



BARGAINING UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

This is our contract, not our employer's We will maintain control of bargaining, we will remain united

As we shared in our last update, the employer is unwilling to meet us at a provincial table. Despite efforts to divide us, we are still coordinating bargaining. The NSSBCU will continue to be at each local's table so that our common proposals can be negotiated in a way that is organized, coordinated, and united—this is our mandate.

Beyond that, it's clear that if we give in and start to bargain provincial proposals separately, the employer will take full advantage of the separate tables and attempt to bargain inequality into our contracts. We know that the EECDC is fine with major disparities between locals as we've spent the past year harmonizing wages across the province to address just that. This is a tactic to cultivate resentment and discontent amongst workers. Without coordinated bargaining, they will be able to go for the one item they can't legislate or negotiate away: our solidarity.

They are already attempting to sow seeds of division by refusing to meet at a common table—another deliberate move—as it slows down bargaining by forcing us to talk about logistics, instead of proposals. Instead, they suggest amending certification orders so all school support staff would be bargaining as one local. Asking us to consider this lengthy and unnecessary process in the middle of bargaining just to be able to bargain provincial proposals at a common table, which is what we have done in the past, amounts to the EECDC asking workers to jump through hoops just to enjoy our collective bargaining rights. They're hoping to distract us—they won't. They want us to lose steam—we won't. They want to divide us—they can't.

Common proposals don't mean one-size-fits-all proposals

The only area in which this government is willing to engage a common front is regarding wages, as every local is getting the same response to our flat rate proposal: A no, and an offer of a general wage increase at a rate of 3%, 2% and 2% over three years.

This is important because a percentage increase means the increase amount is proportional to your existing wage. So, members with the lowest wage get smaller increases, folks with higher wages get bigger increases, and everyone's increases will fall short of the growing cost of groceries, housing and other living expenses.

This one-size-fits-all approach means that after reporting a surplus of \$143M for the last year, the provincial government wants to save money on the backs of the lowest earning workers in Nova Scotia. They want to say they are offering the same wage increases to everyone, but the bottom line is not the same when you're starting with the lowest hourly wage.

This is another reason that having a common table is so important, as it will support us in ensuring that we win wage increases that will make a difference to *all* members. At the end of this update, we've included a breakdown of what the difference between a flat rate increase and percentage increase looks like for our highest and lowest paid members.



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Maintain control, take action

The only way we could force the employer to a common table is if we spend time merging eight locals into one local, like they suggest. If they want to see 5,000 school support staff across Nova Scotia operate as one, let's show them what that looks like.

Strike votes are taking place from **October 1-9**. A schedule will be released with times and locations for each local. We cannot emphasize enough that **it is crucial that all members participate in the vote to have their voices heard**. This doesn't mean bargaining is over. There are still upcoming meetings set for bargaining and conciliation. However, we need to be prepared to take action. Again, the one thing they cannot take away from us at the table, or anywhere, is our solidarity.

We need to show the employer that we stand together, steadfast and united.

If you have any questions or concerns, we will be holding information sessions on bargaining and the outstanding issues between **September 16-27**. Again, each local will share information on the exact time and date of the sessions. The goal for these sessions is to make sure each and every member is informed about the bargaining process and prepared for the vote.

Nelson Scott (Local 5050), Andrew Weaver (Local 964), Kevin Carther (Local 3876), Ciarán Llachlan Leavitt (Local 955), Jenny-Lynn Wardrope (Local 3890), Robert Amero (Local 2272), Jennifer Cox (Local 4682), and Shelley McNeil (Local 5047)

Nova Scotia School Board Council of Unions

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Here's what our proposal and the employer's proposal would break down to, for folks on both the higher and lower end of the salary range for school support staff in Nova Scotia. We have also included an estimation of Becky Druhan, the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development's hourly wage based on an annual salary of \$89,234.90.

EMPLOYER PROPOSAL – PERCENTAGE INCREASES

	Hourly Rate	Year 1 3%	Year 2 2%	Year 2 2%	End of contract
Systems Admin	\$37.68	\$1.13	\$0.78	\$0.79	\$40.38
EPA or TA	\$26.80	\$0.80	\$0.55	\$0.56	\$28.71
Bus Driver	\$26.26	\$0.79	\$0.54	\$0.55	\$28.14
Lunch/Bus/Ground Supervisor	\$18.18	\$0.55	\$0.37	\$0.38	\$19.48
MLA	\$49.03	\$1.47	\$1.01	\$1.03	\$52.54

UNION PROPOSAL – FLAT RATE INCREASES

	Hourly Rate	Year 1	Year 2	Year 2	End of contract
Systems Admin	\$37.68	\$3	\$1	\$1	\$42.68
EPA or TA	\$26.80	\$3	\$1	\$1	\$31.80
Bus Driver	\$26.26	\$3	\$1	\$1	\$31.26
Lunch/Bus/Ground Supervisor	\$18.18	\$3	\$1	\$1	\$23.18
MLA	\$49.03	\$3	\$1	\$1	\$54.03