



Upcoming dates:

December 18th, 2014 –
Bargaining date

February 3rd-7th, 2015 –
OSBCC annual conference
in Ottawa

Week of April 13th, 2015 –
Charter challenge (with
other unions) on Bill 115

December 8, 2014

Bargaining update

We met with the management team on December 3rd and 4th.

The “terms of reference” discussions (establishing ground rules for bargaining) are over now – we have signed off on those. We were not able to secure government funding for the CUPE table as part of these discussions, but have tabled the issue for further exploration in the context of bargaining. In BC, the provincial government did commit a substantial sum to cover the CUPE team’s bargaining costs, and we hope to achieve a similar solution here.

We have yet to formally exchange proposals with the management team, but have started into the discussion about what issues belong at the central table vs. local tables. (As you know, the items we tabled were decided by delegates in February). It quickly became clear that the management team wants to see most items discussed at the central table – this is similar to what the teachers’ federations are experiencing.

We are committed to meaningful local bargaining and will ensure that issues best left to local tables remain for local discussion, and we’ve informed the management team of that.

The management team is pushing for central talks to cover everything with a monetary cost, beyond salary and benefits.

The flipside to the management team’s position is that they reject many of the items that we see as central – such as contracting in/out, violence prevention, and preventative maintenance. For us, these items are properly placed at the central table, and addressed in a constructive way, could well result in provincial cost savings.

It is now clear to us that we will need to invoke the dispute resolution mechanism available through the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB). We have an additional bargaining date scheduled for **December 18th**, but we do not anticipate being able to reach agreement on the central vs. local issues division without the assistance of the OLRB.

Information from other unions

Two of the teacher groups – OECTA and OSSTF – have already filed their applications for dispute resolution with the OLRB. In OECTA's case, all three parties (government, employer council, and the union) will exchange briefs mid-December. A meeting to provide responses will be held at the OLRB after this. CUPE has reserved the right to seek intervenor status in this matter. OECTA's actual hearing dates will be in January, and they have informed their members that they do not expect to be bargaining until mid-February at the earliest.

OSSTF has also set dates for OLRB hearings on behalf of their teachers' unit. The timeline for their hearing follows OECTA's. OSSTF has also applied to the OLRB on behalf of their support staff. No dates have been set for that hearing.

Finalizing local proposals

It's critical that locals finalize proposals for local bargaining so we are all in a position to start bargaining together. We have sent language from CUPE National for locals to review for inclusion in local proposals if your current collective agreement lacks similar language.

Once central bargaining issues are established and agreed, we expect local bargaining to commence within 15 days. It's crucial that you be ready for this. In order to avoid disputes at the local table about what is central and what is not, we ask you to send your completed local proposals to Jim Morrison, OSBCC coordinator, for review. This step is one Ontario Council of Hospital Unions has used successfully to distinguish where conflicts may arise between central and local proposals.

Second Call for Conference

Our annual conference is scheduled for February 3rd to 7th, 2015, in Ottawa. This is likely to be a pivotal time in bargaining – please plan to send delegates from your local. Second Call will be coming out this week. The theme of our conference this year is “Negotiate to settle, prepare to strike.”

Conference Reports have been sent to local Presidents for completion – please send them in ASAP. Your OSBCC area rep will follow up if you have not submitted your report. We need to have all these reports translated for the conference book. Last minute entries cannot be accommodated.

Ongoing mobilizing

We are pleased to see so many areas have planned strike preparation courses and would like to thank the staff who have offered their time to deliver these classes. We need to be well prepared for what will certainly be a difficult round of bargaining.

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