

JUNE 9, 2022

C22181 AULReP

BARGAINING UPDATE



LIVING WATERS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS LOCAL 071 CHAPTER 012 - ALL STAFF EXCEPT TEACHERS

Mediation hits a wall on the first day

Employer insists two-tier wages is a government mandate

Your negotiating team met with the employer and mediator on June 8, and we quickly hit an obstacle to reaching a fair deal.

Living Waters stated that they have a written mandate from the provincial government outlining what the government expects them to achieve in bargaining with AUPE members. They said that they have been instructed to seek a lower wage rate for uncertified Educational Assistants (EA) and that they have been provided with comparator information to rationalize this demand.

Although Living Waters says that the government will not allow them to share this mandate or the comparator documentation in bargaining, the mediator confirmed that other school boards have been given the go ahead to share the bargaining mandates set by the provincial government.

Two-tier wages are a bad idea! Even if current employees would be maintained at current wage rates regardless of whether they were certified or not, two-tiers would mean that new employees could be paid substantially less for doing the same work! Current employees without certification would be unable to move up in salary

regardless of how many years of experience you have in the classroom.

At the start of the pandemic, this government laid off thousands of EAs and other support workers, leaving us struggling to make ends meet while kids, families and teachers were scrambling without the valuable support we provide. And now after an extraordinarily difficult two years, when provincial oil and gas revenues are reaching record high levels while working people are pinched by skyrocketing inflation, our compensation is again on the chopping block.

Living Waters started this round of bargaining claiming they wanted to repair their relationship with members. While we understand that their hands are tied to some extent by the government, their approach to bargaining has damaged the relationship further.

They are sticking to their demands for rollbacks to sick leave and custodial call back pay, despite these positions being above and beyond what the government is pushing for. They have also shown little willingness to

(Continued on page 2)

AUPE NEGOTIATING TEAM – LIVING WATERS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Sarah Cross (Slave Lake)
crissar@hotmail.com

Jane Arndt (Edson)
janeardt75@gmail.com or
780-725-1912 (cell)

Laurie Martinot (Whitecourt)
lmartino@telusplanet.net or
780-706-5857 (cell)

AUPE RESOURCE STAFF

Merryn Edwards Negotiations
m.edwards@aupe.org or
780-952-1951 (cell)

Tracy Noble Organizing
t.noble@aupe.org or 306-304-2853 (cell)

Mimi Williams Communications
m.williams@aupe.org

BARGAINING UPDATE



discuss non-monetary improvements and are maintaining proposals that go in the other direction, such as an automatic extension of probation by any days not at work (sick, vacation, leave etc.).

Similarly, they refuse to budge on the conversion of the Health Spending Account to a Flexible Spending Account unless the amount is reduced by \$300, although they confirmed that the money saved from the unused portions of the current HSA are retained by Living Waters. This change would not require additional government funding but would make a big difference in the lives of our members!

With no room for movement, we mutually agreed to cancel two of the three future dates for mediation while they seek approval

from the government to release selected information about their mandate. We will return to mediation on June 23, at which time we anticipate they will provide that selected information to us, although they refused to share it in advance.

If you have coworkers who are not receiving these bargaining updates in their personal e-mail inboxes, please encourage them to visit aupe.org/update info to ensure that they receive news about bargaining in a timely manner.

Please contact a member of your negotiating team if you have any questions about this bargaining update.