

OCC expects pact by start of school

BY RALPH R. ECHTINAW
STAFF WRITER

Oakland Community College was still negotiating a new contract with the teachers union at press time, but the union president told the board of trustees Thursday that the union "believes that we will have a contract by Sept. 3."

If an agreement isn't reached in time for the new semester, teachers are expected to work under terms of the old contract.

The fall semester begins Thursday.

The last OCC teachers' strike occurred 20 years ago during the Nixon Administration's wage and price freeze and lasted a week. There has been no walkout since, said college spokesman George Cartsonis.

Historically, when negotiations have dragged on, the teachers went back to work anyway, Cartsonis

EDUCATION

said. "If a settlement is not reached by the 31st, we expect what has happened (before) will occur again."

Both Cartsonis and Uni Suskind, president of the OCC Faculty Association, seemed confident a settlement would be reached. The former said negotiations "are making progress," while the latter said the administration negotiators gave in on a few points last week.

A teacher who requested anonymity said the negotiations have mostly been comprised of an administration attempt to gain concessions, while the union sought the status quo, more or less.

The teacher, however, doesn't believe there will be a strike. "We're not in a militant mood," he said.

"We want to get something settled."

The current three-year contract says that beginning teachers must be paid about \$29,000 a year, while teachers at the top of the OCC pay scale get more than \$65,000 — when they teach a regular class load.

OCC teachers are also allowed to teach an overload of classes. The amount of that overload is a bargaining issue.

Suskind said she expects salaries to rise in the new contract.

OCC's budget, passed in June, provided for a 4.5 percent pay increase for full-time and adjunct faculty, a 10 percent fringe benefit cost increase as well as an increase in retirement costs from the current 11.29 to 12.3 percent.

The teachers are supposed to meet Wednesday night and either vote on a contract (should one be ready for their scrutiny), or vote on

what to do if an agreement hasn't been reached, Suskind said.

The union president added that striking, per se, isn't a legal recourse, but teachers may choose to "withhold services" (like teaching) "to protest unfair labor practices." In essence this is a strike, but the union calls it a "job action."

OCC operates five campuses around Oakland County in Farmington Hills, Auburn Hills, Royal Oak, Waterford Township and Southfield. More than 29,000 students were enrolled a year ago and more are expected this year, Cartsonis said.

The college has a budget of \$69.5 million of which 36 percent is generated through a property tax on county residents, 36 percent from tuition and 24 percent from a state subsidy.

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Monday, Sept. 7 — West Bloomfield: Temple Israel, 5725 Walnut Lake Road. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact: Marsha Dickman, 350-2959.

Tuesday, Sept. 8 — West Bloomfield: Temple Kol-Ami, 5085 Walnut Lake Road. Hours: 2-8 p.m. Contact: Shelley Willner, 788-1138.

Tuesday, Sept. 15 — Bloomfield Hills: Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, 5631 N. Adams Road. Hours: 2-8 p.m. Contact: Nancy Geik, 680-1255.

Wednesday, Sept. 16 — Troy: St. Paul Insurance Company, 1301 Long Lake Road. Hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact: Sherrie Waterstone, 334-3575.

Wednesday, Sept. 16 — West

Bloomfield: Covenant Baptist Church, 5800 W. Maple Road. Hours: 3-9 p.m. Contact: Connie Webster, 334-5575.

Thursday, Sept. 17 — Bloomfield Hills: Bloomfield Township Municipal Office, 4200 Telegraph Road. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact: Wilma Cotton, 644-0161.

Monday, Sept. 21 — Birmingham: Beverly Hills Methodist

Church, 2000 W. 13 Mile Road. Hours: 2-8 p.m. Contact: Pat Reeves, 644-8276.

Monday, Sept. 21 — Southfield: St. Ives Church. Hours: 1:30-7:30 p.m. Contact: Pat Denis, 557-0925.

Tuesday, Sept. 22 — Southfield: City of Southfield Parks & Rec. Bldg., 26000 Evergreen Road. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact: Delores Gunn, 354-4754.

Friday, Sept. 25 — Southfield: Oakland County Health Dept., 27725 Greenfield. Hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact: Barbara Puckett, 424-7011.

Saturday, Sept. 26 — Bloomfield Hills: Congregational Church of Birmingham, 1000 Cranbrook Road. Hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact: Nancy Schermerhorn, 549-9385.

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