

Questions & Answers

The ISSUE

On June 22 the CAAT-S bargaining team issued a news release announcing that it had set a strike vote for Thursday July 14.

Why has the bargaining team called for a strike vote?

Negotiations for a new collective agreement with the colleges began on June 7 with the exchange of proposals. It seems very clear to us that the negotiating team for the colleges is not prepared to bargain with the same level of seriousness as the union bargaining team.

By calling for a strike vote we are issuing a wake-up call to management to get serious about contract negotiations.

Does this mean there will be a strike by CAAT-S members starting July 14?

No. The July 14 strike vote does not mean a walkout by college support workers. A majority vote in favour of a strike mandate would authorize a walkout only when the OPSEU bargaining team determines a contract settlement cannot be reached at the negotiation table.

When does the contract expire? Will your members walkout then?

Our contract with the colleges expires at midnight on Aug. 31. We would be in a legal position to walkout at that time, if the bargaining team feels little or no progress is being made at the bargaining table.

Alternatively, we could continue negotiations through the Aug. 31 deadline in hopes of reaching an agreement. That is our objective.

These are tough times for a lot of people. Why would you even consider going on strike?

Yes these are tough times. But we need to defend good jobs. Good jobs build strong communities. If we don't protect our good jobs now, then what will be the quality of jobs, and wages and benefits, for future generations?

What are the most important issues facing your members?

1. Wages & benefits
2. Working conditions
3. The introduction of a two-tier benefit package for new employees

Do you think a strike can be avoided?

Contracts are never settled on the picket line. They're settled at the negotiation table. We are not working toward a strike. We're working toward a contract settlement that respects the issues which our members have identified as most important to them.

Where & when will your members be voting? When will we know the results?

Those details will be announced shortly.

Where can I find more details?

On the OPSEU website. Please visit: http://opseu.org/caat/caat_sup/bargaining2011/index.htm or call: **1-800-268-7376 extension 8777**

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