

The Real Deal

Bargaining news from your OPSEU Central
Bargaining Team in the Ontario Public Service

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Strike deadline approaching

You would think that an 88 per cent strike mandate would get us an 88 per cent improvement in the employer's offer. Unfortunately, the employer doesn't seem to be listening.

With renewed determination, the employer continues to push for "pay for performance", along with every other concession, cap and control the employer has put forward.

In his response to the employer, OPSEU chief negotiator Andy Todd said, "Our members have no interest in term classifieds, no interest in pay for performance and no interest in your new concept of permanent unclassified staff. We want information on our special case submissions, and we deserve a 'made in OPSEU' agreement, not one patterned from some other organization."

Andy went on to say that the members not only gave an 88 per cent vote to reject the contract offer, but also an 88 per cent vote for an excellent collective agreement. "At this point we have about one week to achieve it," he told the employer.

Marg Simmons, chair of the OPS Central Team, is disappointed in the employer's lack of recognition for the strong message sent by the members.

"We are now, and have been attempting to negotiate a collective agreement with this employer," Simmons said. "From what we have seen so far, they are not moving from their concessionary standpoint."

We will continue to negotiate if and when the employer wants to entertain that idea. To this point, the employer has not. If we have no agreement, we will

be on strike.

"We need to encourage them to negotiate," said Simmons. "It's time to MAKE SOME NOISE! It's time to show this employer what an 88 per cent rejection vote sounds like."

The Team asks that ALL locals ensure that their strike committees are up and running, that their picket rosters are completed, and that all members are plugged in to the mobilization campaign. These actions will reinforce to the employer that we are very serious about our demands.

Disputes 'R Us

The employer's fax machines are bustling. They have been receiving essential service list dispute forms from their managers at an alarmingly rapid pace. The employer just can't understand why our members are not filing their own.

Our response to date has been because our members are

generally "happy people", with little to complain about.

The arbitrators are in the hallways and have been with us since Monday evening. They will rule on those disputes that the parties cannot agree on.

The arbitrators will be quite busy.

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POST AND CIRCULATE

Attention all health professionals

Some managers seem hell-bent on getting involved in matters that they have no right to be involved in. Some of these actions border on intimidation, harassment and interfering with our members' right to engage in a legal strike.

Managers are circulating documents to their nurses outlining their responsibilities under the College of Nurses. We need to remind the employer that they should back off and stop trying to interfere.

Tim Hadwen, General Counsel for OPSEU, has issued a memo on the subject of Regulated health professionals and possible labour disruptions. The memo is available on the OPSEU website at:

<http://www.opseu.org/ops/bargaining/MemoRegulatedHealthProfession.pdf>. The memo says:

“All employees represented by OPSEU in the Ontario Public Service have the right to strike in accordance with the provisions of the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act. All employees in the OPSEU bargaining units, including Regulated Health Professionals (such as nurses, physiotherapists, psychometrists, etc.) have the right, once a legal strike commences, to cease going to work and engage in picket line activity. The exception is that essential services agreements must be complied with. But, other than essential services,

unionized regulated health professionals in the OPS have the legal right to strike.

None of the Regulated Health Professions Act, the Regulated Health Professions Code or statements by any College says otherwise.

Regulated Health Professionals are able to take bereavement leave, maternity leave, and exercise the legal right to strike because the employer is aware of these possibilities and has responsibility to make alternate arrangements for patient care (including essential services agreements)”

Please let us know if your employer is trying to intimidate you.

Radio ads started today

Radio ads boosting support of the Ontario Public Service began today on stations across the province. The hard-hitting,

factual ads talk about water quality, food inspection and community safety. Listen for them!

The Real Deal is your only accurate source of Central Team information during this round of bargaining. If you don't read it here, you can't be sure it's true. Don't rely on gossip and rumours. We will provide the facts.

The Real Deal will be available by fax, by e-mail, and on the OPSEU web site at www.opseu.org. To receive it directly, send your secure fax number to Lesley Williams at (416) 443-1762 or send your e-mail address to lwilliams@opseu.org.

Central Team Quote:

“Please understand. There is no one depressed in this house and we are not interested in the possibilities of defeat. Those possibilities do not exist.” – Queen Victoria, 1899

How to contact your team members

You can contact the Central Team directly at (416) 815-1406, by fax at (416) 815-1412 or by e-mail at centralteam@opseu.org.

*Authorized for distribution by
Marg Simmons, chair, Central team, and
Leah Casselman, president.*

Marg Simmons L. 263 Chair
(905) 844-5239 (after hours)

Mark Kotanen L. 128 Vice-chair
(519) 336-6926 (after hours)
mkotanen@tct.net

Jeff Bendig L. 434
(613) 364-7580 (after hours)
jeffbendig@hotmail.com

Teri Breau-Auzins L. 506
(416) 721-2767 (after hours)
teriauzins@rogers.com

Joseph Catroppa L. 736
(807) 628-5147 (after hours)
jncat@tbaytel.net

Laurie Chapman L. 323
(705) 323-8172 (after hours)
lchapman@bconnex.net

Michel Chaumont L. 623
chaumont@attcanada.net

Darwin Lacelle L. 447
416 815 1406
dmlacell@nrtco.net

Steve Nield L. 123
(519) 383-5643 (after hours)

Sandra Noad L. 101
(519) 657-9518 (weekends)
sanoad@rogers.com

James Roland L. 720
(807) 345-4609 (after hours)
jimrol@hotmail.com

Serge Valcourt L. 634
(705) 497-4393 (after hours)
opseu.634@sympatico.ca

Peter Wall L. 638
(416) 815-1406