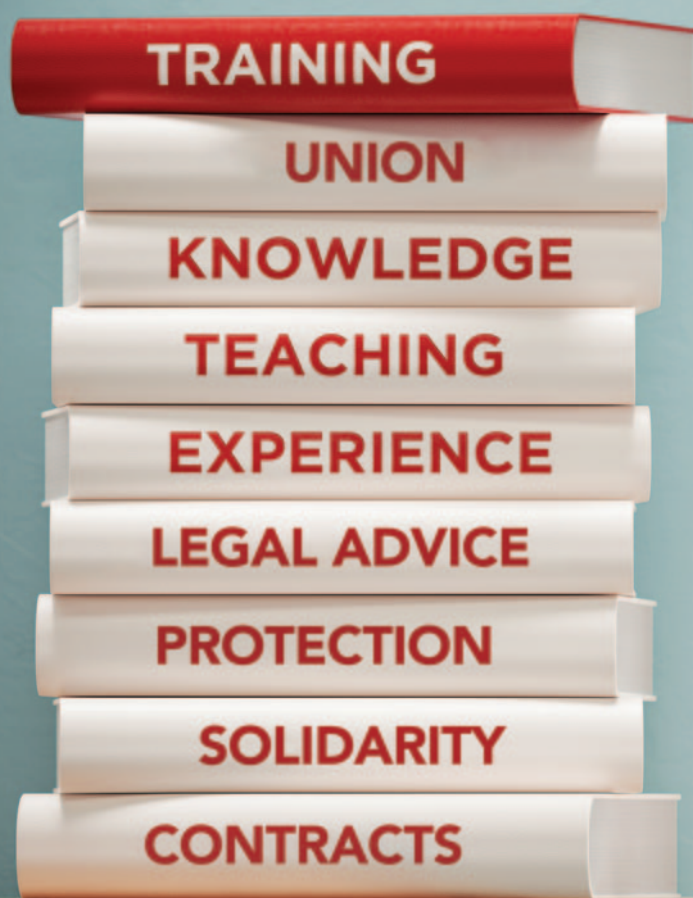


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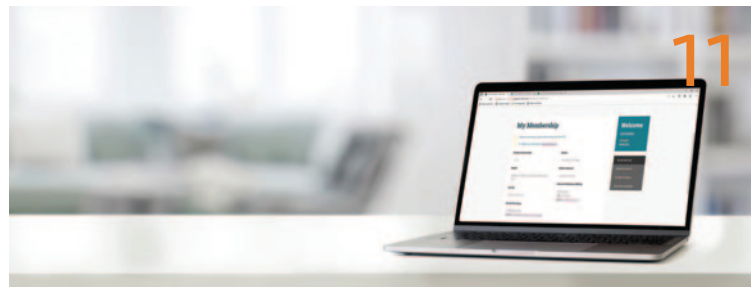
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Members can email astirfeedback@asti.ie or text 087 934 9956.

Make your voice heard

Welcome back! I hope you've all had a well-earned rest and are ready for the coming school year. I would particularly like to welcome those of you who are new to our profession – you have chosen a career where you will make a profound difference to the lives of others. I would also like to welcome you to the ASTI, a union dedicated exclusively to second-level teachers and one with a long and proud tradition of serving teachers' interests and promoting education.

Each year brings its own challenges and this year is no different. You will already have received a special Nuacht about the cost of living crisis and, through our Standing Committee representatives, branches and website, we will keep you updated on events as they arise. I would also refer you to our Budget 2023 submission, which is available on our website. Given the central importance of education to the social and economic development of a society, it is scandalous how successive governments have failed to make sufficient investment in it. According to the most recent OECD figures, Ireland comes last out of 36 OECD countries in terms of investment in second-level education as a percentage of GDP. It is through the dedication of teachers that this low level of investment is not reflected in international studies such as PISA, where Ireland is consistently one of the top-scoring countries in literacy, and above average in science and maths.

Last March, the Minister for Education announced her proposed changes to Senior Cycle. Neither the style of her announcement nor the substance of her proposals showed any regard for the collective voice of teachers. Minister Foley's unilateral approach to policymaking is more reminiscent of the 19th century than the 21st, which is somewhat ironic given that empowering students to meet 21st century challenges is one of the stated aims of her changes. At the beginning of the school year, it is worth remembering that our policies remain constant – we will not assess our own students for State certification; any changes to Senior Cycle ought to be based on independent, rigorous research and appropriate to the Irish education system. Such changes ought to be fully costed and properly resourced, and must take account of teachers' workload if they are to be implementable.

As teachers, we know that the work we do is an enormous societal good and is central to the social and economic growth of our society. As a teachers' union we know the importance of defending standards in an education system, which has served our country so well. Regarding Senior Cycle, we have much to do. As we refine our response to the Minister's proposals, there will be special meetings of CEC and branches over the coming year, we will be publishing extra editions of Nuacht to keep you informed and, as always, you can keep up to date through your Standing Committee representative, school steward and our website. I urge you to keep yourself informed and to make use of the opportunities the ASTI provides for your voice to be heard.



Building Momentum: review

At time of writing, the line of sight relating to progress on public service pay is uncertain. However, the cost of living crisis must be addressed. The role played by teachers and other public servants in rising to the challenges of Covid-19 must be acknowledged by way of pay increases that enable them to cope and flourish in the context of record tax receipts being received by the Exchequer. The prevarication by the Government in the aftermath of the ICTU's Public Services Committee triggering a review clause in the Building Momentum agreement in early March, followed by a derisory offer in June, indicates a lack of appreciation in Government for all that has been achieved. The ASTI will be holding a ballot that will have significant implications for the capacity of all members to meet their bills. Ballots are a fundamental element of a democracy and have always been central to the value we place on democracy within the ASTI.

Turbulent times in education

The recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, the climate crisis, ever-increasing digitalisation, and the paucity of investment ensure that the challenges we all face within the education system are immense. The necessity for teachers and their union to take a proactive stand and reassert their will to mobilise and organise for quality in education, the benefit of students, and improved terms and conditions for teachers has never been more pressing. High-quality inclusive education is a key element of a healthy and prosperous society. Our expertise must be imprinted in education policy. We must fight to defend our profession. A key challenge is to tackle the teacher shortage crisis and ensure that teaching retains its attractiveness. The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE), of which the ASTI is an affiliate member, recently adopted the following 10 key action points to raise the status and improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession:

1. Ensure professional autonomy and academic freedom.
2. Commit to collaborative and collegial leadership in educational establishments and systems.
3. Deliver decent salaries – including addressing any pay inequalities.
4. Ensure sustainable working conditions and promote teacher well-being.
5. Control excessive workload and working hours.
6. Create quality entry pathways and retention practices.
7. Ensure entitlement to quality and inclusive initial education and continuous professional development.
8. Address equality and diversity challenges in teaching workforces.
9. Promote and commit to social dialogue.
10. Empower the teaching profession.

The numbering of key action points does not indicate the level of importance. All must be achieved to reach the goal of a strong, sustainable profession and education system.



Zimbabwe teachers' union President arrested and tortured



From left: Gemma Tuffy (ASTI Media/Communications Official), Andrew Anderson (Executive Director, Front Line Defenders), Obert Masaraure (recipient of the Front Line Defenders Award 2022), Moira Leydon (ASTI Assistant General Secretary), and Diarmaid de Paor (ASTI Deputy General Secretary).

Deputy General Secretary Diarmaid de Paor and Assistant General Secretary Moira Leydon recently met with Obert Masaraure, the National President of the Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe, and Andrew Anderson, Executive Director of Front Line Defenders.

Obert is the recipient of the Front Line Defenders Award 2022, in recognition of his incredible human rights work in support of labour and teachers' rights in Zimbabwe, despite the risks involved in this work. His union's concerns include the repeated closure of schools to facilitate political rallies, the requirement for students and teachers to take part in such rallies, including providing entertainment and refreshments, and the harassment of teachers who have objected to this pattern of interruption of school and misuse of teachers' time.

Children in Zimbabwe, particularly in rural areas, have been disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, due to little or no access to broadband or digital devices for millions of families. Educators such as Obert have warned of a slide towards widespread illiteracy if schools continue to be arbitrarily shut and teachers diverted from their work.

Upon returning to Zimbabwe following his receipt of the Front Line Defenders Award, Obert was arrested at Harare central police station. He attended the station as part of the conditions of his remand bail hearing for a case of treason brought against him for participating in a lawful teachers' protest. He was released and then detained again. Incredibly, Obert has now also been charged with murder.

We, in the ASTI, were profoundly disheartened to hear of his experience of arrest, beatings and torture. This response by the authorities to the legal work of promoting education and protecting labour rights by a trade union official is contrary to Zimbabwe's constitution, not to mention international labour conventions, which Zimbabwe has signed up to.

The ASTI, alongside other Irish teacher unions, wrote to Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney TD in June and in July, asking him to communicate with his counterpart in Zimbabwe to demand the release of Obert.

For updates see: <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/>

Derek Nolan, RIP



Former ASTI President Derek Nolan passed away in March 2022. Derek served as ASTI President for two terms: 1977-78 and 1978-79. The Kanturk-born teacher spent most of his career teaching at North Monastery School, Cork, where he took particular interest in special needs education, SPHE and adult education. He gained additional qualifications in UCC to support his school community in these areas. During his time teaching in North Monastery School, he also acted as Home School Liaison Officer for a number of years and prior to his retirement was vice principal of the school.

He first got involved in the ASTI as a young teacher in North Monastery and served in various regional roles before being elected ASTI President, including branch treasurer, secretary, and Chair of Cork ASTI.

As President, Derek drove the campaign to establish boards of management in voluntary secondary schools. This campaign sought to democratise the running of second-level schools, giving a voice to all of the partners in education. It was backed by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. During his time as President, Derek also fought for the introduction of a redeployment scheme, warning that without a scheme, redundancy was a significant threat to teachers. He fought for and achieved improved pay rates for teachers involved in State exams.

Derek held a number of important roles, including membership of the City of Cork VEC Adult Education Board, director of the Cope Foundation, and committee member of Co-Operation Ireland. He also served as president of the Cork Council of Trade Unions for three separate terms. He was appointed as a Peace Commissioner in 1995.

The ASTI expresses its deepest condolences to Derek's wife and family.

Coffee morning for Ukraine



Colin Blake and Cára Davey of the ASTI school committee in Pobalscoil Neasáin, Dublin, at their coffee morning for the Red Cross Ukraine Crisis Appeal. Not pictured: Conor Lyons.

ASTI members held coffee mornings in May to raise funds for the Red Cross humanitarian effort in Ukraine. Red Cross teams are on the ground in Ukraine and will continue their work to repair vital infrastructure, support health facilities, and help families with life-

saving food and hygiene items.

Donations will help those affected to get food, medicine, shelter and water, and also help the Red Cross to assist those displaced by conflict. For information on the Red Cross Ukraine Crisis Appeal or to donate, visit <https://donate.redcross.ie/>.



Upskill with the ASTI

The ASTI is offering a range of training and seminars for our members over the coming year. These events will allow members to learn from experienced ASTI officials and to engage with teaching colleagues from around the country on key issues affecting them.

School stewards' training

Training will take place for new or experienced school stewards. Participants will receive comprehensive e-packs in advance with links to information on key aspects of the role. The emphasis in the training is on responding to current issues in your school and how best to represent your colleagues. These training sessions are open to all school stewards.

Board of management training

These will be one-day training seminars for teacher representatives on boards of management. The role of ASTI representatives on boards of management is a very important one and we would urge you to encourage your representatives to attend this training day, where they can hear their union's interpretation of their role and duties.

Retirement seminars

This two-evening programme of retirement seminars is for members who are considering retirement during 2023 or 2024. Attendance is required on both evenings. Session 1 will be presented by the ASTI and session 2 will be presented by Cornmarket.

School leadership training

Intended for those thinking of applying for an AP post in their school, this seminar will focus on the four domains of leadership as set out in Circular 003/2018, including advice on completion of the application form and preparation for the interview.

Health and safety training

School health and safety representatives and teachers who served as Covid-19 Lead Worker Representatives are invited to this online seminar on teachers' health, safety and welfare at work.

Training and seminars usually take place in a variety of venues around the country, on a number of different dates. Visit <https://www.asti.ie/member-benefits/events/> to find the dates and locations of the training or seminar you are interested in that best suits you.



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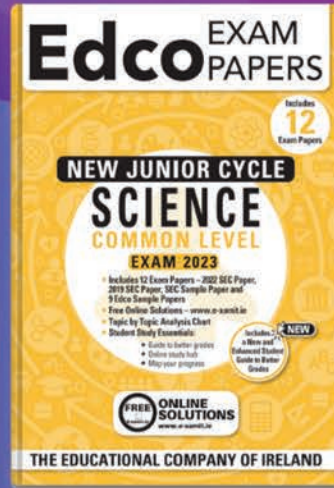
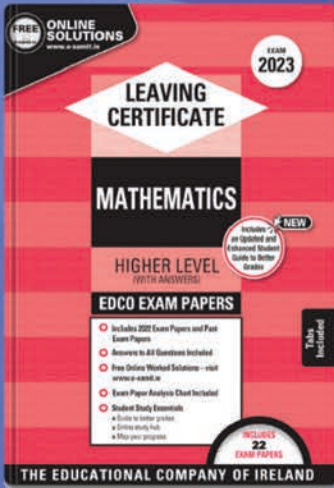


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Special educational needs submission

The ASTI made a submission to the Special Oireachtas Committee on Autism in July, setting out its views on the issues that need to be addressed to meet the needs of students with special educational needs (SENs), including autistic students, in second-level schools. The ASTI has underlined the need to make sure that schools have sufficient resources to provide school places in September for autistic students. Immediate steps must be taken to address the 5,000+ waiting list for assessment and diagnosis.

The ASTI is committed to inclusive education and believes that it is the model most consonant with the needs of children and young people, and wider social inclusion goals. From the ASTI’s perspective, the most important resource in the school system is the teaching profession. Supporting the profession requires sustainable workloads and good working conditions – including equal pay for equal work, resourced in-school management structures, and supports for CPD. Relevant key issues in the Committee’s request for submissions were addressed with the following recommendations made:

Access to education

The ASTI’s submission highlighted that access to education is fundamental to realising the right to education. Such access is dependent on investment in school buildings and facilities: it is unfair to attribute blame to schools for infrastructural and human resource decisions made at central level.

Access to assessment and intervention

Immediate steps must be taken to extend access to assessment services via the National Educational Psychological Service and the Scheme for Commissioning Psychological Assessments. A review of overall psychological service should be undertaken, given sustained growth in population and an SEN prevalence rate of 25%.

Inclusive education for all

A national CPD programme must be provided and all schools should have a dedicated post for SEN co-ordination.

To read the full submission, see: <https://www.asti.ie/document-library/asti-submission-to-special-oireachtas-committee-on-autism/>

Special Convention on Leaving Cert

A Special Convention held in June adopted the following motion: *“That ASTI engage in discussions on Leaving Certificate/Senior Cycle Reform. This policy supersedes the previous adopted position regarding engagement in such discussions and does not impact on any other ASTI policy.”*

For an update on Leaving Cert/Senior Cycle discussions, see page 14. Also in June, a special Central Executive Council meeting elected Máire G. Ní Chiarba as an ASTI Trustee. The ASTI Trustees 2022/23 are: Michael Barry, Gerry Breslin, and Máire G. Ní Chiarba.

Strategy on ESD launched



The second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to 2030, with accompanying Implementation Plan to 2026, was launched in June. ESD aims to ensure that by 2030: “All learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development” (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7).

The National Strategy on ESD to 2030 sets out five key priority areas in line with UNESCO’s Framework for ESD for 2030.

Schools are intended to engage in the Implementation Plan in a number of ways, including promoting participation in ESD-related curriculum enrichment activities, projects and competitions in schools, and organising Climate Action Week as an opportunity to support actions and communications across Green Schools, GreenCampus and Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) schemes.

For more information, see: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/02952d-national-strategy-on-education-for-sustainable-development-in-ireland/>

Moira Leydon new ILHS Vice President



From left: Dr John Cunningham (ILHS member), Moira Leydon (ASTI Assistant General Secretary and ILHS Vice President), and Shay Cody (ILHS President).

ASTI Assistant General Secretary Moira Leydon has been elected Vice President of the Irish Labour History Society (ILHS). The ILHS was established in 1973, with a founding objective to “promote the knowledge of Irish labour and of Irish people in labour history abroad and labour history in general, the appreciation of the importance of labour history in the educational curriculum, and the preservation of all records and reminiscences, oral and written, relating to the current and past experiences of the Irish working class and its organisations”.

For more information about the work of the ILHS, see: <http://www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com/>

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Budget 2023 – ASTI priorities



The ASTI has set out its priorities as part of its Budget 2023 campaign, highlighting that the most recent OECD report Education at a Glance 2021 finds Ireland, once again, in last place out of 36 countries for investment in second-level education as a percentage of GDP.

It is essential that the Government commits to a significant increase in funding for education in Budget 2023. The ASTI’s priorities are:

1. **Address cost of living increases:** the sharp increase in inflation

since 2021 has impacted on individuals, families and organisations, including schools. Workers and families struggle to meet essential costs. Schools have been hit by rising operational costs.

2. **Equal pay for post-2010 entrants to teaching:** in the context of teacher shortages, the Government must commit to equal pay for post-2010 entrants to teaching.
3. **Smaller class sizes:** research carried out by the ASTI in 2020 found that the majority of Junior Cycle classes are above the EU and OECD averages.
4. **School building infrastructure:** schools need improved ventilation, adequate canteen facilities, better heating systems, and much more.
5. **Restoration of guidance counselling to pre-recession levels:** the pandemic has highlighted the need to ensure that student well-being is supported in a variety of ways, including adequate access to one-to-one counselling services within the school community.
6. **Digital technology:** each school should have a dedicated leadership post to oversee the implementation of the school’s digital learning strategy.

The ASTI has engaged in lobbying of public representatives regarding Budget 2023.

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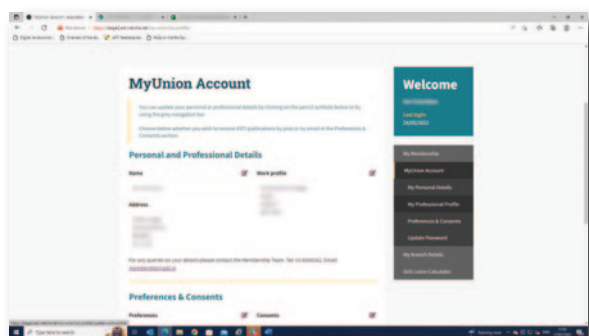
Access information and update your details plus much more on the new members' section of [asti.ie](https://www.asti.ie).



The new members' area of the ASTI website is now live

ASTI members can now access MyUnion, a new members' area of the ASTI website. Once you have created an account, you will have convenient access to information about your membership. This includes:

- the personal details the ASTI holds for you, e.g., name, phone number, school
- your school steward's name and email address
- your industrial relations official's name and email address
- the names of your elected representatives on CEC
- the names and email addresses for your branch, and
- the name and email address of your Standing Committee representative.



Update your information

It is now possible to update your personal details directly in the MyUnion area – for example, your home address – and this change will be reflected in the ASTI's membership database for future correspondence. There is also a facility to tell the ASTI what subjects you teach, in order to receive relevant notifications, such as subject-specific surveys.

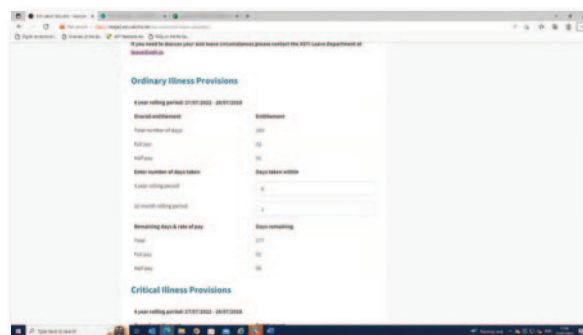
Mailing preferences

Signing up for a MyUnion account will also give members the option of opting in or out of ASTI research surveys and opting to receive publications, such as *ASTIR* or *Nuacht*, by email instead of in hard copy.

Sick leave calculator

A sick leave calculator is now available to members who are logged in to

their MyUnion account. Simply answer a few questions about what sick leave you have previously taken to calculate your remaining sick leave entitlements.



Additional benefits for activists

Members in activist roles such as school stewards and branch secretaries will receive additional benefits by logging into MyUnion, which will assist them in their roles. Over the coming months, the process whereby branches approve applicant teachers into membership will move to a streamlined online process, making it easier for applicants and branch secretaries.

To create your MyUnion account, go to <https://www.asti.ie/my-union/> and use the 'Account Activation' prompt to create your account. To register for a MyUnion account, your email address must match the one we have for you on our members' database. If you do not receive an account activation email, this may be because we do not have your current email address. Contact info@asti.ie or 01-604 0160 if you believe this may be the case.

Win €200 worth of One4All vouchers

To celebrate the launch of MyUnion, all ASTI members who register and log in to their MyUnion account in before November 7 will be entered into a draw. Three winners will be chosen from the draw and each winner will receive €200 in One4All vouchers. All you need to do is go to <https://www.asti.ie/my-union/> and log in to be entered into the draw.



At the time of going to print, the teacher unions (ASTI, IFUT, INTO and TUI) had separately announced their plans to ballot union members on industrial action in support of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) public sector pay campaign.

In March 2022 the ICTU Public Services Committee triggered a review clause contained in the current public sector pay agreement – Building Momentum. At the time inflation was at 5.6%. The Government responded in May, by which time inflation was at 7%. Subsequent talks between representatives of the Public Services Committee and the Government at the Workplace Relations Commission ended without agreement on June 17, by which time inflation had reached 7.8%. A Government offer made during the talks of a

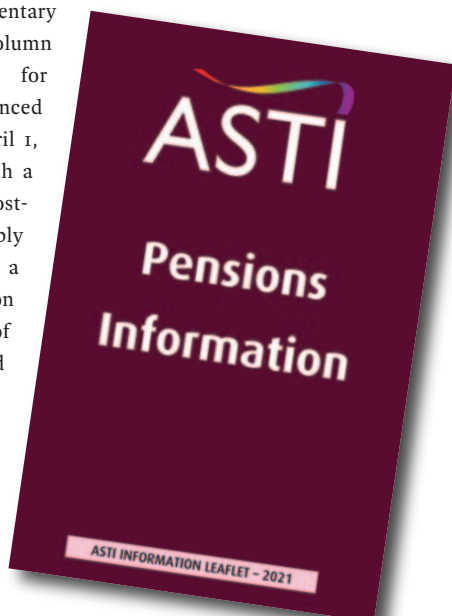
2.5% increase for the 2021-22 period and a 2.5% increase for 2023 was rejected by the union side. Department of Public Expenditure and Reform representatives stated that the Government needed time to reflect on its position. By August, inflation had passed 9%.

In July, the ICTU Public Services Committee recommended a co-ordinated campaign by public sector unions, backed by industrial action ballots. To this end, the ASTI and other unions have begun ballot preparations. The ASTI's ballot will go ahead unless the Government makes a substantial offer in the coming weeks.

For up-to-date information, visit: www.asti.ie

CORRECTION

The ASTI Pensions Information leaflet, dated 2021 and currently being circulated to schools, contains an error on page 5 regarding the payment of a supplementary pension. In the column headed “2004–2012” for teachers who commenced employment from April 1, 2004, the age at which a teacher retiring on a cost-neutral basis can apply for the payment of a supplementary pension by the Department of Education should read 65 years of age and not 60 as shown. See the correct table here.



2004 – 2012

Commenced Employment from 1st April 2004 Teachers' Superannuation Scheme Class A Social Insurance
Pension: Co-ordinated pension, i.e., value of pension paid by Department of Education (based on final salary) takes account of State Contributory Pension paid separately by Department of Social Protection
Compulsory retirement age abolished
Full co-ordinated pension after 40 years' service
Voluntary retirement available at age 65 (2 years minimum service)
Retirement between age 55 and 65 available on cost-neutral basis (see note 2 below). Also: supplementary pension paid on application from age 65 by Department of Education
Cost-neutral retirement available from age 55 (see note 2 below)
Pension benefits can be preserved to age 65 if resigned earlier from teaching

2. *Cost-Neutral Early Retirement* is a retirement option that allows teachers to retire early with immediate payment of pension benefits. The pension and lump sum payments are subject to actuarial reduction to take account of the early payment of the lump sum and the longer period over which the pension will be paid.



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*Lourda Roseingrave,
Ennis National School*

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- Key employment law issues relevant to the school setting;
- School structures and governance arrangements;
- Admissions policies and student conduct issues;
- The legal issues relating to special educational needs;
- Key considerations regarding negligence and litigation management;
- Child protection issues;
- Data protection concerns;
- Other matters relevant to higher, further and adult education.

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WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

This course is suitable for the following:

- Solicitors, barristers, and trainees who advise or wish to advise on education law,
- Key stakeholders and decision-makers within the education setting, including school principals, assistant principals, inspectors, teachers at all levels,
- Teachers in management organisations, trade unions, and staff associations.

SENIOR CYCLE: TEACHERS' VOICES MUST BE HEARD

Teachers' voices must be heard in changes to Senior Cycle, writes Moira Leydon, ASTI Assistant General Secretary.

Earlier this year, the Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD, published 'Equity and Excellence for All', the roadmap for changes at Senior Cycle. The future curriculum framework will aim to:

- empower students to meet the challenges of the 21st century
- enrich the student experience and build on what's strong in our current system, and
- embed well-being and reduce student stress levels.

The redeveloped Senior Cycle will include:

- revised curricula for all existing Leaving Cert subjects
- revised Leaving Cert subjects will have assessment components (in addition to written exams) worth 40% of the total Leaving Cert grade
- introduction of teacher-based assessment components
- updated curriculum and assessment models in chemistry, physics, biology and business will be available for fifth-year students in network schools* in September 2024
- Leaving Cert established students entering Senior Cycle in September 2023 will sit paper 1 in English and Irish at the end of fifth year
- introduction of two new subjects: drama, film and theatre studies, and climate action and sustainable development – these subjects will be available to network schools* in 2024
- oral examinations and the music practical performance will take place during the first week of the Easter break
- new level 1 and level 2 qualification (National Framework of Qualifications) will be introduced for some students with special educational needs
- Leaving Cert Applied students will have improved access to maths and foreign languages from September 2022, and
- the Transition Year programme will be revised.

**The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) will invite a selection of schools to become network schools. These schools will participate at an early stage in revised curriculum and assessment arrangements.*

Unanswered questions

Beyond setting out these actions, the Minister's announcement does not provide information on how or when the above actions will commence. This is a cause for concern, as is the Minister's terminology around a "co-created curriculum". This term is vague and confusing. It certainly does not accord recognition to the professional expertise, experience and role of teachers. Moreover, the Minister's announcement that a Senior Cycle reform programme delivery board will be established to oversee and drive the changes suggests that a markedly technocratic approach will be taken to the change process.

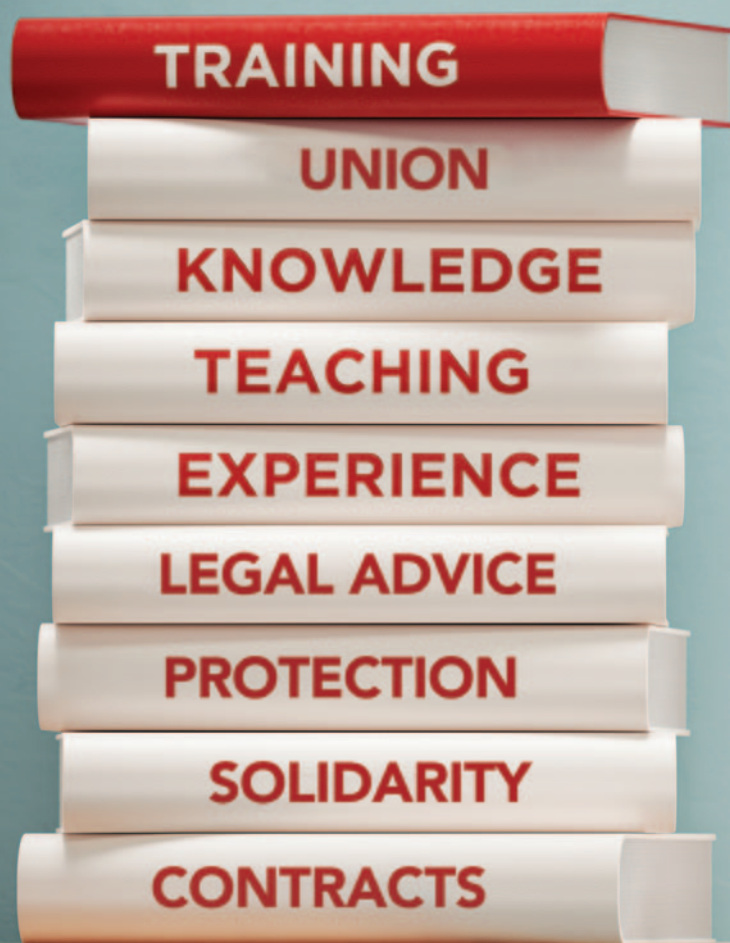
Get involved

The teacher's voice cannot be just one among many: unlike other stakeholders, teachers' unique role in implementing the curriculum in the classroom must be afforded a distinctive place in the process of curriculum change. The ASTI will engage in deep consultation with its members on the programme set out by the Minister. This consultation will include:

- hosting a special CEC meeting in early autumn – see www.asti.ie for details
- publication of the ASTI's vision for curriculum change
- survey of teachers
- creation of teachers' petition, and
- special branch meetings.

The following motion was adopted by ASTI Convention 2022:
Motion 48 – Leaving Certificate Assessment – That the ASTI insist that the assessment and grading of the Leaving Certificate remain the sole remit of the State Examinations Commission.

For more information, see the ASTI website – www.asti.ie



NEW TO TEACHING

If you are starting work as a teacher this September, or you are beginning a new role, it is important that you understand the contract that you have and the conditions that go along with it.

Contracts

The type of contract you hold depends on the reason for the position being vacant and the type of hours that you cover.

Regardless of the type of contract you have, you are entitled to 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.

Always keep a copy of your contract and any related documents as they may be needed in the future. If you are unsure of anything in your contract, ask your ASTI school steward or ASTI Head Office for clarification or advice. Before you sign a contract, make sure it includes the following information:

- the nature and duration of your employment
- the type of contract under which you are employed – fixed-term or permanent, part-time or whole-time
- the number of hours per week you are contracted to teach
- the subjects and levels you will be teaching and the reason for the vacancy you are filling, and
- whether you will be paid by the Department of Education, the school, or the Education and Training Board (ETB).

Always keep a copy of your contract and any related documents as they may be needed in the future.

Contract of temporary employment

Many newly qualified teachers (NQTs) will begin their teaching careers with temporary contracts.

A non-permanent 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.

There are four categories of non-permanent teaching contract for qualified teachers.

A casual part-time teacher is appointed where there is a casual need for hours to be covered (fewer than 150 hours in a school year), usually covering for a teacher on short-term sick leave or parental leave. A casual qualified teacher is paid a standard rate.

A non-casual part-time teacher is appointed when a teacher is needed for over 150 hours in a school year but for less than the full school year. Usually, they are covering for maternity leave or carer's leave. The qualified non-casual rate per hour worked is the teacher's own personal point on the pay scale divided by 735.

A regular part-time teacher is appointed when a teacher is needed for a full school year, but for less than the full 22 hours a week, for example covering a job share contract. A regular part-time teacher will be paid on the same basis as a whole-time teacher, *pro rata* to the number of hours worked.

A temporary whole-time teacher is appointed to work full hours for at least one full school year, generally covering a career break/secondment. They will be paid in accordance with their incremental point on the salary scale.

Permanent/CID contracts

Permanent contract

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

Contracts of indefinite duration

A contract of indefinite duration (CID) gives a teacher the same job security as other permanent teachers. The only differences are that salary is based on the number of hours spent teaching (which can be less than full hours) and the awarding of the contract is normally the result of the teacher acquiring the requisite amount of teaching service in a sustainable teaching post. For more information on eligibility requirements for a CID, see www.asti.ie.

Salary

Your pay depends on:

- when you first started teaching in your contract
- your hours, and
- your teaching experience.

Teachers are paid based on an incremental salary scale or according to annual rates. If 2022 is your first year teaching, you will be on the first point of the post-January 2011 pay scale.

If you are employed by a voluntary secondary school or a community or comprehensive school, you will be paid directly each fortnight by the Department of Education from its offices in Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

If you are employed by a community college or vocational school, you will be paid by the relevant Education and Training Board (ETB) at least once a month out of funds allocated to it from the Department of Education. If you are employed privately by the school, you will be paid directly by the school.

Permanent teachers/full-time CID teachers are paid over 12 months and their salary is based on the relevant point on the appropriate scale. For full details, see www.asti.ie.

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.

Casual and non-casual teachers will accumulate statutory annual leave to the value of 12% of time worked. Teachers are required to take their statutory annual leave entitlement during the school closure periods, e.g., Christmas, Easter, summer.

Incremental credit

If you have previous teaching experience, in Ireland or abroad, you may be entitled to incremental credit. Teachers who are paid an incremental salary by the Department of Education may apply for incremental salary credit for previous service. Incremental credit is awarded at the discretion of the Department of Education for previous qualified service

only – for full details, see Circular 0029/2007. Teachers returning to Ireland from teaching abroad should note that there is currently no scheme for the award of incremental credit for private service given outside of the EU.

However, you should retain evidence of any teaching experience, even if it is not currently eligible for incremental credit, in case of future changes to the scheme.

All applications for the award of incremental credit must be made within two years from: 1. a teacher's initial appointment to a Department-paid teaching position, or 2. from the date of return to service in the case of those who are on career break.

You may also be entitled to incremental credit for relevant non-teaching experience.

In order to apply for incremental credit, the application form available in Circular 0029/2007 should be completed and submitted directly to the Department of Education, providing all the relevant/required information.

Getting involved in the ASTI

As an ASTI member, you can influence ASTI rules and policies. ASTI rules and policies are determined by annual or special conventions. Members may propose a motion to their branch for Convention. Members may seek election to attend Convention.

Each ASTI member is a member of a branch operating in the area in which they are employed or normally reside. Branch meetings discuss professional, educational and trade union issues of local and national importance to teachers and, through their branches, individual members may influence the policy direction of the union.

If you'd like to attend a branch meeting, ask your school steward when the next meeting is being held.

Making your voice heard

You can express your opinions by being actively involved in your local branch and by attending your branch meetings.

Your voice will be heard when you play an active part in your ASTI branch. Some of the advantages of getting involved are:

- you can influence the direction of the union through the election of your branch officers or by seeking election yourself
- when you have been a member for three consecutive years, you may seek election to the Central Executive Council (CEC), which is chosen at branch level in October/November and meets twice yearly – CEC members also attend Annual Convention
- when you have been a member for one year, you may act as a delegate to Annual Convention, which meets at Easter – delegates are elected at branch level in December and their attendance at Convention is funded by the union, and
- you may wish to seek election to Standing Committee, which is elected in February every two years (nomination in December). Any member of two years' standing may seek election to Standing Committee.

VOX POP

Experienced ASTI members were asked why they think new teachers should join the union.



Congratulations colleagues, you have chosen to inspire and educate the future and I'm sure the journey to this point has been an interesting one. Your next important choice is whether to join our union, the ASTI, and it is an equally important one. Schools and staffrooms are busy places. You might be feeling intimidated by the amount of information you need to process to function in your new school. You might be amazed by the amount of energy that you're using getting through the full school day. You are certainly working hard to put everything you have learned in your PME into action. Joining the ASTI means becoming part of a community that works for your welfare as a person and as a teaching professional. Expert advice is provided by your union officials on contractual and procedural matters, while branch officers and school stewards are available to help you out with queries that relate to your day-to-day teaching practices in your school. Being part of the ASTI offers you a platform to voice your opinion on important educational changes and access to a range of services that address your needs as your career evolves.

Orla O'Callaghan, school steward in Coláiste Muire, Co. Mayo



New teachers should join the ASTI for protection, particularly with the development of the fitness-to-teach hearings and the protection and insight it provides with regard to pensions, pay and contracts. Membership also provides a chance for members to voice their opinion and concerns with regard to union policy through the branch structure and Convention. Ordinary members can change things and it is important to realise this. Membership provides solidarity and the chance for members to develop personally and in their careers through service at a branch or national level.

Philip Synnott, school steward in Coolmine Community School, Dublin

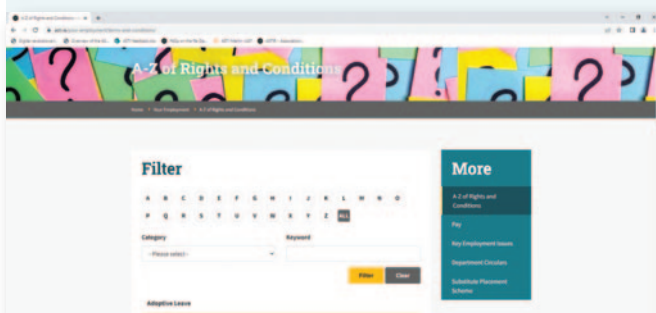


It is more important now than ever for all teachers in the classroom to have the protection of a union in the event of a spurious or vexatious complaint by a parent/guardian to the Teaching Council. Students in their final year can join for free and also new teaching members will have their fee waived for the first year. I strongly advise all teachers to join the ASTI as early as possible as they begin their new career.

Michael McGrath, Honorary National Organiser

Do you have more questions about your rights and conditions as a teacher?

The A-Z of rights and conditions on the ASTI website provides explanations of many of the key rights and conditions of teachers. If you can't find what you're looking for, or you need further advice, contact ASTI Head Office at info@asti.ie or 01-604 0160 for professional advice.



JOIN THE ASTI ONLINE

If you are starting your career this September, did you know you can join the ASTI online?

Simply click the join button on the top right of any page on the ASTI website and complete the online form.

ASTI membership is free for teachers in their first year of teaching and for student teachers. For Department-paid, ETBI-paid and school-paid teachers, make sure you have the following to hand before you begin the join online process:

- payroll number
- Teaching Council registration number
- names of ASTI proposer and seconder (ideally your proposer and seconder will be from your local branch, e.g., school colleagues), and
- membership numbers of proposer and seconder (this is not essential, but having these numbers helps us to process your application more quickly).

PROTECTING EDUCATION



ASTI representatives have made clear that the union will protect the integrity of Senior Cycle and the Irish education system.

“They [teachers] are moving because of the situation with housing and the cost of living in Dublin. They are looking around for opportunities. Teachers of Gaeilge, for instance, are in demand nationwide, so why wouldn’t you say to yourself ‘I can move to somewhere in the provinces and buy a house for half the price I am paying in Dublin and the salary will be the same’? When they look at the financial differences it is a no brainer.”

Kieran Christie, ASTI General Secretary

Irish Independent, July 10, 2022

“...Kieran Christie, the General Secretary of the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland (ASTI) was on the road to Sligo where he lives. He turned the car back to Dublin and dialled into the meeting from the union’s offices – delivering a flat ‘no’ to the proposal.”

Excerpt from the book *Pandemonium* by Jack Horgan-Jones and Hugh O’Connell, explaining the reaction to the proposal to throw out the plan to vaccinate keyworkers first against Covid-19 in favour of an age-based approach in April 2021.

“The international evidence is that if you’re dealing with these complex and sensitive issues with young people, you shouldn’t be doing it in groups of more than 15. Our classes are 25-30, it’s just too big, so that will have to be addressed when these programmes [RSE] are being rolled out in schools.”

Diarmaid de Paor, ASTI Deputy General Secretary

RTÉ News: Six One, RTÉ One, July 18, 2022

“At the Special Committee on Autism today we heard about students with very high needs, many of whom would be for instance non verbal. Some schools have very significant challenges on having a physical space, or more significantly, the real challenge is to have properly trained teachers able to meet those students’ needs ... we are back at the question: what is happening that we’re not in a position to say fáilte romhait isteach, we have the staff and we can get the staff quickly and we have the financing available to put in place the sensory room, etc., that is needed?”

Moira Leydon, ASTI Assistant General Secretary

Drivetime, RTÉ Radio One, July 5, 2022

“Ms Barry, who teaches at Loreto Secondary School, Fermoy, Co. Cork, said she thought of how far her students had progressed in sixth year and how they were able to handle the paper “so much better and do so much credit to themselves” compared with if they were sitting it at the end of fifth year. She said this was the kind of paper where students had to draw on what they had learned about current affairs, about turning 18 and adulthood. “They make a lot of progress in sixth year, it’s not just academically and the nuts and bolts of writing, but also a maturity. If all we do in sixth year is Shakespeare and poetry, I think we would really lose something,” she said.”

Kate Barry, ASTI English Subject Representative, discussing plans for Leaving Cert English paper 1 to move to the end of fifth year for students entering Senior Cycle in 2023

Irish Independent, June 8, 2022

“Association of Secondary Teachers’ Ireland (ASTI) subject representative Ann Loughnane felt the essay titles were less accessible than other years, and thought many students would have struggled. She felt in the context of a language exam, it could have been “hard to know where to begin or end” and some topics may have been more suited to a philosophy or history paper. Paper 1 also includes the listening comprehension and Ms Loughnane said higher level was “on the whole, fair, with some challenging questions”, while ordinary level was “fine”.”

Anne Loughnane, ASTI Gaeilge Subject Representative

Irish Independent, June 13, 2022

“Well, you’ve just given a timeline of events and I’d like to remind everybody that we triggered the review of our pay agreement on March 11, and inflation was 5.6%. It took until May for the Government to respond, by then it was 7%. The talks broke up as you said on June 17, by which stage inflation had hit 7.8%. At the end of June it was 9.1%. You can see the pattern of what’s happening here. Prices are rising at a rate that should only be described as alarming. People are finding themselves unable to meet their bills. Energy costs are frightening. I don’t know about you, but my July electricity bill was nearer to what I’d expect in November or December. So like all workers, we’re really worried about how we’re going to heat and light our homes this winter, how we’re going to cope with soaring food costs and other essential items.”

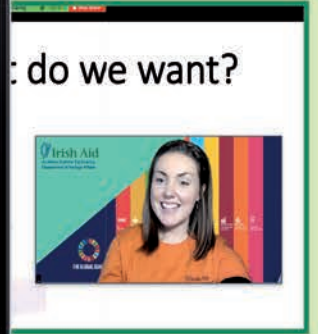
Miriam Duggan, ASTI President

Morning Ireland, RTÉ Radio 1, August 11, 2022

“This is across the whole public sector. Because we work to a particular schedule, with schools going back at the end of August, we have to begin to prepare early. So maybe we’re the first people out to signal that we will be balloting members, as the Congress of Trade Unions has asked all of us to do. But other unions will be coming out over the coming weeks and making the same statement I’m sure. Because workers are suffering, all of us are.”

Miriam Duggan, ASTI President

Newstalk Breakfast, Newstalk, August 11, 2022



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ASTI CELEBRATES OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS

ASTI teachers from around the country were recognised with ASTI Awards for their personal and professional achievements. This article features 2022 recipients.



Deirdre Mac Donald receives her ASTI Honorary Life Membership Award from then ASTI President Eamon Dennehy (left) and ASTI General Secretary Kieran Christie.



For her fascinating work examining academic and professional resilience in inner city Limerick, Helen Lowe was awarded an ASTI Bursary. Here she is pictured with then ASTI President Eamon Dennehy (left) and ASTI General Secretary Kieran Christie.

The ASTI held its first post-Covid awards ceremony in the Riu Plaza Gresham Hotel, Dublin, on Friday, May 27, where teachers were shown some well-earned recognition.

Honorary Life Membership

Two committed and long-serving ASTI members were given the Honorary Life Membership Award for 2022. Deirdre Mac Donald from Wexford and Pat Hurley from Cork were the two recipients of the Award. Honorary Life Membership is the most prestigious award that can be bestowed on an ASTI member. It is given in recognition of singular and exceptional service to the ASTI involving substantial and commendable personal input.

Deirdre served as President of the ASTI in 2019 and held many positions within the union before her election. A key focus of Deirdre's work has been teachers' health and well-being. Given the high level of stress-related illness in teaching, Deirdre's expertise is of great benefit to the ASTI, the teaching profession and beyond. She instigated the setting up of the Integrated Workplace Health Management Initiative – a union, school management and Health and Safety Authority (HSA) working group on teacher health and well-being.

Deirdre's first role within the union was as school steward in Wexford CBS. She also served as Wexford ASTI Branch Organiser and Branch

Chair. She was elected to the ASTI Central Executive Council in 2006. Deirdre served on a number of national ASTI committees including the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee, which she chaired. She was elected as Vice President of the ASTI in 2018.

Pat also served as President of the ASTI, with his term coinciding with the ASTI's centenary, a year during which the ASTI celebrated its key achievements over the previous 100 years, including a salary scheme for secondary teachers, security of tenure for teachers, and more. During his presidency, Pat hosted President Mary McAleese and poet Seamus Heaney at two very special ASTI centenary events.

Pat is a former Principal of Middleton CBS and held many different roles within the ASTI, including school steward, delegate to ASTI Annual Convention, and ASTI East Cork Branch Secretary. He was also a member of the ASTI Central Executive Council (CEC). He served as ASTI Vice President before taking on the role of ASTI President in August 2008.

His presidency began just weeks before Ireland was hit by the banking crisis and consequent recession. The bank bailout and subsequent education cuts became a key focus for Pat. He worked with his counterparts in the other teacher unions to organise the biggest teacher-led demonstration against the Government in the history of the State. In December 2008, well over 50,000 teachers, parents and school



For her remarkable work in her school and the surrounding community, Angela O'Connor received the ASTI Achievement Award from then ASTI President Eamon Dennehy (left) and ASTI General Secretary Kieran Christie.

managers marched to Government Buildings under the banner Schools United.

ASTI Achievement Award

Angela O'Connor, a teacher at Margaret Aylward Community School in Whitehall, Dublin, was the ASTI Achievement Award winner for 2022. She has worked in the school for more than four decades and organises fundraising activities with her students each year in support of local charitable organisations. These include Focus Ireland and a local women's refuge.

Angela's outstanding contribution, both in terms of the direct help it provides to good causes and in getting students involved in helping others, is an example to everyone in the school community. Her colleagues say that it is almost impossible to put into words the impact that she has had on generations of students and teachers in the school. Her generosity of spirit has touched the whole school community. Angela was presented with her award by ASTI General Secretary Kieran Christie.

ASTI Bursary

There were two recipients of the ASTI Bursary Award for 2021/22. The ASTI Bursary Award scheme assists ASTI members in undertaking further studies relating to teaching, education or trade unionism.

Helen Lowe is a teacher in St Munchin's College in Limerick, and was awarded an ASTI Bursary for undertaking a structured PhD in Education in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Her research will explore academic and professional resilience in inner city Limerick, focusing on social class mobility and its impacts on identity and personal belonging. The purpose of Helen's research is to investigate what gravitates individuals from specific backgrounds to the transformative effects of education or skills. The aim of the research is to increase the existing knowledge on the experiences and emotions of social class mobility, and to improve insights into the resilience of individuals who are socioeconomically disadvantaged.

Norma Lowney is a teacher at Limerick Educate Together Secondary School and also received an ASTI Bursary Award for a doctoral study



Then ASTI President Eamon Dennehy (left) and ASTI General Secretary Kieran Christie present Pat Hurley from Cork with the ASTI Honorary Life Membership Award.

she is engaged in on the topic of 'Lines of flight: the arts, rhizomes, ecologies and wellbeing in schools'.

Norma's study examines the role the arts can play in post-primary education through a reflective examination of her practice over a three-year period as the Junior Cycle Framework, with its emphasis on well-being, is implemented.

Norma experiments through interdisciplinary practice, building connections, creating intersections and curating the curriculum. The teacher and students explore the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the arts, and the well-being curriculum together in a collaborative environment.

Norma collaborates with colleagues within her school, outside artists, and organisations both nationally and internationally. Her research interrogates the artist-teacher-researcher paradigm and the messy processes involved in insider research. She reflects and responds through her art practice to her pedagogy and the research experience.

PJ Kennedy Award

The PJ Kennedy Award is presented to ASTI members who have given valuable service to the union at branch level. The 2022 recipients for the award were Jim Ahern (Kilkenny Branch), Mairead Bergin (Clare Branch), Nellie Campion (Kilkenny Branch), Marian Collins (Carrick-on-Shannon Branch), Annie Gallagher (Donegal Branch), Eddie Kenneally (Sligo Branch), Margaret Kent (Fermoy Branch), Jimmy Murphy (Enniscorthy Branch), and Nancy Twomey (Cork North Branch).

Thomas MacDonagh Medal

The Thomas MacDonagh Medal recognises outstanding service in a representative capacity within the ASTI or an outside body. It may also include an action or position taken by an ASTI member that has significant benefits for ASTI members. This year's recipient was Emer Brady (Dublin North 1 Branch).

Articles on the 2021 and 2020 ASTI Awards recipients will feature in the November and January issues of *ASTIR*.

WHO IS YOUR STANDING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE?

Standing Committee representative's role

Standing Committee is the ASTI governing body when Central Executive Council (CEC) is not in session. It makes policy decisions in accordance with the rules and Annual Convention decisions. Standing Committee members are elected by members every two years.



STANDING COMMITTEE 2022/2023

President:	Miriam Duggan	Honorary Treasurer:	Pádraig Murphy
Vice President:	Geraldine O'Brien	Honorary National Organiser:	Michael McGrath
Immediate Past President:	Eamon Dennehy		

Region	Branches in region	Name	Region	Branches in region	Name
1	Donegal, Iar Thuaisceart, Thir Chonaill, Sligo	Patrick Curley	9	Tipperary, Kilkenny, Roscrea	Donal Coughlan
2	West Mayo, East Mayo, Carrick-on-Shannon	Róisín Doyle	10	Laois, Kildare, Carlow	Eamon Ryan
3	Galway, Tuam, East Galway	Richie Bell	11	Longford, Tullamore, Navan, Athlone, Mullingar	David Wynne
4	Clare, Limerick South, Limerick North, Nenagh	Vacant	12	Dundalk, Monaghan, Cavan, Drogheda	Ray Nolan
5	Desmond, Kerry, West Limerick	Donal Cremin	13	Dublin South 2, Dublin South County	Chris Hind
6	Cork South, Carbery	Anne Loughnane	14	Stillorgan, Wicklow, Dún Laoghaire, Bray	Ray St. John
7	Fermoy, Cork North, East Cork, West Waterford, Dungarvan	Pat Knightly	15	Dublin South West, Dublin North West	Adrienne Healy
8	Wexford, New Ross, Enniscorthy, Waterford	Paul O'Reilly	16	Dublin North 1, Dublin North Central	Maria Markey-Green
			17	Dublin North East, Fingal	Seamus Keane
			18	Dublin South Central, Dublin South 1	Sinéad Corkery

MEET YOUR STANDING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

The ASTI Standing Committee is elected by ASTI members to make decisions about policy. We continue our profiles of Standing Committee representatives.



Ray Nolan

Teacher in St Mary's Diocesan School, Drogheda
Standing Committee Representative for Region 12: Cavan, Monaghan, Dundalk, Drogheda

I got involved in the ASTI because...

I've always thought it is important to be a member of a representative association/union no matter what

job you are in. When I joined St Mary's Diocesan School here in Drogheda, there were some very strong characters who were involved with the ASTI at school level, branch level and national level. Apart from anything else, every employee needs the protection of a union because you never know when you may need it. I got involved in ASTI activity after I had an issue with class sizes and when it was sorted, I realised that all members working together can sort most problems, while taking ASTI policy into account. I have since been school steward, branch secretary, branch chairman, CEC representative and, since last November, Standing Committee representative for Region 12.

The ASTI's biggest priorities right now are...

The ASTI has many challenges. The pay inequality that exists in every staffroom needs to be dealt with by the Government as it caused this problem. Senior Cycle reform is another issue the ASTI is dealing with. Embarking on a review of Senior Cycle without first completing a comprehensive review of the Junior Cycle is a nonsense. One would like to think that the mistakes made at Junior Cycle (and there were many) would not be repeated at Senior Cycle. On a positive note, the ASTI's response to the Covid-19 pandemic has shown that by working together, change for the better can be effected.

Something people may not know about me...

Before I went to Thomond College of Education in 1984, I served my time as an apprentice fitter/turner in Bord Na Móna. After teaching for a year, I went to live in Australia for nearly four years and worked in a naval dockyard in Sydney Harbour, overhauling submarines. I've been a Liverpool supporter since 1973 and enjoy heavy rock and classical music.

Sinéad Corkery



Deputy Principal and French teacher in St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School, Dublin 8
Standing Committee Representative for Region 18: Dublin South 1, Dublin South Central

I got involved in the ASTI because...

I come from a household where my mother, who was also a French teacher, was actively involved in the Nenagh Branch of the ASTI. As

soon as I was appointed to my first teaching position, she encouraged me to join my local branch and I started attending school meetings immediately. As a non-permanent teacher, I felt protected and knew that my ASTI colleagues were there to offer me support, advice, encouragement and most of all friendship.

In 2010 I was elected school steward and started attending the Dublin South Central Branch meetings. In 2012, I was elected to CEC, and in 2016 I became Branch Chairperson. I have served as school steward, regional organiser and honorary branch secretary for a number of years, and am honoured now to represent my region at Standing Committee.

The ASTI's biggest priorities right now are...

In my opinion, pay equality, Senior Cycle reform, the recruitment and retention of teachers, and teacher well-being are the biggest priorities. It is an untenable situation that the profession finds itself in, where colleagues are working alongside one another and being paid on significantly different scales. It is imperative that the high educational standards the Irish education system is known for are not jeopardised by introducing Senior Cycle reform before a full, comprehensive and independent review of the Junior Cycle is complete. Teacher and student voices must be listened to and heeded if any reform is to be a success.

The ever-increasing administrative burden on teachers arising from changes in education legislation and initiative overload are the main causes of stress among teachers. At a time when student well-being is being lauded, there is a sense among the profession that teacher well-being is being ignored.

Something people may not know about me...

I love France and all things French: the food, the culture, the language and the people. I love nothing more than spending my summer holidays in the Vendée region with family and friends soaking up all of the above. Also, I met my husband at a CEC meeting!

MEET THE NEW ASTI PRESIDENT

New ASTI President Miriam Duggan says she always wanted to be a teacher and that justice and fairness have always been key issues for her.



Where do you teach?

I teach in Rosmini Community School in Drumcondra.

Where did you go to second-level school?

I went to the convent school in Malahide for both my primary and secondary education. When I joined the school in low infants, it was tiny and some of our classes were in the convent drawing room and refectory. That small school became Malahide Community School and now has over 1,200 students.

Who was your most inspiring teacher?

Our teachers were amazing and so giving of their time and knowledge. With great affection, I remember Catherine Kilbride for her brilliant English classes and insistence on high standards, Peggy Burke who had us speaking German on our first day and attending cultural events in the Goethe Institute by fifth year, and Susie Hall who taught us French and how to speak up for ourselves.

Why did you become a teacher?

I love learning – those ‘eureka’ moments where a wispy filament of an idea becomes a coherent thought. Being able to access and reflect on the

thoughts and achievements of others is a truly profound experience because ideas change the world and how we see our place in it. What brought me into teaching was the love of ideas and the importance of intellectual development.

Did you always want to be a teacher or did you ever consider another career?

I always wanted to be a teacher – in fact, I asked for a blackboard as an eight year old and spent hours ‘teaching’ who knows what to my very patient dog. In the late 80s, I did other work while on a career break. During a spell with the International Managers Forum of Ireland, I devised a training course for aspirant music managers and realised that all roads were leading me back to education.

What is your favourite thing about being a teacher?

I love working with young people and teaching is full of very rewarding moments, such as when a student grasps a concept or takes an idea to a new place, which I hadn’t thought of. The thing I love most about teaching is encouraging my students to become confident fellow travellers – so that instead of me teaching them a poem or play, we explore it together.

What was your favourite subject in school?

I always loved studying English, both language and literature. At its finest, it's such a nuanced language where a word or a punctuation point can change the tone and therefore the meaning of a piece entirely. Literature is a lifelong love and full of reflections on what it means to be human at a particular moment or in a particular context. My favourite art forms are poetry and the short story, as the brevity of both requires intensely compressed language.

Why did you become involved in the ASTI?

Justice and fairness have always been huge issues for me, and I hated seeing anybody treated badly. Because I believe that workers should offer each other help and strength, I would have joined the trade union of whatever job I was doing. I chose the ASTI because I respected my colleagues who were members, and I admired the long tradition of our union in education. Once I joined the ASTI and I realised the wide range of our union's engagement with education and workers' rights, I knew that I had found my people.

What positions have you held within the ASTI prior to becoming president?

I have held a number of positions within the ASTI. At school level I have served as school steward. At various times I have been branch organiser, branch secretary and branch chair of the Dublin North 1 Branch. At national level, I have also been a regional organiser, a member of CEC and a member of Standing Committee. I have also served on a number of ASTI committees, including the Finance Committee, *ASTIR* Editorial Board, Equality Committee, Community and Comprehensive Advisory Committee, Steering Committee, and Safety, Health and Welfare Committee. I have also served as ASTI representative on external committees such as the Posts of Responsibility (POR) Appeals Committee. I've been ASTI representative for English on the NCCA course committee and ASTI representative for SPHE on the NCCA subject development committee.

What would you say to teachers starting their career this September wondering if they should join the ASTI?

I would urge any teacher who is not a member of a trade union to join the ASTI. Our union is very strong on serving our members, from advice about contracts to industrial relations issues, which can arise. We have been at the forefront of many of the advances in teachers' working conditions, most recently leading the campaign for equal pay and securing a reduction in teachers' class contact hours for professional time. Our Head Office staff provides terrific back-up, supporting our members with its wealth of knowledge/advice, and accessing legal advice for members when necessary.

What are your priorities for your year as ASTI President?

Securing a significant pay increase for teachers is my most immediate priority. Like other workers, teachers are struggling under the burden of rising costs of energy, fuel, food and other basics, and many are really worried about what the winter will bring.

Responding to the Minister's proposed changes to Senior Cycle is another chief objective this year. If they are to be implementable, any changes need to be based on rigorous, independent research, be properly resourced and take account of teachers' workload. This will be a very



Miriam hopes to staunchly defend teachers' rights as ASTI President.

important year for refining our response to the Minister's proposals, so it's really important that members are fully informed of developments.

I am also keenly aware that there are issues still to be resolved for teachers who started their careers post 2011, including the pay discrimination they've been working under. ASTI action has meant that some issues have been resolved, but significant issues remain. It is absolutely imperative that the outstanding issues are resolved for these teachers who have been disenfranchised for 11 years now.

Finally, in everything which the year of my presidency may bring, I hope I will continue to be a staunch defender of teachers' terms and conditions of work.

How would you encourage teachers starting their career this September?

Teaching can be a very pressurised job but it can also be immensely rewarding because we are capable of making a huge difference in the lives of those we teach. Teachers are very collegial so don't be shy about asking for help or advice – we all do it!

What are your interests outside of teaching?

Outside of teaching, my interests include gardening and travel.

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

Despite her political viewpoint, Liz Cheney is due massive respect for standing up for what is right despite intimidation and threats of deselection.

What is something that members may not know about you?

I am a baker. I studied part time in the National Bakery School in the basement of DIT Kevin Street for three years. It was an absolutely brilliant course and I loved every moment. So did my colleagues because every Thursday and Monday, I used to bring in loads of breads, cakes and pastries for them.

ASTI GLOBAL SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

The ASTI Global Solidarity Committee was formed at Convention 2022, to enable members to further promote social justice and global citizenship issues.



The ASTI Global Solidarity Committee. Back row (from left): Ann Piggot, Geraldine O'Brien (ASTI Vice President), Miriam Duggan (ASTI President), Andrew Phelan, and Sinéad Moore. Front row (from left): Moira Leydon (ASTI Assistant General Secretary), Noelle Moran (Chairperson), and Veronica Lavin.

ASTI Convention 2022 overwhelmingly adopted a motion supporting the establishment of a Global Solidarity Committee. Motion 62 provides a roadmap for the work of the Committee:

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

inequality, human rights abuses, denial of trade union rights and the climate crisis.

Global work

During the debate, speakers referenced the enormous amount of work going on in classrooms on social justice/global citizenship issues. The establishment of a Global Solidarity Committee for the union would enable members to demonstrate their own commitment to social justice and a better, fairer world.

The committee was established at Easter 2022 and has held initial meetings to discuss how it can best fulfil its aims. The following members are on the Global Solidarity Sub-Committee: Veronica Lavin, Sinéad Moore, Noelle Moran, Andrew Phelan, and Ann Piggott.

Moira Leydon, ASTI Assistant General Secretary: Education and Research, provides professional support to the committee.

TRAVEL TO SCHOOL

There are some attractive options available to teachers to reduce the cost of their commute.



Are environmental concerns or cost of living issues making you think about changing how you commute? The Travel Pass Scheme and Cycle To Work Scheme allow teachers to spread the cost of their commute across the year and reduce the amount of tax paid on their salary.

Travel Pass Scheme

What is the Travel Pass Scheme?

The Travel Pass Scheme allows teachers to have the cost of an annual TaxSaver Commuter Ticket deducted from their salary, without being liable for benefit-in-kind taxation.

This means that the employee will not pay tax, PRSI, universal social charge or pension-related deduction on the remuneration sacrificed. The salary sacrifice will have no impact on pension contributions or on pension benefits.

This is an annual scheme, meaning that a portion of salary will be deducted in each pay period for one year and this will be reflected in your payslip. You will not be able to cancel your participation in the Scheme prior to the end of the one-year period.

Who can avail of it?

Teachers applying for the Scheme must be employed in a permanent, contract of indefinite duration (CID), fixed-term, or regular part-time capacity at the date of application. This is to ensure that you will be employed until the salary sacrifice has been recouped.

How do I apply?

To apply for the Travel Pass Scheme, you must complete an application form, which outlines the options for annual tickets being offered by transport providers, sign an authorisation form and familiarise yourself with the conditions governing the Scheme.

These forms will be available in September and October each year on the Department's website (www.education.ie – Travel Pass). The closing date for application to the Scheme is the first working day in November. This closing date will be strictly adhered to.

How will I get my pass?

On receipt of the completed application and authorisation forms, the Department will place an order with transport providers for the issue of annual passes in respect of the employee who opted to take up the Scheme. The Department will then issue the pass to each employee. It is important to note that the travel pass is issued to the applicant by registered post. It is therefore essential that the address supplied on the application form is

the address where the applicant will be, in order to accept delivery. A school address should not be used for this purpose.

Cycle to Work Scheme

What is the Cycle to Work Scheme?

The Cycle to Work Scheme allows an employer to purchase a new bicycle or e-bike and/or bicycle safety equipment once every four years on behalf of an employee. The cost of the bike will then be recouped from the employee's salary, without them being liable for benefit-in-kind taxation.

The total cost of the bicycle and/or bicycle safety equipment as stated on the invoice from the supplier will be deducted from the employee's salary, and they will not pay income tax, PRSI, or universal social charge on the remuneration sacrificed. The salary sacrifice will have no impact on pension contributions or on pension benefits.

For pedelecs or ebikes and related safety equipment the limit is €1,500. For other bicycles and related safety equipment the limit is now €1,250.

All salary deductions must be completed by the last payroll in October of the calendar year in which they commence, although an employee may choose to complete the salary deductions over a shorter period.

Who can avail of it?

Teachers applying for the Scheme must be employed in a permanent, contract of indefinite duration (CID), fixed-term, or regular part-time capacity at the date of application. This is to ensure that you will be employed until the salary sacrifice has been recouped.

How do I apply?

Teachers can apply for the Cycle to Work Scheme using the application form at Appendix 2 of Circular 0056/2020. The application form must be completed in conjunction with your chosen supplier. The supplier must attach the relevant invoice for the bicycle or safety equipment. Applications may be submitted at any time of the year.

Applicants should also read and agree to the conditions governing the Scheme and sign an authorisation form, which sets out the salary sacrifice for the items requested, i.e., the total cost of the bicycle and/or bicycle safety equipment as stated on the invoice.

How do I get my bike?

Once the salary deduction arrangements have been put in place, payment will issue to the supplier and the bicycle/cycle safety equipment may be collected from the supplier. You will be notified in writing when the deductions will commence.

RSTA 60 Bliain ag Fás

Goodbyes and welcomes

Goodbye to retiring staff and those on the move; welcome to new teachers fresh from college and elsewhere. With the biggest rise in the population since 1841, there are students arriving from many countries, which adds to the rich diversity of our schools. These include those who have made Ireland their home, in addition to refugees, asylum seekers and those from war-torn Ukraine.

RSTA AGM/Conference

After an absence of two years, the AGM/Conference of the RSTA took place in Killarney in early May. This marked the 60th year of the RSTA, which was founded at an invitation of the ASTI in 1962 to a group of retired teachers who worked assiduously for pension parity with serving teachers. This is still the challenge today, and is supported by the teaching unions and the Alliance of Retired Public Servants, who have access to the Minister's office.

The election of the incoming President, Ms Susie Hall, marked a significant moment in the AGM agenda. A former President of ASTI and an Assistant Principal of Malahide Community School, her talents and wide experience, in the service of RSTA, will be welcomed throughout the Association.

The formal dinner on this occasion was attended by the then ASTI President, Eamon Dennehy, and Kieran Christie, General Secretary, who



From left: Padraic O'Doherty (outgoing RSTA President), Susie Hall (incoming RSTA President), and Marcella Fahy, RSTA Cork.

reassured the attendees of the need to maintain the present parity arrangements, which is ASTI policy. A commemorative bell replicating the original used by the RSTA founding members was presented to each branch by their Dublin colleagues. This generous act is gratefully appreciated by the Association.

RSTA 60

This milestone anniversary is an opportunity to reach out to retired colleagues. A reception this autumn is expected to be held in each branch to welcome both newly retired members and those who are not yet members from previous years. The work of members, over the years, who have supported the RSTA through membership, at national and branch level, will be acknowledged and celebrated.

RSTA membership application/renewal

Name:

Address:

Home phone:

Mobile:

Email:

RSTA branch:

Annual subscription: €24
Annual renewal date: September 1

Payment options: Bank standing order (recommended by RSTA) or cheque (payable to RSTA)

Return to: Mrs Muriel McNicholas, Cordarragh, Kiltimagh, Claremorris, Co. Mayo.

Contact: murielmcnicholas@gmail.com or 085-118 1330

The personal information requested here is required to administer your membership of the RSTA. It is used by the RSTA in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). See the RSTA Data Protection and Privacy Policy on the RSTA website – www.rsta.ie.

Standing order set-up form

To: The Manager (Bank name and full address)

I hereby authorise and request you to DEBIT my account:

Account name/s:

IBAN

BIC

And to credit the account of:

RETIRED SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

IBAN: IE55 AIBK 9323 6112 7290 80 (**BIC:** AIBKIE2D)

with the amount of **€24** (twenty four Euro)

Start Date: ___/___/20___ **Frequency:** Annually until further notice

Reference: (To identify member's subscription on RSTA bank statement):

Member name

Signature: Date: ___/___/20___

Education and Training Bursary Scheme 2022-2023

Applications are open for the Education and Training Bursary Scheme 2022-2023 to fund practical supports for educational and career development for young people who were previously in the care of Tusla.

The scheme, which is now in its second year, provides financial support to those over 18 years to help them achieve their career goals. Care-experienced young people, who are not receiving financial support for their education from any other State source, can apply for a bursary of up to €5,000 to fund a course or to purchase necessary materials or hardware.

A total of €750,000 of dormant accounts funding was secured in 2022 by Tusla and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to provide educational supports for children in care and young people in aftercare.

Applications for the Education and Training Bursary Scheme 2022-2023 are open until October 28, 2022. For further information, visit www.tusla.ie or email educationbursary@tusla.ie.

FÉILTE



FÉILTE, the festival that celebrates the teaching profession, is returning with a live hybrid event on Saturday, October 1, 2022 at The Helix, Dublin, and online. Declan Coyle is the keynote speaker this year. Declan is the author of the number one bestselling book, *The Green Platform*, an innovative 'inner software' methodology that has inspired and motivated many across the globe.

The day will include a range of teacher-led showcases and interactive workshops, as well as TeachMeet, StudentMeet, LeadershipMeet, Comhrá Taighde, live entertainment, and much more.

Attendance is free; however, a refundable charge of €14.99 will be applied to your card.

Please ensure that your ticket is scanned upon arrival at FÉILTE 2022 so that your deposit is refunded. Your ticket charge will be refunded to the same card that was used to place the deposit 10-15 working days after FÉILTE 2022.

Apply for your tickets now and celebrate the teaching profession at www.teachingcouncil.ie.

Follow @TeachingCouncil and @FEILTE on Twitter and join the conversation by using #FEILTE.

ASTI Scholarship Award

The ASTI Scholarship Award is open to ASTI members who are undertaking or wish to undertake further third-level studies. The programme of study can be either full-time or part-time.

Two successful applicants will receive €2,000 each to fund their studies. Applications will be determined by a selection committee comprised of ASTI officers. The criteria for selection are:

- relevance of proposed course to the professional lives of teachers and second-level education;
- potential for study to inform the ongoing policy agenda and work of the ASTI, and
- potential for the research to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Due to Covid-19 circumstances, we are extending the closing date to September 30, 2022. Download an application form at www.asti.ie.

Back to school lunch videos

The National Dairy Council (NDC) has offered advice on second-level school students' lunchboxes. Most Irish school-going teenagers eat a packed lunch from home, and making sure that it is healthy and balanced is important to help support them during the busy school day, and during these years of rapid growth and development.

Sinéad Delahunty of Delicious and registered dietitian Evan Lynch worked with the NDC to produce special videos with advice on creating nutritious, tasty, affordable and above all quick back to school lunches that any teenager can get stuck into. These are available to view at www.ndc.ie.



World Teachers' Day



October 5 is World Teachers' Day – a UNESCO/International Labour Organisation (ILO) event, which recognises the importance of education and the work of teachers. The theme of World Teachers' Day 2022 is Teachers at the Heart of Education Recovery. ASTI school staff can organise a staffroom cake during the week of World Teachers' Day and recoup the cost by submitting receipts directly to their branch treasurer. This offers ASTI staff an opportunity to welcome new members to the ASTI.

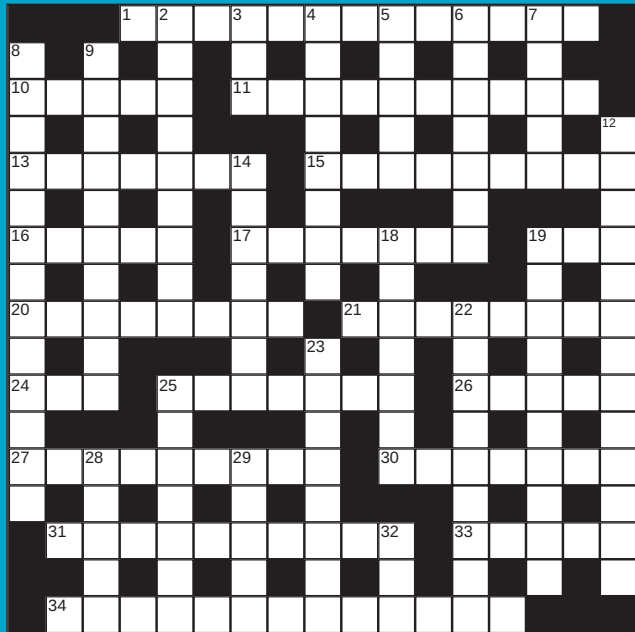


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ASTIR CROSSWORD NO. 2204

The winner will receive €250 in One4All vouchers.

If you wish to keep your copy of *ASTIR* intact you may send a photocopy of the crossword. One entry only per member.



Name

School

Address

ASTI Branch

Entries to: ASTIR Crossword No. 2204,
Think Media, The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.

To arrive by: Friday, September 23, 2022

ACROSS

1. Inflammatory naming ceremony? (7,2,4)
10. Main artery in the body. (5)
11. See milliner spar, we hear, for a yapper. (10)
13. About a flatfish, or so we hear. (7)
15. Sounds like sphere is dense for type of missile. (9)
16. It's dark, for another thing. (5)
17. Possibly altered foot-pedal. (7)
19. Could be gold, milky or cross. (3)
20. Miss the Spanish lass. (8)
21. Huge, monstrous creature. (8)
24. Loyalist organisation founded in 1971. (1,1,1)
25. Drug taken from editors. (7)
26. Simple advice to beseech. (5)
27. About a cooking stove, or so we hear. (9)
30. Shoeless Hanoverians in state of oblivion. (7)
31. Cautious, conscientious, painstaking. (10)
33. Awaiting other metal block. (5)
34. Substance or device used to remove limescale. (5, 8)

DOWN

2. Fine grained form of gypsum used for carving. (9)
3. Provide this to show concern. (1,1,1)
4. Condition of great disorder. (8)
5. Pertaining to the number eight. (5)
6. Stub out butterflies. That's rich! (7)
7. What the chickens come home to. (5)
8. Above board, straightforward, by the book. (4,3,6)
9. Lies or rumours serving to influence public opinion. (10)
12. Campfire might lead to this military policy. (8,5)
14. Give a legal right to. (7)
18. Historic German city bombed in 1945. (7)
19. Mag Osborne right back at you. (10)
22. Know-how, proficiency, skill. (9)
23. Romulus without Remus could be a terrorist. (4,4)
25. Rinsed a little fish. (7)
28. Clare native in stadium. (5)
29. They may be common, or compound, or abstract. (5)
32. Use this in court action. (3)

Solutions to ASTIR Crossword No. 2203

ACROSS	DOWN
1. From head to toe	2. Ridge tile
10. Upend	3. Mac
11. Colourless	4. Eclectic
13. Stipend	5. Deuce
15. Clergyman	6. Obligated
16. Haiti	7. Of Sam
17. Bridged	8. Rubs shoulders
19. Age	9. Semicircle
20. Unclench	12. On bended knees
21. Animated	14. Debacle
24. Dye	18. Ginseng
25. Acetate	19. Art nouveau
26. Lloyd	22. Milkshake
27. Retractor	23. Garrotte
30. Gas oven	25. Anaemic
31. Anemometer	28. Tango
33. Adage	29. Tempo
34. Touch one's toes	32. Rat

Did you miss?

Unlocking MyUnion 11
New to teaching 15

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the winner of Crossword No. 2203:
Jennifer Harte, Coláiste Mhichíl
CBS Sexton Street, Limerick.
Limerick Branch

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- We fight to protect your working conditions and professional integrity
- We have negotiated a range of financial offers for you
- We consult with you through surveys, ballots and our representative network
- We bring you the latest news about your profession through our website, social media, publications, email and texts
- We provide training
- We achieved 2-year CIDs
- We took strike action to advance equal pay for post 2010 entrants to teaching
- We are the only union working exclusively for second-level teachers

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see www.asti.ie 1800 418400

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