

## TO: INTO/UTU SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES

Dear Colleague

**Re.: Classroom Assistants' Dispute - ELB Parent/Guardian Proposal**

At the time of writing, some form of strike action by NIPSA will take place in schools next week. Other trade unions - UNISON, AMICUS and GMB - are in the process of balloting their members regarding an employers' offer and will not be on strike.

The five Education and Library Boards have written to parents with pupils in special schools and learning support centres permitting them or guardians/nominated family members to accompany a child with special educational needs to school. The five teaching unions - ATL, INTO, NASUWT, NAHT and UTU - met with representatives of the Education and Library Board Chief Executives to discuss this proposal. All the teaching unions expressed serious concerns about potential large numbers of parents/guardians being present in classrooms.

Concerns included:

- ❑ Child protection of all pupils;
- ❑ Health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff;
- ❑ Implications for teaching and learning;
- ❑ Good order and discipline;
- ❑ Implications for teacher/parent; teacher/classroom assistant professional relationships.

INTO/UTU consider the proposal to contain high risks in all the areas above and have requested the Education and Library Boards to rescind this letter to parents. All of the classroom assistants' trade unions are ICTU affiliates and INTO/UTU are aware of ICTU efforts to resolve this impasse.

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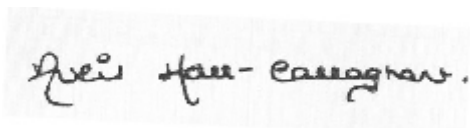
## ACTIONS FOR INTO/UTU REPRESENTATIVES

- ❑ INTO/UTU reps are asked to meet with their principals and to seek a guarantee that in strike situations by classroom assistants in a school, principals/governors will not allow parents/guardians unfettered rights to accompany their children in the classroom.
- ❑ INTO/UTU reps are also requested to strongly advise members not to teach, in strike situations by classroom assistants in a school, where large numbers of adults are present in the classroom.

Any concerns, which reps have arising from the above, should be reported to Northern Office INTO / UTU Headquarters for consideration of ballots of members in the individual schools concerned. INTO/UTU believe that members/principals will be at serious risk in circumstances where the ELB proposals are implemented.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely



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**AVRIL HALL-CALLAGHAN**  
General Secretary  
UTU



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**FRANK BUNTING**  
Northern Secretary  
INTO