



To: **Workplace Representatives, Branch Officers – 2nd Level
Executive Committee (for information)**

29th May 2017

670 whole-time teaching posts to support professional time - TUI welcomes the increased provision

Colleagues,

As a key part of the Junior Cycle Agreement reached by the TUI with the Department of Education and Skills in September 2015, each teacher involved in the delivery of Junior Cycle has an entitlement to 40 minutes per week of professional time. This professional time will be accommodated by a reduction, to 21 hours 20 minutes, in the maximum weekly class contact hours. To facilitate implementation of this professional time entitlement, Budget 2017 provided for the creation of 550 additional whole-time equivalent teaching posts from the commencement of the 2017/18 school year.

While this additional resourcing was most welcome, the TUI had a grave concern that it was insufficient to fund the professional time for all the teachers for whom it will be an entitlement. The provisions of Circular Letter 15/2017 confirmed that the TUI's concerns were well founded as it set out that the allocation of the 550 posts would be based on the initial teacher allocation to schools.

The union contended that this would further disadvantage already disadvantaged schools, in that the final teacher allocation of such schools will normally include a number of teaching posts that are not part of the initial allocation (e.g. resource hours).

The union made it clear that it would be entirely unacceptable should the method of allocating teaching hours to support professional time discriminate against the very schools that cater for all the children in a community, that cater for students with special needs and that most closely comply with national education policy priorities.

Prior to TUI Annual Congress 2017, the TUI had made strong representations to the Department of Education and Skills for an increase in the number of additional posts to support the implementation of the professional time entitlement. The demand of the union for this increase was reiterated at Annual Congress 2017.

At a meeting of the Junior Cycle Implementation Committee on 29th May 2017, the Department of Education and Skills, in response to the union's representations, confirmed that a further 120 whole-time equivalent (WTE) teaching posts will be provided, bringing the total number to 670 WTEs.

The TUI welcomes this as a very positive development but has advised that the distribution of the additional posts must take full account of the particular needs of disadvantaged schools.

Yours sincerely,

Joanne Irwin
President

John MacGabhann
General Secretary