



CSSBA makes proposals to distribute \$3.5 million surplus bonus fund

April 30, 2008

The Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA) has negotiated a guaranteed minimum fund for Early Incentive Bonus Payments with the Community Social Service Employers' Association (CCSEA). The CSSBA also reached an agreement with CCSEA that if there was money left after distributing the Early Incentive Payments the CSSBA would determine the manner of distribution of that money.

The audit of expenditures has now been completed and there is a surplus of almost \$4 million.

Before applying the money anywhere else, the CSSBA addressed groups that received either no bonus or a reduced bonus in 2006 based on several criteria. The deadline for applications was April 15, 2008 and it appears that there will be about \$3.5 million left after those expenditures.

In deciding on a proposal to distribute the remaining funds, the CSSBA considered the monetary priorities for bargaining that the membership provided during the last round of collective bargaining and the growing recruitment and retention crisis in the sector which has developed since that time. Several research studies have now documented in some detail the recruitment and retention problems in the sector.

Two proposals have been developed by the CSSBA and were presented to CSSEA on April 23.

The first is an offer to use the surplus bonus money to apply to temporary market adjustments to wages allowed by Memorandum of Agreement #18. This offer is conditional on the CSSBA's funds being matched by government.

Temporary market adjustments under MOA#18 are intended to provide relief to recruitment and retention pressures and the CSSBA does not believe that \$3.5 million will provide a wage lift of enough significance to begin to touch this problem.

Should government be unwilling to take advantage of the CSSBA's offer to apply our \$3.5 million to wages, the CSSBA's alternative decision is to apply the money to sick leave improvements for the remainder of the current collective agreement. This is the only monetary bargaining priority that was not addressed to some measure in the last round of bargaining.

The CSSBA expects to know before the fall whether government has an interest in addressing the recruitment and retention problems in the sector. Their response will be the basis on which the CSSBA moves forward to conclude our decision on how to distribute the remaining surplus funds of \$3.5 million.

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