

M E M O R A N D U M

OPSEU



SEFPO

Syndicat des Employé-e-s
de la Fonction Publique
de l'Ontario

TO: All Presidents with members in the Ministry of Education
All Stewards in the Ministry of Education

FROM: Brian Gould, OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

DATE: April 2, 2007

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Education
ERC Minutes – December 19, 2006**

Attached, for your information, are the minutes of the above captioned meeting.

Please post or otherwise make them available to the members in your workplaces.

Also attached is a MERC referral form which should be used when referring unresolved local issues to the ministry level. The referral should be sent care of the Job Security Unit with all the supporting documentation, (e.g. minutes, correspondence, etc.), with any referrals.

PLEASE NOTE: THESE MINISTRY MINUTES WERE PREPARED BY THE EMPLOYER.

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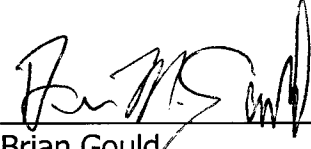
or

1 800-663-1070


Leah Casselman
President

/jmh
att.

CC: MERC Chairs
Ministry ERC


Brian Gould
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

**MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

MINUTES

**Tuesday December 19, 2006
Kenora Room
MacDonald Block, 900 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario
9:30 a.m. – Noon**

For the Employer:

Lisa Sherin (Co-chair)
Mercedes Gagnon
David Doherty
Deborah Metrakos
Jay Naik
Reena Sharma

For the Union:

Alicia Czekierda (Co-chair)*
Chris Cormier
Stephen George
Sue Blackford

*Chair of the Meeting

Regrets:

Kit Rankin
Mel Thompson

REVIEW OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the June 7, 2006 meeting were approved as written. The minutes of the October 5, 2006 meeting were approved as revised.

BUSINESS ARISING:

1. Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Prevention (WDHP) Policy Update

The Union confirmed that the training package being developed by the Central Employee Relations Committee (CERC) subcommittee on training does not include a component on WDHP training.

Management reported that none of the Provincial Schools Branch policies are currently taped in American Sign Language (ASL) or la langue des signes québécoise (LSQ). The Branch is prepared to record selected Branch policies in ASL/LSQ, starting with those policies referenced in the orientation material, but cannot commit to a completion date at this time.

The Union indicated that WDHP training had been provided at the Ministry Offices at 777 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario, in February 2006 and asked why the training had not been disclosed to the Union. Management indicated that it was unaware of the training referenced, but would follow-up and report back to the Union.

At the last MERC meeting the Union committed to report back on whether WDHP training falls within the mandate of the new Central Employee Relations Committee (CERC) subcommittee on training. The Union reported that the subcommittee is not examining WDHP training. It further indicated that it might raise the issue of WDHP training at the CERC.

***Commitment:* Management will enquire about WDHP training at 777 Bay Street and report back to the Union.**

2. Local Employee Relations Committees (LERCs) / Training Module

Management indicated that it was awaiting the Union's response to suggestions of how to do training needs assessment. The Union responded that it had polled the union LERC co-chairs at each provincial school, all of whom supported LERC training based on the Community and Social Services Model. Management noted that, as it was awaiting agreement from the Union on how to conduct a needs assessment it had not yet had an opportunity to canvass the LERC Management Co-chairs on the issue. There was a discussion of the outstanding implementation issues – how the training would be rolled out, to whom, who would actually give the training a consultant, MERC members or both, how much training is feasible in any one year, and timelines for delivering training. There was agreement that there was a need to move forward on an implementation plan, which would include all Ministry LERCs. Management suggested that it

might be beneficial if MERC members from each side attended one of the Ministry of Community and Social Services training sessions. The Union indicated that it would involve all of its MERC members in working on the implementation issues.

Commitment: *The MERC subcommittee will develop an implementation plan for delivery of LERC training based on the COMSOC model, by January 31, 2007. The plan will incorporate MERC training that would occur prior to delivery of training to the LERCs.*

3. Seniority Lists, True Vacancy Report, Unclassified Contracts

The Union noted that there had been a significant reduction in the positions noted on the True Vacancy List. Management confirmed that this was the result of ongoing efforts to remove unfunded vacant positions. It indicated that it hoped to reduce the number of such positions recorded on the list to no more than 5% of the total.

A discussion ensued about how supply positions are recorded in terms of Full Time Equivalent positions (FTE's). Management indicated that these positions are initially entered as full FTE's but then are reduced based on the actual hours worked in any given month. The Union asked whether it could get a breakdown of supply FTE's reconciled on the basis of actual hours worked, as well as information on the number of supply staff versus the number of unclassified staff less than full-time. Management agreed to look into whether that data is available.

At the October MERC management indicated that the Ministry of Government Services (MGS) had reported to OPSEU Corporate the percentage of OPSEU unclassified staff (excluding seasonal employees and students) as a percentage of total OPSEU staff, but for this purpose had combined the ministries of Education, and Training, Colleges and Universities. Management was asked to provide the information for the Ministry of Education alone. Management reported at this meeting that it was attempting to determine exactly how MGS had made the calculations so that the figure given can be directly comparable to that of other Ministries. Management reported that, based on a manual count of the current seniority and unclassified lists, unclassified staff represented approximately 16.18% of OPSEU staff.

The Union indicated that it had a number of specific questions about the lists that it would e-mail to Management. It was agreed that the questions and answers would then be appended to the minutes,

Commitment: *Management will review whether it can provide data on supply staff FTE's and distinguish between supply staff and unclassified staff less than full-time.*

Management also agreed to report back on the percentage of unclassified staff for the Ministry of Education once it had obtained the information required from the Ministry of Government Services.

4. Provincial Schools Governance

Management indicated that there was nothing new to report on this item.

5. Residential Counsellors 1 & 2 Job Specifications

The Union indicated that it was still analyzing the job specifications for these positions and had nothing to report at this time.

6. WSIB Summaries

The Union indicated that it would like to see training at the provincial schools on preventing slip/fall accidents. Management agreed that such training could be made a component of its occupational health and safety training.

The Union asked that Management include position titles to the WSIB report so that it can better assess the context in which the accidents are occurring.

Commitment: *Management will include a component on preventing slip/falls in provincial school occupational health and safety training.*

Management will add position title to the WSIB report on a going forward basis.

7. Job Evaluations Project Update

Neither Management nor the Union had an update to provide on the Job Evaluation Project

8. Ideas Campaign Update

Management reported that 9 ideas had been submitted to the Ministry for review. The issues raised included:

- double sided photocopying
- health and nutrition education, including education on alternative therapies
- sector development of IT training programs
- sector IT procurement
- on line secondary school testing
- electronic clipping services

9. Health and Safety/ Workplace Bullying

Management reported that it had relayed to the Corporate Human Resource Policy Branch of the Ministry of Government Services OPSEU's position that there should be an anti-bullying policy. The response received was that such a policy is not currently under development, but may be considered for future development.

The Union reported that anti-bullying training had been provided at W. Ross MacDonald School. Management reported that a seminar on bullying had also been presented by the OPSEU local president at an OPSEU lunch-time event in the Mowat Block.

It was agreed that this item would be removed from the agenda.

10. Exit Interviews

Management indicated that it had not proceeded to re-issue the exit interview policy, as it was reviewing the policy to see if it could be made more effective.

Commitment: Management will issue a communication advising staff of the process for exit interviews once the policy has been reviewed and revised as appropriate.

11. Residential Counsellor 3's doing Child Youth Worker 3's Job

Management indicated that this issue was resolved. The Union asked that the minutes record a summary of the issue and the resolution. As the MERC Management representative who held the discussions was not present it was decided that the member draft a summary which would be appended to the minutes.

Following the meeting the following summary was provided:

The Manager of Finance and Administration, Provincial Schools Branch met with the OPSEU Local President to discuss the backfilling of a Child Care Worker 3 position at Roberts School. The issue was resolved at that meeting through an agreement that the position will be backfilled during the absence of the incumbent until March 2007. The agreement was based on an assessment by Management of the operational needs of the program.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Drug Cards for Seasonal Employees

The Union asked how the implementation of drug cards would affect the ability of seasonal staff at the provincial schools to receive reimbursement from the beginning of the school year.

Management responded that it has asked Ontario Shared Services to review this situation, and will get back to the Union once it has an answer. It noted that the current system which relies on a paper claim and a manual override of the insurance carrier's automated eligibility list, should still be available as a back-up system.

Commitment: *Management will pursue this issue with Ontario Shared Services and report back to the Union.*

2. Web Based Records of Employment

The Union asked whether the Ministry would be using web based *Records of Employment* (ROEs) to speed up processing of paperwork in support of seasonal employee's Employment Insurance claims. Management indicated that it had contacted Ontario Shared Services (OSS) and was informed that there had been

internal discussions within OSS, but that no decision had been made to use web based ROEs at this time. Movement to the electronic submission of ROEs would have to be made on an OPS-wide basis.

3. Changes in Hours of Work / Job Posting of 36.25 hour Classroom Assistants at Centre Jules Leger

The Union asked why a classroom Assistant position had recently been posted as a 36.25 hour position at Centre Jules Leger (CJL) when such positions were now being posted as 32 hour positions at other sites. Management responded that its position has always been that it will continue to post positions as 36.25 when it has operational need for 36.25 hours of work per week. In this case the extra hours are based on the position performing breakfast, lunch, and after-school supervision, which is not performed by the 32 hour Classroom Assistants.

The Union indicated that its information is that the CJL positions do not include breakfast supervision. Management agreed to confirm its information.

Commitment: Management will confirm whether the Centre Jules Leger Classroom Assistant positions include breakfast supervision.

4. Belleville LERC Terms of Reference

This item was deferred

5. Work Boot Allowance

In response to a question from the Union, Management indicated that the provincial schools work boot allowance had not been revised since the mid-1990's. The Union indicated that it would be submitting a proposal for a revision to the practice. Management indicated that it would be glad to receive the proposal and would in the meantime conduct its own review.

Commitment: The Union will submit a proposal for a revised provincial schools work boot allowance. Management will conduct a review of the current practice.

6. Provincial Schools Branch Strategic Plan

The Union raised concern over the direction taken by the committee developing the Provincial Schools Branch strategic plan. It claimed that management is now dictating the process, which started out as a collaborative process. It claimed that committee members are being told what to write/recommend, and what to address or not address. It suggested that the process seems now to be focussed on meeting time lines and finding cost savings rather than improving service, and that it had moved away from the priorities identified through the initial survey.

***Commitment:** The Union will provide any further details of its concerns by e-mail. Management will investigate these allegations and report back to the Union.*

7. Workplace Ergonomics (Showcase Ontario 2006)

This item was deferred

8. Secondments within the Ministry

This item was deferred

9. Rebuilding Public Services

The Union noted that successor rights were to be restored in legislation currently before the Legislative Assembly.

The Union raised concern that the Premier's promise to rebuild the Public Service, was not being implemented. It noted staff reductions, lay-offs, divesting work to other levels of government, and under funding as inconsistent with this promise. It noted in particular the closing of public health laboratories and development service facilities, and the recent consultations on identifying services Ontario should not be delivering. It suggested that these developments reduced service, diminished the quality of life, and failed to recognize the dedication of provincial government employees. It asked that management convey these concerns to its principals.

10. Drivers Licences / Insurance

The Union questioned the need to include, on corporate files, photocopies of employees' driver's licences for employees driving Ministry vehicles. It suggested that this violated employees' privacy and that the file copies should have the driver's licence number blacked out.

The Union also inquired as to the implications of recent changes to *the Insurance Act* on staff using fleet vehicles or renting vehicles for government business. Management responded that it was aware of the issue and was awaiting clarification from the Ministry of Government Services (MGS).

Commitments: *Management will inquire as to whether it is necessary to keep a copy of the driver's licence number on file for insurance purposes. It will also provide the Union with information on the implications of the changes to the Insurance Act on staff using Ministry or rented vehicles, once obtained from MGS.*

11. MERC Dates for 2007

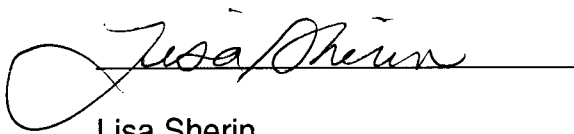
The parties agreed to the following dates for 2007:

March 27, 2007
June 15, 2007
October 4, 2007
December 14, 2007

Next Meeting: March 29, 2007

The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes signed 2007:



Lisa Sherin
For Management



Alicia Czekierda
For the Union