduction of 0.7% (+6.0%) over the 2020 (2019) figure.

This membership reduction is concentrated within the following categories of members: Full members -311 (-2.7%), Job-sharers -45 (-8.1%), Associate non-pro rata (substitute teachers) -35 (-9%) and Members on Leave -26 (-15.6%). The remaining categories have shown increases in the number of members, especially amongst teachers on non-permanent fixed-term contracts (Associate pro-rata) +183 (6.2%).

A further increase in emeritus members has added to the trend identified in previous reports of retired members forming a growing proportion of union membership. Emeritus members now represent 10.7% of the union's total membership in 2021 (2020 10.2%; 2019 10.1%; 2018 9.5%; 2017 9.3%; 2016 7.8%).

The figure for student membership has continued to grow over the last three years but also reflects the decisions of university and college education departments to schedule union recruitment into the second semester, i.e. after the ASTI's membership reporting date.

Membership Returns

The total membership of the ASTI in December 2021 was 18,323, comprising 12,766 women members and 5,557 men. A detailed presentation of membership figures is contained in the following tables:

Table 1: Total membership by category at December 2021 (2017 to 2021)

Community and Comprehensive Schools

Tables 6 to 9 set out the growth in ASTI membership in the Community and Comprehensive Sector. Overall membership in this sector has grown from 2,305 in 1997 to 3,294 in 2021. Membership growth in this sector has improved at an increasing rate to 2020, but has seen a marginal reduction during 2021.

Table 6: Total Membership in Community and Comprehensive Schools and Colleges (2017 to 2021)

	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
Total membership	3,079	3,095	3,182	3,363	3,294
Full members ¹	2,343	2,294	2,289	2,285	2,208
Job Sharers	118	115	104	103	93
CID non-full	118	115	121	137	142
Associate pro-rata	432	493	563	699	739
Associate non-pro rata	35	43	49	86	79
Members on leave	26	21	29	31	20
Student members	7	14	27	22	13

Table 7: Membership in Community Schools (2017 to 2021)

	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
Total membership	2,118	2,125	2,172	2,310	2,263
Full members ¹	1,688	1,643	1,631	1,627	1,571
Job Sharers	91	90	79	78	73
CID non-full	89	84	88	96	101
Associate pro-rata	203	252	306	412	441
Associate non-pro rata	25	34	34	60	55
Members on leave	18	13	19	22	14
Student members	4	9	15	15	8

Table 8: Membership in Comprehensive Schools (2017 to 2021)

	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
Total membership	314	324	321	326	320
Full members ¹	259	260	255	250	242
Job Sharers	9	8	7	7	5
CID non-full	12	13	12	15	14
Associate pro-rata	25	40	36	47	53
Associate non-pro rata	3	0	1	3	4
Members on leave	3	3	4	1	1
Student members	3	0	6	3	1

Table 9: Membership in Community Colleges (2017 to 2021)

	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
Total membership	647	646	689	727	711
Full members ¹	396	391	403	408	395
Job Sharers	18	17	18	18	15
CID non-full	17	18	21	26	27
Associate pro-rata	204	201	221	240	245
Associate non-pro rata	7	9	14	23	20
Members on leave	5	5	6	8	5
Student members	-	5	6	4	4

Branch Membership

Branch	2020	2021	Branch	2020	2021
Athlone	234	232	Fermoy	127	130
Bray	224	222	Fingal	431	422
Carberry	347	350	Galway	780	778
Carlow	345	344	Iar Thuaisceart TC	66	71
Carrick-on-Shann	138	132	Kerry	629	616
Cavan	213	214	Kildare	689	687
Clare	404	407	Kilkenny	364	367
Cork North	574	555	Laois	304	296
Cork South	790	772	Limerick North	362	359
Desmond	252	245	Limerick South	401	398
Donegal	367	353	Longford	178	180
Drogheda Sean Higgins	282	301	Monaghan	261	258
Dublin North I	481	484	Mullingar	223	220
Dublin North Ctrl	294	292	Navan	417	423
Dublin North East	499	489	Nenagh	124	126
Dublin North West	836	838	New Ross	197	195
Dublin South I	538	534	Roscrea	92	92
Dublin South 2	614	602	Sligo	301	281
Dublin South Ctrl	311	316	Stillorgan	383	394
Dublin South Cnty	211	197	Tipperary	473	460
Dublin South West	427	415	Tuam	145	147
Dún Laoghaire	144	148	Tullamore	211	205
Dundalk	257	252	Waterford	453	449
Dungarvan	169	175	West Limerick	107	103
East Cork	273	272	West Mayo	499	495
East Galway	168	173	West Waterford	59	58
East Mayo	99	104	Wexford Tony Boland	247	240
Enniscorthy	239	244	Wicklow	199	211

ASTI AWARDS TO MEMBERS

Membership of the ASTI Awards Committee is as follows:

Ger Curtin, Pat Deery, Maire G. Ni Chiarba, President, Vice-President and General Secretary. Jacqueline Kearns, Executive Officer provides technical advice to the committee.

The committee held a hybrid meeting in ASTI Head Office and on-line meeting on the Zoom platform on Tuesday 18th January 2022 to consider applications for the following awards:

- PJ Kennedy Award
- Thomas MacDonagh Medal
- Honorary Life Membership

in the context of a strict application of the Procedure for ASTI Awards and the information supplied by the branches the committee made the following recommendations.

PJ Kennedy Award

The committee recommended that the PJ Kennedy award be awarded to eight members. Two of the recipients were nominated by their branch for the Thomas MacDonagh medal and a further two recipients were nominated by their branch for the Honorary Life Membership but met the criteria for the PJ Kennedy award.

Thomas MacDonagh Medal

The committee recommended that the Thomas MacDonagh medal be awarded to one member who is an outgoing Standing Committee member.

Honorary Life Membership

The committee considered the nomination received for this award and decided to recommend that two nominees be sent to CEC in accordance with Rule 13, refer nominees for Honorary Life membership to Annual Convention on this occasion.

allowance. The Deputy General Secretary's salary scale was fixed in January 2006 at a maximum of 1.73493 of the maximum of the secondary teacher's scale plus primary pass degree allowance plus pass H. Dip in Education allowance.

The General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary are provided with the use of ASTI motorcars. The ASTI pays all costs in relation to these cars, excluding personal mileage. These provisions are subject to "Benefit in Kind" taxation. Other officials are paid Civil Service mileage rates or the actual fares when travelling on ASTI business. Details of these expenses are published annually in the Financial Report to Convention.

The method of reimbursement of staff members' costs incurred in the conduct of their duties is a system linked to Civil Service subsistence allowances. Claims in respect of such costs are circulated to Standing Committee at each ordinary meeting and checked by scrutineers before being reimbursed.

Head office is open from 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. each day with a luncheon period closure of one hour from 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m. The office is open for 242 normal working days in each year. Much of the work of officials and, in particular, of the industrial relations officials, is confidential to the members directly involved. It is, therefore, unlikely to be reported or referred to at branch or other meetings.

An outline of the duties undertaken by officials is set out below. The duties are assigned by the General Secretary and vary from time to time in accordance with the priorities established by Convention, CEC and Standing Committee.

Outline of Duties:

The duties of officials set out below may vary depending on circumstances.

General Secretary

Kieran Christie

The General Secretary represents and promotes the interests of the union and its members in relation to salary and conditions of employment and the wellbeing of the education service at a national and international level. He is entrusted with managing the daily business of the Association, including the organization of Head Office and the execution of Association policy.

Deputy General Secretary

Diarmaid de Paor

The Deputy General Secretary supports the General Secretary in his national role. He deputises for the General Secretary and has specific responsibility in the area of communication and education policy, relations with parents, aspects of C&A and issues arising for Principals and Deputy Principals. He presents the Board of Management training for ASTI. He also services the ASTI Equality Committee and the Principals and Deputy Principals Advisory Committee.

Assistant General Secretary/Education Research

Moira Leydon

The Assistant General Secretary acts as Education and Research Officer and monitors progress in the education area. She services the ASTI Education Committee in furthering the education aims of the Association. She is responsible for coordinating a number of ASTI training programmes and coordinator of the ASTI network of subject representatives.

ASTI STAFF

The following staff changes:

Ann Marie Ryan, EO/IR was granted an extension to her one-year career break she continues to be replaced by Breda Lynch. Grainne McMullan was appointment Staff Office/IR/GDPR on Monday 14th June 2021 on a fixed term one year contract.

ASTI STAFF GRADES AND SALARIES

Apart from the General Secretary and the Deputy General Secretary ASTI staff members' salaries are linked to the appropriate Civil Service grades. The levels of remuneration are comparable with those paid in the other teachers' unions and in other unions of similar size.

The General Secretary's salary was fixed by CEC in April 2005 at 2.1846 of the maximum of the secondary teacher's salary scale plus pass primary degree allowance plus pass H Dip in Education

Executive Officer: Administration Jacqueline Kearns

The Executive Officer has responsibility for the general administration of ASTI head office and the organisation and co-ordination of conferences and seminars. She is responsible for recruitment of administrative staff, staff training and monitoring the work of administrative staff. She also has specific responsibility for the ASTI Awards Sub-Committee.

Executive Officer: Media & Communications Gemma Tuffy

The Executive Officer has responsibility to develop and maintain a positive public profile for the ASTI and its members. She is involved in media liaison, public relations, political campaigning, policy development, coordination of ASTI media representative network, publications and communications, and assisting members in dealing with the media. She acts as coordinator for media training for ASTI. She also has specific responsibility for the ASTIR Editorial Board.

Executive Officer: Industrial Relations Bernard Moynihan

The Executive Officer has responsibility for industrial relations. He is involved in assisting and representing teachers on industrial relations matters and promoting the welfare of members on an individual and school basis. He is a member of the school stewards training team. He also has specific responsibility for the Non-Permanent Teachers' Advisory Committee.

Executive Officer: Industrial Relations Maire Collins

The Executive Officer has responsibility for industrial relations. She is involved in assisting and representing teachers on industrial relations matters and promoting the welfare of members on an individual and school basis. She is a member of the school stewards training team. She also may have specific responsibility for sub-committee work as it arises.

Executive Officer: Industrial Relations Ann Marie Ryan

(Career Break commenced in Jan 2021 and was extended for a second year in January 2022)

The Executive Officer has responsibility for industrial relations. She is involved in assisting and representing teachers on industrial relations matters and promoting the welfare of members on an individual or school basis. She is assigned duties in relation to retirement. She is a member of the school stewards training team. She also has specific responsibility for the Community and Comprehensive Advisory Committee.

Executive Officer: Development & Organisation**Desmond O'Toole**

The EO/Development & Organisation is involved in assisting and representing teachers on industrial relations matters and promoting the welfare of members on an individual or school basis. He is assigned duties in relation to recruitment, retirement, elections, social welfare, Occupational Health Service, Employee Assurances Scheme. He is a member of the school stewards training and retirement training teams. He also has specific responsibility for the Rules Committee and Pensions Sub-Committee.

Executive Officer: Industrial Relations Conor McDonald

The Executive Officer has responsibility for industrial relations. He is involved in assisting and representing teachers on industrial relations matters and promoting the welfare of members on an individual or school basis. He is a member of the school stewards training team. He also has specific responsibility for the Safety, Health and Welfare Sub-Committee.

CASEWORK

ASTI Head Office Officials work on a wide range of issues in support of members. This work includes making representations to school authorities, schools management bodies, the Department of Education and other stakeholders in Irish education. Assistance regarding complaints relating to members, made to the Teaching Council, is also provided. Such representation can often be on behalf of individual members, groups of members or the ASTI membership as a whole, depending on the forum. Under a number of legislative provisions, ASTI has taken cases to the Workplace Relations Commission and the Labour Court. On occasion it has been necessary to pursue matters through the legal system up to and including the superior courts.

Matters on which representations were made this year include:

- Redeployment
- GDPR issues
- Dismissal
- Internal school difficulties
- Leave of absence
- School closures
- Pension entitlements
- Part-time and fixed-term teachers' conditions
- Timetable issues
- Supervision and substitution
- Junior Cycle
- Posts of Responsibility
- Special needs provision issues
- Salary matters
- Difficulties with revenue and social welfare authorities
- Complaints about appointment procedures
- Maternity leave
- Sick Leave
- Breastfeeding breaks
- Job-sharing
- Career break scheme
- Incremental credit
- Harassment of teachers
- School discipline
- School amalgamations
- Complaints against teachers
- Queries about Department Circulars
- Retirement
- Qualification allowances
- Teaching Council issues
- Examinations / State Examinations Commission

RULES COMMITTEE

The Rules Committee is elected annually at Annual Convention. The Committee was last elected at the virtual Convention 2021. The current members of the Committee are: the President, Vice-President and General Secretary (ex-officio), Padraic McWeeney (Chairperson), Philip Irwin, Geraldine O'Brien, John McDonnell and Michael McGrath. Desmond O'Toole (Organisation and Development official) provides professional support for the work of the Committee.

The Committee has met once since Convention 2021 on 10th January 2022. Meetings ordinarily take place in ASTI Head Office. The following issues were addressed at this meeting:

Rules Committee: The Committee considered a proposal to place the Rules Committee on a statutory basis within the ASTI Rules and Constitution.

Review of ASTI Structures: The Committee considered a process of reviewing the proposals that were presented to the ASTI Special Convention in November 2014. This work remains ongoing.

ASTI SUBSTITUTION SERVICE

The ASTI Substitute Placement Scheme has been in operation since 1994 and there are currently 250+ teachers registered with the scheme. There is an average of 15 calls per week to the Substitute Scheme and approximately 10 of those are from schools looking for a substitute teacher. Regulations: When registering, a teacher must complete a registration form containing the relevant details and including a commitment to abide by the rules of the scheme. The rules require a teacher to keep the register updated as to the teacher's current availability for employment. All members of the scheme are advised to keep their details up to date. Operation of the Scheme: The service is provided by calling 01- 6040170 or by e-mailing . Schools making enquiries will be advised of the names and details of teachers who are on the register and available to undertake substitute work within their area. Online registration is available on the ASTI Website. It is not necessary for an applicant to be a member of the ASTI. How the Scheme works: When applicants have submitted their details they are stored on our Substitute Placement database and made available to school principals. According to employers' criteria, the ASTI releases a list of teacher's details subject to what is required. The ASTI is not a recruitment agency and only releases Substitute Placement teachers' details to Secondary Schools and upholds the Data Protection Act.

TRAINING 2021/22

ASTI Board of Management Representatives	(4 seminars)	64 attended
ASTI School Stewards	(4 seminars)	98 attended
ASTI School Leadership	(2 seminars)	52 attended
ASTI Retirement Seminars	(6 seminars)	155 attended

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

DATE	VENUE	ATTENDANCE
10th November 2021	Online	25
17th November 2021	Online	10
24th November 2021	Online	14
1st December 2021	Online	15
Total		64

SCHOOL STEWARDS TRAINING

DATE	VENUE	NUMBERS ATTENDED
5th October	Online	24
12th October	Online	24
19th October	Online	25
11th November	Online	25
Total		98

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TRAINING

DATE	VENUE	NUMBERS ATTENDED
18th September	Online	25
6th November	Online	27
Total		52

RETIREMENT SEMINARS

VENUE	Session 1	ATTENDED
Online	9th November 2021	39
Online	16th November 2021	31
Online	30th November 2021	24
Online	11th January 2022	15
Online	18th January 2022	16
Online	1st February 2022	30
Total		155

VENUE	Session 2	ATTENDED
Online	7th December 2021	81
Online	8th February 2022	74
Total		155

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CONVENTION 2022

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Comhdháil Lámhleabhar & Tuairiscí

LEABHAR 1 & 2


ASTI

100ú Comhdháil
Bhliantúil 2022

AG FREASTAL AR MHÚINTEOIRÍ
AG COTHÚ AN OIDEACHAIS