

Negotiations Update #2

www.osstfd20.ca

District 20 Teachers' Bargaining Unit

905-332-1228

United We Stand, Divided We Fall!



Laurel Broten, Minister of Education, is bringing the Government's Austerity Agenda to our Doorstep

If the Government Gets its Way...

Teachers, you need to get over the idea that you've been pampered for the last four years with an annual 3% wage increase. In fact, that increase hasn't even allowed you to keep up with the increase in the cost of living. Many of you won't have noticed, because you've also been moving across and up the grid. It's hard not to feel a little bit rich when you're getting both a wage and a grid increase.

Well, if the government gets its way, you can say good-bye to that feeling. If the government gets its way, what you're making now is what you'll be making in August, 2014, and perhaps beyond. That is, if you haven't become so demoralized that you've left the profession, or so exhausted that you've had to take a reduced timetable. If the government gets its way, your salary will go nowhere, while the cost of living will continue to rise at least 3% a year. A wage freeze is a pay cut. A wage and grid freeze is a hammer blow to every young teacher in the province. If the government gets its way.

Feeling Sick? Get Over It!

Your Kids Sick? Who Cares!

That, at any rate, appears to be the government's attitude. It is proposing to do away with your current sick-leave plan, which allows for 20 sick days per year, with unused sick days deposited in a sick bank in case of catastrophic illness or injury. In its place would be a plan allowing for a maximum of six paid sick days per year, which would not be bankable. Use them or lose them.

As for the idea that teachers with families might sometimes need to take a day off to care for a sick child? Don't even mention it. The government's not interested.

It's a Race to the Bottom

In addition to the above, the government is also proposing to zap your accumulated sick days out of existence, meddle with the salary grid, phase out retirement gratuities, and get out of the

pension-funding business. As a package (and that's exactly how the government views them), these austerity parameters are potentially more devastating to the teaching profession than any proposals put forward by Mike Harris or Bob Rae in the 1990's.

Recently, the government contacted all Directors and school board Chairs in Ontario, reminding them in no uncertain terms that it expects all new collective agreements to adhere to the above austerity parameters. In public, the government maintains that these measures would have no negative impact on student achievement or the classroom experience. Teachers know better.

TBU Annual General Assembly

Tuesday, April 24th

4:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Galaxy Club

475 North Service Rd E, Oakville, ON

All Halton Secondary Teachers are welcome!

You are the Federation!

What You Can Do?

1. **Continue to check** our website www.osstfd20.ca for local and provincial bargaining updates. We have recently posted a series of "backgrounders" on the key bargaining issues.
2. **Consider attending** the TBU Annual Assembly on Tuesday, April 24th as a delegate from your school. Contact your Branch President for information.
3. **Support** one another individually, and support your Union. We have no other options for getting through.
4. **Most important, remember that our only strength lies in numbers.** Now more than ever, we need to maintain solidarity and support our Provincial Executive in its effort to persuade the government to negotiate fairly.

Where Are We Now with Bargaining?

Bargaining at the Provincial Level

Unlike ETFO, OSSTF has not walked away from the Provincial Discussion Table. Yet. Two days of PDT meetings are scheduled for April 18-19. Our Provincial Executive will be meeting with the government's representatives. The key question will be whether the government is prepared to engage in a serious discussion of the issues, or whether the PDT is really just a PUT--a Provincial Ultimatum Table.

In the meantime, in response to the government's directive to the Boards, Provincial Executive has instructed our legal counsel to file an unfair labour practice complaint at the Ontario Labour Relations Board. The complaint will cite the ongoing political interference in our free collective bargaining process.

At present, nothing suggests that the bargaining process at the provincial level will be either easy or short.

Bargaining at the Local Level

The TBU Collective Bargaining Committee continues to meet regularly in preparation for local bargaining. We have prepared a brief that recognizes the concerns of teachers, as communicated in our bargaining survey, and that presents reasonable, cost-neutral proposals for recognizing those concerns.

As per Article 03.01.00 of the current Collective Agreement, the Union will be contacting the Board at the beginning of June, in order to serve notice of our intention to bargain. We will begin negotiations with the Board before the end of the school year. However, it is highly unlikely that a new agreement will be in place prior to the expiration of the current contract on August 31st.

One further note. As of April 11th, all local bargaining units have been placed in provincial resumption. This means that the Provincial Office will oversee and guide all local negotiations, once underway. This will forestall any attempt by the government to divide and conquer.

TBU Collective Bargaining Committee

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