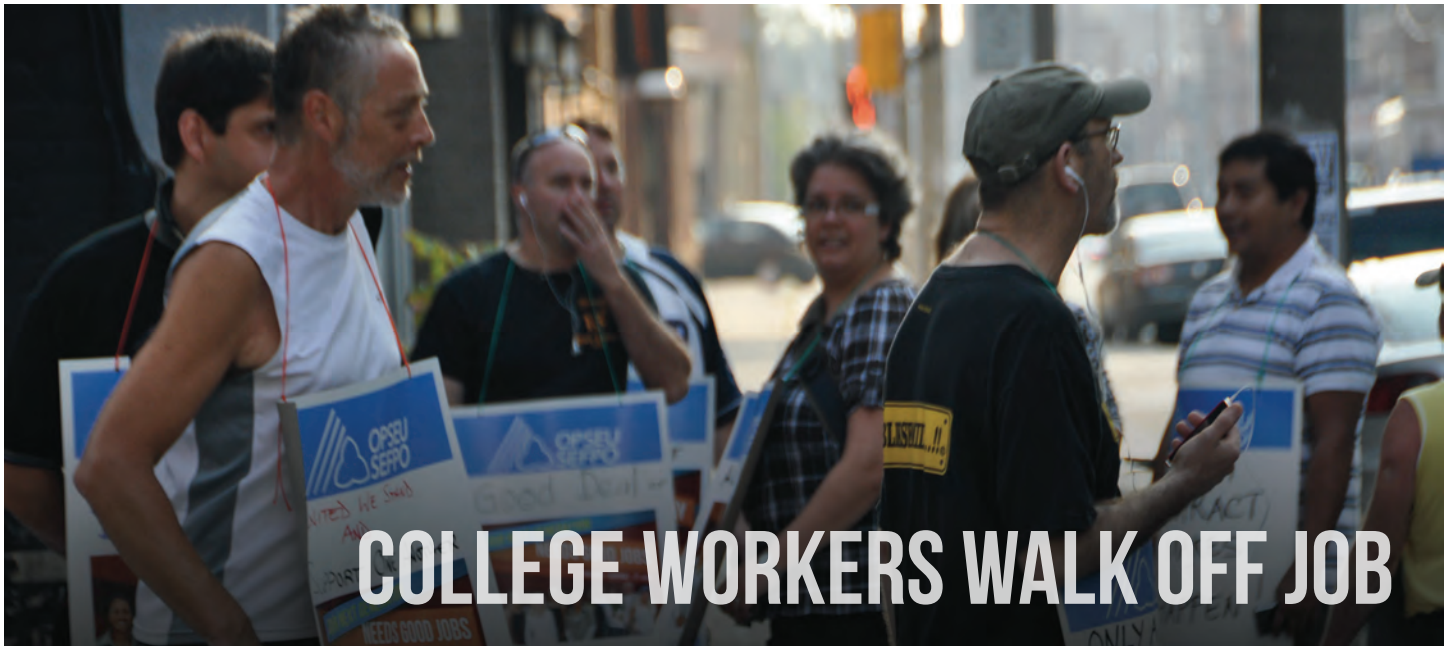


STRIKE BULLETIN

ISSUE #1

SEPTEMBER 2, 2011



Late in the evening on Wednesday Aug. 31, as the clocked moved toward a midnight strike deadline, negotiators for management told us 'this was it.' They weren't prepared to move a step closer to a settlement. Left behind on the bargaining table were several of our items that needed to be addressed and a number of changes they proposed that would have eliminated some of your existing rights.

Over the coming days you are likely to hear how greedy we are and how good we have it. In the meantime let's take a reality check and separate our facts from their fiction.

FACTS VS. FICTION

WAGES

The colleges were offering 1.5, 1.5, 1.75 in each of three years. Annual inflation alone is currently running at 2.7 per cent. We were willing to negotiate, but not a wage rate that would see us fall behind the rate of inflation.

SPECIAL ALLOWANCE

Under our current contract the colleges are required to pay the 'Special Allowance' annually on Sept. 1 or the prior pay period. Management wants to change the date of the payout to the first pay period AFTER Sept. 1.

A bit of background. This past

August the College Employer Council actually advised the colleges NOT to pay us the Special Allowance this year. Why not? We believe it was a deliberate move on their part to further intimidate you by further reducing those funds available to you during a strike. When we asked management at the bargaining table why they were requesting this change, their

2011 CAAT-SUPPORT DIVISION STRIKE BULLETIN

dubious reply was that Sept. 1 did not necessarily fall on a payday and because of that it complicated payroll process. So why didn't they propose the first payday in August? or July? Because they want to limit your available funds in the event of a strike hoping it will influence your decision on whether or not to support a strike.

INITIATIVES/OPPORTUNITIES

During the last round of bargaining this was a contentious issue. We eventually agreed to leave this as a Letter of Understanding as we thought these could be good professional development opportunities if properly used. The colleges, however, have abused this letter. The result is that very few people find themselves hired into these positions as a part of professional development. Management now seeks to make the letter a permanent part of our collective agreement.

FLEXIBLE HOURS OF WORK

Management negotiators stated two weeks was too short a time frame and that they wanted a longer period of notice to opt out of a flexible work schedule - even though you may have special circumstances that require a change in your schedule.

COMPRESSED WORK WEEKS

This was a glimpse into management's motives that affect your working life. On the one hand they

finally addressed the issue of split work weeks. On the other hand, management did not address the possible shift changes that could take place, or changes to your work schedules. Management negotiators did not address how it would deal with inequities whereby some members would be allowed to have a four-day work week while others would be denied. Under management's proposal if you are a frontline worker you would never be able to exercise a four-day work week. Management indicated that if you, too, wished to exercise a four-day work your only option is to put pressure on your manager to agree to your request.

UNION NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE TIME OFF

We feel management wants to create a rift between your bargaining team and you by trying to portray this dispute as an example of how the union leadership wants more, while members are prepared to accept nothing.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

In order to serve the needs of our members your elected reps need leaves of absence. It may not be a major issue for members but it's another way that management deliberately creates a disruptive and dangerous wedge between the members and your elected union representatives.

TIME OFF FOR UNION REPRESENTATION

Another example of how management seeks to weaken your right to strong union representation and contract enforcement.

COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

This is actually a decent proposal that both sides successfully achieved. Management proposed a quicker internal process and we proposed to go to a single arbitrator rather than a board. This could save the colleges and the union hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. Management, however, still aims to limit an arbitrator's powers.

SUMMER STUDENT WORKERS

We want the colleges to pay these students at a properly evaluated rate - and not the reduced student minimum wage.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Forty-two years ago, under our first collective agreement, our probationary period was six months. What's changed over 42 years? Why, suddenly, the urgent need to change the length of the probationary period. Again, management is trying to undermine our good jobs and abuse new employees. We believe management's real agenda is to hire new employees and then release them before their probation expires, thus creating a temporary workforce.

2011 CAAT-SUPPORT DIVISION STRIKE BULLETIN

For 32 years CAAT Support has not resorted to strike action but on Sept. 1 we stood up to demand the respect we deserve. We took a stand to protect you against the erosion of our good jobs today, and to help ensure good jobs for tomorrow.

Finally, I leave you with this thought: support staff are the backbone of the college system; we are the infrastructure and we make Ontario colleges work.

Rod Bemister, Chair - CAAT-S Bargaining Team



CONTACT YOUR TEAM!

If you have any questions at all about bargaining, feel free to e-mail your team at any time.

Our address is
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This publication is authorized for distribution by:

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GOOD JOBS TODAY GOOD JOBS TOMORROW



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