



TOGETHER, EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE

OSBCC Bargaining Update 2012

Issue 7

April 17, 2012

Who is the OSBCC Bargaining Committee?

The OSBCC Bargaining Committee represents over 50,000 CUPE members who work in school boards in Ontario at the Provincial Discussion Table (PDT). The Committee brings forward central bargaining proposals during negotiations with the province and school board trustee associations. The bargaining committee consists of CUPE staff and members.

With the exception of the Chair and Vice Chair of the OSBCC, who are appointed to the bargaining committee, members are elected to sit on the bargaining committee. The OSBCC Chair (Terri Preston) heads the committee along with the OSBCC Vice-Chair (Susan Hanson). Representatives from seven areas, including a French representative and one from northern Ontario, plus two members-at-large make up the rest of the group. OSBCC Coordinator (Brian Blakeley), French coordinator (Monique Drapeau), research officer (Paul O'Donnell), acting assistant director (Gwen Hewitt), communications officer (Marjorie Savoie) and CUPE Ontario Division liaison (Wynne Hartviksen) make up the staff portion of the committee.

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The bargaining committee met with representatives of the four school board associations on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of last week. Discussions began with the topic of the “wage freeze” imposed on non-unionized workers over the last two years. Perhaps not coincidentally, the government sent a memo last week to directors and chairs explaining that the freeze and government parameters were to apply to everyone.

The next item brought forward was job security. Our members need to be assured they have a secure position for the duration of the collective agreement and this was highlighted at the table. Discussion took place on returning contracted-out work back in-house, and preventing further privatization. The Associations noted that while the government will maintain overall education spending in 2012-13, some boards will see severe reductions in school operating budgets as a result of changes to the Grants for Student Needs (GSN). **It would be important for locals, through labour-management committees or other means, to find out—and let our bargaining committee know — if their board has been negatively impacted by these changes in school operations funding.**

The bargaining committee brought forward the resolution recently passed in the Hamilton-Wentworth Board – asking for provincial exemption from terms negotiated in the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) that would impact boards – and requested to see similar resolutions passed through boards across Ontario.

Time was spent taking the Associations through our positions on employment equity, professional development, technological change, violence, medical intervention, supervision and colleges. The government suggested coming back to with examples of best practices as it pertains to professional development. **Please send examples of joint professional development initiatives that work well for your locals to bblakeley@cupe.ca and terri.preston@cupe4400.org by the end of this week.**

We opened discussions on a Provincial Benefits Plan in order to gauge interest in such a plan – the government stated that they are open to what they have heard so far.

The bargaining committee made it clear that we have no interest in the government's sick leave proposal or moving to a short-term disability plan.

Additional dates were requested and so far May 2 and May 17 have been secured. In the meantime, the bargaining committee remains committed to working on developing coordinated language proposals on the issues identified at our conference. Once finalized, these will be forwarded to locals to be incorporated into their bargaining packages.

It is important to acknowledge the work of our Bargaining Support Committee. The committee will be in Toronto Friday and Saturday to prepare for the next step in mobilizing.

Please note that we will be opening up conference calls to include local executive, local bargaining committees and area council members.

This is an extremely challenging round of bargaining. Clear and consistent messaging to our members is crucial. Lookout for a Bargaining Update – Questions and Answers and a Mobilization Update in the coming weeks.

Thank you for your continued support.

Your Bargaining Committee

Terri Preston – OSBCC Chair
Susan Hanson – OSBCC Vice-Chair
Vern Andrus – Area Rep
Jim Glavan – Area Rep
Mark Luciani – Area Rep
Dave Smith – Area Rep
Lee Ann West – Area Rep
Sylvain Piché – Area Rep/French
Rodney McGee – Area Rep/North
Don Bryans – Member-at-large
Frank Ventresca – Member-at-large

CUPE Staff

Gwen Hewitt – Assistant Regional Director
Brian Blakeley – OSBCC Coordinator
Monique Drapeau – OSBCC French Coordinator
Paul O'Donnell – CUPE Research
Marjorie Savoie – CUPE Communications
Wynne Hartviksen – Executive Assistant, CUPE Ontario Division

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