

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)
October 19, 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, EDU Karyn Bruneel, EDU Boafoa Kwamena, EDU Arik Kovacs, EDU Juanita Sheridan, TBS *Chair of the Meeting	Andrea Sequeira, EDU Janice Taylor, EDU Annie Wang, EDU	

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 fixed term list and seasonal list were provided to OPSEU by email on October 14, 2021. The seniority report will be provided after the meeting. OPSEU identified employees who may be eligible for conversion to regular status. b) No update. c) The Employer provided an update on the upcoming training and learning opportunities available to staff including: Anti-Racism Competency and Capacity (ARCC) Digital	The Employer will follow up and report back.

STANDING ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>Learning Program, Effective Storytelling in Government and Equity and Fairness: Anti-racism in digital government.</p> <p>d) No surplus notice alerts have been provided in the ministry since the last MERC meeting.</p>	
2. Seasonal Benefits and Pay	OPSEU raised concerns that issues with seasonal benefit access are not being resolved in a timely manner.	The Employer will follow up with OSS for the timely resolution of this issue.
3. CCQALB BERC Update	The BERC met on October 14, 2021. The parties discussed caseload and the status of the MOA. The next BERC meeting is on December 2, 2021.	
4. PDSB BERC Update	The BERC met on September 28, 2021. The parties discussed items such as seasonal benefits access, staffing and COVID-19 protocols. The next BERC meeting is on February 8, 2022. The Employer confirmed that System Memo # 13 was sent out to staff on October 12, 2021.	
5. Plans for employees returning to the workplace / office	The Employer confirmed that safety precautions will be maintained including capacity limits, masks in common areas and physical distancing. Each location will have a 'welcome back memo' from CBRE / IO that will include information relevant to the site for staff such as elevator capacity.	The parties agreed that this is a standing item. The Employer will continue to provide updates as information becomes available.

BUSINESS ARISING ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
1. n/a		
NEW ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
1. Re-opening strategies and involvement of the MERC, LERCs and JHSCs.	The Employer provided an update on the reopening plan for office spaces and confirmed that the reopening plan has been shared with the JHSCs.	The parties encourage the LERCs and the JHSCs to continue to meet on a regular basis.
2. Ministry Anti-Racism Action Plan	The Employer confirmed that the Ministry Anti-Racism Action Plan has been released and is posted on the ministry intranet site. The Employer provided a brief overview of the plan and the work completed. OPSEU emphasized the need for on-going employee engagement.	The parties agreed to make this a standing item.

For the Union: Original signed by Daryl O'Grady
Date: October 19, 2021

For the Employer: Original signed by Sanaul Haque
Date: October 19, 2021