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Discussions – Questions – Concerns

HIGHLIGHTS

from
REGULAR GENERAL MEETING
of February 23, 2008

We've been busy! The following provides information and items discussed, presented and reviewed at our Regular General Meeting of February 23, 2008. A copy of the "official Minutes" and Reports from the Meeting have been forwarded to all 997 Communicators and posted on our web site – www.cupe997.ca – Member Resources – Meeting Information.

Highlights From EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

997 office updates including the Local's purchase of Minolta Konica photo copier.

Surplus from CUPE 997 PD Fund and Support Staff Funding - a plan formulated covering the period to Aug 31 2010. Surplus funds were broken down into the 3 school years, and then from there equitable distribution to our "groups" – i.e.: Custodial/Maintenance; Office/Clerical; Technical and Educational Assistants. We welcome suggestions for items – events. We have participated and provided funds for the upcoming Custodial/Maintenance PD Day and there have been discussions regarding the possible participation of Educational Assistants for ½ day on the April 18th PA Day.

Job Evaluation – the Chief Stewards and President have received training. There is a Joint Ratings Committee Meeting scheduled with the assistance of the CUPE National JE Representative on March 31st.

We have received inquiries regarding additional and/or changing job duties and responsibilities from members of "generic job description" positions. The Board will be providing a draft proposed schedule for "maintenance" of the Job Evaluation plan. As we commence and move forward through the maintenance portion of the JE Plan we will provide more details.

CUPE 997 By-Law Review – Notice and proposed changes will be posted on our web site – www.cupe997.ca – Member Resources – CUPE 997 By-Laws and Meeting Information and a hard copy for posting in all worksites will go out in the Courier.

By-Election – Office/Clerical Chief Steward – Notice and details will be posted on our web site www.cupe997.ca – What's New and Member Resources – Meeting Information and a hard copy forwarded to our Communicators for posting in all worksites.

Attendance Support Procedure – This new TLDSB Procedure has been presented to the Trustees' and will be implemented. We strongly urge all 997 Members to review the information in our collective agreements regarding the information we are obligated to provide to the employer relating to sick leave usage. Please contact your Chief Steward or the 997 Office before providing any medical (diagnosis) information to the employer either in writing or verbally.

Highlights from GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Status of Informal, Step 1 and Step 2 Grievances - TLDSB and our CUPE Local will be undertaking discussions regarding Educational Assistant “male designated” positions and recognition of our time when the work day is extended as a result of attending Courses – Workshops – Seminars, etc. A correction regarding the Grievance Committee Report – the Policy Grievance relating to “male designated positions” has not been withdrawn – it is “in abeyance”.

Highlights from JOINT HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

The importance of all staff completing the Incident/Accident Reports was discussed. The reminder - clarification provided on the Joint Health & Safety Committee Report for Feb 12 08 re Kerrie Wright’s Memo to Principals, Vice Principals and Secretaries clearly identifies the necessity of ensuring these Reports are completed and submitted. There appears to be some confusion with Educational Assistants – to confirm the completing of information in the “Behaviour Log” is not part of the Incident/Accident reporting.

There was discussion regarding the importance of access in the worksite to MSDS Sheets relating to chemicals/products in the workplace. A recent situation at a contract cleaning school occurred when a worker experienced a violent reaction to paint fumes from painting that was being done in a stairwell. CUPE Custodial/Maintenance staff receive education and direction with respect to the appropriate chemicals and products, the necessary safeguards and protection for workers and students. This issue continues to be investigated. Workers (staff) at worksites where there is work taking place and there are odours relating to the work being undertaken should check with their Worksite Health & Safety Representative and/or their Head Custodian.

997 COMMUNICATORS

We have language in our collective agreements noting space on worksites bulletin boards must be available for the posting of information of interest to 997 Members. If a worksite presently does not have bulletin board space we suggest they first check with their Principal to determine what bulletin board area will be made available. If there continues to be problems please contact your Chief Steward or the 997 Office.

We greatly appreciate our 997 Communicators distributing and posting our Newsletters, Notices and other items of interest and importance. We post a copy of all Courier mailings and/or e-mails forwarded to our 997 Communicators on our web site – www.cupe997.ca – Member Resources – Communicators Memos.

Highlights re 997 BARGAINING (Refer to “Bargaining 2008 – CUPE Ontario School Board Sector – Central Bargaining Framework” information sheet distributed early February.)

Members reviewed and discussed the historic bargaining process being undertaken by CUPE School Board Locals across the Province. There was a review of the Central Bargaining Framework information sheet forwarded to all 997 Members in early February. It is important for Members to be aware that in the event there is agreement at the Provincial Discussion Table **the settlement will be incorporated into our bargaining process as a “non-negotiable” settlement item and then brought forward to the membership for ratification at our individual Ratification Meetings with our “local bargaining items”.**

A section has been set up on our web site – www.cupe997.ca – Member Resources – Bargaining 2008. A copy of the 3 page information sheet “Bargaining – 2008 – CUPE Ontario School Board Sector Central Bargaining Framework” is posted and updates will be provided as they become available.

CHIEF STEWARDS REPORTS

We are receiving a significant number of phone calls and e-mails regarding worksite concerns – issues relating to our collective agreements and Board Policies – Procedures. While these are busy days and nights please continue to touch base with us. We may not always be able to get back to you immediately but our goal is to touch base within 24 hours of your contact. It is important for you to have accurate information – suggestions from your “Union’s perspective”, it is our role and responsibility to advocate on your behalf and it is important for us to know what is going on out there!

CUSTODIAL – MAINTENANCE -- Chief Stewards: Herb Pounder and John Roycroft

Custodial-Maintenance PA Day: Friday, March 7, 2008 at BMLSS. Funds from the CUPE PD Fund Surplus have been made available for this event. Agenda items to include:

Updated Custodial Manual

Water Flushing – there have been ongoing discussions between the employer and 997 regarding the impact and workload of the Water Flushing Regulations for Custodial and Maintenance staff. The Board has undertaken discussions and investigations with other School Boards and with the Ministry of Environment – clarification and guidelines regarding expectations for all Head Custodians will be forthcoming and will be in writing.

ECO Schools Initiative – 997 has brought forward concerns regarding storage and processes-procedures within our worksites relating to this important initiative.

OFFICE, CLERICAL -- The Chief Steward position is presently vacant – please contact Lynn Raback at the CUPE 997 Office. Lynn noted thanks to Bill Campbell for his assistance.

Job Postings

A concern was identified regarding “revisions” to Job Postings and the process undertaken regarding applications, interviews and testing. The employer is within their right to determine the “qualifications” of a position. The qualifications must reflect the information noted on the Job Description and the ratings coming from the Job Evaluation process. While 997 Chief Stewards review all Job Postings to ensure accurate information is reflected on Job Postings and have questioned any changes or revisions Office/Clerical staff are encouraged to contact the 997 Office regarding information on any Job Posting – things can be missed these busy days!

Testing and Application Process

The employer is within their right to request testing for software programs that are used in a position. Any applicants to a Job Posting who following contact by the HR Department are considering withdrawing their application should contact the 997 Office immediately and most definitely prior to withdrawing their application.

Staffing – Lindsay Board Office Positions

There have been a number of changes in staffing within the Lindsay Board Office. We are not in a position to challenge any processes undertaken or not undertaken by the employer relating to positions which are outside of the “bargaining unit” – i.e.: Middle Management – Executive Assistant positions. The employer is within their right to fill positions, without posting, up to 40 days. There is presently a position in the HR Department posted – as this position is filled there will be subsequent positions posted.

Board Designated Holidays – Elementary and Secondary Panel PA Day

On an annual basis all School Boards across the Province submit to the Ministry of Education the proposed “School Calendar” for the upcoming school year. The Ministry identifies the number of required instructional days, the maximum number of PA Days and in the Secondary panel the maximum number of days that can be allotted to exam days.

Approximately 5 years ago a Committee comprised of parents and teachers brought forward a proposal to configure the TLDSB School Calendars to include “Board Designated Holidays” throughout the school year and in turn extending the school year at the end of June. This proposal was approved by the Board and subsequently TLDSB School Calendars have been submitted to the Ministry with the inclusion of the “Board Designated Holidays”.

School secretarial staff work all instructional (exam), PA Days and by Board policy there is provision for 5 days at the end of the school year and 5 days prior to the beginning of the next school year. With the inclusion of “Board Designated Holidays” the number of working days within the year for school secretarial staff remains the same – it is the configuration of the days that changed approximately 5 years ago.

The Board has provided a voluntary PA Day on the Board Designated Holidays for each of the panels since the change in the configuration of the school calendar. As this is not a regular day we do not have access to items such as sick leave, Personal/Compassionate Days, etc.

School secretarial staff who have concerns – suggestions - input with regards to the agenda, location, travel arrangements, start and end times relating to the Secretarial PA Days – Board Designated Holidays should contact Karen Downing in the HR Department.

Job Evaluation (Appendix E – Protocol Agreement of our collective agreements)

There was a review of the processes undertaken following amalgamation and confirmation positions which have not been reviewed – reconsidered since the original 01-02 processes will be included on the schedule being developed re “maintenance”.

TECHNICAL Chief Steward -- Bill Campbell

(Information Services Dept., E-Learning, Yearly Outdoor Education Centre, Pediculosis Co-ordinator)

We have received inquiries, are investigating and providing assistance regarding collective agreement issues and additionally TLDSB Board Procedures – processes.

The IS Department has welcomed a new Computer Technician and IS Administration Training & Support Technician.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS Chief Steward -- Debbie Gillan

There have been 18 new “permanent” Educational Assistants hired following the mid year posting – placement process. The original figure of 21 was corrected as we continue to have some EA’s in the north who do not have a “permanent position” and a placeholder is required. The determination of who is hired “to permanent” falls entirely under the umbrella of “management rights”.

A meeting has been scheduled with Kevin Cutler, District Principal of Special Education, to discuss EA concerns which have come forward including the administration of the “Lieu Day”; clarification with regards to the role/responsibility and assignment of supervision during instructional periods; EA Supply Lists; guidelines – protocols with regards to staffing re toileting; EA PA Days.

It would be great to see you ...

Next Regular General Meeting - Saturday, May 10, 2008 – Hyland Crest Senior Citizens' Home