

**Email to Members**

**September 4, 2025**

**Subject Line: DFA Bargaining Update**

Dear DFA Member,

Earlier this afternoon the Board released another inappropriate and misleading message to the campus community, almost identical in kind to the interest arbitration communication that led us to file a bargaining complaint with the Minister of Labour. The DFA Executive Committee will be asked tomorrow to approve adding this latest incident to the substance of our earlier complaint.

On September 2, Grace Aldridge-Jefferies, Dalhousie Vice-President of People and Culture, sent me a letter with what she characterized as an 'offer' – this is the 'offer' referred to in the campus-wide communication this afternoon. Ms. Aldridge-Jefferies is not a member of the Board's bargaining team, and I am not a member of the DFA's bargaining team. Communications of this kind violate the bargaining protocols jointly agreed by the DFA and Board. We called an urgent meeting of the DFA Bargaining Team, and also contacted our conciliation officer; all bargaining proposals are to be exchanged at the bargaining table with both parties present.

In the evening on September 3, our conciliation officer Rick Rose emailed the DFA and Board. The key recommendation from the email is extracted here:

*"As a way forward, I am setting a meeting date to resume conciliation talks for Monday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 9:00 am. My office considered other dates - both earlier and later – but I feel this date will give us our best chance of having positive conversations and outcome."*

The DFA Bargaining Team met again this afternoon, and agreed that the only way to conclude a new collective agreement is at the bargaining table under the supervision of a conciliation officer. We can no longer trust the Board's bargaining team to act in good faith. We trust Rick Rose's judgement that the best time to meet is on Monday.

To be clear, we have accepted the invitation to conciliation on Monday, September 8, and we will not engage with any member of the Board until that time. The Board is free to introduce the 'offer' sent by Ms. Aldridge-Jefferies as a formal bargaining proposal following agreed protocol on Monday.



I appreciate that you are anxious to receive updates about progress in our negotiations, and ask for your trust that we are working in the best interest of all Members. We are dealing with an unprofessional and unpredictable bargaining partner trying to undermine the collective bargaining process to sow division and confusion. I encourage you to wait for communications from us before taking the Board's messages about bargaining at face value.

It is your work on the line and elsewhere that brought us back to conciliation. Our efforts are having an impact, and we will go into the meeting Monday with the goal of reaching agreement.

I look forward to seeing you all at our rally tomorrow at noon.

Dave Westwood

DFA President 2025-2026