

EDUCATION DIVISION

FORSA



**CONFERENCE
2023**

AGENDA

12th - 14th April 2023

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Conference timetable

Wednesday 12th April

- 17:00 Registration opens and issue of ballot papers
- 19.00 Registration closes

Thursday 13th April

- 08.30 Registration re-opens
- 09.30 Opening Education Division Executive Committee (EDEC) video
- 09.35 Student performance
- 09.40 Chairs' address
- 09.50 Appointment of tellers and scrutineers
- 09:55 Adoption of general standing orders
- 10.00 Standing Orders Committee Report
- 10:10 Adoption of previous minutes and biannual report
- 10.15 Education policy: Motions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19
- 11.40 Job evaluation: Motions 36, 37
- 11.55 June working: Motion 41
- 12.05 Head of Division address
- 12.15 Presentation of distinguished service awards
- 12:20 *"Reeling in the years"* video introduced by Kevin Callinan, General Secretary
- 12.30 Address by Minister for Education Norma Foley TD, and response from Head of Division Andy Pike
- 13.00 Conference adjourns for lunch
- 14.00 Conference resumes
- 14.00 Pay and related: Motions 1, 2, 3
- 14.30 Public and social policy: Motions 53, 54, 55
- 15.00 Panel discussion and launch of progression research paper
- 16.00 General terms and conditions: Motions 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32
- 17.00 Strategic Change presentation
- 17.15 Conference adjourns
- 20.00 Conference dinner

Conference timetable

Friday 14th April

- 09:30 Conference resumes
- 09.30 Pensions and related: Motions 33, 34, 35
- 10:00 SNA permanency, redeployment and related: Motions 42, 43, 44, 45, 46
(motions 45 and 46 to be taken in common debate)
- 10.45 72 hours: Motions 38, 39, 40
- 11.00 Panel discussion on hearing the voice of students
- 11.45 SNA assault leave: Motions 47, 48, 49
- 12.05 Equality and related: Motions 50, 51, 52
- 12.20 Health and safety: Motions 56, 57
- 12.35 Appendix 3: Motions advisory to the National Executive Committee 61, 62, 63, 64
- 12.45 Conference closes

Standing Orders Committee

Civil Service Division

Siobhán Daly
Helen Lundy (Secretary)

Education Division

Eileen Coman
Niamh Jordan**

Health and Welfare Division

Gerry Foley (Vice-chairperson)
Don Meskell

Local Government and Local Services Division

Rose Marie Conroy (Chairperson)
Audrey Warren*

Municipal Employees' Division

Tom Kavanagh
Michael Ross

Services and Enterprises Division

Teresa Kearns (Returning officer)
Billy Gallagher

*Kathryn Collins resigned from SOC in 2022 and was replaced by Audrey Warren, who transferred from the Education Division to the Local Government and Local Services (LGLS) Division.

** Niamh Jordan was nominated by the Education Division Executive Committee to replace Audrey Warren on her transfer to LGLS Division.

General standing orders for conference

1. These standing orders shall be read in conjunction with the rulebook of the union. If there is conflict on meaning, then the rulebook shall prevail.
2. The Standing Orders Committee shall recommend the timetable for Conference and the order in which motions and amendments submitted shall be taken. When the time allotted to a group of motions has elapsed, the chairperson shall allow the debate in progress to finish. S/he shall then proceed to the next group of motions, thus guillotining any remaining motions in the current section. Such guillotined motions may be taken up by the chairperson later in Conference as time permits. Otherwise, they are automatically referred to the appropriate executive committee.
3. Unless otherwise decided by Conference, only one motion may be before Conference for discussion at any time.
4. Individual motions and amendments should be proposed by a speaker from the appropriate executive committee or from the branch which gave notice of the motion or amendment. Where no delegate of that branch is present, the motion may be proposed by any other member of Conference. In the case of motions in common debate, all motions and amendments shall be deemed to be formally proposed, unless the Conference has been given advance notice that the proposer of a motion or amendment does not wish it to be proposed. There is no requirement for any motion or amendment to be seconded. Once the agenda has been adopted, motions may only be withdrawn with the agreement of conference.
5. Only members of conference as defined by Rules 16(i) and 20(ii) or the equivalent grade committee representatives as defined in Rule 25(ii)(e) of the rulebook may address conference¹. This rule shall not preclude the Standing Orders Committee from making recommendations to conference, which shall be considered immediately by conference.
6. Unless otherwise agreed by conference, no member shall address conference unless s/he is proposing or speaking to a motion or amendment or:
 - (i) is raising a point of order; or
 - (ii) is raising a point of fact; or
 - (iii) is delivering the chairperson's address.
7. All speakers should address conference from the rostrum or microphone, and should announce her/his name and branch or committee. The proposer of a motion shall speak for not more than four (4) minutes, and all other speakers shall have not more than three (3) minutes. Members of the relevant Executive Committee and members of staff will be limited to three (3) minutes when clarifying points or answering questions.

¹ In accordance with rule 20(iv) and with the exception of the casting vote of the conference chairperson, only delegates and members of the National Executive Committee may vote at conference.

8. Where several motions and/or amendments submitted deal with the same topic, Standing Orders Committee may produce a composite or comprehensive motion. If it is not possible to do this, there may be a common debate on the issue covered by the group of motions and/or amendments. The first speaker on behalf of the proposing branch or the first speaker on behalf of the DEC in the case of motions proposed by the DEC shall be deemed to be the proposer of the motion. Each proposer shall have a maximum of four (4) minutes. In the subsequent debate, no-one may speak more than once, but each speaker may refer to any of the motion(s)/amendment(s) then before conference, up to a maximum of three (3) minutes. Proposers of motions taken in common debate shall, subject to the discretion of the conference chairperson, have the right of reply but only in respect of the motion proposed by her/him and the right of reply shall be strictly confined to answering previous speakers on that motion and/or where clarification has been sought and the proposer shall not introduce any new matter into the debate. When the chairperson is satisfied that sufficient time has been allowed for debate, each motion and/or amendment shall be voted on separately in accordance with the relevant Standing Orders Committee report.
9. Amendments to amendments may not be moved, even under the terms of Rules 17(ix) and 21(ix) of the rulebook.
10. Except as otherwise provided, no member of conference shall speak to a motion more than once. For the purpose of this standing order, an amendment to a motion and a motion which has been amended shall each be considered to be a new motion.
11. Subject to the discretion of the conference chairperson, the proposer of a substantive motion, not in common debate, shall have a right to reply immediately before the motion is put to conference, provided that opposition has been expressed or clarification has been requested. However, the right of reply shall be strictly confined to answering previous speakers on that motion and/or where clarification has been sought and the proposer shall not introduce any new matter into the debate. The proposer of an amendment shall not have a right of reply.
12. The following types of motion may be moved at any time:
 - (i) Motion to "refer to the National Executive Committee or Divisional Executive Committee." The chairperson of conference will then ask the proposer of the motion or amendment if s/he agrees. If not, there will be a short debate on the motion to refer, before conference decides the issue by voting. If the motion to refer is defeated, the original debate will continue.
 - (ii) Motion "that the question be now put." This motion may only be put to conference if the chairperson is satisfied that a reasonable amount of time for debate has been allowed. If the chairperson is so satisfied, the motion shall be put without discussion.
 - (iii) Motion "that conference proceeds to next business." After this motion has been moved the proposer of the motion/amendment under discussion has the right to speak briefly against the procedural motion, which shall then be put without further discussion. If it is defeated, debate shall continue on the original motion/amendment.
 - (iv) Motion to "suspend standing orders." Such a motion shall state the purpose and period of time for which standing orders shall be suspended. This procedural motion must be passed by three-quarters of the delegates present and voting to be adopted.
13. If two or more members of conference wish to speak, the chairperson will call on the members whom s/he first observes, except that when a member of the Standing Orders Committee rises, s/he shall be the next to speak.
14. If, in the opinion of the chairperson, grave disorder has arisen, s/he may at her/his discretion, adjourn the meeting for a specified time.
15. Mobile phones may not be used in the conference hall while conference is in session.
16. No literature, other than conference documents - agenda, minutes, and reports - may be circulated in the conference hall without the express advance approval of conference by a simple majority of delegates present and voting.
17. No smoking or vaping is permitted in the conference premises.

Brief outline of proportional representation system as used for Fórsa DEC elections

There are various electoral systems used in different countries and organisations to achieve what are considered in those areas to be democratic outcomes. In Ireland, we have multi-seat constituencies with a system of proportional representation (PR) with transferable votes. This applies if your first (or second etc.) choice is not elected or is elected with a surplus of votes. The 'left over' votes are then transferred to other candidates of your choice. There are some differences between the PR system used for Dáil elections and those used for Seanad elections - where the Panel elections and University Seat elections use further variations of the PR system.

Fórsa decided to adopt an electoral system aligned to the Seanad Panel election system where each vote is treated as being equal to 1,000 votes. While the Fórsa system is designed specifically for NEC and DEC elections, it can be used for elections at branch and other levels. Branches and equivalent grade committees/national professional committees are, of course, free to use any of the other Oireachtas models of PR should they wish.

Ballot paper

In any election it is important that the ballot paper is accurate, with candidates listed in alphabetical order (by surname, then first name).

While the ballot paper may give instructions as to how to vote (e.g. mark, 1, 2, 3 etc. opposite each candidate in order of your choice), the ballot paper may not contain any advice or recommendation as to who to vote for.

All ballot papers should have security features. This applies especially where postal ballots are used or when voters have possession of ballot papers for a period before the vote. Security features could include a 'punched' watermark, different coloured ink/paper, signatures of returning officers and/or other features that make them difficult to reproduce.

The system of distribution of ballot papers must also ensure that only those eligible to vote receive ballot papers, and that nobody can receive more than one ballot paper. The ballot papers should be placed in a sealed box, which is stored safely until the count. Postal ballots received should be placed on arrival in the count center in a sealed container. It is essential that the ballot paper cannot identify the voter.

Returning Officer

A Returning Officer, preferably agreed, should be appointed in every case as decisions may be required in relation to:

- The validity of ballots;
- The order of distribution of surpluses; or
- The elimination of candidates; or
- In relation to requests for re-counts.

While the Returning Officer may be assisted by various scrutineers (vote counters), only the Returning Officer can make decisions. Everyone else is there to assist only.

Valid ballot papers

One of the first jobs of the Returning Officer is to identify any spoiled or invalid ballot papers. The latter includes 'forgeries' or any ballot paper that does not carry the security marks. All photocopies of ballot papers are considered to be invalid.

Spoiled votes are those where the ballot paper either does not contain any votes (but might include uncomplimentary remarks) or does not clearly indicate a preference (e.g. more than one candidate with the same preference or 'X' etc. marked against them). A ballot paper may be deemed valid for the first or second preferences but invalid for subsequent counts (e.g. ballot paper marked 1, 2, 3, 3, 3. This identifies the first two preferences but not subsequent preferences).

First count

All of the valid ballot papers are sorted into parcels according to first preference vote. Each ballot paper is given a value of 1,000.

The quota

The quota is calculated by adding all of the valid first preference votes and dividing that number by the number of places to be filled plus one (ignoring any fractions), and then by adding one to the result. For example, if the number of valid votes was 100,000 (100 votes at value of 1,000 each) and the number of seats to be filled was 4, the quota is 20,001 i.e. $[100,000 \div (4+1) + 1]$.

Once a candidate reaches or exceeds the quota, on the first or subsequent counts, that candidate is elected. It is not possible, using this quota system, for more candidates to be elected than the number of places to be filled.

Distribute or eliminate?

The biggest causes of confusion in the PR system are:

- To decide whether to distribute one or more surpluses or to eliminate the lowest candidate(s); and
- If a surplus is to be distributed, how to calculate this and which votes, physically, are transferred.

In one-seat elections, (e.g. union president, treasurer, chairperson of division), this is easy. If one candidate exceeds the quota (50% plus 1 in this case) he/she is elected. If no candidate reaches the quota, then the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. More than one candidate may be eliminated at the same time; if for example, the total of the bottom two candidates does not exceed the votes of the next highest candidate.

In the single seat election, the lowest placed candidates are eliminated in order and their second preferences (or third preferences etc., if their second preference candidates are already eliminated) are transferred until one candidate either reaches the quota or only two candidates remain in the race. In the latter situation the candidate with the highest vote is deemed to be elected without reaching the quota. The ballot papers to be physically transferred in the case of eliminated candidates are the actual ballot papers showing the next highest preference. Where there is no remaining preference, then the vote is non-transferable.

However, where there is more than one position to be filled, the position becomes more complex.

In multi-seat elections (e.g. union vice president, 'ordinary' DEC members), the likelihood is that a number of candidates will exceed the quota on the first count. The surpluses in these cases may be very small in each case. The issue for the Returning Officer is to decide whether to eliminate one or more candidates or whether to distribute the surplus(es).

The Returning Officer will distribute the surplus(es) where the total value of all surpluses to be distributed exceeds the difference in votes between the lowest two candidates. This may alter the order of these lowest candidates and in particular the order in they might be eliminated or moved up the list. The Returning Officer will ordinarily distribute all surplus(es), (where available) before anybody is eliminated. When each surplus is distributed the lowest candidate will be eliminated.

The order in which surpluses are distributed is as follows:

- The greatest surplus is distributed first;
- If there are two or more surpluses that are equal the first to be distributed is the surplus that arose on the earliest count;
- Where this is also equal the surplus to be first distributed is that of the candidate with the highest first preferences;
- If all of these are still equal, the first surplus to be distributed is that of the candidate who was first ahead of the other candidate at the first count at which they were unequal;
- If there was no such count (e.g. first count surplus only to be distributed) then the Returning Officer shall decide by lot* which surplus to distribute first.

The order in which candidates are eliminated is as follows:

- The candidate with the lowest vote (total original and transferred) is first eliminated;
- Where two or more candidates equally have the lowest vote, the candidate who is first eliminated is that who received the lowest first preference votes;
- Where these are equal, the first candidate to be eliminated is that which was lowest at the first count at which they were unequal;
- Where these are equal (or cannot arise, as in the first count) the Returning Officer can exercise judgement based on a scrutiny of the preferences cast, however if the judgement of the Returning Officer is that they are still equal he/she shall decide by lot* which of them is to be eliminated first.

Where the votes of the lowest two or more candidates together with the total surpluses to be distributed does not exceed the votes of the next highest candidate, these may all be eliminated together.

*For the avoidance of any doubt "by lot" means a first preference paper of each equal candidate is placed in a hat and one is drawn out. The remaining paper (NOT the paper that has been drawn out) is the candidate to remain in the election.

Physical transfer of ballot papers

Where a surplus is to be distributed, the number of second preference (or next highest preference votes if the second preference is already elected or eliminated and so on) is calculated and the ballot papers are placed in bundles by reference to the second (or next highest preference vote as the case may be). Non-transferable votes (if such exists) are placed in a separate bundle. A ballot paper is non-transferable if it does not indicate a preference for a remaining candidate (e.g. there may not be any second or later preference indicated or any such candidate(s) may be already elected or eliminated).

The value of each bundle of votes is calculated by assigning a value to each vote by reference to the proportion of the surplus votes (of the elected candidate whose surplus is being distributed). These bundles (of ballot papers) with the 'adjusted' value written on the top are then physically transferred to the bundle of the appropriate candidate's first and any other transferred votes.

Where a candidate is eliminated their second preference votes (or remaining preferences as appropriate) are transferred to the remaining candidate who is named next highest on their list of preferences. Each of these transferred votes (if original votes or votes already valued at 1,000 from other eliminated candidates) is valued at 1,000 each, exactly the value as if they were first preference votes. This does not apply where the eliminated candidates' votes contain original and transferred "surplus" votes.

The value of each of the transferred “surplus” votes in this case is based on the value allocated at the time of the transfer. The other original votes and preference votes (but not those not containing “surplus” votes- see last paragraph) transferred from other eliminated candidates are valued at 1,000 each.

Elected without reaching the quota

Where at the end of any count the number of remaining candidates equals the number of vacancies remaining to be filled, they are deemed to be elected even if they have not reached the quota.

Where there is only one vacancy remaining and the highest placed candidate cannot be overtaken by any other remaining candidate (even if the next highest placed candidate were to receive the total value of any undistributed surpluses and the votes of all candidates to be eliminated) then that candidate is deemed to be elected.

Result sheet

The Returning Officer should complete the result sheet as the election proceeds showing:

- (1) The total number of votes cast;
- (2) The number of spoiled votes;
- (3) The total valid poll;
- (4) The number of seats to be filled;
- (5) The quota;
- (6) The list of candidates and their votes, showing transferred votes etc., at each count.

This result sheet should be made available to all candidates and everyone else with an interest in the outcome of the election e.g. a copy could be posted in the count center, conference hall, etc. The Returning Officer will make the result sheet available to the candidates, and respond to any queries they may have, prior to making it available to others with an interest in the election.

Re-count

The conference election procedures do not specifically provide for re-counts.

However, the Returning Officer may at any time during the count require a re-count or re-check of some or all of the ballot papers if he/she has any reason to be concerned that an error may have been made.

There is no specific provision for candidates to seek a re-count either in part or in total. However, a Returning Officer would be required to have regard to any points made by candidates as to why a full or partial re-count should take place when deciding whether to order such a re-count, e.g. if a clear error was spotted, where in the judgement of the Returning Officer the votes are close enough for any possible error to have a material effect on any outcome.

It would generally be useful to agree the timescale within which candidates could seek a re-count. This is required for very practical reasons, including that the conduct or outcome of later elections may be dependent on the outcome of the election in dispute, e.g. at union conference the vice president elections are not held until the presidential and treasurer election results are known. The security of the ballot papers is also an important factor if there were delays in holding a re-count. As such, any requests for re-counts should preferably be made before the declaration of the results.

Fórsa conference election procedures

Rule 19 covers the Divisional Executive and its officers.

The election of the Chairperson or Cathaoirleach is straightforward. A standard PR STV election is conducted, and the winner is elected.

Following that election, any candidates from the winner's constituency for the positions of Vice Chairperson or Leas-Cathaoirleach are excluded from the election and any preferences voted for any such candidate move to the next preference.

March 2023

Standing Orders Report No.2

This report is a consolidated report including Standing Orders Committee Report No. 1.

1. Conference timetable

The foregoing timetable for conference is recommended.

2. General standing orders

The foregoing General Standing Orders are recommended.

Where branches or the DEC have queries or wish to seek changes to General Standing Orders or to SOC Reports they are asked to raise these in writing (soc@forsa.ie) with the SOC as soon as possible and in any event not later than one week prior to conference.

3. Motions received

Sixty Four (64) motions were received by the deadline and fifty seven (57) are included on the agenda for debate.

4. Motions considered as out of order

Three motions are considered to be out of order, as such, at this stage. The SOC has adjusted the union terminology in some to make them in order. A number of motions were considered by the SOC to be more appropriate to the national conference and this is indicated on the agenda.

5. Advisory motions

In accordance with the rule, and until otherwise determined by national conference, each divisional conference shall determine policy on pay, conditions and other matters affecting only the members in the division. However, divisional conferences may also consider other matters provided that they are not matters which are of sole concern to the members of another division or which conflict with policy as previously determined by the union conference.

Decisions of divisional conference in relation to such matters have the status of recommendations to the National Executive who shall decide on any action to be taken.

Where a motion covers a matter that has, or could have, both divisional and central (i.e more than one division) dimensions, it is recommended that unless the substance or text of that motion clearly requires otherwise, it should be presumed that it is intended by the proposers as a matter for action at divisional and not at central level within the union. As such, motions in this category would not be deemed to fall into the category of advice to the NEC. However, such motions cannot be portrayed as deciding anything other than divisional policy on the issues covered.

6. Amendments received

No amendments were received and no amendments were received late.

7. Composite motions/amendments

There are no composite motions included on the agenda.

8. Common debates

It is recommended that the following motions be taken in common debate: Motions 45 and 46.

9. Guillotined motions

These will be taken during conference at the end of other sections if time permits, with the balance, if any, of guillotined motions being taken at the end of conference.

It is recommended that guillotined motions be taken in the order they were guillotined, with all guillotined motions in a section being completed before moving to the next set of guillotined motions.

10. Emergency motions

Branches are asked to advise the SOC of any emergency motions as soon as possible so that these might be included in a Standing Orders Committee report to conference.

11. Withdrawal of motions and nominations

Branches are asked to advise the SOC of any motions/nominations that they wish to withdraw so that these can be included in a Standing Orders Committee report to conference. Forms are appended to withdraw motions and nominations at the rear of this booklet.

Jude Carry has notified SOC of their withdrawal of their nomination for Standing Orders Committee.

12. Officer elections and votes

The outcome of the elections held during the course of Conference will be declared to Conference by Returning Officer Teresa Kearns.

13. Standing Orders Committee

The Standing Orders Committee for the Education Division are Eileen Coman and Niamh Jordan. Also in attendance from the National Standing Orders Committee will be Rose Marie Conroy (Chair), Gerry Foley (Vice-Chair), Teresa Kearns (Returning Officer) and Helen Lundy (Secretary).

14. Legend on acronyms

As above, in order to preserve the integrity of what was submitted, acronyms and abbreviations are not amended and have been left as submitted. To assist delegates and branches, a legend of acronyms that may be unfamiliar to them, is submitted below.

APO	Assistant Principal Officer
BDS	Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DE/S	Department of Education/& Skills
DEC	Divisional Executive Committee
DEIS	Delivering, Equality & Opportunity in Schools
DFHERIS	Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
ETB	Education & Training Board
HEA	Higher Education Authority
IOT	Institute of Technology
NCSE	National Council for Special Ed
NDA	National Disability Authority
NSSO	National Shared Service Office
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PMSS	Professional, Management & Support Staff
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SCP	Schools Completion Programme
SEN	Special Education Needs
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
SOC	Standing Orders Committee
THEA	Technical, Higher, Education, Association
TU	Technological University

Rose Marie Conroy
Chairperson
Standing Orders Committee

March 2023

Motions

Pay and related

Motion 1 - Education Divisional Executive Committee

This Conference recognises and applauds the work done by the School Secretaries branch committee in negotiating and delivering for its members the first centralised, standard contract of employment for grant-paid secretaries since 1979.

While Conference recognises the significant achievement in doing so it is aware that further work is needed to bring school secretaries into line with public servants in the areas of pensions, sick leave and public service status.

To this end, Conference directs the Education Divisional Executive to provide all practicable assistance needed to the committee of the School Secretary branch to achieve these goals and bring currently grant-paid school secretaries into line with their colleagues working in Education Training Boards (ETBs) and those who continue to work to pre-1979 school secretary contracts who hold this public service status.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 2 - School Secretaries

Conference instructs the incoming Education DEC to ensure that all school secretaries be immediately recognised as public servants by the Government, and rewarded accordingly for the diverse workload undertaken daily, dealing with the challenges and complexities of the job. This recognition should also include upgrading to Grade IV posts, in line with Circular Letter 0081/2020.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 3 - School Secretaries

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC and school secretaries to continue to fight for equality and parity in line with our ETB colleagues. Whilst we have come a long way, we still have a long way to go and must keep the pressure on the DES until we achieve our goal of parity in full.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Education policy

Motion 4 – Education Divisional Executive Committee

Conference welcomes and endorses the National Access Plan, a strategic action plan for equity of access, that was recently published by the Higher Education Authority in conjunction with the Department of Education.

Conference commends the valuable work of our SNAs with children and young adults in schools and the vitally important role they play in assisting the students they work with to complete their education.

Conference is disappointed at the lack of support that exists for these students at the next stage of their life journey be that third level, apprenticeship, other vocational training, or the world of work.

At post-primary level, it is estimated that 17.9% of 13-year-olds have some form of Special Educational Need (SEN). Census 2016 found that, in total, 643,131 people had a disability, meaning that 13.5%, or one in seven, of the population has a disability of some kind.

The NDA (2018) estimates that by 2028, the number of people with a disability will increase by 20%. One-third of this increase is due to the increased size of the population and two-thirds to the ageing of the population. Based on these projected figures, it is estimated that by 2026, 14.8% of the overall population will have a disability. In AHEAD's (2021) analysis of 2019/2020 data, there has been consistent year-on-year growth in the numbers of students with disabilities registering with support services in higher education – an increase of over 220% in the last 11 years.

Therefore, this Conference calls on the Education DEC to engage with Government, the Minister for Education and the Minister for Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to provide immediate support to these students to ensure that they progress and reach their full potential and calls for the recommendations contained in the National Access Plan to be implemented immediately.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 5 – South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

This Conference proposes that the Education DEC promote equality for all pupils by seeking access to career guidance and school completion programs for pupils in special schools therefore promoting access pathways to third level education. Please support this motion.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 6 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to advocate for additional resources both financial and psychological for children in care particularly when they reach the age in which they will be accessing and participating in higher education and who wish to pursue their education to PhD level.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 7 – South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

This Conference calls on the Education DEC to campaign for special schools be included in all services afforded to DEIS schools. This is a service long overdue in special education.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 8 – School Completion Branch

This Conference recognises the exponential rise in young people presenting with mental health challenges and the significant deficits that exist in meeting their needs. This Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek that the Department of Education invest in SCP capacity to facilitate mental health supports and to be the home of the recently announced emotional therapists in schools, whether they are DEIS or non-DEIS schools.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 9 – School Completion Branch

This Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek that the Department of Education once and for all resolve the ongoing governance and employment deficits in the School Completion Programme which this union has been highlighting since 2006. The failure to address these issues is limiting the ability of SCP to meet the needs of children and young people, retain experienced and qualified staff, and facilitate the expansion of SCP to all DEIS schools.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 10 – School Completion Branch

This Conference calls attention to a significant rise in the presentation of school refusing behaviours among students in the Junior Cycle as reported by staff working on the ground in schools. Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek that the Department of Education ensure adequate funding is put in place in the School Completion Programme to address the social, emotional and educational needs of these young people.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 11 – Munster SNAs

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to engage with the Department of Education to seek to place Sustainable Development Goals formally on the schools' curriculum. These Goals are vitally important, and schools are well-placed to promote them. Many schools are already engaged in projects, and where they are engaging the learning and awareness is inspirational, with everyone benefitting from the knowledge. The students in particular are enthusiastically embracing the learning and many very interesting initiatives are beginning to emerge.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 12 – NETB

That this Conference calls the Education DEC to ensure ETBs cease the practice of outsourcing administrative work to private companies and entities and ensure the use of direct employment is in place.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 13 – South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

This Conference urges the Education DEC to negotiate with the Department of Education to ensure that every pupil leaving a special school and intending to avail of a third level placement will have access to a PA (personal assistant).

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 14 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to secure continued realistic funding from the HEA and DFHERIS to ensure that the Technological University (TU) transition phases are appropriately funded from integration, organisation and design, right through to the implementation phases. Success of the TU's are dependent on adequate funding and supports during this period.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 15 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to engage with the Higher Education Authority and the DFHERIS to ensure that appropriate and acceptable funding is secured for the ongoing and future development of higher education in line with the Department's strategic plans.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 16 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek a meeting with the DFHERIS to discuss the findings of the OECD Report on Education in the Technological University/loT sector and the deficit of PMSS to academic posts. In the traditional universities, the ratio is 1 to 1 while in TUs it is 0.59 to 1. This report is the result of a universal wise research into the academic roles, but we are concerned with the effects the implementation of this report will have on our administrative members.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 17 – NETB

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to ensure continued progression of Organisational Design Phase II, to include a review of all grades and functions of an ETB.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 18 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to support requested amendments to the Higher Education Act 2022. The Act contains the incorrect title for professional, management, and support staff. Also, a request for equal representation with our academic colleagues on the Governing Body of Technological Universities was not given due consideration when this legislation was put to the houses of the Oireachtas. Therefore, the diverse cohort of admin, library, technical, and support staff have only one representative on the governing body of each TU as opposed to three and possibly four academic representatives. These issues are not acceptable and must be amended.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 19 - Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek immediately the establishment of a committee between the PMSS unions, the DFHERIS, and THEA to draft our circulars outstanding. This is a long outstanding issue which we and our official have raised with the Department and THEA on numerous occasions over the years. It was agreed at the National TU Negotiation Forum to address this issue but there has not been any progress to date and this needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

General terms and conditions

Motion 20 - Education Divisional Executive Committee

In 2018, the NCSE published their review of the Statutory Special Needs Assistant Scheme. This review recommended changes to the way in which Special Education was provided. Since 2018, the Government has committed to implementation of elements of the review such as the Frontloading allocation mechanism and the Schools Inclusion Model but has failed to deliver such changes. This has resulted in continued uncertainty and confusion for all concerned with the provision of education to students with additional needs. Parents and staff are unsure how the allocation of scarce resources should be managed within our Schools and SNAs are unsure of their role.

Therefore, Conference calls on the Divisional Executive to seek that Government bring forward clear policies on the future model for Special Education that:

1. Abolishes the Statutory Special Needs Assistant Scheme and replaces it with a service-based model with SNA resources allocated to each and every school;
2. Provides access to inclusive education for all students with additional needs and provides SNA and SET support for students on a permanent basis;
3. Establishes an ongoing allocation of SNAs for each school with a redeployment scheme enabling staff to move to new schools in the local area as an alternative to redundancy;
4. Provides adequate access to health and social care services for students with additional needs through a schools based service;
5. Ensures that SNAs have access to continual professional development with a revised entry qualification to ensure new staff are equipped to meet the needs of students.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 21 - Education Divisional Executive Committee

That this Conference requests the Education DEC ensure that SNA concerns relating to completion of probationary periods is addressed during the contract review. It is the experience of SNAs who move from one school to another either as a choice or as a consequence of being made redundant are required to complete probationary period all over again.

This practice is outdated and should not be allowed to continue, it is more than reasonable for SNAs to request that once they have completed a probationary period that is accepted in one school there should be no need to complete another probationary period in another school.

The requirement for additional probationary periods is meaningless and serves to undermine the experience and years' service provided by the SNA.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 22 - Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek the urgent extension of the 2019 scheme for "Leave of Absence following assault for lecturers employed in TU's and IoTs" to be applied to all PMSS and not just lecturers.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 23 - South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek that all Occupational Health reports issued to employers in relation to all staff referrals be copied to said employees at the same time as issued to employers. This will ensure honesty, transparency and GDPR compliance.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 24 - School Secretaries

When Norma Foley mentioned on 3rd November that "she welcomed the decision to align bereavement leave for staff in the education sector with those in areas of the public sector. This agreement will see existing leave for staff extended to 20 days in relation to the death of a spouse/partner or child." This did not include school secretaries. This Conference calls on the Education DEC to challenge this. Our grief is as important as the colleagues we work alongside.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 25 - Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to engage with the Department of Education and all education providers to ensure that they agree to put in place a policy on menopause awareness and paid leave of absence days.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 26 - NETB

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to ensure that adequate resources are put in place to safeguard the family friendly and work-life balance initiatives for all administrative staff in the ETB sector.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 27 - NETB

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to develop and implement a policy of CPD for administrative staff in the Education and Training Board sector.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 28 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to pursue with the Department of Education the recognisable anomalies in annual leave entitlements that exist amongst administrative and library staff within the public service. Our members in education seem to have less favourable terms than our colleagues in other public services.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 29 – School Completion Branch

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek the Department of Education reinstate regional and national in-service to School Completion Programmes and direct that funding is ringfenced for the provision of external supervision for SCP staff members to ensure their continued wellbeing in the workplace.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 30 – NETB

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek that compulsory closure days are added to annual leave entitlement of new entrant administrative staff in ETBs.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 31 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to engage with each education provider to ensure that they implement a policy on surrogacy. To engage in a campaign to highlight an awareness of the multitude of routes people take to become parents including surrogacy. Currently people accessing surrogacy as a route to parenthood have no entitlement to paid leave therefore, it is necessary to seek equity of treatment for those becoming parents in line with adoptive leave which are equivalent to the provisions within the maternity/adoptive leave for those becoming parents through surrogacy.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 32 – School Secretaries

Conference instructs the incoming Education DEC to ensure that all Fórsa branch committee members, be granted paid leave without exception, to attend union business that fall within term time, such as training and conference without affecting annual leave.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Pensions and related

Motion 33 – South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to provide structured information days in relation to retirement for all school staff represented by them as a matter of urgency. Please support this motion.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 34 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to emphasize with the Department of Education and DFHERIS the adverse effects the shortfall in resources within the offices of the NSSO and shared services payroll are having on public service pensioners. This shortfall has resulted in payment of pension increases being delayed by at least a year. This situation is unacceptable and cannot be allowed to happen again.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 35 – NETB

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to secure back-pay sanctioned under recent pay agreements is applied to retired administrative staff members in the ETB sector.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Job evaluation

Motion 36 – NETB

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to ensure that the job evaluation scheme currently in place for Technical Universities is rolled out to Education and Training Boards.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 37 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek an agreement with the Department of Education to an extension of our job evaluation scheme to inclusion the Grade 7 and the APO management level. Grade 7 is an administrative grade and our members at this grade feel aggrieved because this grade was not included in the original agreement. Our APO members have not had a grade review for over 20 years and their roles have changed considerably over the years.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

72 hours

Motion 38 – Education Divisional Executive Committee

This Conference welcomes the recent commencement of discussions on the SNA 72 hours obligation and national SNA contract. The 72 hours are a bank of unpaid hours which may be used by employers to undertake duties that could not be undertaken during normal working time. Originally the 12 days, they changed to 72 hours in 2011. The hours, or more precisely the constant abuse of them have become a stone in the shoe for SNAs since. They are regularly abused by school principals in manners that are often demeaning and totally inappropriate. SNAs often suffer the hours being scheduled incorrectly or being used to do duties that are not appropriate to the role of an SNA, or which displace the duties of other grades within the school family.

The way they are used offers little or no benefit to the SNA, or more importantly the Children that they care for, in fact they often serve as a debarment to SNAs undertaking training, as they would need to do that on top of the 72 hour obligation. This abuse needs to stop.

We believe that the abuse of SNAs in this manner stems from the lack of a professional qualification and the continued classification of the provision of the SNA service as a scheme. This classification and the current qualification are stuck in time and are nowhere near reflective of the modern SNA role or responsibilities. Nor does it consider the significant change that has taken place with regards the provision of Special Education overall or current recruitment practices which sees employers consistently seeking qualifications beyond those nationally agreed.

The current qualification is wholly inadequate and only serves to perpetuate the inaccurate view that SNAs are unskilled workers, reinforcing the misconceptions of employers around what duties might be appropriate. This outdated qualification needs to be changed to appropriately reflect the level of responsibility SNAs hold and the complexity of the tasks and duties they carry out daily.

The SNA contract is also no longer fit for purpose. It contains too many grey areas or provisions that are open to abuse, such as “at the discretion of the principal”. Like with the 72-hours this is often used to compel SNAs to undertake inappropriate duties and displace the work of education colleagues.

This Conference calls on Fórsa’s Education Division to support fully our officials throughout these discussions to eliminate such abuses and deliver a better working environment for SNAs, better opportunity for development and a fairer contract which accurately reflects the current day roles and responsibilities of SNAs.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 39 – North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs

This Conference calls on the Education DEC to continue to work to abolish the bank of time known as the 72 hours. This time is abused particularly under the heading of the discretion of the principal. Its use is random and unnecessary and used to abuse and disrespect SNAs.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 40 – Connacht/Ulster SNAs

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to find a resolution to the most serious day-to-day abuse of respect for SNAs, that of Inappropriate Work, before the end of the current school year in May/June of 2023.

SNAs have been carrying out secretarial, caretaking, cleaning, and teaching duties for far too long, without an end in sight. We have also been carrying out medical and nursing procedures, doing healthcare work, physio, and OT, none of which we are properly trained or covered to do, and all of which is way above our payscale. We need to remind ourselves that we are employed by the Department of Education, and not the HSE. Remember what almost happened during the first Covid Lockdown (courtesy of Minister McHugh), and why.

Inappropriate work needs to be prioritised by Fórsa, which should consider the long-held Trade Union Movement’s opposition to Displacement, that of taking work away from others whose job that is. Inappropriate Work also covers the contentious issues of the 72 Hours and June Work, most of which are taken up with work which is clearly ‘inappropriate to the grade of SNAs’.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

June working

Motion 41 – North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs

That this Conference asks the Education DEC to work to end the practice of June work as it is another way for principals to abuse SNAs by using the time to force inappropriate work on SNAs, doing jobs that have nothing to do with the role of an SNA. Currently June work should only be used for appropriate work including exams in post primary schools.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

SNA permanency, redeployment and related

Motion 42 – Education Divisional Executive Committee

Conference asserts that there is no longer any genuine reason to retain the current model of the SNA redundancy scheme and subsequent model of allocations.

On a yearly basis SNAs fear and await the decisions of the NCSE as to whether members will have a job come September for the following school year. During the pandemic there was some kind of relief for SNAs in this regard as the positions were frozen.

As we move out of the restrictions and directions that were needed during the pandemic to ensure returning to school was safe for students and staff, we will surely see a return to the yearly dread that is associated with SNA allocations and the fear this brings to many SNAs that their jobs may not be there come September.

Conference contends that this system is out of date and not fit for purpose, this is all more apparent as the data shows that SNA allocations increase year in year out. This means that if there a yearly increase in allocations there should be no requirement for any SNA to made redundant.

It is more than reasonable for SNAs to ask to be treated fairly and given the opportunity of employment in another school if the SNA allocation in their existing employment is reduced. In this regard it is more than possible to have in place a transfer scheme in which an SNA who has been informed that their post no longer exists in a school, they should be allowed to transfer to another school within an agreeable geographical distance.

This scheme should not have any conditions that rely on the SNA needing to be re-interviewed nor should they need to have their employment status altered that shows their service record has been broken because they move from one school to another.

The SNA Redundancy Scheme should be maintained for SNAs who may not wish to transfer from one school to another, this would be cognisant that there is a provision of posts within a certain geographical area that would take into account where the reduction in allocation takes place.

SNAs are seeking that they be treated fairly and in line with counterparts in teaching and other employers in education such as the Education Training Boards whose employees have access to such schemes. The Department's position is untenable, and we cannot allow this current injustice to continue. Conference calls on the Divisional Executive to engage with the Department of Education to address these concerns.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 43 – North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs

This Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek permanency and job security in line with all other public servants for SNAs. Because of the current system an SNA could be working in the same post for many years, but their position is dependent on allocations by the NCSE. Real permanency is vital for SNAs to get access to mortgages and loans etc.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 44 – Connacht/Ulster SNAs

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to enter negotiations with the Department of Education to end the unjust treatment of substitute SNAs. To this effect it is proposed that the rights of substitute SNAs are brought into line with those of their permanent colleagues they are replacing. This should be done without taking away from the rights of the permanent post-holder. To achieve this end, it is proposed that substitute SNAs be afforded the same rights as substitute teachers, who receive the same conditions of employment as their permanent colleagues after 40 days.

They are then classified as 'non-casual' substitutes and they become entitled to paid sick leave, family illness leave, maternity leave and other benefits. Substitute SNAs must 'sign on' for every school break and holiday and are regularly left with long delays before payment. They should not have to 'sign on' and should be paid for holidays, like all other SNAs. We propose that this discussion takes place during Fórsa's upcoming meeting with the Department and a resolution be sought before the end of the current school year in May 2023.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 45 – Education Divisional Executive Committee

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek the introduction of a centralised Garda vetting database during the SNA contract review. This would allow flexibility for substitute SNAs to work across different schools and for staff to participate in summer provision across different schools.

The current system is complex and is a barrier to flexible movement of SNAs from one school to another which in itself provides difficulties not just for SNAs but for employers who need to employ an SNA at short notice whether that be on a full-time basis or a part-time basis.

A centralised system in this regard would be beneficial and would free up and lessen unnecessary and lost administrative time, it can often take weeks and longer for SNAs and schools to agree a start date for employment due to the antiquated system that being used and conference calls on Fórsa to further members concerns in this regard.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 46 – North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek the establishment of a centralised database that will provide a Garda vetting hub where potential new employers can access in order to determine potential new employee's Garda vetting status. This would cease the practice of workers in the education sector having to seek Garda clearance when moving from one employer to another.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

SNA assault leave

Motion 47 – North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs

Per circular 62/2017, "The maximum leave available to SNAs who are assaulted in their line of work is capped at three months (92 days) and then, in exceptional cases another three months (91 days) at full pay. This is subject to a limit of 183 days in a rolling four year period. Any subsequent leave is dealt under the Sick Leave scheme".

However, if a SNA is still unable to work due to significant physical injuries which occurred in their place of work due to no fault of their own, we believe that the only person qualified to assess if the SNA must return to work is a doctor or certified medical practitioner. As long as the SNA remains incapacitated due to assault, they should remain on assault leave once a doctor will certify that this is the reason the SNA is absent from work.

This Conference calls on the Education DEC to prioritise a change in circular so that SNAs will not be expected to lose their sick leave entitlements due to serious assaults which have taken place in their place of work.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 48 – Munster SNAs

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek provision for special leave for Special Needs Assistants who are accidentally injured at work. Accidental injury is not counted as Assault Leave. Currently, SNAs who need to stay out of work as a result of a workplace accident are required to produce a medical certificate and it comes out of their very limited sick leave allocation (92 days in four years). SNAs regularly report to us, that any medical expenses incurred are not covered by the school. This can often result in a significant loss. We call on Fórsa to put this very important concern on the agenda in future discussions with the Department of Education.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 49 – Munster SNAs

That this Conference call on the Education DEC to look into the possibility of no-fault compensation in the case of injuries acquired following assault in the course of our duties.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Equality and related

Motion 50 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to engage with all education providers to ensure that they put in place a policy on sexual harassment.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 51 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to engage with the DFHERIS and all education providers to ensure that they implement a policy on domestic violence leave.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 52 – NETB

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to ensure the protection of the roles of pregnant people in ETB administrative roles by securing agreement to sanction replacement staff for the duration of their maternity leave and to ensure those roles are not diminished or outsourced while people are on maternity leave.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Public and social policy

Motion 53 – Education Divisional Executive Committee

This Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek that Government to introduce free public transport for further education and higher education students. A decision to grant full free public transport for higher education and further education students would have multiple benefits.

These include the following:

- It would make a meaningful contribution to a cost-of-living reduction for these students. Numerous studies point to the economic challenges faced by students in further and higher education forcing many of them to work part-time during their studies. There is an abundance of evidence internationally that part time work, though necessary if they are to continue in college, usually has a negative impact on, educational outcomes for students;
- It would incentivise students who may be contemplating dropping out of college to remain there, whether as undergraduates or postgraduates;
- It would allow greater number of students to remain living at home during their studies. These would also reduce cost for the students, reduce the pressure on student accommodation and free up accommodation currently rented by students to other renters;
- It would reduce the use of cars, especially single occupancy cars, in the journey to the campus and reduce car parking pressure on campuses;
- It would enable students who choose or must live away from home to live in locations some distance from the campus thereby further easing the accommodation pressure on university towns;
- It would have a positive environmental impact and help socialise the younger generation away from private transport towards public transport.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 54 – Higher Education

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek a review of the SUSI student grant scheme to facilitate applications for mature students who due to the cost-of-living crisis and the lack of rental accommodation are living independently with parents, they are then means tested on their parent’s salary even though they have no choice but to live in their parents’ home.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 55 – Munster SNAs

That this Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek to hold schools that ask or demand “voluntary contributions” to publish the amount of money raised and account for how it is spent. The current cost of living crisis is impacting everyone. The cost of sending children to school is enormous. These co-called “voluntary contributions” are an added stress to families. Especially when t’s more than one child in the family attending the school, where the cost is usually per student. There is a lot of pressure on families to pay and no pressure or expectation at all on schools to account for monies raised and how it is spent. While we accept that schools can often be cash poor, this burden should not be passed on to families. The main point of this motion is to hold schools to account for the monies raised and how it is spent. Because it is deemed to be “voluntary” there is a notion that it is optional. Any parent knows that it is far from voluntary.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Health and safety

Motion 56 – Education Divisional Executive Committee

This Conference notes with some concern the inadequate health and safety provisions that exist within schools and the education sector overall, which were highlighted throughout the recent pandemic.

The lack of central guidance and clear policies on Health and Safety within the education sector has led to a situation where there are wholly inadequate responses to Health and Safety and significant variances in the standards adopted between schools.

Whilst some schools were hugely proactive in putting Health and Safety measures in place, undertaking risk assessments, supplying appropriate PPE and ensuring best practice was followed, there were also incidents where BOM's and/or principals penny pinched and refused to provide PPE or equipment to assist resolve ventilation issues, despite the fact that funding was made available by the Department.

The education sector is lagging behind many others when it comes to health and safety. Workers in the sector can often find themselves working in premises that are not up to standard, often cold and damp with inadequate facilities and ventilation, they also find themselves in roles that have not been risk assessed with little or no cognisance given to the risks that they may encounter whilst undertaking their daily duties, PPE is either not provided at all, or what is provided is wholly inadequate for the purpose it is supposed to serve.

We need to change the mindset; we need to get education employers to give health and safety the attention and commitment it deserves and compel them to ensure they provide all of us and our colleagues and students with a safe and healthy working environment.

This Conference calls on the Education DEC to seek that Government introduce a Health and Safety Charter across the education sector. The charter should outline the steps all employers should take to put in place strong safety mechanisms, ensuring that risks within our workplaces, roles, and responsibilities are mitigated to the greatest extent possible, providing an appropriate level of health and safety for workers and students alike.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

Motion 57 – South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

The Government has enacted the Children First act of 2015 primarily centered on child protection/reporting procedures. From that Act various circulars including 0081/2017, 0072/2020 and Tusla's Children First guidance policy 2017 are based (this list is not exhaustive).

This Conference calls on the Education DEC to request the Department of Education issue instructional memo or circular to all school managements directing that school child protection policy and intimate care policy adapts the practice of "2 adults to 1 student" in all intimate care settings affording the highest attainable measure of protection for both student and staff as a risk minimising control measure.

Withdrawn Amended Carried Not Carried Remitted

APPENDIX 1

Motions deemed to be Out of Order

Motion 58 – School Secretaries

That Leo Varadkar, in his current position of Taoiseach, be held accountable and stands over his reply, as Tánaiste to questions from Deputy Séan Canney in the Dáil, on the 8th October 2020 wherein he stated that it is the Government's objective to regularise school secretaries employment, terms and conditions and pension rights.

Motion 59 – School Secretaries

All time spent working as a school secretary should be counted for increment payments. This has not been the case and secretaries are prevented from moving within their field in the education sector as moving from a grant paid position to Department appointed position can result in an increment drop in pay. Again School secretaries are left out of the education sector re pay.

Motion 60 – Higher Education

The Higher Education branch calls on Conference to take into consideration the goals and aims of Forsa's and the Division's Strategic Plan. One of its priorities is to recruit new members with a goal to increasing overall membership to 100,000. For the Higher Education branch to do this effectively, we need a branch organiser because the members of the branch executive have very busy full-time day jobs and are giving what spare time they have to the efficient running of the branch.

APPENDIX 2

Motions advisory to the National Executive Committee

Motion 61 – School Secretaries

Conference asks you our members and Fórsa to lobby our Government to instate a Minister For Women in Ireland. From the inception of our free state 100 years ago, women have not been treated equally and have been overlooked. We are the backbone and foundation of our state and family's overall wellbeing. Ensuring access to dedicated women's health care from puberty to menopause and beyond will lead to an improved health for women, children and families. Health of women will no doubt enrich the families, communities and economy of Ireland.

Motion 62 – Higher Education

Conference asks Fórsa to seek a review of the foreign travel circular to reflect the increased costs in accommodation and travel for International Officers and staff.

Motion 63 – Connacht/Ulster SNAs

Fórsa is affiliated to the BDS Campaign but should do more to inform members on this issue, send out information listing products and companies that should be boycotted and should also ensure that all union investments including pension funds do not hold any stock in Israeli companies or equities.

Motion 64 – Connacht/Ulster SNAs

We seek that Fórsa trade union engage on an information campaign to raise awareness about the BDS campaign. This should include all resources at the union's disposal and should seek to educate members of the importance of this movement. Fórsa should also ensure that none of members money is used to support the Israelis continuing occupation. Including pensions funds, investments. Fórsa should seek out every opportunity to highlight the plight of the people of Palestine.

APPENDIX 3

Nominations received by the deadline set out in rule 21(v)

Cathaoirleach/Chairperson

Ursula Cox
Higher Education

Noreen Kelly Sheehan
Education Division No. 1

Noreen O'Mahony
Munster SNA Branch

Nominating Branch

Higher Education

Education Division No. 1

Connaught/Ulster SNA Branch
Munster SNAs
North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs
School Completion Programme
South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

Leas Cathaoirleach/Vice-Chairperson

Ursula Cox
Higher Education

Grainne Haughney
Education Division No. 1

Eilise McGarrell
Connaught/Ulster SNA Branch

Nominating Branch

Higher Education

Education Division No. 1

Connaught/Ulster SNA Branch
Munster SNAs
North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs
School Completion Programme
South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

Divisional Executive Member

Luisa Carty
School Secretaries

Ursula Cox
Higher Education

Breda Halley
Education Division No. 1

Claudia Jennings
Connacht/Ulster SNAs

James Kavanagh
School Completion Programme

Nominating Branch

School Secretaries.

Higher Education

Education Division No. 1

Connacht/Ulster SNAs
Munster SNAs

School Completion Programme

Divisional Executive Member (continued)

Marcel McCafferty
NETB

Carol McSherry
North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs

Annette Murphy
South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

Catherine Quirke
Munster SNAs

3rd Seat – Divisional Representative on NEC

Ursula Cox
Higher Education

Eilise McGarrell
Connacht/Ulster SNAs

Standing Orders Committee

Jude Carry (withdrawn)
South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

Eileen Coman
NETB

Niamh Jordan
Connacht/Ulster SNAs

Nominating Branch

NETB

North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs

South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs

Munster SNAs

Nominating Branch

Higher Education
Munster SNAs
North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs
School Completion Programme
South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs
School Secretaries

Connacht/Ulster SNAs

Nominating Branch

South Dublin/South Leinster SNAs
School Secretaries.

Connacht/Ulster SNAs
Munster SNAs
NETB

Connacht/Ulster SNAs
Munster SNAs
North Dublin/North Leinster SNAs

APPENDIX 4

Motion, amendment and nomination withdrawal forms

Fórsa education conference 2023

Motion, amendment and nomination withdrawal form

.....Branch wishes to withdraw:
[Please use BLOCK capitals]

Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>

Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Name of principal delegate	
Signature of principal delegate	
Date	Time
SOC signature	Date Time



Fórsa education conference 2023

Motion, amendment and nomination withdrawal form

.....Branch wishes to withdraw:
[Please use BLOCK capitals]

Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
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Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>
Motion number	<input type="text"/>	Amendment to motion	<input type="text"/>

Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
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Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Election	Nomination
Name of principal delegate	
Signature of principal delegate	
Date	Time
SOC signature	Date Time



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