

## Bargaining Update: Framework Agreement Reached

The parties resumed discussions on Monday, September 16th and continued late into the night on Tuesday concluding on Wednesday, September 18th with a two-year provincial framework agreement that the parties are recommending for local ratification.

Over the course of these lengthy bargaining sessions the parties discussed their respective positions and considered the long-term implications of what was proposed by the parties. After extensive consideration the union accepted a staggered wage increase with an end lift of 3.5% with no contributions of savings from the collective agreement. The timing of the wage increase is as follows:

July, 1, 2013 .....	1.0%
February 1, 2014 .....	2.0%
May 1, 2014.....	0.5%

The other elements of the framework agreement include:

- Acceptance of the framework contingent on the completion of local bargaining by December 20, 2013.
- An ongoing commitment to the work of the Support Staff Education and Adjustment Committee (SSEAC).
- The establishment of an Education Assistants (EA) committee to explore the issues of Education Assistant best practices as well as the potential to recognize credentials and qualifications to regulate the employment of Education Assistants.
- A joint endeavour to look at opportunities to reduce sick leave costs, better manage replacement costs and attendance related issues.
- An immediate change to make participation in JEIS mandatory for continued access to sick leave as well as for access to LTD benefits.
- A BlueNet pay direct drug card along with the adoption of the BlueRX Formulary for prescription drugs for plans where it would be cost neutral.
- Renewal of Letters of Understandings from the 2011 framework on the PEBT and Demographic, Classification and Wage Information.
- Meetings between the parties and the Ministry of Education to examine and discuss any impediments arising from, and the options to facilitate, the introduction of shared services.

Following local bargaining within the districts, ratification by Boards of Education, Union locals and the BCPSEA board will be required to finalize the agreements.

Boards are reminded that they are required to have approved savings plans before they can conclude an agreement with the Union local. The savings plan submission should be forwarded to Claire Avison at the Ministry of Education ([Claire.Avison@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Claire.Avison@gov.bc.ca)). More detailed communication and tools to assist with the creation of savings plans are also being sent to district staff by the Ministry of Education.

There will be a series of conference calls set up for tomorrow to explain the agreement. A separate email will be sent out with the call-in information.

## **Questions**

If you have any questions, please contact your [district liaison](#).