

## For Association newsletters

### Manitoba Teacher Bargaining in Context: A Pan-Canadian Comparison

This 2014-15 school year all 38 Manitoba local teacher collective associations under provincial public jurisdiction have begun the process of negotiating new collective agreements as their current agreements expired June 30, 2014.

As of mid-October 2014, five new collective agreements have already been concluded. Of the five, two agreements (Flin Flon and Portage la Prairie) are 4 year terms expiring in June 2018 with the remaining three new agreements (Seven Oaks, St. James-Assiniboia, and Seine River) with 3 year terms expiring June 2017.

The settlement pattern affecting teacher salaries are annual increases beginning each September of 2.0% per year for the period between 2014 and 2017. For those associations with 4 year deals, the settlement in 2017-18 was 3% (comprised of 1.5% in September followed by a further 1.5% at January 2018).

Given the increases established by the 4 year settlements, it is believed that based on the latest available information on the economy and inflation, this annual average settlement of 2.3% should protect the purchasing power of salaries. This was one of the key goals of this bargaining round, along with improvements to working conditions and rights established in collective agreement language.

These negotiated Manitoba teacher settlements, by way of contrast, fare very favourably when compared to other teacher settlements across Canada as generally any settlement below 2% will be below inflation and therefore result in a real decrease in salary. As it stands as of October 2014, teachers in Manitoba and Nova Scotia are the only teachers to have negotiated overall increases averaging above 2% per year.

Province	Term (Duration)	Avg. Annual Salary Settlement	Bargaining Structure for Salaries
Nova Scotia	2012-15 (3 yrs)	2.5%	Provincial
<b>Manitoba</b>	<b>2014-18 (3-4 yrs)</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>Local</b>
PEI	2013-15 (23 mths)	1.9%	Provincial
Quebec	2010-15 (5 yrs)	1.5%	Provincial
Newfoundland & Lab.	2012-16 (4 yrs)	1.25%	Provincial
British Columbia	2013-19 (6 yrs)	1.2%	Provincial
New Brunswick	2012-16 (4 yrs)	1.0%	Provincial
Alberta	2012-16 (4 yrs)	0.5%	Provincial framework
Saskatchewan	2013+	conciliation	Provincial
Ontario	2014+	bargaining	Provincial

Recently teacher negotiations were concluded in British Columbia settling a five week strike where the teachers did not receive pay for this period of time. The settlement provided for an approximate total salary increase of 7.25% spread out over 6 years. Of substantial gain for the teachers was significantly enhanced class size and student composition funding which will result in the hiring of hundreds of additional teachers across the province to address this pressing concern. This issue has been of high

significance to the BCTF and its membership for over a decade since the government stripped out class size and student composition provisions out of previously negotiated contracts.

Closer to home, teachers in Saskatchewan are currently in conciliation after having turned down two previous tentative agreements with the government. In Ontario, the current bargaining round is being shaped by new legislation which creates provincial bargaining for salaries and benefits. Additionally, the newly elected Wynne government has signalled to public sector unions, including teachers, that wage freezes should be accepted given the state of provincial finances. It is expected that a challenging round of bargaining will ensue in Ontario.