



**TO: Workplace Representatives / Branch Secretaries / Branch Chairs
 Executive Committee**

20th February, 2018

Re: Pay Equalisation Campaign - Lobbying

Dear Colleagues

I would like to thank you for participating in our Lunchtime Protest on pay inequality on 1st February. The protest enabled us, once again, to highlight the deeply negative impact that pay inequality is having on our profession and on the quality of education we can provide for students. Both prior to and on 1st February we had extensive media coverage (TV and Radio) both locally and nationally.

As you will be aware, the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act, 2017 contains a provision which states that 'The Minister shall, within three months of the passing of this Act, prepare and lay before the Oireachtas a report on the cost of and a plan in dealing with pay equalisation for new entrants to the public service.' As the Act was passed on the 16th December 2017, it is expected that a report will be put before the Oireachtas by the end of March. In this regard, it is important that we maintain the momentum of our campaign and continue to highlight the issue of pay inequality by whatever means are available to us.

Within the last few weeks we have lobbied TDs and Senators nationally, including a joint TUI, ASTI and INTO meeting with the leader of Fianna Fáil, Mr. Michael Martin, along with their party's spokespersons for both Public Expenditure and Reform and Education and Skills.

It is worth noting that the following motion, submitted by Fianna Fáil was accepted by Government in the Dáil in late January:

The motion (as passed) calls on the Government to:

“— agree a roadmap with teaching unions on how full pay equality will be achieved and in conjunction with that organise a recruitment and advertising campaign aimed at bringing home young Irish teachers temporarily working abroad;

— establish substitute supply panels again at primary level;

- consider, on a temporary basis, allowing teachers who job share to substitute during their days off in their own schools;
- further expand, on a temporary basis, the opportunity for teachers on career break to act as substitutes;
- make it easier for retired teachers to act as substitutes in the short-term, but ensure that this in no way interferes with the normal teaching labour market;
- reconsider the need for a second year in PME programmes;
- rapidly expand undergraduate programmes of initial teacher education to qualify people to be second-level teachers;
- ensure that teachers based in Northern Ireland can register to teach in the Republic of Ireland in an efficient, economic and fair way;
- ensure that teachers qualified abroad are facilitated into the Irish education system in a reasonable way;
- expedite the work started following the publication of the 2015 Teaching Council Report; and
- establish a body within the Department of Education and Skills working with education partners tasked with coordinating policy matters concerning teacher supply.”

Fine Gael tried to amend the motion but their amendment was defeated.

Nationally, we are working closely with the INTO and the ASTI and intend holding a joint protest outside Leinster House within the next few weeks. More information will be provided once the respective Executive Committees of the three unions finalise the arrangements.

I would ask that in the weeks remaining before the report is put to the Oireachtas, members would redouble their lobbying efforts locally. It is imperative that lobbying takes place in each constituency and for the remaining weeks, I would ask that you now concentrate your efforts on lobbying Fine Gael TDs, Senators and Councillors.

Your assistance in this regard is crucial to achieving pay parity.

Yours sincerely,



Joanne Irwin
President



John MacGabhann
General Secretary