



UTU UPDATE – FEBRUARY 2017

Dear Colleague,

SALARY NEGOTIATIONS

A meeting took place in UTU Headquarters on Tuesday between Management Side and Teachers Side after which the following joint statement was issued:

“Management Side, representing the employers of teachers and the Department of Education and the Northern Ireland Teachers’ Council (NITC representing the teaching unions) held a further constructive meeting to discuss the resolution of issues relating to ongoing industrial action. Joint working parties are scheduled to meet in the weeks commencing 27th February and 6th March 2017.”

The working parties are to concentrate on the following areas:

1. Teachers’ pay
2. Teachers’ workload and accountability
3. Performance management, leadership and teacher development

We will let you know about the progress we are making but in the meantime the **INDUSTRIAL ACTION IS TO REMAIN UNCHANGED** (see UTU website for details).

SCHOOL INSPECTIONS

Despite our requests that ETI Inspections be suspended the Chief Inspector has decided to continue sending Inspectors out to schools. Our experience has been that once Inspectors have visited classrooms and been handed the standard letter they are happy to leave teachers alone. If any school is notified of an Inspection please let us know and we will be

more than happy to visit the school on the morning the Inspectors arrive to ensure that all goes smoothly.

We have been advised that the NAHT is currently consulting with its members regarding an NAHT withdrawal from co-operation with the ETI which would be a very welcome step. Please keep us informed of any concerns you may have and please call on us for assistance if required. The action you are taking has been extremely effective and has assisted in bringing the employers and the Department of Education back to the negotiating table!

UTU CONFERENCE

This year's UTU Conference is to be held in the Slieve Donard Hotel from Thursday 23rd March to Saturday 25th March. We already have our full complement of delegates nominated by our Branches but if you would be interested in attending on the Thursday evening or Friday during the day please contact Karen Taylor at Headquarters and we will arrange for your attendance. If you have never attended a UTU Conference before then this is a good way of finding out what goes on there – maybe you will decide to become more involved in the work of the Union and perhaps become a delegate at next year's Conference! A full list of the motions passed will be sent out to schools next term and no doubt there will be press coverage of the event and plenty of photos in your next UTU News!

CONTROLLED SCHOOLS SUPPORT COUNCIL

The new Controlled Schools Support Council came into being for September 2016 and is based in Stranmillis College, Belfast. Its Chief Executive is Barry Mulholland, ex CEO of the Western Education and Library Board and there is a staff of 17. The elections for the new Board of CSSC are due to take place shortly and we have been advised that Gillian Dunlop, Principal of Largymore PS is a candidate. Gillian already represents UTU on GTC so please give her your support in this election.

ASSEMBLY ELECTION

The Education Group within the Irish Congress of Trade unions has produced a manifesto for the up-coming Assembly Election. I have enclosed a number of copies for your school which you may distribute as appropriate or display on the staff noticeboard.

FINALLY

Can I thank you for your support in the recent Industrial Action. It continues to be extremely effective and we will continue to review it monthly at the CEC meetings. Our Officials will be happy to visit your school at any time if you feel it would be useful - especially if there are members of staff who are considering joining UTU or want to discuss the ongoing action.

Yours Sincerely

Avril Hall-Callaghan
General Secretary