

NUAUGHT

Issue No. 3 – September 2026

BALLOT SPECIAL

Defending Living Standards: National Ballot for Industrial Action 2026

ASTI is conducting a ballot of members in September for potential industrial action, unless significant progress on teachers' pay is made as a matter of urgency with Government.

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Message from ASTI President, Richie Bell

Dear ASTI member,

Teachers, like the rest of society, continue to struggle with a persistent cost-of-living crisis. The 1% increases paid earlier this year have already been wiped out by inflation, leaving members working for less in real terms.

The Public Service Agreement 2024-2026 expired at the end of June and exploratory talks between the ICTU Public Services Committee and the Department of Public Expenditure failed to establish a basis for formal negotiations. The Government did not set out any credible commitment to a pay strategy that would protect the living standards of public servants over the lifetime of a new multi-annual agreement.

In these circumstances, ASTI has decided to ballot members on taking industrial action, in conjunction with our fellow teacher unions and the wider public sector unions in ICTU. We will not allow our members to be left behind while costs continue to rise.

Now more than ever, your participation in this ASTI ballot is vital. I would encourage you to keep up to date through your School Steward, your Branch and Standing Committee representatives, and our website. We must speak as one voice in defence of teachers' living standards and the future of our profession.

I wish you every success in the year ahead in your personal and professional lives.

Richie Bell
ASTI President

The ASTI ballot is being
conducted as part of a
co-ordinated campaign
by public sector unions



RICHIE BELL
ASTI President

Completed ballot papers
must be received by ASTI
Head Office by
**5.30 pm on Wednesday,
September 23rd**

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Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES



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Vote YES

Completed ballot papers
must be received by ASTI

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The ASTI is conducting a ballot on industrial action in line with other public sector trade unions.

This decision follows the Government's failure to table a meaningful offer on pay following the expiry of the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026 at the end of June. It was taken in response to a request from the ICTU Public Services Committee (PSC) to all its affiliates to hold ballots and prepare for a co-ordinated campaign uniting public sector unions in seeking pay increases to protect living standards against a continuing cost-of-living crisis.

The ballot is also protective in nature. It is intended to ensure that members are in a position to respond should negotiations on a new agreement fail to produce an acceptable outcome, or should changes to work practices be imposed without union agreement.

The imperative to substantially improve public service pay comes against a background of sustained inflation, which has eroded the value of the 1% increases paid in February and June 2026.

Why is this ballot happening?

The objective is to secure an acceptable outcome on pay and to protect members' terms and conditions following the expiry of the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026.

Over recent weeks, exploratory talks took place between the Public Services Committee of ICTU and officials from the Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation. These discussions failed to establish the basis for formal pay talks, as the Government did not set out a commitment to a pay strategy that would protect the living standards of public servants over the lifetime of a multi-annual agreement.

The Public Services Committee of ICTU decided to ask affiliate unions to consider arrangements for ballots on industrial action arising from the expiry of the agreement.

More than 50 days after the last agreement expired, there is still no successor agreement, no agreed pay provision covering the remainder of 2026, and no meaningful negotiating process underway. This situation cannot be allowed to continue.

How does the Government's position fall short?

Public sector workers have seen the value of the 1% increases paid in February and June 2026 wiped out by inflation. Despite this, the Government has failed to set out any credible approach to pay for the remainder of 2026 and beyond.

Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES

Members are keenly aware of the extent to which this Government has acted to address issues raised by employer lobby groups and developers, including hospitality VAT cuts and supports for the farming and haulage sectors, at significant cost to the taxpayer and the Exchequer. At the same time, the Government has failed to progress local bargaining claims, reneging on its commitment in the last agreement to settle these claims from September 1st last year. ICTU negotiators have made it clear that unions are ready for substantive talks, but meaningful negotiations require the Government to come forward with a serious position on pay and living standards.

When and how will the ballot take place?

The ASTI ballot will run alongside co-ordinated ballots by the other teacher unions and public sector unions affiliated to the ICTU Public Services Committee.

Full details of this ballot will be communicated to School Stewards shortly.

Who can vote?

Only serving teachers can vote in this ballot, as it relates to industrial action.

What form will industrial action take?

ASTI members will be asked to sanction industrial action up to and including strike action. Strike action is a full withdrawal of labour and may be accompanied by the placing of pickets. Industrial action may also include non-cooperation with initiatives, withdrawal from supervision and substitution, and one or more days of strike action along with the placing of pickets.

The precise duration, form, nature and timing of any strike action/industrial action will be determined by the ASTI Standing Committee, in consultation with the ICTU Public Services Committee.

Has Standing Committee made a recommendation?

Standing Committee is recommending that all members Vote YES in this ballot. This will enable the ASTI to play its part in the co-ordinated campaign by public servants to secure fair pay and to protect members' terms and conditions during a continuing cost-of-living crisis.

What penalties may apply if ASTI members take strike action?

The ASTI would be acting as part of a co-ordinated campaign with other public sector unions. Strike action would result in loss of pay for the duration of any work stoppage. More targeted forms of industrial action typically have little or no impact on pay.

Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES



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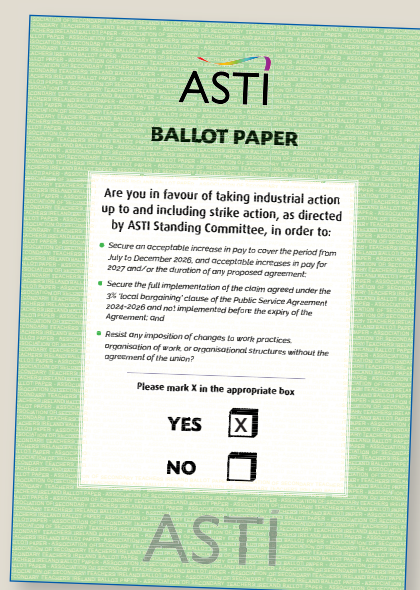
Passing this ballot will
enable the ASTI to
mandate action which
may include non-
cooperation actions in a
variety of areas including
Senior Cycle
Redevelopment

Ballot material will arrive
in schools in September



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For full information visit

www.asti.ie/ballot

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Ballot arrangements

Full details of the ballot timetable and arrangements will be communicated to School Stewards. School Stewards play a vital role in ensuring ASTI ballots are conducted in an efficient and transparent manner, and the ASTI wishes to thank School Stewards in advance for their work in distributing and collecting ballot material.

It is vital that all members who are entitled to vote participate in the ballot and that ballot papers reach ASTI Head Office by **5.30 pm on September 23rd**.

Ballot paper wording

The question you will be asked on the ballot paper will be as follows:

Are you in favour of taking industrial action up to and including strike action, as directed by ASTI Standing Committee, in order to:

- *secure an acceptable increase in pay to cover the period from July to December 2026, and acceptable increases in pay for 2027 and/or the duration of any proposed agreement;*
- *secure the full implementation of the claim agreed under the 3% 'local bargaining' clause of the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026 and not implemented before the expiry of the Agreement; and*
- *resist any imposition of changes to work practices, organisation of work, or organisational structures without the agreement of the union?*

This will enable the ASTI to mandate action which may include strike action and/or non-cooperation action/s in a variety of areas including Senior Cycle Redevelopment.

Vote YES

Have your voice heard

Members should visit the ASTI website regularly for latest news and further information.

Completed ballot papers must be received by ASTI Head Office by **5.30 pm, Wednesday September 23rd**.

Use your vote: ASTI is recommending vote YES