



TO: CAAT Academic Faculty Members
FROM: The Faculty Negotiating Team
DATE: December 1, 2009
RE: Bargaining Update

The Colleges agreed to resume negotiations for one day – November 30.

In an effort to kick-start a settlement, the faculty team withdrew several proposals and amended others – all designed to reduce costs. Media releases from the Colleges cited costs as the reason for failure to get an agreement.

Our revised salary position is an annual 2.5% raise for three years. Management is offering a salary increase of 8% over four years.

Management media releases have claimed that there was no settlement because union proposals were “unaffordable.” The union revised position is affordable. It is in line with all current public sector increases which have averaged 2.4% in 2009.

The union has proposed an adjustment allowance to faculty at the top step. This is similar to the recognition allowance in place from September 1, 2002 to March 31, 2007. This allowance would compensate for losing ground against our referent groups – other Ontario teachers – who have received increases on average over 3% per year. Unlike percentage grid changes, such allowances reduce costs significantly because they apply to a limited number.

Faculty maintain that the priority bargaining issue is improving quality education by implementing all the recommendations of the Workload Task Force. The union focused our discussion on those recommendations.

The Colleges made no changes at all to their imposed terms or offer to settle. Instead, the Colleges handed the union a list of proposals that they insisted had to be withdrawn.

They would then only bargain on a limited number of items of their choosing. On those items, they advised that bargaining had to be within their “settlement zone.”

The Colleges also verbally provided some alleged costing for the revised union proposals. [Further details will follow in future updates.]

Bargaining dates have been set for December 14 and 15.

The Ontario Labour Relations Board has scheduled January 13 for a strike vote. Strike votes are common and more often than not result in an improved settlement without a strike. The Union will continue to offer dates for negotiations and attempt to work towards a fair settlement.

Management's position reflects that they have no interest in quality improvement. Despite the fact that they agreed to the recommendations of the Workload Task Force, they refuse to implement those recommendations. Instead they are holding fast to their imposed terms and conditions of employment which contain many concessions that will erode quality and perpetuate the mistrust in the system. The Task Force noted with concern that there was much distrust already in the college system.

The faculty team presented a revised offer that could have resulted in settlement. Management came with no revisions to their position and no willingness to enter into good faith negotiations. Rather than negotiate, they insist the faculty capitulate.

Ted Montgomery, for the team