


ASTIR

Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland



Junior
Cycle
ballot



Word cloud terms: Career, Pay, Reassurance, Information, Professional, Voice, Security, Advice, Jobs, Achieving, Opinion, Network, Teachers, Contracts, Support, Strength, Protection, Campaigning, Union, Unity, Representation, Expert, Equality, Solidarity, Benefits.

New teachers' special

Guide to social media
for teachers

New sick leave
arrangements

Meet the new
ASTI President



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Media and Communications Officer:
Gemma Tuffy

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Editorial: Ann-Marie Hardiman, Paul O'Grady
and Róisín Treacy.

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Advertising: Paul O'Grady.

ASTI

Thomas MacDonagh House,
Winetavern Street,
Dublin 8.
Tel: 01-604 0160
Fax: 01-897 2760
astir@astir.ie

www.astir.ie

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The ASTIR Editorial Board is interested in receiving feedback on ASTIR. Members can email astirfeedback@astir.ie or text 087-9349956.

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JUNIOR CYCLE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

Directive to members following an ASTI ballot:
ASTI members have voted in favour of the following directive:
Junior Cycle Framework Proposal: 'Not to engage in any aspect of school based education for the purpose of the Junior Cycle Student Award (JCSA).'
Members of the Junior Cycle Framework Proposal are to follow the following guidelines:

- 1 Not to attend CPD organised in connection with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposal.
- 2 Not to attend meetings associated with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposal.
- 3 Not to attend any planning meeting or participate in any planning activities organised in connection with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposal.
- 4 Not to engage in any aspect of school based education for the purpose of the Junior Cycle Student Award (JCSA).
- 5 Not to engage in any supervision of or delivery of Junior Cycle Framework Short Courses.
- 6 Not to engage in any event or function related to points 1 to 5 above.



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Letters, comments and articles are welcome

All submissions will be considered by the ASTIR Editorial Board. Email astir@astir.ie.

Protect education, teaching – Vote 'Yes'

As a new school year begins we, the teachers, are called on again to defend the education system from the misguided Government plans under the Framework for Junior Cycle. Our support for these reforms is contingent on the retention of State certification and external assessment which are bedrock strengths of the system at second level. We are balloting again this month to extend our industrial action in the face of the decision of the new Minister, Jan O'Sullivan, to proceed with the plans of her predecessor by commencing the Junior Cycle English specifications. This follows our lengthy campaign in opposition to the Framework and may be one of the most crucial ballots in the history of the ASTI.

When we were excluded by Minister Quinn with his announcement in October, 2012 we undertook our own extensive consultation with teachers and presented it to the Minister in April, 2013. (*Teachers' Voice*).

- We participated for six months in Minister Quinn's working groups in Junior Cycle, but our issues were ignored.
- We held lunchtime protests in March 2014 to highlight our concerns.
- We voted not to co-operate with the implementation in the absence of negotiation and agreement in March, 2014.
- We presented to the Minister a petition from 10,000 teachers seeking the retention of the role of teachers as advocates of their students rather than their judges in May 2014.

In spite of our measured and responsible campaign, the Government is persisting with implementation without agreement with teachers, therefore we must stand firm and extend our action to include one or more strike days in order to achieve our objectives.

Protect education, teaching

A Yes vote will:

- show the new Minister that teachers are serious about standards, equity, fairness and maintaining the student-teacher relationship;
- strengthen the hand of the ASTI negotiators in seeking to have teachers' key concerns addressed; and,
- bring us into line with the TUI members who have already voted for industrial action up to strike action.

Turnout is crucial. We need your vote and the vote of your colleagues. In every ASTI ballot hundreds of ballot papers are discounted because they arrive just after the closing time. Please be mindful of this and make sure you post your ballot paper well before the deadline.

New to teaching?

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all of those joining the second-level teaching profession and the ASTI this year.



Philip Irwin
ASTI President

Time to reverse austerity cuts

Teachers have come through five years of pay cuts, diminished resources and services in schools, and a marked deterioration in working conditions. Every teacher has been affected. For some teachers the impact has brought great hardship.

The ASTI has spent the last five years defending the education service and the pay and conditions of teachers from relentless attacks. On top of changes to tax-related payments implemented for all workers, teachers were subjected to a further 14% cut in income via the public service pension levy and public service pay cut. Following this, the Haddington Road Agreement imposed a range of pay freezes and pay cuts on teachers, including freezing of increments, cuts to those earning over €65,000 and the loss of the supervision and substitution allowance. Young teachers were unfairly targeted via additional pay cuts and the abolition of qualification allowances. In 2012 the European Commission reported that teachers in Ireland were among the worst impacted by cuts to teachers' pay across the 34 OECD countries.

Throughout this period the ASTI has continued to campaign vigorously to highlight the impact of pay cuts on teachers. While we have a long way to go, the announcement earlier this year of the first steps towards the restoration of new teachers' salary scales to 2010 levels came as a direct result of the incessant campaigning undertaken by the ASTI, INTO and TUI. The ASTI is also pursuing the reversal of cuts to pay, resources and services implemented since 2009 for all teachers. The Haddington Road Agreement contains commitments on the restoration of the Haddington Road pay cuts to teachers earning over €65,000 and a €1,592 pay increase for all teachers (the commitment is to restore these in two tranches in April 2017 and January 2018). The ASTI is insisting that these commitments are honoured in full.

Now that the Government is stating that the struggle for economic recovery has finally turned a corner, we must ensure that tax cuts do not become the mantra of those who wish to avoid investment in public services, including pay restoration for public sector workers. Education in Ireland has endured a significant decline in investment since 2005. It is the job of the ASTI – as a union representing public sector workers who are educators – to work relentlessly to restore the losses incurred by teachers and schools in the name of austerity.

Finally, if there is one message to be gleaned from the last five years, it is that solidarity amongst teachers and amongst teacher unions is vital for effective campaigning. We must continue to stand together to defend and promote teachers and education. As an ASTI member you will be asked to do this once again this September as the ASTI conducts a ballot on Junior Cycle reform. I urge you to ensure the voice of the teacher is heard by casting your vote as soon as possible. Read more about the ballot on pages six and seven.



Pat King
ASTI General Secretary

JUNIOR CYCLE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

Directive to members following an ASTI ballot:

ASTI members have voted in favour of non-co-operation with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals. With effect from **Monday 7th April** and until further notice Standing Committee directs ASTI members in all schools, including Junior Cycle Network Schools, to withdraw co-operation with the introduction or implementation of the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals as follows:

1 Not to attend CPD organised in connection with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals.

2 Not to attend meetings associated with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals.

3 Not to attend any planning meeting or participate in any planning activities organised in connection with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals.

4 Not to engage in any aspect of school based assessment for the purpose of the Junior Cycle Student Award (JCSA).

5 Not to engage in any development of or delivery of Junior Cycle Framework Short Courses.

6 Not to engage in any event or function related to points 1 to 5 above.



SUPPORT ASTI'S JUNIOR CYCLE CAMPAIGN:

- For Standards, Quality, Equity and Fairness in Junior Cycle education
- For a fair, impartial and transparent Junior Cycle exam
- For training, resources and supports for teachers in dealing with Junior Cycle workload

Junior Cycle reform – update

In the coming months, the ASTI will intensify its campaign to ensure reform of the Junior Cycle is educationally sound and properly resourced.

Teachers' key concerns about the Framework for Junior Cycle are:

- the assessment model: the proposed assessment model undermines teacher-student relationships and consistency of standards;
- resources: the ASTI has serious concerns about the lack of resources and the capacity of schools to implement the Framework; and,
- consultation: there has been a consistent lack of consultation with teachers and inadequate information for teachers on the Framework.

Vote Yes
for standards,
equity, fairness

Independent). Only 29% of those surveyed agreed that teachers should assess their own students.

New Minister for Education

Following the resignation of Ruairí Quinn TD as Minister for Education and Skills and the appointment of Jan O'Sullivan TD to the position, the ASTI wrote to the new Minister outlining its key concerns about the Framework for Junior Cycle and seeking a meeting to discuss the matter. This meeting will take place in early September.

September 2014 Ballot

ASTI members will receive ballot papers on industrial action (including a one-day strike and possible further strike action) in September. Members are being asked to strengthen the ASTI's position on Junior Cycle reform by voting Yes in this ballot. While ASTI members have already given a mandate for industrial action in the form of non-co-operation with various aspects of the Framework, a stronger mandate is needed in order to intensify the campaign. Any further industrial action – including strike action – will be decided upon by Standing Committee as appropriate and co-ordinated with the TUI. The TUI already has a mandate from its members for strike action. A Yes vote from ASTI members in this ballot will bring the union in line with the TUI and will ensure that the unions can continue their joint campaign to have second-level teachers' concerns addressed.

ASTI Directive remains

In March 2014 ASTI members voted to withdraw from co-operation with aspects of the introduction and implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle. The directive on non-co-operation remains in place (see page 5).

10,000 signatures to Minister

Almost 10,000 ASTI members signed the ASTI petition to the former Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairí Quinn TD, opposing the implementation of the Framework and asking the then Minister to ensure that the methods of assessment used at Junior Cycle are fair, impartial and transparent and capable of maintaining educational standards.

The petition was presented to the Minister by the ASTI President Philip Irwin and Immediate Past President Sally Maguire in May.

Public supports ASTI position

Sixty per cent of the public support the ASTI position that teachers should not assess their own students for Junior Cycle exams, according to a poll conducted by Millward Brown (commissioned by the Irish

Background to the JC campaign

In October 2012, Ruairí Quinn TD, the then Minister for Education and Skills, published *A Framework for Junior Cycle*, which set out his plans for reform of the Junior Cycle.

Teachers had not been consulted on this Framework, which differed significantly from proposals put forward by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in 2011. Teachers were shocked to discover the then Minister's proposals included the abolition of the State Junior Certificate exam. Under the Framework the Junior Certificate is to be replaced with in-house exams set and graded by students' own teachers. In addition, there will be no national State Certificate. Instead students will receive certificates from their schools.

Campaign

In response to the Minister's announcement, the ASTI launched a campaign to highlight teachers' concerns including the failure to consult with teachers.

During the past three years, the ASTI has undertaken a number of activities including:

Consultation

Consultation with 10,000 ASTI members – approximately 10,000 members participated in the ASTI consultation on the Framework for Junior Cycle. The findings were published in the ASTI publication *Teachers' Voice* in 2013.

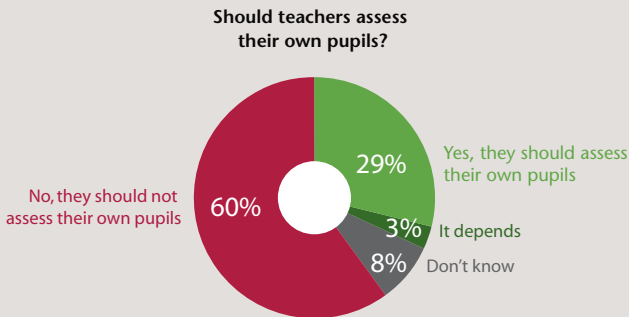
Nationwide protest

A lunchtime protest was held by 27,000 members of the ASTI and the TUI on March 11, 2014. Teachers all over the country took their message to the school gate. The ASTI received significant media coverage of the event.

Information campaign

The ASTI and TUI launched a website for parents outlining teachers'

Survey of Public May 2014



Courtesy of Millward Brown and Irish Independent.

concerns about the Framework for Junior Cycle. An advertising campaign included ads aimed at parents in national and local newspapers. In addition, information flyers were sent to parents' associations in every primary school and a public meeting for parents was held in Galway.

Political lobby

A nationwide lobby of politicians was undertaken.

Surveys

In April 2014, ASTI published a survey which found that 89% of second-level school principals believed their school had little to no capacity to implement the Framework for Junior Cycle. Another ASTI survey this year found that 77% of teachers of English believed the Framework for Junior Cycle inservice training provided by the Department of Education did not meet their expectations; 82% said the training did not provide enough time to cover the new English course.

Teachers of English

Despite the ASTI's campaign, there has been no progress on teachers' key concerns to date. As teachers of English are required to teach the new Framework for Junior Cycle English Specification this term, the union has no choice but to intensify its campaign.

What's wrong with school-based assessment at Junior Cycle?

The abolition of a State awarded Junior Certificate has the potential to undermine education standards at Junior Cycle and could mean the status of the certificate varying from school to school. The Framework for Junior Cycle does not allow for national grading and marking standards to be maintained. There must be an external assessment model. The ASTI is open to different modes of assessment, but objects to the change in teachers' role from advocate to judge. The ASTI believes that every student is entitled to a fair, impartial and transparent Junior Cycle assessment system. The ASTI has a long standing policy that teachers do not assess their own students for State exams.

Keep up with the campaign at www.asti.ie

ASTI schools inspection poster to be distributed

A school inspection poster has been produced by the ASTI, outlining the major points of school inspection and evaluation. During whole school evaluation, the Department of Education evaluates the quality of school management, teaching, learning, assessment and the school's own planning and self-review. The poster gives a comprehensive breakdown of these points as well as notice times and procedure. These posters will be going out to School Stewards in September for display on the staff noticeboard.

Significant growth in student numbers

The Department of Education and Skills has predicted a huge increase in the secondary school population over the coming years. The student population, which currently stands at 333,175 is expected to increase to 430,000 by 2026. Key annual statistics published by the Department for the 2013/2014 academic year have shown an increase of 5,892 second level students. While education cuts have taken well over 1,000 posts out of second-level education, the good news is that as long as the pupil-teacher ratio is maintained, there will be some employment opportunities for new second-level teachers. However, the cutbacks have resulted in losses for schools, with 98% of second-level schools stating they have lost subject teachers and 38% saying they have dropped one or more subjects from the timetable. The ASTI continues its campaign for the reversal of the worst of the education cuts.

Changes to ASTI salary protection

The ASTI Salary Protection Scheme has been amended to reflect changes in teachers' sick leave arrangements which take effect from September 2014. This Scheme will now pay out benefits earlier than before. In addition to this, the cost of membership of the Scheme has been reduced with effect from June 2014. For more information on the ASTI Salary Protection Scheme visit www.asti.ie (Financial Benefits section).

School Steward training

Training will take place for School Stewards in late September and October. This one-day training is designed to support School Stewards by familiarising them with the work of the ASTI, covering issues facing ASTI members and enabling them to help other members. Training takes place in Limerick, Monaghan, Dublin, Cork and Kilkenny. For more information visit www.asti.ie

ASTI Retirement Seminars

The ASTI is providing retirement information evenings for members. If you intend to retire at the end of (or during) the school year, you should attend an information evening which will be held between 4pm-7pm in venues around the country. For more information visit www.asti.ie.

Special Convention to discuss changes in the structure of ASTI

During September and October ASTI branches will be electing delegates to attend an ASTI Special Convention to be held in Athlone on November 14 and 15. In 2010 and 2011 Annual Convention agreed to task the Officers with conducting a review of the structures of the ASTI. Recommendations and rule changes arising from this review will be discussed at the Special Convention.

Aims of the review

- To improve the effectiveness of the ASTI
- To encourage engagement by members in the ASTI
- To encourage a spirit of trade union solidarity
- To facilitate effective communication
- To enhance the service for members

Proposals include the following

School issues

- Enhanced supports for School Stewards
- A union committee in every school
- More clarity on role of board of representatives
- School visits by Standing Committee and Officers
- Better school/branch links

Branches

- Reduction in the number of branches from 56 to 36
- Updated guidelines for branch operations
- Specific purpose branch meetings
- Training for branch officers

Standing Committee/CEC

- Standing Committee to replace CEC as the new ASTI Executive Council
- Newly defined role and powers for CEC
- CEC to be reduced from 162 members to 72
- Efficiency of Standing Committee to be enhanced
- Strategic planning of union to be improved

Officers

- President to have a two year term of office
- Vice President to be elected every second year

Convention

- Convention motions to be more topical and current
- New procedure for submission of motions
- Branch officers to automatically attend Convention
- Size of Convention to be reduced from 500 to 300 (approx.)
- Format of Convention to be further examined

General

- Associate members to have full rights (including membership of CEC)
- Only serving teachers to attend Convention as delegates
- Only serving teachers to act on ASTI national committees
- Benevolent fund committee, investment committee, C&C committee and regional organiser structure to be abolished.

The full text of the rule changes and recommendations will be circulated to all schools and can be found on the ASTI website www.asti.ie

Dublin South County motion

Dublin South County proposed Motion 25 – Conditions of work at Convention 2014. The motion is as follows: “The ASTI demands a review by the Department of Education and Skills of the administrative duties and workload, now carried out by teachers under recent Department initiatives, and how they impact on teaching and lesson planning.” This motion was adopted by Convention 2014. However, the motion was incorrectly attributed to another branch in the Convention Handbook, which was reproduced in May *ASTIR*.

Substitute Placement Service

Teachers who are available for substitute work can register with the ASTI Substitute Placement Service, which matches schools that require substitute teachers with suitable teachers in their area. For more information, contact Eileen at 01 604 0170 or email eileen@asti.ie.

This issue in numbers...

€165

THE AMOUNT THAT ASTI
members can claim back on
some medical expenses.

(P.16)

96,825

THE PREDICTED INCREASE
in the secondary school
population by 2026.

(P.8)

Launch of Active School Week



Pictured at the launch of the Active School Week are (from left): Denis O'Boyle, Mayo Education Centre; Karen Cotter, Active School Flag Coordinator; ASTI Immediate Past President Sally Maguire; and Sean McGrath, Department of Education.

Active School Week 2014 was launched in May as part of the Active School Flag Initiative. Schools that strive to achieve a physically active and physically educated school community are recognised by being awarded an Active School Flag. The initiative is open to primary and post-primary schools, special schools and Youthreach centres. To date, over 350 schools have been awarded the flag and it is expected that this number will increase to more than 500 by the end of the year. For further information on the Active School Flag, go to <http://www.activeschoolflag.ie/>

New agreement on Croke Park 33 hours

The ASTI, TUI, school management bodies and Department of Education and Skills have reached a new agreement on the usage of the Croke Park/ 33 hours. This follows representations made by the unions. The new arrangements allow for five of the 33 hours to be used for planning and development work other than on a whole school/staff basis. The requirement that the Croke Park hours be done in blocks of one or two hours will not apply to the five hours, which can be done in blocks of 30 minutes or more. In addition, the five hours can be done at any time other than class contact time and S&S timetabled time. For more information, visit www.asti.ie.

New S&S roster arrangements

Following a commitment given as part of the Haddington Road talks, the ASTI/TUI, management bodies and the Department have agreed to new procedures for the drafting of the S&S substitution rosters. The new procedures are based on the following principles:

- identification by the principal of the substitution needs of the school;
- early provision to teachers of their class timetables;
- option for teachers to identify their preferences for the use of their 'non-teaching periods' for substitution enabling them to set out their preferences in sequential order;
- schools will assign teachers to substitution periods based on the teachers' stated orders of preference;
- teachers to be permitted to swap rostered periods;
- job-sharing or part-time teachers will be able to 'block-off' periods to which they cannot be assigned for substitution; and,
- the completed roster will be published for staff information.

For more information, visit www.asti.ie.

New Minister for Education



Jan O'Sullivan has been announced as the new Minister for Education and Skills. She previously acted as Labour Party Education Spokesperson. A qualified second-level teacher and former pre-school teacher, Minister

O'Sullivan was elected to the Seanad in 1993 and won her Dáil seat for Limerick East in a 1998 by-election. In March 2011, she was appointed as Minister of State for Trade and Development, becoming Minister of State for Housing and Planning in December 2011. Read the ASTI's message for the new Minister on page 11.

Salary increase for 2011 entrants

Teachers who entered teaching between January 1, 2011 and February 1, 2012 are to have their salaries improved. The teacher unions have secured the abolition of the 2011 pay scale (with its 10% pay cut), which was imposed on new-entrant teachers. Under the Haddington Road Agreement the 2011 scale was replaced by an improved scale. Under the new agreement there is a new scale with the 2011 new entrants now having the same 'top of the scale' salary of €59,359 as the pre-2011 teachers. The new scale is available at www.asti.ie.

85

THE NUMBER OF PROPOSED
rule changes to be debated at
the ASTI Special Convention.

(P.8)

€4,000

THE VALUE OF THE
ASTI SCHOLARSHIP

Read about this year's winner
in this issue.

(P.20)

Embedding equality

Are you interested in embedding equality across your subject areas or even across the entire curriculum? The Equality Authority has produced a resource manual for second-level teachers which has been distributed to schools (and is also available online). For teachers who want to go a step further, the Equality Authority is rolling out specialised training for second-level teachers this school year.

'Equality in Second-level Schools' is a training manual for teachers who wish to facilitate equality training in their school for school staff. It can also be used for lesson planning and will be used for the Equality Authority training. It contains tips on incorporating equality/human rights education into everyday classroom teaching and learning. It also provides a useful list of resources, including video uploads for use in the classroom.

The training manual is based on training delivered to teachers across 72 schools earlier this year, as well as advice from the ASTI and other organisations. The manual aims to support teachers in broaching social justice issues in the classroom in a constructive and creative manner and it is relevant to a broad range of subjects. In order to participate in training, fill in the application form which will be sent to schools shortly. Sonya Cummins, ASTI member and teacher at the Franciscan College, Gormanston, relates her experience: "I did training over two and a half days. It was intense, but there was a great sense of collaboration. There was a good mix of subject teachers there, which meant plenty of ideas were shared." Sonya, who is a transition year coordinator and also teaches music and geography, explains that the training is cross curricular, and can be built into any subject or programme: "It can be worked in anywhere in the curriculum. I did a 'women and equality' exercise I learned at the training with a Leaving Cert class on developmental geography. I'm currently developing a four-week learning module. I would definitely recommend the training to other teachers. It pushes you out of your comfort zone, but the exercises you learn are different and really work. You are covered for substitution if you do the course, which is really helpful."



Industrial relations appointment



Sarah Fagan has been appointed Executive Officer: Industrial Relations with the ASTI. Sarah has a BA from NUI Galway, a Post Graduate Diploma in Employment Law from UCD and a Post Graduate Diploma in Conflict and Dispute Resolution from Trinity College Dublin. She previously worked as ASTI Staff Officer: Industrial Relations. Sarah looks after the following branches: Carlow; Carbery; Drogheda; Dublin Nth Central; Dublin Sth 2; Dublin Sth County; Enniscorthy; Fingal; Limerick Nth; Nenagh; Sligo; West Mayo. To find out more visit www.asti.ie.

Cuts impaired ICT integration

The reduction in the number of teachers in schools has hindered the capacity to create supportive environments for ICT (information and communications technology) integration according to an ASTI submission to the Department of Education and Skills.

The submission was made in response to a consultative paper published by the Department on the building of a national digital strategy for schools. While welcoming the Department's public consultation on digital strategy for schools, the ASTI has stated that many of the recommendations made do not appear viable due to the increase in pupil-teacher ratio, reducing the scope for innovation in classrooms. A moratorium on the appointment of posts of responsibility has also hindered ICT implementation as a result of severely undermined middle-management structures. To read the ASTI submission in full, please go the 'publications' heading on www.asti.ie and find under 'submissions'.

ASTI submission on STEM

Investment in STEM education (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) should be viewed as national strategic investment according to an ASTI submission to the 2014 STEM Review Group.

Though many strengths in the current system were recognised by the review, such as a broad and balanced curriculum both at Junior and Senior Cycle and high-quality teachers, there are many barriers to the engagement in and understanding of STEM subjects for students. Such obstacles include inadequate supports for continual professional development, as well as fragmented information available about STEM careers. This has not been aided by the ex-quota elimination of guidance counsellors among many other challenges. To read the ASTI submission to the 2014 STEM review, please go to the 'publications' heading on www.asti.ie and find under 'submissions'.

Free E-library for teachers

The Teaching Council is providing all registered teachers with free access to the EBSCO Education Source package. The facility was introduced last year. EBSCO Education Source is a collection of over 1,700 journals, a selection of eBooks and additional research resources for the field of education. This project is a response from the Teaching Council to a call from teachers for easier access to research and critical engagement with research. To access the collection, you must log into the Teaching Council website www.teachingcouncil.ie.

Teaching becomes Masters qualification

From this September, postgraduate programmes for those seeking to qualify as second-level teachers will be extended to two years. The Professional Diploma in Education, which was until recently the recognised postgraduate qualification for post primary teaching, has been expanded to a Masters, requiring two years full-time study, or 120 ECTS credits. The Professional Master of Education (PME) is recognised by the Teaching Council of Ireland for the purposes of registration as a post-primary teacher in Ireland and the EU, as well as other English speaking countries.

ASTI calls on new Minister to address Junior Cycle concerns

ASTI representatives continued to highlight key issues of Junior Cycle concern and employment opportunities for young teachers throughout the summer.



Junior Cycle

"Parents have overwhelmingly backed teachers in their opposition to proposals to have them marking their own pupils' Junior Cert papers, an *Irish Independent*/Millward Brown opinion poll reveals."

Irish Independent, May 19

"Ireland has a robust exams system which is credible, objective and transparent. It provides students with a valid statement of learning and achievement half-way through and at the end of their second-level education experience. It is vital that our exams system retains these strengths."

ASTI Immediate Past-President Sally Maguire, *Evening Echo*, June 4

"The dispute about the Junior Cycle programme is not beyond redemption. If a new Minister sits down with the teacher unions, the ASTI and the TUI, we've no doubt that reforms can take place, but reforms that are credible and that maintain standards in schools."

ASTI General Secretary Pat King, RTE News at One, July 2

"We are running to the wire on this [the Framework for Junior Cycle]. I would hope that the new Minister would, at the earliest opportunity, see fit to talk to teachers and to listen to teachers. There is still a window of opportunity before September."

ASTI Immediate Past-President Sally Maguire, Today FM, The Last Word, July 2

"In a letter to the Minister, ASTI General Secretary Pat King states that: 'Teachers have no faith in the assessment model being proposed and it is now clear that parents do not have confidence in the proposals either. Teachers fully support the need for curriculum reform but, as the practitioners, believe that their concerns must be taken into consideration.'"

Irish Daily Mail, July 15

Outstanding teachers

"Two of Ireland's top teachers received awards last night for their outstanding contributions outside the classroom at a reception in Dublin."

Irish Sun, May 24 (read about the 2014 ASTI Achievement Award winners on page 21)

Young teachers

"'People go on about the parity of pay, or the lack of it, but the first thing a new teacher is thinking of is getting a job, it's not the pay,' said Mr Howley. 'Second-level teachers who secure permanent positions start on about €30,000, which rises every year. But the vast majority spend several years in temporary/substitute teaching jobs earning a fraction of this, with no income over the holidays.' Mr Howley, a maths and science teacher in Pobalscoil Neasain in Baldoyle, north Dublin, said graduates are battling it out for as little as six hours teaching a week."

ASTI member Keith Howley, *Irish Independent*, June 26

To view more ASTI media coverage, visit the ASTI Media Centre at www.asti.ie.

New to teaching?

Keep informed with www.asti.ie



The ASTI website is an important resource for new teachers.

For any question relating to teaching, the ASTI website should be your first port of call. The website contains comprehensive, up-to-date information on all topics of relevance to teachers. From salary scales to sick leave, every angle is covered. A special section dedicated to new teachers addresses the questions and concerns that those coming into the profession might have and highlights the protection and benefits that come with ASTI membership.

Finding your first teaching job

The ASTI website contains advice on the key aspects of finding a teaching job, from application to interview preparation. Likely interview questions are covered, as well as best practice following the interview. As finding a job is a key concern for so many new teachers, consulting the website can address apprehension by offering practical guidance.

ASTI Substitution Placement Service

The ASTI has a substitute placement service which is available to all schools from September to May. Teachers who are available for substitute work are invited to register with the scheme. For more information, contact Eileen at 01 604 0170 or email eileen@asti.ie.

Teaching hours, contracts, salary – explained

Find out more about your job, your contract, as well as salary entitlements. As most new teachers don't find full employment right away, this information may prove invaluable if you wish to equip

yourself with greater knowledge of your current position and prospects. Keep up to date on developments on the ASTI website.

Support from every level

From School Stewards to Branch level to Head Office, ASTI colleagues and staff are here to support you as you begin your career.

Benefits and services

The ASTI offers a wide range of services and benefits to all members such as expert advice and help on workplace issues, protection and representation, campaigning on your behalf, as well as training and professional development opportunities for teachers. There are also many money-saving deals and benefits with ASTI membership, such as special offers on car insurance, as well as a number of specially-negotiated deals on a range of products. Log onto the website for more details.

Got a question?

Whatever your question is, the ASTI is here to help. Call us, email us or send a message via Facebook or Twitter. For more

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New to teaching guide

Some basic information and advice as you get started on your teaching career.

Teaching jobs

The number of teacher appointments in a school is linked to the number of students attending that school. The current pupil-teacher ratio is 19:1, so for every 19 students, one permanent full-time teaching position is allocated (in fee-charging schools the ratio rises to 23:1). These positions are called 'in quota' positions and are funded by the Department of Education and Skills. Schools can also apply to the Department for 'concessionary' teaching hours. These extra hours are granted depending on a school's individual needs. Some schools may also pay for teaching hours directly from their own funds. Most second-level teachers begin their careers in part-time and temporary positions.

Contracts – an overview

You should make sure you receive clear written information on the terms and conditions of your job, either in the form of a letter of appointment, a written contract, or a written statement. You are entitled to this information and it's important that you have it so that you fully understand the nature of your employment. Remember to keep a copy of all documents, as they may be important in future. If there is anything you are unsure of, ask your ASTI school steward or ASTI Head Office for clarification or advice. Don't sign a contract unless you know exactly what you're signing.

Check that your contract:

- sets out the nature and duration of your employment;
- clarifies the type of contract under which you are employed: fixed-term or permanent; part-time; or, whole-time;
- clarifies the number of hours per week you are contracted to teach;
- names the subjects and levels you will be teaching;
- gives the reason for the vacancy you are filling; and,
- tells you whether you will be paid by the Department of Education, the school, or the VEC.

The type of contract you hold depends on the reasons for the vacancy and the type of hours you will cover. In-quota positions are permanent, while concessionary hours will normally result in a temporary fixed-term contract. Outside of concessionary hours, a fixed-term contract should only be given when the need for the teacher's service is genuinely a temporary one, for example, where you are replacing a teacher on leave.

Part-time and non-permanent

Many newly-qualified teachers (NQT) will begin their teaching careers in temporary positions covering for teachers on leave or covering concessionary hours. The ASTI is campaigning to ensure new teachers have access to secure employment. The union has made progress in recent months. There are four categories of non-permanent teaching contract for qualified teachers.

A **regular part-time teacher** is appointed where the need for a teacher for a certain number of hours is viable for at least a year. For example, you would have a pro-rata contract where you are covering concessionary hours or a career break.

A **temporary whole-time teacher** is appointed to work full hours on a temporary basis, normally for at least one year. For example, where you are replacing a teacher on secondment or where the Department doesn't sanction a permanent position.

A **non-casual part-time teacher** is appointed where there is a specific need for a teacher for less than a year but for more than 150 hours in total in the year. For example, if you are covering for a teacher on maternity leave.

A **casual part-time teacher** is appointed where there is a casual need for hours to be covered. For example, where you are replacing a teacher on short-term sick leave.

Regular part-time, temporary whole time and non-casual part time contracts are all types of fixed term contracts.

Permanent contracts and contracts of indefinite duration

Permanent contract

Permanent teachers are contracted to teach 22 hours a week. If you receive a permanent job, you may receive a permanent probationary contract but once the probationary period has been served you should receive a permanent contract.

Contracts of indefinite duration

If you have been employed on three successive fixed term contracts in the same school, you may be entitled to a CID subject to meeting other criteria. A CID affords the holder the same rights and entitlements as any other permanent teacher, except that their salary is based on the number of hours they teach per week.

In order to qualify for a CID you must:

- be registered with the Teaching Council;
- hold appropriate qualifications;
- have in excess of three years continuous teaching service*, under two or more successive written contracts of employment with the same employer that were paid for by monies provided by the Oireachtas.

*Up until last year teachers had to have in excess of four years continuous teaching service to obtain a CID, but the ASTI, along with other teacher unions, successfully negotiated it down to three.

Teachers who meet the above criteria will be entitled to a CID, unless:

- their post will not be viable within a reasonable period, and this was set out as an objective ground in writing in the previous contract; or,



- they are covering for a teacher on an approved scheme of leave of absence and this was set out as an objective ground in writing the previous contract.

The hours of a CID will be the same as those held in the contract immediately prior to receiving a CID.

Salary

Your pay depends on when you first started teaching, your qualifications, your contract, your hours and your teaching experience.

Teachers are paid based on an incremental salary scale, or according to hourly rates. Which scale or what rate you are on depends on when you first began teaching in a Department-paid position. Different scales and rates operate for teachers who started:

- before January 1, 2011;
- after January 1, 2011*;
- after February 1, 2012.

*The ASTI has in recent months been instrumental in obtaining an improved scale for teachers who entered teaching between January 1, 2011 and February 1, 2012. The ASTI is working to restore equity of pay for all teachers through a common salary scale for all teachers.

Permanent teachers/full-time CID teachers are paid over 12 months and their salary is based on the relevant point on the appropriate scale plus allowances.

Regular part-time teachers, part-time CID teachers and temporary whole-time teachers are paid over 12 months and their salary is based on a pro-rata fraction of the relevant point on the salary scale, plus any allowances, depending on how many hours they teach.

Non-casual part-time teachers are paid salary for the duration of their contract. They are paid an hourly rate (including 56% holiday pay), based on a pro-rata fraction of the relevant point on the salary scale plus allowances.

A qualified casual part-time teacher is paid on an hourly rate for each hour of teaching only. After 150 hours at the casual rate in one school year, the teacher is paid a personal non-casual hourly rate based on his or her qualification and previous experience for each hour of teaching done for the remainder of the school year.

A-Z of terms

CID – Contract of indefinite duration

S&S – Supervision and substitution

PTR – Pupil-teacher ratio

NQT – Newly-qualified teacher

CPD – Continuing professional development

BOM – Board of Management

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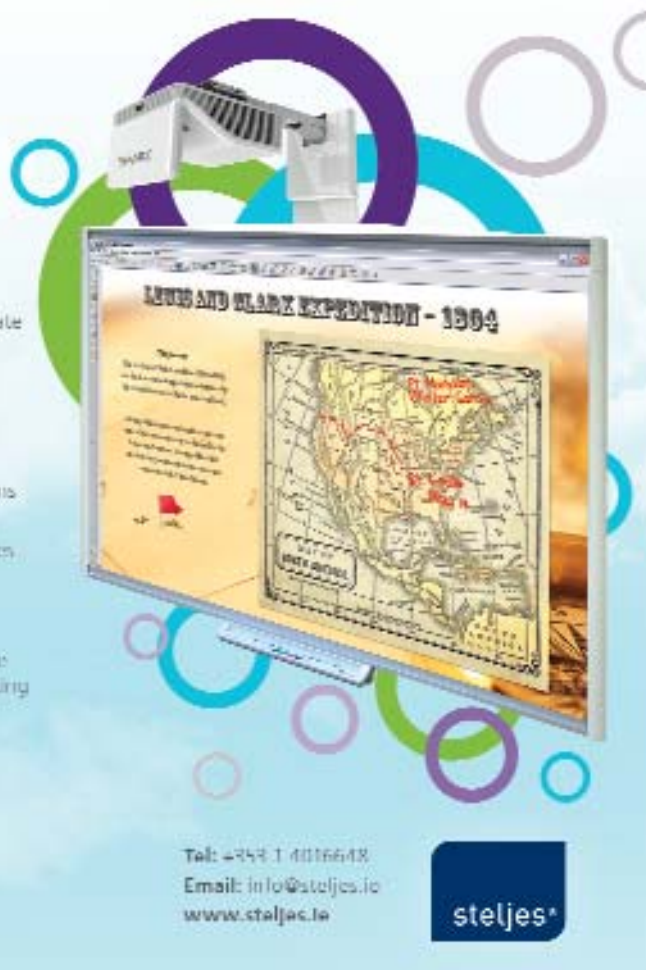
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What can we offer you?

As a new school year begins, *ASTIR* takes a look at what the ASTI has to offer you in the year ahead.

Answers to your questions

The ASTI can explain all aspects of your job, your rights, and your entitlements. Got a question about your contract? Are you on the right salary? How many hours supervision and substitution should you do? Any question big or small, give us a call on 1850 418 400; email info@asti.ie; or visit the ASTI website, which has hundreds of pages of information available 24/7. You can also request a school visit where your school staff can be briefed on their rights and entitlements or on specific queries by one of our industrial relations officials. So, if you have a question or concern at any time throughout the year, we're here to help.

Representation and protection...

... for you

The ASTI stands up for teachers if employment rights are being infringed. We will advise and represent you if you are involved in a dispute of any kind. Through the ASTI, you can access professional industrial relations advice, and legal representation if necessary. ASTI staff will represent you in meetings with school management and the Department of Education. Most issues can be easily and quickly resolved through discussion at this level.

Where necessary, however, we will represent and support you in cases taken to the Rights Commissioner, equality tribunals, or the Labour Court. We have years of experience and a wealth of expert knowledge - put it to use!

....for your profession

In the coming year, the ASTI will continue to work to protect and improve teachers' working conditions and to ensure job security. Members are represented at national, regional, and school levels. We negotiate with the Department of Education, managerial bodies, boards of management and ETBs on an ongoing basis to achieve the best conditions for our members. Watch out for updates on the ASTI website, on Facebook and Twitter, as well as in our publications *Nuacht* and *ASTIR*.

Training and professional development

The ASTI runs events of interest to new/non-permanent/part-time teachers. We also offer trade union training, including courses for school stewards and Board of Management representatives; our ever-popular retirement courses; health and safety training; and a variety of other courses according to demand. Annual Convention at Easter and the ASTI New Teacher Conference in May will give you the chance to meet colleagues from around the country and to keep informed. Look out for details on the ASTI website and advertised in school.

Campaigns on your behalf

ASTI campaigns reflect your best interests and those of your students. This year the ASTI will continue to campaign against cuts to your pay, better school conditions and for more teaching jobs. The ASTI has also been

instrumental in protecting teaching from the public sector recruitment ban, securing permanency for teachers after three years instead of four, as well as achieving significant progress on securing equal pay for new teachers. The ASTI has also succeeded in maintaining the pupil teacher ratio, which will positively effect both teachers and students, especially with the increase in students attending secondary school. We have a powerful voice to use on your behalf.

News and information

The ASTI website is updated daily with news and information for teachers. Throughout the year, members will receive copies of *ASTIR* magazine, providing news, features and comment on subjects of interest to teachers professionally and personally. *Nuacht* will regularly update you on issues relating to your job, working conditions, industrial relations developments and ASTI activity and achievements. As an ASTI member, you can access information leaflets covering all aspects of your job, rights and entitlements. Browse these comprehensive leaflets on the ASTI website and request copies from ASTI Head Office.

Keep track of your teaching and ASTI activities this year on your ASTI year planner and in your ASTI diary. These handy organisers are sent to every ASTI member each year.

Financial benefits

If you are due an eye exam or dentist check up this year, remember to keep your receipt - the ASTI Sickness Benefit Scheme allows members to claim up to €165 back on optical and dental treatment. The Scheme also offers financial assistance to cover medical expenses for teachers who are out of work due to illness for seven consecutive days or more. If you find yourself in serious financial difficulty this year, the ASTI Benevolent Fund is available to help you. Terms and conditions apply to these schemes. Contact ASTI Head Office or see our website for more information.

As an ASTI member, you can access a number of specially-negotiated deals on a range of products, including car, home, travel and health insurance. You can investigate these on the services and benefits section of our website.

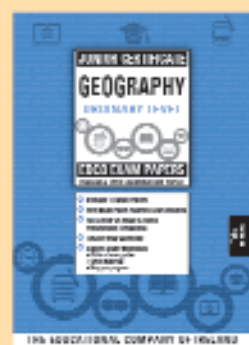
If you are on part-time hours or looking for work this year, sign up to our substitute placement scheme. We maintain a register of teachers available for work so we can match them to substitute opportunities as they arise. Visit our website to sign up.

A say in education

Only ASTI members can influence ASTI policy. You can do this through ballots, at branch meetings, by sitting on committees and attending Convention. The ASTI is represented on the NCCA and the Teaching Council, as well as other education bodies. We play an important role in shaping second-level education policy in Ireland. As an ASTI member, you can influence the changing landscape of education, so if you have something to say, now is the time to say it.

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A guide to social media in the classroom

Advice and tips on how social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter can benefit teachers.
Aoife Darmody reports.



A new generation of teachers brought up with technology are now taking positions in schools. Social media use comes as second nature to these digital natives and their expertise can be used in class. However, all teachers can equally benefit from the creative ways in which social media such as Facebook and Twitter can be used in education.

Social media as an online resource



Forums such as Twitter are an ideal place for educators to swap ideas and resources, as well as providing an ideal platform where advice and support can be offered. Teachers who regularly tweet on educational matters are known as 'tweachers'. Evelyn O'Connor (left), a teacher and tweacher at Mount St. Michael, Claremorris, Co. Mayo believes that social media is something that should be embraced, rather than avoided, digital native or not: "Teachers young and old should explore

and exploit the enormous benefits of social media."

There are various approaches for teachers to take in this regard. Evelyn advises teachers with an interest in discussing education-related topics to search #edchatie on Twitter from 8.30pm to 9.30pm on a Monday evening. This weekly discussion group (which stands for education chat Ireland) is an ideal forum for active participants, as well as passive participants (sometimes known as 'lurkers').



Fellow tweacher Conor Murphy (left), teacher at Rossa College, Skibbereen, Co. Cork also advocates Twitter as a great educational tool. He believes that the global aspect of Twitter is a real advantage and that users should follow tweeters from all over the world for a wide variety of insight and opinion. "Don't just follow Irish tweeters, follow people from everywhere and anywhere. Twitter is a great place to get ideas from far afield and also to see what doesn't work."

Conor encourages teachers to read relevant blogs, or even have their own blog for maximum engagement: "Write a blog and become an active part of the debate. If nothing else, it will help you reflect on your teaching and at best, it will help others."

For those who don't wish to stray too publically into the fray, there are many places online where you can ask for advice about specific subjects in relative privacy. Evelyn recommends forums such as INOTE (the Irish National Organisation for Teachers of English), which has a closed Facebook group for English teachers with over 350 members. Evelyn stresses the benefits of having groups such as this: "Having a closed group means we can look for guidance, resources and support without having any concerns about privacy." If a teacher can't find a similar informal space for CPD, Evelyn recommends that teachers take initiative and create their own space: "If one doesn't exist, why not set one up? That'll certainly look good on your CV."

Don't overshare

With the parameters between public and private space online becoming increasingly blurred, it is more difficult to make the distinction between what to share and what to withhold. Conor advises teachers to make a plan before engaging with social media: "Decide why and how you want to use social media and act accordingly." Conor himself was initially hesitant to share personal information when he first started engaging publically with social media. "I started carefully with no pictures of myself and no real information on where I worked. As I got more comfortable with Twitter, I let more personal information out. Reveal what you feel comfortable with first and then review." Conor now believes that a profile picture is a necessity. As well as a sense of humour: "Put a picture with your profile. There's nothing worse than talking to an egg."

Beware

However, there are limitations as to what a professional such as a teacher can put on the internet. Any online activity leaves a permanent mark. The imprint of this so called 'digital footprint' is likened to that of a tattoo – it is indelible. Personally-revealing information is at risk of being found by inquisitive students or curious employers. As such, some caution must be exercised when sharing information online. The Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers offers some guidance regarding the professional use of social media.

"Teachers should ensure that any communication with pupils/students, colleagues, parents, school management and others is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as email, texting and social media sites."

Deputy Director of the Teaching Council, Brendan O'Dea provides further clarity: "The Code says that teachers are expected to respect the privacy of others and the confidentiality of information gained in their professional practice; avoid conflict between their professional work and private interests which could reasonably be deemed to impact negatively on students and communicate in a manner which is professional, collaborative and supportive."

However, assessing what actually constitutes as appropriate online behaviour is something which teachers must gauge themselves: "Teachers are advised to use their professional judgement when communicating on social media."

Know school policy

Brendan also highlights the importance of each school having an internet acceptable use policy and for staff to familiarise themselves with it: "Each school should have a policy dealing with communications. Teachers should comply with agreed school policies, procedures and guidelines and are advised to ensure they are familiar with their own school's policy."

The advice generally given to teachers is to use their own discretion and not to publish anything online that they would be uncomfortable pinning on the notice board in school. That said, with a huge portion of our communication taking place online, is permanent self-censure a plausible solution? Conor believes that the key is in choosing your platform wisely. "Twitter is always public and so must be seen as a professional outlet. Facebook is more secure if you are in control of your privacy, but you have to remain professional when discussing your day-to-day work. So no names of students, etc." This view is echoed by Evelyn: "Double check that your privacy settings are at the highest level."

Tips for social media users

- Be aware that what you tweet and retweet can be seen.
- Adjust your privacy settings on Facebook and on Twitter.
- Treat all information as potentially public.
- Consider carefully what you post on friends' walls. Their profile may not be set to private and may be visible to anyone.
- Consider using your middle name or even an leagan Gaeilge on Facebook if you don't already do so.
- If using closed groups, be very clear when giving or seeking advice.
- Search your name on various search engines on a regular basis. You need to monitor your online presence.
- Ensure you have permission before you publish students' work online.
- If using a school YouTube account, make sure that videos are 'unlisted' so that only those with the link can view them.
- If you are accepting students' work via email, make sure it's a work email.
- Don't accept students, their parents or even recent students as your personal friends on Facebook.
- Don't follow students as friends on Twitter.
- Don't complain about school, staff or students online.
- Never forget to log out of your accounts when using social media in the classroom. Your account may be accessible to others, even if you have left the browser and switched the computer off.
- Familiarise yourself with the Teaching Council Code of Practice.



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These are guidelines only.

Awards to ASTI members

Teachers from all over the country were honoured in an awards ceremony in May for their outstanding contribution both inside and outside the classroom.



From left to right are Pat King, General Secretary; Thomas MacDonagh medal recipient Michael Lynch; PJ Kennedy Award recipient Maureen McKeon; Thomas MacDonagh medal recipient John Connolly; Sally Maguire, ASTI Immediate Past President; Carrick-on-Shannon Branch Chair Martin Talbot.



From left: General Secretary, Pat King; Honorary life-membership recipient, Deirdre Healy; and, ASTI Immediate Past President Sally Maguire.

The annual ASTI awards ceremony held in the Gresham Hotel, Dublin honoured those who have provided invaluable service to the teaching profession, as well as the union.

Honorary life membership is awarded in recognition of teachers who have given singular and exceptional service to their profession, as well as the ASTI. Deirdre Healy (Dublin South-Central Branch), Ger O'Donaghue (Limerick South Branch) and Jim O'Brien (Navan Branch) were the three members who received the honour this year.

The Thomas MacDonagh award is presented to those who have given distinguished service to the ASTI. 2014 recipients are: Gerry Breslin (Sligo Branch); Kevin Brogan (Drogheda Seán Higgins Branch); John Connolly (Carrick-On-Shannon Branch); Elaine Devlin (Dundalk Branch); Sheila Jennings (Carbery Branch); Joseph Keating (Dublin South County Branch); Michael Lynch (Carrick-on-Shannon Branch); Vincent McCarvill (Monaghan Branch); Dolores Mullins (Drogheda Seán Higgins Branch); Máirín Ní Bhreithiúnaigh (Dublin South Central Branch); Jim O'Driscoll

(Bray Branch); and, Colm O'Toole (Laois Branch).

The PJ Kennedy Award is awarded to members who have given valuable service to the branch and/or branch members. Recipients of the award are: Marie Bourke (Clare Branch); Joe Coy (Tuam Branch); Eileen Dinneen (Carbery Branch); Gerry Fahy (Tuam Branch); Brid Galligan (Mullingar Branch); Seamus Horan (Dublin North-East Branch); Luke McGuirk (Drogheda Seán Higgins Branch); Maureen McKeon (Carrick-on-Shannon Branch); Pat Moriarty (Navan Branch); Ena Nolan (Mullingar Branch); Micheál Ó Súilleabháin (Cork North Branch); and, Frank Scott (Stillorgan Branch).

The ASTI Achievement Award honours teachers who have made an exceptional contribution in the public or professional sphere. Two such outstanding teachers are profiled opposite on page 21.

For a full selection of pictures, see www.asti.ie.

Centenary Scholarship



Beth Cooney, a teacher at St Mary's Secondary School, Nenagh was the recipient of the ASTI Centenary Scholarship. This scholarship of €4,000 is awarded to one ASTI member annually. Beth is a PHD student in her second year, whose research focuses on the professional learning experience among post-primary teachers in Ireland. Her aim is to determine to what extent we have understood the change from traditional rote learning to transformative learning practices. She is also interested in exploring what aspects of professional learning influence teaching, classroom practice and student learning, as well as barriers to professional learning that teachers

may experience. Beth believes that there can be a greater integration of school and professional development and that there should be a reconceptualisation of professional learning. Her overall aim is to identify useful models of professional learning to inform a future national strategy for professional development.

The ASTI Centenary Scholarship is determined by a Scholarship Selection Committee whose selection criteria include: relevance of the proposed course of study to the professional lives of teachers and second level; potential for study to inform the ongoing policy agenda and work of the ASTI. It was believed that Beth's studies best matched the criteria, making her the preferred candidate for the scholarship.

Honouring teachers' achievements

Teachers from Galway and Cork were honoured at the 2014 ASTI Achievement Awards. Aoife Darmody profiles the winners.



Una O'Brien receives her award from ASTI Immediate Past President, Sally Maguire and General Secretary, Pat King.

Una O'Brien – Outstanding Teacher Achievement Award

Music teacher Una O'Brien received a 2014 ASTI Achievement Award for the exceptional contribution she has made to her school and the commitment she has shown to her students. Una is an accomplished musician in both the classical and the traditional styles and has brought dedication, passion and competition success to Presentation College, Currylea, Tuam.

With thanks to Una, students have performed incredibly well in competitions both locally and nationally. Presentation College, Currylea was three times awarded Best Orchestra in the Galway University Musical Awards. The school has also twice received the Connacht Tribune Award for Best Musical Accompaniment. Further success was achieved in 2011 and 2012, with students reaching the finals of Our School's Got Talent, a nationwide competition organised by Special Olympics Ireland.

Una has had a life-long engagement with music both on a personal and academic level (Una has a BA in Music and Irish, and a Masters in Performance) and encourages students to get involved in extra-curricular activities related to music. Una has directed the scores of five musicals in the school, which has involved the organisation, rehearsal and conduction of solo singers, choir and orchestra, along with all instrumental arrangement.

Una has not neglected her traditional Irish leanings either, and the school's trad group was successful in the Gael Linn Siamsa competition. She also oversaw 'Canann Tuaim', a CD of Saw Doctor songs as Gaeilge launched in 2009, which was a collaborative effort between the Irish traditional group and transition year students. Una brings music to life for her students and arranges workshops with professional musicians, as well as organising trips to concerts and shows for students. Principal Neasa Cosgrave has stated her contribution to the school as 'phenomenal'. A worthy recipient of the Outstanding Teacher Achievement Award, Una O'Brien's contributions have without doubt enriched both school and student body.



Ciarán Collins receives his award from ASTI Immediate Past President, Sally Maguire and General Secretary, Pat King.

Ciarán Collins – Outstanding Individual Achievement Award

Ciarán Collins received an ASTI Achievement Award thanks to his outstanding contribution to Ireland's literary world. While Ciarán Collins teaches full time in the Hamilton High School in Bandon, Co. Cork, he is also an acclaimed writer. The English and Irish teacher published his debut novel in 2013 with tremendous success, winning the Rooney Prize for Irish Literature that year. The book, entitled *The Gamal*, was internationally lauded, with critical praise ranging from "outstanding" (*Irish Times*), to "remarkable" (*New York Times*). The book is available in six countries and is due to be translated into French and German.

The Gamal is set in west Cork and is told through the eyes of Charlie, a 'gamalóg' or simpleton, from which the book derives its name. The protagonist has been advised by his psychologist to write his thoughts down as a form of therapy. Though Charlie is construed to be something of a village idiot, his observations prove that he is far more insightful than he might appear.

Like Charlie in the book, Ciarán comes from a small village in west Cork. One of eight children, his love of English developed partly in thanks to the abundance of books that were in his house growing up. Ciarán went on to study English and Irish in UCC, completing an MA there where he specialised in modern drama.

It is fulfilling one's own potential which inspires Ciarán both personally and professionally. He has coached GAA teams for years in the school and is highly regarded by colleagues and students alike. Ciarán's achievement demonstrates the heights that can be reached when possibilities are explored.

The ASTI Achievement Awards are presented annually to honour teachers who not only play an important professional role in their schools, but whose talent, commitment, and determination enables them and/or their students to excel in areas such as sport, literature and music. Find out more about the ASTI Achievement Awards at www.asti.ie.

Meet the President

New school year, new ASTI President. *ASTIR* talks to Philip Irwin about his priorities for the year ahead.



ASTI President Philip Irwin teaches at The High School Rathgar, Dublin. A member of the Dublin South 1 branch, Philip has previously served as branch vice-chair, secretary and organiser. He has also served as a Standing Committee and Central Executive Council representative and held the position of ASTI Vice President last year.

What subjects do you teach?

I teach history, geography and CSPE.

Where did you go to second-level school?

I went to national school in Cashel, onto CBS Cashel and then onto Rockwell College.

Who was your most inspiring teacher?

There were many, however my father Joe taught in Rockwell College and though I had misgivings about it at the time, I certainly admire him most now. His interests were particularly English and history and he was widely involved in local drama as well.

Why did you become involved in the ASTI?

It's a family tradition – I was following my father's footsteps who was chairman of the Tipperary branch in the 1960s and 1970s as well as being a CEC representative. I was also a teacher in the 1980s and this maybe convinced me of the need for solidarity among teachers to achieve improvements.

What are your priorities for your year as ASTI President?

We will continue to defend the retention of State certification and external assessment for the Junior Cycle as bedrocks of the traditional strengths of our education system, also with a view to defending the Leaving Certificate. Secondly, casualisation is undermining the capacity of schools to deliver proper education to our children.

How would you encourage teachers starting their career this September?

Give it a go and keep an open mind, and if conditions aren't what they should be, work with other teachers to improve them.

What are your interests outside teaching?

Walking, reading, watching films, sports.

Who in public life (politics, sport, writing, music, etc.) do you admire?

I admire the courage of Cork woman Louise O' Keeffe for her persistence and resilience in taking the government to the European Court for the abuse she suffered at school in the 1970s.



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New sick leave arrangements

Significant changes to teachers' sick leave come into effect from September 1, 2014. The most important information is outlined here.



Sick leave arrangements provide entitlements to teachers for ordinary illness leave and critical illness leave. Ordinary illness is any illness which is not regarded as critical illness. Critical illness is a serious illness or physical injury which results in the teacher being seriously debilitated. Teachers may also be entitled to a period of Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR) at the end of paid sick leave entitlement (see below).

Self-certified sick leave

Teachers have an entitlement to seven days' paid self-certified sick leave over a two year rolling period. Self-certified sick leave is subject to certain criteria. A teachers' self-certified sick leave is included when calculating entitlements to ordinary illness leave and critical illness leave.

Ordinary illness leave provisions

A teacher who is absent from duty because of personal illness or injury may be granted paid sick leave as follows:

- a maximum of three months (92 days) fully paid in a year;
- followed by a maximum of three months (91 days) on half pay.

The above is subject to a maximum of six months' (183 days) paid sick leave in a rolling four year period.

Critical illness leave provisions

A teacher who becomes incapacitated as a result of critical illness or serious physical injury may be granted extended paid sick leave, subject to specific criteria as follows:

- a maximum of six months (183 days) on full pay in a year;
- followed by a maximum of six months (182 days) on half pay.

The above is subject to a maximum of 12 months' (365 days) paid sick leave in a rolling four year period. If a teacher has an ordinary illness within a 12-month period of the start date of the granting of critical illness, the critical illness provisions will apply.

Temporary rehabilitation remuneration (TRR)

Where the relevant period of sick leave has been exhausted, a teacher with a minimum of five years' service (in a pensionable position either in a whole-time or part-time capacity) may be granted continued payment in the form of TRR subject to certain conditions at the end of the period of sick leave. TRR will be calculated on the basis of:

- pensionable pay; and
- paid pensionable service accrued in the employment at the time the paid sick leave was exhausted, together with the added years which would be awarded if ill health retirement were granted.

It is also important to note that:

- the period during which TRR is paid is not a period of pensionable service;
- the granting of TRR will be conditional at all times on the Occupational Health Service confirming that there is a reasonable prospect of recovery and return to work;
- TRR will not exceed 18 months (548 days) in the case of ordinary illness; and,
- TRR will not exceed 24 months (730 days) in the case of critical illness (subject to six monthly reviews).

Unpaid sick leave

For teachers who don't qualify for TRR the following applies: if a teacher has exhausted the maximum period of paid sick leave and is still medically unfit to resume duty but wishes to retain his/her position in the school, he/she must notify the employer of his/her intention to avail of a period of unpaid sick leave. After such a period of unpaid sick leave he/she may resume teaching if certified fit to do so. This period of sick leave shall not normally exceed the TRR limits.

Treatment of teachers on sick leave prior to September 1, 2014

Teachers currently on sick leave, whose leave period began prior to

September 1 2014, will continue to avail of the pre-September 2014 sick leave arrangements for that absence, i.e., a maximum of 365 days of paid sick leave in a rolling four-year period. Following a resumption of duties, any subsequent sick leave absence will be dealt with under the new arrangements. Comprehensive information on the new sick leave arrangements and the pre-September 2014 sick leave arrangements are available at www.asti.ie

Teachers have an entitlement to seven days' paid self-certified sick leave over a two year rolling period...subject to certain criteria.

Working out your sick leave

Ordinary illness (non-critical)

If you need to take sick leave for ordinary illness, there are two reference periods to consider – one to determine how much paid sick leave you have remaining and another to consider what rate you will be paid during any remaining sick leave. This is called a 'dual look-back'. Remember: because rolling look-back periods apply, remaining sick leave entitlement is worked out on a day-by-day basis.

First step (ordinary illness sick leave)

Firstly, you look back over the previous four-year period to determine how much sick leave you have taken during that period, including both certified and self-certified leave. If you have taken less than 183 days' sick leave during that period, you are entitled to paid sick leave for the remaining number of days. If you have exceeded that amount, you are not entitled to any more paid sick leave for non-critical illness.

Second step (ordinary illness sick leave)

Secondly, if you are entitled to paid sick leave, to determine which rate of pay you will be paid during your sick leave (full-pay or half-pay), you look back at how much sick leave you have taken in the previous 12 months, including both certified and self-certified leave. You may take up to 92 days' of sick leave on full pay in a 12 month period, so if you have taken less than that amount you will be on full pay until you reach that limit. After that, you will be on half pay for up to a further 91 days (this is subject to a limit of 183 days of paid non-critical illness sick leave in a four-year period).

Examples

Paul (ordinary illness)

Paul is absent from work on October 1, 2014 for one day due to illness, but does not attend a doctor. Paul now needs to determine that he has not exceeded the maximum number of self-certified sick days of seven, allowable in a rolling two-year period. Therefore, he now looks back to October 1, 2012 and sees that he had two self-certified sick days in this rolling two-year period. Therefore Paul is entitled to full pay for this day of self-certified sick leave.

Rory (ordinary illness)

Rory needs to take sick leave on October 1, 2014. He looks back four years to October 1, 2010 to see how many sick leave days he has taken since then. Rory has taken 170 sick leave days in that period so on October 1, 2014 he has 13 of his 183 days of paid sick leave left. Rory then looks back 12 months to see at what rate his remaining 13 days of sick leave will be paid. Rory took 100 days of sick leave in the last 12 months – 92 days on full pay and eight days on half pay. Rory therefore has no sick leave on full pay left and his remaining 13 days of sick leave will be paid at half pay.

Critical illness

If you need to take sick leave under the critical illness protocol, there are two reference periods to consider – one to determine how much paid sick leave you have remaining and another to consider what rate you will be paid during any remaining sick leave. This is called a 'dual look-back'. Remember: because rolling look-back periods apply, remaining sick leave entitlement is worked out on a day-by-day basis.

First step (critical illness sick leave)

Firstly, you look back over the previous four-year period to determine how much sick leave you have taken during that period. If you have taken less than 365 days of sick leave during that period, you are entitled to paid sick leave for the remaining number of days. If you have exceeded that amount, you are not entitled to any more paid sick leave.

Second step (critical illness sick leave)

Secondly, if you are entitled to paid sick leave, to determine which rate of pay you are entitled to during your sick leave (full pay or half pay), you look back at how much critical sick leave you have taken in the previous 12 months. You may take up to 183 days of sick leave on full pay in a 12-month period, so if you have taken less than that amount you will be on full pay until you reach that limit. After that, you will be on half pay for up to a further 182 days (this is subject to a limit of 365 days of paid critical illness sick leave in a four-year period).

Example

Helen (critical illness)

Helen satisfies the criteria to for her sick leave to be treated under the critical illness protocol. She needs to take sick leave on October 1, 2014. She looks back to October 1, 2010 to see how many sick leave days she has taken since then. Helen has taken 20 sick leave days in that period, so on October 1, 2014 she has 345 of her 365 days of paid sick leave left.

Helen then looks back 12 months to see at what rate her remaining 345 days will be paid. Helen took 10 days sick leave on full pay in that period so she has 173 days of sick leave on full pay left. Helen's remaining 345 days of sick leave are therefore made up of 173 days on full pay and 172 days on half pay.

For a full description of the new sick leave provisions, please consult Circular 0059/2014 and the Critical Illness Protocol document (available at www.asti.ie).



Importance of breakfast for kids

By Martha Cox, Registered Dietitian.



Eating breakfast is considered to be an important part of a balanced diet and provides a great start to the day. Breakfast eaters generally have higher micronutrient intakes¹ and tend to be less overweight² than breakfast skippers. Children and adolescents who regularly eat breakfast also tend to have a lower body mass index than those who don't, and have a reduced risk of becoming overweight or obese^{3,4}. Surveys, however, conclude that many kids skip breakfast⁵ and, considering the fact that eating breakfast is thought to improve concentration and learning⁶, the promotion of regularly eating breakfast, especially on school days should stay high on the agenda.

The reality of the morning rush when getting ready for work and school is all too familiar. It's easy to understand how this can lead to breakfast skipping, possibly accounting for the statistic that one

in seven children in Ireland fail to eat breakfast every day⁷.

Skipping breakfast can not only reduce nutrient intake but also the ability to learn. Now the children are going back to school, it seems a great opportunity to set a routine and get into the breakfast habit from the start.

Vitamins and minerals needed

Children need an adequate intake of vitamins and minerals to support their slow and steady growth and studies in children suggest that breakfast eaters are more likely to meet their daily nutrient intake guidelines⁸. A recent study examining the school day diet of Irish primary-school children found that relative to the overall school-day, food eaten 'before school' was lower in saturated fat and sodium, and higher in dietary fibre and many



micronutrients¹⁷. Breakfast eaters tend to have higher intakes of essential vitamins and minerals, particularly when they choose cereal and milk for breakfast, as breakfast cereals are often fortified and milk boosts calcium intake¹.

The importance of eating breakfast on cognitive performance has been studied in some depth in healthy young adults⁹ with increasing interest in children and effects on performance and learning at school. The primary fuel for the brain is glucose and it is dependent upon a constant supply in the blood stream. When we wake up in the morning we have, in effect, had an 'overnight fast' and eating breakfast boosts the levels of glucose in the circulation. Glucose in itself may have a direct effect on cognitive performance and the exact mechanisms of action are not well established and need greater understanding¹⁰.

Increasingly it is accepted that when children eat breakfast it can help improve their mental performance in areas such as problem solving¹¹, mathematical and creative tasks¹² and attention span¹⁵. This effect continues throughout the hours after breakfast, not just after breakfast has been consumed^{14,15}. The beneficial impact of breakfast consumption is likely to be even greater among children whose nutritional status is compromised¹⁶. However, further research is needed to more fully understand the effect of breakfast in children and adolescents, and to recommend exactly what size and composition of breakfast is optimal for children's cognitive function.

Five Top Tips to help kids to eat breakfast

1. Set the alarm 10 minutes earlier to give a little extra time to eat breakfast.
2. Sit and eat breakfast together.
3. Lay out the breakfast bowls, plates, cutlery and packets of breakfast cereals ready to sit down to eat when everyone is dressed and ready to go to work and school.
4. Keep children looking forward to their breakfast by offering a variety of tastes over time. Offering a variety of cereal choices, or allowing children to mix their breakfast cereals will help to avoid flavour boredom setting in – buy a different kind of fortified breakfast cereal when next shopping.
5. A portion of fruit with breakfast counts towards 1 of your 5-A-Day and the vitamin C found in fruit aids iron absorption too.

Evidence is encouraging

The importance of breakfast cannot be underestimated, and the evidence for its beneficial effect on overall wellbeing and improved memory is encouraging¹⁸. Breakfast doesn't have to be a complicated affair – quite the reverse in fact. A bowl of fortified breakfast cereal and milk, topped with a handful of fruit or with a glass of juice, is quick, tasty and nutritious and is an ideal choice for the whole family.

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Meet your representatives

Find out more about your representatives on ASTI Standing Committee.



Máire G Ní Chiarba

Vice President

I got involved because... ASTI members in my school were served by an excellent school steward during my first year teaching.

Attending meetings of Cork North Branch was a wonderful learning experience, as the level and depth of debate were most impressive. I became school steward at a very young age and held the position for many years. It was never a burden performing my duties and I got great satisfaction out of recruiting members and working in their interest. My involvement in the ASTI became greater as I held almost every officership in the branch: I was a CEC representative; Standing Committee representative; and I am now Vice President. On a personal level, I have made some wonderful friends through the ASTI.

The ASTI's biggest priorities right now are... The Junior Cycle – The implications of the Framework for Junior Cycle for education and student motivation are a matter of great concern. We need to stand firmly against assessment as proposed in the Framework. As professionals, we cannot be seen to endorse what we as classroom experts deem to be an undermining of a highly-respected and independently-assessed system. The casualisation of the profession – The lack of a career structure is causing many young teachers to leave the profession. Support structures for teachers – Our focus must not be diverted from our right to teach in a safe and supportive environment.

People may not know... I have a keen interest in theatre and can be quite dramatic! Swimming is a form of exercise I really enjoy. My golfing career is currently on hold, but I am hoping to get back to playing regularly, sooner rather than later.



Brian Burke

Represents: Longford, Tullamore, Navan, Athlone, Mullingar.

School: St. Ciaran's Community School, Kells, Co. Meath.

I got involved because... I was encouraged to do so by very active union members in my school who saw the importance of enlisting new entrants to the profession. I was subsequently elected school steward and was the first non-permanent teacher to hold this position. I must also acknowledge the role of the Navan branch in promoting activism and supporting participation in the union. I certainly would not be on

Standing Committee today if it had not been for the members of the Navan branch.

The ASTI's biggest priorities right now are... threefold. The first and most immediate is the continuation of our campaign against the proposed reform of the Junior Certificate. The Junior Certificate must be preserved as an externally-assessed, state-awarded exam. Secondly, we must seek the equalisation of pay and conditions of all teachers. It is not acceptable that three pay scales exist within the profession. We must agitate for an end to this divisive and discriminatory practice. Thirdly, we must continue to seek an end to the moratorium on posts of responsibility.

You may not know... That I am the second teacher from St Ciaran's Community School, Kells to be elected to Standing Committee in recent times. This is reflective of a proud tradition of trade union activism in my school. It also reflects the willingness of a new, young generation of teachers to honour and indeed advance the tradition of activism and dedication to union principles established by a now largely-retired one.



Noelle Moran

Represents: Galway, Tuam, East Galway.

School: St Jarlath's College, Tuam, Co. Galway.

I got involved because... I always had an interest in trade unionism and attended branch meetings and annual Convention every year since starting teaching. I was School Steward, Branch Chairperson, an elected CEC member and served a term on the Education Committee at different times. I am very committed to serving on Standing Committee and very much appreciate Region 3 affording me the opportunity to represent us.

The ASTI's biggest priorities right now are... retention of State certification and fair, transparent, external assessment must be insisted upon in Junior Cycle reform.

Casualisation of our profession, the unacceptable 'hours culture' with less than full salary potential for many non-permanent and CID teachers, and the panel still not having been established, must be addressed. We must strive to reverse what we can of pay cuts, including insistence on a common pay-scale for all teachers, and the serious deterioration of working conditions.

The moratorium on posts must be lifted as schools cannot cope with decimated middle-management and promotional opportunities are practically non-existent. A cap is needed on initiatives as endless implementation is totally over-burdening schools.

You may not know... I was non-permanent for many years and obtained one of the first CIDs. Having previously worked on the Non-Permanent Teachers' Committee campaigning for improvements for new entrants and non-permanent teachers, I have recently been appointed Standing Committee Representative to the NPTC and look forward to working with this committee again. On another note, I donate platelets in St. James' Hospital near Head Office. Donations can be made every 30 days and monthly Standing Committee meetings allow me to be a donor.



Eamon Dennehy

Represents: Region 10: Laois, Kildare, Carlow.
School: Heywood Community School, Ballinakill, Co. Laois.

I got involved because... I have always believed that having a strong trade union is necessary in order to protect the pay and conditions of workers and to promote fairness in the workplace and in society generally.

The ASTI's biggest priorities right now are... Agreements made under the austerity programme have divided our membership into different categories with different pay scales, allowances, working hours and pension rights. We must eliminate these divisions and inequalities and reunite our union so that it can act effectively in the interest of all its members. The teaching profession must have a say in the direction and development of the education system and must not be ignored when radical changes to it are being proposed. This will require our members to be well informed, organised, determined, and united.



Peter Quinn

Represents: Region 4: Clare, Limerick South, Limerick North, Nenagh.
School: St. Flannan's College, Ennis, Co. Clare.

I got involved because... Having attended branch meetings, I became more aware of teachers rights and their conditions of work. I felt I could make a contribution to their upkeep and improvement.

The ASTI's biggest priorities right now are... a) Getting parity of pay within the profession; b) not assessing our own students in the new Junior Cert; and, c) getting back what we lost in the last number of years.

Something you may not know... I was the first person in Ireland to put syllabi onto CDs, i.e., business studies, economics, and business.

Learning from the Holocaust

Continuous Professional Development

Study Visit to Krakow

27-31 October 2014

A one-day programme for teachers that includes a four-day study visit to Krakow and Auschwitz-Birkenau



Our hosts: Jewish Heritage

This programme is designed to help teachers grasp the enormity of the Holocaust and an understanding of Jewish life in Europe up to the Second World War. It introduces them to the complex and challenging subject of the Holocaust encouraging them to develop lessons suitable for their pupils.

The programme is supported by two separate seminar days: one in preparation for the study visit (18 October 2014) and one on reflection afterwards (28 November 2014).

Visit includes:

- Tour to Krakow, Ghetto, Jewish Museum, Schindler's Factory, The Jewish Ghetto, Płaszów concentration camp, Auschwitz Jewish Centre and Auschwitz-Birkenau.
- Testimonies from Holocaust survivors and Polish Righteous Among the Nations.
- Lecture: Dr Edyta Gwizda, University of Krakow.

For CDDG (RPS) includes: flights, hotels, seminars, lunches and tours

This programme can be taken independently or as part of the Certificate in Holocaust Education awarded by Trinity College






For information and details about our teacher education programmes, contact:



Holocaust Education Trust Ireland, Clifton House, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2, Ireland.
Tel: +353 1 8502583 Email: info@holocaust.org www.holocaust.org

CERTIFICATE IN HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

2014/2015

Continuous Professional Development

Special purpose award at level 10 with a carrying section

A certificate in Holocaust education for post-primary teachers providing in-depth tuition on the historical significance and contemporary resonance of the Holocaust. The programme provides participants with information, tools and skills to address the subject in their areas of work, and to develop pedagogic expertise to complement their knowledge. The programme is divided into four modules, all of which must be completed by participants.

Course Duration: One year (part time)





Accreditation: The Certificate in Holocaust Education is awarded by Trinity College Dublin, accredited by the EU and fully recognised nationally.

Enrolment: Open to all teachers.

1. **Teaching the Holocaust:** (August) Introduction: One-day seminar programme for teachers that addresses the complex subject of the Holocaust and how to teach it in the classroom.
2. **Learning from the Holocaust:** (October) Six-day programme that includes a four-day study visit to Krakow and Auschwitz-Birkenau. The programme is supported by two separate seminar days: one in preparation for the study visit and one on reflection afterwards.
3. **Irish Seminar at Yeshiva University International School, Jerusalem:** (July) Eight-day programme for teachers at Yeshiva University International School for Holocaust Studies.
4. **Final Seminar:** (March) One-day seminar to be completed on the programme.

Fees: €7,425 for registered teachers who include education all tuition, travel and accommodation (approx). For other applicants who do not qualify for sponsorship, the fee is €9,225. The programme may qualify for the Teacher Relief Scheme.

Supported by the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Skills (Dublin) and in appreciation of Grants-in-Aid from the Department of Education and Skills.

For information and details about all our teacher education programmes, contact:

Holocaust Education Trust Ireland, Clifton House, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2, Ireland.
Tel: +353 1 8502583 Email: info@holocaust.org www.holocaust.org

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RSTA needs your support now. Join us and our retired colleagues in the Alliance of Retired Public Servants in the campaign to get the pension reductions reversed. Complete the RSTA Application Form (below) today.



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Membership Application

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Teachers' festival

FÉILTE, the Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching Excellence, will take place on Saturday, October 4 in the RDS, Dublin, on the eve of World Teachers' Day. Organised by the Teaching Council, the theme of this year's event is: "Talking about teaching: tearing down the walls". It will feature a mix of over 50 showcases and workshops, spanning projects from across the education sector, demonstrating the innovation happening in teaching and learning now. All registered teachers have been invited to apply to attend. The closing date for applications is Wednesday, September 10. For more information visit www.teachingcouncil.ie and Twitter (@FEILTE and @TeachingCouncil).

Navan Branch retirement function



A function was held in Navan recently to mark the retirement of the following teachers: Dan Ahearne; Brian Burke; Elizabeth Byrne; Vincent Donovan; Christine Foley; Pauline Grenham; Barbara Hegarty; Celine Kearney; Mai Killian; Michael Lynch; Pat Moriarty; Marie Oakes; Jim O'Brien; Margaret O'Brien; Eibhlin O'Cruaiaoi; PJ O'Reilly; Margaret Ryan; Anne Shaw; Margaret Shields; Margaret Smyth; Anne Stewart; Bernie Sturdy; Siobhan Sullivan; and, Carol Tuttle. Also in attendance were Pat King, General Secretary; Sally Maguire, Immediate Past President; and, John Daly, Branch Organiser.

Board of Management Seminars

Board of Management training seminars will be held in November in Cork, Dublin, Kilkenny and Galway. Registration forms go out to schools in September and you can return them by fax (01-8972760), by post or by email (lquinn@asti.ie).

Parent teacher meetings – good practice suggestions

The ASTI is examining good practice in relation to the running of parent-teacher meetings in second-level schools. The aim is to gather data and put together tips for schools for improving the running of parent-teacher meetings. If your school has come up with a system for running parent-teacher meetings that works well or is particularly efficient, we'd like to know. Tell us about the system and why you think it works. Please email us at info@asti.ie. Please insert the words Parent-Teacher Meetings in the subject box.

NEWGRANGE WINTER SOLSTICE 2014 ART COMPETITION

**Would your students like
to be in the Chamber at
Newgrange for the Winter
Solstice this year?**

The Office of Public Works is delighted to announce that it is running an Art Competition for primary and post-primary school children, with the winning entrants being present for the Winter Solstice at Newgrange on December 21, 2014.

This is an extremely exciting opportunity and all they have to do is channel their creativity to create art work on the following theme:

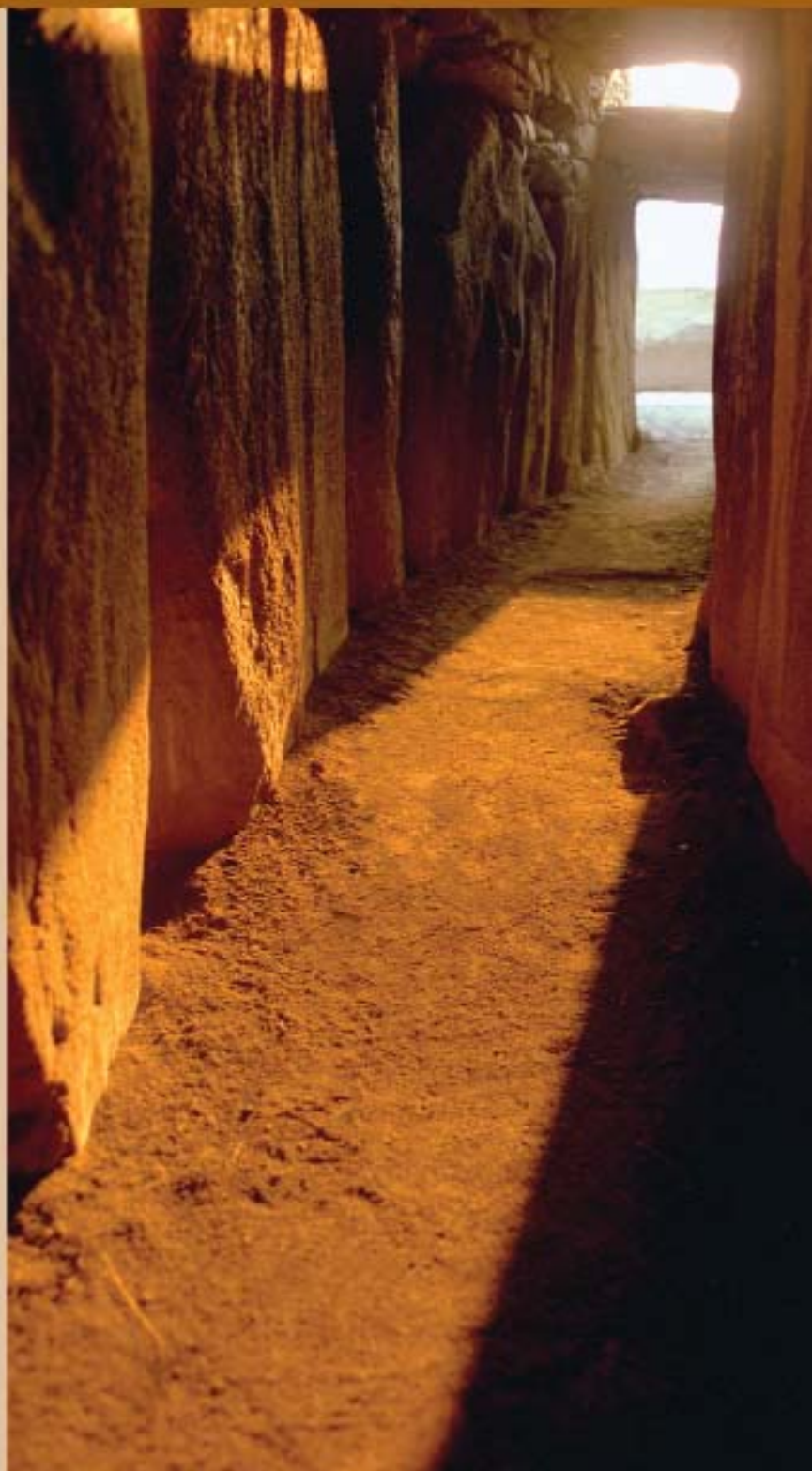
Newgrange – The Winter Solstice

Entry is free – full details and rules of the competition are available on www.heritageireland.ie.

Winners will be present in the chamber with a parent/guardian for one of the most important events in the heritage calendar.

Closing date for receipt of entries is Friday November 14, 2014.

All entries should be posted/delivered to the Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre, Donore, Co Meath



Education policy public lecture series

The Vere Foster Trust is holding a lecture on 'Taking research informed teaching seriously: From aspiration to reality?' at 6.30pm on Thursday, September 11. The lecture, which is being held in the National Gallery of Ireland, will highlight the importance of the continuing education of teachers and how engagement with research contributes to high-quality teaching. The lecture will outline key steps that must be taken if research-informed teaching is to become a reality. It will also invite consideration of how far Ireland is meeting the aspiration of a research-literate teaching force. Pamela Munn, Emeritus Professor of Curriculum Research, University of Edinburgh will be giving the talk. Contact verefostertrust@gmail.com to reserve a seat and hospitality.

Khan Academy maths symposium

The Khan Academy, a recognised leader in free education will be hosting a free symposium on maths on September 27. The Academy, which has most recently supported the MATHletes Challenge, is world renowned for its provision of online resources, primarily in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. The symposium is part of this year's Excited Digital Learning Festival and offers Irish teachers an opportunity to acquire practical tools and experience in implementing these resources in the classroom. For more information and to register, visit www.excited.ie.

Exploring Diversity and Global Justice resource

Comhlámh has launched a free resource called 'Exploring Diversity and Global Justice through the Arts'. It is primarily a teaching tool for secondary school teachers and includes activities for up to 15 classes based around the themes of social justice and global development. A hard copy can be requested by sending an email to info@comhlamh.org and a digital edition is available at http://issuu.com/comhlamh/docs/exploring_diversity_global_justice_

Mobile technology in education

A two-day conference on mobile technology in initial teacher education (MiTE) is being held in Galway on 23 and 24 of January, 2015. The conference will celebrate the possibilities and explore the challenges of integrating mobile technology in ITE (Initial Teacher Education). Please email sean.ogradaigh@nuigalway.ie and put 'MiTE Conference' in the subject field. You will then be notified when the conference website will go live and when the call for papers will be opened. You will also receive registration information and updates on confirmed keynote speakers.

Recruitment of post-primary inspectors

The Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills will be recruiting post-primary inspectors in a range of subjects in early September. The posts include inspectors of art, construction and technology, guidance, history, mathematics, Spanish and special education. Full details available on www.publicjobs.ie after September 5, 2014.

Technoteachers Association Annual Conference

The Annual Conference of the Technoteachers Association takes place in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Limerick on Friday 17 and Saturday 18 of October. There will be presentations, workshops, teaching resources and company stands. For more information visit www.technoteachers.ie.

Calling NUI Maynooth graduates

NUI Maynooth are trying to connect with past alumni and reconnect them to NUIM's fantastic online community. By registering, you can sign up for alumni events, update your contact details, and enjoy a wide variety of free membership benefits, including life-long learning, library access and invitation to reunions and events. Visit <https://alumni-network.nuim.ie> for more details.

ECO-UNESCO – Supporting teachers to bring ECO-Action into education!

ECO-UNESCO, Ireland's environmental education and youth organisation is calling on all secondary schools to get involved in an environmental action project and take part in their Young Environmentalists Awards (YEA) 2015. The YEA is Ireland's biggest celebration of youth eco-action and participation in the programme is a great way to engage students with environmental issues which link into the school curriculum, as well as developing key personal skills such as confidence, assertiveness, team work and communication. Free training to get groups up and running is being offered by ECO-UNESCO throughout September and October and can be delivered in the classroom upon request. Participants to the programme are fully supported by ECO-UNESCO throughout the year with a hotline, manual and toolkit available to all registered groups. To register, book training and for full details on the programme visit www.ecounesco.ie, phone 016625491. Closing date for registration: November 28, 2014.

New teachers sought

Youth Connect is looking to recruit recently qualified teachers to join its team of teaching graduates to deliver an innovative youth education programme in two of its regional areas, Galway and Cavan. Positions are offered to successful candidates on a fixed-term basis. Teachers on the panel will receive extensive training on all aspects of teaching social and political topics and will work as part of a team, fully supported by the Schools Co-ordinator. 100 hours delivered on this programme will be accepted by the Teaching Council towards the full time teaching qualification. For further information, contact Fiona Dunne, Youth Connect Programme Manager at Fiona.dunne@ictu.ie or visit www.youth-connect.ie.

Chaplains' annual conference

The Annual Conference of the School Chaplains' Association of Ireland is taking place in Hotel Kilkenny on Friday 17 and Saturday 18 of October. For more information visit www.irishchaplains.org.

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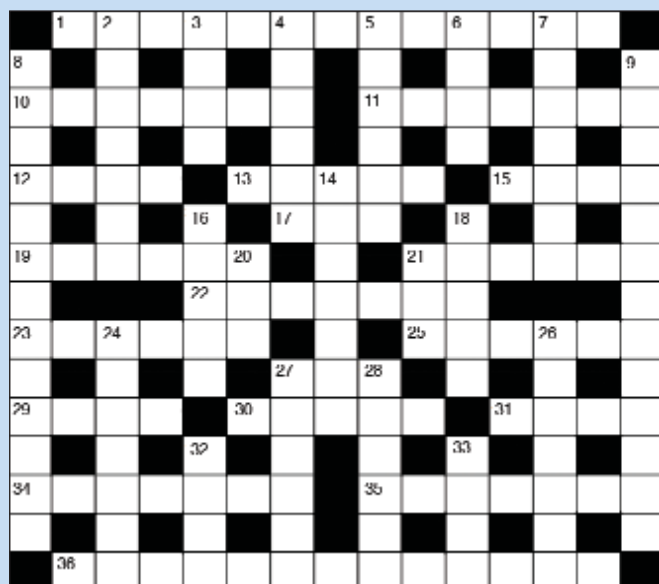

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ASTIR CROSSWORD NO. 1404

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Name School Address ASTI Branch

Entries to: ASTIR Crossword No. 1404, Think Media,
The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.

To arrive by: Friday, October 12, 2014

CLUES ACROSS:

- 1, 19 & 30 across: Is it on the reading list of 21 down? (1,9,3,6,5)
- 10 He was a wetter kind of prince! (7)
- 11 Kind of arrest (7)
- 12 Sent to a bird's home (4)
- 13 Credit alternative (5)
- 15 "But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at " As spoken by the
villain in Othello (4)
- 17 A palindromic flop (3)
- 19 See 1 across
- 21 Good humoured Jo and Al have six
between them (6)
- 22 Lose oar in the spray (7)
- 23 Ah, an unusual place in Africa! (6)
- 25 Informally an egghead (6)
- 27 It's usually served with lobster! (3)
- 29 A fishy part of a shoe! (4)
- 30 See 1 across
- 31 Catty comment! (4)
- 34 Nothing orange about this herb (7)
- 35 Dribble or drool (7)
- 36 A key role of ASTI (8,5)

CLUES DOWN:

- 2 A son's French shiver is part of Friday (7)
- 3 Dry as dust (4)
- 4 Dear Ned, what have you gained by work? (6)
- 5 The rich do have this flower (6)
- 6 Star Trek captain found in a Scottish church (4)
- 7 Paper work? (7)
- 8 "It's just not cricket anymore" for him to play
for Ireland! (5,8)
- 9 Elected annually, by May 1 (6,7)
- 14 It could be a pastoral pain after missing the last
bus (7)
- 16 Every school has one (5)
- 18 Orals could provide an energy option (5)
- 20 In a jamboree on a lough on the river
Shannon (3)
- 21 Minister for Education and Skills in short (1.1'1.)
- 24 20 down live could soothe or ease (7)
- 26 Put the maple and biro together and become
bitter (7)
- 27 Poetically times past (6)
- 28 "Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd.
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or ... from
hell..." (Hamlet) (6)
- 32 Rash protection? (4)
- 33 Apple's apple, for example (4)

**Solution to ASTIR Crossword
No. 1403**

Across	Down
1 Assessment	1 Abbr
6 CIDs	2 Sultanate
10 Bilby	3 Slyly
11 Inclusive	4 Maidens
12 Ganymede	5 Nucleus
13 FEMPI	7 Idiom
15 Nuances	8 Specialist
17 Surreal	9 Suffered
19 Dweller	14 Inadequate
21 Mediums	16 Collider
22 Quasi	18 Ebullient
24 Gingerly	20 Regatta
27 Authentic	21 Menaced
28 Fiend	23 ASTIR
29 ECRU	25 Elfin
30 Haddington	26 Eden

DID YOU MISS?

The tips and advice for teachers on use of social media
New sick leave arrangements are in place for teachers

pages 18 and 19.
pages 24 and 25.

Congratulations

Congratulations to the winner
of Crossword No. 1403:

Sheila Waldron, St Mary's CBS,
Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.
Enniscorthy Branch member.

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Reference: 1. The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study (2006).



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