

2011 Bargaining Bulletin



Information for OPSEU members in the CAAT-Support Division

Issue #6, July 15, 2011

Outstanding Support!



Bargaining team vice-chair Florry Foster (foreground) lines up with St. Clair College co-workers to cast their ballots in Thursday's strike vote

On July 14th we collectively made a difficult decision as support staff. Our decision was to **stand united** for our demands for a fair contract that protects our jobs now and in the future. **No concessions** was our message.

Despite management's best efforts to interfere with this round of bargaining and this vote, we were able to **win a 77 per cent strike mandate**. You showed that you stand firmly behind your demands and your team.

The team thanks everyone who mobilized, stayed connected, and voted. **You** are the reason we were able to achieve this strike mandate.

The hard work starts now. While a strike mandate is a significant accomplishment, we are now heading back to the table to bargain with the colleges with a strong mandate. However, as we have stated before, **college management needs to get serious**. The time for management's games are over; the members have shown that they are ready to do whatever is necessary to get a deal.

Over the next month and a half we need to continue showing them that we are ready. Many Locals have set up strike committees, have had meetings for strike planning and members have signed up for strike duties. It is time to become fully prepared and we are well on are way. Approximately 4,000 members signed up for strike duty ahead of the strike vote. If you have not signed up for strike duties already, we would encourage you to contact your Local President to find out the website information.

Contact your local strike committee to find out what needs to be done.

In the next few days, we will be posting a Q and A to help you prepare for possible job action, including some helpful tips on managing your personal finances in preparation for a possible strike. The more prepared we are, the more management will understand the true nature of our resolve.

September 1st – our strike deadline – is not that far away.

We also need members to:

- **Talk to students, faculty, friends and neighbours** in order to build support for our cause;
- **Talk to your brothers and sisters** in the workplace about what we have achieved to-date, and what is needed to get a satisfactory deal;
- **Show your solidarity** by wearing the “Everyone needs Support” buttons;

Let the college management know that **your resolve** goes beyond the strike vote. Remind management every chance you get, that **everyone does need support**. We have already made a difference. **Now is the time to finish what we started.**

Message from the Chair

We now have a strike mandate to work with. Management’s denial of mobilizing time, interference with union business, disrespectful behavior and meddling in the conduct of the vote, disrespectful behavior of not putting their full demands on the table, and unwillingness to bring their monetary package to the table have failed. Support Staff have seen through their misdeeds.

Our goal is a collective agreement that we can bring back to you and recommend for acceptance, not a strike. On July 19, 20 and 21, we will return to the table to negotiate.

We will be backed by the vote results of July 14th. I want to be perfectly clear, the only reason we would go out on strike is if management continues on the path of interference, disrespectful behavior and meddling.

We are committed to getting a deal done, and management had best be committed to that goal as well.

We continue to speak to you, the members, every day either in person, by telephone or by e-mail. Unlike the employer team, we are accountable to our members every day, not just for the day of a vote.

Over the next few weeks the colleges will have to consider their decisions and actions in order to avoid a strike. They must seriously want to bargain with us and not just provide “sound clips” for the media.

Some colleges have indicated that they will be open for business as usual if we go on strike, so let’s be clear. Withdrawal of our support will have a devastating effect on the colleges.

For the rest of the summer we need to continue to show management we are prepared to do whatever it takes, up to and including any strike action, to get a collective agreement.

Once again, thank you for your support July 14th. Let’s do everything we can to ensure that when we go back to the bargaining table, management knows we are fully prepared to go on strike. Only then will we fully win their respect and gain a collective agreement that is fair, equitable and rewards the work we do.

In Solidarity,

Rod Bemister

Chair, 2011 CAAT Support 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 bargaining@rogers.com.

Please post and circulate.

This publication is authorized for distribution by:
Rod Bemister, Chair, CAAT-Support Bargaining Team
and Warren (Smokey) Thomas, President, OPSEU.

