



# TIME FOR CHANGE

CONFERENCE HANDBOOK

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”

Education is not the  
filling of a pot but the  
lighting of a fire.

W.B. YEATS



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## PRESIDENTS FOREWORD

### Colleagues

It gives me great pleasure to welcome all delegates and guests to the 105th Annual Conference of the Ulster Teachers' Union.

This Handbook will be a very useful guide for you to use throughout our conference. In it you will find the carefully planned programme and the resolutions being brought forward for debate. You will also read the names of our staff, CEC representatives and names of delegates and fraternal guests attending, and the Minutes of the Annual Conference 2023. There is also a list of our valued sponsors and exhibitors, and our thanks go to each of them for their support. I encourage you to visit their stands and enter their competitions. Do also take time to read the Standing Orders.

Last year the theme for conference was "Education Demands Better." Never has a theme been more relevant. After we rejected the pay offer in 2022 we have witnessed an absence of willingness from Management Side to negotiate in a fair and realistic way in order to end our pay dispute. Since the collapse of Stormont in 2022 we have been eagerly awaiting its return and in the meantime looking to the Secretary of State to secure the necessary funding from central government in order to award teachers with a fair pay settlement. This year members have continued to take part in Industrial

Action and in particular, the number of days of strike action increased.

Since conference last year, members were asked to participate in two and a half days of strike action - in April, November and January 2024. I would like to take this opportunity to thank members for the sacrifice each of you made and for supporting this action. Your actions demonstrate the trust you placed in the leadership of UTU and our CEC and for this I am deeply grateful.

As members of UTU we stood in solidarity for ourselves, for our colleagues, for our children and for the future of our education system. As a union we stood in solidarity with our sister teaching unions and then more recently with the other public sector unions. The 5 teaching unions speaking with the same voice was paramount in this campaign and has been an example to unions in other sectors and their campaigns. UTU were encouraged on many occasions by sister unions across these islands - we were grateful for this steadfast support. I firmly believe that all these actions have been the catalyst for focusing the minds of our political leaders and ultimately the reinstatement of a devolved administration at Stormont. I therefore cannot underestimate the profound impact the actions that you all

took have had and trust that in the near future we will see a speedy and satisfactory resolution to our ongoing pay dispute. Members will be aware that we still await pay uplift for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24.

Since conference met last year we still continue to witness a major lack of investment in the education system, impacting severely on school budgets and ultimately it is the children who are suffering from this underinvestment – I believe this is the shameful reality.

For our theme this year I have chosen **“Time For Change.”** At the time of writing this foreword, devolution has returned to Stormont with the first sitting of the Assembly just weeks ago. I welcome our Education Minister, Paul Givan into his role and encourage him to commence constructive dialogue with us to ensure that we can deliver the best possible outcomes for the children and young people entrusted to our care. As a sector we need change; we cannot continue with the significant level of underfunding in our schools, we cannot continue with the significant level of underfunding for our teaching and support staff and we cannot continue to jeopardize the future of our children and young people. The solutions to these problems may seem very obvious to us as teachers. However, it is beholden on us to clearly articulate these problems and to discuss the possible solutions with those in positions of influence. Over the course of this conference we

will have the opportunity to discuss and focus on how to provide children and young people with the best possible learning experiences enabling them to build brighter and better futures. To this end, over the next two days, I encourage you to have your voice heard about the educational issues you feel passionate about.

As I approach the end of my Presidential year I would like to give a word of personal thanks to Denise, Heather, Karen, Lindsay, Meriel and Tony for their hard work and dedication in their roles within UTU, and for the support and friendship shown towards me over the last year – thank you for making my year extremely enjoyable and for helping me with all things related to technology!

I would also like to thank and commend our Field Officer, Rebekka and our Organising Officer, Joseph for supporting and helping members in a very professional manner.

Our Deputy General Secretary, Stephen works tirelessly and diligently representing members and UTU – I am grateful to Stephen for his continued commitment and dedication.

I would like to personally thank our General Secretary Jacquie for all her support throughout my Presidential year – she has been a great inspiration to me. The leadership shown by Jacquie to our great union is second to none. Her knowledge of issues relevant to education and the trade union movement is unrivalled. Jacquie is completely committed to our members and to

the work of UTU - she shows great wisdom and compassion and is highly respected by everyone she meets.

Finally, I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to all of our delegates and guests at Roe Park Resort for our annual conference – I really hope you enjoy your time with us.



UTU President  
2023-24



## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

### THURSDAY 14th MARCH

- 17.00:** Registration, Exhibition Viewing and Coffee
- 17.30:** Session 1: Opening of Conference Resolutions
- 18.45:** Session 2: Private Session for UTU delegates
- 19.30:** Close of Session
- 20.00:** Dinner – Courtyard Restaurant
- 22.00:** Jamming Session – O’Cahan’s Bar

# CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

## FRIDAY 15th MARCH

**09.00:** Registration for guests

**09.15:** Session 3: Resolutions

**10.15:** Presentation–Learning Me–Nicole O'Connor

**10.30:** Exhibition Viewing and Coffee

**11.00:** Musical Interlude – Braidside Integrated Primary School Choir

**11.15:** Session 4: Chaired by Matthew McDermott, Education Authority

**President's Address:** Lynelle Fenton

**General Secretary's Address:** Jacquie White

**12.45:** President's Lunch – Courtyard Restaurant

**14.00:** Presentation – Disability Panel

**Chaired by:** Pauline Hurst, UTU Disability Champion

Matthew McDermott, Assistant Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services EANI

Vivienne Murphy, Disability Employment Support Service, EANI

Stephen McCrystall, EANI Equality & Diversity Officer

**15.00:** Session 5: Resolutions

**16.00:** Exhibition Viewing and Coffee

**16.30:** Session 6: Resolutions

**17.20:** Prize Draws for Competitions

**17.30:** Close

**19.00:** Drinks Reception – Danny Boy Suite

**19.30:** Conference Dinner – Roe Park Suite

**Installation of President and Vice-President**

**Fraternal Greetings:** Micheal Gillespie, TUI General Secretary



# STANDING ORDERS

1. The Order of Business shall be drawn up by the Conference Motions and Agenda Committee and printed in the Handbook.
2. Any motions appearing on the Order Paper shall not be withdrawn, except with the consent of Conference.
3. Notwithstanding 1 above, the order of any item on the Agenda may be altered on motion. It shall also be open to the President to suggest alterations in the Order of Business as and when he may consider them necessary and such alterations shall become operative with the consent of Conference without discussion.
4. Twenty delegates shall form a quorum.
5. When the President calls Conference to order or rises to speak all Delegates shall immediately be seated.
6. The proposer of any motion or amendment shall be allowed not more than five minutes and each succeeding speaker not more than three minutes. The first of the Delegates who intimates to the President at Conference his opposition to any motion shall be entitled to five minutes as first opposing speaker.
7. No person shall address Conference until called upon by the President. When called, a speaker shall proceed to a microphone and shall speak therefrom after announcing his name, and the Branch he represents. When the President has called a speaker all other Delegates shall immediately be seated.
8. No delegate shall be permitted to speak more than once on the same proposition. The first opposing speaker and the proposer shall have the right to sum up, but they shall not be permitted to introduce new matters into the discussion.
9. At any time during the discussion of a motion or amendment it shall be open to any Delegate to move "That the question be now put", and if it should appear on a show of hands that a majority of Delegates are in favour of terminating the discussion, the question shall be put and voted upon, except that no speech shall be interrupted for the purpose and that the proposer be not denied the right of reply. The acceptance of the motion "That the question be now put" shall always be at the discretion of the President.
10. Whenever an amendment is moved to any motion no other amendment shall be accepted until the first amendment is disposed of.
11. All amendments and addenda to any motion shall be submitted in writing on the prescribed Amendment Slip (CONF-24-3) signed by the proposer and seconder to the General Secretary before the end of the Session previous to that at which it will be tabled for discussion, or as soon thereafter, as is practicably possible.
12. All motions shall be put from the chair when the President considers that sufficient time has been given for discussion. The decision on a motion shall be taken by a show of hands. A demand for a recount may be made by any 10 Delegates standing in their places. No more than two recounts shall be allowed. A card vote shall be taken, if requested, by 10 members standing and raising their voting cards in the air. Any card vote subsequently taken shall be deemed to be conclusive. The card vote shall be based on the allocation of votes based on Branch membership as outlined in (CONF-24-4). The President shall have a vote and, in the event of a tie, a casting vote.
13. It shall be competent at the conclusion of any speech for any Delegate to move "That Conference proceed to the next business". If seconded it shall be put forthwith and, if carried, the motion under discussion shall be considered dropped.
14. Questions of Order or Explanation may be asked. The President shall not refuse to consider any Point of Order, but his decision thereon shall be final.
15. It shall be competent upon any delegate to challenge the President's ruling. Should this challenge be seconded the President will vacate the chair in favour of another Officer and the matter shall then be considered. Only the proposer of the challenge and the President may speak on the matter which, shall then be voted on.
16. At all proceedings of Conference members shall disclose any pecuniary interest and/or relevant family relationships, as applicable, to the business about to be discussed, and withdraw for the time being, if so requested by the President.
17. A motion to suspend Standing Orders must specify the purpose, and must be seconded. It shall be carried only if supported by at least two-thirds of those present. Once the purpose of the motion has been fulfilled, the proceedings shall immediately revert to Standing Orders. The President shall not refuse to accept a motion for the suspension of Standing Orders, but he may postpone putting it to the Conference until the completion of any discussion which is in progress when the motion is tabled.
18. In these Standing Orders the title "President" is deemed to apply to that person occupying the chair at any Session of Conference.
19. All references to the masculine gender shall be interpreted as equally applicable to the feminine.



# AMENDMENT SLIPS

THE ATTENTION OF DELEGATES IS DRAWN TO PARAGRAPH 11 OF STANDING ORDERS WHICH READS AS FOLLOWS:-

"All amendments and addenda to any motion shall be submitted in writing on the prescribed Amendment Slip signed by the proposer and seconder to the General Secretary before the end of the Session previous to that at which it will be tabled for discussion, or as soon thereafter as is practicably possible."

RESOLUTION NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

TEXT OF AMENDMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PROPOSER: \_\_\_\_\_ BRANCH: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF SECONDER: \_\_\_\_\_ BRANCH: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS IS AN EXAMPLE. COPIES OF FORM AVAILABLE FROM CONFERENCE OFFICE.**

## CARD VOTE ALLOCATIONS

For the purposes of a card vote in accordance with **paragraph 64 of the Rules and Constitution** of the Union, and **number 12** of the standing orders of Conference, each branch shall be entitled to the number of votes indicated as follows:

BRANCH	MEMBERSHIP	CARD VOTES
BANBRIDGE/DROMORE	183	61
BELFAST	567	189
CARRICK/ABBHEY/LARNE	380	47
CAUSEWAY	300	75
FOYLE	248	24
LISBURN/B'NAHINCH	308	51
MID-ANTRIM	394	131
MID-ULSTER	173	57
NEWRY & MOURNE	207	34
N'ARDS/N.DOWN	536	178
ORCHARD COUNTY	563	281
SOUTH-WEST	322	29

# CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

## 1. MID-ANTRIM - SAFEGUARDING

Conference calls on the Department of Education to carry out a survey enabling information to be gathered that will recognise the role and amount of workload placed on the safeguarding teams in schools. Conference calls on funding to be made available to support those schools which require extra finance and resourcing to ensure that staff are given the adequate time to manage the unique situations that arise in a moment's notice regarding safeguarding. This will ensure that the safeguarding role can be carried out effectively and that other pupils are not missing out on their educational needs or detrimentally suffering due to staff being drawn away from their normal duties.

## 2. CAUSEWAY – SUPPORT STAFF TEMPORARY AVAILABILITY

Conference calls on EA to prioritise putting in place a temporary list for all support staff that schools can avail of that is fit for purpose.

## 3. SOUTH-WEST BRANCH - MOBILE PHONES

With a UNESCO survey saying that there are over 6 billion mobile phone subscriptions worldwide and that they bring both positive and negative effects to today's classrooms. Conference calls on the Education Authority to urgently give clear and concise guidance that can be implemented by all schools on the use and misuse of mobile phone technology in schools.

## 4. SOUTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION – SOCIAL MEDIA

Conference notes that it has now been over 13 years since TNC2011/2 – Policy Statement on Tackling Violence and Abusive Behaviour Against Teachers was introduced. During that time the amount of social media platform communication in society has dramatically increased. Therefore Conference requests that a clear and enforceable procedure should be provided to all school stakeholders by the Department of Education to address the issue of On Line Bullying of School Staff by both children and adults.

## 5. FOYLE BRANCH - MANAGEMENT OF CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Conference deplores the lack of training for teachers and school leaders in the effective deployment of classroom assistants. Conference calls for EA to put in place proper policies and procedures to help support the classroom assistants in their role within an increasingly diverse classroom environment

## 6. CAUSEWAY – LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR DEPENDENTS OF ANY AGE

In the context of rising pension age, our ageing society and the resultant need for caring, Conference calls on DE to extend leave of absence to cover absence for dependents of any age.

## 7. SEND TRANSFORMATION AND BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

Conference has grave concerns with regard to the proposed changes to the structure, availability and delivery of the EA support services. In order to meet the needs of all pupils, it is vital that the new system delivers a clear pathway for referral, is sufficiently staffed and that those employed in the services receive adequate training and notice with regard to any changes to their current contractual duties. Conference notes with concern the timeline for implementing those significant changes and urges the employers to shift their focus from budget pressures to the schools, the pupils and the staff involved in the services.

## 8. DISABILITY

It is the contention of Conference that the legislation in NI around rights of workers with a disability and the responsibilities of employers has been well defined and well established for a considerable number of years.

Conference, therefore, has grave concerns about the marked lack of knowledge, process and procedure in relation to dealing with teachers' disability within both the school context and, indeed, the wider education system.

Conference calls on the employing authorities to ensure that all employers are fully aware of their responsibilities in this area under the legislation and that clear processes and appropriate funding are in place, both at school and system level, to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be provided where needed to allow teachers with a disability to remain in employment with the support and dignity which they deserve – and to which they are entitled.

## 9. REVIEWS

Conference welcomes the work which was put into the Workload Reviews by representatives of both the employers and the teaching unions over an 18-month period following the Pay and Workload Agreement of 2020.

Conference calls on the Minister to access funding and resources which will now allow the recommendations of these reviews to come to fruition in the interests of the teachers – and the children – in the schools.

# CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

## 10. INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF EDUCATION

Conference recognises the pressures our education system is under and the need for transformation in the interests of a more effective service.

On this basis, Conference welcomed the commissioning of the Independent Review of Education and sees merit in a number of the recommendations – but not all.

Conference calls on the Minister to ensure that the teaching unions are fully involved in consultation regarding the potential impact of the recommendations on the schools and system and to work together with NITC to ascertain the best out-workings of the Report for all.

## 11. GOVERNANCE

Conference has grave concerns around the lack of accountability which pertains to the governing bodies of schools.

This is particularly pertinent in cases where Governors fail to take appropriate advice from the employing authorities, fail to act on advice from the employing authorities and/or seek to circumvent agreed procedures pertaining to Teachers' Terms and Conditions.

Further, unlike in other areas of work, there is no effective and defined process in place to raise a complaint against an individual school governor as an employer in cases of unacceptable behaviour.

Conference calls on the Department of Education to revisit the links and relationships between the employing authorities and school governors and work with NITC to ensure that accountability lies where it should and that the appropriate procedures are in place should action be required.

## 12. BEHAVIOUR AND TEAM TEACH SUPPORT SEN AND MAINSTREAM

Conference acknowledges DE's draft guidance on the reduction and management of Restrictive Practices. However, Conference calls upon DE to ensure all schools and education settings are appropriately funded and resourced to prevent, support and manage crisis situations.

## 13. CARRICK/ABBEY AND LARNE BRANCH - INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF TEACHING STAFF

Conference recognises the pivotal role played by teaching staff in the education system in contributing significantly to the development and health and well-being of pupils. Conference

recognises that the demands on teaching staff have increased over the past number of years, and especially as a result of the aftermath of Covid-19, resulting in heightened stress levels, burnout, and adverse effects on the physical and mental health of our teaching workforce.

Conference highlights and commends those schools who are leading the way in innovative and collaborative staff wellbeing initiatives.

Conference demands that the Education Authority includes and promotes a range of strategies to address health and wellbeing as part of continuing professional development opportunities for teaching staff to be included in Staff Development Days. Conference demands that the Department of Education increases funding to all schools to ensure that these opportunities can be utilised and sustained into the future.

## 14. EA TRAINING FOR STAFF

Conference recognises the importance of Teacher Professional Learning.

Conference calls on EA to ensure that such opportunities are made available at the appropriate times and with the appropriate resources which allow teachers to access them within their contracted time.

## 15. SOUTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION – STANDARDISED ASSESSMENTS

Conference calls on DE/EA to urgently review current provision for standardised testing in the primary (and post-primary) sector of Northern Ireland.

Currently schools are forced to use private, English based testing much of which is not in line with the Northern Ireland curriculum. This places undue stress on young people and their teachers. It also places a significant financial burden on school budgets.

GL assessment holds a monopoly on standardised assessment in schools. Conference is concerned that DE is failing in its statutory duties to provide age-appropriate testing based on the Northern Ireland curriculum.

Conference calls on:

- (i) An urgent review of current assessment practices in primary schools
- (ii) A survey to schools on use of testing and data
- (iii) An urgent review on how data is used by ETI as a summative assessment tool to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning in our schools

# CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

## 16. SOUTH-WEST BRANCH - EARLY CAREER TEACHERS

Conference calls on the employers to look at ways to improve the support, funding and training available to help provide the professional foundations for Early Career Teachers.

## 17. CAUSEWAY – EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Conference despairs at the lack of hours allocated to schools for educational psychologists, and the fact that teachers themselves are required to prioritise their children in order of need. Conference is further concerned that EA is prepared to accept private assessments in some areas as a basis for school support.

Conference calls on EA to revisit this decision and determine which professional voices will be taken into account to ensure the appropriate placement and support for individual children.

Conference further calls on the Minister for Education to access funding for the support of children with SEN as a matter of priority.

## 18. CARRICK/ABBEY AND LARNE BRANCH - INCREASED INVESTMENT IN PUPIL SUPPORT SERVICES

The current state of investment in pupil support services for pupils with a range of special needs, medical needs, trauma, or for those requiring counselling falls short of adequately addressing the unique challenges faced by these pupils.

Conference demands that the Department of Education substantially increases the funding for Pupil Support Services.

## 19. EA TRANSPORT

Every child has the right to access a full balanced educational experience and the lack of transport should never impact on the child arriving late or having to leave school early. Conference demands that the needs of the child are put first and adequate resources are available to ensure that their education is not impacted.

## 20. TRAINED FULLY QUALIFIED SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Conference deplores the lack of specialist subject teachers available for either short term or long-term teaching. DE needs to undertake an effective audit of teaching vacancies in subjects and key stages and inform and support teacher training colleges and other appropriate institutions to address the shortfall in these areas.

## 21. ATTENDANCE / EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

Conference deplores the abysmal lack of funding made available to tackle the significant fall in pupil attendance. Attendance is linked directly to attainment. The Educational Welfare Service is seriously under staffed. Conference calls on DE to invest in this vital service.

## 22. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Technological advancements in education continue to shape the learning environment for our pupils and educational staff. The explosion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the past 18months will bring both challenges and benefits to the classroom. Teachers must prepare for the impact as educators as AI will challenge their professional role, teaching methodology and pupil / class interactions.

Conference calls on the Employing Authorities to establish a forum to engage with all stakeholders to inform them about the latest developments in AI but also to debate, discuss and address concerns for the implications that may have potential negative consequences to the teaching workforce.

## 23. EDUCATION INFORMATION SOLUTIONS (EDIS) PROGRAMME

Conference remains concerned regarding the delivery of a single School Management System that have been outlined by the Education Authority. Conference demands that the Education Authority continue to update and engage with school leaders and teachers around the timescales and the critical planning and support that will be offered to schools to ensure an effective and smooth transition can be delivered.

## 24. CAUSEWAY – LEADERSHIP WORKLOAD REVIEW

Conference calls on DE to put in place the means to implement the recommendations from the Leadership Workload Review.

## CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### **PRESIDENT**

Lynelle Fenton, BEd (Hons), Braidside Integrated Primary School

### **VICE-PRESIDENT**

Leigh McKay, BA (Hons), PGCE, DASE, Ballyclare Secondary School

### **EX-PRESIDENT**

Louise Creelman, BSc (Hons), DIS, PGCE, Bushvalley Primary School

### **GENERAL SECRETARY**

Jacquie White, BEd (Hons), PQHNI, UTU Headquarters

### **HONORARY TREASURER**

David Thompson, BEd (Hons), Dip AS Ed, PQHNI, Dungannon Primary School

### **BELFAST AREA ASSOCIATION**

Jacqueline Gargan, BEd (Hons), Glastry College  
Jon Bleakney, BEd (Hons), Lakewood Special School  
Louise Brown, BEd., Glastry College

### **SOUTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION**

Aaron Davis, BEd, MEd, Knockevin Special School  
Heather Milligan, BEd, DASE, PQHNI, Dromara Primary School  
Grace McCulough, BEd (Hons), MEd, Regent House School

### **NORTH-EASTERN AREA ASSOCIATION**

Jill Johnston, BSc (Hons), PGCE, Larne High School  
Mark Creelman, BA (Hons), PGCE, Garvagh Primary School  
Jillian Jones, BEd (Hons), Drumrane Primary School

### **SOUTHERN AREA ASSOCIATION**

Heather Wilson, BA (Hons), Dungannon Primary School  
Jill Ravey, BEd (Hons), Riverside Special School  
Steven Savage, BEd, Cairnshill Primary School  
Aaron Davidson, BEd (Hons), Moyallon Primary School

### **WESTERN AREA ASSOCIATION**

Audrey Dempsey, BEd (Hons), PQHNI, Omagh County Primary School  
Joy Carrothers, BEd (Hons), MEd, Cooley Primary School  
Janice Mullan MSc, BA (Hons), ATCL, PGCE, ETA EOTAS

### **OBSERVERS**

Pauline Hurst, BEd (Hons), PQHNI Enniskillen Model Primary School

# OFFICIAL DELEGATES

## **BANBRIDGE AND DROMORE BRANCH**

Jill Finn, Edenderry Primary School  
Nicola McGregor, Edenderry Primary School  
Gillian Ward, Retired Teacher

## **BELFAST BRANCH**

Julie Brown, Irish Society Primary School  
Grace Stevenson, Wellington College  
Andrew Scott-Mulholland, Saints and Scholars IPS  
David Majury, St Columbanus College

## **CARRICK/ABBEY/LARNE BRANCH**

Caroline Phelan, Carnmoney Primary  
Estelle McCord, Larne High School  
Andrew Nicholl, Ballyclare Secondary  
Ashley Knox, Larne High School  
Stephanie McNeill, Greystone Primary  
Llenore Coles, Larne High School  
Amy McMullan, Larne High School  
Paul Smith, Earlview Primary School

## **CAUSEWAY BRANCH**

Caroline Friel, Irish Society Primary School  
Callum Hannigan, Millstrand Integrated Primary School  
Jennifer Sturgeon, Supply Teacher

## **FOYLE BRANCH**

Zoe Cheshire, Supply Teacher  
Lara Connor, Donemana Primary School  
Julie McClelland, Rossmar Special School  
Alison Steen, Drumrane Primary School  
Charlene Trolan, Rossmar Special School  
Lorna Wilson, Oakgrove Integrated Primary School  
Rebecca Furphy, Supply Teacher

## **LISBURN/BALLYNAHINCH BRANCH**

Hannah English, Elmgrove Primary School  
Andrew Fee, Elmgrove Primary School  
Colin Irwin, Cregagh Primary School  
Jenny McCann, Newcastle Primary School  
Eileen Mckee, Harmony Hill Primary School  
Susan White, Hart Memorial Primary School

## **MID-ANTRIM BRANCH**

Derek Calderwood, Braidside Integrated Primary School  
Beverly Esler, Ballykeel Primary School  
Corey McKendry, Supply Teacher  
Lynn Robinson, Ballymena Primary School

## **MID-ULSTER BRANCH**

Helen Morton, Fivemiletown Primary School  
Andrea Sawyers, Augher Central Primary School  
Andrea Thompson, St Kevin's College

## **NEWRY AND MOURNE BRANCH**

Alana Campbell, Kilkeel High School  
Sandra Henderson, Kilkeel Primary School  
Austin Kincaid, Kilkeel High School  
Janelle Kincaid, Newcastle Primary School  
Andrew Leonard, Kilkeel High School  
Gillian Stevenson, Annalong Primary School

## **N'ARDS/N.DOWN BRANCH**

Stephen Cumper, Harding Memorial IPS  
Carney Cumper, Killyleagh Integrated Primary School  
Stephanie Moore, Supply Teacher

## **ORCHARD COUNTY**

Etain Hall-Callaghan, Harding Memorial IPS  
Jan Snoddy, Dromore Central Primary

## **SOUTH-WEST BRANCH**

Karen Atchison, Temporary Teacher  
Pamela Brown, Castlederg High School  
Janet Burke, Denamona Primary School  
Emma Daley, Fivemiletown Primary School  
Carol Elliott, Supply Teacher  
Jill Funston, Omagh County Primary School  
Nicola Heenan, Fivemiletown Primary School  
David Kearney, Derrygonnelly Primary School  
Kerry McGarry, Enniskillen Model Primary School  
Janice Murray, Enniskillen Model Primary School  
Pauline Hurst, Enniskillen Model Primary School

## **BRANCH GUESTS/OBSERVERS**

### **FOYLE**

Jennifer Mullan, Retired Teacher  
Maureen Nutt, Retired Teacher

### **MID-ANTRIM**

Audrey Philson, Retired Teacher  
Lynn Robinson, Ballymena Primary School  
Gillian Scott, Retired Teacher

### **N'ARDS/N.DOWN BRANCH**

Sally McKee, Retired Teacher

### **SOUTH-WEST BRANCH**

Helen Robinson, Retired Teacher

### **FUTURE IN TEACHING**

John Crown  
Matthew Robinson

## FRATERNAL DELEGATES

### EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND

Andrea Bradley, General Secretary  
Andrene Bamford, Past-President

### ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY TEACHERS IN IRELAND

Diarmuid De Paor, Deputy General Secretary  
Geraldine O'Brien, President

### NATIONAL EDUCATION UNION

Pauline Buchanan, Joint Regional Secretary  
Edel McInerney, President NEU

### SCOTTISH SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Seamus Searson, General Secretary  
Stuart Hunter, President

### IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS' ORGANISATION

Mark McTaggart, Northern Secretary  
John Driscoll, Ex-President  
Marie O'Shea, Assistant Northern Secretary  
Caoimhin MacColaim, Northern Chair  
Nuala O'Donnell, Senior Official

### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLMASTERS UNION OF WOMEN TEACHERS

Justin McCamphill, National Official  
Rosemary Carabin, President  
Ronan Sharkey, NI President  
Maxine Murphy-Higgins, Policy and Casework Official

### TEACHERS' UNION OF IRELAND

Michael Gillespie, General Secretary  
David Waters, President

### IRISH FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

Frank Jones, General Secretary  
Emma Sokell, President

### UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE UNION

Caoimhe NI Dhonaill, Officer

### IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

Gerry Murphy, Assistant General Secretary  
Paddy Mackel, Chair, NIC/ICTU  
Clare Moore, Officer

### EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Matthew McDermott, Assistant Director for HR Service and Industrial Relations  
Dale Hanna, Interim Director of CYPs  
Donna Allen, Interim Director of Operations and Estates  
Cara McLaughlin, Industrial Relations & Reward Manager

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE

Nicola Bryne, Assistant Chief Inspector  
Barry O'Rourke, Assistant Chief Inspector

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

John Mason, Head of Teachers' Negotiating Team

### STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Professor Patricia Eton, Director of Teaching and Learning

### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HEAD TEACHERS

Joanne White

### PAST PRESIDENTS

Audrey Stewart  
Lewis Love  
Gillian Scott  
Sally McKee

### HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS

John Carr  
Alisatir Orr  
Avril Hall-Callaghan  
Lexie Scott  
Arlene Allen

### OTHER GUESTS

Phillip Rawe, Industrial Court  
Julie McAuley, Principal,  
Braidside Intregated Primary School  
Stephanie McMullan, Chair of BOG,  
Braidside Intregated Primary School  
Maura McKay, Shean Dickson Merrick  
Bernie McCloskey, Shean Dickson Merrick  
Pat Sheehan, MLA  
Cara Hunter, MLA

### COUNCIL FOR THE CURRICULUM, EXAMINATIONS & ASSESSMENT

Michael McAuley, Business Manager

### TRANSFEROR REPRESENTATIVES' COUNCIL

Dr Rebecca Stevenson  
Dr Peter Hamill



# GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

## HEADQUARTERS STAFF

General Secretary	Jacquie White
Deputy General Secretary	Stephen McCord
Field Officer	Leigh Cooper
Field Officer	Rebekka Gilpin
Organising Officer	Joseph Wyglendacz
Executive Officer	Karen Taylor
Financial Executive Officer	Heather Arrell
Database Administrator	Denise Allely
Support Officer	Meriel Segal
Operational Officer/PA to Gen Sec	Lindsay Osborne
Communications Officer/PA to Deputy Gen Sec	Tony McCabe

## CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Lynelle Fenton, President  
 Leigh McKay, Vice-President  
 Louise Creelman, Ex-President  
 Jacquie White, General Secretary  
 Stephen McCord, Deputy General Secretary  
 David Thompson, Honorary Treasurer  
 Karen Taylor, Executive Officer  
 Lindsay Osborne, Operational Officer  
 Louise Brown  
 Jill Ravey  
 Heather Milligan  
 Jillian Jones  
 Janice Mullan

**Convener:** Louise Creelman, Ex-President

# MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Minutes of the One Hundred and Fourth Annual Conference of the Ulster Teachers' Union

1. The 104th Annual Conference of the Ulster Teachers' Union was held in the Roe Park Hotel, Limavady, Londonderry from Thursday 30th to Friday 31st March 2023.

2. Representatives were present from the major teachers' unions within UK and Ireland including the National Education Union, the Educational Institute of Scotland, the Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association, the Irish National Teachers' Organisation, the National Association of Head Teachers, the National Association of Schoolmasters and Women Teachers, the Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland, the Teachers' Union of Ireland, the University and College Union, the Association of Head teachers & Deputies in Scotland and the Irish Federation of University Teachers.

3. Representatives were also present from the Transferor Representatives' Council, the Retired Teachers' Association, the Department of Education, the Education Authority, the Education and Training Inspectorate, the Controlled Schools' Support Council, the Labour Relations Agency, the Certification Office, Millar Grattan Media, CCEA, Buddy Bear Trust, Education International/ETUCE and the ICTU.

## **SESSION 1 -THURSDAY 30th MARCH 2022, 17:30**

### PUBLIC SESSION

4. The President, Louise Creelman, welcomed guests and declared the 104th Annual Conference open.

5. The President encouraged delegates to be mindful of the housekeeping rules and timings on motions.

### **ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS**

6. Standing Orders were put to Conference and were adopted unanimously.

Proposed by Alison Steen, Past-President

Seconded by Lynelle Fenton, Vice-President

7. The President moved the business to public session.

### **PUBLIC SESSION - RESOLUTIONS**

#### 8. Resolution 1 – **ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORMS**

Proposed by Corey McKendry, Mid-Antrim Branch

Seconded by Jillian Jones, Mid-Antrim Branch

Conference recognises the benefits which on-line learning platforms have brought to both teaching and learning. Conference is alarmed about the ways in which these have become abused by some parents. Conference calls on the Education Authority to draw up a charter of fair use which all schools will be required to adhere to.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

#### 9. Resolution 2 – **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Proposed by Louise Creelman, President, Causeway Branch

Seconded by Audrey McKee, Causeway Branch

Conference is alarmed at the high incidence of teachers and principals being subjected to inappropriate use of Social Media. Conference demands that the employing authorities implement their duty of care and seek, as a matter of urgency, to put consistent and appropriate procedures in place to address this growing unacceptable practice within local and wider school communities.

Jacquie White, UTU General Secretary, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

#### 10. Resolution 3 – **CLASS SIZES IN NURSERY**

Proposed by Joy Carrothers, South-West Branch, CEC

Seconded by Karen Atchison, South-West Branch

Conference calls on the Department of Education to re-evaluate and improve the staff-pupil ratios in nursery settings. The current class size of 26 with one teacher and one assistant is not meeting the increasingly complex needs of the children in our nursery settings.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

# MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## 11. Resolution 4 – **ASSISTED PREGNANCY**

Proposed by Jacquie White, UTU General Secretary, CEC

Seconded by Janice Mullan, CEC

Conference recognises the changing trends regarding embarking on family life in Northern Ireland and recognises the importance of appropriate support for both parents. Conference calls for the establishment of procedures to allow both parents to be fully involved in the assisted pregnancy process where it is required.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

## 12. Resolution 5 – **MATERNITY, PATERNITY, ADOPTION AND SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE**

Proposed by David Thompson, CEC

Seconded by Louise Creelman, President, CEC

Conference calls on DE to make urgent changes to the maternity, paternity and adoption benefits of teachers, making it more comparable with other public sectors/ services, and promote the opportunities available under the shared parental leave scheme.

*Paul Smith*, CEC and *Rebekka Gilpin*, Field Officer, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

## 13. Resolution 6 – **BREASTFEEDING**

Proposed by Rebekka Gilpin, Field Officer

Seconded by Leigh McKay, CEC

The combination of the cost of living crisis and the low rates of maternity pay have resulted in some teachers having to return to work before their full maternity leave entitlement has expired. Consequently, some teachers return to school whilst they continue to breastfeed their child. Conference calls on the employing authorities to work with the teaching unions to establish an agreed framework which allows breastfeeding mothers to remain in the workplace with understanding and dignity.

*Janice Mullan*, CEC, and *Jill Johnson*, Carrick/Abbey/Larne Branch, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

## 14. Resolution 7 – **FUNDING FOR EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**

Proposed by Ashley Knox, Carrick/Abbey/Larne Branch

Seconded by Leigh McKay, Carrick/Abbey/Larne Branch, CEC

Conference calls on the Education Authority to urgently look at the funding arrangements of Educational Psychology support for schools. This area has been eroded in recent years. We now see a post-code lottery where children in an area could be forgotten or ignored for long periods of time due to a lack of personnel or funding in that region. Every child should have equal access and timely interventions in place. Conference calls for this matter to be addressed by the employing authorities.

*David Thompson*, CEC, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

## **SESSION 2 – THURSDAY 30TH MARCH, 18:45**

### PRIVATE SESSION

#### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

15. Alison Steen, CEC, proposed the Adoption of the Minutes of Annual Conference 2022. This was seconded by Lynelle Fenton, Vice President. The Minutes, as printed in the Conference Handbook, were adopted unanimously.

#### **CEC REPORT**

16. The General Secretary, Jacquie White, paid tribute to the CEC and their devotion to the UTU membership. She emphasised the amount of work that had been carried out regarding the Reviews resulting from the Pay and Workload Agreement 2020 and informed Conference that the working groups had met on 197 occasions. Furthermore, a brief overview of the current status of the reviews and the reports was provided to delegates. The General Secretary summarised common themes

## MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

from law and tenure cases and thanked the UTU officials for their work and support. She also underlined the importance of joint working across the unions.

17. The General Secretary invited questions and comments before proposing the adoption of the CEC report.

18. The adoption of the CEC report was seconded by Lynelle Fenton, Vice President, and supported unanimously.

19. The President, Louise Creelman, thanked all UTU officials and staff for their work on behalf of the membership.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

20. The President invited the Honorary Treasurer, Gillian Dunlop, to present the Annual Financial

Report for the year ending December 2022 to Conference. This had been provided to delegates prior to the meeting and was displayed on screen.

21. Gillian Dunlop, Honorary Treasurer, announced that she would be moving to Australia and would hand over her post to David Thompson following his election. The Honorary Treasurer then provided a detailed overview of the financial accounts of UTU.

22. The Honorary Treasurer explained that the accounts had been given a clean bill of health from the Auditors and stated that, thankfully, the UTU had not been impacted financially by the Covid pandemic financial fall out. Gillian Dunlop extended thanks to Karen Taylor, Executive Officer, Mervin McClean, Building Trustee, and Heather Arrell, Financial Executive Officer, and delivered the Financial report to Conference. She also paid tribute to Stephen McCord and Tony McCabe for their work online and their cost saving efforts.

23. There were no questions from the floor and no questions submitted in advance.

24. The Honorary Treasurer proposed that SLMD Ltd to be retained as Auditor;

this was seconded by Alison Steen, Past President. The proposed auditor was adopted unanimously

25. Lynelle Fenton, Vice-President, formally seconded the adoption of the Financial Report and thanked Gillian Dunlop for her services as Honorary Treasurer and wished her and her family well for her move to Australia.

26. The Financial Report was adopted unanimously

### PROPOSAL OF CONFERENCE DATES

27. Alison Steen, Past President, proposed the dates of the 105th Annual Conference to be 14th & 15th March 2024 at Roe Park, Limavady. This was seconded by Lynelle Fenton, Vice-President.

28. There was a question from the floor from David Thompson, CEC, regarding the location with a wish to assess the viability to move Conference to the Slieve Donard, Co. Down.

### ACTION ON PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

29. The General Secretary, referred to a motion, brought forward from Mid-Antrim Branch in 2022, concerning reviewing existing Area Association nominations to CEC; she explained that whilst a strategy had been developed it had not been welcomed by some Branches. The General Secretary reminded Conference that a proposal had been made for further engagement to take place at Conference 2023 to canvass ideas.

30. Stephen McCord, Deputy General Secretary, delivered a presentation contextualising the current membership and Branch structures citing the applicable rules. Opportunities were then given to Branches to contribute for a collegiate strategy to be compiled.

31. Lexie Scott spoke to the presentation.

# MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

32. The President encouraged delegates to discuss proposed amendments within their Branches.

The President declared Session 2 closed at 19:50.

## **SESSION 3 – FRIDAY 31st MARCH 2023, 09:30**

### **PUBLIC SESSION**

33. The President, Louise Creelman, opened Session 3 at 9.30am. She welcomed Delegates and Guests, reminded Conference of speaking rules and encouraged everyone to liaise with exhibitors.

#### **34. Resolution 8 – SEN**

Proposed by June Murphy, Causeway Branch

Seconded by Audrey McKee, Causeway Branch

Conference calls upon the Education Authority to review current provision and implement a manageable, practical and realistic service for SEN guidance and support to schools. Conference is alarmed at the ever increasing needs and requests for SEN referrals, psychologist reports, visits, annual reviews, PLPs and the rising stress and time factor levels that this places on teachers, SEN Leaders, Senior Leaders and Principals to obtain, process and manage effectively the information and action required in working practice within schools.

Ashley Knox, Carrick/Abbey Larne Branch, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

#### **35. Resolution 9 – OPERATION ENCOMPASS**

Proposed by Leigh McKay, CEC

Seconded by Audrey Dempsey, CEC

Conference deplores the continuing upsurge in the rates of Domestic Abuse in Northern Ireland. Conference calls upon the DE, as a matter of urgency, to facilitate the full and proper embedding of education around Domestic Abuse into

the curriculum with the necessary funding, time and resources made available to schools. Conference further calls on EA to fund the resourcing required to roll out the spiral curriculum necessary for 'Operation Encompass' to ensure the protection of our pupils in future society.

Gillian Dunlop, CEC, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### **EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS**

#### **36. Emergency Resolution – PAY**

Proposed by Janice Mullan, CEC

Seconded by Lynelle Fenton, Vice-President, CEC

Conference is gravely concerned about the on-going impasse in regard to the resolution of the issue of fair pay for teachers. Conference congratulates the membership on delivering the mandate for industrial action and for the continuing support of that action to date. Conference further commends the CEC and those in sister unions in NITC for working together and coordinating action in the interests of all teachers. Conference calls on the CEC to continue to campaign, alongside sister unions, to deliver a fair pay uplift for teachers and school leaders which reflects the commitment of the profession and its true value and contribution towards the future of this society.

David Thompson, CEC, Stephen McCord, CEC, and Stephen Cumper, N'ards/N. Down Branch, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### **PRESENTATION**

37. The President introduced Sam Kincaid, Cyber Protection Officer from the PSNI Cyber Crime Centre.

38. Sam Kinkaid delivered a presentation on the dangers of cyber-crime and how it does and could affect schools. He acknowledged that, whilst schools and colleges

## MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

are not cash rich, the data of 'end-users' they possess is of significant financial value.

39. Louise Creelman, President, presented Sam Kinkaid with a gift and delivered thanks for a very informative and eye-opening presentation.

40. Session 3 closed at 10:33am.

### **SESSION 4 – FRIDAY 31st MARCH 2022, 11:15**

#### **PUBLIC SESSION**

41. Louise Creelman, President welcomed everyone and introduced the children's choir from Bushvalley Primary School, who opened the session with musical pieces, accompanied by their teacher Claire Stinson and Karen Irwin, Principal. The choir received a standing ovation from Conference.

42. Lynelle Fenton, Vice President, thanked the choir for their fantastic performance and gave the teachers and all children a token of appreciation.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

43. Jacquie White, General Secretary, reported the obituaries paying tribute to Paul Bond & Hazel Lendrum. Conference also marked their respect to Annette Morrow, an employee of the Union, who had sadly passed away in July 2022.

#### **CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2023/24**

44. The General Secretary announced the results of the elections to the Central Executive Committee for the year 2023-2024 as follows:

##### **a) Belfast Area**

There were 3 candidates for 3 places.

Jaki Gargan, Jon Bleakney and Louise Brown were elected.

##### **b) North Eastern Area**

There were 5 candidates for 4 places.

Following due process, Mark Creelman, Jill Johnston, Jillian Jones, Emma Loughridge were elected.

##### **c) South Eastern Area**

There were 3 candidates for 3 places.

Grace McCullough, Heather Milligan and Aaron Davis were elected.

##### **d) Southern Area**

There were 4 candidates for 4 places.

Jill Ravey, Heather Wilson, Steven Savage and Aaron Davidson were elected.

##### **e) Western Area**

There were 3 candidates for 3 places.

Audrey Dempsey, Joy Carruthers and Janice Mullan were elected.

45. The General Secretary thanked all outgoing CEC members for their service.

#### **VICE PRESIDENT**

46. There was one candidate for the office of Vice-President for the year 2023/2024.

Leigh McKay was declared elected.

The General Secretary extended her congratulations to Leigh.

#### **HONORARY TREASURER**

47. There was one candidate for the office of Honorary Treasurer for the year 2023/2024.

Mr David Thompson was declared elected.

## MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

48. The Vice President introduced Gerry Murphy, Assistant General Secretary ICTU, as Chair of Session 4. Gerry Murphy assumed the chair.

49. Gerry Murphy addressed Conference and thanked the UTU for the invitation. He emphasised the importance of the strike action on 21st January, and in particular the UTU mandate and presence on the day. Gerry Murphy referred to the ICTU campaign Workers Demand Better, and commended the strength of the trade union movement, in particular in light of budget cuts and lack of political representation. He expressed his severe concerns over recent announcements of the cuts affecting the education sector, and called on unions to continue their action to oppose those cuts. Gerry Murphy called on delegates to keep their faith in education, continue standing up for that mission and continue the work.

50. Gerry Murphy wished Lynelle Fenton well in her new role of Vice President. He then invited the President, Louise Creelman, to deliver her Presidential Address and commended her for leading the UTU into a period of unprecedented industrial action.

51. The President, Louise Creelman, delivered her Presidential Address to Conference to great acclaim.

52. The Chair, Gerry Murphy, responded to the Presidential speech and reminded Conference of 5 main points: education is a right, teachers have had enough, the importance of solidarity, teachers' good will is taken for granted and to take the President's advice.

53. The President, Louise Creelman, thanked Gerry Murphy for chairing the session and presented him with a gift.

54. The President, Louise Creelman, introduced Andrea Bradley, General Secretary of EIS, to deliver Fraternal Greetings to Conference.

55. Andrea Bradley delivered Fraternal Greetings, underlining the common purpose of all education unions. She expressed solidarity with UTU members, on behalf of the EIS, and encouraged delegates to continue their actions.

56. The President, Louise Creelman, thanked Andrea Bradley, and presented her with a gift. She then asked Jacquie White, General Secretary, to address Conference.

57. Jacquie White delivered the General Secretary's Address, thanking delegates for their contributions to Conference, and Andrea Bradley and Louise Creelman for their inspirational speeches. She paid tribute to Gerry Murphy in taking up his new role with ICTU and underlined the importance of unity to address the pay and budget crisis. The General Secretary further expressed grave concerns regarding the lack of respect for teachers and called on Conference to support UTU action.

58. The General Secretary presented Hannah English, the winner of the strike poster competition, with a prize.

59. The President closed the session for lunch at 12:53

### **SESSION 5 – FRIDAY 31st MARCH 2022, 14:00**

#### **PUBLIC SESSION**

#### **PRESENTATION**

60. The President, Louise Creelman, welcomed delegates back and introduced Dr Lisa Wilson, Senior Economist at the Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI), to give a presentation to Conference.

61. Dr Lisa Wilson addressed Conference, presenting economic findings and policies on the gender pay gap in Northern Ireland.

62. Louise Creelman, President, thanked Dr Lisa Wilson and presented a gift.

The President requested that Conference agree to alter the order of resolutions (amending Standing Orders) to take Resolution 16. Conference agreed.

## MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

### 63. Resolution 16 – **AREA PLANNING**

Proposed by Alison Steen, Past President

Seconded by Paul Smith, CEC

Conference continues to have grave concerns around the Area Planning process. Conference has very specific concerns, though, currently, with regard to the new policy of the employing authorities to hold the initial pre-consultation meetings on-line. Conference despairs at the lack of consideration given to the immense negative impact on individual teachers, School Leaders and support staff who find themselves in these circumstances. Conference calls on the employing authorities to revert to in-person meetings with immediate effect to ensure that the members of staff facing fundamental changes in their employment situation receive some basic level of duty of care.

Jillian Jones, Mid-Antrim Branch, and Stephen McCord, Deputy General Secretary spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

64. The President moved to take the second emergency resolution.

### **EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS**

#### 65. Emergency Resolution - **EDUCATION FUNDING**

Proposed by Gillian Dunlop, CEC

Seconded by Jacquie White, UTU General Secretary

Conference despairs at the chronic levels of underfunding in education, the effects of which will be greatly augmented by the recently announced cuts to the Northern Ireland education budget and the resultant loss of services. Conference demands that the Central Executive Committee coordinates and campaigns with sister unions in NITC to resist the implementation of these cuts. This includes the last minute decision to cut the hunger payments over the holiday periods and the cessation of engage funding leaving teachers without employment at no notice. Conference further demands that the CEC works in conjunction with NITC to engage with

politicians and political parties with a view to increasing the portion of the block grant given to education in Northern Ireland.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

#### 66. Emergency Resolution – **ENGAGE FUNDING (FIT)**

Proposed by Etain Hall-Callaghan, FIT

Seconded by Rebecca Stevenson, FIT

The Engage I, II and III funding that has been awarded to school settings from September 2020 was very welcomed. This funding provided much needed intervention for pupils impacted by the disruption on education due to COVID-19. It also enabled employment and experience to be gained by many of our recently qualified teachers. We are dismayed that this funding will cease in March 2023. Conference demands immediate long term investment from the Department of Education to allow funding in this area.

Stephen Cumper, N'ards/N. Down Branch, June Murphy, Causeway Branch, and Aaron Davidson, CEC, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### **MAIN RESOLUTION**

#### 67. Resolution 10 – **FOUNDATION STAGE CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS**

Proposed by Lynelle Fenton, CEC

Seconded by Joy Carrothers, CEC

Conference recognises the need for additional classroom support at Foundation Stage in order to fully deliver the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Conference calls on DE to review the provision of Classrooms Assistants at Foundation Stage and ensure that the funding and resource is of a level which ensures that each and every child has full access to the curriculum as it is laid down.

Carney Cumper, N'ards/N. Down branch spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.



# MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## 68. Resolution 11 - **APPROPRIATE SCHOOL SETTINGS WITH SUFFICIENT FUNDING**

Proposed by Aaron Davis, CEC

Seconded by Jill Ravey, CEC

Conference notes the exponential growth in children requiring support for a range of additional needs in our schools. Conference calls on DE to urgently review how children and young people with SEN are placed in the appropriate setting based on their need, and commit to and deliver sufficient funding to allow for the required staffing and resources to ensure that every child can meet their full potential.

David Thompson, CEC, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

## 69. Resolution 12 – **NUMERACY SUPPORT**

Proposed by Louise Creelman, President, CEC

Seconded by Mark Creelman, CEC

Conference notes that many pathways into education and employment for young people require a certain level of achievement in English and Mathematics. Conference further notes that relevant support is made available to pupils who require assistance in Literacy but not those who require assistance in Numeracy, thus impeding progress for those with additional numeracy needs at the earlier stages of education. Conference calls on The Education Authority School Improvement Service to implement a Numeracy Support Service for our pupils similar to that which is offered by EALS.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

## 70. Resolution 13 – **ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR MATHEMATICS OUTREACH SUPPORT**

Proposed by Heather Milligan, CEC

Seconded by Jennifer McCann, Lisburn & Ballynahinch Branch

CEC calls upon Conference to demand that the Department of Education provides additional funding for schools to acquire high quality outreach support for mathematics without impinging upon other SEN Funding.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

## 71. Resolution 14 – **DISABILITY**

Proposed by Stephen McCord, Deputy General Secretary

Seconded by Pauline Hurst, South-West Branch

Conference welcomes the positive development of a culture in our schools which enables teachers to access support for their disability with a greater degree of confidence. Conference calls on the Education Authority to ensure that all teachers are fully informed of appropriate support and are facilitated in accessing said support in a timely and easy manner.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

72. The President, Louise Creelman, brought Session 5 to a close at 16:02.

## **SESSION 6 – FRIDAY 31st MARCH 2022 – 16:30**

### **PUBLIC SESSION**

## 73. Resolution 15 – **MENOPAUSE**

Proposed by Leigh McKay, CEC

Seconded by Janice Mullan, CEC

In a workforce which is predominantly female, Conference welcomes the growing awareness of the impact of the menopause on women in the workplace, and the work which has taken place thus far towards raising awareness and providing support. Conference calls on the employing authorities to ensure that school specific menopause policies are now mainstreamed within the school system and

## MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

that every female teacher has access to appropriate understanding and support at point of need.

Jacquie White, UTU General Secretary, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### 74. Resolution 17 – **LEADERSHIP WORKLOAD**

Proposed by Mark Creelman, Causeway Branch, CEC

Seconded by Callum Hannigan, Causeway Branch

Conference calls upon the need for the Education Authority to make radical changes to reduce the excessive workload still being placed upon senior leaders and principals in schools. The working school environment should reflect and support the health and well-being of all Leaders and Conference demands that EA address this current workload, which is having such a detrimental impact in schools.

Aaron Davidson, CEC, spoke to the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### 75. Resolution 19 – **SUPPORT SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS AND CHILDREN**

Proposed by Aaron Davidson, CEC

Seconded by Alison Steen, CEC

Conference despairs at the lack of access to support services and the associated waiting times which schools and children have to endure to get the help they need. The situation is only due to be greatly exacerbated by the recent announcement of further cost cutting exercises demanded of the Education Authority. Conference demands that the relevant decision-making and funding bodies act as a matter of urgency to invest in these services and ensure that all of our children, regardless of need, have access to the appropriate support and resource at point of need.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### 76. Resolution 18 – **EA HUMAN RESOURCES**

Proposed by Gillian Dunlop, CEC

Seconded by Joseph Wyglendacz, Organising Officer

Conference has grave concerns about the lack of support available to Governors and school leaders from the Education Authority in relation to the Human Resources issues which arise in schools. Conference believes that the application of agreed procedures in the absence of appropriate training and/or advice has created unnecessary stress and anxiety in what are already difficult situations. Conference calls on the Education Authority to ensure that:

- School leaders and Governors have ready access to consistent HR advice

- Appropriate training is made available and the importance of participating before engaging in TNC procedures are properly outlined and promoted, and uptake is monitored

The resolution was carried unanimously.

### 77. Resolution 20 – **PASTORAL CARE**

Proposed by David Gault, Carrick/Abbey/Larne Branch

Seconded by Jill Johnson, Carrick/Abbey/Larne Branch

Responsibility for pastoral care and child protection across our schools is a demanding and challenging role. Conference commends our teachers, school leaders, year heads and designated teachers for their commitment in this area. Conference calls on the employing authorities to ensure that Principals and Boards of Governors have adequate funding and time given to ensure that pastoral leaders are not contravening time regulations or impacting on other time restraints due to the pressures demanded by this role.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

78. The following resolutions were passed to CEC for completion due to time

79. Resolution 21 – **TECHNOLOGY**

Conference has concerns about the lack of appropriate technology that can be used to support children's learning in the area of ICT. Significant funding is required to enable schools to purchase technology such as interactive whiteboards and iPads/ Chromebooks or laptops for children to use. Despite the significant funding provided by the Department of Education to implement the roll out of MS Surface Pros to teaching staff, schools find themselves unable to appropriately resource digital technology in the classroom. It is vital to have additional money, ring fenced, to purchase technology such as interactive whiteboards, ways to wirelessly connect Surface Pros to interactive whiteboards and a realistic ratio of devices to children in lessons. These have become essentials that some schools simply cannot afford. Conference demands that these issues are addressed as a matter of urgency.

80. Resolution 22 – **ELECTRIC VEHICLE/GREEN STRATEGY**

Conference calls on the Department of Education to devise an Electric Vehicle/ Green strategy that supports employees and takes cognisance of the Government's Proposal that no internal combustion engine cars will be sold after 2030.

81. Resolution 23 – **SEND FUNDING**

The pressures of austerity and the lack of a Stormont Executive means that funding in the area of Special Educational Needs has eroded over a number of years. Time, resources, CPD and funding are necessary for our SENCOs and we demand better for our pupils. Conference demands that the Education Authority urgently increases available funding to implement SENCO duties and also to have sufficient non-contact time to fulfil the ever-increasing demands of this role to provide appropriate support for pupils with SEND.

82. The sponsors and exhibitors' Prize draws took place with the following results:

<b>Cornmarket:</b>	Lindsay Osborne
<b>Wine:</b>	Estelle McCord, Jessica Blomqvist, Ashley Knox, Janice Mullan
<b>Signature Voucher:</b>	Pamela Brown
<b>Steve Sinnot Fdn:</b>	Emily Taylor
<b>Membership Plus:</b>	Lexie Scott, Carol Elliott
<b>Lafayette:</b>	Joy Carruthers
<b>UTU:</b>	Andrea Fusco, Lexie Scott, Carney Cumper

83. The President thanked everyone for their attendance and declared 104th Conference closed at 17.30.

# REGISTRATION

All delegates must register initially at the UTU Conference desk and then at the hotel reception.

It is important that resident delegates and guests wear their Conference lanyards, particularly in the dining room.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Roe Park Resort  
LIMAVADY  
Co Londonderry  
BT49 9FB  
T: +44 (0) 28777 22222

Free car parking is available on site.

Please register with the UTU reception which is located beside the main Conference hall.

Hotel Check-In Times: Check in 3.00pm / Check out 11.00am

Photography and Filming will be taking place. These will be used in UTU publications and social media (UTU Website, Facebook, X, Instagram and YouTube).

Delegates and guests who do not wish to have their image used should inform [office@utu.edu](mailto:office@utu.edu) before Wednesday 13th March 2024.

## COMPLAINTS

All complaints regarding the hotel should be made to Lindsay Osborne, Operational Officer.

## SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS

- Inspire Wellbeing
- The Steve Sinnott Foundation
- HSCNI Adoption and Foster Care
- Cyber Crime Centre
- Learning Me
- E-Printing UK
- Dandelion Studios
- Allied Irish Bank
- Harper Collins
- Creative Activity
- Membership Plus
- Cornmarket Insurance Services
- Platinum Financial Planning
- Childrens Books Ireland
- The Signature Works
- The Integrated Education Fund



# NOTES

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