

# BARGAINING BULLETIN #7

Since our media release last Wednesday, which was picked up by local newspapers and radio stations, the Employer has also put out a media release with their update on negotiations.

One point of clarification needs to be made in response to that release: the Employer states that “together the bargaining teams agreed to focus on the FASBU agreement first.” As we reported in both Bulletin #1 and Bulletin #2, after the Employer rejected our proposal to consolidate FASBU and CASBU, NUFA was prepared to bargain FASBU and CASBU concurrently. The Employer has refused to consider CASBU proposals until FASBU negotiations are completed.

Further, we had hoped that negotiations would resume in August; however, the Employer remains unavailable until our date with the conciliator on September 13th. We agreed to work towards a goal of June 30th as the date by which all parties wished to reach renewed collective agreements for both FASBU and CASBU. However, we agreed to this goal before seeing that the Employer proposed opening an unusually high number of articles (over half of the FASBU Collective Agreement), attempting to make substantive changes to major articles like Tenure and Promotion, and Academic Freedom. This deadline was always ambitious but it became unrealistic once package bargaining failed. The setting of a deadline goal for negotiations before they had even begun was unprecedented, but in good faith we agreed. After the package bargaining failed and the June 30th date passed with little progress made on a number of critical articles, it became apparent that we would need more time to bargain. We hoped that at least some of the 7 dates in August that we offered would be accepted by the Employer, but they were not.

Pensions continue to be a critical issue as we move towards conciliation. Approximately 18% of our Members are already in a jointly sponsored Defined Benefit (DB) plan, namely the Ontario Teacher’s Pension Plan (OTPP). Those who are in the current Defined Contribution (DC) plan have continued to express very strong support for moving to the CAAT DBPlus pension plan.

Years ago, teachers understood their professional value and began bargaining for a pension plan that would sustain them throughout retirement. They pushed for a multi-employer defined benefit (DB) pension plan that was reliable and sustainable. Today, the Ontario Teacher’s Pension Plan is one of the world’s largest institutional investors with a reported value of over \$190 billion and more than 142,000 retirees receive pension benefits every month. Our Education colleagues fought for and earned their pensions. We all should be proud of and take encouragement from what they achieved.

Now, in 2019, those who are not OTPP Members in the Nipissing University Faculty Association (NUFA) want something similar, and appreciate the support of our Education colleagues in the OTPP who have travelled this road before and have the knowledge, experience and demonstrated perseverance to help us see this through.

Although NUFA’s current proposal to move to the CAAT DBPlus pension plan cannot be equated to the OTPP, it is an improvement over the current DC plan in two very important ways:

1) it moves Members from the current plan - where all of the risk of investments are assumed individually - to a *shared risk* model based on knowledgeable investment advice; and,

2) it results in pension benefits that are *known* and can be planned for rather than the current plan where pension results are largely unknowable and open to the vagaries of volatile monetary markets.

While NUFA needs the support of ALL of our Members to secure a good and fair deal, on this issue we are in particular need of the support of our Education colleagues in the OTPP. They know that this is good and right for our Members. Indeed, we're following the path on pension improvements that they've already walked. We'd be crazy not to follow their lead.

With one date for conciliation set for September 13<sup>th</sup> and no prospect of more dates till October, the NUFA Executive and the CBC foresee weeks, maybe months, of foot-dragging by the Employer. We are at a crucial point in this process where we must demonstrate our intent to get a reasonable deal—and we can only do that together as a complete Membership. To that end, we will be calling a Special Membership Meeting on Monday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. At that meeting, we will be looking for your support to empower your bargaining team with a strong Membership standing behind them when they meet with the Employer and the conciliator. The time has come for us to show the Employer that we are ready for action—even labour action. Strike or lock-out are not words that anyone wants to hear, but still less do we want to concede to endless delays or a contract with only losses.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

*You will see that we have a number of events planned in a very short time period. The Executive, CBC and standing committees have been working hard in the last few weeks of summer to make sure that our voices are out there for the start of classes when they will be most effective. But we need your help! If you haven't already agreed to help out with these or future events, please contact the NUFA office to find out what you can do for your fellow Members and your hardworking team at the table.*

Labour Day Picnic: Monday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> 11:00am-3:00pm at the North Bay Waterfront

For more details visit: <http://www.northbaylabour.ca/>

Solidarity Social & Trivia Night:  
September 5<sup>th</sup>  
@The LOFT (Churchills)



NUFA sponsored  
student breakfast: Food  
for Thought  
September 6<sup>th</sup>



Special Membership  
Meeting: **September 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**@11:30 in F213**  
(Theatre)

\*NOTE: While we had reported in our last Bulletin that John Brooks would take over as the Employer's chief negotiator, it has been clarified that the PVPAR, Arja Vainio-Mattila, remains the chief negotiator. There appears to have been a miscommunication between the parties on this point.