

## Commentary on the MOA - FT

On May 13, 2020, OPSEU staff reps received a proposal with instructions to approach the 24 Support Staff Locals and encourage them to go into an agreement with their College. The proposal is not binding in nature and it is up to each Local Union to decide whether this is something they would want to engage their College in or not. It is important to note that OPSEU discussed and agreed to this document even after the members of the Colleges Support Staff voted not to do that.

The proposal covers the notion of furlough, which according to Oxford English Dictionary is “a layoff, especially a temporary one, from a place of employment.”

Our Collective Agreement provides some of the best known job security language, contained in article 15. In the event the College decides layoffs are necessary, the Collective Agreement outlines the rules and processes that need to be followed, and forces the College to provide information to the Local Union that is relevant to each position that is deemed to be laid-off.

One of the mainstays of the discussed proposal is the suspension of article 15, or at least the job security part of it. The ramifications are that the Colleges will have free reign in deciding who to furlough without regard of seniority, financial disclosure, proper notice to the effected members, or discussion with the Local Union.

The Full-Time Divisional Executive, EERC and all 24 Local Union Presidents stand together that this is not a good deal for support staff. The proposal is trading benefits from the layoff date to January 31, 2021 for significantly more job loss across the Colleges. The proposal also mentions that furloughed employees would be able to buy-back their pensionable service – this is something we can do already and it is not something that the Colleges control, but rather is part of our Pension Plan.

Our current language allows for the College and the Local Union to apply the same “benefits” as outlined in the proposal without giving up our processes, which have been used and tried for the past several decades and have resulted in extremely few people losing their jobs. We are confident in our Local Unions’ ability to discuss and minimise layoffs at our Colleges, and have an extensive support system in place across the province to help each other. Jointly, we have 100+ years experience dealing with layoffs, and strategies to minimise or eliminate bumping and displacements. Management is looking for a way to deflect their responsibility to lead and manage, and putting it on to us to self destruct. We need to stay strong and together in these uncertain and trying times.

In Solidarity,

CAAT Support Full-time Divex

CAAT Support Full-time EERC