

Bargaining Bulletin

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Dear Members

On Wednesday, February 15, 2012, OSSTF/FEESO and other education stakeholders received a memo from the government outlining its timetable for a Provincial Discussion Table (PDT) relating to the upcoming negotiation of our collective agreements. A teleconference was held on February 21 with the Premier, the Minister of Education and all education stakeholders.

On Wednesday, February 22, 2012, your Provincial Executive, Department Head of Negotiations and In-House Legal Counsel met with the government's PDT team and received the attached document outlining the government's parameters for the 2012 PDT discussions. The government's team consisted of three hired lawyers, with the lead, a retired judge, presenting OSSTF/FEESO with an austerity proposal for all OSSTF/FEESO bargaining units that, as part of a two year agreement would:

1. **Freeze wages** - a two-year term for the next collective agreement with a 0% salary increase in each year.
2. **Freeze progression on all salary grids** - all members currently on the salary grid would be frozen in place for two years with no catch up to the correct position on the grid being possible in the future, perpetuating a permanent lag created by the freeze.
3. **Restructure salary grids** - a review of salary grids going forward with the intent of limiting how experience and qualifications are recognized in moving through the new grid, with a view to future "sustainability".
4. **Freeze all retirement gratuities and remove sick leave banks** – the retirement gratuity entitlement (sick leave bank, service, salary, and eligibility) would be frozen as of August 31, 2012. All accumulated sick leave not used to calculate this frozen gratuity would be removed – there would be no more sick leave banks. Each member would receive six (6) days per year at 100% salary and then, short term disability for up to 24 weeks at 2/3 salary, none of which is accumulated or carried forward.

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5. **Examine OTPP contributions and benefits** - a 2012 Ontario Teacher Pension Plan valuation would occur with a view to not increasing the government's level of contribution. This would mean that teachers would bear the sole responsibility for any shortfall through reduction of benefits.

The government representatives have indicated that it is their intent to have these parameters met prior to the release of the Ontario budget in late March. **The government proposal represents an unprecedented attack on members' rights and the process of free collective bargaining. It is clearly unacceptable to OSSTF/FEESO.**

The proposed PDT process is not part of the collective bargaining process as established in the *Ontario Labour Relations Act*. OSSTF/FEESO will continue to prepare for negotiations with local employers across the province.

OSSTF/FEESO has been and will continue to be in contact with the other teacher affiliates and other affected unions in order to gather the most up-to-date information possible. We will be meeting with our Ad Hoc advisory work groups, consisting of local leaders, the evening of February 29th. Further information will be distributed as it becomes available. Members should be sure to frequently monitor both your local OSSTF/FEESO communication network and the OSSTF/FEESO provincial website.



Kenneth Coran, President