

143rd Annual Conference

Northern Committee Report

Newry: 1 – 2 April 2011



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Table of Attendance at Northern Committee Meetings 2010

The total number of meetings held in 2010 was 10

Mary Cahillane	attended 10 meetings
Charlie Glenn	attended 8 meetings
Paddy McAllister	attended 7 meetings
Mark McTaggart	attended 9 meetings
Barney Magill	attended 7 meetings
Kevin Smyth	attended 7 meetings
John McAnulty	attended 9 meetings
Gerry Murphy	attended 10 meetings
Eddie Keenan	attended 3 meetings
Des McDonagh	attended 9 meetings
Mary Dorman	attended 10 meetings
Cathy Crozier	attended 9 meetings
Jim Magee	attended 9 meetings
Annette Comey (Elected November 2010)	attended 1 meeting
Rita Fox	attended 8 meetings
Ann Marie Conway	attended 5 meetings
Mary Hughes (Retired March 2010)	attended 2 meetings
Tony Lappin (Retired March 2010)	attended 3 meetings
Frank Bunting, Northern Secretary	attended 9 meetings
Tony Carlin, Senior Official	attended 10 meetings
Brendan Harron, Senior Official	attended 8 meetings
John Carr, Former General Secretary	attended 3 meetings
Sheila Nunan, General Secretary	attended 4 meetings
Noel Ward, Deputy General Secretary	attended 1 meeting
Jim Higgins, President	attended 6 meetings
Maire Ni Chuinneagain, Former President	attended 1 meeting

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SECTION 1: SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Teachers' salaries and conditions of service in Northern Ireland are determined by the Teachers' Negotiating Committee [TNC] between two parties - Management Side and Teachers' Side. Management Side consists of the five Education and Library Boards, CCMS, NICIE, Governing Bodies Association, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG) and the Department of Education (DE). The Education Skills Authority (ESA) has observer status.

The Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) is the Teachers' Side of the TNC. NITC consists of the five recognised teachers' unions, INTO, ATL, NAHT, NASUWT and the UTU.

The ICTU 2009 mediated agreement for the NITC continues. This provided for a revised NITC Constitution with decision making for the two-year period from April 2009 to April 2011 being on a consensual basis of the five NITC Interests. After April 2011 decision making within the NITC will be on the basis of agreement of only four of the five teacher unions.

A second ICTU mediation became necessary. NASUWT, in breach of the NITC Constitution attempted to put forward a separate claim on salaries and conditions of service to Management Side. This was contrary to the following NITC claim - which was agreed by ATL, INTO, NAHT, NASUWT and UTU. This sought for 2010;

1. The introduction of Planning, Preparation and Assessment Time (PPA);
2. The Introduction of a guaranteed teaching year for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT's);
3. Clear guidance of the obligations, duties and rights of teachers and schools in respect of limiting classroom cover;
4. Time for Teaching Principals in nursery schools, who should have no more than 3 days per week class contact (bringing them into line with Primary Principals).

This Association sought meetings with the Education Minister, the Permanent Secretary and senior officials of the DE and with Management Side. In spite of being repeatedly informed by all parties to process its concerns through the NITC and the TNC, NASUWT continued in breach of the Constitution and undertook industrial action in schools throughout the year.

The following ICTU report was made to the NITC unions and as at March 2011 had not been accepted by NASUWT.

Teachers Unions' Conciliation Process – 24th November 2010

Having reflected on the discussions held during the above meeting I propose that the following clauses are adopted by all constituent members of the NITC in a spirit of solidarity and unity so necessary for meeting the challenges ahead in the current economic environment and in conformity with the NITC Constitution:

- 1) All NITC constituents accept fully that the TNC is the sole negotiating forum for teachers in Northern Ireland.
- 2) Section 10 of the NITC Constitution sets out the procedure for constituents wishing to submit claims and as this Constitution has been accepted by all concerned then the agreed procedure MUST be adhered to.
- 3) Accepting the above any current industrial action should be suspended. The issue at the centre of this industrial action shall be pursued through the agreed procedures.
- 4) On the matter of issues other than terms and conditions of employment for teachers such as policy implications it is recommended that all constituents participate in the Strategic Forum initiative on the basis of the preamble to these clauses.
- 5) The inter-trade union transfer of members is being processed by apparently all constituents in contravention of Paragraph 46 of the ICTU Constitution. As this article is designed to promote harmonious relations between unions I recommend all constituents implement forthwith.

- 6) Nothing in the above negates the autonomy of any constituent union to carry out its activities as endorsed by its membership. However such action should only be engaged in following exhaustion of the procedures as contained in the NITC.

TNC salary agreements become the basis of DE Determinations. TNC conditions of service agreements are issued to schools in the form of TNC Circulars. TNC agreements automatically amend Northern Ireland teachers' contracts of employment and each agreement becomes the implied conditions of service of all teachers.

1.1 Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC)

NITC has the following representation from the recognised teachers' unions.

ATL	3
INTO	5
NAHT	1 [with 1 observer]
NASUWT	5
UTU	5
Total	19

1.2 INTO Representation on NITC

INTO representatives on the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council in 2010 were:

John McAnulty
 Frank Bunting
 Barney Magill
 Gerry Murphy
 Mary Cahillane

1.3 NITC Officers

The NITC Officers are:

Chair:	Avril Hall-Callaghan UTU
Vice Chair:	Frank Bunting INTO
Honorary Secretary:	Seamus Searson NASUWT
Minutes Secretary:	Mark Langhammer ATL
Conditions of Service Spokesperson:	Frank Bunting INTO
Salaries' Spokesperson:	Seamus Searson NASUWT

1.4 Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC)

Each NITC union has two representatives on the Teachers' Side of the TNC. The INTO representatives in 2010 were John McAnulty and Frank Bunting.

Frank Bunting (with Tony Carlin substituting) served on the Joint Working Party (JWP). The following areas of work were undertaken by the TNC:

- **Redundancy Procedure**
Clarification was obtained on the procedure and the advice given to Governors by employing authorities.
- **Teacher Abuse Survey**
A major survey was undertaken of teachers in Northern Ireland on teacher abuse and guidance to Boards of Governors was agreed that took into account the results of the survey.
- **Winding Down Scheme**
Many meetings were held to provide teachers who are 55 plus the opportunity to wind down into retirement without actuarial reductions. No agreement, along the lines of the Scottish Model was possible due to increasing tight financial constraints imposed on the DE by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

- **Unsatisfactory Teaching and Principal Procedures**
Again there have been many meetings and much work undertaken. The role of the ETI was clarified. The Interests contributed proposals for a new scheme which remain under discussion.
- **School Partnerships**
The growth of school partnerships, like Topsy, created many administrative and terms and conditions of employment issues for teachers. Many school partnerships are at different stages of development and TNC agreed that Management Side and TNC should collaborate more closely on developing protocols for partnership working.
- **Schools' Closures' Agreement**
The lack of a schools' closure agreement remains a scandal. DE continues to argue that it cannot agree to the draft Schools' Closure Agreement until it has secured agreement from NITC to changes in the Reorganisation Allowance Regulations. The only problem being that DE has been unable to articulate what changes it is seeking to the Reorganisation Allowance Regulations.
- **Teachers' Occupational Maternity Scheme / Adoption Leave**
NITC agreed the following INTO claim
Increase in full maternity pay from 4 to 8 weeks, with removal of two weeks at 9/10th pay. Maternity leave would then be 8 weeks full pay, 12 weeks ½ pay, 19 weeks Higher rate SMP. Increase paid leave to two weeks full pay.
Increase benefits to mirror those paid for maternity pay. Adoptive fathers to avail of two weeks paternity leave paid at rate of full pay.
- **Strategy for Teacher Health and Well Being** – Agreed. It is a far cry from the 1993 NITC claim for an independent Teacher Welfare Service to be established being high on rhetorical flourish but low on concrete proposals. Future initiatives include:
Schools to adopt a model Health and Well Being Policy;
A programme of Professional Development for teachers to be set up, including existing EPD and PQH provision to help teachers experiencing negative feelings about not being permitted to engage in meaningful Professional Development;
Improved systems to be put in place at school to monitor staff turnover and absence;
Teachers to be trained on carrying out risk assessments;
DE to encourage schools to use at least one exceptional closure day on teacher health related issues.
- **Threshold Appeals' Process** – NITC accepted an INTO claim that appeals by teachers in relation to movement on all parts of their pay spine, including Threshold should be heard by an independent LRA arbitrator rather than the existing Board of Governors Salaries Appeals' Committee.
- **Honoraria** – surprisingly many schools award honoraria to teachers (amounts varying from £35 per annum to £2000 per month) for unspecified duties which should normally be covered by Teaching Allowances. INTO sought clarification on this process and new arrangements have been developed which require a business case to be submitted by a Board of Governors to DE – for issue to DFP – before an honorarium can be paid.
- **Class Room Observation** – considerable time was spent on conflicting claims by two unions NAHT and NASUWT that Classroom Observation by principals had become a widespread problem in Northern Ireland schools. Both unions agreed to provide documentary evidence of this malpractice which in spite of numerous requests never appeared. Both unions issued separate advices with the result that Management Side has determined to issue its own advice on Classroom Observation.
- **Long Term Teachers' Allowance** – NITC agreed an INTO claim that a Long Term Teachers' Allowance would be paid to teachers on UPS 3 and principals and vice-principals at the top of their ISR. The claim was referred to an NITC sub-committee where it is currently buried.
- **Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) and Cover** – TNC agreed that in spite of a critical shortage of resources, a survey should be undertaken of all schools in Northern Ireland to evaluate prevailing practice with regard to how PPA and Cover had been introduced/managed. This survey was to take place in early 2011.
- **Forthcoming Marriage of Prince William and Kate Middleton** – INTO submitted a proposal that would reduce the teaching year from 190 to 189 days to enable teachers and pupils to join in on this joyous occasion rather than use a day of their Easter holiday in so doing. A response is awaited.

1.5 NITC Side of the TNC

ATL:	Theo Laverty, Mark Langhammer
INTO:	John McAnulty, Frank Bunting
NAHT:	Michael Newman, Fern Turner
UTU:	Lewis Love, Avril Hall-Callaghan
NASUWT:	Brigidin Lyttle, Seamus Searson

1.6 NITC Issues**1.6.1 Fundamental Review of LMS Funding**

NITC noted correspondence from Will Haire, then DE Permanent Secretary giving a commitment that the Council would be consulted on the Terms of Reference of the Fundamental Review of LMS. This review is long overdue in view of the gross disparity between primary and post primary school funding and the increasing difficulties in school collaboration funding at post primary level. There were no developments during the year.

1.6.2 DE Strategic Forum

Since the DE/ESA/NITC visit to Montgomery County, Maryland, DE has threatened to establish a Strategic Forum to promote education partnership. Protocols and terms of reference were eventually drawn up and the first meeting took place early in 2011. INTO originally decided not to get involved in the Strategic Forum but after reflection got reluctantly involved.

The two key issues under discussion are;

1. Drastic cutbacks to the Education Budget
2. Workforce review – designed to make school staffs “more dynamic”.

INTO continues to have the most serious reservations about the Strategic Forum agenda.

1.6.3 Education and Skills Authority [ESA]

INTO and NITC campaigned strongly during the year for the establishment of ESA and for the rationalization of education administration. Regrettably the process became a political football with the Unionist parties operating an effective veto. This will have profoundly negative implications for individual schools’ budgets and staffing over incoming years.

1.6.4 Education and Training Inspectorate [ETI]

Excellent relationships continue between the ETI and NITC largely due to the efforts of Chief Inspector Stanley Goudie. A presentation was made on “Together Towards Improvement” (TTI); concerns were raised about the increasingly bureaucratic nature of school development planning; the ability of school governors to evaluate the performance of principals. Attention was drawn to good reports on Extended Schools and Special Education Needs.

The Chief Inspector’s report 2008/2010 was launched in October 2010.

NITC expressed concern on the timing of the publication of adverse inspection reports. ETI agreed to alert teachers and unions in advance in such circumstances. NITC expressed concern regarding potential impact on the level and quality of support for schools under “Every School a Good School”, given the extensive budget cuts that have been announced. ETI stated that the inspection process in schools would not be affected and that the role of the District Inspector would be maintained.

1.6.5 CCEA

Good collaborative arrangements continued with DE Curriculum Branch and CCEA with regard to proposed new assessment and reporting arrangements. It was noted that teacher training for the new arrangements would be mainly by on line materials and on line support and 140 school shad volunteered for the new assessments arrangements pilot. Monthly NITC/CCEA meetings take place.

1.6.6 Education Budget Crisis

Various meetings took place with education partners during the year about the looming budget crisis following the election of the Conservative-Liberal government and the decision of the northern Ireland Executive not to protect in any way the Education budget. In one meeting redundancies equivalent to 7000 full time equivalent posts was raised – an extraordinary figure in a population of 20,000 teachers.

The Draft DE Budget was published in January 2011 for consultation and proved to be even worse than initial fears. It was exacerbated by a Treasury decision to remove “school surpluses” – a decision that was later reversed through recourse to the Northern Ireland Block Budget.

The INTO response to the Draft Education Budget can be found on page 16.

1.6.7 Redundancies

The employing authorities continue to do an excellent job in resolving increasingly serious teacher redundancy problems following the withdrawal of Premature Retirement Compensation Arrangements (PRC). Severance Payments equivalent to a redundancy payment was paid to teachers made redundant in 2009/10. A further decision extending this to the 2010/11 school year was made in 2011 with redundancy determinations needing to be made before the end of March 2011.

1.7 Salaries 2008-2011 – Industrial Action Ballot

The final year of the three year salary settlement resulted in a 2.3% salary award to teachers paid in September 2010. The Conservative Government imposed a salary freeze on teachers and all public sector workers commencing from September 2011. In view of this attack on teacher salaries, the Government imposed change to teacher pension indexation from the Retail Price Index (RPI) to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Government's specified objective to increase teacher contributions to their pension scheme (from 6.4% to 9.4%) - in effect a salary cut, INTO agreed to ballot members in Northern Ireland for a programme of discontinuous industrial action.

SECTION 2

SECTION 2: SUPERANNUATION

2.1 Redundancy Compensation

In 2009 DE ended the funding stream whereby teachers being made redundant in their late 50's were able to access their pension on their actual teaching service. Teachers made redundant during 2010 received a Severance Payment equivalent to double their redundancy payment award. This arrangement facilitates teachers 58 plus. DE has announced that it has in-line money for the 2010/11 Financial Year to replicate similar Redundancy and Severance Payments for teachers who must apply before the end of March 2011.

In 2010 the minimum age for Premature Retirement in public sector pension schemes was increased. After 1st April 2010 all access to teacher pensions was withdrawn until the normal retirement age of 60. Teachers over 55 can voluntarily access their pension and lump sum on a penal and punitive actuarially reduced basis. INTO strongly advises members to seek advice before considering this option.

2.2 Number of Teacher Redundancies at 30 November 2009

	Voluntary			Compulsory			Overall Total
	Primary	Post Primary	Total	Primary	Post Primary	Total	
BELB	8	11	19	1	1	2	21
WELB	12	1	13	1	0	1	14
NEELB	9	18	27	1	2	3	20
SEELB	8	9	17	1	2	3	12
SELB	3	8	11	1	0	1	20
GMI	0	6	6	0	0	0	6
VGS	0	18	18	0	2	2	20
CCMS	27	44	71	0	0	0	71
	67	115	182	5	7	12	194

Number of Teacher Redundancies 2010-11 Financial Year

Board	Controlled	Maintained	Total
BELB	16	17	33
WELB	9	13	22
NEELB	49	8	57
SEELB	17	6	23
SELB	13	19	32
ELB Sub Total	104	63	167
VGS			21
GMI			8
Total			196

2.3 Ill Health Retirements

The breakdown of ill health retirement figures for teachers in 2010 was as follows:

Cases of Total Incapacity Benefit (TIB) – 28
 Cases of Partial Incapacity Benefit (PIB) – 37
 Total – 65

2.4 Consolidation of NITPS Regulations

The work that needed to be done to consolidate the Northern Ireland Teacher Pension (NITPS) Regulations was not done due to DE resource problems. New Consolidated Regulations were published in England and Wales in 2010. INTO continues to press for the consolidation of the NITPS.

2.5 Winding Down Scheme

There are already some flexibilities within the Northern Ireland Teachers' Pension Scheme for teachers to gain access to part of their pension post 55 whilst continuing to teach. This requires an alteration of at least 25% in relation to the original teaching job. Only a small number – perhaps as low as five teachers have accessed this flexibility since 1998.

A more teacher friendly Winding Down Scheme is under consideration with respect to the likely uptake, associated costs and how those costs might be met. Whilst there have been many meetings DE has no budgeted resource to facilitate this additional flexibility at present.

2.6 RPA and Teachers' Pension Scheme

Post ESA, funding for the Teachers' Pension Scheme will continue to be accounted for separately.

2.7 North / South Transfer Pensions

The transfer of pensions is now possible between jurisdictions North and South. This is due to the fact the Teachers' scheme in the Republic of Ireland is now registered as Qualified Recognized Overseas Pensions Schemes (QROPS). Transfers will be based on transfer values and not day for day service. Detailed guidance on North / South transfer values is on the INTO website.

2.8 DE Pension Computer System

The contract for the teacher pension computer system was awarded to Capita Hartshead. This will provide enhanced information for teachers in relation to all aspects of their pension.

SECTION 3: EDUCATION FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION

At Conference 2010 Northern Committee agreed to make Education Funding a key priority for 2010/11; seek meetings with the Education Minister; Department of Education; Education and Library Board Chief Executives; the Education and Skills Authority Chief Executive Designate; to research Education Funding; to undertake a review of back office administration costs and to report to Northern Conference 2011.

INTO has long been concerned about Education Funding and the balance between school funding and education administration. INTO has previously recommended:

- LMS is critically reviewed to develop a process where schools and governors have autonomy to plan and deliver on plans;
- An end to the drip feed approach to school funding initiatives with agreed funding clearly set out in a programme from the outset;
- Removal of all salaries from LMS with staff being paid centrally;
- Principals and Governors to have autonomy within their School Development Plan to take forward strategies that reflect the local community and school needs;
- Development of an integrated education process where funding, professional development, inspection and planning are managed on a partnership basis ;
- Radically revised school funding arrangements that address school needs and equality concerns;

Northern Committee made a number of radical proposals to Northern Conference 2010 including;

- 1 The total percentage of the Education Budget spent on schools should be increased from 59 to 80 %;
- 2 RPA should seek to reduce spending on beaurcracy and administration;
- 3 TSN factor in the ASB should be increased;
- 4 All funding to Preparatory Schools should cease;
- 5 The waiting for a AWPU in Primary Schools should be increased to the level of a year 8 in a Post Primary School;
- 6 School surpluses above 2.5 % should be redistributed within the system;
- 7 LMS should be replaced with the Scottish system of school funding – Delegated Schools' Management (DSM) which separates staffing costs from other areas of expenditure;

In-year Developments

INTO made representations to a number of education bodies:

- At a meeting with Education Minister Caitriona Ruane MLA, INTO stressed the need not only to increase spending on education in general but also to shift spending from administration to the classroom. The Minister gave a commitment to defend frontline services when faced with a cut in the education budget and to reduce the gap in spending between primary and secondary schools;
- Two meetings took place with Senior Officials from the Department of Education including the Permanent Secretary. Whilst the thrust of INTO policy was noted and the need to reduce spending on administration was accepted they did point out the difficulties that surrounded the creation of ESA. They also drew attention to the complexity of school funding in Northern Ireland and the fact that a percentage of the budget obtained by Education Bodies did come eventually to schools.
- INTO (and NITC) had a number of meetings with Gavin Boyd Designated Chief Executive of ESA. In spite of energetic representations by INTO on the necessity to establish ESA before the worst effects of the Con-Dem budget cuts were realised it became clear that the creation of ESA and the potential savings on

administration would not be realised this side of an Assembly Election. INTO expressed the concern of teachers that not only was money being spent on bodies which duplicated services but that money was also being spent on an embryonic body with no function.

- All the teacher unions accepted the need to reduce spending on administration and to increase the size of the Aggregated Schools' Budget.
- In the final INTO response to the Department of Education draft Education Budget, INTO argued forcefully for the need to increase and not cut the Aggregate Schools' Budget to achieve the objectives of 'Every School a Good School [ESaGS], improve children's teaching and learning and avoid the huge reduction in the number of teachers and other school staff envisaged in the DE draft Education Budget.

Other Developments

The difficulty in increasing the total of the Education Budget spent on schools from 60 to 80% is illustrated by the following analysis of Western Education and Library Board Funding to 31 December 2010 (see Table 1 below)

Table 1

FUNDING TO 31 DECEMBER 2010

	Western Educ & Library Board	Total Funding £	%age
D.Ed.	Nursery	2,312,882	
D.Ed.	Primary	86,765,248	
D.Ed.	Secondary	59,264,409	
D.Ed.	Grammar	10,095,412	
	EYF	0	
D.Ed.	Earmarked	4,907,754	
	Schools Delegated Total	163,345,705	61%
D.Ed.	Landlord Maintenance	4,611,000	
D.Ed.	Schools Non-Delegated	14,579,547	
D.Ed.	Schools N/Delegated Earmarked	7,726,000	
	Schools N/Delegated - Major Capital	167,000	
D.Ed.	Sch. Centre - Curriculum	260,000	
D.Ed.	Sch. Centre - Earmarked Initiatives	553,000	
D.Ed.	Special Schools	15,175,000	
D.Ed.	Special - Excl Special Schools	12,789,000	
D.Ed.	Special Earmarked	3,984,656	
D.Ed.	HQ Admin & Services	5,666,000	
D.Ed.	Catering Service	8,784,000	
D.Ed.	Home To School Transport	15,856,000	
D.Ed.	Transport Earmarked	686,000	
D.Ed.	CASS	3,911,000	
D.Ed.	CASS Earmarked	5,081,076	
D.Ed.	Schools Library	734,000	
D.Ed.	Misc Educ Services	3,089,000	
D.Ed.	BMC (Admin)	152,000	
D.Ed.	Clothing (Schools)	850,000	
	Centre budgets Total	104,654,279	39%
	Total	267,999,984	100%

Western ELB had a total budget in 2010 of £268million. 61% as illustrated above was delegated to schools. 39% a non-delegated figure covers a range of inter school related funding initiatives such as;

- Landlord Maintenance (4 million, £611,000)
- Special Schools (15 million, £175,000)
- Special Education – excluding special schools (12 million, £789,000)
- Special Ear marked (3 million, £984,656)
- School Catering (8 million, £784,000)
- Home to School Transport – a massive (856 million, 15,856,000)

It is difficult, if not impossible to see how the ASB figures for schools could be increased without having a detrimental impact on schools themselves. Of the non delegated Western ELB budget of £104,654,279 only £5,666,000 is allocated to Headquarter Administration and Services. Western ELB and Southern ELB are the most advanced of the Boards in respect of the integration of their respective services and it is likely that some savings will be achieved here.

The delegation of the CASS budget of £3,911,000 to schools would increase ASB but few proposals have emerged as to how Teacher Continuous Professional Development in schools could be managed under such delegated arrangements. Innovative arrangements should and could be developed utilising the resources of the University teaching colleges. With increasing unemployment every effort must be maintained to protect the school catering service and the Clothing (schools) Allowance.

Following the intervention of the Education Minister school funding to Preparatory Schools was dramatically reduced but, in spite of INTO protests not terminated.

The waiting for AWPUs in Primary Schools was increased marginally but not to the extent that it would address the existing disparity between Primary and Post Primary Funding.

In early 2011 there was a scare over school surpluses which was addressed by effective action taken by Education Minister Caitriona Ruane MLA and Finance Minister Sammy Wilson MP, MLA guaranteeing school budget surpluses through the Northern Ireland block budget.

In spite of INTO representations, the long promised Fundamental Review of LMS School Funding remains consigned to the indefinite future. It is even more inappropriate now in view of developing school collaboration and Area Learning Communities.

In the INTO response to the DE draft Education budget. INTO reviewed the Educational landscape in the light of the very drastic cuts being proposed over the next four years to the ASB budget. INTO took the view that the bulk of the cuts should not be visited upon teachers and support staff in view of the fact that Pupil AWP funding constituted 82.5% of the ASB budget in 2008, it follows that the only consequence of the Tory cutbacks and the decision of the Northern Ireland Executive not to protect the Education Budget over the next CSR four year period will be a massive hemorrhage of teaching and support staff jobs in schools.

INTO believes that other struts of the Education Firmament should be reviewed and reduced. This would apply to all non essential back office jobs; the £25 million CCEA budget (which INTO recommends should become a sub-committee of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in the Republic of Ireland; the replacement of the £5 million Education and Training Inspectorate with a more focused system of accountability; and a reduced Department of Education. The proposed artificial divide between the Department of Education – being responsible for policy and ESA – being responsible for operations is a nippy way of having two Permanent Secretaries.

Draft Budget 2011-15 Department of Education Draft Allocations and Savings Proposals

INTO Response

1. Introduction

- 1.1 INTO acknowledges that the background to the draft budget is extremely challenging in circumstances where the British Treasury has removed £4 billion from the Northern Ireland Block Grant. INTO also notes that this is a draft budget and the Executive is attempting to raise an additional £1.6 billion. Of this £800 million has

already been allocated. The Education Minister is optimistic that the draft budget for education will be enhanced arising from this process. INTO can only hope that this optimism is not misplaced. But even in circumstances where the optimism is justified, the education budget would need the entire amount of the alleged £800 million to avoid the decimation of the education service. INTO has grave doubts about whether the additional Executive resource of £800 million will be realised, as some of the proposals do not seem to generate the cash necessary or, if so, in time. The proposed Department of Education savings are unprecedented in their ferocity and highly alarming. In their present form, they will lead to hundreds of school closures and thousands of teacher redundancies, a serious increase in class size and a blight on the education of a generation of children.

- 1.2 INTO is reluctantly prepared - due to the enormity of the cuts proposed - to respond as requested to:
- The proposed budget allocations for Education;
 - The proposed Savings measures;
 - Other opportunities to improve services and ensure efficiencies.

2. The Proposed Budget Allocations for Education

INTO is alarmed that the 2010/11 Budget Baseline is frozen at £1,914.8 million and then dramatically cut year on year by -3.3% (2011/12); -3% (2012/13); -2.8% (2013/14); -3.5% (2014/15). Even assuming a continuation of the modest 2.5% uplift to schools budgets for 2010/11 and bearing in mind RPI inflation currently at 4.8% - eating into schools budgets, the effect of the overall cut is extraordinary. With a 2.5% increase over 2010/15 the recurrent Education budget would be £2,658.8 million. The proposal is that this is reduced to £1,847.7 million. This represents a cut of £811.1 million over the 2011/14 four year period. A cut of this magnitude is unprecedented and totally unacceptable.

The most alarming figure in the Department's saving areas is to the Aggregated Schools Budget (ASB). The cuts over 4 years are 2011/12 - £26.55 million; 2012/13 another £85.15 million; 2013/14 another £114.05 million and 2014/15 a staggering £179.85 million. The ASB is what pays teachers and front line staff salaries. It is what keeps schools solvent. Unprecedented cuts of this nature can only have catastrophic effects on the job security of thousands of teachers and front line staff.

INTO welcomes the Education Minister's assurances that she will do everything in her power to protect the job security of teachers and front line service staff. INTO supports the Department's attempt to re-classify £41 million of Capital monies to Resource in 2011/12 to minimise, as far as possible, the impact on the level of funding directly available to schools. If this re-classification is successful, it means the cut to schools budgets 2011/12 will be notionally £26.55 million (though this takes no account of the false 2010/11 baseline, inflationary or other pressures) – rather than a cut of £67.55 million to schools budgets. So while the re-classification from Capital to Resource is regrettable from a school building perspective, in the context of the dire financial projections in these Draft Allocations INTO is of the view that this re-classification will reduce the mass redundancy of teachers for a year.

INTO is alarmed at the effects of these unprecedented massive cuts to schools budgets. The question is how many teacher redundancies will there be? INTO is seeking a detailed answer to this question. However in 2010/11, regarded as a "good year" because schools budgets were increased by 2.5%, the Department of Education and Employing Authorities are planning on 250 teacher redundancies. Should schools budgets continue to be uplifted annually by 2.5%, it is not unreasonable to project 1000 teacher redundancies over the four year 2011/15 period. With the level of cuts proposed to the ASB, it is not unreasonable to assume a quadrupling of teacher redundancies, if this Resource budget was to remain in its present untenable form.

In the context of the severity of the ASB budget 2011/15 the other proposed savings areas are irritants and are mildly damaging to the education of children, which must be our most important concern. A key point INTO wants to emphasise is that the proposed cuts are unprecedented. Teachers and classroom assistants are being offered up as the main sacrifice for the cuts. The Department has failed to take account of other beasts on the educational landscape such as CCEA and the ETI whose future in the Draft Budget remains very much 'business as usual'.

INTO makes the following observations:

- Home to school transport costs are wildly excessive in Northern Ireland. The cut proposed, in the circumstances of the proposed budget cuts, is derisory. The time is long overdue for the jelly-like interpretation of 'parental choice' to be revisited and for the minority sectional interests defending this expensive redoubt to be challenged.

- The proposed cuts to ICT in schools are disappointing but not life threatening.
- The re-classification of Capital to Resource next year is useful but, in reality, taking into account the proposed enormity of the cuts, is a sticking plaster on a bleeding open wound.
- The reorganisation of professional support to schools. 'Reorganization' is a weasel word. In reality it means a cut. There is little specificity about the nature and extent of this cut.
- Cutting £15/£30/£30/£30m (million) over the 2011/15 period signals the destruction of the Education and Library Boards' Curriculum and Advisory Support Services which is shocking particularly in view of the fact that no adequate or acceptable alternative, or resource, is proposed.
- INTO welcomes the cessation of the Tory government inspired Specialist School Model, divisiveness between Department of Education grant-aided schools introduced into Northern Ireland by Barry Gardiner MP and former Direct Rule Education Minister of infamous memory.
- The cuts to the Entitlement Framework, after all the work that has been done in this area are extremely disappointing. The reference in this paragraph to the longstanding Strategic Review of LMS is amusing but not funny. This fundamental review is now overdue by about four years. Nothing much has changed with Devolution with respect to the Department of Education. Much is promised. Little is delivered.
- Transferring the cost of the AccessNI pre-employment vetting check to the person offered the job would be more satisfactory if there were jobs on offer rather than the massive job cuts being proposed in this draft document.
- Delaying the programme of capacity building in support for barriers to learning is a miserly cut that will have a profoundly negative impact on children's education.
- Teacher substitution; INTO is concerned at the expectation of the Department of Education that teacher sickness absence will reduce to producing savings of £7.2 million. The increasingly stressed school environments created by these proposed cuts, are likely to wreak havoc on the health and well being of teachers and front line staff. It seems more an issue of Department of Education wish fulfillment. The proposals may well impact negatively on school budgets without addressing the problem under concern.
- The imposition of the GTC fee on teachers will be a highly unpopular move amongst teachers. The emoluments agreed by the GTC and the Department of Education for GTC members, including the swathe of so-called stakeholder members on the Council, GTC Chair, the neutered role of the Council, will now be viewed from a different prism, now that teachers are being expected to pay upfront for the service provided. INTO proposes that a review of the role of the GTC in the light of this change of circumstances should be undertaken.
- INTO notes the proposal on Primary Principal Transfer Interviews. However the workload on Teaching Principals is long-standing, unaddressed and increasing. There is absolutely no merit in withdrawing substitute cover from teaching principals in schools. INTO strongly opposes this proposal.

3. Other Opportunities to Secure Services and Ensure Efficiencies

It has taken countless generations to build the current Northern Ireland schools system. Yes, it is not ideal and change is necessary. However, at Primary and Post Primary Level a first class education is available currently for all Northern Ireland children.

INTO is of the view that the savagery and drastic nature of the proposed Savings, particularly to the ASB Budget, will lay waste to the Northern Ireland schools system. INTO does not regard this view as alarmist or scare mongering. The reality is across Northern Ireland hundreds and thousands of teachers will lose their jobs and will find it extremely difficult to access other teaching positions.

In view of the above, INTO laments the bickering between Northern Ireland political parties which has led to the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) being put on ice. The establishment of ESA would have given the opportunity for the Department of Education to adopt a more strategic approach to the excessive cuts being imposed on Northern Ireland budgets by the Conservative government of millionaires. That opportunity has now been lost, the forthcoming General Election in the Republic of Ireland will be followed by the Northern Ireland Assembly Elections in May and it is highly unlikely that legislation

establishing the ESA will be in place before 2012. The result is that in the first year of drastic cuts each of Northern Ireland's 1200 schools will have to face the unacceptability of cuts across the board and little strategic approach will be possible.

When considering cuts of such magnitude the Department of Education would do well to look around at other major cost centres and evaluate their effectiveness, in an equal and equivalent manner to the magnitude of the cuts being proposed for school budgets. Rather than sacrifice thousands of teachers' jobs and drastically impair the teaching and learning of children in our schools it would be much more sensible to consider the roles of bodies like the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) and the Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). The value for money of both organisations, in the context of the loss of so many teaching jobs, requires a fundamental review of them both.

ETI costs £5 million pounds per year. How many forms of accountability should schools be subject to? The proposed interface between the ESA and ETI is blurred and requires clarification. In the context of this funding crisis, Department of Education proposals to fund additional administrative bodies, which were strange, are now totally unrealistic.

INTO questions, whether in the context of these extraordinary proposals for cuts to the schools' budget, whether Northern Ireland, with a relatively small number of 1200 schools, actually needs a CCEA. Apart from being a factory of self-serving complexity, there would be considerable merit in a greater North/South approach within this area and using the NCCA, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, as one curriculum and assessment body for the Island.

INTO is critical of the fact that not enough attention has been given by the Department to developing education administrative and curriculum and assessment arrangements which are fit for purpose for Northern Ireland. INTO urges a more strategic response to the Education Budget which does not concentrate on the decimation of teaching and front-line service jobs to the immediate disadvantage to children's education. INTO also urges that all educational special interest groups such as the Transferors' Council, the Northern Ireland Council for Catholic Education, if they are keen to set up separate education administrative bodies, should ensure they are self-funding and receive no money from the education budget. Whatever resources are available should go to frontline services and children's education. Separateness and sectionalism should be discouraged and not "pump primed" with public money.

4. Concluding Remarks

Greater attention needs to be given to the removal of the bureaucratic burden on teachers and principals. Given the current status quo, any change in this direction is highly unlikely. There are far too many administrators, gate keepers, and persons desperate not to return to classroom teaching or others who have visited classrooms fleetingly much as some visit the carbon fibre plant in Bombardier Belfast. Most if not all are expensive and in over supply. The false divide between Department of Education (policy) and ESA (operations) is a typical policy gonk piece of false fancy. Education administration should be seamless in situations where the interests of pupils, teachers and schools come first.

SECTION 4: STANDING CONFERENCES FOR PRIMARY, POST-PRIMARY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

STANDING CONFERENCE FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

INTO Representatives: Mark McTaggart (Joint Secretary), Rita Fox, Charles Glenn, Kevin Smyth, Mary Dorman.

STANDING CONFERENCE FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

INTO Representatives: Barney Magill (Joint Secretary), John McAnulty.

Joint-Conference met in May 2010.

4.1 BUDGET

DE provided a detailed briefing of the 2010/11 Budget outcome including the key priorities and decisions which had affected the outcome.

Teachers' Side requested that the detailed breakdown be provided in writing. DE agreed.

Teachers' Side commented that it was difficult to see front-line services not being affected in the current financial climate. Despite the budget constraints expectation levels continued to rise and this was extremely challenging to teachers. Items such as exam fees and transport costs were increasing yet still had to be met from within tight fixed budgets. It was important that the Minister realised the pressures schools and teachers were under. DE replied that the Minister was fully committed to protecting front-line services by reducing bureaucracy with the creation of ESA and the abolition of 8 NDPBs. However, the legislation to progress this was held up in the Executive.

DE added that public expenditure was reduced in both cash and real terms and this would be a recurring debate over the next few years.

4.2 ESA/CONVERGENCE

ESAIT provided a detailed update on the implementation of ESA and the progress on the Convergence Delivery Plan.

Teachers' Side requested that the update be forwarded to them in writing. ESAIT Teachers' Side commented that the public perception of the process was poor. There appeared to be parallel structures in place, with ESAIT and the Boards, and this was very much against the spirit of the process. It was vital to avoid duplication and not to see the parallel structures in place indefinitely. The general perception was that ESA would not happen quickly and there was a requirement to put some confidence in the system which appeared to be in a state of confusion. It was also felt that the current focus was totally on the ELBs to the exclusion of the other members of the education family.

DE stated that there were no parallel structures. ESAIT and the Boards would be required to work closely together. The Minister was committed to the implementation of ESA as soon as the legislative process would allow.

Phase 1 of the convergence process was concentrating on the ELBs as it was here that the greatest savings would be made.

Teachers' Side added that they were in favour of ESA as a means of reducing bureaucracy and directing more funds to front-line services but the reverse appeared to be the case at the moment while schools and teachers were struggling to obtain adequate funding for books and exam fees.

DE stressed that the process was designed to create greater efficiency. The onus would be on the ELBs to save money on their administration budgets. It had to be viewed as a transitional period related to the current response on the draft legislation.

4.3 SEN REVIEW

DE reported that the return date for responses to the review was extended to the end of January 2010. The high level proposals outlined have generated significant interest with over 1,700 responses. All responses are being analysed by the Department of Education and a Summary Report of these will be produced by the end of summer. Following this, a thorough analysis of the responses will guide and inform the further development of the detailed policy proposals which will aim to put in place a robust and accountable framework. In addition ETI have been commissioned to develop SENCO guidance and indicators of good practice. It is hoped that the final proposals will go to the Minister in 2011.

Teachers' Side stated that the delay in delivering the new system was creating uncertainty and confusion for both parents and teachers in the Statementing Process. It was vitally important to get the new system right.

DE added the current statementing process would remain in place until decisions on the new system were made and any new arrangements were introduced. Any decision as to the new system would be based on the consultative process and would hopefully result in a system which would be as effective as it could be and meet the approval of all concerned.

4.4 AREA BASED PLANNING (ABP)

DE reported that the Bain Report, published in December 2006, recommended a new Area Based Planning approach to create an estate of educationally sustainable schools, plus pre-school and youth facilities, meeting the longer term needs of local areas. ABP is about anticipating the future needs of an area and planning to meet those needs. An exercise looking at delivering the Entitlement Framework on an area basis was initiated in 2008 and the Central Group Report "*Together Towards Entitlement*" was published in November 2009. This set out the steps needed to achieve an area-based planning approach to the schools' estate and deliver the Entitlement Framework by 2013. The Minister accepted the Report's recommendations which will help inform this aspect of ABP when ESA is established.

DE added that steps had been laid out for the introduction of ABP :

- identifying the need on an Area Base – analysing the population;
- engagement with the various sectors;
- development of proposals and plans on an Area Base;
- full consultation on proposals for implementation of ABP;
- the Development Proposal process in place for individual school and the related capital investment.

Teachers' Side asked how the process fitted in with recent NICCE proposals. DE stated it was very helpful that one sector had put forward proposals but that when ABP was in place, these would have to be considered within a context ABP as it was vital that all sectors were dealt with in the process. Teachers' Side asked as to the powers that DE would have as to the possible decisions on individual institutions.

DE replied that it would retain the power of approval and capital investment decisions would be based on proposals contained within an approved Area Based Plan.

4.5 TRANSFER

DE reported that the policy on Post-Primary Transfer for the 2011 process remains as set out in the Transfer 2010 Guidance. Consideration is being given to issuing guidance for 2011 before the end of the school year. A detailed Circular for Transfer 2011 will issue at the start of the Autumn term.

Teachers' Side asked what the legal position was with regard to schools moving from a selective to non-selective situation without the required formal approval. DE stated that the GBA had published legal advice on this issue. DE

was renewing its advice in light of the transfer policy and would deal expeditiously with any applications for development proposals that were received.

Teachers' Side added that Primary Schools were fully committed to the process but were in the hands of the Grammar Schools. Many parents were unable to come to terms with what teachers were aspiring to, leaving the Primary Sector in a state of limbo.

DE acknowledged this but stressed that, legally, schools were allowed to continue to admit pupils on the basis of ability.

Teachers' Side stated that it would be timely for the Department to reissue the advice on coaching for selection tests before and after school as it appeared this was still taking place in certain schools.

DE stressed that the Minister had strong views on this but it was a difficult matter to police. DE would consider the request.

4.6 LITERACY/NUMERACY

DE reported that work is continuing to finalise the revised Literacy and Numeracy strategy. DE was planning the same level of engagement with teacher unions as previously, with a view to getting Ministerial approval to enable the launch in the Autumn term.

Teachers' Side stated that schools would welcome the launch of a clear and focussed strategy and wished to record their appreciation that, in formulating this, the engagement with the teacher unions was high on the priority list.

4.7 ESAGS/FORMAL INTERVENTION PROCESS

DE reported that the ESAGS Policy includes a Formal Intervention Process where provision is found to be less than satisfactory by ETI. There were currently 18 schools in the process and the Minister was concerned with the media coverage one school had received. Teachers' Side shared the concern over media coverage and stressed that transparency was required in order that the process be workable.

ACE commented that it was important to establish a consistent process across Northern Ireland. It was putting a sharp demand on CASS Services in the Boards but that the support and collaboration from CCMS was appreciated.

4.8 InCas (From Agenda Item 3 – Matters Arising From Previous Meeting)

Teachers' Side asked if the contract for InCAS was being renewed. DE reported that the original contract did have provision for an extension and that was being pursued. At the same time, work was commencing on a new tender for a diagnostic assessment tool that was quality assured and reflected legislative requirements. NITC would be consulted in drawing up the specifications.

Teachers' Side stated that it was vitally important that teachers and schools fully understood the nature and purpose of diagnostic assessment and that the results helped schools plan. There are currently many teachers who do not fully understand the process and are fearful that anything that results in the production of data could end up in the media.

DE added that it was vitally important to get the new specification right and that principals and NITC representatives would have an important role to play in ensuring that a reality check is built in.

4.9 INSPECTION MATTERS

ETI reported that the overall procedures for inspection have not changed markedly since the implementation of the new inspection models in 2005/06 with the main focus being on key aspects of achievements and standards, provision for learning and, leadership and management.

ETI will introduce on an incremental basis, from Sept 2010, an increasingly proportionate and risk-based strategy of inspection for schools. Schools, where the areas for improvement outweigh the strengths, will participate in a

shorter inspection cycle than others. This strategy has been outlined to Standing Conference on two previous occasions and will be shared with NITC shortly.

ETI has continued to work closely with a range of stakeholders within *Using Schools Information Data (USID)*, to provide workshops for primary principals on the effective use of data to inform and improve learning and teaching. To date the feedback received has been encouraging.

An Area-based Inspection evaluating the Support for Self-Evaluation has been carried out in the Downpatrick area involving a sampling of schools and organisations from pre-school to FE and training and also key stakeholders such as SEELB, CCMS, RTU, LSDA, C2k and DE and DEL. An oral feedback will be given to relevant groups in June and the report should be published in the autumn term.

The next Chief Inspector's Report is currently being finalised and will cover the period from April 2008 to March 2010. It is planned to launch the report in October and the messages for schools will be given at the next Standing Conference. ETI added that *Together Towards Improvement (TTI)* has been reviewed for the primary and post-primary sector. There is now much more consistency with the versions of TTI across all educational phases and, in particular, with *Improving Quality: Raising Standards (IQRS)* in the Further Education and Work-based Learning phases. It is intended to share the new TTIs with NITC shortly.

Teachers' Side were pleased that there had been little switch of emphasis in the procedures for inspection but were concerned that a school's performance could be misrepresented in the data produced without taking particular circumstances into account. ETI stated that judgements were not based on data alone and where data is examined, it is the trend rather than individual or most recent year outcomes which is given greater weight.

Evaluations of a school's performance are also based upon, importantly, direct observation of learning and teaching through lesson visits, discussions with staff and senior management, examination of pupils' books, discussions of a school's own internal assessment outcomes and discussions with pupils.

Brian Speirs, ETI, reported that this would be his last Standing Conference due to retirement and he would be replaced by John Anderson. Teacher's Side thanked Brian for his contribution to Conference and wished him well in his retirement.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Teachers' Side took the opportunity to note Robson Davison's forthcoming retirement and acknowledged his contribution to Conference, particularly in his role as Chair. Robson thanked all for the remarks made and wished Conference, and in particular his successor, well for the future.

Standing Conference Special Education

INTO Representatives: Mary Dorman and Nora O'Baoill

The Special Standing Conference met on the 24th November 2010

An update was given about the progress the DE is making with collating and evaluating the responses to the consultation process that followed the publication of the Inclusion and SEN Review document. The findings are expected in the Spring. This will be followed by a lower level strategy document being issued for consultation.

Middletown Centre for Autism is continuing to progress and training is being offered to teachers. DE is currently conducting an audit to help develop an updated strategy for Autism provision. It has engaged with Teachers' Side in the consultation process.

DE outlined a capacity building programme that is being developed. A conference is planned for March 2011 to launch the programme. A major element will be a portal on the c2k desk top that will allow teachers to directly access information and support related to SEN strategies and conditions. Quick SEN reference guides and IEP writing guidelines could assist teachers on demand. A section on E learning and capacity building for SENCOs will be provided. TS welcomed this development but cautioned against E learning as the only channel for capacity building.

Teachers' Side expressed concerns that cutting of capital build funding could impact adversely upon the special school sector. Accommodation issues in this sector can have a disproportionate impact upon pupils and staff.

Teacher Side was concerned that schools that had met the capital build criteria had not been placed upon the DE list.

Teachers' Side noted the ETI report on LSC provision and sought reassurance from DE that a strategic plan was being drawn up to ensure equality of access to Learning Support Centres and MLD provision throughout the region. Teachers' Side also highlighted the need for ongoing support for staff who had to meet increasingly diverse needs.

A range of concerns were expressed by teachers side about the limitations difficulties and in some cases the unsuitability of the INCAS test for some pupils with SEN. Pupils in Special Schools are exempt. DE were aware of the limitations and indicated that testing banks were being increased.

CCEA is currently looking at the issue of providing qualification options for all post primary pupils. It is seeking to develop post primary accreditation that is suitable in all post primary and FE settings. It was agreed that a two track system would be undesirable.

SECTION 5: EDUCATION SECTION

5.1 Transfer

During 2010 grammar schools used the results of unregulated entrance tests to determine their intakes for September 2010. Primary school principals were put under enormous pressure from parents seeking results of class-based tests and assessments to support their applications for entry to the grammar schools. INTO issued advice to principal members on the matter.

In December 2010, the Education Minister published guidance for Transfer 2011. The guidance was largely the same as that issued for Transfer 2010, the main difference being an announcement that DE would only provide funding for primary principals to conduct transfer interviews with parents up to and including 4 February 2011. This date falls just before the results of the entrance tests are issued.

*“Primary School Principals should note that it is clearly very important that they continue to offer their help and advice to all P7 parents. It is also very important that the primary school principal’s role in Transfer is clear and receives the support of the Department. For these reasons, all primary school principals should invite parents of P7 children to an interview to advise on the completion of a Transfer Form and these interviews should take place **on or before 4 February 2011**. Grammar school breakaway entrance test results issue after this date. Primary principals are advised, therefore, that they should conduct transfer interviews with parents during a period when these interviews cannot become involved in issues related to breakaway entrance test results. Primary school principals have no formal involvement in these tests. Responsibility for completion of the Transfer Form continues to rest entirely with the parent.*

Primary school principals should also note that any transfer interviews conducted after 4 February 2011 will not be considered by the Department to be part of the transfer procedure and will not therefore be eligible for substitute teacher cover. An appropriate adjustment is being made to the arrangements for claiming substitute cover for involvement in the transfer procedure. It is possible that the need to generate savings in the education budget may preclude funding for any transfer interviews next year”.

Following the publication of the advice, the Minister came under attack in the NI Assembly from MLAs whose parties support the retention of academic selection.

5.2 Assessment and Reporting to Parents

During the year CCEA consulted regularly with INTO on the end-of-key stage assessment arrangements, which will become statutory from September 2012. Discussions took place on the INSET arrangements for teachers, which will roll out during the 2011/12 school year.

The INTO position, as conveyed to CCEA was:

- The Organisation welcomed the decision that assessment will be based on teachers’ professional judgement (moderated);
- the outworking of the proposals must be workload proofed;
- every teacher must be fully trained in the operation of the arrangements.

INTO secured agreement that every teacher will avail of the same level of INSET (no cascading), which CCEA guaranteed will be of high quality.

5.3 INCAs

INTO continued to express its dissatisfaction with and lack of confidence in INCAs, following the debacle of the previous year. Further concerns arose during 2010 about the accuracy and validity of the results for primary 4

pupils. These concerns were conveyed to CCEA who undertook to address them. CCEA confirmed that tenders will be sought for a new computer –based assessment system for the year 2012/13.

5.4 Post-Primary Review

During 2010, the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education (NICCE) published proposals for reorganisation of the Catholic post-primary sector, on an area by area basis. INTO held meetings of members in schools and branches across the north to consider the proposals. The INTO response to the proposals can be viewed on the INTO website [www.into.ie/Northern Ireland](http://www.into.ie/Northern%20Ireland)

5.5 Entitlement Framework/Area Learning Communities

Northern Committee received regular reports from Post-Primary Area Representatives on the progress, or otherwise, of collaboration arrangements among post-primary schools, in preparation for the requirement to deliver the Entitlement Framework from September 2012.

The main issues emerging from the reports included:

- potential barriers between Catholic-managed and Controlled schools and between Grammar and Secondary schools;
- the implications for jobs and posts of responsibility;
- contractual issues;
- quality assurance of teaching in each school;
- curricular issues;
- financial issues for pupils moving between schools;
- admissions criteria.

NITC and JWP are currently considering the conditions of service issues arising from ALCs.

5.6 Early Years (0-6) Strategy

INTO responded to the DE proposed strategy for early years (0-6) provision in November 2010.

Below is a summary of the response. The full response can be viewed on the INTO website [www.into.ie /Northern Ireland](http://www.into.ie/Northern%20Ireland).

Summary

INTO is profoundly disappointed by this Consultative document. As a vision, it is seriously flawed, with its undue emphasis on developing the role of the private sector in early years provision.

INTO acknowledges the vital importance of Early Years provision to the educational wellbeing and future life quality of our children.

INTO agrees on the need to provide equality of access and equality of high level provision for all children.

INTO believes that the way to achieve the stated objectives is to raise standards in the non-statutory sector to those already prevalent in the statutory sector.

INTO is disappointed that the proposed Strategy signally fails to ensure the above, in that:

- There is no commitment to ensure that the necessary funding will be made available to ensure that all children benefit from high quality, teacher-led and supported provision. Indeed funding, as an issue, is not addressed in the document.
- The Strategy appears to focus on the non-statutory sector, to the inevitable detriment of the statutory sector. INTO supports the work done in many private and voluntary settings and recognises the need for up-skilling the qualifications of staff in this sector, but this must not be at the expense of the high quality provision that children receive in the statutory sector.

INTO calls on the Department to ensure that any development and elaboration of this Consultation is informed by professional teachers from the sector and that the divisiveness encouraged by this Consultation is ended.

5.7 Class Size Campaign

In February 2010, INTO and UTU launched a joint campaign to reduce class size, particularly in primary schools. The campaign was entitled *Crowded Out*.

The objectives on class size are:

- 18 in Foundation Stage and KS1
- 24 in KS2
- 20 in KS3

Leaflets and posters were prepared for classrooms and other public spaces. INTO representatives met with the Education Minister and other MLAs to promote the campaign. The Education Minister expressed support for the objectives but said that everything depended on the availability of funding.

5.8 SEN Review

As the year ended, the Department of Education had still not published the outcomes of the SEN review.

5.9 Responses to Consultation Papers

INTO submitted responses to the following consultations. The responses can be viewed on the INTO website: [www.into.ie /Northern Ireland](http://www.into.ie/NorthernIreland).

- Teacher Education in a Climate of Change
- Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education
- STEM Strategy

SECTION 6: EQUALITY

6.1 Equal Opportunities including policies, procedures and Joint Declaration of Protection

INTO continues to advise members on a wide range of equality issues associated with their terms and conditions of employment. Advice and representation has been provided particularly on issues such as gender discrimination in employment, reasonable adjustments in cases of disabled teachers and issues of discrimination in the application for redundancy and flexible working procedures.

Members are urged to ensure that the School's Equal Opportunities policy has been updated in line with the agreed procedure developed by INTO. Members should ensure that they have been provided with a signed copy of the Joint Declaration of Protection which states the school's opposition to discrimination, bullying and harassment.

INTO has engaged with the Equality and Human Rights Commission in respect of changes to strategic policies and proposals impacting on schools. INTO continues to oppose the strategy being followed by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to develop Equality Indicators as part of the overall ETI inspection process for schools and colleges. INTO considers that this process has not been agreed and is likely to impose a significant bureaucratic burden on schools.

INTO continues to support the '*Lift Off*' process to promote Human Rights in schools. This is a cross border initiative in conjunction with the Ulster Teachers Union.

In conjunction with other members of the JWP, INTO has taken forward the issue of violence and abuse of teachers. At present a representative survey of the teaching workforce has been undertaken and appropriate guidance for use Governors, Principals and teachers is being prepared.

INTO continues to monitor policies issued by the Department of Education and Employing Authorities for issues of equality of opportunity. In addition, INTO has responded to Section 75 consultations on issues such as pension changes and alterations to the SENDO legislation.

6.2 Family Friendly Procedures

INTO initiated and has successfully agreed revisions of the agreed family friendly policies for teachers. The revision has resulted in changes to:

- Career Break Scheme;
- Job Share Scheme;
- Temporary variation of contract;
- Flexible working scheme.

In the negotiations, INTO secured agreement that the rights to work flexibly would be extended to all teaching staff, including Principals and Vice Principals. All flexible working arrangements are available on a temporary (up to 3 years) or permanent basis and the right to request flexible working has been extended to include children up to 16 years. The issues of working during a career break and teaching allowances was also agreed.

INTO seeks further improvements to the benefits available to members in respect of maternity, paternity and adoptive leave. NITC has agreed the following INTO claims

6.3 Maternity Scheme Claim

Increase in full pay from 4 to 8 weeks, with removal of two weeks at 9/10th pay. Maternity leave would then be 8 weeks full pay, 12 weeks ½ pay, 19 weeks Higher rate SMP.

6.4 Paternity Scheme Claim

Increase paid leave to two weeks' full pay

6.5 Adoptive Leave Claim

Increase benefits to mirror those paid for maternity pay. Adoptive fathers to avail of two weeks paternity leave paid at rate of full pay.

SECTION 7: GTC REPORT

7.1 INTO Representatives:

Daisy Mules, INTO / NITC Representative

Mary Reynolds, elected from the Primary Sector

Paddy Linden, elected from the Post Primary Sector

The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland is the statutory, independent body for the teaching profession and “*is dedicated to enhancing the status of teaching and promoting the highest standards of professional conduct and practice. It will work in partnership to develop and sustain a broad “professional community” characterised by a culture of respect, integrity, cooperation and dialogue.*”

7.2 Four-year GTC Election

INTO and UTU launched a joint slate for the GTC Election in 2010. In a low turn-out the slate was quite unsuccessful.

UTU / GTC reps include Gillian Garrett, Carney Cumper and Gillian Scott.

Former INTO / NITC representative to the GTC Tony Lappin retired from teaching and resigned from the GTC. He was replaced by Daisy Mules, Derry Branch.

7.3 Bursary Programme

GTC continues to operate a bursary programme for teachers undertaking research.

7.4 GTC Policy Responses

GTC responded to the DE consultation document ‘*Teacher Education in a Climate of Change – The Way Forward*’ and recommended an Induction Year for beginning teachers.

GTC responded to the DE consultation ‘*Early Years’ Strategy*’ which noted the serious implication for teachers working in Nursery Schools and Primary Schools Nursery Units.

GTC also responded to the DE consultation ‘*Community Relation, Equality and Diversity in Education*’, including Equality Impact Assessment.

7.5 Operational Plan 2010/11

GTC has undertaken a survey carried out with stakeholders and admissions to the register of teachers. Work was ongoing with school returns and the recording of GTC applications.

SECTION 8: IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (ICTU)

8.1 Congress Officers

Avril Hall-Callaghan (CHAIR)

Pamela Dooley (VICE-CHAIR)

Peter Bunting (ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY)

Elected INTO Representative Kevin Smyth

8.2 Key Issues

The economic situation continued in rapid economic decline. Public sector employment continues to hold up until April 2011 when massive cuts are expected over the next four-year CSR period. There is little effective collaboration with the Northern Ireland Executive.

Various marches and rally's were held to advocate that *'there is a better fairer way'*.

Peter Bunting AGS continues to play a useful mediating role seeking to get NASUWT agreement to the NITC constitution and his proposed mediated settlement of November 2010.

8.3 Representation

Education Trade Union Group
Women's Committee

Gerry Murphy and John McNulty
Cathy Crozier and Geraldine McGowan

8.4 Women's Committee ICTU

Women's Committee meets once a month and dealt with a number of issues:

- Violence Against Women
- Trafficking, Women and Girls
- Disability
- Funding for Women's Issues
- CEDAW (UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women)
- Women's Seminar
- LIFT and Leadership Prog.

8.5 NIC ICTU Disability Committee

The Committee met regularly with the focus being on improving the knowledge of the various union representatives on Disability Legislation and promoting the issues of our members with a wide range of disabilities.

Following a presentation from Disability Aid Abroad the committee have taken an active interest in employment support for workers with disabilities in Tanzania. INTO are supporting this project through Disability Aid. In Tanzania only 5% of children with disabilities attend school, and training and employment opportunities are denied to disabled people.

ICTU deliver accredited training courses for “Disability Champions at Work”. These Champions develop the expertise to support their union members who have issues at work due to any type of disability. Two INTO members have completed this course – Ann Madden and Charles Glenn.

The Committee and the Champions are supported by the Equality Commission with seminars focussing on disability issues. The Commission and ICTU have formed a Champions Forum to ensure the Champions and Committee members are supported and updated on legislation.

A joint North/South Disability Seminar and graduation ceremony of Disability Champions will be held in April. The focus will be on mental health.

INTO is represented on the Disability Committee by Ann Madden who was elected Vice-Chair of this committee.

Further information on the work of the Committee, or anyone interested in becoming involved please contact INTO HQ.

SECTION 9: INTERNAL

9.0 INTO / UTU

INTO

Sheila Nunan
Gerry Murphy
Cathy Crozier
John McAnulty
Frank Bunting

UTU

TGA Scott
Gillian Garrett
Lewis Love
Mike Graves
Avril Hall – Callaghan

9.1 Board

The INTO / UTU relationship continues to develop. The Board has decided to prioritise integration at CEC / NC level. A range of events are organised including retirement courses, an annual Leadership Conference and general benefits.

9.2 Class Size Campaign

INTO in conjunction with our colleagues in UTU launched a class size campaign in February 2010. The aim of the campaign was to draw attention to the current situation in our schools where some children are being taught in classes of 35 or more and where one in eight children is being taught in a class of over 30. We also wished to draw attention to the fact that cuts in the education budget would further increase class size.

- The campaign was launched before last year's Northern Conference and received considerable coverage in the media.
- Leaflets and posters were distributed to every school in which there are INTO/UTU members
- The class size issue received prominent coverage in INTO and UTU publications
- The chair of INTO and President of UTU wrote to the Minister of Education, Department Officials, the Assembly Education Committee and the Education Spokespersons of all the major political parties seeking meetings to press the case for reduced class size.
- A number of meetings were held including one with the Minister. The Minister agreed with the educational arguments to reduce class size but stated that the onus was on schools to take action from within their LMS budgets.
- The INTO / UTU Class Size Campaign was endorsed by the NITC and has now become an NITC campaign. The NITC highlighted the issue at a meeting with the Assembly Education Committee.

It is still necessary to highlight the need to reduce class size even during a period of educational cutbacks. It could be argued that the cuts would be even more severe if it had not been for this campaign. It is also worth noting that in the most recent survey of teachers undertaken by INTO, a reduction in class size was identified as one of the most significant ways to reduce teacher workload and pressure.

SECTION 10: ACTION ON CONFERENCE 2010 RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION**ACTION****1 Salaries**

Conference welcomes the 2.3% award to teachers in September 2009 which was the second stage in a three year salary settlement.

Conference calls on Northern Committee:

- (i) to negotiate a 'Long Term Teachers' Allowance' for teachers who have completed 12 years of service.
- (ii) to ballot members for industrial action up to and including strike action should any attempt be made to withhold the final stage of the salary settlement due in September 2010 or any proposal to cut or freeze teacher salaries.

- Long Term allowance referred to NITC
- 2.3% final year stage of teachers' pay settlement paid September 2010
- Government imposed pay freeze 1 September 2011 for two years

2 Transfer

Conference condemns the use of unregulated entrance tests by grammar schools and the attempts by grammar school bodies to force primary school principals into compliance with efforts to perpetrate an outdated, discredited and socially divisive system of academic selection.

Conference calls on Northern Committee:

- To Education sub committee

A

- (i) to continue to campaign for the removal of academic selection and the establishment of all-ability schools at post-primary level;
- (ii) to take all the necessary steps, should grammar schools persist with their private arrangements for enrolment, to remove primary schools from the transfer process from primary to post-primary schools.
- (iii) to ensure that Primary School Principals are no longer involved in the preparation and administration of the Transfer forms.

B

- (i) to continue to put pressure on Trustees of Grammar Schools to follow the lead given by the NICCE and move towards a non-selective system.
- (ii) to demand that the Department of Education ensures that in future

B

- (i) to continue to put pressure on Trustees of Grammar Schools to follow the lead given by the NICCE and move towards a non-selective system.
- (ii) to demand that the Department of Education ensures that in future

Primary Principals are given clear and unambiguous directions in relation to the transfer of Year 7 pupils to second level education.

C

- (i) Conference calls on Northern Committee to highlight our concern about the possible misuse of public funds by some grammar schools in their conduct of the transfer procedure.
- (ii) Conference calls on Northern Committee to offer support to teachers and principals who are pressurised to get involved in administration of the transfer procedure.

3 Education administration

Conference notes the current mess and the totally disproportionate cost of education administration in Northern Ireland.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to work to ensure that:

- (i) Effective structures are put in place which will greatly increase the proportion of the education budget which goes to schools;
- (ii) Parallel education administrative structures are removed at the earliest opportunity;
- (iii) A review is undertaken of back office education bodies including the Department of Education, the proposed ESAIT, the Education and Training Inspectorate and all unelected quangos to ensure they are fit for purpose and delivering value for money.
- (iv) All savings from these reviews be reallocated into schools LMS budgets and other frontline educational services.

Conference demands that Northern Committee investigate and establish the percentage of the Northern Ireland Education Budget that is wasted on such bodies and report their findings to Conference 2011.

- Education Funding Paper (with a focus on the implications of the Northern Ireland Executives draft budget 2011/14) to be considered at Northern Conference
- Background meetings held with Education and Library Boards, ESAIT, ETI and the Department of Education

4 Class size

Conference welcomes the campaign launched by the Joint INTO/UTU Board on class size.

Conference notes that research demonstrates reductions in class size bring about overall improvements in pupils' performance

Conference demands that class size should be no greater than:

- 18 in Foundation Stage and KS1
- 24 in KS2
- 20 in KS3
- KS2 and KS3 practical activities, to include maths investigations, music, drama and ICT- maximum 20 pupils.

- Class size campaign launched by INTO/UTU Board
- MLAs canvassed for support
- Class size campaign adopted by Northern Ireland Teachers' Council

and that DE issue guidance to schools on class size in composite classes and in classes containing pupils with statements of special educational needs.

Conference demands that these recommendations on class size are adopted by the Department of Education. Conference instructs the INTO/UTU Board to seek the support of parents to help achieve this objective.

5 SEN

Conference expresses great concern that changes in special needs provision will lead to huge increases in teachers' workload, a loss of funding for Special needs, and impact negatively on all children in class.

- (i) Conference demands that the implementation of these changes is immediately suspended pending a comprehensive audit of their implications for the provision of Children with Specific Learning Difficulties.
- (ii) Conference calls for immediate consultation on the following Education and Library Board documents;
 - (1) "Provisional Criteria for initiating Statutory assessments of SEN and for the making of Statements of SEN".
 - (2) "Good Practice Guidelines for schools to meet the SEN of pupils at the school based stages of the Code of Practice."
- (iii) Conference requests Northern Committee to campaign on behalf of teachers on the workload implications of the SEN review. INTO is particularly concerned about the problem teachers will face when trying to access classroom assistant hours in the absence of statements, and the impact of increased accountability on teachers.
- (iv) Conference fully supports the primacy of the welfare of children with Special Needs in any reform of educational provision. Conference instructs Northern Committee to ensure the primacy of the welfare of the pupil with Special Needs above any economic consideration.

- To Education sub committee

6 InCAS

Conference is aghast at the serious errors that arose with the administration of InCAS in the Autumn 2009 term. Conference notes the serious concerns of teachers with regards to all aspects of the InCAs tests and in particular; doubts as to the validity of results obtained given our present knowledge of the diverse ways in which children learn; their weakness as a diagnostic instrument, and the undue weight given to INCAs scores in reporting to parents.

Conference demands that Northern Committee obtain:

- (i) Complete information on the cost, contract and fitness for the purpose of the InCAS assessment tool;
- (ii) Concrete guarantees from the Department of Education that InCAS will not be used for academic selective purposes.

Conference further demands that should such guarantees not be forthcoming, members will be instructed to boycott InCAs in Autumn 2010.

7 Assaults

Conference notes with concern a growing pattern of low level assaults – both verbal and physical - on many teaching staff by children, parents and third parties. Conference expresses concern at the systemic failure to address the effects and impact of such acts on the teachers concerned.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to campaign for workload-proofed, health and safety arrangements for the monitoring, recording, reporting and support of victims of assault by third parties.

- TNC survey of teachers developed and circulated to representative sample of teaching workforce;
- Draft survey findings received;
- Work on guidance for schools ongoing;
- INTO highlighted issue through bulletins and media.

8 Education Funding

Conference regrets the delay in the Department of Education undertaking the long promised fundamental review of school funding.

Conference calls on the Northern Committee to ensure that early consultation takes place with the teaching unions and other education partners on terms of reference for this review that will address the existing inequity between primary and post-primary education and the disproportionate percentage of the education budget spent on administration in Northern Ireland.

- Raise with Education Minister
- Assurance given that consultation will take place with teacher unions on draft terms of reference

9 Parents' Complaints Procedure

Conference, recognising that schools must deal with complaints from parents, is concerned at the increasing numbers of teachers who are the subject of malicious or vexatious allegations, many of which are forwarded anonymously.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to work to ensure that any revised complaints' procedure supports the legal and human rights of teachers and ensures that effective action can be taken where malicious or vexatious allegations are made against teachers.

- Agreement reached within TNC on revised Parents' Complaints Procedure (see www.into.ie)
- Concerns remain on the absence of legal and human rights of teachers in the new procedure. Discussions underway in the Joint Working Party.

10 Workload

Conference notes with concern the continued excessive workload under which teachers are working.

Conference demands that Northern Committee renew and extend the current 'Enough is Enough' campaign to reduce the workload of teachers including a ballot of members for industrial action.

- Initial notice to members re possible industrial action

11 Pensions

Conference views with extreme concern recent public attacks made on the Teachers' Pensions' Scheme [TPS]. Conference notes agreed revised arrangements for the TPS by which:

- Teachers pay a contribution of 6.4% of salary which is equivalent to private sector schemes;
- The pensions age for new starters is 65 – up from 60;
- The TPS has cost sharing arrangement in place with a 14% cap on the employer's contribution by which, if costs rise, teachers will pay more.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to:

- INTO responses to the Hutton Commissions call for evidence part 1 and 2 (see www.into.ie)
- Close contact maintained with the Teacher Superannuation Working Group (London)
- Major INTO campaign launched December 2010 to protect teachers pensions
- Ballot for industrial action under active consideration
- Working with TUC and ICTU contacted for support.

- (a) To protect the Teachers' Pensions' Scheme by all means at its disposal including, if necessary, balloting of members for industrial action;
- (b) To work with the ICTU and - through the Teachers' Superannuation Working Group – the TUC to resist all attacks on public sector pension schemes.

12 Maternity, Paternity and Adoption

Conference notes with concern the failure of the Teachers' Negotiating Committee [TNC] to agree overdue improvements to the pay and conditions of teachers who wish to avail of maternity, paternity and adoption arrangements.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to negotiate significant improvements to the pay and terms and conditions for teachers who wish to avail of maternity, paternity or adoption arrangements to make them comparable with other public sector employees in Northern Ireland.

- INTO claim presented to NITC

13 Assessment arrangements

Conference welcomes the commitment by the Department of Education to consult in a meaningful manner with the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council on future assessment and reporting arrangements and notes that the Programme Management Board has identified this as a major focus of INSET over the next year.

Conference instructs Northern Committee to ensure that:

- (i) Any proposed assessment and reporting arrangements are teacher friendly, workload proofed and fit for purpose;
- (ii) INSET for assessment is of a high quality;
- (iii) Teacher evaluation of INSET is evaluated and monitored by the General Teaching Council [GTCNI]

- Response to DE
- Keep under review

14 Capital expenditure cuts

Conference notes with alarm the proposed cuts in the Capital Build and Maintenance Budgets and calls on Northern Committee to ensure that:

- (i) the Department of Education publishes a breakdown of the status of all current build applications.
- (ii) The Northern Committee launch a campaign whereby all schools are encouraged to be more proactive in carrying out Health and Safety audits and reporting potential risks caused by lack of maintenance.
- (iii) in the event of an ETI inspection the Board of Governors makes the Inspectorate aware that the delivery of the Revised Curriculum is being jeopardised by the inadequate accommodation in which teachers have to try to deliver it.

- Raised with Education Minister and list of capital projects obtained (see www.into.ie)
- Active support given to Lisanelly project, Omagh
- Education cuts lead to deep freeze on capital projects

15 NQTs

Conference instructs Northern Committee to engage with the Department of Education to adopt the Scottish model with respect to newly-qualified teachers, i.e. that they be given a year's guaranteed fully paid employment.

- NITC agrees INTO proposal to make the NQT guaranteed year part of the NITC priority claim for 2010

