# Bargaining Bulletin

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As a result of the majority of our collective agreements expiring on August 31, 2012, and upcoming strike votes in affected bargaining units, there have been a number of questions from members regarding financial issues. Members want to know what steps they can take to financially prepare for a possible full withdrawal of services or a lock-out by the employer and what support is available in those scenarios.

Members should be aware that taking strike votes is a strategy designed to facilitate the likelihood of achieving the best possible results through the collective bargaining process. Strike action can take many forms ranging from the withdrawal of certain services while still attending work, to full withdrawal of services. Whenever engaging in strike activity, the full withdrawal of services option is a possibility, and it is prudent to consider the potential financial impact.

The following are suggestions for members to consider:

- Avoid large new expenditures before September
- Save additional money where possible over the summer months
- Contact your mortgage holder to discuss flexibility including deferred payment in the event of temporary income loss.
- Establish a line of credit.

*A reminder that OSSTF/FEESO owns Educators Financial Group which offers a wide range of financial services, including lines of credit, to educators and their family members. You can get more information by visiting www.educatorsfinancialgroup.ca

In addition to these suggestions, members should be aware of the following financial support from OSSTF/FEESO in the event of a full withdrawal of services strike action or a lock-out by the employer:

- Strike Pay for members who work full-time is $55 per day for the first 10 days and $65 per day plus an additional $5 per day per dependent after the 10th day. Note that there are no deductions made from strike pay. Members who work part-time shall receive the same per diem support as full-time employees, provided they average more than 2 days per week. Members who are casual employees averaging 2 days or less per week, will receive 2 days strike pay per week.
- The benefits currently covered in your collective agreement will be continued, with no lapse in coverage.
- OSSTF/FEESO guarantees that no member's pension will be adversely affected by a strike or lockout.
- Interest-free loans may be available to members in financial need.

**If you have further questions regarding financial issues related to strike activity, please contact your local Bargaining Unit President or Provincial Office if your President is not available.**

Kenneth Coran, President