

Campus Chair Update December, 2010

Professional Services Membership:

We expect everyone has been following the Bargaining Updates posted by the employer on mySIAST. Please remember this is management's interpretation only. Unfortunately the union does not have access to this method of communication in the workplace and will continue to distribute our updates on paper; as we currently experiencing problems with access to our website.

After the Union served strike notice on November 10th the employer then served lock out notice and contacted the Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety asking him to appoint a mediator. On November 16th the Union responded with a letter to the Minister indicating it would be inappropriate to appoint a mediator as it could be viewed as infringing on the Trade Union Act. We believe we can use the mediation options suggested and are available to both parties and have no assurance that an appointed mediator will act in an impartial manner. The Union remains committed to resolving this collective agreement through a mediated process but are cautious that the process be fair.

November 17th the Minister responded that his office would not appoint a mediator.

November 18th the employer submitted the names of three mediators to the union. The union researched the potential mediators and on November 24th responded that they lacked the neutrality needed to move this process forward. We then responded suggesting using Doug Forseth and Fred Cuddington concurrently in a process that was used successfully in 2007 with the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations. They have clearly demonstrated their experience and ability to mediate a successful conclusion to the impasse the parties are currently experiencing.

November 26th the employer again posted a response on the website that they are not in agreement with our suggestion of a mediation panel and proposed another two mediators. This correspondence was formally submitted to the union at 10:34 am November 30th, three and one half days after being posted on mySIAST. As you can imagine we are extremely disappointed in their response but have no option but to move forward. We will research SIAST's suggested mediators as well as others we believe would be successful in helping to finalize this round of bargaining.

It may appear as if there is little progress over the past two weeks, but you can be assured your Campus Committees are working diligently. Your Shop Stewards, Picket Captains, Communication Officers, Finance Officers and Provincial Strike Committees are all in place. A huge thanks to these members for donating their time, hard work and organizational skills.

In solidarity:
Tracey Kurtenbach
Shawna North
Twila Johnson
Joan Popadyne
Ken Weisgarber