

Provincial Discussion Table News



FEB 2011

Joint Labour/Employers Update #2

In follow-up to our communication in late December, we would like to provide an update on the development of a CAS Provincial Discussion Table.

On February 14th, approximately 115 people attended a special one-day agency employer forum in Toronto, to discuss the potential of resolving key systemic labour issues in child welfare through a Provincial Discussion Table model (PDT). The stated goal for the day was to discuss options for increasing labour stability in the child welfare sector during a time of change. Participation at this meeting included Executive Directors, HR Directors, Board Presidents, Directors of Service & other senior leaders from within the child welfare sector, CUPE, OPSEU, Simcoe CAS Employee Association, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ministry of Labour and the Labour Relations Secretariat.

The forum, marked by energy and positive dialogue on the initiative was jointly sponsored by CUPE, OPSEU, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and the OACAS whose representatives participated actively through panel discussions and question and answer sessions. The ADM from the Ministry of Children & Youth Services also attended and indicated the Ministry's support of the dialogue, their commitment to participate in these discussions and consider recommendations that may develop. Attached is an electronic copy of the materials developed for the day.

The following day, on February 15th, the employer representatives from the CAS Provincial Discussion Table met with the Local Directors from across the province to discuss pros and cons of moving forward and to elicit individual agencies' interest in continuing these discussions. At this meeting, a significant number of agencies indicated that they are prepared to recommend to their boards participation in the PDT process on a "without prejudice" basis. This will be determined by early March.

In the meantime, the current Provincial Discussion Table representatives from employers, labour and government representatives will be meeting to discuss next steps. Regular updates will be provided as the process and issues are clarified. The unions are continuing to ask locals not to move to impasse on local bargaining issues to allow these CAS PDT discussions to unfold. Further, any questions regarding the CAS PDT should be referred back to the respective party's representative at the table.

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