

Questions and Answers re: College Strike Impact on Dual Credits, Experiential Learning, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

Issue

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), which represents full-time professors, instructors, counsellors and librarians within Ontario's college system, has begun a strike action as of Monday, October 16, 2017.

This may negatively impact students who participate in a number of secondary programs, events, and activities that take place, entirely or in part, on college campuses or utilizing college resources. This includes:

- School College Work Initiative (SCWI) Activities and Dual Credit Programs, most notably the School Within a College (SWAC) programs, which are situated on college campuses.
- Experiential learning opportunities, such as cooperative education, in which student placements occur on a college campus.
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) level 1 Apprenticeship schooling provided at colleges.

Key Messages

- Students are the top priority for our government, and we know they have real concerns about the impact a potential strike may have on their education. While the government has no direct involvement in the collective bargaining process, we are committed to doing everything we can to connect students to the resources they need to stay informed.
- We expect that for the duration of the labour disruption, school board staff will work together with SCWI Regional Planning Team (RPT) Chairs and RPT members from colleges to implement contingency plans and determine how to best communicate with students.
- In 2017-18, students are participating in 604 dual credit programs, comprised of 16,801 dual credits that are delivered on a college campus. Of all dual credit programs delivered on a college campus, 107 are School Within A College (SWAC) programs.
- Some students may have a cooperative education placement that takes place on a college campus. All school boards have policies that provide appropriate procedures in the event of a strike, lockout, or collective action. These may include arranging alternative learning opportunities for students.
- As part of OYAP, some students participate in level 1 apprenticeship schooling at colleges. School board and college staff will work together to ensure coordinated

communication takes place and that alternative options are available for students.

Q1. How long do you expect this strike to last?

A1. We know all parties involved in bargaining have students as their top priority: students want to be in the classroom, and we all want them there too. And faculty want to be supporting students' learning in the classroom. In the meantime, we expect that school board staff will work together with RPT Chairs and RPT members from colleges to determine how to deal with the situation and how to best communicate with students.

Q2. If the strike continues, will students still earn the credits they were supposed to in the dual credit program?

A2. There is some potential for SWAC classes to be convened with their secondary school teachers at sites away from the college. School board staff will work with RPT Chairs to seek alternative sites in order to continue teaching dual credit classes for the duration of the labour disruption.

Q3. Some students in SWAC programs will not want to return to their home school for classes. Where will they attend class during the strike?

A3. As dual credit programs will not be able to take place on any college campus during a labour disruption, school board staff will work with RPT Chairs to attempt to find an alternate location. This may include finding space in a secondary school or community buildings.

Q4. Will the strike affect students' ability to graduate on time?

A4. At this time, we can't predict how long the labour disruption will last. School board staff will be monitoring the situation and will make every effort to work with students to meet their needs and to try to ease any effects of the college labour disruption.

Q5. Will there be any impact of the college strike on cooperative education programs, OYAP, or other experiential learning programs?

A5. Some students may have a cooperative education placement on a college campus. All school boards have policies that provide appropriate procedures during a strike, including arranging alternative learning opportunities for students. For example, if the strike or work action continues for a prolonged period of time,

teachers may arrange for students to complete the placement component of the course with another organization and placement supervisor.

Q6. Will OYAP participants be notified about a strike?

A6. Yes, as part of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development College Strike Contingency Plan, Regional Directors will send a memo to school boards to advise of the strike and to ask them to communicate with OYAP participants who are affected.

Q7. How will OYAP participants be accommodated for missed schooling during the strike?

A7. Colleges will work with local offices, service providers, and school boards to ensure feasible options are implemented to make up for missed schooling. Class intakes may need to be adjusted to accommodate rescheduled classes for participants. Regions may also need to amend agreements to reflect new project timelines.