



NEGOTIATIONS

NEWSLETTER #14

vccfa@telus.net

(604) 688-6210

www.vccfa.ca

April 5, 2005

The 2% Stipend Vote

General Meeting
Tuesday, April 12, 2005
2:30 pm
Croatian Cultural Centre
3250 Commercial Drive
(@ 16th Avenue)

Secret ballot ~ after voting begins the ballot boxes will be open until 6:30 pm

2004-07 Agreement Ratified

At the Special Meeting on March 31st, members ratified the tentative Collective Agreement. The vote result was 112 in favour, 6 opposed and 2 abstaining. The Agreement provides for a new top step in the third year of the Agreement (a 3.3% increase to the current top step), a new .6% common faculty PD fund, several changes to the Common Agreement that were described in our last newsletter, and a process for resolving all outstanding local issues.

The Stipend Question

The Agreement also gives each local the option to participate in a stipend process. Members at all steps can receive a 2% stipend, starting no later than August 1, 2005, by giving up provisions in our Collective Agreement of a like value. In our last newsletter, we had recommended that members take the stipend option. However, at the Special Meeting we withdrew our recommendation because of new information that we received and because of uncertainty around other items. There was discussion of the stipend at the meeting. Members decided to vote on it on April 12. Other faculty associations are engaged in the same process. So far three faculty associations (Capilano, Kwantlen and Douglas) have voted for the stipend. The seven BCGEU locals have the stipend as part of their agreements – no option.

The Negotiating Committee has been wrestling with this issue for several days, and we want to give you the pros and cons, as well as the information we have to date.

Pros

- the stipend is the only way to provide a salary increase to all members
- it is treated as salary for future increases and other purposes
- it counts as pensionable earnings
- it keeps VCCFA members at the same pay level as any other faculty association

Cons

- the stipend transfers certain non-taxable benefits into taxable salary
- it means the loss of already low PD funds and education leaves
- it entails a reduction of hard-earned PD and vacation days
- it involves determinations of value that we are not completely certain about

Process

If members vote **against** the stipend, we will bargain the remaining local issues with the College. If we cannot reach agreement, an arbitrator will resolve all outstanding issues.

If we vote **for** the stipend, then, in addition to bargaining local issues as above, the Negotiating Committee will propose items from the local agreement that will be used for achieving the stipend. We will then bargain with the College for this "compensation transfer". If we cannot reach agreement, an arbitrator will make the final decision regarding how the 2% stipend is to be achieved.

If members vote for the stipend, the Negotiating Committee proposes to put forward the items below. We believe, without prejudice, that they have the approximate values indicated.

PD Funds and Adjudicated PD Funds	\$	155 K	.5%
Education Leaves	\$	125 K	.4%
1 vacation day	\$	130 K	.4%
1 PD day	\$	130 K	.4%
TOTAL		\$540 K	1.7%

Total required for stipend: 2% of VCCFA salary costs (\$650,000)

We still don't know how much is available from the Common Agreement. If there is not enough available, more will have to come from our local agreement. We hope to provide you with that information at the meeting. **Please note that the items and values shown above represent our best guess. We cannot guarantee that an arbitrator will arrive at the same calculation.**

Conclusions

Some members view the stipend process as undesirable on principle, or think that the potential losses involved are too great. Others believe that the tradeoff is worth it. It isn't an easy decision, but it is a decision members will have to make. It will be determined by a majority vote at the meeting on April 12. The question on the secret ballot will be as follows:

Are you in favour of participating in the stipend process?

YES ____

NO ____

If you have any questions or comments, please contact one of the members of the Negotiating Committee. Thank you, as always, for your support.

	local	e-mail address
Mark Goertz	871-7183	mgoertz@telus.net
Karen Griffiths	443-8327	bustergee@hotmail.com
Vinit Khosla (Chair)	871-7255	vkhosla@shaw.ca
Ingrid Kolsteren	688-6210	ikolsteren@telus.net
Maggi Trebble	871-7254	trebbles@hotmail.com
Rose Marie Watson	443-8495	ebwatson@shaw.ca