

Contract Update

A Newsletter from the Colleges' Bargaining Team

Issue 10 – December 4, 2009

Negotiations Unsuccessful

On November 30th the colleges' bargaining team met with the union in an effort to finalize a collective agreement based on the colleges' final offer that was implemented on November 18th. We are disappointed to advise that the discussions were not successful.

When we met, the colleges requested that the union present its best offer for settlement. After six months of bargaining it was time to eliminate the uncertainty caused by the negotiations and move forward with the academic year.

Union's Settlement Position Would Add \$218 Million In Annual Costs

The union responded by modifying its previous offer of settlement. Its revised position continues to have over 65 proposed changes to the collective agreement that are not contained in the new terms and conditions that have been introduced. The union's offer would increase the colleges' annual operating costs by over \$218 million just to maintain existing programming. To put the \$218 million of additional costs in perspective, the colleges' total annual salary costs for full-time faculty is \$620 million.

The union's proposals continue to reduce the amount of time teachers will spend in the classroom, introduce significant staffing changes, and increase salaries and benefits at an annual cost of:

- Teaching Hours Reduction - \$96 million
- Staffing Changes - \$71 million
- Salaries and Benefits - \$51 million

What OPSEU is insisting on is a huge cost to the colleges and completely unaffordable in the current economic climate. It is these demands which led the colleges to introduce the improved terms it could afford back on November 18th.

No Agreement on Salary

The union bargaining team has repeatedly and publicly stated that the negotiations are not about money. However, the union did not accept the salary increases that were introduced on November 18th. It continues to demand salary increases of 9.7 per cent over three years that would increase the maximum salary from \$96,529 to \$105,951 – a \$9,422 increase.

The union has stated that its salary position is 7.5 per cent over three years, which is an incomplete picture. The union's salary proposal over three years has increases of 2.5%, 2.5% and 2.5% - but also includes adjustment allowances for those faculty at the maximum of a further \$500, \$2,000, and \$2,000 over the three-year period. The union's characterization of its proposal simply ignores the allowances.

The Council has posted the union's offer on its web site at www.theCouncil.on.ca so that faculty and managers can review the union's offer of settlement.

Union Seeks Strike Mandate

The union has scheduled a strike vote for January 13, 2010.

The colleges believe that a strike now would be damaging to our students and the reputation of the college system in the eyes of the public. This is particularly true in the current economic climate. Instead of settling the terms of a collective agreement, the union seems committed to putting the system through the uncertainty and disruption of a strike.

The outcome of the strike vote is critical to the system. Obtaining a strike mandate will not change the economic realities. If the union is successful in obtaining a strike mandate it will be seen as an endorsement of the union's demands by the union's bargaining team. Those demands are not affordable and can't be agreed to by the colleges. They are similar to the demands which led to the strike in the last round of negotiations which were not awarded by the arbitrator or recommended by the task force. The colleges have already introduced the improvements based on their best offer.

If the union does obtain a mandate to continue to press forward with its demands a strike is likely to occur since then Colleges cannot agree to the union's position. If faculty choose not to support a strike it is anticipated that a collective agreement will be finalized quickly based on the revised terms of employment introduced by the colleges.

Further Bargaining Dates

The colleges and the union have agreed to meet again on December 14 and 15. We remain committed to finalizing a collective agreement to remove uncertainty and concern for both our faculty and our students.

New Terms and Conditions

There have been some requests for more information about the new terms and conditions that were introduced on November 18th.

Please find below a list of topics of interest with corresponding links to more detailed information.

- [Background on the legislative framework that allows the colleges to introduce new terms and conditions](#)
- [Comparison of the colleges' workload proposals to the four recommendations in the Joint Workload Taskforce Report](#)
- [Questions and answers on modified workload arrangements](#)
- [Questions and answers on union's allegations of concessions](#)
- [Comparison of OPSEU and College Salary Position](#)

Keeping you informed

Contract Update is a periodic newsletter from the Colleges' 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.

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.