


PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

On February 13, 2019, there will be a General Membership Meeting that will include a report from the President, a budget presentation by the Treasurer, and a motion to increase our Local dues.

The Local Executive Committee met in January to discuss and approve an operating budget for 2019. That budget also recommended an increase to the Local dues. Any Local dues increase must be approved by two-thirds of the members voting at a General Membership Meeting.

Local dues are levied separately from OPSEU central dues. They are used to pay for the operations of the Local including staffing, rent, meeting expenses, legal, Local advocacy campaigns, and other regular business expenses. Most importantly they also pay for faculty release time. This release time is used to conduct union business – mainly advocating for members through the grievance process.


With over 1,100 members our local is the largest CAAT Academic unit. At any given time, we are required to ensure the proper stewardship of many grievances. Some are minor and can be resolved



**Your Union
Your Voice
Matters**

When: **13 February 2019 @ 6:00 pm**
Where: Dragon Legend Restaurant
25 Lanark Drive, Markham ON L3R 9Y7

WHY: Voting on Annual Operating Budget,
and Dues Increase (increasing to \$15.00/pay period (FT)
and \$9.00/pay period (PL))

Your VOTE Counts 

quickly, while others, such as those related to Article 2 (bargaining unit representation and giving preference to the designation of full-time positions), have lasted over a decade and are still unresolved.

Time is also needed to release Stewards to participate in important committees such as Workload Monitoring. As the needs of our local have increased, the College is charging us more for Officer release time, further increasing our costs.

Historically, the College charged less for release time purchases. That changed, however, in 2015

when the College elected to calculate release time differently. The Local fought that and lost. As a result, we owed and continue to owe significant sums for past years of release time.

(continued on p. 3)

FEATURES:

- **Labour Notes**
- **Ford's Newest Target**
- **PL Seniority**
- **Hardship Fund for Former Partial-Load Faculty**

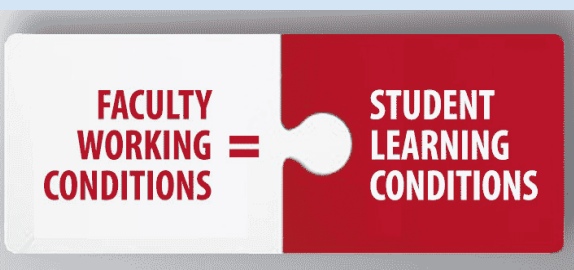


union@opseu560.org
<https://opseu560.org>

Across North America, from CUPE 3903's strike at York University, public school teachers' action in West Virginia, the massive walk-out of educators in Los Angeles, to our own work stoppage in 2017, there is inspiring evidence that a new kind of labour militancy is emerging.

The CAAT (Academic) strike was not about wages and benefits. It was about employment equity and the quality of education we embody and deliver. If there is any redemption to be found in the current dark days of Doug Ford, it is that the neoliberal project will expose itself as antithetical to quality education and, fundamentally, to democracy. We must fight for a democratic workplace by reaching out to form alliances with others — students, staff, community groups — and to address issues larger than our own “bread-and-butter” demands.

The world of education and employment is changing; but it need not change in the direction that the dominant forces in our society are pushing us. By building coalitions with other progressive communities, we can help end the madness and get back to doing what we're best at—teaching.



Digital newsletters and updates available at opseu560.org.

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Our inspiring 2017 strike won impressive gains including improved language on academic freedom and a push toward employment equity and, in conjunction with the Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, expedited paths to full-time employment for contract faculty. Though imperfect, that law and the Kaplan Arbitration Award made big improvements. Now, the fledgling Ford administration is (perhaps illegally) trashing both. Meanwhile, the desperately needed reorganization of college governance that's been urged by provincial inquiries for decades is being contemptuously rejected by the government.

What else could be expected from a Premier who quit after a few weeks of post-secondary education, because, quote, “the lectures bored me silly”? Instead, he slid into the multimillion dollar family business and lived off his inherited wealth for decades. Now he is looking to undermine education at all levels, across the province.

As Toronto Star columnist Royson James put it, Ford's tactics on the environment, health care, education and democratic governance are to “invent crises, create chaos, move quickly to destabilize and change so many things at once that opposition is diffused and fractured—and then to declare victory.”

Ford's newest target? Students. Brazenly announcing new tuition and fee policies behind a sign saying “For the Students,” Minister Merrilee Fullerton boasted tuition cuts of 10%; this, however, will be offset by decreasing grants, increasing repayable loans, and imposing harsher loan repayment schedules on lower-income students. Wealthier students will catch a break. Poorer students will be broken.

As well, part of the “reform” is making fees for student organizations voluntary. This isn't just an economic squeeze; it's also political. Combined with his “free speech” initiative, Ford is marginalizing student groups. As college education suffers from funding reductions, Ford is ensuring that dissenting student voices are silenced.

President's Address (cont'd from page 1)

- In 2014-15 we were charged \$49,826.56 for release time.
- The 2017-18 invoice from the College is just under \$138,000.
- For 2019 the costs are expected to rise to over \$168,000.

The College has won the right, at arbitration, to levy some of these charges. The increasing workload and complex political climate requires us to maintain our current levels of release time. Additionally, the College has even tried to charge us for release time during the strike. We are not going to pay that fee.

It's also important to understand that aggravating the situation is the fact that for the past three years, the practice of our Local was to use cash-basis accounting. This approach poses numerous issues, not the least of which is that it does not comply with GAAP or Generally Agreed Accounting Principles. We have now rectified that and are moving to an accrual-basis accounting standard. But what this outdated, cash-based practice has meant, in real terms, for today is that the last three years of that accumulated outstanding debt was not appropriately reflected in the books of our Local because no invoices for that debt were paid.

Furthermore, the strike of 2017 cost the Local roughly \$1.2 M and significantly reduced our bank balances, with the majority of these costs related to strike pay top-up. A full budget report will be presented by Treasurer Jon Olinski.

Our dues have held steady at \$7.50 per pay period for full-time (FT) faculty members since 2010. Partial-Load (PL) faculty have paid \$4.50 per pay period since 2010. That number represents approximately 0.18% of a FT salary at the top step. The percentage is slightly different for PL and varies depending on the number of hours worked.

That is very long time indeed for dues to go unchanged, and although it has been something of which we have been proud in the past, it cannot support a robust future for our Local. And, while our dues have stayed steady, our expenses have increased dramatically.

The stark reality with which we are faced is that, without a dues increase, we will continue to incur a monthly operating deficit of about \$15,000 meaning a further



erosion of our strike fund. Our bank balance declined last year by \$180,450.08. This is simply unacceptable, and we must take action now to remedy the past and prepare for the future.

We have also recently taken clear steps to modernize our ability to offer services to our members. After years of struggling to meet the administrative load of a large Local, we have finally hired an individual to help full-time managing the many tasks required to run our Local effectively and efficiently. We are also relocating our office to a more accessible location, keeping the cost per square foot roughly the same, despite the high real estate market. These are decisions that we can put off no longer and I believe that we will enjoy improved services as a result.

Thus, to cover our operating expenses your Local Executive Committee has moved to increase dues for FT faculty from \$7.50 per pay period to \$15.00 per pay period and for PL faculty to increase dues from \$4.50 per pay period to \$9.00 per pay period.

I realize that this may seem like a large increase but note that the cost of not having the resources to fight for more full-time positions or, in an extreme case, a wrongful dismissal is much greater.

I hope you will join me in supporting this fiscally responsible and progressive action. I look forward to seeing you on February 13.

In solidarity,

Frank Yee
President, OPSEU 560

PL Seniority: Mind Your Own Business?

If nothing else convinces you how important Article 26.10 (seniority) is for Partial Load (PL) Faculty, then just look at how hard the colleges are trying to eviscerate it.

When you ask the colleges to be transparent and show you how they are protecting your rights, and they tell you to mind your own business, you know “something is rotten in the state of...” Ontario. When you demand that all faculty who are affected be informed of their rights, and the colleges’ only response is, “We don’t have to do that,” you can quote the Bard again -- “the [colleges] doth protest too much, methinks”

26.10 D ...[b]y October 30th in each calendar year, a currently or previously employed partial-load employee must register their interest in being employed as a partial-load employee in the following calendar year.

The Collective Agreement requires PL faculty to “register” each year in order to put their seniority rights into effect. The intent here is to give the colleges time to plan around and implement your rights. However, the colleges are using it to punish PL faculty. After much chiding from the union, Seneca finally put up an online registry, but then failed to tell ALL fac-

ulty that have been PL about it. When the union demanded this mistake to be corrected, they said they didn’t have to. Shame on them! (We are grieving it.)

26.10 E ...where the college...hire[s] a partial-load employee to teach a course that has previously been taught by that registered partial-load

employee...it will give priority in hiring to such partial-load employee...
Seneca finally put up an online registry, but then failed to tell ALL faculty that have been PL about it.

Yes, that article gives you genuine seniority, but in order to exercise your right

to be hired to teach a course, you need to know who else is teaching that course and whether your service give you priority in teaching that course. When PL faculty and the union ask the colleges for this information, both are essentially told to mind their own business. We are minding OUR OWN BUSINESS. Asked to show how they are determining the rights to priority hiring, the colleges simply refuse. The colleges feel they have no obligation to show evidence that they are protecting your rights. They did make it clear, though, that they are consciously misreading 26.10; the colleges insist that they can “bundle” courses and then determine priority hiring on that “bundle” That means unless you have taught that specific bundle of courses, right down to the specific sections of courses, then

the colleges have determined you have no priority rights for any of the courses in the bundle. That is not what 26.10 says. Read it and you will see that you have rights to any of the courses you have taught, not to any “bundle” you have taught. (We are grieving this too.)

You do need to mind your own business. Register your interest every year. Make sure you are given priority hiring: it is your right. Don’t have access to the information you need? File a grievance to get it.

P.S. Did we mention that Seneca is only considering courses that you have taught in the last four years?



HARDSHIP FUND FOR FORMER PARTIAL-LOAD FACULTY

If you are a faculty member who was Partial-Load in the Fall 2018 term but have not been assigned Partial-Load status for Winter 2019, you may be entitled to receive a grant of \$250 from the Local’s Hardship Fund. Please send an email indicating your loss of status to hardshipfund@opseu560.org.

Please also attach a copy of your assignment from last semester and your assignment from this semester.