



Support Our Secretaries

**Join Fórsa's
campaign for respect
and fair conditions for
all School Secretaries.**

**Principals, teachers,
parents and colleagues
standing in support of
School Secretaries.**

**FORSA**

**We need
your voice.
Together we
will be heard.**

How you can help.

1. SIGN THE PETITION. Go to www.forsa.ie/support-our-secretaries-campaign and sign the nationwide petition calling on the Department of Education and Skills to finally ensure that ALL school staff are afforded the same basic rights and pay grades as their colleagues.

2. PROMOTE AND SHARE THE CAMPAIGN WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES.

Display the campaign poster enclosed, wear your SOS badge. Ask your school colleagues to support the campaign. Promote the campaign and share your story on social media.

You can also download a variety of campaign materials from www.forsa.ie/support-our-secretaries-campaign

3. ENCOURAGE YOUR COLLEAGUES TO JOIN YOU. Ask your colleagues who are not members of the Union to support the campaign and stand with you by joining Fórsa today.

**Remember you are not alone.
Support is all around you.**



**Please join
the campaign today !**



You have the support of your colleagues.

All over Ireland school principals, teachers, boards of management and parents are standing with you and adding their voice to the Support Our Secretaries campaign.

"The INTO Principals' and Deputy Principals' Committee acknowledge the tremendous contribution that school secretaries make to the life of primary schools, and in particular the critical role they play in supporting school leaders. INTO is fully in support of Fórsa's Support Our Secretaries campaign and offer our assistance in achieving your aims. We will advise our members, and in particular our principal teacher members of this"

Sheila Nunan, General Secretary, Irish National Teachers' Organisation.

"The TUI has a long standing position that the provision of education in the state is a core element of the social contract and a vital public service. In this regard, it is also our position that the staff supporting the provision of this public service should be considered to be, and should receive all of the benefits and entitlements of, equivalent public servants. The TUI fully supports Fórsa in their campaign to secure this recognition, and the inherent security, for their members.."

Séamus Lahart, President, Teachers' Union of Ireland.

"As a principal, I deeply appreciate the role school secretaries play in supporting the work of the principal and the school. As an INTO member, I support fair and equal pay and conditions for school secretaries, and wish the Fórsa campaign well."

Michelle Keane, Cathaoirleach of INTO Principals' and Deputy Principals' Committee

"The Irish Congress of Trade Unions fully supports this campaign which we believe is strongly related to the principles outlined in the Congress 'Charter for fair Conditions at Work'. School Secretaries, together with all other workers, are entitled to have certainty regarding their pay, terms and conditions of employment, and Government should take all necessary measures to end the precarious nature of their employment."

Patricia King, General Secretary Irish Congress of Trade Unions Organisation.

You have our support.

As you know, Fórsa is the largest union representing public service workers in Ireland and the only union representing School Secretaries. As a member of Fórsa you already have our full protection and the support of our 80.000 members. And today we are asking all of our members to also stand with you by signing and sharing the Support Our Secretaries petition.

With the combined support of your colleagues, we can ensure that your voice is finally heard and your needs are finally met.

**So please stand with us.
Join the Support Our
Secretaries campaign today.**

Go to www.forsa.ie/support-our-secretaries-campaign to sign the petition. For more information simply email at joconnor@forsa.ie
Or call 01-8171582

Fórsa
Nerney's Court
Dublin D01 R2C5



A Simple Solution



The time has come to end this arbitrary, unfair and unjust system and value all school staff equally.

This long-outdated system places a huge burden on a school's resources and forces some of their most pivotal members of staff to work in extraordinarily unfair and unsustainable conditions.

Fórsa, the largest public service trade union in the country, is calling on the government to ensure that, not just some, but all School Secretaries and staff are paid by the Department of Education and Skills, and afforded the same basic rights and pay grades as their colleagues.



But we cannot do this without your support.



The first and most important step of this campaign is for School Secretaries to stand together.

School Secretaries

One of the most crucial members of staff but least valued by Government.

School Secretaries are the key to everything that happens in our schools. Every appointment, every schedule, every crisis, every teacher, every parent – every single day.

They are commonly the longest serving, the most trusted and an indispensable member of staff. Yet they are also the most neglected by Government.

A Nationwide Problem

Fórsa estimate that around 90% of all School Secretaries are denied basic entitlements such as sick leave and pension rights.

Many School Secretaries work for as little as €12,000 per year.

Today, only around 10% of School Secretaries are paid directly by the Department of Education and Skills – ensuring that they receive the same basic rights and entitlements as any other school employee.

But the vast majority of schools are forced to employ their School Secretary – and their caretaker – through their ancillary grant. This two tier system means that in some schools there can be two secretaries, doing the same job in the same office, where one is paid €44,000 per year and the other receives a meagre €12,000. Many other school support staff such as caretakers face the same discrimination and inequity.

In any other walk of life this discrimination would be illegal.

Support Our Secretaries – The Campaign.

Fórsa's Support Our Secretaries campaign is a nationwide movement of school staff, parents, colleagues and friends all standing in support of the demand for respect and fair conditions for all School Secretaries.

It may be a long hard campaign but, with your support and the support of your colleagues, we know that we can ensure that all School Secretaries will finally receive the recognition and respect that they deserve .



The campaign will feature

1. A national **online petition**.
2. **Official declarations of support** from Teachers' Unions and representative bodies.
3. A series of nationwide events and **public meetings**.
4. The first ever **National Day for School Secretaries**.



**For further information
please contact**

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Fórsa Trade Union

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Key dates and events

Over the next few months, Fórsa will continue to shine a light on the unfair terms and conditions that the majority of schools secretaries are forced to endure.

January 17th – Public launch of 'Support our Secretaries' campaign / Launch of national online petition.

January 19th – School Secretaries Branch AGM / Welcome event for new and potential members of Fórsa.

Week January 28th – 'Support our Secretaries' campaign packs delivered to every school in the country.

February / March – A series of Support Our Secretaries events, including activist training, will be held throughout the country raising awareness of the issue and allowing school secretaries to meet and share their stories.

February / March – Declarations of support from national and local representative bodies.

Week of April 1st – Teachers' Conferences.

April 24th - 26th – Fórsa Education Divisional Conference.

May – In May this year, we will host the first ever National School Secretaries Day. And the 'Support our Secretaries' petition will be printed and delivered to the Minister for Education & Skills.