



Rainy River

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

June 10, 2016

Update on Collective Bargaining

EDUCATION CENTRE

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Dear District 5B secondary school permanent teachers represented by OSSTF:

We want to achieve a negotiated collective agreement and end the current labour disruption.

This is why the Board initiated the involvement of Peter Simpson, lead mediator for the province, to meet with the bargaining committees and to try and help us achieve an agreement.

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This is why the Board removed every one of our proposals from the bargaining table.

WEB SITE:

www.rrdsb.com

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The critical issue which continues to divide us relates to an OSSTF proposal that would guarantee a redundant teacher access to any LTO position, regardless of whether or not that teacher was qualified to teach that position. The determination as to the teacher's ability to manage the assignment successfully would not be based on any objective criteria, but rather would be left entirely up to the teacher.

The Board cannot agree to this proposal.

DIRECTOR

Heather Campbell

This proposal runs contrary to a provincially accepted system of teacher qualifications. It contemplates physics teachers teaching music, and music teachers teaching technological education, based on their own self-assessment. This is not a system that can command public confidence and support, certainly not in areas where programming options for students are already limited.

It is a system that does not exist in any other OSSTF collective agreement.

We have listened carefully to the concerns raised by your bargaining agent and have proposed a number of compromise solutions. These proposed solutions are:

- Referring the matter to interest arbitration, where the inclusion or exclusion of OSSTF's proposal in the collective agreement would be determined by an objective adjudicator; or
- Creating a system that would allow a surplus teacher to teach the LTO if they are deemed to be qualified based on previous experience, a system that is found in other OSSTF agreements in Ontario. A copy of the language the Board has proposed is attached at Appendix "A" to this letter.

Any one of these proposed solutions reflects a *compromise* position which we believe would satisfactorily address this issue. All have been rejected categorically by your bargaining agent, leading to the continuation of the strike.

Two other points deserve mention.

This issue (i.e., redundant teacher access to LTOs) will affect less than a handful of teachers in any given school year. In fact, for the 2016-2017 school year, the Board currently anticipates that redundancies will be limited to approximately 0.33 FTE.

If any of these proposed solutions is used to resolve the strike, and later experience shows it to be unsatisfactory, the language may be made the subject of renegotiation as early as the 2017 round of bargaining.

The recent June 6, 2016 OSSTF advertisement in the *Fort Frances Bulletin* suggests that its insistence on its proposal is necessary "to protect the seniority rights of all union members."

We disagree.

The issue in question involves expanding seniority rights in a way that will likely benefit fewer than 10% of the members of the bargaining unit.

Both sides say they want a deal, and we believe both sides want a deal. What divides us are the terms of the deal. You are entitled to a clear understanding of the issue that separates us. We have tried to describe it objectively and hope our description assists you in that understanding.

We have been in bargaining since April 2015 and in a labour disruption since December 9, 2015.

You are a critical piece of the education system in Rainy River and we want this labour dispute to end. We also want to ensure that you have all of the information.

We want to resume bargaining as soon as possible, to resolve our differences in a fair manner, and to end this labour disruption.

Sincerely,



Heather Campbell
Director of Education, Rainy River District School Board

c. trustees

Attach.
Appendix A