



The Honourable Deb Matthews, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development, has quite rightly expressed her concern that students are struggling with continued uncertainty that has resulted from the strike. She says,

*They are worried about how to pay for unexpected costs like additional rent or canceling long-standing travel plans to be home with family. They've told me they are stressed about when they will be able to complete their studies or if there will be any extra help when classes finally resume.*

*That is why I am requiring that colleges establish a dedicated fund with all the savings from the strike. The fund will be used to support students who have experienced financial hardships as a result of the strike.*

While we applaud her action, we question her preferred means of financing the fund. We realize that the Colleges are saving money by keeping students out of the classroom, which, of course, explains, in part, why Management has been reluctant to negotiate an agreement. However, we have a better idea for making money available to Mohawk students in need.

1. President McKerlie should be required to donate one of his two salaries, preferably the higher salary, to the student hardship fund.
2. All Management bonuses for this academic year should also be donated to the fund.

Management has spent the last four weeks counting its cash windfall, after turning its back on the negotiating table and prolonging the strike. It's time for the Government to acknowledge that College Council has abdicated its responsibility as a party to the bargaining process and now must make a contribution to assist those students who have been impacted by their intransigence.

The Executive, Local 240