

University of Northern British Columbia Faculty Association

Bargaining Bulletin #2023-02

May 11, 2023

Message from the Chief Negotiator

Dear Colleagues,

Both parties having tabled their comprehensive proposals for the renewal of our Collective Agreement (including all monetary and non-monetary proposals), it can fairly be said that contract negotiations are now truly underway. And we can report that the parties are engaging in respectful exchange of ideas; each side explains the perceived problems their proposals are intended to address and why they are putting forward their proposed changes to the Collective Agreement. That is not to say that negotiations are a cakewalk for either side – we should expect intense “hard bargaining.” We can also report that we were disappointed to see the Employer table proposed changes (more than 40 articles and some quite substantial) to more than twice as many articles as the FA has opened, and that these include proposed changes to some provisions that we hoped would remain unchanged.

Still, because the Employer had their entire package prepared at the beginning of negotiations, the parties tabled salary proposals that are relatively similar, both parties have been able to table counter-proposals promptly, both parties have been willing to respond to the legitimate concerns of the other in respectful ways, and we have been able to sign off on twelve articles so far (and are very close on a number of others). Therefore, we are cautiously optimistic about this round of negotiations. Indeed, although the timelines are tight, both parties continue to express their intention to try to conclude a tentative agreement before our present Collective Agreement expires on 30 June.

We have learned again this week how important it is for us to have an engaged membership. We tabled proposals that are rooted in the information we gained from surveys, focus groups, and other consultations. Our positions are supported by a mandate from our members and the FA executive. Those factors facilitate our efforts to propose changes to the Collective Agreement that address your legitimate concerns.

Please continue to read our updates when they come in, because your continued attention to these negotiations is also important to us.

Ted Binnema, Chief Negotiator, and the rest of the team:

Jacqueline Holler

Dezene Huber

Matt Reid

Donna Sindaco



Rm. 3085/3089 Charles J. McCaffray Hall