MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)
33 Bloor St. E., Employment and Training Division office
February 28, 2017

For Management:
Jennifer Barton, Director, Eastern Region, Employment and Training Division (Management Co-Chair)
Kara Smith, Business Advisor, Strategic Business Unit

For OPSEU:
*Mickey Riccardi, Employment and Training Consultant – Western Region (OPSEU Co-chair)
Sophia Ambrose, Communications Officer, Student Financial Assistance Branch
Brenton Beeston, Employment and Training Consultant – Central Region

Guests:
Alissa Bryers, Employee Relations Advisor, Employee Relations Branch (TBS)

Roxanne Barnes, OPSEU OPS Central Negotiator

Regrets:
Dali Aung, Employee Relations Advisor, Employee Relations Branch (TBS)
Carol Strachan, Director/Superintendent, Private Career Colleges Branch
Helen Cranley, Manager, Labour Market Information and Research Unit

*Chair of the Meeting

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED	DATE TABLED
NEW BUSINESS			
1. May MERC meeting date	MERC date changed to May 16, 2017.	Remove from agenda.	February 28, 2017
2. Apprenticeship online registration process	OPSEU expressed concern over apprenticeship registration levels and the decrease in members' field work. OPSEU requesting further information through presentation on the online registration process.	Employer to follow up and schedule presentation for next meeting.	February 28, 2017
3. OAD 8 – School Scheduling Clerks in Western Region	OPSEU raised concerns that some positions were not captured by the MOA signed in the fall. These positions may continue to perform school scheduling duties.	Employer to investigate.	February 28, 2017

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4. **Auditor General's 2015 Report**	OPSEU asked about what action plan was put in place as a result of the Auditor General's recommendations from 2015.	Employer to follow up.	February 28, 2017
5. **French Language Policy – retesting**	The Employer responded to OPSEU's questions on the French Language Re-Testing Policy: 1. Once tested for French language skills and designated proficiency, does an employee have to be re-tested within a certain time period to maintain their designation (if the levels of proficiency have not changed for their job)? If so, how long is a proficiency test results valid before re-testing is required? The best practise within EDU and MAESD has been to consider the proficiency certificate valid for 5 years, after which it is recommended to re-test, if the employee is applying for another position. If the employee remains in the same position and the French proficiency requirements for the position do not change, the employee does not need to be re-tested. There can be exceptions to this rule if, for example, a manager hires someone who has been tested and has fluency in French but not the required French skills for a position. The manager generally agrees to have the employee re-tested after a certain period of time (typically within a year) to ensure that the employee has progressed and obtains certification for the required French skills. Please note that only a position can be designated bilingual. An employee is tested for proficiency in French but that does not "designate" them, it only verifies that they have the language skills required for the designated position they are applying for.	Remove from agenda.	February 28, 2017

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	2. Can anyone request to be tested for French language proficiency, even if their job is not designated? Anyone can decide they want to have their French language skills tested, even if they are not in a designated position. However, it is at the manager's discretion whether to cover the cost of the evaluation		
6. LERC Referral from Toronto Centre – 2 St Clair Ave West	OPSEU asked why only two of five permanent openings for a fall 2016 Service Delivery Assistant competition have been filled to date. There may be fixed-term employees in the other vacant positions. OPSEU also expressed similar concerns regarding Employment & Training Consultant staffing levels in Central Region.	Employer to investigate both issues and to look into the ERIP process per Appendix 21. Employer to follow up by end of March.	February 28, 2017
7. Agency Report	OPSEU asked whether it is possible to obtain list of agency staff that the Ministry currently uses.	Employer to look into issue and follow up by end of March.	February 28, 2017
8. Temp Assignment List	OPSEU asked whether it is possible to obtain list of employees on temporary assignments.	Employer to look into issue and follow up by end of March.	February 28, 2017
9. Common Standards	OPSEU asked why a student was asked to send out common service standard test emails. OPSEU also expressed concern over the format of the email, as members believed it was a phishing attempt and were not aware that service standards were being monitored. Employer confirmed that they were not tracking individual responses, rather the entire ministry's response rate.	Employer to look into whether providing an information share ahead of time will be possible.	February 28, 2017
10. Digital Government	OPSEU requested an update on Digital Government initiatives and their impacts on MAESD programs.	Establish as a standing item. Employer to provide further information and updates as they become available.	February 28, 2017

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BUSINESS ARISING FROM NEW BUSINESS (LAST MEETING)			
1. OSAP Surplus Disclosure	Union raised concerns over notification process of Notice-of-Layoff (NOL) meetings. Management arranged in-person meetings with a Human Resources Advisor.	Remove from agenda.	December 13, 2016
2. Security checks within ETD	Union requested confirmation of which positions in Employment and Training Division require security checks and the level of security clearance required. Union inquired as to: the limit allowed on number of tokens/clearances within individual office, time limits on how long clearances are valid, the requirements on clearance renewals. Management had previously advised that currently only Employment and Training Consultant positions require general level security clearance.	Management to follow-up and confirm what type of information is checked at general level; confirm with regional branches which staff possess clearances; whether any positions require enhanced level security clearance.	December 13, 2016 New date tabled.
3. OAD8 positions in Central Region	Union inquired as to classification of administrative positions. Management confirmed the Service Delivery Assistant position is classified as a 09OAD level and Administrative Assistant level is classified at 08OAD level.	Employer to investigate and follow up.	December 13, 2016
4. Indigenous Education Branch	No new updates.	Move to Standing Items.	December 13, 2016
5. OSAP vacation guidelines	Union raised concerns of the introduction of a new vacation guideline in the OSAP program delivery office. Union has requested the new guideline be revoked. Management provided a response on January 25, 2017, stating that the pilot will proceed in 2017. The launch of this pilot arises	Refer to LERC. Remove from agenda.	December 13, 2016

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	information regarding the workshop.	to Post-Secondary Division management. Remove from agenda.	
10. CWW for Employment Training Officers	Union confirmed that there are some workplaces that are not offered CWW.	Remove from agenda.	
11. Appendix 29 – New language on topics to be discussed	Union suggested the use of an MOA to outline parties' agreement on methods to fill vacancies.	Employer to explore this possibility.	January 22, 2016
12. EAP Orientation	Management responded that the Vendor of Record for the Employee Assistance Program is currently in the bidding process and Sheppell-FGI cannot be confirmed as the service provider going forward this year. Once the new VOR is confirmed, management will book the presentation for the September MERC meeting.	Employer to follow up.	January 22, 2016
13. Attendance Management Support Program – Stats	Union requested on ministry statistics, at last MERC meeting: - Employees in different levels - Number of preclusions - Voluntary Option numbers - ASMP Level 4 Terminations Management advised that statistics as above broken down by divisional/branch level are not available, at this time.	Employer to follow up.	May 10, 2016
14. Bill 173 – Benefits Transformation	Employer confirmed that MAESD is not part of the Wave 1 of Bill 173 (Benefits Transformation). MAESD programs are not impacted at this time. Wave 2 planning has begun recently.	Employer to invite Ministry of Finance Benefits Transformation lead to attend a future MERC meeting.	May 10, 2016
15. ETD Compass Announcement re:	Management confirmed that the percentage of work transferred to PDSB is minimal. Only scanning of documentation is no longer	Remove from agenda.	May 10, 2016

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Employment Ontario Contact Centre	done at local offices, all other administration remains the same and there are minimal material impacts to the work of local staff.		
16. Health Productivity Program	The Health and Productivity Program (HPP) is a Letter of Understanding in the Collective Agreement. The HPP supports employees who have been on leave and require accommodation upon return-to-work with or without restrictions/limitations. The Union is seeking pilot agreements with various ministries.	Union has invited guest speaker from Ministry of Children and Youth Services, currently administering a HPP. Union to update on scheduled presentation, when available.	May 10, 2016
17. Joint MERC training	Parties are awaiting confirmation of new training session dates. Training dates are scheduled for spring 2017.	Parties to sign up when registration opens.	September 13, 2016
18. FTEs by Office	The Union inquired as to whether ERCs can receive FTE numbers. Management advised that overall FTE numbers will not be provided at the MERC table, citing Article 2 management discretion.	Response provided at CERC. Remove from agenda.	September 13, 2016
STANDING ITEMS			
1. Redeployment	No update.		
2. Seniority list, Seasonal list, and Fixed-Term list	Management provided the reports to the Union.		
3. Apprenticeship Modernization Update	No update.		
4. Highly Skilled Workforce Strategy **a) Ministry's New Mandate Letter (September 2016)**	No update.	Employer to invite a representative from the Highly Skilled Workforce Division to speak to this issue.	

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5. Second Career Program Review	Management provided overview of recent info-share on Second Career redesign consultations with internal and external stakeholders. The ministry is currently working on modernizing its suite of employment and training programs as part of its multi-year transformation of Employment Ontario. The ministry anticipates to begin conducting consultations in January/early February and conclude by the end of April.	Employer to provide updates as they arise. April 12th Update.	
6. ETD Regional Review	Updates are provided on a monthly basis and posted on the ETD intranet site/COMPASS. No new updates.	Employer to provide any new updates and request guest speaker from Project Team to speak to respective developments.	
7. Training and Development	The Union sought information on a Ministry training & development strategy.	Employer to follow-up.	
8. Mass Centralized Recruitment Process	No updates.		
9. Technological Change	No updates.		
10. Disclosures & Info-Shares	All OPS staff were required to complete the **Respectful Workplace Policy and the WDHP Program Awareness Session** available through LearnON by November 30, 2016. Union requested completion rates for next MERC meeting. Union inquired as to whether training will be provided for the new Scented Products and Food Allergens in the Workplace Policy and the Noise in the Workplace Policy.	Employer to follow-up and provide an update.	
11. Value for Money Audit	A number of recommendations were made to MAESD from the Auditor General's report released on November 30, 2016. MAESD will be required to develop and action plans to address the recommendations prior to the Auditor General's follow-up.	Employer to share information as work on these recommendations	

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		progresses.	
12. Deputy Minister Changes Announced June 13, 2016		Remove from agenda.	
13. OSAP Transformation	No updates.	Employer to invite a representative from the OSAP Transformation Branch to speak at a future MERC meeting.	
14. ETD Intranet and EOPG Web Transformation Strategy	No updates.		
15. Queen's Park Reconstruction Project	No updates. All updates can be found on the QPRP InsideOPS page: https://intra.ontario.ca/queens-park-reconstruction-project		

Jennifer Barton, for Management

02/28/2017

Date

Mickey Riccardi, for the Union

Feb 28/17.

Date