

CUPE LOCAL 3903 Bargaining Report

9 March 2018

The Bargaining team met immediately after the rejection of the final offer on 2 March 2018 and sent our red lines to the employer through the conciliator. The employer said that was not a counter-offer and rejected the red lines.

The Bargaining Team met at 2pm on 5 March 2018 after the rally to revisit our package and present a counter offer to the employer. We dropped 8 proposals and revised 12 proposals. We did this to negotiate in good faith, to attempt to get a deal while our power was at a peak, and to narrow the focus of the demands on the core issues and red lines. The employer rejected our counter offer.

The bargaining team did not meet again until 8 March 2018 at the Unifor 112 Office on Tangiers Road to discuss our strategy and communications.

Based on the outstanding picket lines and mobilization of the membership the bargaining team has resolved to hold firm on our current package.

We cannot predict when the employer will come back to the table but are certain that the continued strength of our picket lines and the activity of the general membership are the pathway to a good deal for all the units. We must leverage our capacities, skills and community connections to build the kind of power we need to reach a good deal.

It must be emphasized the importance of inter-unit solidarity. There is no daylight between the units on the bargaining team and in the rank and file. Many members have been in multiple units and our strength is rooted in our togetherness. We cannot do this without each other.

We are also dead opposed to arbitration for the following reason. First, we agree with the Premier that the best deals are achieved through collective bargaining. Second, education is a right, not a commodity and a strike is the only way to defend it from the super-rich and their morally bankrupt lawyers. We have the right to strike, DON'T WASTE IT. Third, only the parties can resolve the difficult issues between us, not an outside arbitrator. Fourth, striking will protect good jobs for our students. Fifth, CUPE 3902 at U of T was upset with the outcome of arbitration in 2015 as our sector has little history of interest arbitration.

The bargaining team has also devised a communications strategy to make sure the membership is as informed as possible about the issues and the current state of bargaining.

The bargaining team would like to acknowledge the outstanding work of the general membership of the union, the strike coordinators, the picket captains, the executive, the strike committee, the 8th line, the Ramgarhia Sikh Society, and union staff for their contributions to the 2018 strike thus far.