



**For Immediate Release
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College Students Fear Potential Support Staff Strike

TORONTO, ON - Ontario College and college/university students are encouraging both bargaining teams of the college support staff and management to reach a new collective agreement before August 31st, says the College Student Alliance (CSA).

"We are quite concerned that both sides appear to be no closer to reaching a new agreement," says Jenn Howarth, President of the College Student Alliance. "With a new semester beginning in a matter of weeks; students from across the province are anxious that a potential province-wide support staff strike could affect start-up and impact the overall experience of starting a new chapter in their life."

Both sides have been bargaining since the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) informed the College Compensation and Appointments Council (the Council) of their intention to bargain in early 2008. The current collective agreement expires on August 31, 2008. On July 16, 2008, 66.6 per cent of support staff voted 68.8 per cent in favour of a strike mandate. Now, whether or not there will be a province-wide strike rests in the hands of both respective bargaining teams as they head back to the bargaining table on August 12th.

"The CSA is seriously worried that come the end of August students will be crossing the picket line to enter their classes," adds Ms. Howarth. "Both sides need to remember that college students are paying to receive a quality postsecondary education and in today's ever-changing and highly competitive workforce receiving that education in a timely manner is extremely important. OPSEU and the Council must use the remaining days leading up to August 31st to reach a fair agreement that works for all parties, including students."

The College Student Alliance is a partner in postsecondary education and has developed an information Web site to keep college and college/university students informed and educated with up-to-date, accurate and unbiased information related to the potential support staff strike.

For more information, please visit www.collegestrike.ca.

The College Student Alliance (CSA) is an advocacy and services organization, which has been proudly serving Ontario's college and college/university students since 1975. The CSA currently represents 16 colleges and 23 student councils with over 109,000 full-time student members throughout the province.

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