

Un Employed

March 23, 2006

News & Views of OPSEU Local 558 Striking Workers

Volume 3, Number 7

Friday: a day of political action

Local 558 has 538 full-time and partial-load librarians, counsellors, professors on strike. Imagine for a moment that every one of our members does something in the next several days to exert political pressure on the government to find a settlement that supports quality education. While 538 people seems like a small number in a city of 3 million, consider that a very small fraction of the population participates in the political process. Those who do are seen as representative of the broader community. Now imagine that 9100 articulate, committed and outspoken professors, librarians and counsellors do something. Don't underestimate the significant presence that CAAT academic can establish province-wide.

During these crucial moments in negotiations, it is



OPSEU President Leah Casselman with Centennial picketers at Progress campus

key to communicate with our political leaders and the public at large the significance of this strike and the determination we have to achieve quality education gains. During your picket shift today, talk with fellow picketers about potential actions you can take and plan to do at least one or two things from the list below as your Friday strike duty.

A guide to political action

Here are some suggestions of actions to take:

- attend Centennial's Quality Education rally at Progress on Thursday at 4pm
- drop by and visit your MPP - remember that face to face and verbal contact has the most impact
- make an appointment to see your MPP
 - call your MPP and follow it up with a letter
 - organize a "flying squad" of striking faculty members to drop in on your local MPP and discuss why you are on strike
 - write Dalton McGuinty
 - write a "letter to the editor"
 - phone into a local call-in show
 - participate on a web discussion group
 - If you are a member of a professional organization, a community organization or other group, explain to them the issues and ask them to write Premier McGuinty in support of quality education
 - plan to do something on your picket shift that will boost everyone's morale
 - wear a yellow armband in solidarity with John Stammers. ☒

Letter topics & talking points

Here are some ideas of things you can write and talk about:

- why applied learning in the college system needs lower class sizes (for example, why you need small class sizes to teach someone how to give an injection)
- how Ontario's productivity and economic future is connected to quality career education
- how the Ontario government's funding increases are (not) finding their way to the classroom
- overcrowding in classrooms & high student/teacher ratios
- changes in workload and class sizes over your teaching career
- the effect on students (especially future ones) of these changes
- why "contract teachers" (partial-load, part-time, sessional) are limited by the system in their ability to prepare for courses and deal with student needs.
- the integral role that colleges, which are rooted in the community, play in providing options and opportunities for youth

Dear editor

The College strike is entering its third week. Let's be clear on why we are walking the line. Look at my department for an example. We teach Automotive Apprentices how to repair cars. In the last 40 years, cars have changed but not the training time for Apprentices. They went to school for 720 hours in the sixties and still go to school for the same amount of time!

I think everyone can understand that cars are just a little more complex these days. At the same time, my classes have increased in size from an average of 25 to consistently 40. The only reason they are not larger is because the rooms hold only 40. We want smaller classes, and more time with our students.

What happens to the students in this situation? It's easy to imagine how the quality of education has deteriorated. We want more full time profs. We are on strike, losing pay (eating macaroni) for your sons and daughters. The province has long ago determined that the College system needs more to prepare our students for the jobs they intend to hold after graduation.

We only want them to go out properly educated and ready for their careers. This is what Premier McGuinty wants too.

Prof. Thomas Brown

Centennial College, Toronto

Liberal MPP contacts

Bas Balkissoon, Scarborough—Rouge River

4559 Sheppard Avenue East, Unit B

Toronto, Ontario M1S 1V3

Tel: (416) 297-5040 Fax: (416) 297-6767

bbalkissoon.mpp@liberal.ola.org

Hon. Mary Anne Chambers, Scarborough East

20 - 4630 Kingston Rd

Toronto ON M1E 4Z4

Tel : 416-281-2787 Fax : 416-281-2360

machambers.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Hon. Gerry Phillips, Scarborough—Agincourt

204 - 4002 Sheppard Ave E

Scarborough ON M1S 4R5

Tel : 416-297-6568 Fax : 416-297-4962

gphillips.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Lorenzo Berardinetti, Scarborough Southwest

3047 Kingston Rd

Scarborough ON M1M 1P1

Tel : 416-261-9525 Fax : 416-261-0381

lberardinetti.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Brad Duguid, Scarborough Centre

204 - 1450 Midland Ave

Scarborough ON M1P 4Z8

Tel : 416-615-2183 Fax : 416-615-2011

bduguid.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Hon. Mike Colle, Eglinton—Lawrence

2882 Dufferin St

Toronto ON M6B 3S6

Tel : 416-781-2395 Fax : 416-781-4116

mcolle.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Wayne Arthurs, Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge

213 - 1550 Kingston Rd

Pickering ON L1V 1C3

Tel : 905-420-0829 Fax : 905-420-5351

warthurs.mpp@liberal.ola.org