

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)
March 23, 2021
11:00a.m. – 1:00p.m.**

In Attendance

For the Union	For the Employer	Guests	Regrets
Daryl O’Grady, Co-Chair, OPSEU Robert Scarfo, OPSEU Drew Finucane, OPSEU Sandra Harper, OPS Negotiator	*Sanaul Haque, Co-Chair, EDU Karyn Bruneel, EDU Jason McLean, EDU Arik Kovacs, EDU Juanita Sheridan, TBS *Chair of the Meeting		

STANDING ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Confirmation of the Agenda		
1. Employer Updates a) Seniority, Fixed Term and Seasonal Reports b) TEI c) Training and Development d) Surplus	a) The seniority report, fixed term list and seasonal list were provided to the union by email on March 16, 2021. The Employer provided an update on the use of co-op students in the I&IT Cluster. OPSEU asked the Employer to confirm the maximum duration for a co-op student. The Employer confirmed that the length of term for a co-op student will be determined by the educational institution. OPSEU has asked the ministry to review a number	The Employer will provide an update on the status of fixed term employees before the next meeting.

STANDING ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>of fixed term employees that may be eligible for conversion.</p> <p>b) As of January 31, 2021, 87 out of 108 (81%) TEI applications submitted by OPSEU-represented employees in the Ministry have been approved.</p> <p>c) The ministry has held three (3) learning events that were open to all staff since January. The DCCP is underway and will continue until September. There are seven (7) OPSEU-represented employees in the DCCP. There are 106 OPSEU-represented employees enrolled in ICCT for this quarter. The Employer provided an update on the development of the ministry's anti-racism action plan. OPSEU raised concerns about a lack of opportunities for employees to act in Team Lead positions at PDSB. The parties agreed to refer this to the BEREC for discussion.</p> <p>d) No surplus notice alerts have been provided in the ministry since the last MERC meeting.</p>	
2. Seasonal Benefits and Pay	This item has been referred to the CERC. OPSEU asked that in the interim the normal processes for	

STANDING ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	seasonal benefits are followed as the summer hiatus period approaches.	
3. CCQALB BERC Update	The BERC met on March 18, 2021. The parties discussed compressed work week arrangements. The next BERC meeting will be in June 2021.	
4. PDSB BERC Update	The BERC met on February 23, 2021. The parties discussed several items including nursing staff, vacancies and the emergency monitoring system. The next BERC meeting is on May 25, 2021.	
BUSINESS ARISING ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
1. ERC Level 2 Training	No update at this time.	
NEW ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
1. Plans for when those still working at home will be returning to the workplace (update).	On February 10, 2021 a memo was sent to all OPS staff from Deputy Minister French, which confirmed that workplace reintegration plans will remain paused until further notice, and the OPS will continue to work remotely as much as possible. The memo is available on InsideOPS at https://intra.ontario.ca/tbs/february-10-2021-to-all-ops-staff-update-on-covid-19-public-health-measures	
2. Temporary assignment contracts across the ministry (update).	OPSEU asked for an update on the use of temporary assignments and raised concern that permanent positions are being filled on a	

BUSINESS ARISING ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	temporary basis. The Employer confirmed that the hiring freeze continues and that permanent positions can only be filled on a temporary basis, with the exception of business-critical positions and those exempted by the Deputy Minister.	

For the Union: Original signed by Daryl O'Grady

Date: March 23, 2021

For the Employer: Original signed by Sanaul Haque

Date: March 23, 2021