



CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS 2017

1. SEN

Conference condemns the lack of resources provided for special education. Conference calls on the EA to consult with the teaching unions as to how the needs of those pupils with SEN can best be met. Conference demands that, where children in mainstream schools have recommendations for support, the funding be provided to ensure that schools can meet the children's needs.

2. SOUTHERN AREA ASSOCIATION – SEN PROVISION IN NURSERY AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Conference demands the DE properly funds the SEN provision to support early intervention and provide adequate time for SENCO to fulfil their role.

3. SOUTHERN AREA ASSOCIATION – DSC SHARED EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Conference demands an urgent review of how the DSC Shared Education Programme is structured in order to facilitate schools to work together free of the current bureaucratic nightmare.

4. SHARED EDUCATION

Conference calls upon DE to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to continue the excellent programmes for Shared Education which have been developed in recent years with the assistance of EU funding.

5. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Conference is increasingly concerned about the falling levels of pupil attendance in our schools. Conference is further concerned that parents do not fully appreciate the impact that poor attendance can and does have on pupil attainment and achievement. Conference demands that the Department of Education fund a campaign to highlight to parents the positive impacts of good attendance. Conference further calls on the EA to collate examples of good practice in tackling poor attendance and disseminate such positive strategies to all schools.

6. AREA BASED PLANNING

Conference condemns the fact that the unions have not been offered access to the decision-making process for area based planning. Conference demands that the DE ensures that professional organisations have greater input into the process of area based planning.

7. CLASS SIZE

Conference condemns the fact that DE has already breached the existing guidelines on maximum class size. Conference calls on DE to maintain current statutory limits on class size in primary schools and to extend similar legislation to KS2. Conference further urges DE to return to the statutory class sizes for practical subjects at post-primary level.

8. ICT RESOURCES

Conference calls on DE to provide funding to update ICT resources in schools. Conference also calls on EA to ensure that all education personnel receive updated training in the area of ICT. Conference furthermore insists that all schools should have equality of provision in order to access ICT as required.

9. LEVELS OF PROGRESSION

Conference registers the lack of confidence in the teaching profession and amongst parents in the levels of progression and calls on the DE, as a matter of urgency, to introduce legislation which makes these no longer a requirement for teachers and schools.

10. ETI

Conference condemns the recent actions of the Chief Inspector in instructing inspectors to visit schools and carry out inspections during a time of industrial action. Conference continues to call on the ETI to examine the workload issues created by the inspection process and calls on DE to examine the effects of inspection in distorting the normal pattern of teaching and learning in schools.

11. CAUSEWAY BRANCH – ETI (NI)

Conference notes that the ETI has not taken any further steps to develop a collaborative and supportive approach to school inspections (as recommended by the Education Committee in 2014), opting, instead, to create further varying bureaucratic, evaluative inspection platforms. Conference calls for CEC to put further pressure on the Department and ETI to ensure that current modes of inspection are fit for purpose, that inspectors have a minimum standard of professional, school-based experience and that procedures are put in place, as a matter of urgency, to provide professional and supportive guidance in necessary school improvement points.

12. TEACHERS' PAY

Conference notes that the starting salary for young teachers is 16% below the OECD average. Conference calls on the employers of teachers and the DE to agree a restoration of the value of teachers' pay which has continued to decrease in real terms since 2010.

13. FUNDING

Conference notes with alarm the continuing under funding of the education service.

Conference calls on the new assembly to ensure that the Department of Education receives the budget uplift it requires.

14. EDUCATION BUDGET

Conference recognises the competing priorities for the education budget. Conference calls on the Central Executive to develop a coherent policy which will help determine what the key priorities for this Union will be as we engage, along with the other unions, with the new Minister for Education.

15. CAUSEWAY BRANCH – DOMESTIC ABUSE

Conference has concerns about the continuing high incidence of domestic abuse in our society. As a mark of recognition and a means of raising awareness that this issue impacts on teachers to the same degree as any other section of the workforce, Conference calls on TNC to add a clause to the Teachers' Attendance Procedure which allows for absence due to domestic abuse to be treated appropriately.

16. WORKLOAD

Conference condemns the excessive workload imposed on teachers by the present demands within the system. Conference considers that the excessive accountability needs to be examined by the employers and DE to identify what can be reduced in terms of demand on teachers.

17. CAUSEWAY BRANCH – WORKLOAD (TEACHING PRINCIPALS)

Conference notes the lack of progress made, at departmental level, to tackle and stabilise the mounting workload faced by all teaching professionals in the workplace, but in particular, that of teaching principals. Conference calls on the Department to issue strong guidance to Governors to ensure that teaching principals in their first few years of holding the position are given proper access to their principal release time.

18. SOUTH WEST BRANCH – TEACHING PRINCIPALS

Conference demands that the EA recognises the workload of a teaching principal and will address this and seek to reduce the workload forced upon them in some way.

19. SOUTH WEST BRANCH – TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

Conference demands that the EA takes the responsibility for the continuous professional development for teachers in particular in the areas of SEN, ICT and assessment.

20. CAUSEWAY BRANCH – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Conference is disappointed that access to departmentally funded professional development continues to be on the demise while privatised professional development continues to flourish. Conference calls on the Department to fulfil its responsibility to the teaching profession to ensure that quality, departmentally-funded professional development opportunities are made available.

21. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Conference recognises the value of Continuous Professional Development and calls on the EA to adequately fund for sufficient professional development, including face-to-face sessions. Conference also demands that appropriate sub-cover be funded and provided.

22. CAUSEWAY BRANCH – PROMOTION

Conference notes that, even in these times of financial constraint, schools continue to utilise short-listing strategies that place emphasis on the holding of teaching allowances as an indication of proven and existing leadership responsibility and competency. Conference calls on EA to urgently address this practice with schools and to ensure that the experience of leading a curriculum area or other aspect of school life is cited as a criterion for a post regardless of whether or not the teacher received payment.