

CAAT-S Bargaining

Q & A

Issue#
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This Q & A provides general information about the 2014 round of collective bargaining for OPSEU members in the Support Division of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT-Support).

1. When does our current collective agreement expire?

August 31, 2014.

2. How is bargaining going so far?

Each side started with opening statements that included some shared goals, such as bargaining with respect, without stalling tactics, and achieving a fair collective agreement before Aug. 31. Based on our first few days of face-to-face negotiations we are cautiously optimistic that these were not just empty words. There has been real movement on some items from the first days of bargaining.

3. What is this round of bargaining about?

CAAT-S members are looking for job security, benefit enhancements, and a fair wage increase. Our proposals also include improvements to bereavement and compassionate leave, and relief for members coping with income loss while returning from short term or long term disability.

4. Are we bargaining for part-timers?

This was not identified by our members as an issue in our demand-setting process which preceded negotiations.

5. Where did our proposals (demands) come from?

The process we call “demand setting” started with local demand-setting meetings last winter. This was followed by a survey completed by the members. Demands from the local meetings were brought to the final (province-wide) demand-setting meeting held in Toronto in March, attended by delegates representing all 24 colleges. Delegates voted on our bargaining priorities at that meeting.

6. Will the CAAT-S bargaining team call a strike vote?

We never enter into negotiations with the intent to eventually call for a strike mandate. We negotiate for a good contract, not to take labour action. The decision whether or not to call for a strike vote depends entirely on whether or not progress is being made on our proposals at the bargaining table. We are looking forward to six days of productive negotiations with management in July. At the end of the month we will assess whether meaningful progress is being made in our contract talks.

7. What can members do to get involved?

- › Stay informed about bargaining by visiting the website, Facebook page, or by reading our Bargaining Bulletin newsletters;
- › Ask questions and give your feedback regarding management's proposals at caatsbargainingteam2014@opseu.org;
- › Spread the word! Involve your colleagues in the workplace, distribute materials, visit our website and follow us on Facebook;
- › Demonstrate your support for the bargaining team by participating in local events;
- › Enter the photo contest on the Facebook page by sending in your pictures and stories about your role at the college;
- › Update your secure email and contact information with OPSEU (Membership Services 1-800-268-7376) so you can be informed directly of developments.

8. Why can't the bargaining team let members know exactly what has been agreed to in the contract negotiations?

There are many proposals in the bargaining process that must be evaluated, modified, supported and at times, combined and traded with management representatives. It can be a very complex process that takes time and patience.

However, nothing we achieve is set in stone until a tentative agreement is complete.

If no tentative agreement is reached then the little agreements achieved along the way are no longer binding. Also, it is in the best interest of both sides if bargaining is restricted to the negotiating table, and not revealed publicly. This allows a more productive atmosphere for bargaining, and it allows both sides to think openly and creatively in order to resolve conflicting interests.

However, your bargaining team is committed to ensuring we act on our members' wishes as expressed through demand-setting, the bargaining survey, at membership meetings, and through our mobilizers.

This Q&A has been authorized for distribution by:

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