ETFO
Thames Valley Teacher Local

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BARGAINING UPDATE

Clarity. Calm. Solidarity.

97% YES!

A powerful mandate.
A united membership.

97% of teacher and occasional teacher members voted in favour of central strike action, should it become necessary. **This strengthens our bargaining position.** It does not mean we are automatically going on strike.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Bargaining continues. We expect the Ford government and employer representatives to engage in meaningful negotiations.

UPCOMING BARGAINING DATES

- **Teacher/Occasional Teacher Central Table: Nov. 26, Dec. 3, Dec. 14.**
- **Education Worker Central Table: Nov. 27, Nov. 30, Dec. 4.**

OLRB DECISION – WHAT IT MEANS

On November 18 the Ontario Labour Relations Board clarified which matters belong at central and local bargaining tables.

Several key issues remain available for local bargaining including supervision scheduling, preparation time payback, transfer/surplus timelines, and local union leave. This protects local bargaining in Thames Valley.

WHAT ABOUT WORK-TO-RULE OR STRIKE ACTION?

- A strike mandate gives ETFO the authority and support to consider job action if needed later in the process.
- ETFO is not currently in a legal strike position, and no job action has been announced.
- Job action can take different forms (such as work-to rule) and may be introduced in stages if progress isn't made. These steps are not automatic.

Creating Change – Together.

We'll continue to keep you updated as information develops.

Bargaining Update: 97%: What it Means

Dear Colleagues,

As we move forward in this round of collective bargaining, we want to share where things stand, what recent developments mean, and what we might expect in the weeks ahead. We recognize that discussions about strike votes and potential job action can create uncertainty. Our hope is that this update provides some clarity and reassurance as we continue moving forward together.

First, thank you to everyone who participated in ETFO's central strike vote. An overwhelming 97% of teacher and occasional teacher members voted YES, giving our provincial bargaining team a powerful mandate. Our education worker colleagues also delivered a 97% YES vote.

This is an extraordinary demonstration of unity and sends a clear message to the Ford government: educators stand together in seeking meaningful improvements to our working conditions, classroom safety, student supports, and fair compensation.

A 97% YES vote strengthens our bargaining position. It does not mean we are going on strike. Our mandate gives the provincial bargaining team the strength and support to negotiate on our behalf.

Where Are We in Bargaining?

Our priority remains reaching a fair, negotiated collective agreement. Central bargaining dates are confirmed for teachers and occasional teachers on November 26, December 3, and December 14. Our education worker colleagues return to the table on November 27, November 30, and December 4.

We expect the Ford government and representatives to participate in meaningful, productive negotiations that address the challenges facing educators and students.

The OLRB Decision

On November 18, the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) issued decisions clarifying which issues will be negotiated provincially at the central tables and which will remain available for local bargaining. This is a positive development as several important issues, including supervision scheduling, preparation time payback, staffing language, transfer and surplus timelines, and local union leave, remain available for local negotiations. This protects our ability to negotiate important working conditions here in Thames Valley and provides greater clarity as bargaining moves forward.

What About Work-to-Rule or Strike Action?

We know this is a question on many members' minds, and we want to provide some reassurance. A strong strike mandate does not mean job action is imminent or inevitable. ETFO is not currently in a legal strike position, and no job action has been announced.

If negotiations do not produce sufficient progress, ETFO may consider additional steps, including work-to-rule or other forms of job action. Work-to-rule generally involves limiting certain duties or activities rather than a full withdrawal of services. However, these steps are not automatic. They require further processes and clear direction from ETFO.

Creating Change, Together

We know bargaining can create uncertainty, especially when conversations turn to speculations on ‘strikes’ or ‘job action’. We want to reassure members that we are not at that point. You gave your bargaining team a strong mandate, bargaining dates are scheduled, and our priority remains reaching a fair agreement.

There is a process ahead of us, and we need to allow that process to unfold. As developments occur, your Local will continue to provide clear, timely, and accurate information. We will ensure members understand what is happening, what it means, and what, if anything, is being asked of them.

In the meantime, we encourage everyone to continue demonstrating solidarity, including wearing **Red4Ed**, consider wearing purple on Wednesdays to support CUPE and to continue the incredible work you do each day to support each other and your students throughout Thames Valley.

Thank you for your participation, your trust, and your continued support of one another.

Our strength comes from our unity. Our goal remains clear: better working conditions for educators and better learning conditions for students.

In solidarity,

Michael Thomas
President
ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local