

Contract Update

Issue 7 – October 23, 2009

A Newsletter for College Managers about Contract Negotiations

Keeping you informed

Contract Update is a periodic newsletter from your Academic Bargaining Team to keep you informed on progress made or when significant events occur during collective bargaining. The English and French versions of this newsletter are also posted on the College Compensation and Appointments Council's website at www.theCouncil.on.ca.

Parties unable to reach agreement

The colleges met with the faculty union (OPSEU) from October 19 to 22 with an expectation of settling the new collective agreement. We are discouraged to report that the parties are far apart concerning the elements of a deal. As a result, the Conciliation Officer will advise the Minister of Labour that he has been unable to assist the parties in settling the new collective agreement.

The colleges emphasized the importance of resolving the issues and eliminating the ongoing uncertainty the negotiations create for our faculty and students. We began negotiations in June and we have been in direct negotiations with the union for 25 days.

The colleges' full offer of settlement can be viewed in its entirety at [Settlement Offer](#) .

Next bargaining dates

The remaining scheduled negotiating session between the parties will commence on November 10, 2009. It is imperative that a new collective agreement be resolved at that time. In the last round of bargaining the negotiations dragged on until the union called a strike which commenced on March 7, 2006, placing the students' academic year in jeopardy.

A settlement is still possible in November if the parties set realistic expectations.

Deteriorating economic situation

On Thursday, October 22, the Ontario Government announced that it is anticipating a deficit of \$24.7 billion in the current fiscal year. This new deficit projection is up from the \$18.5 billion projection announced in June.

The Government is also forecasting a 3.5% contraction in the economy.

These projections will place increased pressure on public sector finances. Colleges can expect little, if any, increase to operating revenues.

Wages

Despite the worsening economic situation, in an effort to settle, the colleges increased their monetary offer and are proposing a settlement of 1.5%, 1.5%, 2% and 2% in a four-year deal. The new salary maximum would be \$103,464.

This is within the range of recent public sector settlements. OPSEU, just last week, settled an agreement with the faculty employed at the Michener Institute in Toronto. In the first year, that agreement provided a initial 1% increase and a further 1% six months later for a first year increase of 1.5%. The second and third year each provided a 2% increase. Almost all settlements in the Broader Public Sector are now being resolved in the 1 to 2% zone. Parties, including OPSEU, have been negotiating three or four-year renewal agreements.

OPSEU reduced its salary proposal to 4.0% per year for two years. The union maintained its proposal for a new step in each year. OPSEU's total salary proposal would increase the new maximum salary by 14 per cent to \$109,915.

Workload

The colleges' offer of settlement addresses the four recommendations of the Joint Workload Taskforce that was endorsed by both parties. A summary of those recommendations was shared in Contract Update Issue 6 which can be reviewed by going to the following link www.thecouncil.on.ca/documents/ACADContractUpdate_06_E.pdf .

Most of the colleges' workload proposals provide greater faculty input in determining workload assignments and require the consent of the faculty involved.

The union made few significant modifications to its position on workload issues. Its proposals continue to include many items which are not included in the task force's four recommendations. All of these workload items were either withdrawn by the union or not accepted by the arbitrator in the last round of negotiations.

Your opinion

We are interested in what you have to say and welcome your opinion. Please feel free to contact any member of the Management Bargaining Team or submit your views in writing to: info@theCouncil.on.ca.