

ASTI Convention 2012 Era of cuts – what’s at risk?

Education and teaching in an era of cuts is the overall theme of ASTI Annual Convention 2012.

Motions submitted by branches for debate will focus on the devastating impact of education cuts on schools, the unfair treatment of new teachers, Junior Cycle reform, and issues relating to the Public Service (Croke Park) Agreement.

Debates during Convention will highlight the consequences of austerity measures on students, teachers, the economy and the future of Ireland’s education service.

Education cuts

A major survey on the impact of the education cuts on second-level schools, carried out by Millward Browne Lansdowne research, will be launched by the ASTI in the days prior to Annual Convention. As well as demonstrating the consequences of education cuts since 2009, the survey asks schools what decisions they have taken in relation to the Budget 2012 education cuts, including decisions they have taken regarding guidance provision and subject choice for the 2012/2013 school year.

The health and safety implications of larger class sizes will also be explored. A motion on the first day of Annual Convention calls for the ASTI to vigorously defend its policy on class size in an effort to address concerns about student and teacher welfare.

New teachers

New teachers, young teachers, and part-time and temporary teachers are the most vulnerable members of the ASTI. They face precarious employment and unequal treatment in terms of their pay and pensions. Recently qualified teachers seeking their first teaching job will receive 30% less pay than they would have received two years ago due to a pay cut for new entrants, a cap on qualification allowances and, most recently, the freezing of allowances (pending the public service wide review of allowances).

Croke Park

Any breach of the Croke Park Agreement by the Government means that it becomes null and void. This motion will be debated at Convention along with motions on what types of non-classroom work should be allowable for the calculation of the 33 hours.

A full list of motions for this year’s Annual Convention can be found on pages 5-8.

See key Convention speeches by webcast

You can watch the key speeches at this year’s Annual Convention live by webcast.

Visit www.asti.ie for details.

News from Convention

ASTI Annual Convention takes place from April 10th to 12th.

As well as attracting media coverage, reports from Convention will be available at www.asti.ie, on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#).

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Convention 2012

Key events

Tuesday April 10th

Declaration of President and election of Vice-President 2012-2013

Address by ASTI President

Address by Minister for Education and Skills

Wednesday April 11th

Election of Trustees and Honorary Treasurer

General Secretary's report

Debate on motions

Thursday April 12th

Debate on motions

Key topics

Tuesday April 10th

Posts of Responsibility moratorium

Class size and pupil-teacher ratio

Wednesday April 11th

Croke Park Agreement

Non-permanent / new teachers

Thursday April 12th

Assessment

Junior Cycle Review

Convention 2012

Convention 2012 will be held in Cork City from Tuesday 10th to Thursday 12th of April. Over 500 delegates will attend the event in the Silver Springs Moran Hotel Cork.

Candidates for election

Each year delegates elect a new ASTI President and Vice-President. This year's candidates are:

Candidate for President

Gerry Breslin

Nominating branches:

Athlone, Carbery, Carlow, Cavan, Clare, Cork North, Cork South Paddy Mulcahy, Drogheda, Sean Higgins, Dublin North West, Dublin North Central, Dublin South 1, Dublin South Central, Dublin South West, Dublin South County, Fermoy, Fingal, Galway, Iar-Thuaisceart Thir Chonaill, Kerry, Kildare, Laois, Limerick North, Limerick , South, Longford, Monaghan, Mullingar, New Ross, Roscrea, Sligo, Stillorgan, Tipperary, Tuam, West Limerick, West Mayo, Wexford Tony Boland, Wicklow.



Candidates for Vice-President

Philip Irwin

Nominating Branches

Athlone, Carbery, Cork North, Dublin North West, Dublin South 1, Dublin South Central, Dublin South West, Dungarvan, Fingal, New Ross.



Sally Maguire

Nominating Branches

Bray, Carlow, Clare, Cork South Paddy Mulcahy, Dublin North East, Dublin North Central, Dublin South County, Fermoy, Iar Thuaisceart Thir Chonaill, Kildare, Limerick North, Limerick South, Mullingar, Nenagh, Roscrea, Stillorgan, Tipperary, Tuam, West Limerick, Wicklow.



Candidate profiles

Philip Irwin

Personal profile

- Born in Cashel, Co. Tipperary
- Married to Sheilann, with two children, JohnJoe (15) and Liam (10)
- My father, Joe was Chairperson of the Tipperary Branch and CEC member when the ASTI Convention was held in Cashel in 1966.
- Teaching at the High School, Rathgar, Dublin 6 since 1986 (history, geography, CSPE, TY Co-ordinator and involved in cross-country and athletics.)
- Currently School Steward and Standing Committee representative for Region 18.
- ASTI Representative on NCCA Board of Studies for Arts and Humanities and 2nd representative for NCCA course committee for CSPE
- ASTI nominee to incoming NCCA Council.
- I have served as CEC Representative, Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and organiser for the Dublin South 1 Branch.
- Member of the History Teachers Association of Ireland and currently National Vice Chairperson of the Association of CSPE Teachers.

Aims:

I believe that as custodians of the education of the future citizens of the country that it is incumbent on us to stand firm for ourselves and the education system at this time of national crisis. We must do this by:

Defending teaching as a lifelong occupation

I believe that the unfair attacks on the pay and allowances of new entrants cannot be allowed to remain in place if teaching is to attract talented people who will take a long-term view for the good of their students. The evident CASUALISATION of teaching where so many of our members are in categories other than fulltime permanent has to be halted.

Resisting inappropriate inspections

I believe that we cannot accept the continuation of the "Drive-By inspections". These inspections "on the cheap" are de-professionalising and tarnishing the inspectorate. We need a supportive and advisory inspectorate rather than distrustful and superficial intrusions into our classrooms.

Returning guidance provision in second level schools to its proper status

I believe that the moves to diminish the place of Guidance will undermine the holistic education which 2nd level schools offer and will lead to further job losses for newer teachers.

Protecting the integrity and impersonality of the state exams system at junior and senior levels

I believe that the system of external assessment for state exams has protected the education system from the corruption evident in planning and other areas of Irish life. The supportive role of teachers as advocates rather than judges of their students must be maintained.

Opposing any further cuts to our pensions

I believe that the Government have imposed enough cuts on us in the name of austerity which is not working. Pensions are deferred pay and the message that we pay for our pensions has to be emphasised again and again – Hands Off!

Asserting our professionalism

I believe that we must insist that dignity and respect are accorded to us in our role as teachers in these difficult times. Evident failures to consult and afford due regard to our views at National and school level have to be exposed. In these times we must individually and collectively assert the importance of our role for the wellbeing of our students and for national recovery.



Philip Irwin
Candidate for Vice-Presidency



Sally Maguire

Candidate for Vice-Presidency

Candidate profiles

Sally Maguire

Personal profile

- Born and educated in Dublin.
- Taught in Mater Dei, Secondary School, Basin Lane 1978 – 1993
- Redeployed to St. Raphaela's Secondary School in 1993
- Currently teaching students with Special Educational Needs
- Former School Steward
- Former Stillorgan Branch Secretary and Chairperson.
- Member of CEC
- Member of Standing Committee since 2006
- ASTI Representative on the Working Group to Review Child Protection Guidelines for Schools
- ASTI Representative on the NCSE Consultative Forum

Aims and objectives for the ASTI

- To seek justice and equality for all our members
- To accurately represent your views
- To protect jobs for our younger members
- To make every effort to eliminate the two-tier pay scale and restore the starting salary of new teachers
- To prevent any further injustice to our young graduates
- To restore salaries and improve conditions of work for all our members
- To restore the pupil-teacher ratio to 18:1
- To protect our Non-Permanent Teachers against exploitation
- To seek an end to the moratorium on Posts of Responsibility
- To oppose any further cuts in teachers' pensions
- To uphold the ASTI position that teachers should not have to assess their own students for examination purposes
- To ensure that teachers receive adequate resources and training for all new courses
- To develop the ASTI as a strong, unified and vibrant union
- To make the ASTI more influential
- To challenge mis-information about teachers
- To champion the work of teachers
- To encourage our young members to take an active part in union activities.
- To promote the role of women in our union
- To ensure continuity of resources for all students with Special Educational Needs
- To fight against disadvantage in all areas of Education
- To continue the campaign to reverse the pay cuts and restore salaries to former levels

Enough is enough

ASTI must engage in a vigorous campaign to protect the teaching profession and second-level education.

Convention motions 2012

Posts of Responsibility Moratorium - Motion 11

In light of the unprecedented numbers of post holders who have recently retired, that the ASTI, in conjunction with the other teacher unions urgently seek a significant alleviation of the moratorium on Posts of Responsibility. (Galway)

Class Size and P.T.R - Motion 23

That on Health & Safety grounds and out of concern for the welfare of students and teachers the ASTI vigorously defends its policy on class size and opposes any move to increase the pupil teacher ratio. (Dublin South County, Fermoy)

Croke Park Agreement - Motion 4

That anything agreed in the Croke Park deal becomes null and void if the agreement is broken by the Government. (Dublin South 2)

Extra Curricular Activities - Motion 24

Until the cessation of the Croke Park Agreement the ASTI will negotiate with the government the terms and conditions of usage of the 33 hours of non teaching work per year, to include extra curricular and other school based activities. (Dublin North West)

Amendment

Amend by addition of 'and all continuous professional development courses' immediately after the word 'activities'. (Tipperary)

C.P.D and Croke Park Hours - Motion 53

That the ASTI negotiates with the Department of Education and Skills that all continual professional development courses may count towards the extra 33 hours negotiated under the Croke Park Agreement. (Carbery)

Amendment

Insert the word 'accredited' between 'all' and 'continual'. The motion would then read:

That the ASTI negotiates with the Department of Education & Skills that all accredited continual professional development courses may count towards the extra 33 hours negotiated under the Croke Park Agreement. (Dublin North East)

New Teachers' Pay and Conditions - Motion 2

That the ASTI investigate the legality of the change in new teachers' pay and conditions with a view to mounting a legal challenge under equality legislation. (Dublin South West, Waterford)

New Teachers' Salary - Motion 3

That the ASTI urgently seek the reversal of the inequity whereby new teachers who enter the profession from January 2011 start on point one of the salary scale. (Waterford, Dublin North West).

Committees for election 2012

Steering Committee

5 members

Rules Committee

5 members

Investment Committee

4 members

Pensions Sub-Committee

5 members

Convention Dinner

A dinner for delegates will be held on the night of Tuesday, 10th April in the Silver Springs Hotel. Tickets are priced at €45 and will be on sale in the Conference Foyer, Silver Springs Hotel from 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm on Tuesday 10th April. If your branch reserves a table of 10 before March 30th, it will cost only €350 - a saving of €100. Contact info@asti.ie, reference 'Annual Convention'.

Convention motions 2012

Examination Appointments - Motion 15

That the ASTI negotiate with the State Examinations Commission and the Managerial Authorities to ensure that serving teachers would be given first priority in the appointment of examination personnel (superintendents, assistant examiners, readers, scribes etc) for the State Examinations. (New Ross)

Amendment

Amend by insertion of the words 'second level' immediately after the word 'serving'. (Carlow)

Assessment - Motion 56

That in light of the NCCA proposed curricular and assessment changes in the Junior Certificate Examination, the ASTI reaffirms its policy and directive on teachers assessing their own students for State Examinations and vehemently opposes changes that include such assessment by teachers. (New Ross, Carbery, Athlone, Stillorgan, Dublin North West, Fingal Navan, Nenagh)

Assessment Campaign - Motion 59

That the ASTI should engage in a campaign to increase awareness amongst parents of the implications of teachers assessing their own students. (Nenagh)

Junior Cycle Review Framework - Motion 64

That in order to ensure that all schools operate on an equal footing, the ASTI resists the changes proposed in the Junior Cycle Review Framework until the Minister for Education & Skills and the Department identify and provide necessary resources and until teachers are provided with necessary in-service training. (Stillorgan, Sligo, Carbery, Dublin South 1, Fermoy)

Rule 145 - Motion 94

Rule 145:

Amend Rule 145 as follows:

Part C, line one, by deleting the words "one year" and substituting the words "two years" and

Part C, line two, by deleting the word "five" and substituting the word "six".

Part C of Rule 145 shall then read as follows:

Trustees shall hold office for two years and shall be eligible for re-election but in no case shall a Trustee serve for more than six consecutive years. If from any cause, the number of Trustees should fall below three, the CEC shall elect a Trustee or Trustees to bring the number up to three. Any Trustee so elected shall hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual Convention. (Standing Committee)

Convention motions 2012

Rule 59 - Motion 95

Rule 59

Amend Rule 59 by addition after the words "prior to election" of the following:
"The Trustees shall also attend Convention but shall not be members of Convention"

Rule 59 to read as follows:

The Convention shall consist of

- (a) the Officers of the Association;
- (b) the members of the incoming Central Executive Council;
- (c) the current regionally elected representatives on Standing Committee; and
- (d) delegates from Branches appointed upon the following basis:-
 - (i) One delegate for 20 to 60 members;
 - (ii) Two delegates for 61 to 120 members;
 - (iii) Three delegates for 121 members to 180 members and so on.

Election of Branch delegates shall be computed on the numerical strength of each Branch on December 1st each year. Branch delegates must be members of the Branch they represent and must have been members of the Association for at least one year prior to election.

The Trustees shall also attend Convention but shall not be members of Convention. (Standing Committee)

Rule 150 - Motion 96

Rule 150

- (a) Amend Rule 150 by deletion of the word "may" immediately after the words "The Trustees" and by insertion of the word "shall" immediately after the words "The Trustees" and
- (b) Amend Rule 150 by addition after the words "delegates to Convention" of the following:

"The Trustees shall formally present their report to Convention"

and delete the words "and such report may be presented to Convention by the Trustees".

Rule 150 to read as follows:

The Trustees shall attend the Conventions of the Association and may speak at Convention on matters pertaining to their duties but they shall not act as delegates to Convention. The Trustees shall formally present their report to Convention. An annual report by the Trustees, which records their account of their duty to safeguard the ASTI property and funds, shall be included in the Convention Handbook. (Standing Committee)

Teaching Council Subscription - Motion 50

That the ASTI seek a reduction of 50% in the subscription to the Teaching Council. (Waterford)

**Convention 2012 will also
elect Trustees and ASTI
Honorary Treasurer**

ASTI survey on disability

The ASTI is conducting an online survey on the employment experiences of teachers with disabilities/serious illness.

The survey includes questions on seeking employment, returning to work, and how the school authorities responded to the disability/serious illness (e.g. did the school act to accommodate you, etc.). The survey only takes a few minutes to complete, a link is available on the home page of the ASTI website - www.asti.ie.

Part-time teachers' payment for leave

The Department of Education and Skills' online claim system (OLCS) currently has no ability to account for periods of leave taken by non-casual part-time teachers.

The Department is planning to update the OLCS system to account for non-casual teachers absences. In advance of this, an interim application form is being drafted.

Members affected should contact the ASTI. We will liaise directly with the Department of Education on your behalf.

Carer's leave applications

Members wishing to take carer's leave should note that it can take up to six weeks for applications to be assessed by the Department of Social Protection.

The Department of Social Protection is responsible for deciding eligibility for Carer's Leave. Application is made through the CARB1 form. For more information see the leave section of the ASTI website - www.asti.ie.

Help us improve your union

It's time for change. . .

The ASTI is conducting a review of the union – its rules, structures, operation and services. This is your chance to tell us what you think about the ASTI and what can be done to improve the union.

Survey of members

As part of this comprehensive review, a random survey of members will be undertaken via email. The survey of members is being carried out by the independent consultancy Genesis. All replies will go directly to Genesis and will be treated as confidential.

Survey of branch secretaries

In addition, an email survey of branch secretaries all over the country will be undertaken. This survey will focus on internal democracy in the ASTI. The responses will be used to analyse activity at branch level and to inform the discussions taking place on renewing the ASTI's representational structures. All responses will be treated as confidential.

Both surveys will be carried out in the coming weeks. Members who receive a survey by email or post will have the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to the review. ♦

Teaching Council Act – Section 30 to be enacted

It is expected that the Education Amendment Bill will be enacted shortly, paving the way for the enactment of Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act.

The Bill includes an amendment to Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001, which will allow schools to employ non-registered teachers in a teaching capacity in certain and limited circumstances where no registered teacher is available.

Objections to this amendment by the ASTI and others have resulted in an instruction from the Department of Education and Skills that schools must be able to demonstrate that they exhausted specific avenues before appointing a non-registered teacher (see Circular 0031/2011).

Once enacted, the Education Amendment Bill will allow for the commencement of Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act, which requires that all teachers teaching in State-recognised schools whose salaries are funded by the Department of Education and Skills must be registered with the Teaching Council (except in the exceptional and limited circumstances described in Circular 0031/2011). Teachers who are not registered will not be paid by the Department except in the exceptional limited circumstances described in Circular 0031/2011.

Register or renew your registration to protect salary

In light of the imminent enactment of Section 30, the ASTI is urging any member who is not currently registered with the Teaching Council to contact the Council immediately and to begin the process of registration.

Teachers returning to teach following retirement or after taking a period of leave from teaching should ensure that they continue to renew their Teaching Council registration. If you do not renew, your registration with the Teaching Council will lapse and your name will be removed from the Register. Should you wish to return to the Register, you will need to re-apply for registration at least four months in advance and undergo the full application process. ♦