

The Real Deal

Bargaining news from your OPSEU Central
Bargaining Team in the Ontario Public Service

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Get ready for a hot January

Tuesday, Dec. 18 has come and gone at the Central bargaining table. We now have two opening proposals: yours and the employer's.

Yours is better.

Your OPSEU Central Team put forward a package aimed at beginning to rebuild the OPS by supporting the people on the front lines. Our package calls for, among other things, improved job security, better wages, benefits and more classified jobs for unclassified workers, and an extension of the Factor 80 early retirement plan for any eligible employee, whether they have a layoff notice or not.

"These are the kinds of things we need to build careers in the OPS," said Marg Simmons, chair of the Central Team. "People with 'careers,' as opposed to 'jobs,' are able to develop the skills, the experience, and the loyalty that are the foundation of a top-quality public service."

This is what we are fighting for. It's what we'll have to fight hard for in the New Year.

While we focused on renewal, the employer's proposal is stuck in the past. They want to make it even easier to get rid of public employees by cutting your current job security protections. They want the workers left behind to be as cheap and

disposable as possible.

They haven't mentioned Factor 80. They haven't tabled a wage proposal.

It's going to take a lot of pressure and persuasion by OPSEU members to knock the employer's takeaways off the bargaining table and win the improvements we need.

The good news is, member action is already working. In our workplaces, in our communities, and in the news media, OPSEU members have been letting this employer know that we mean business for over three months.

Member action has already had a direct impact on bargaining. We not only know we have your support, but more importantly, the employer knows it too. Keep up the tremendous work!

The following is a brief summary of the demands put forward. For a complete list please check the .pdf document on the OPSEU web site at www.opseu.org.

The members' proposal

Job security issues

- Looking at article 20 and improvements to it

Pension issues

- Extend factor 80, and have it

accessible whether or not you have a layoff notice.

- Other improvements

Benefits

- New carrier
- Drug card
- Joint-administration
- General improvements
- Unclassified entitlements

Wages

- 6 per cent, yr.1
- 6 per cent, yr 2

Unclassified issues

- Better conversion language
- Improvements to unclassified, and seasonal staff

Family issues

- Provisions for paid emergency leave

Seniority

- Order of layoff provision

Other improvements in the areas of posting and filling of vacancies, grievances, training and development, vacation improvement, travel, union activities, occupational health and safety language and issues and specific bargaining unit issues.

Please turn to page 2

POST AND CIRCULATE

The employer's proposal

Pay for performance

The employer wants the ability to reward their favourites and deny others. The details of their "treasure chest" will be forwarded at a later date.

Benefits

Reduce coverage by introducing "caps" and "other limits". This could mean lesser dental benefits, generic drugs or only specific drugs being covered. The details are to follow.

Pensions

Eliminate the ability to pay for Factor 80 on our own.

Reasonable Efforts

Eliminate the ability of our members to opt in to RFP's if their jobs are eliminated under Schedule A of Appendix 18.

This would have a significant impact on MTO area maintenance and Ministry of Education at the moment and others in the context of this collective agreement.

Employment Equity

Eliminate all references to employment equity in posting and filling of vacancies.

Job competitions

- Eliminate need for competition in certain situations - details to be forwarded
- Limit competitions where postings are frequent and create a bidding process
- Eliminate requirement to acknowledge applications for positions.

Unclassifieds

Attempt to eliminate rollovers

for unclassified members by not counting all their "unrelated assignments" (as they determine them) in the conversion formula.

Vacation entitlement

Super vacation in order to attract "competent and qualified" people to the OPS (as opposed to the apparent "bums" they currently have). This would create a two-tiered vacation system.

Reduction of the number of "bums"

Reduce the number of "bums" available if members are displaced during a layoff. Details to be forwarded.

Term Classifieds

Would like to explore this with us.

Meet your team members

*Joe Catroppa,
Central Team Member*

Joe Catroppa works for the Office of the Registrar General in Thunder Bay and is the president of Local 736. As if being a member of the bargaining team wasn't enough, Joe is also a MERC member with the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services, an area council member and a harassment and discrimination investigator.

"I feel confident and optimistic that a fair and equitable contract can be achieved for all," said Joe. "The energy, passion and commitment of the team members are second to none. I urge all members across the province to support your bargaining team."

Joe says that the power of 45,000 members standing together is an unbeatable force. "In solidarity, we can achieve anything."



Meet your team members

*Serge Valcourt,
Central Team Member*

Serge Valcourt is a Transportation Enforcement Officer and Facility Auditor with the Ministry of Transportation, and has been in the ministry since 1988. Serge is a strong union activist, and had his first introduction to a union as a student mechanic helper in Kapuskasing.

Serge has been the president



of Local 634, a composite local in North Bay, since 1997. He is an active member of the MTO

MERC team and a member of both the North Bay area council and the North Bay labour council.

“I am proud to have been given the chance to represent Region 6 in this round of bargaining,” said Serge. “I know the importance of public services and ending the government’s plan to privatize our work.”

Serge cannot put enough

stress on the importance of member support.

“We need that support to get a good contract,” said Serge. “With the support of all, we will have a contract that we can all defend and all be proud of.”

Central Team quote of the week:

“There is no limit to what you can accomplish if you do not worry too much about who gets the credit.” – Andy Todd

How to contact your team members

You can contact the Central Team directly at (416) 815-1406, by fax at (416) 815-1412 or by e-mail at centralteam@opseu.org.

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The Real Deal is your only accurate source of Central Team information during this round of bargaining. If you don't read it here, you can't be sure it's true. Don't rely on gossip and rumours. We will provide the facts.

The Real Deal will be available by fax, by e-mail, and on the OPSEU web site at www.opseu.org. To receive it directly, send your secure fax number to Lesley Williams at (416) 443-1762 or send your e-mail address to lwilliams@opseu.org.

*Authorized for distribution by
Marg Simmons, chair, Central team, and
Leah Casselman, president.*