

Senior Cycle update

In May of this year, ASTI members voted to reject the document *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures* by 68% to 32% (turnout 73%).



ASTI General Secretary Kieran Christie presented teachers' key concerns on *Senior Cycle Redevelopment* to the Oireachtas Committee on Education and Youth in October.

In May of this year, ASTI members voted to reject the document *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures* by 68% to 32% (turnout 73%). In a separate ballot, ASTI members voted by 67% to 33% in favour of industrial action, up to and including strike action, in the event that the ASTI rejected the provisions set out in the document *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures*.

ASTI Standing Committee decided, in the first instance, to seek resolution of the issues of concern to teachers by invoking the dispute resolution mechanisms set out in the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026, which the ASTI is party to. The Public Service Agreement also provides that where dispute resolution fails to end in agreement, either side can refer the dispute to the Scheme of Conciliation and Arbitration for Teachers.

Dispute referred to conciliation

The ASTI took part in engagement with the Department of Education and Youth from June to October 2025. However, despite progress, no agreement was reached. In October 2025, the ASTI referred the dispute regarding *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures* to the Teachers' Conciliation Council (part of the Scheme of Conciliation and Arbitration for Teachers). As this edition of *ASTIR* goes to print, the ASTI is embarking on the conciliation process.

Key concerns

The ASTI's key concerns are:

- the lack of clarity regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in Leaving Certificate Additional Assessment Components (AACs) and related authentication issues,
- recently published guidelines on the use of AI in schools will be of minimal practical help to teachers managing AACs,
- the inappropriateness of the allocation of 40% for the AACs in some subjects,
- the inadequacy of the present Science Laboratory Health and Safety Guidance (1998 – amended 2001),
- the reported lack of adequate laboratory storage space for AAC

projects/laboratory equipment, and lack of access to laboratories and information and communications technology (ICT) in many schools,

- the lack of adequate and timely training for teachers,
- concerns about the exacerbation of inequities for students,
- workload issues and lack of professional time, and
- the capacity of schools to cope with rushed Senior Cycle Redevelopment.

The Teachers' Conciliation Council (TCC) forms part of the Scheme of Conciliation and Arbitration for Teachers, the purpose of which is to provide a forum for claims and proposals relating to salary, and other terms and conditions of service for teachers. The TCC is composed of representatives from the teacher unions, school management bodies, the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, and the Department of Education and Youth. The TCC is independently chaired by an official of the Workplace Relations Commission. The terms and conditions of teachers' employment in State-funded teaching posts are formulated at the TCC.

Roll-out of Tranche 1 subjects

Tranche 1 subjects

Teachers of Tranche 1 subjects have now received:

- AAC Guidelines,
- a sample brief for the AAC,
- four sample examination papers (two Higher Level, two Ordinary Level), and
- State Examinations Commission Coursework Rules and Procedures are due in 2025.

Tranche 1 AAC briefs (for the 2027 Leaving Certificate cohort) will be available in January 2026.