

Action against pay cuts

ASTI and the other teacher unions - INTO, TUI and IFUT - are committed to a strong and sustained response to the two pay cuts in 2009. The teacher unions are participating in the public service unions' campaign to reverse the pay cuts, protect pensions and prevent compulsory redundancies in the public sector.

This campaign will involve co-ordinated industrial action. This includes the implementation of 'work to rule' type directives and a blanket refusal to co-operate with transformation proposals for the public sector.

The four teacher unions have agreed that as part of the public sector-wide campaign they:

- (a) **Are committed to a campaign of opposition to the Budget decisions, up to and including strike action;**
- (b) **Reject co-operation with any transformation agenda in education proposed by the Government;**
- (c) **Are committed to the implementation of Directives on:**
 - (1) **Parents-teacher meetings/ staff meetings outside school time**
 - (2) **Posts of responsibility**
 - (3) **School development planning meetings additional to SDPI**
 - (4) **Class size (second level)**
 - (5) **WSE and subject inspections (second-level);**
- (d) **Support a joint lobbying campaign with other public service unions;**
- (e) **As an initial step, support regional meetings of public servants, including teachers, with political representatives leading to a mass rally and day of action;**
- (f) **Agree that no member should attend inservice meetings unless substitution is provided by the Department of Education and Science;**
- (g) **Agree to formulate guidelines on fulfilling minimal statutory administrative obligations in schools.**

These actions mean that teachers will concentrate on their primary professional work of preparation and teaching in a progressive work-to-rule type manner.

Other work-to-rule type activities will apply to universities/ third-level institutions.

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ASTI Convention 2010

Your local branch will be holding a meeting before the end of January to select delegates to Annual Convention and to prioritise motions for the Convention agenda. Involve yourself in the ASTI at this vital time, attend your branch meeting and be available to attend Convention as a branch delegate.

Joe Moran, ASTI President

ASTI news RSS

Keep updated with the latest ASTI news by signing up to an RSS feed at www.asti.ie/rss

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Campaign against pay cuts - Directives

A list of directives which apply to ASTI members, and details regarding their implementation including frequently asked questions, are available at www.asti.ie

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Action in other sectors

Equivalent action will be taken across the public service including the civil service, the health service and the local government sector.

Long-term campaign

It is envisaged that the campaign against the pay cuts by the public sector unions will continue over a sustained period. The campaign includes provision for further strikes if necessary. The industrial action element of the strategy includes the possibility of:

- ◆ Selective strike action to be used intermittently alongside a sustained work-to-rule/ non co-operation campaign;
- ◆ Other forms of disruptive action;
- ◆ Targeting specific areas in response to the threat of compulsory redundancies and disciplinary action for non-cooperation;
- ◆ Demonstrations and protests in conjunction with service users as appropriate;
- ◆ Consideration of a wide-scale strike at a strategic point in the campaign.

Oral examinations at Junior Cert

ASTI policy is that members do not provide marks for their own pupils in the state certificate examinations. This applies to the oral examinations at Junior Cert, including Gaeilge. These exams require a structure that ensures quality control and standards

Haiti earthquake

Members are asked to contribute generously to charities such as Concern, Goal, Unicef and the Red Cross to alleviate the suffering of victims of the Haiti earthquake.

Extra teachers in February

The ASTI played a crucial role in ensuring that second-level education was included in the Renewed Programme for Government agreed by Fianna Fail and the Green Party last October. The Renewed Programme for Government included a commitment to allocate an additional 500 teaching posts at primary and post-primary. Two-hundred to these posts are to come on stream during the 2010 school year, a further 150 at the start of the 2010/2011 school year, and the remaining 150 at the start of the 2011/ 2012 school year.

These posts are permanent and will form a permanent part of the overall allocation on an ongoing basis.

February 2010

Of the 200 posts in the current school year, 100 will be allocated to second-level schools using the arrangements for the allocation of learning support posts (schools in future with an enrolment of under 600 will receive up to .7 of a WTE teaching post and schools with 600 or more will receive 1.2).

It is intended that these teachers will be in schools in February.

2010/2011 school year

150 posts will be allocated to schools in September 2010 - 100 to second-level schools and 50 to primary schools. At second level these posts will be allocated to small stand alone co-educational schools in order to facilitate greater subject choice.

2011/2012 school year

150 posts will be allocated to schools in September 2011. Further discussions will take place between the education partners regarding the allocation of these posts. ◆

Pay cut hits teachers

Members have been shocked by the severity of the reduction in their pay consequent upon government budget decisions.

All of the energies of the whole public trade union movement will be dedicated over the coming months towards reversing those decisions. The campaign is likely to be long and sustained and it is vital that members support the directives agreed by the unions as the first phase of the campaign.

With effect from January 1st 2010, the pay of public sector workers including teachers has been reduced by:

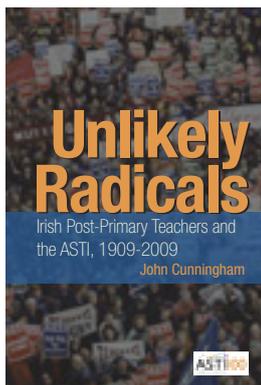
5% on the first 30,000
7.5% on the next 40,000
10% on the next 55,000

Allowances paid to teachers - including allowances paid to principals, deputy principals, assistant principals, special duties teachers, degree and other qualification allowances - have been reduced by 5%.

The Department of Education and Science has published revised salary scales, which are available on the ASTI website (Pay section). ♦

AVC report

The annual report prepared by the Trustees of the ASTI AVC scheme for the year ending 31 March 2009 is now available. Any member may obtain a copy by writing to the Honorary Treasurer or alternatively by writing to Cornmarket Financial Services, as administrators of the scheme.



ASTI launches 100th year history

The ASTI has launched *Unlikely Radicals: Irish Post-Primary Teachers and the ASTI, 1909-2009* by Dr John Cunningham of NUI Galway and published by Cork University Press. Copies of the book has been sent to schools. Additional copies can be purchased in book stores or at Cork University Press - www.corkuniversitypress.com.



Pictured at the launch of *Unlikely Radicals: Irish Post-Primary Teachers and the ASTI, 1909-2009* are (left to right): Dr. John Cunningham, author; Kieran Mulvey, Chief Executive of the LRC; Joe Moran, ASTI President; John White, ASTI General Secretary; and Clive Byrne, Director of the NAPD.

Irish language awards

The Ireland Canada University Foundation provides a number of awards designed to support the teaching of the Irish language in Canadian universities.

Applications are open for those wishing to work as Irish language teaching assistants in Canada from September 2010 to May 2011. The closing date for applications is March 5th. For more information email info@icuf.ie.

Moratorium has disproportional impact on second-level schools

School closures due to snow

Teachers as professional educators will ensure that syllabi and courses will be fully covered for their students. Most examination students will have missed only two/three classes and these will easily be made up within the standardised school year.

In April 2009 the Government implemented a moratorium on appointments to promotion posts in schools other than those of Principal or Deputy Principal.

Given that the overwhelming majority of promoted posts in second-level schools are Assistant Principals and Special Duties Teachers, this decision has had a disproportionate effect on second-level schools.

Second-level schools are complex institutions with up to 1,500 vibrant adolescents with diverse needs following a broad range of educational programmes. Institutions of such complexity require structures and systems within which the process of education can be facilitated. A quality education service, school discipline, and student pastoral care cannot survive the implementation of this moratorium.

The Department circular (0022/2009) announcing the moratorium stated that it was a matter for schools to reorganise and prioritise the appropriate duties for post-holders.

As long as there are no vacancies, the moratorium by definition has no effect. However, it has had a disproportionate and devastating effect on some schools.

The current accelerated rate of teacher retirements, and the expected increase in this rate in 2010 because of the budget decisions, is emptying the ranks of Assistant Principals, Special Duties Teachers, Programme Co-ordinators and Adult Education Directors, many of whom were recruited in the decade following the introduction of free education. The ranks of Assistant Principal and Special Duties Teacher are being further depleted to replace retiring Principals and Deputy Principals. This means that in accordance with the reorganisation and prioritisation outlined above, posts such as year head, timetabling, examinations secretary, programme co-ordinator have to be reassigned.

This process of reassignment and prioritisation is already grinding to a halt in some schools where the extent of the retirements/resignations is such that a large number of posts will be unfilled. It is likely to be further exacerbated by the expected increase in the number of retirements with effect from 1st September 2010.

It is entirely unreasonable to expect un-promoted classroom teachers already labouring under increased classroom burdens - longer hours, increased class sizes, higher and ordinary level in the same class - because of education cutbacks, to perform these duties on a voluntary basis. This will not happen.

Given that the savings on the moratorium are of the order of 11 million per year, the damage to the education of this generation of pupils is disproportionate to the savings made. The moratorium should be removed. ◆