

NUAUGHT

Issue No 4 - September 2014

Junior Cycle campaign intensifies Vote Yes

This month ASTI members will be balloted on extending industrial action over the Framework for Junior Cycle.

Why ballot now?

The ASTI sought a deferral of the Junior Cycle Framework. However the Department of Education and Skills is persisting with its implementation this September.

Ballot papers will be issued to members' home addresses from mid-September. The Ballot paper will ask members:

Do you agree to the extension of industrial action, to include a one-day strike and further strike action as directed by ASTI Standing Committee?

Voting 'Yes'

to the extension of industrial action will help to protect standards, equity and fairness in our exam system and ensure that teachers can retain their role as advocates for their students, rather than as judges.

Voting 'Yes'

will strengthen the hand of ASTI negotiators as they meet the Minister and her officials this month.

Voting 'Yes'

to the extension of industrial action will bring the ASTI into line with the TUI, whose members have already voted in favour of industrial action up to strike action. Any one-day strike, or further one-day strikes, will be co-ordinated by the ASTI and TUI.

Completed ballot papers must arrive in Head Office before 5p.m. on Monday, October 6th

This means ballot papers must be posted well in advance of this date

Vote to make sure teachers' views are heard

ASTI Central Executive Council (CEC) has decided to conduct a ballot of members on the extension of industrial action over the Framework for Junior Cycle.

Ballot papers must arrive back to Head Office before 5p.m. on Monday, October 6th. Post your ballot paper in time.

All teachers will be affected by the Junior Cycle Framework

We are asking ASTI members to unite in their opposition to changes that teachers, as professionals, have no faith in.

Vote YES to extending industrial action to include a one-day strike and further action as directed by ASTI Standing Committee.

ASTI
A century of service

The ASTI/ TUI Directive on non-cooperation with the Framework for Junior Cycle remains in place

Vote YES for:

- Standards ✓
- Equity ✓
- Quality ✓
- Fairness ✓
- Consultation ✓

Vote YES to:
extend industrial action on the Framework for Junior Cycle

Junior Cycle Directive

The Directive to ASTI members and TUI members on non-cooperation with key aspects of the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle remains in place. This Directive follows a ballot of members in March of this year in which members voted 9:1 in favour of industrial action in the form of non-cooperation. See page 4.

Copies of the Directive were issued in poster form in April of this year and have been re-issued to schools this September.

For more information on the operation of the Directive visit www.asti.ie

New Minister

The new Minister for Education and Skills Jan O'Sullivan has stated that she is supporting the reforms set out in the Framework for Junior Cycle and is proceeding with implementation. Following a request from the ASTI to discuss teachers' concerns about the Framework, the Minister wrote to the ASTI stating that she would welcome the opportunity to hear the ASTI's concerns. This meeting takes place in early September. Further meetings are expected.

Why ballot now?

Despite the ASTI's campaign, there has been no progress on teachers' key concerns to date. As teachers of English are required to teach the new Framework for Junior Cycle English specification this term, the union has no choice but to intensify its campaign.

Junior Cycle campaign

What your support has achieved

Your support for the ASTI's Junior Cycle campaign has resulted in a number of achievements:

- In May this year, a survey of the public, commissioned by the Irish Independent and undertaken by Millward Brown, found that 60 per cent of respondents supported the ASTI's position that teachers should not assess their own Junior Cycle students. Only 29 per cent believed teachers should assess their own students.
- In May this year, the ASTI presented a petition signed by 10,000 members to the then Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn seeking that the role of teachers as advocates for their students, rather than judges, be retained.
- Up to 27,000 second-level teachers - members of the ASTI and the TUI participated in a lunchtime protest on March 11th this year. The protest received significant media coverage.

To read more about campaign activities visit www.asti.ie

What your continued support can achieve

- Standards, equity, quality and fairness in Junior Cycle reform.
- A fair, impartial and transparent Junior Cycle exams system.
- Training, resources and supports for teachers.

Teachers' key concerns

Assessment

The Framework for Junior Cycle assessment model threatens equity, relationships and consistency of standards:

- The abolition of a State Junior Certificate has the potential to undermine education standards at Junior Cycle and could result in the status of the certificate varying from school to school.
- There must be an external assessment model. The ASTI is open to different modes of assessment but objects to the change in the teacher's role from advocate to judge.
- Every student is entitled to a fair, impartial and transparent Junior Cycle examinations system.
- The Framework proposals do not allow for equity of standards between schools.

Resources

Serious concerns exist on resources and capacity:

- Schools are at breaking point and teachers are under huge stress. This context must be considered.
- Teachers must be supported through good teaching resources, including on-going professional development and whole-school in-service.
- Teachers of English, who are now required to implement the Framework for Junior Cycle English specification, received just one day of in-service prior to September 2014.
- All teachers will be required to implement the Framework and assess their own students in the coming years.

Consultation

- There was no consultation when the Minister abolished the State Junior Certificate.
- Classroom teachers who understand what does and does not work in the classroom must have their voices heard.
- There is still a lack of information about how the new Framework will actually work on the ground.

Special Convention on operation, structure of ASTI

A Special Convention to review the structures of the ASTI will be held in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone commencing at 7pm on Friday 14th November and continuing on Saturday 15th November.

Each branch of ASTI should now arrange for the election of branch delegates to attend this Special Convention. Members of CEC automatically attend Convention.

Nomination forms have been sent to branches and must be returned to ASTI Head Office no later than Friday, October 3rd.

Vote YES
to make sure
teachers' views
can no longer
be ignored

The Junior Cert State Exam is being abolished and replaced by school-based assessment marked by students' teachers.

Teachers were not consulted about the abolition of the Junior Cert State Exam.

**Students
Deserve
Equity**

JUNIOR CYCLE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

Directive to members following an ASTI ballot:

ASTI members have voted in favour of non-co-operation with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals. With effect from **Monday 7th April** and until further notice Standing Committee directs ASTI members in all schools, including Junior Cycle Network Schools, to withdraw co-operation with the introduction or implementation of the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals as follows:

- 1** Not to attend CPD organised in connection with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals.
- 2** Not to attend meetings associated with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals.
- 3** Not to attend any planning meeting or participate in any planning activities organised in connection with the Junior Cycle Framework Proposals.
- 4** Not to engage in any aspect of school based assessment for the purpose of the Junior Cycle Student Award (JCSA).
- 5** Not to engage in any development of or delivery of Junior Cycle Framework Short Courses.
- 6** Not to engage in any event or function related to points 1 to 5 above.



SUPPORT ASTI'S JUNIOR CYCLE CAMPAIGN:

- For Standards, Quality, Equity and Fairness in Junior Cycle education
- For a fair, impartial and transparent Junior Cycle exam
- For training, resources and supports for teachers in dealing with Junior Cycle workload