

Participants

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SGEU/NUPGE	Shawna North Jim Steele	OPSEU/NUPGE	Naz Binck Benoit Dupuis Manzur Malik
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Welcome and Introductions

Brother Luff began a round of introductions of the 16 participants, and we were all able to get a brief idea of each other's participation with the union and work sector.

Communications and Updates

The Education and Training Working Group report from 2009 was reviewed highlighting collective bargaining, trades and apprenticeship, the changing role of colleges, academic freedom and intellectual property rights.

NUPGE website articles on the education and training sector were presented and the ongoing sharing of news and information was encouraged. Over the past year, stories NUPGE covered included: rights for part-time college workers, bargaining in half a dozen provinces, rising tuition fees, online learning and changes to the copyright tariff.



The monthly Education & Training eBulletin was also introduced and everyone in the group subscribed for the next monthly issue. In addition, the group was welcomed to invite other colleagues to subscribe to the eBulletin and send stories and info for distribution along to Sister Hawley (khawley@nupge.ca).

Bargaining

Each Component included bargaining updates in their written Component reports. The issue of bargaining was discussed separately from the rest of the Component report and ample time was given for each Component to outline their bargaining structures and share some of the highlights of their most recent round of bargaining.

Component Reports

Each Component briefly reviewed the rest of their report, highlighting the most current issues for their sector.

Health and safety issues

Changes to the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology's (SIAST) harassment and discrimination policy have meant that instead of trained conflict resolution personnel dealing with the initial stages of any conflict, Program Heads with no training are the first line of contact. This has potentially increased the risk associated with workplace conflict.

The SGEU/NUPGE Academic Bargaining Unit won the Twyla Mitchell Arbitration. Ms. Mitchell experienced harassment and discrimination due to her gender during her employment as a welding and auto repair instructor.

From MGEU/NUPGE, Sister Lynn updated us on a number of health and safety concerns that had been identified at the new Assiniboine Community College (ACC) campus in an old mental health hospital. A wide variety of issues from asbestos to storage of acetylene tanks were areas where the union insisted on action being taken.

OPSEU/NUPGE has one appeal ongoing at the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) regarding the provision of injury notices. Unions are encouraging the Ministry of Labour (MOL) to "fix this problem" that certain workplaces feel they are exempt from providing detailed injury notices.

Campaigns

SGEU/NUPGE has a campaign website to protect public services from privatization by starting with instructors and professional services staff at SIAST. "The future skilled workers of our province are worth more than the unreasonable and unfair offer SIAST is trying to force on its frontline workers." Check out the online campaign – <http://ifyoulovesaskatchewan.ca>.

OPSEU/NUPGE continues to fight for 20,000 part-time employees currently denied their rights to union representation. OPSEU/NUPGE is demanding that the Ontario government comply with the International Labour Organization's (ILO) ruling and count the certification ballots.

The full Component reports for those Components that attended can be found in participants' binders.



Campaign Update

Brother Luff reviewed the goals and objectives of the *All Together Now* (ATN) Campaign and then gave an update of where the campaign is now and where it is headed. With more than 5,000 pledges signed, hundreds of letters written and the burgeoning *Writers 4 Change* initiative, the campaign has made great strides and brought the debate to the public and Parliament.

Writers 4 Change

Writers 4 Change is a group of activists from across the country who volunteered to submit letters and opinion pieces to newspapers. About 55 people have signed up so far and over the last three weeks we've had about 30 letters published in newspapers across the country. These published letters help change the media narrative a little when it comes to taxes and public services. Editorial staff definitely monitor feedback closely and this can influence some of their decisions and result in more balanced stories on our key issues.

The *Writers 4 Change* initiative is also an investment in building campaign capacity. We're establishing a team of activists with the experience and confidence to write letters to newspapers on important issues and this is an investment that will help other campaigns in the future.

Campaign Website – <http://alltogethernow.nupge.ca>

The website is a good resource for taking action and getting information. We're adding several new elements to keep it fresh every day, including a rolling news ticker. We're also updating the campaign videos and photos on the site more frequently now that we have a large quantity to draw from.

Facebook Page

The Facebook page continues to be a good source of action and information on the campaign. About 800 people have now joined the campaign online through the Facebook page. The Champions and others continue to post photos, news stories, research, etc.

They're often commenting on each other's postings – so it feels like a real conversation is taking place. The website and Facebook page have also allowed us to pick up supporters in other countries, e.g. the UK, US and Australia. Also, Public Services International (PSI) has promoted our campaign (including the website and Facebook page) as a model for other PSI affiliates around the world to follow.

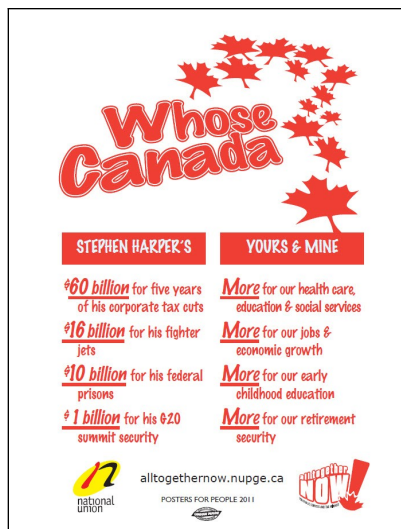
Send Harper a Message – Win \$100

This is another recent initiative that has gone on for the campaign. We are always looking for ways to draw people back to the campaign website and Facebook page. And we wanted people to send letters to Harper saying they want tax fairness, not more corporate tax cuts. If they send a letter, their name is entered into a weekly draw for \$100.

In addition to advertising the contest online, we produced key chains for Champions and others to hand out at events – about 5,000 key chains have been distributed so far.

Over the last two weeks about 60 people have sent letters to Harper. Many of them are published on the campaign website. Winners will be announced on the *All Together Now* website and Facebook page.

The plan is to have our Champions 4 Change present the cheque to the winners, take a photo and post it on the website and Facebook page.



Whose Canada?

This is another recent initiative of the campaign. It is a poster series that will compare and contrast Harper's priorities and values with those of most Canadians. The first poster was distributed electronically two weeks ago and it can be downloaded on the campaign website. It will also be included with the print newsletter going out in March. We plan to do several posters over the next few months.

Apprenticeship In Canada

Brother Bradford is NUPGE's representative on the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) apprenticeship committee and Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Canadien sur l'apprentissage (CAF-FCA) (government, education, labour, users). He is also active with the

BC Federation of Labour (BC Fed) and Red Seal consultations.

Brother Bradford will keep the group posted about the Red Seal conference in Regina so that those interested can register in time.

Overview of apprenticeship structures

Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA): Each province has a director (may fall under different titles) that is responsible for the Red Seal Program. These directors sit on the CCDA. The purpose of this council is to apply a national standard (except Quebec who has a seat on the council but sets their own standards) that will allow for labour mobility of the trades throughout Canada.

Current concerns

Brother Bradford highlighted some additional concerns related to apprenticeship and the trades including: governance, qualifications, ratios, critical shortages, shifting costs, compulsory certification, curriculum, mobility, modularization, technical training (public vs private), on-the-job training, national standards, competency evaluation, apprenticeship counseling, pre-apprenticeship training and apprenticeship opportunities.

The Industrial Training Authority (ITA) in BC addresses a series of issues through a multi-stakeholder body. Among the issues, which are likely faced in each province, are:

- critical skills shortages;
- the lack of employers' support for apprenticeship training;
- the shifting of costs from the government and employers to the apprentices;
- the fragmentation of trades through the elimination of compulsory certification;
- technical training being steered away from the public system to the private;
- journey person to apprentice ratios; and
- trade curriculum and the Red Seal Program.

Brother Bradford covered a lot of information and referred participants to the materials in their binders for greater detail.

NUPGE Responds to the Red Seal Consultations



Any proposals to change or modify the Red Seal are, of course, viewed with much interest and concern by workers and their representatives. While changes which improve and strengthen the Red Seal are welcome, any modifications which hold the potential to dilute or weaken the program are of grave concern.

One trend which is raising concerns, is the fragmentation or modularization of trades. For example, carpentry has become framers, formers, roofers, finishers, etc., rather than

producing carpenters with this diversity of skills.

The strategy works fine during a boom, but then workers are underskilled for other work when the economy has stabilized. Business wants to de-skill workers to keep wages down. This is a job security issue as well for educators as it is de-skilling educators.

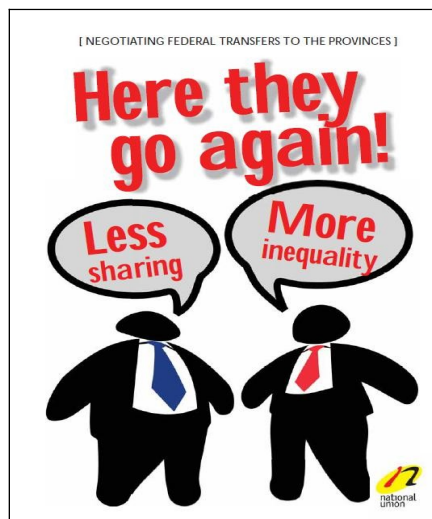
This potential freezing of apprentices below the attainment of the full scope of skills would have a direct and obvious effect on the employability and mobility of skilled tradespersons. While the skill attainment required by a current employer may be adequate for that employer, if for any reason the worker needs to find alternate employment, less than complete training will have a negative effect on their employment prospects.

Regarding the expanded role of assessors, NUPGE wants some things clarified. For example: How does the CCDA envision developing the required assessors? What will be the criteria for the appointment of assessors? Who will assess the competency of the assessors?

NUPGE feels that educational instructors should be the assessors. Instructors having been trained and having accumulated work experience, should be the best assessors. This argument seems to be gaining traction.

CST/CHT 2014 Transfers

Brother Luff gave an overview of the structures for the Canada Social Transfer (CST) and the Canada Health Transfer (CHT). Revenue from these federal transfers plays a vital role in ensuring the provinces and territories have the ability to support economic growth and deliver quality public services.



The agreements for these transfer payments expire on March 31, 2014. Specifically, the CST transfer is a significant source of revenue for the post-secondary education sector. It is our understanding that discussions are currently underway at the federal, provincial and territorial levels in regards to the renewal negotiations that will take place in 2014.

A model letter will be prepared for the group's feedback. Once complete, each Component president can send the letter to premiers and ministers of education in each province. A similar letter will be sent from James Clancy, NUPGE's national president, to the minister of education, the prime minister and the finance minister.

In addition to lobbying government, NUPGE has produced an educational pamphlet to help facilitate the discussion on the renewal of the upcoming federal Health Accord and Canada Social Transfer (CST), *Here they go again*, explaining the importance of the issues.

Unfortunately, there are signs the Harper government is considering government spending cuts to address the deficit - even while giving corporations a further tax break.

Education and Training working group members were encouraged to order hard copies of the pamphlet to distribute to their Components.

Access Copyright

Access Copyright is a collective-rights association that applies to the Copyright Board for a tariff that licenses the use of copyrighted material for post-secondary institutions and their libraries.

Access Copyright's 2010 proposal key points are:

- Summer of 2010 Access Copyright (AC) proposed an increase of 350-400%: \$35/college students and \$45/university students. (For the next two years the interim agreement will remain at \$3.58 for each full-time-equivalent (FTE) student and \$0.11 for each page in a study guide.)
- Huge expansion of AC's purview requires institutions to grant unfettered direct access to faculty, librarian and student e-mail accounts, to monitor what's being used.

The protest to this dramatic increase in fees leads to a review by the Copyright Board. The board ruled that an interim tariff would hold fees at their previous level until 2013, but the roughly 350% increase will retroactively take effect in a year and a half and is likely to cost institutions millions of extra dollars.

An increase in per student fees for use of copyrighted material means that tuition will increase or general expenses for the institution will be squeezed to accommodate the new costs.

Another huge concern is the potential for privacy infringement through e-mail monitoring as copyright law moves into digital territory. On top of this privacy issue is the workload that will inevitably follow. Library and support staff will have additional monitoring and reporting procedures that would add a significant burden to their workload.

There are questions remaining and NUPGE will keep the Education and Training members up to date with the Education and Training eBulletin.

Online Learning

Ontario Online Institute

Brother Dupuis kicked off the discussion with an update from Ontario. He explained that, in the March 2010 budget, money was announced for an Ontario Online Institute. The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) and unions responded with concern that while post-secondary

institutions offer thousands of online courses and participate in distance learning networks, the creation of a new Ontario Online Institute may only serve to be a costly replacement for infrastructure that already exists in the province.

The report from CFS, OPSEU/NUPGE, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) highlighted that an online education must address:

- the skyrocketing cost of attending a post secondary institution in Ontario;
- Ontario's student-faculty ratio and class sizes that are the largest in Canada;
- the lack of space at institutions to achieve the provincial government's projected 70% post-secondary attainment rate and the shortfall in deferred maintenance; and
- the increasing reliance on private sector services and funding and the subsequent impact on academic freedom and quality of education.

The report, "Opening Ontario For Whom", was included in participants' binders. Still much is unknown about the status of the initiative.

Other Online Learning

A separate online learning initiative is OntarioLearn.com. Further discussion revealed that virtually every other province had a similar online clearing house for community college courses across the province.

Ontario Learn's annual report describes the online learning program as the "best kept secret". Due to its stealth approach of online registration, there is no accountability regarding who the instructors are, or how they are recruited.

The most obvious ramifications for OPSEU/NUPGE is non-unionized teachers being recruited at great expense for online courses. There is an 85% retention rate of students, which is surprisingly high, so this needs to be examined. Issues of intellectual property rights have emerged as unionized workers' materials are being used for online courses they don't have an option to teach.

BC Online / Campus BC's collective agreements state that colleges still own material that instructors in their employ produce on outside contracts as well as during regular work hours.

Instructors that are BCGEU/NUPGE members are recruited to create online curriculum. E-apprentice pilot programs have started. Students will work with trades person, and then have two weeks testing. This method is getting around traditional methods of trades education and will likely not yield good results for students.

Campus Manitoba – the online institute at Brandon University, is in full swing with articulations at other Manitoba campuses. PEI's Holland College offers online programs. Campus Saskatchewan has colleges involved in online training as well.

The discussion explored other models for online learning and the potential future of this trend. Participants discussed the need to bargain contract language that protects intellectual property rights of faculty.

The quality of education distributed through online programs was a recurring concern. It was recognized that some courses may lend themselves to online teaching, while other content can best be taught in a hands-on format where students have direct and intensive contact with an instructor.

Follow-ups

Item	NUPGE Responsibility	Component Responsibility	Complete
CST letter for Components	Draft and circulate	Component presidents send letter to provincial education ministers	√
CST letter from NUPGE National president James Clancy to federal government	Drafted, signed, sent		√
Dates for Red Seal Conference in Regina, SK		Dan Bradford, BCGEU	√
Proposal to NEB for Advisory Group on Trades and Apprenticeship	Draft memo, present to NEB	Appoint representative	√
Update eBulletin list	New working group members added		√
Provide update on Access Copyright	Current status added to March eBulletin		√