

**Upcoming dates:**

- February 7-11, 2017 – OSBCC Conference

November 23, 2016**Update on contract extension talks**

As you know, we've recently met with the province regarding the possibility of a contract extension. The small group assigned to these talks held meetings with the government from Tuesday, November 15th through the early morning of Friday, November 18th.

While talks were productive, we did not reach an agreement on contract extension. We have not closed the door on continuing these talks at a future point.

We raised issues related to workload, staffing levels, and the overall funding of the education system. We also raised issues related to job security in the sector, and stressed the importance of this to us. The Council of Trustee Associations (CTA) were not interested in amending our existing job security language, so the government's offer was limited to an extension of the current job security LOU in our central agreement, and not substantive changes to protect our complement against attrition.

In fact, while we were in central extension talks, we learned that the Halton Catholic Board announced the contracting out of cleaning in two more high schools. Our members working in those schools will be assigned to a permanent unassigned pool. The timing of this seemed designed to undermine central talks, and we expressed our opposition to this directly to the government.

While there was an offer to increase wages, without substantive other changes we did not feel it was enough at this point to agree to an extension. The government also offered to target new monies in a few specific areas requiring greater investment, but it was not enough to move us toward agreement.

OSSTF is returning to the table with the government to continue extension talks this week. We have no information to share on the other unions at this point.

Benefit trust talks are ongoing outside of the extension talks, and we have been clear that there needs to be more money for this if we are to agree to a benefits trust.

There were no discussions on the remedy sought following the Charter challenge victory in April. These talks need to continue.

In general, the committee left the discussions feeling we were clear in communicating CUPE's priorities. We emphasized in particular job security, and the areas of the funding formula that require substantial investment to restore and improve our ability to deliver the services students need, and to make sure their learning environments are maintained.

While we are open to continuing these talks in the future, locals need to prepare for local bargaining as usual. Please start to get your bargaining and strike committees organized. Please continue to work with parent groups and allies to fight school closures and address problems with the funding of the education system.

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