

The Part-Time Times

A newsletter for Ontario community college part-time and sessional employees and friends

Sprint to the finish!

Organizers race to sign up more part-timers as college card-signing drive enters crucial week

The OPSEU campaign to win union rights for Ontario college part-timers and sessionals enters a new phase this week.

Union organizers are racing to get as many people as possible to sign membership application cards before the end of Friday, April 11.

“We know now that this organizing drive has the support of thousands of college part-timers and sessionals,” says OPSEU President Warren (Smokey) Thomas. “This does not mean we can stop signing people up. Every single card we sign increases our moral authority to demand that these workers get the chance now to be represented by our union and take part in collective bargaining.”

The union will make one final request this week to ask the College Compensation and Appointments Council to voluntarily recognize OPSEU as the bargaining agent for part-timers and sessionals. The Council handles collective bargaining for the colleges.

“The colleges are funded by the province and are fully accountable to the province, and in the last nine months both the colleges and the province have repeatedly expressed their support for bargaining rights for part-timers and sessionals,” said Thomas. “I think it’s safe to say that all college workers expect their government to tell the colleges that the time to turn talk into action is now.”

If the Council refuses to recognize OPSEU as the part-timers’ bargaining agent, the union will make a formal application for certification to the Education Relations Commission on Monday, April 14. (The

Education Relations Commission works in concert with the Ontario Labour Relations Board.)

The union will present thousands of signed union cards to the Commission and ask it to order a certification vote.

“We know now that our organizing drive has the support of thousands of college part-timers and sessionals. This does not mean we can stop signing people up.”

– OPSEU President Warren (Smokey) Thomas



“In a certification vote, I know we will prove that the overwhelming majority of college workers want OPSEU as their bargaining agent,” said Thomas.

In the meantime, he said, union organizers need to stay focused on card-signing.

“It’s tempting to ease up as we get close to the finish line, but we’re not done yet,” he said. “If it comes to a vote, we need to be able to notify workers about vote locations and times, and it’s a lot simpler if we have their contact information.

“We’ll celebrate after we win. For now, we’ve got work to do.”

It's time!

SIGN YOUR OPSEU UNION CARD TODAY

For full information about the OPSEU drive to win union rights for part-timers and sessionals at Ontario's community colleges, just visit or call!

www.collegeworkers.org

1-866-811-7274

The Part-Time Times is authorized for distribution by Roger Couvrette, president of the Organization of Part-Time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (OPSECAAT), and Warren (Smokey) Thomas, president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU).

