

September 9, 2011

To: All Full-time Support Staff

The college support staff strike will soon enter its second week. As I write to you today, there are no talks scheduled between the colleges and the union.

The colleges remain willing to negotiate but only if negotiations can be productive. We need to secure a settlement that is reasonable to our employees and affordable to the colleges.

Unfortunately, the prospects of reaching a negotiated settlement are not positive so long as the union's bargainers do not accept the economic realities.

Colleges' Offer

The colleges have provided a good offer with a salary increase of 4.8% over three years with no concessions from employees.

- Year One – an annual salary increase of 1.5%
- Year Two – an annual salary increase of 1.5%
- Year Three – an annual salary increase of 1.75%

This offer is in line with other OPSEU and broader public sector settlements, which in July 2011 contained average annual salary increases of 1.2%.

Union's Proposals

The union's proposals would add more costs than the colleges can afford, including:

- 6.1% salary increase over two years
- Significant additional college costs for retiree benefits
- Additional union leave time

Affirming the Colleges' Positions

There have been many public comments made that inaccurately reflect the positions of the colleges on the use of part-time employees, concessions from employees and two-tier employment provisions. Let me deal directly with these matters.

No provision in the colleges' proposals would increase the use of part-time employees. In fact, the existing collective agreement gives preference to full-time over part-time employment.

The union has **no** proposals on the table that would alter how we use part-time employees. The OPSEU bargaining team is well aware that the colleges have actually increased the number of full-time support staff over the past two years – up from 6,751 in 2008 to 6,936 in 2010.

Furthermore, let me confirm that the colleges are not asking for any concessions from employees or any item that would result in two-tier employment conditions.

Colleges' and Union's Proposals Posted Online

The College Employer Council has posted both the colleges' and the union's proposals that were on the table when the strike started. The Council has done this to help everyone gain a full understanding of what was being proposed by each side.

We encourage everyone to visit the site www.thecouncil.on.ca, read the proposals and inform themselves about the issues.

The strike is unfortunate for everyone. We all hope that it will be resolved quickly and we can once again work together delivering the services, programs and education that are so highly valued in our community. We have a labour dispute; it is not personal and we are working toward a negotiated settlement. During this difficult process, I am hopeful that we can maintain the respect and professionalism that exemplifies Sault College.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Common". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ron" being more prominent and the last name "Common" following in a similar style.

Ron Common
President