



## DÁIL ÉIREANN

### MAINIÚ DO BHUNSCOILEANNA.

Rith Dáil Éireann an Rún seo istigh ag an gCruinniú de Dháil Éireann a bhí ann an 26ú lá seo de Mheitheamh, 2024.

### PRIMARY SCHOOL FUNDING.

The within Resolution was passed by Dáil Éireann at its Meeting on this 26th day of June, 2024.

Cathaoirleach Dháil Éireann

Le cur go dtí:

For transmission to: *An Taoiseach*

**Go ndéanann Dáil Éireann:**

**a thabhairt dá haire:**

- gur 22.8 dalta in aghaidh an mhéid ranga an cóimheas idir daltaí agus múinteoirí atá againn, ach gur 20 dalta in aghaidh an ranga an meán san Aontas Eorpach;
- go bhfuil caiteachas an Rialtais in aghaidh an dalta inár mbunscoileanna tearcmhaoinithe go géar, rud is ionann agus 13 faoin gcéad den Olltáirgeacht Intíre in aghaidh an duine, fad gurb é 27 faoin gcéad in aghaidh an duine meán na hEagraíochta um Chomhar agus Fhorbairt Eacnamaíochta (ECFE), rud a fhágann Éire san áit dheireanach as 36 tír fhorbartha maidir le caiteachas ar oideachas, de réir tuarascála ó ECFE;
- suirbhé a rinne Cumann Bainistíochta na mBunscoileanna Caitliceacha le déanaí i mí Aibreáin 2024, inar tuairiscíodh gur tháinig ardú os cionn 35 faoin gcéad ar chostais fuinnimh scoileanna sa dá bhliain atá imithe thart, fad gur ardaíodh costais árachais 19 faoin gcéad i gcaitheamh na tréimhse céanna, agus go raibh seacht gcinn as gach 10 mbunscoil ag feidhmiú faoi easnamh uair éigin sna 12 mhí a chuaigh thart;
- gur ar éigean i bhfirinne go gclúdaíonn an Deontas Caipitíochta na costais fuinnimh agus leictreachais, agus gur beag maoiniú a bhíonn fágtha, nó nach mbíonn maoiniú ar bith fágtha, chun na costais ar fad eile a bhaineann le scoil a reáchtáil a chlúdach lena n-áirítear costais diúscartha dramhaíola, acmhainní stáiseanóireachta agus teagaisc, muirir bhainc, costais phárolla agus riaracháin, muirir Uisce Éireann, táillí cuntasáíochta, costais a bhaineann le soláthar sláinte agus sábháilteachta, tionchar an laghdaithe ar Scéim Leabhar Saor in Aisce na mBunscoileanna, imeacht na scéime Deontais TFC, an ciorrú €15 in aghaidh an dalta sa Deontas Cláir Samhraidh agus an laghdú sa Deontas Seirbhísí Coimhdeacha, ach nach bhfuil teoranta do na nithe sin;
- an gá atá ag scoileanna airgead a bhailiú

**That Dáil Éireann:**

**notes:**

- that our pupil teacher ratio is 22.8 pupils per class size, whereas the European Union average is 20 pupils per class;
- that there is chronic underfunding in Government expenditure per student in our primary schools, which is equivalent to 13 per cent per capita Gross Domestic Product, while the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average is 27 per cent per capita, leaving Ireland last out of 36 developed countries for spending on education, as per an OECD report;
- a recent survey carried out by the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association in April 2024, which reported that schools have seen their energy costs increased by over 35 per cent in the last two years, while insurance costs increased by 19 per cent over the same period, and seven out of 10 primary schools have run at a deficit at some stage over the past 12 months;
- that in reality the Capitation Grant barely covers energy and electricity costs, with little or no funding left to cover all the other costs involved in running a school including, but not limited to, refuse disposal costs, stationery and teaching resources, bank charges, Irish Water charges, accounting fees, payroll and administrative costs, costs related to health and safety provision, the impact of the reduction in the Primary School Free Books Scheme, the disappearance of the ICT Grant scheme, the cut of €15 per pupil in the Summer Programme Grant and the decrease in the Ancillary Services Grant;
- the need for schools to fundraise just to

díreach chun billí a íoc, agus gur deacra airgead a bhailiú i gceantair a bhfuil an t-anás níos measa iontu, agus i scoileanna beaga tuaithe;

- an brú méadaithe ar phríomhoidí scoileanna atá á dtraochadh de réir ráta ar ábhar imní é; agus
  - go mbíonn, d'ainneoin an leibhéal sheasta tearcinfheistíochta sin, scór daltaí Éireannacha 15 bliana d'aois i measc na gcinn is airde i gClár Measúnaithe Idirnáisiúnta Scoláirí ECFE, rud a léiríonn go soiléir caighdeán an teagaisc agus cumas ár mac léinn;
- a thabhairt dá haire thairis sin:
- gur tharla ardú 56 faoin gcéad idir 2017 agus 2021 i líon na leanaí le riachtanais speisialta sa bhunoideachas;
  - go bhfuil os cionn 16,500 leanbh ag fanacht lena gcéad choinne leis an Meitheal Líonraí Leanaí faoi Mhíchumas (MLLM), ó tá ráta folúntais foirme náisiúnta ós cionn 30 faoin gcéad ag na meithil sin;
  - go bhfuil 19,500 leanbh ag fanacht le measúnachtaí riachtanais, rud a chuireann tuilleadh leis na deacrachtaí atá roimh dhaltai Riachtanas Oideachas Speisialta (ROS) sna scoileanna;
  - an t-easnamh mór tacaíochtaí riachtanas speisialta oideachais (ROS), agus an leithdháileadh Múinteoirí Oideachais Speisialta (MOS) caltha nó ciorraithe idir 2017 agus 2021, fad atá leithdháileadh Cúntóirí Riachtanas Speisialta (CRS) caltha den chuid is mó freisin;
  - nach ndéanfaítear tacaíochtaí breise ach amháin tar éis athbhreithnithe eisceachtúla nó meicníochtaí achomharc an-troma, i gcás nár dearbhaíodh a bhformhór;
  - in ainneoin samhail nua MOS a bheith á tabhairt isteach in 2024, go bhfuil an critéar "riachtanais chasta" bainte amach as measúnuithe agus nach n-aithneofar tacaíochtaí a bheith ag teastáil ó roinnt mhaith daltaí príomhshrutha ROS go dtí rang 2 ar a laghad;

pay bills, and that fundraising is more difficult in areas of greater deprivation, and in smaller rural schools;

- the increased pressure on school principals who are suffering burnout at a worrying rate; and
- that despite this chronic level of underinvestment, 15-year-old Irish pupils score among the highest on the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment, which clearly indicates the quality of teaching and the ability of our students;

further notes:

- that the number of children with special needs in primary education increased by 56 per cent between 2017 and 2021;
- that over 16,500 children are awaiting their first appointment with the Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT), as these teams have a national staff vacancy rate of over 30 per cent;
- that 19,500 children are awaiting an assessment of need, further adding to the difficulties that Special Education Needs (SEN) pupils are facing in schools;
- the severe lack of SEN supports, with Special Education Teachers (SET) allocations frozen or cut between 2017 and 2021, while Special Needs Assistant (SNA) allocations have also been largely frozen;
- that additional supports are only granted following extremely burdensome exceptional reviews or appeals mechanisms, where the majority of these were not upheld;
- that despite a new SET model being introduced in 2024, the criterion of "complex needs" has been removed from assessments and many SEN mainstream pupils will not be recognised as needing supports until at least 2nd class;

- nach bhfuil aon sásra éifeachtúil nó tráthúil ag scoileanna chun a gcuid riachtanas ROS a thuirisciú don Roinn Oideachais nó don Chomhairle Náisiúnta um Oideachas Speisialta, ar féidir, mar thoradh air sin, leithdháiltí MOS a bheith á mbunú ar shonraí neamhiomlána is sonraí a d'fhéadfaí a cheartú go héasca trí iarraidh ar phríomhoidí an fhaisnéis sin a ionchur ina mBunachar Sonraí Daltaí Ar Líne (BSDAL) go bliantúil;
  - líon na leanaí a bhfuil riachtanais speisialta acu, agus a dteaghligh, a bhfuil áiteanna scoileanna fós á lorg go géar acu le haghaidh mhí Mheán Fómhair 2024;
  - go bhfuil os cionn 45,000 leanbh ar na foirne FMLM ar fud na tíre; agus
  - gur mó an drochthionchar ar dhaltaí SEN a bhíonn ag an ngéarchéim in earcú agus coinneáil múinteoirí ar fud ár gcórais oideachais; agus
- a iarraidh ar an Rialtas:
- gealltanas a thabhairt go ndéanfaidh sé cistiú bunoideachais a ailíniú leis an meán-chistiú san ECFE;
  - a áirithiú gur leor an Deontas Coimhdeach chun an costas a bhaineann le reáchtáil scoile a chlúdach;
  - a áirithiú go léirítear riachtanais reatha agus próifíllí aonair i samhail leithdháilte MOS 2024, go ndéantar athmheasúnú práinneach ar "riachtanais chasta" a athbhunú mar chritéar, agus go gcuirfear síneadh le BSDAL i bhfeidhm láithreach chun sonraí fíor-ama atá cruinn a áirithiú i leith daltaí a bhfuil riachtanais speisialta acu;
  - a áirithiú go ndéanfaidh síceolaí oideachais cáilithe an ghné oideachasúil den Mheasúnú ar Riachtanais a chomhlánú, le cúnaimh ó scoileanna;
  - an tAcht um Oideachas do Dhaoine a bhfuil Riachtanais Speisialta Oideachais Acu, 2004 a fhorfheidhmiú, ionas gur féidir le scoileanna dul i muinín reachtaíochta chun a áirithiú go bhfaigheann a ndaltaí na tacaíochtaí ROS
- that schools have no efficient or timely mechanism for reporting their SEN needs to the Department of Education or the National Council for Special Education, which can result in SET allocations being based on incomplete data which could easily be rectified by asking principals to input this information on their Pupil Online Database (POD) annually;
  - the number of children with special needs and their families who are still desperately seeking school places for September 2024;
  - that there are over 45,000 children on the CDNT teams across the country; and
  - that the crisis in the recruitment and retention of teachers across our education system has a greater adverse effect on SEN pupils; and
- calls on the Government to:
- commit to aligning primary educational funding with the OECD average;
  - ensure the Ancillary Grant is sufficient to cover the cost of running a school;
  - ensure the 2024 SET allocation model reflects current needs and individual profiling, urgently reassesses the reinstatement of "complex needs" as a criterion, and immediately put in place an extension to the POD to ensure real time and accurate data regarding pupils with special needs;
  - ensure the educational component of Assessment of Needs is completed by a qualified educational psychologist, with assistance from schools;
  - enforce the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004, so that schools can access legislative recourse to ensure their pupils receive the necessary SEN supports to meet their individual needs;

is gá chun freastal ar a riachtanais aonair;

- acmhainní agus tacaíochtaí leordhóthanacha a leithdháileadh ar scoileanna a bhfuil leanaí á n-imeascadh acu ar dídeanaithe iad agus atá ag lorg tearmainn;
  - plean gníomhaíochta a thabhairt ar aghaidh chun tacaíocht níos fearr a thabhairt do phríomhoidí scoile agus chun an t-am riaracháin do phríomhoidí teagaisc a mhéadú, chomh maith le líon na bpríomhoidí cúnta a athbhunú go hiomlán go dtí na leibhéil a bhí ann roimh bhlianta na déine;
  - plean gníomhaíochta a thabhairt ar aghaidh le hacmhainní agus amlínte chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar an ngéarghanntanas atá ann sa chóras oideachais maidir le soláthair múinteoirí; agus
  - breithniú a dhéanamh ar cheadú do scoileanna leas a bhaint as díolúintí ó Cháin Bhreisluacha (CBL) nó as scéimeanna cúitimh i leith CBL.
- allocate sufficient resources and supports to schools that are integrating refugee and asylum-seeking children;
  - bring forward an action plan to better support school principals and to increase the administrative time for teaching principals, as well as fully reinstating the numbers of assistant principals back to pre-austerity levels;
  - bring forward an action plan with resources and timelines to address the chronic teacher supply shortage in our education system; and
  - consider allowing schools to benefit from Value Added Tax (VAT) exemptions or VAT compensation schemes.