



## **2019-2023 Provincial Collective Bargaining School Staff Liaison Evaluation Survey Results**

The Teachers' Bargaining Committee appreciates the feedback of school staff liaisons who participated in the evaluation of the last round of provincial collective bargaining.

A very complex round of bargaining concluded in June, with the *2019-2023 Provincial Collective Bargaining Agreement* being signed. Prior to beginning negotiations, priorities were identified by members in a bargaining survey, confirmed through focus groups and approved by Council. A highly transparent process meant members were provided updates on negotiations after each meeting between the TBC and the GTBC. This strategy helped create public support and understanding for our objectives and, in turn, exerted increased pressure on the government in advance of a provincial election. This strategy was effective until schools were closed in response to the global pandemic, shortly after sanctions were implemented. Maintaining sanctions early in the pandemic response ensured that boards would respect teacher time as they created their plans to support students. The agreement was reached that was strongly endorsed by members.

The summary below represents the themes of the responses we received from approximately 130 SSLs;

### Question #1 asked SSL perception regarding the effectiveness of communication.

- The overall consensus was that TBC communications have improved over time and the move to transparent bargaining was appreciated. Seventy percent of responses were positive.
- There was frustration about receiving information from the media or social media first, rather than directly from STF information, and challenges experienced with the STF app.
- There was a mixed response regarding how much public support was garnered. Some SSLs felt the Federation gained public support and others felt there was no gain in public support.
- Not specific to only one question, there was feedback that the public needs to be informed about the role and responsibility placed upon teachers to counteract a perceived negative image of teachers by the general public.

### Question #2 wanted to test whether SSLs received enough information to carry out their role.

- Eighty-seven percent of respondents reported receiving information required to carry out their role.
- SSLs also indicated their support for the sanction hotline.

Question #3 asked SSLs to state the successes in this round.

- Overall, SSLs felt the TBC was well positioned until the pandemic struck.
- The salary increase in a time of pandemic was viewed as a success.
- Many other items were viewed as successful: recognition that class composition is important, raising public support for public education and the show of collectivity by teachers, transparency and clear messaging from STF President Patrick Maze and the imposition of sanctions.

Question #4 asked SSLs to state frustrations in this round.

- Being unable to achieve some measure to manage class composition was an equal frustration with the sudden end of negotiations and not fighting harder. Some felt there was a perception of teachers caving.
- Some reported feeling government disrespected teachers and the bargaining process. The pandemic undermined momentum of teachers and, for some, contributed to feeling pressure to ratify the deal.
- There was an equal level of frustration with the small salary increase, the fact that class composition was on the table, the need to go to sanctions and the restriction of service sanction.

Question #5 asked what the organization needs to consider for the next round.

- The highest percentage of SSLs (34 percent) indicated that class composition provisions need to be a priority in the next round.
- It is important to build public support so more visible campaigns should be considered.
- Continue to build collectivity and stand firm if there is a need to impose sanctions.
- Continue to seek appropriate salary increases. No more zeroes.
- It was also suggested that the TBC should meet with principals before implementing sanctions so that principals can inform their staff members.

The Teachers' Bargaining Committee recognizes that the success of each round of negotiations is viewed by each individual through their own personal and professional lens, and that recognition is borne out by the diverse opinions offered in this survey. The TBC will consider this feedback and use it to inform its practice in preparing for and facilitating the next round of negotiations which should commence in the spring of 2023.

The role of the SSL was critical in carrying out the vote on the sanction question, and the TBC appreciates the efforts of SSLs to conduct that work with integrity and attention to detail.