

LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

THE GOOD, THE BAD, and THE UGLY!

The Good:

- On April 24th, 2009, at approximately 11:55 p.m. after two full days of negotiations and just minutes before the Ministry imposed deadline, our new four year Collective Agreement was settled.
- This was an incredibly stressful round of bargaining as it was often negotiated through the media at both the Provincial and Local Levels, and it once again called into question the integrity of ETFO member's province wide.
- Despite the unique circumstances we were forced to negotiate under, we came away with the best deal possible. We were able to successfully address our two most important local issues, and made significant improvements in other areas.
- We now have a fully-funded benefit plan for the next four years.
- We replace the antiquated and ineffective staffing and transfer process to allow Teacher Initiated Trades.
- We added member protection to the Evaluation process, removed discipline notes after 3 years, reduced Federation operating costs, and allowed for the early return from a child care leave.

The Bad:

- From the very first meeting, our Board set a tone for negotiations characterized by a lack of respect for the job we all do as educators and displayed a fundamental inability to understand and appreciate what teachers do on a day to day basis.
- The Board followed a plan of starting late (every meeting), stalling (for hours and hours between passes), and cancelling meetings (with little notice and limited explanation). The reason for these tactics – to delay any real negotiations.
- Article XXVII – Hours of Work for Record of Employment: This article deals strictly with the reporting of insurable hours

worked by Teachers for the purpose of Employment Insurance. It is an absolute no cost item to the Board. During the course of negotiations, I asked if the Board would consider increasing the hours deemed to have been worked per day by a full-time teacher from the current 7 to 8 hours to be more reflective of an actual work day. The response was, **“No, the Board is not in the habit of lying about how many hours a Teacher works, we will keep it at 7.”**



Mark Buff
Chief Negotiator

- Letter of Understanding: Partial Leaves of Absence: On April 23rd, the Board agreed in principle to include a new Letter of Understanding to allow members to take partial leaves of absence. When we returned to the bargaining table the following morning, the Board had pulled the partial leaves off the table because, **“They didn’t believe they got enough in return for granting the partial leaves.”** What they wanted in trade was

the removal of our ability to write our own absence note provided under Article 19.02.

The Ugly:

- The Board claims due to declining enrollment the PDT Agreement allows funding for only an increase of 11.4 FTE to cover the planning time increase from 200 – 210 minutes for 2009-2010.
- The PDT Agreement funds for only an increase of 3.4 FTE to cover the Grade 4-8 Class Size reduction.
- The Board has cut 25.5 Reading Recovery Teachers and replaced them with 19.3 Literacy Coaches.
- The Board has also approved the inclusion of fifteen Teaching Principals - 3 FTE teaching positions.
- $14.8 - 9.2 = 5.6$ actual FTE increase or a net savings to the Board of roughly \$700,000.00.
- I wonder how much 150 new Blackberries plus monthly service is?
- I wonder how many of our closed classrooms the savings would reopen?
 $85 \text{ Rooms} \times \$2,000 \text{ per room} = \$170,000.$
Turns out – All of Them!

chalk talk

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