

# 2011 Bargaining Bulletin



Information for OPSEU members in the CAAT-Support Division

Issue #5, June 22, 2011

## The time has arrived: stand up and be counted



Over the last month your CAAT Support bargaining team 2011 members have visited locals across Ontario to talk to members about this round of bargaining.

We've explained the challenges the revised Colleges' Collective Bargaining Act (CCBA) has presented and how the new timelines have condensed nine months of bargaining into three.

We've highlighted other changes, such as the ability of the colleges to impose working terms and conditions on us if, by midnight Aug. 31, we have not reached a new collective agreement and if we are not on strike.

We've shared with you that 18 of 24 colleges have

denied time off for mobilizers so that they are able to inform you about bargaining – despite previous assurances by management that Article 12.1 Leave without Pay met our needs.

We've told you about colleges that are denying locals the use of the email system to communicate with members about local issues and bargaining.

We've informed you about those colleges which previously had never had a problem with the local holding member meetings on campus. Suddenly they are denying locals the use of rooms on campus for general membership meetings and information sessions on bargaining.

We've talked about colleges that were attempting

to tell locals what business they were allowed to perform on local union time-off.

We've indicated that we won't be surprised if these bullying and harassing tactics spread to all colleges in Ontario.

We've reminded you of McGuinty's ploy to enforce a zero per cent wage and compensation freeze.

We've revealed that despite McGuinty's attempt to reduce the provincial deficit on the backs of members, arbitrated and negotiated settlements in the provincial public sector have averaged approximately 2.2 per cent in each year of collective agreements.

On June 7 we presented management with a detailed, comprehensive demand document. We did this because, unlike previous rounds of bargaining, we knew we had less than 90 days to reach an offer we feel confident you would ratify. This was no time for vague and broadly-worded demands.

What did the colleges bring to the table? Half of their demands deal with "housekeeping" issues – for example, updating references contained in the CCBA 1990 to the CCBA 2008, and updating the Colleges Relations Commission to Minister of Labour.

Their document does not give any indication that bargaining timelines have been dramatically reduced.

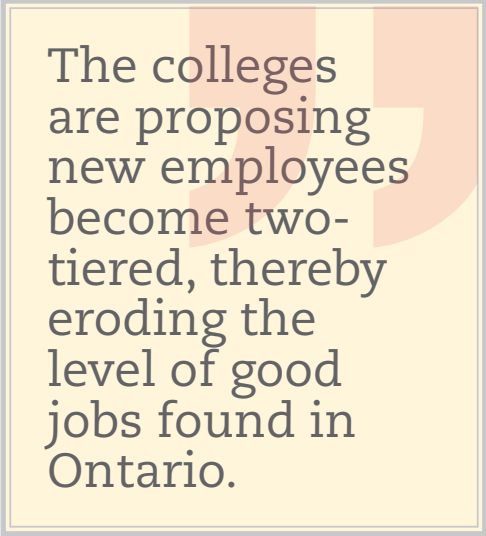
Their proposals do, however, suggest that they seek significant cutbacks to our existing rights.

They want to review the definition of a "normal work week."

How would you feel if those four days happened to be Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday, and those 10 hours each day were 9 am to 8 pm (including your lunch break)?

What if you work 35 hours per week? A "normal work week" could be defined as seven days, five hours per week. It could also mean cutting the work week back to 25 hours. Is this an extreme example? Perhaps. But the point is: opening the contract to allow the employer more flexibility in defining YOUR work week and hours can result in many, many varying schedules to suit the EMPLOYER'S purposes without any consideration of what the impacts might be on your lives.

The colleges are proposing new employees become two-tiered, thereby eroding the standard of good jobs found in Ontario.



The colleges are proposing new employees become two-tiered, thereby eroding the level of good jobs found in Ontario.

Management's proposals also include a request to "update language" regarding the need to provide 90 days notice of layoff. At the negotiating table management provided us with additional details on their definition of "updating language."

In the event of a faculty strike they want to be able to lay off support staff without such notice. No joke! Currently, Article 27.07 of the academic collective agreement allows the college to do exactly that with academic staff in the event of a strike by support staff.

None of Management's written proposals are accompanied by any specific changes, or language modifications.

These omissions simply slow down the bargaining process with the possibility that we may not achieve a negotiated settlement by Aug. 31.

"Review" and "update" are deceptive ways of proposing concessions and decreases to our overtime pay and take backs for the special allowance which could result in a reduction in the amount – or an increase to the number of years of service – required to qualify for the special allowance.

Management's proposals make no mention of wage or benefit increases. They say they want to put this item over to a later date.

Management would say it needed budget approval before they could talk cash. The government's fiscal year ends Mar. 31.

This time, the colleges already know their approved funding. They are able to assess the kind of wage increase they might offer. At our June 7 bargaining session we asked for their monetary position by the next day, June 8.

They replied: No, they were not prepared to present monetary proposals.

In the last round of bargaining management presented its first wage proposal on June 11. In 2005, it was in late June.

The fact is that there are several monetary issues in management's proposals, including overtime rates, seventh day double-time rates, and the special allowance. The only monetary issues they want to delay are those affecting wages and benefits.

Don't let the colleges mislead you. They could table a wage proposal if they wanted.

**We must stand up and let management know we won't stand for its tactics and deception.**

They could approve mobilizing time off; they could allow communication between locals and their members related to bargaining; they could allow members to meet on campus to learn more about bargaining.

We must stand up and let management know we won't stand for its tactics and deception.

We must send a message to the colleges that clearly states:

1. Members support the Bargaining Team who are fighting on behalf of members and the issues they have identified;
2. Members understand the importance of a strong strike mandate to give their bargaining team the leverage it needs to deliver a strong contract settlement ;
3. Members will not settle for concessions or a zero per cent compensation package.

## Read our Q&A!

For more information on this round of CAAT-Support bargaining, read our Q&A. It's online at [www.opseu.org/caat/caat\\_sup/bargaining2011/qanda.htm](http://www.opseu.org/caat/caat_sup/bargaining2011/qanda.htm) .



## Contact your team!

If you have any questions at all about bargaining, feel free to e-mail your team at any time. Our address is [bargaining@rogers.com](mailto:bargaining@rogers.com).

## Please post and circulate.

This publication is authorized for distribution by:  
Rod Bemister, Chair, CAAT-Support Bargaining Team  
and Warren (Smokey) Thomas, President, OPSEU.

