

Vote YES in Senior Cycle Addendum ballot

Following negotiations between ASTI representatives and the Department of Education and Youth, proposals for enhanced provisions (Addendum) for implementation of Senior Cycle Redevelopment have emerged.

Continued on page 2

Message from President

Dear members,

You are being asked to vote in a ballot on the document *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures and Addendum*, following recent negotiations between the ASTI and the Department of Education and Youth.

The Central Executive Council (CEC) has decided to ballot members, and recommends that members vote YES.

This recommendation reflects the view that, while the proposals are not perfect, the Addendum represents real and tangible progress on the issues you raised, including:

- Robust legal protection for teachers in relation to the authentication of student coursework.
- Pilot programme for laboratory support assistants and potentially broader practical and digital supports.
- Additional financial supports for schools.
- Improvements in training.
- A workload working group and an AI taskforce which includes ASTI representation.
- 14 Croke Park Hours to be used on a high-trust teacher-led basis (replacing the 10 hours which are subject to appropriate verification and accountability).

Finally, acceptance of the proposals is linked to the delivery of the **3% local bargaining pay adjustment** under the current public service pay agreement. We will get a 3% pay adjustment upon acceptance, amounting to **€1,500 per year at the bottom of the scale and €2,700 at the top.**

Colleagues, this is not a perfect agreement. It does not resolve every concern, but it does represent progress, achieved through your union's sustained engagement and pressure.

The decision now rests with you.

Padraig Curley
ASTI President

See inside:

Key Issues

Page 2

Background to Ballot

Page 3

Summary of Proposals

Page 5

Frequently Asked Questions

Page 6



PADRAIG CURLEY
ASTI President



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14 high-trust teacher-led

Croke Park hours

(replacing the 10 hours

which are subject to

verification)

ASTI members can now

apply for Senior Cycle

Posts of Responsibility.

These posts are

permanent and attract

an allowance and

reduced contact hours

Continued from page 1

The ASTI Central Executive Council is recommending that members vote YES to accept the proposals in a ballot of ASTI members which will take place in May.

Enhanced provisions include:

- Defined legal protection for teachers / principals regarding authentication of coursework
- A laboratory and digital support assistants pilot scheme
- A €2 million implementation grant for schools
- Additional targeted training for science teachers
- Clear parameters for assessment in Tranches 4 and 5, ensuring teachers know exactly what to expect in terms of weightings for orals / aural, etc

These measures build upon the measures already conceded in the document *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures*, including:

- Posts of Responsibility – L1 and L2 coordinator and SCR coordinator posts to support the implementation of Senior Cycle Redevelopment. These posts include ex quota dedicated time alleviation and are permanent.
- Workload Working Group – to identify and implement mitigating measures regarding workload associated with Senior Cycle Redevelopment.
- AI Taskforce – to examine implications of AI and inform policy regarding AI.
- Croke Park Hours – 14 non-whole school hours on a high trust basis.
- Post-Primary Implementation Group (PPIG) – to deal with Senior Cycle Redevelopment matters in a timely manner.

KEY ISSUES

Posts of Responsibility

Recently, the Department of Education and Youth issued two Circular Letters 0037/2026 and 0038/2026.

Under their terms, ASTI members were prevented from applying for the posts provided in schools from September, associated with Senior Cycle Redevelopment, because ASTI had rejected the *Senior Cycle Redevelopment Implementation Support Measures (SCRISM)* document in a ballot of members in May 2025.

In light of ASTI having negotiated an Addendum to the Senior Cycle Redevelopment document and the ASTI undertaking a ballot, ASTI members are now eligible to apply for these posts.

However, appointment to these posts is subject to acceptance of the Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures and Addendum.

There is no bar now that will prevent applications and a recruitment process proceeding, with eligibility criteria for appointment being considered at the end of a recruitment process.

Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES

Legal Protection

The Addendum document provides defined legal protection for teachers and principals regarding the authentication of coursework. As long as a teacher acts in “good faith” and with “reasonable belief” when reporting suspected inauthentic work, the State accepts liability for the Minister’s subsequent decisions. This shields teachers from personal legal consequences.

ASTI has received legal advice on this matter. Key excerpts are as follows: “It is positive that the Department/SEC have included wording at page 28 of the Rules that a teacher will not be liable under the Rules for any consequences arising from a subsequent decision of the Minister that there has been, or as the case may be that there has not been, a breach of the regulations relating to coursework so long as the report is made based on a reasonable belief / in good faith.

“The confirmation in the Rules and subsequent confirmation in the Addendum does not extend to a legal indemnity nevertheless, the additional confirmations from the Department are positive.

“In legal terms any action correctly brought by or on behalf of a candidate would be made against the decision of the Minister and not against the individual teacher / principal. The Department acknowledges in the Rules and the Addendum that a teacher shall not be liable in such circumstances.

“The protections offered by the Department will not (nor could any protection) prevent legal proceedings being brought by or on behalf of a candidate against a teacher / principal seeking to hold the teacher / principal liable for any damage purportedly caused to the candidate. In such circumstances, assuming a teacher has acted reasonably, the teacher would seek an indemnity from the Minister by serving a standard notice of indemnity in the proceedings in the normal way on the Minister or seek to join the Minister as a co-defendant / third party to the proceedings seeking to pass the liability for the claim on to the Minister.

“Overall, we consider the protections offered by the Department to be positive although not a full legal indemnity. The prospect of litigation against members provided they have acted reasonably is likely to be low risk. In such circumstances and in the unlikely event of legal proceedings there are established legal mechanisms available whereby an indemnity claim may be made against the Minister in respect of withholding claims made by the Minister.”

Background to ballot

In a ballot of members in May 2025, ASTI rejected the provisions of a document entitled *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures*.

Members also voted in favour of industrial action, if necessary, up to and including strike action, in opposition to the accelerated implementation of the Senior Cycle Redevelopment Programme.

In a parallel ballot, the Teachers’ Union of Ireland (TUI) voted to accept the terms as set out in the *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures*.

ASTI Standing Committee decided in June 2025, in the first instance, to seek resolution of the issues of concern to teachers by invoking the dispute resolution mechanisms set out at Chapter 5 of the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026.



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The Addendum provides
new legal protection
which shields teachers
and principals

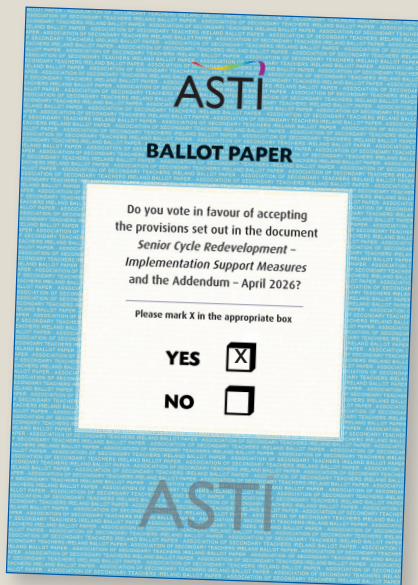


Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES



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Discussions took place with the Department of Education and Youth, and later with Workplace Relations Commission facilitation, over several months. The matter has now been referred to the Joint Implementation Committee of the Public Service Agreement (PSA) 2024-2026.

On 16th April 2026, direct negotiations between ASTI and the Department of Education and Youth took place. The engagement was without prejudice to the dispute resolution process currently in train regarding ASTI's claim of alleged breaches of the Public Service Agreement. The negotiations produced proposals for enhanced provisions to be included in an Addendum to the Senior Cycle Redevelopment document.

The benefits of agreement to the *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures* document, together with the Addendum, are dependent on parties to it approving the agreement and complying with it.

The Central Executive Council (CEC) of ASTI met on the 25th April, 2026. It decided to ballot ASTI members on the document *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures and Addendum with a recommendation to accept.*

Accordingly, a ballot of members on the *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures and Addendum* is being held.

The full text of *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures and Addendum* can be accessed at www.asti.ie/ballot

The question on the ballot paper will be as follows:

Do you vote in favour of accepting the provisions set out in the document Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures and the Addendum dated 17th April, 2026?

Please use your voice

The closing date for the return of completed ballot papers is 5.30p.m. Friday, May 29th. Post can take a number of days. Please post early to ensure all votes are counted.

Guidance for School Stewards: Ballot material and instructions for conducting this school-based ballot are being sent to School Stewards. In addition, an instructional video for School Stewards is available on the ASTI website www.asti.ie

ASTI wishes to thank School Stewards for distribution and collection of ballot material in their schools. School Stewards play a vital role in ensuring ASTI ballots are conducted in an efficient and transparent manner.

It is vital that all members who are entitled to vote, participate in the ballot.

Have your voice heard – make sure you vote: Members should make sure to visit our website www.asti.ie/ballot regularly for latest news and further information.

Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES

Summary of proposals within the Addendum to the Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures / Addendum

The negotiation of the Addendum to the *Senior Cycle Redevelopment - Implementation Support Measures (SCRISM)* addresses some of the specific professional concerns of ASTI members. It builds on the original framework, introducing some new resources, enhanced legal safeguards, and structured influence for teachers.

The changes arising from the Addendum include:

The Addendum provides specific measures for classroom teachers:

Legal Protection: The document provides defined legal protection for teachers and principals regarding the authentication of coursework. As long as a teacher acts in “good faith” and with “reasonable belief” when reporting suspected inauthentic work, the State accepts liability for the Minister’s subsequent decisions. This shields teachers from personal legal consequences.

ASTI has received legal advice on this matter. Key experts of this legal advice are available on page 3 of this Nuacht.

Training: Science teachers will receive further targeted training on health and safety associated with the introduction of the new Senior Cycle subject specifications, through Oide.

Grant Reviews: The annual science subject grant will be formally reviewed following the first examinations in Tranche 1.

Oide Professional Training Feedback: Teachers will now provide feedback on Oide professional training separately, rather than only on the day of the event. This allows for more considered and detailed reflection on the quality of support being provided.

Clarity on Assessment Weightings: The Addendum provides clear parameters for assessment in Tranches 4 and 5, ensuring teachers know exactly what to expect in terms of weightings for orals / aurals, etc.

Irish: Confirmed minimum 40% weighting for oral assessment.

Modern Foreign Languages: A balanced structure of minimum 45% written, minimum 20% oral, and minimum 20% aural, providing a consistent framework for language teachers.

The Addendum provides additional resources for schools:

Laboratory Support Assistants: The Department has committed to an action research pilot project to introduce laboratory assistants. This aims to reduce the preparatory burden on science teachers and could open the door, long term, to assistants across all practical subjects.

Digital and Practical Support: The scope of this pilot may extend to provide digital support and assistance for other subjects with practical components.

€2 Million Implementation Grant: A new total fund of €2 million will be distributed to schools. Crucially, schools have local discretion on how to use this money to best support the enactment of the new Senior Cycle. ASTI has been informed that this will average almost €3,000 per school.

The Addendum reiterates some of the original SCRISM positive aspects:

Croke Park Hours: The rebalancing of these hours (as per Circular 0068/2025) allows for 14 trust-based-model teacher-led hours, acknowledging professional autonomy for planning etc.

Workload Working Group: This group will identify and implement mitigating measures to specifically address teacher concerns regarding the pressure of the new curriculum.



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ASTI is recommending
that members vote YES to
accept the new proposals



Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES



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Completed ballot papers

must be received by ASTI

Head Office by 5.30p.m.

Friday May 29th



AI Taskforce: ASTI will have a seat at the table to examine the implications of Artificial Intelligence, ensuring that policy on AI in the classroom is informed by those teaching on the frontline.

Post-Primary Implementation Group (PPIG): This group provides a direct channel for ASTI representatives to deal with implementation matters in a “timely and responsive manner”.

Key Previous Achievements of ASTI Senior Cycle Redevelopment Campaign:

- Reversal by Minister for Education in 2023, ensuring that additional assessment components will be externally assessed by the SEC.
- Reversal of plans for students to sit Leaving Certificate Paper 1 in both English and Irish at the end of fifth year.
- One year CID qualification period for ASTI members.
- Access to consultation material in NCCA Subject Development Groups.

Frequently Asked Questions

If I vote NO in this ballot, am I voting to stop Senior Cycle Redevelopment?

No. Senior Cycle Redevelopment has already commenced and will continue irrespective of the outcome of this ballot. This ballot focuses solely on the acceptance or rejection of the support measures.

Is the ASTI making any recommendation to members on how to cast their votes?

ASTI is recommending members vote YES.

What is meant by local bargaining?

A local bargaining clause is included in the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026. *Employers and trade unions may negotiate additional changes in rates of pay and / or conditions of employment up to a maximum of 3% of the basic pay cost, inclusive of allowances in the nature of pay, of the particular grade, group or category of employee or bargaining unit. This may include proposals involving changes in structures, work practices or other conditions of service. Implementation of adjustments will be on a phased basis. While 1% was payable on 1st September 2025, the remaining balance of 2% will be due to be implemented during the term of the next successor agreement.*

What do ASTI members have to do to secure the pay increases associated with local bargaining?

ASTI members must vote YES in this ballot and must cooperate with the implementation of the Senior Cycle Redevelopment programme in respect of the aspects set out in Paragraph 5.1 of the *Senior Cycle Redevelopment Implementation Support Measures* document. (www.asti.ie/ballot)

How and to whom will the local bargaining payments be made?

At time of going to press, it is not clear how payments associated with the local bargaining process will be made if agreement is reached. ASTI has advocated strongly that each percentage increase should be incorporated into salary with the consequent knock-on effect that it will also apply as increases to pensions of retired teachers, thus protecting pension parity. ASTI will continue to press on this matter and expects finality to emerge in the coming weeks across the public sector. However, it must be noted that there is also a suggestion that it may be applied by way of an allowance for each serving teacher, which would not have the same effect for retired teachers. In that scenario, it will feed through to the pensions of serving teachers when they retire but it is unlikely to be applicable to the pensions of those already retired.

Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES

What are the implications of the potential outcomes of the ballot?

The ballot asks members are they in favour of accepting the provisions set out in the SCRISM and Addendum.

If the ballot secures a majority YES vote, the provisions of the SCRISM and Addendum will apply to all ASTI members.

If the ballot outcome is NO, ASTI will continue to seek to resolve outstanding issues within the confines of the Dispute Resolution Mechanism of the PSA 2024-2026.

It will be open to the ASTI to ballot on industrial action to seek to resolve outstanding issues if the ballot is rejected.

Who has a vote?

All members who are serving teachers and all honorary life/emeritus /student members may vote.

Reasons to Vote YES:

The Addendum constitutes a significant improvement on the provisions of the original *Senior Cycle Redevelopment Implementation Support Measures*.

- The proposals provide for payment of the 3% pay increase due under the Local Bargaining provision of the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026 for co-operation with Senior Cycle and the related productivity associated with this significant reform.
- The proposals provide for an additional
 - (a) dedicated Post of Responsibility at AP1 or AP2 level in every school to support Senior Cycle redevelopment and another additional dedicated Post of Responsibility for schools offering Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning programmes.
 - (b) a taskforce to examine Artificial Intelligence in teaching, learning and assessment relevant to Senior Cycle Redevelopment.
 - (c) a teachers' workload working group to identify the approach needed to address teachers' concerns and also provide for setting up of a working group on teachers' right to disconnect.
- The proposals provide for a rebalancing of the 'Croke Park' hours, which replaces the 10 non-whole school teacher-led activities with 14 hours on a high-trust model and allows that these activities be related to Senior Cycle.
- The Addendum provides clarification on defined legal protection for teachers and principals regarding the authentication of coursework. As long as a teacher acts in "good faith" and with "reasonable belief" when reporting suspected inauthentic work, the State accepts liability for the Minister's subsequent decisions. This shields teachers from personal legal consequences.
- A Laboratory Support Assistants and Digital and Practical Supports pilot scheme will be introduced. This may extend in time to provide digital support and assistance for other subjects with practical components.
- A €2 Million Implementation Grant will be distributed to schools.
- Science teachers will receive further targeted training on Health and Safety associated with the introduction of the new Senior Cycle subject specifications and there is also a provision where teachers will now provide feedback on Oide professional training separately, rather than only on the day of the event. This allows for more considered and detailed reflection on the quality of support being provided.



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Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES



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ASTI is recommending
that members vote YES to
accept the new proposals



- The proposals provide clear parameters for assessment in Tranches 4 and 5, ensuring teachers know exactly what to expect:
 - (a) **Irish:** Confirmed minimum 40% weighting for oral assessment.
 - (b) **Modern Foreign Languages:** A balanced structure of 45% written, 20% oral, and 20% aural, providing a consistent framework for language teachers.
 - (c) subject specifications, AAC guidelines, sample examination papers, and sample AAC briefs will be made available in the school year prior to the specifications being implemented in schools.
 - (d) early rapid reviews of new and revised subjects will take place following the completion of the first 2-year cycle in each subject.

Reasons to Vote NO:

- The productivity being demanded of teachers under the local bargaining clause of the Public Service Agreement 2024 – 2026, leading to an award of 3% spanning two public service agreements is extensive. Unfortunately, the authority to prescribe the curriculum rests with the Minister.
- The Senior Cycle Redevelopment Programme as announced in 2022 is intended to be based on “Equity and Excellence for All”. However, core inequalities that are in place in the second-level system still exist.
- The lack of clarity regarding whether the 3% local bargaining payments will apply to all is unacceptable. If it is applied as an allowance, it will be in breach of pension parity.
- The document *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures and the Addendum* does not address the problem whereby teachers consider that insufficient core training is being provided in some subjects.
- The proposal in the document *Senior Cycle Redevelopment – Implementation Support Measures and the Addendum* to set up a taskforce to examine Artificial Intelligence in teaching, learning and assessment relevant to Senior Cycle Redevelopment is belated and as such does little to allay the serious concerns members have relating to Artificial Intelligence in these areas.
- The proposal that early rapid reviews of new and revised subjects will take place following the completion of the first 2-year cycle in each subject and that the appropriateness of the allocation of 40% of available marks to additional assessment components will be a specific area of focus will be too late for that cohort and gives no guarantees that meaningful change will be implemented.
- The proposal to provide for a rebalancing of the ‘Croke Park’ hours, which replaces the 10 non-whole school teacher-led activities hours to 14 trust-based model hours and allows that these activities be related to Senior Cycle is insufficient and does not address the need for teachers to be provided with sufficient time to implement the Senior Cycle Redevelopment programme.

Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES