

LOCAL LINES

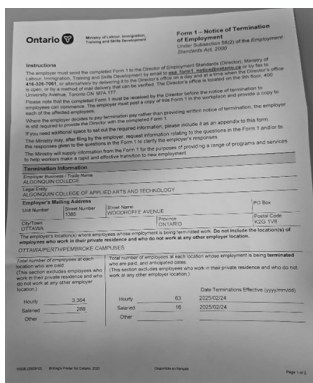


Pre-Decided and Paper-Trail Proven: Uncovering the Truth Behind BoG Votes

Tara Ettinger, Local 415 Lead Steward and Partial-Load Liaison



It has long been rumored that decisions brought before the Board of Governors (BoG) are predetermined, with the votes that happen at their meetings serving as mere formalities. Regrettably, Local 415 has uncovered evidence that seems to support these allegations on March 20, 2025.



The posted "Form 1" from the 4th floor of Building C. The form is still there if you'd like a closer look.

The key piece of evidence is the college's submission to the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development of a "Form 1: Notification of Termination of Employment," filed on February 24, 2025. Form 1 clearly identifies the college's intent to terminate 63 hourly and 16 salaried employees from Locals 415 and 416. It was posted by Human Resources on a physical bulletin board located on the 4th floor of Building C at the Ottawa campus on February 25.

For those keeping track, the BoG met February 24, 2025, the Monday of Study Break Week, with [several big "mitigation strategy" items on the agenda](#). The BoG voted to suspend 37 programs at 4:35 PM, voted to close the Perth campus at 4:50 PM, and concluded the meeting at 6:35 PM. It is worth noting that the Ministry office closes at 5 PM.

While program cuts and layoffs were inevitable, as per the President's message at [a Town Hall in January](#), our Local has continually requested transparency and details supporting how decision making has occurred throughout the process. In fact, the Vice-President of Human Resources, Kin Choi, purposely eluded questions about how many members would be affected, even though it is clearly indicated on the Form 1 sent to the Ministry.

Even more alarming is the VPHR's misleading message at the March 6th Town Hall that the Academic College Employment Stability Council (CESC) was activated on March 3, and that the Support CESC was activated on March 6, both well after the Form 1 was filed with the Ministry (see [related slide #14](#) or [watch recording](#)). You may recall that both locals rebutted the position at the meeting, clarifying that the CESC was activated on a different pending matter isolated from the recent BoG decisions. The college will maintain that they posted the document publicly, as they are required. In case walking on the 4th floor of Building C is not on your regular route between teaching and supporting learners, the Form 1 notice is still posted there, ironically on the "Career Opportunities" bulletin board.



The ironic (and rather cruel) location of the "Form 1" posted in Building C.

As the college continues to use these questionably ethical tactics, we ask that everyone be increasingly vigilant and share information with the Local about questionable actions. No matter how small or insignificant it may appear, please share things that give you pause, as your information may be the missing link to another matter we are working on.



EDITORIAL: ACTIONS SPEAK MUCH LOUDER THAN WORDS



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The Words: “We are committed to treating everyone with dignity and respect throughout this process.” (“Message from the President: Financial Challenges and Mitigation Measures” – Feb. 11, 2025)

The Actions:

- × 37 unique academic programs grouped together and suspended, with intent to terminate, in one single motion (passed within 25 minutes) at the February 24, 2025 Board of Governors’ Meeting
- × No faculty representatives from suspended programs permitted to speak at the BOG meeting
- × Suspension process circumvents the college’s own policy on the process for program suspensions (see [Corporate Policy AA30](#) and multiple articles in this issue)

The Words: “We are committed to navigating these challenges with transparency and compassion... Please know that our leadership team is here to support you during this time.” (Senior Vice-President, Academic – “Follow up to President’s Communiqué – Impact on Academic” – Feb. 11, 2025)

The Actions:

- × No replies from any members of the Algonquin College Executive Team to respectful emails from affected and confused program faculty and coordinators asking for reasons for program suspensions
- × Information about the programs being suspended was shared with the media before all affected employees were notified
- × “Form 1 – Notification of Termination of Employment,” clearly identifying the college’s intent to terminate 63 hourly and 16 salaried employees from Locals 415 and 416, quietly posted on HR bulletin board on the 4th floor of the C Building where very few members of either local would be likely to see it (see our [cover story](#) by Tara Ettinger)

The Words: “We’re here to listen to your concerns, answer your questions, and provide the resources that you need...anchoring on our core values.” (Kin Choi, Vice President, Human Resources on the “AC Approach” to cost mitigation efforts – Town Hall, March 6, 2025)

The Actions:

- × Miscalculations and miscommunication around Voluntary Exit Incentive (VEI) program
- × Confusion and hurt feelings from members deemed eligible for Targeted Retirement Departure Initiative
- × Constant stream of platitudes and promises to uphold core values provided throughout Town Halls and in emails to faculty instead of concrete information and answers
- × Barrage of emails from HR over past few weeks providing important links to mental health and grief support resources, but also seemingly intent on telling us how we *should* be dealing with our emotions over program suspensions, and using extreme, potentially further triggering language like “survivor syndrome” (“Feeling the Changes: Acknowledging the Emotional Impact” Email – March 4, 2025)
- × E-mail reminders to faculty and support staff to update Career Profiles on Workday, with a threat that “information provided may be audited for accuracy” (“Career Profile and Career Development Services for Employees” email from HR – March 4, 2025)

The Words: Caring, Learning, Integrity, Respect.

The Actions: Hmmm...

- Jordan Berard, *Local Lines Co-Editor*



DOES ALGONQUIN INVEST THE TIME AND EFFORT NEEDED TO MAINTAIN ITS MISSION “TO TRANSFORM HOPES AND DREAMS INTO LIFELONG SUCCESS”?

Tracy Henderson, Local 415 President

There are many things one can do in 25 minutes: bake a batch of cookies, complete a focused Pomodoro work session, take a medically recommended power nap, watch a quarter of a football game. Even a hummingbird can only rest for 25 minutes before needing to feed again. For those of us who are holiday-challenged, 25 minutes might even be enough time to almost wrap a gift.

On [February 24th](#), the Board of Governors voted to approve the suspension, with intent to terminate, of 37 programs at Algonquin College. The college administration presented its rationale for this sweeping decision in just 25 minutes. In that brief period, they determined the fate of 37 programs, affecting approximately 100 faculty members and hundreds of students.

This decision came just weeks after the announcement of the Perth campus closure—an institution with deep roots in its community (see January 9th in this [compilation of “Messages from the President”](#)).

We all understand the term “unprecedented financial hardship,” and the difficult situation Ontario’s college system now faces. Whether due to the provincial government’s chronic underfunding or the college’s over-reliance on international student enrollment, the consequences of these decisions are now being felt by faculty, support staff, and students alike.

What makes this situation even more difficult to navigate is the college leadership’s concerning approach, which blatantly circumvents not only the Collective Agreement but also the college’s own [Policy AA30](#). Did this not raise significant red flags for the Board of Governors? The demonstrated lack of integrity is alarming. Rushing through the suspension and proposed termination of 37 programs, without appropriate time for discussion, is a dishonourable way to conduct a process that has such wide-reaching impact.

When leadership disregards one of the college’s core values, it raises the question of whether others—such as respect—are also at risk of being ignored. The college has repeatedly claimed to take a “people-first” approach, acting with empathy and dignity. Yet, their communications fail to reflect these promises. [A recent post on My AC](#) encouraged employees to update their resumes in Workday, while in the same breath reminding them to adhere to HR-18, the Employee Code of Conduct, with the warning that submissions would be audited. Where is the dignity or empathy in that message?

It has been disheartening to hear members of the college community raise concerns—at the Board of Governors, in the media, and through personal advocacy—only to have their voices dismissed and outright ignored.

We continue to investigate the decision-making process behind these suspensions, repeatedly requesting the data that supposedly informed these drastic measures. Another glaring example of disrespect was the college’s decision to share details of the program suspensions with the media before notifying all of the affected employees. How can the college expect us to believe in its commitment to core values like caring, integrity, and respect when its actions so clearly contradict them?

Given the college’s reluctance to share information—whether through the College Employment Stability Committee (CESC) as outlined in Article 28 of the [Collective Agreement](#) or through the established channels between the Local and Human Resources—the union has filed a grievance. This grievance challenges the college’s unilateral implementation of faculty reductions, bypassing the processes outlined in Articles 28 and 29 of the CA and violating its own [Policy AA30](#).

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To be clear, the Local does not have the authority to compel the employer to continue offering valued programs that serve the broader community. However, we do have a responsibility to ensure that every article of the Collective Agreement—an agreed-upon contract between the employer and faculty—is upheld throughout this process.

The Local will continue to engage with the college to ensure that all aspects of the path forward, whatever it may look like, adhere to the provisions set forth in our Collective Agreement. We will also continue to hold the college accountable for living up to its core values—caring, integrity, and respect—as well as its stated commitment to a people-first approach grounded in empathy and dignity.

Finally, I want to remind each of us that **we are the Local**, and that includes **you**. Whether you are a steward or a member-at-large, there are numerous ways to engage—within our programs, departments, and the broader college community. Now is the time to get involved. Our monthly meetings are not yet down to 25 minutes, but we can promise that we make all of our decisions and take actions grounded in our core pillars of **advocacy**, **activism**, and **education**.

Now is your time to take a more active role in protecting our college system.



You Need Your Union and Your Union Needs You!

Liz Von Moos, Local 415 Secretary

One of the biggest misconceptions about unions is that they are separate entities from their members. Nothing could be further from the truth—**YOU** are the union. It's not a shield or a suit of armor that you put on before battle; it's more like a bus, and you're the one behind the wheel.

Our [Local Bylaws](#) make this clear: “The membership is the highest authority of the Local.”

As our membership comes under increasing pressure, we often hear the question, “What is the union doing?” The answer is simple: we're fighting back with every tool available under our [Collective Agreement](#). But this fight isn't the responsibility of a few—it's something we must do together. Together, we are the union. Together, we have power.

You can play a key role in strengthening our collective voice and advocating for faculty by becoming a Steward.

What is a Steward?

Along with Officers, [Stewards](#) make up the Local Executive Committee (LEC). They represent members in their workplaces, answer or refer colleagues' questions, and ensure our rights under the collective agreement are upheld. The only set time commitment for a Steward is a monthly two-hour LEC meeting, but there are plenty of opportunities to become more involved in areas such as accommodations, health and safety, hiring committees, mobilization, and communications. No experience is needed; training and support will be provided.

Why Stewards Matter

Stewards are the backbone of our union. They help distribute important information, bring workplace concerns to the LEC, and mobilize members for union actions and campaigns. In return, Stewards have access to LEC meetings, as well as education and training opportunities to support them in their role.

YOU Need You!

There are 21 Steward vacancies across our three campuses, and we are holding a **Steward by-election** to fill them. The term of office is shortened to only one year, for now (April 10, 2025, to May 29, 2026), so this is a good opportunity to explore the Steward role if you are at all curious.

To run for a Steward position, [complete the nomination form](#) and submit it to comms@locallines.org by 12:00 noon on Thursday, April 3, 2025.

Your union is only as strong as its members—which means it's only as strong as all of our engagement and participation. Get involved and make a difference!

Ontario Syndrome

Martin Lee,

Local 415 2nd Vice President and CAAT-A Bargaining Team Member



Anyone who watches crime TV will, at some point, encounter an episode where the victim ends up defending their abuser. Inevitably, one of the detectives will have a heartfelt conversation about "Stockholm Syndrome"—a disputed diagnosis coined after a bank robber in Sweden who held captives hostage for six days. When the hostages were released, none of them would testify against their captor; instead, they raised money for his legal defense.

The term is now used more broadly to describe situations where people who are objectively being harmed fail to recognize their predicament—circumstances where any objective observer would easily point out the danger.

I'm convinced that Ontario has Stockholm Syndrome. There's simply no other logical explanation for the last several election cycles.

When faced with the opportunity to choose anyone other than Doug Ford, 19% of Ontarians have tripled down on the man who has systematically dismantled the province. Let's examine his track record.

Ontario's colleges have been devastated by Ford's decision to freeze tuition at 2015 levels. To compensate for lost revenue, colleges turned to international student tuition. When the federal government intervened to curb predatory, bad-faith colleges, programs began shutting down across the province—including here at Algonquin College.

Doug Ford [flushed \\$1.3 billion down the drain](#) in an ill-conceived rush to expand liquor licenses—ultimately costing the province billions in lost annual revenue from the LCBO.

One of Ford's first acts in power was eliminating rent control. Since then, rental prices have skyrocketed by hundreds of percent, depending on the city. [Homelessness has surged by 25%](#)—including among students.

More than [2.5 million Ontarians](#), including the author of this article, are without a family doctor. That number is projected to hit 4.4 million by 2026. Meanwhile, hospitals and clinics remain critically underfunded, leaving countless others without essential care. (If you see me, ask about how my partner was told to "pack a lunch" for a surgery he needed.) [Currently, 20% of hospitals](#) with emergency rooms are experiencing unplanned closures.

The province has done nothing to address domestic partner violence, despite [58 women dying](#) from domestic violence in the past year alone.

Ford [shut down supervised consumption sites](#), leading directly to a 205% increase in opioid overdoses. Do you know how many people have fatally overdosed at a supervised consumption site nationally? Not one.

Indigenous communities continue to be ignored—Ginoogaming First Nation, for example, still lacks a permanent bridge to their community.

These aren't historical failures. These are headlines from just the past six months. There's a longer record of his wrongs [here](#).

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How can a government cause so much harm yet still retain power? Surely, those \$200 cheques weren't enough to literally buy votes. The only remaining explanation is that Ontario is trapped in some kind of mass Stockholm Syndrome where voters are under the delusion that continually acting against their own interests will somehow work out in the end.

When I ask my neighbors why they support Ford, I hear truly bizarre justifications. "Better the devil you know..."—as if that logic holds up when the devil in question is top of the ladder for demonic rankings, and has a record-setting maleficence report.

I've also heard "Well, the NDP screwed up last time....," a reference to the Bob Rae government of 1995, despite the fact that I hadn't even finished high school at the time. I don't understand the level of cognitive dissonance required to match a brief period of 30 years ago with the current state of cuts in Ontario.

Anyone who has dealt with a friend, neighbor, or family member who clings to an abuser knows how difficult it is to break through the denial. There's often an acceptance that things must "get worse before they get better."

But how much worse does Ontario have to get before people wake up?

For the faculty across the province facing program closures. For the students now facing an uncertain future. For the elderly experiencing malnutrition because of the rising cost of living. For those awaiting critical medical care. For the schoolchildren being deprived of the basics. And for the rest of our communities—who are struggling yet somehow convinced there is no alternative—I hope Ontario wakes up soon.

Planning for Your Future Self!

Updating Workday and Contacting Your Local for Support!

During times of uncertainty, we encourage you to reach out with your questions, share department information, and seek support. Our door is always open via email at COMMS@locallines.org, a quick call at 613-727-4723 x7716, or an in-person chat in the office in A207a.

On February 12th, the Local hosted a well-attended Information Town Hall. During and after the presentation, we addressed concerns and tried to answer as many questions as possible. Time ran out and we promised to provide a written follow-up. [Please follow this link to find detailed responses to the 43 questions](#) asked during the town hall. You will find the Q & A organized by themes.

In addition, we spoke about forward-thinking homework—especially for members directly impacted by a program suspension—including updating your Workday profile with relevant experience and education. Although this is a somewhat tedious task, it is worthwhile. When you log into Workday, scroll down on the landing page to the **Showcase Your Best Self** tile and select **Manage Profile**. Here you will be able to select your skills, as well as upload your employment history and duties associated with those roles.

The Local also suggests that you fill in a table of courses you have taught, could teach, and would be able to teach with a bit of training. [That template is available for downloading here](#). Please download the template and save a copy to your computer before filling it out.



BATCH PROCESSING: A NEW MODEL FOR THE COLLEGE

Tara Ettinger, Local 415 Lead Steward and Partial-Load Liaison

Last year, the college bypassed aspects of [Policy AA30](#) by grouping three programs (Hairstylist Diploma, Esthetician Diploma, and Hairstyling Apprenticeship) along with an enterprise (AC Salon and Spa) for the Board of Governors to vote on their suspension with the intent of termination.

The pushback from stakeholders—including alumni, the community, faculty, support staff, and students—temporarily halted these efforts, creating an opportunity for voices to be heard. This reconsideration, driven by new information, forced the college to adjust its approach, and, much to its dismay, offer an additional intake of these programs. However, as revealed in the [February 24th Board of Governors' presentation](#), the college used this experience to refine its strategy and increase pressure, ensuring future decisions would be less open to challenge.

By analyzing the timeline, we can see a concentrated effort by the college to systematically circumvent its own policy, while strategically imposing terms and conditions with each faculty push back, culminating in the activation of Phase 1 of a broader institutional strategy.

Timeline of Events:

- **January 2024** – The international student cap was announced, but the college did not express immediate concern, awaiting further government direction. Faculty, support staff, stakeholders, and the Dean presented Hairstyling and Esthetics program concerns to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASAC), which responded by requesting additional information, as the Dean's recommendation lacked full stakeholder and financial considerations.
- **February 2024** – ASAC deferred its recommendation to the Board of Governors on the fate of the Hairstyling and Esthetics programs until June.
- **March 2024** – The Ontario government provided further details and directions regarding the international student cap.
- **June 2024** – [The Board of Governors voted to suspend the Hairstyling and Esthetics programs](#), along with other programs in the cluster, with the intent to terminate them. At the same meeting, the introduction of three new programs was announced. The college reported financial stability, with a \$10.3 million surplus from 2022-23, while continuing to invest in strategic projects. *Behind the Scenes*: the SVPA directed all Deans to conduct a portfolio review of their schools. Simultaneously, we began to see a significant number of many long-time SVPs depart.
- **September 2024** – Upper management conducted a full portfolio review, identifying high-cost programs, those reliant on cross-subsidization, and labor market trends. *Faculty, support staff, and stakeholders were not engaged in this review.*
- **October 2024** – [A Board of Governors' meeting](#) introduced the 10-year Master Campus Development Plan, which included an 80,000 sq ft Food Sciences facility. The college reported that while it had adapted its program offerings by suspending low-enrollment intakes, it remained on track to meet budget targets despite a 10.4% decline in international enrollment.

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- **December 2024** – Board discussions increasingly focused on financial concerns. The CAAT-A union prepared for a potential strike in the new year, while the College Employer Council (CEC) launched aggressive communications citing income loss and financial instability due to frozen tuition and the international student cap.
- **January 2025** – January 7th, a strike was avoided through an agreement to settle remaining contract issues via mediation-arbitration. On January 9th, the Perth campus closure was announced, with a promise that programs would be re-located to Woodroffe campus, ensuring no job losses. At the [January 16th President's Town Hall](#), with a central message of “no-one is coming to save us,” the administration projected a \$60 million budget deficit for 2025-26, increasing to \$93 million in 2026-27. It also announced a deviation from AA 30 and the pending recommendation to suspend 37 academic programs, though no program details were provided.
- **February 2025** – Without informing faculty and support staff about which areas would be affected, the college launched the Targeted Retirement Departure Initiative (TRDI), followed by the Voluntary Exit Initiative (VEI). The focus on secrecy, caused much distress among members. Further confusion occurred as the VEI was briefly suspended because of a calculation or formula error. [At the Board of Governors' meeting](#), SVPA Julie Beauchamp presented the recommendation to suspend and terminate 37 academic programs. The Board approved the motion without exploring possible alternatives such as redesigning, expanding, or reimagining these cornerstone programs and without coming to a full understanding of the impact of losing these programs.
- **March 2025** – [The President's Town Hall](#) outlined the actions taken by the College Executive team to manage the institution's financial direction. Attendees were reassured that if their questions were not addressed in the forum, they could bring them to their direct reporting authority. In a historic moment, Chairs and Deans also raised concerns—ironically, the very individuals that faculty and support staff were instructed to seek answers from appeared to not have them either.

The past year has demonstrated a clear shift in how the college approaches program suspensions, evolving from a contested process to a more strategic, top-down execution with minimal stakeholder engagement. The administration's ability to learn from previous resistance and refine its methods has resulted in a more aggressive and opaque decision-making process. The deviation from [Policy AA30](#), the exclusion of faculty and staff from critical discussions, and the rapid restructuring efforts all point to a broader institutional strategy that prioritizes financial and operational goals over transparency and shared governance.

The question remains: who is guiding these decisions? What will the long-term consequences of these decisions be on students, faculty, and the college community as a whole? Lastly, what will Phase 2 really have in store for the college community?





Solidarity under a Bigger Tent: Part-Time and Sessional Faculty Union Certification

Liz Von Moos, Local 415 Secretary

What does solidarity mean to you? Common interests? Mutual respect and support? How does solidarity support post-secondary education in Ontario? Soon, all academic employees will be under the OPSEU tent. After years of advocacy and legal proceedings since the Part-Time and Sessional union drive began, [it is expected that the votes cast in 2017 will be counted this April](#). Finally, all of our academic colleagues, regardless of the number of hours they teach, will be united in their passion for working with students in higher education.

Among the many benefits that unionization will bring part-time and sessional faculty, there is great potential here for increased job security for this group of precarious members. While Partial-Load (PL) members now have access to the Partial Load Registry, won in the 2017 round of bargaining, no such provision has been extended to part-time (PT) and sessional (SL) colleagues. Importantly, with an increase in the full academic membership, all faculty members will have more power and be able to support one another against management. For evidence that unionization will empower faculty, one need only look at the delay tactics the CEC has used to prevent the ballot boxes from being opened.

A brief history: in October 2017, PT and SL faculty voted on whether to join OPSEU—in fact, some of our readers likely cast a ballot! For the ballots to be counted, at least 35% of PT and SL faculty needed to express their support for unionization by signing union cards. The CEC has spent an unbelievable seven years engaging in legal challenges (that made it all the way to the Supreme Court!) disputing the list used to determine whether the 35% threshold had been met, causing the ballot boxes to be re-sealed, and blocking the certification process. Adding to the offense, the legal proceedings cost the CEC millions of dollars—money that should and could have been better spent supporting faculty and students in the classroom.

Finally, in July 2024, the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) issued a decision to re-open the ballot boxes, with the vote count expected to take place on April 11th and 17th. OPSEU expects that thousands of faculty will become OPSEU members by April/May 2025. As occurred when PT support staff voted to join their FT support staff colleagues in 2018, PT and SL faculty members will form a new bargaining unit within the existing unit of academic members. At the Local level, the two groups will form a composite Local—a Local covered by one set of bylaws, with Steward and Officer meetings held jointly, and separate caucuses as needed. As their first step, the new PT/SL unit will post a notice to bargain and begin the process of negotiating a Collective Agreement. A Bargaining Team will be elected at the pre-bargaining conference held in a few months (June 19-20).

You can help! Reach out to the PT and SL faculty you know and ask them to provide OPSEU with their contact information [at this link](#). Do you know a current PT or SL member who would be excited for a leadership role? They can indicate their interest [at this link](#). A special Resource Hub for Part-Time and SL Faculty has been created on the OPSEU CAAT-A website, and we encourage you to [share this link with your PT/SL colleagues](#).

While unity would have us push for sameness, solidarity recognizes our differences as we work together. This is a time for solidarity. As was shared in a recent communication from OPSEU, “Building power in a bigger tent is something to celebrate. We need each other, because we are strongest when we fight together – even in times of instability and austerity, this is how working people have always found a way to win against all odds.”

The more people we organize, the more power we have. We’re looking forward to celebrating when the votes are counted in April!





Shell Games and Mirrored Rooms

Judy Puritt, Local 415 1st Vice-President

As a child, did you find shell games mesmerizing? And, when you went to an amusement park, were you fascinated by the mirrored rooms in fun houses? I was drawn in by these clever mind tricks, and, at the same time, I always knew that I was being tricked.

These days, the messages Algonquin employees are reading and hearing about our financial situation and the associated cuts leave a similar sense of being tricked. While we hear/read/watch statements, we double check our previous notes and records trying to find the evidence of why things feel a bit off. For academics, who plan for multi-year programs and regularly plan full semesters, the sense of unbalance resulting from the shifting dialogues can feel tricky and even overwhelming.

In early January, Claude Brulé hosted the first town hall of the academic year. The [September announcements](#) related to CIP code limitations/ restrictions had many of us expecting a college-wide meeting. Despite talks of an imminent financial crisis, and despite managers quietly advising faculty to brush up their resumes, there was no college Town Hall at any point in Fall 2024. Nevertheless, faculty heard rumours and warnings from Chairs about programs in jeopardy, and the Local repeatedly asked for (and was denied) information about specific impacts and plans.

Worried members reached out to the Local asking what we were doing. How could we support them if positions were at risk? How were we holding the college accountable? What were we doing to redress the reductions in international student applications and intakes, related to IRCC restrictions, and the tightening of CIP code designations? In response to these concerns, the Local continued to advocate for transparency, information sharing, and stronger arguments being issued to federal and provincial governments to address funding shortfalls. Without providing the Local with breakdown specifics, President Brulé outlined the college's position [in a message on November 7](#).

Meanwhile, new faculty were hired for January starts. (They had big questions about future security!) New hiring is also still on the schedule for certain programs. Although we know that nothing comes with guarantees, surely the college has a long-term retention plan for new hires?

Also in January, the college's "mitigation strategies" to cope with "unprecedented times" were revealed. President Brulé said he could not guarantee there wouldn't be layoffs and Human Resources announced that people-related cuts would be rolled out in "tranches." We heard of administrators and support staff leaving the college. Some left by choice, and others had less say in their departure. We heard from faculty who suddenly did not have a manager and/or the same number of support people in their area. All information for making these decisions, however, was kept very secret.

And then, faculty were told that the Routine Course Renewal time (RCR)—that much needed and valued block of 112 hours of annual course renewal time—[was being removed as of Fall 2025](#). The Local has heard from individuals whose managers tried to remove spring RCR time for this academic year. Upon questioning the SVPA, the Local was told that the "costing" for course renewal was \$2 million per year. Really?! Again, the claim is hard to disprove when the numbers are not in focus and details are not provided. For now, please reach out to us if your manager has already ended your RCR time so we can pursue this.

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[Puritt (continued...)]

As we have seen and heard, the roll out to reducing positions at the college was bumpy at best. People who received targeted retirement (TRDI) packages were in some cases puzzled as they did not know about any “at risk” aspects of their programs. We also heard how various individuals who were targeted through this initiative felt unvalued by the college, in the way they were treated and talked to. Despite years of active engagement with students and programs, years of loyal advocacy, and years of passionate service, there are now individuals who are frustrated, disappointed, and deeply saddened by the ending of their careers at the college. Going to the fun house should be voluntary—it should not be scary!

The second tranche included the Voluntary Exit Incentive (VEI) program. It sounded exciting and appealing to many who work in schools that have seen great reductions in students and programs because of international growth and dependence. We heard about “estimates” that individuals had been quoted and how keen they were to accept the opportunity to fund their exit. In the interim, people who had received the TRDI were further offended that the VEI looked like a better offer after having been directed to believe that the TRDI was a good offer and “nothing better” would be available in the coming months. Of course, we know that the first round of VEI offers were retracted because “adjustments” had to be made, and the initial estimates were deemed “null and void.” Since the adjustments on the VEI formula, we have now heard of faculty still interested but with no further developments. Curiously, we have also heard of members who were denied the VEI; in some cases, we are continuing to explore those cases as it is unclear—again—why the application was denied.

And that takes us right back to the opening reflection. Has the college shifted its fourth pillar of learning from a focus on education to pure entertainment? Will we be able to identify the correct winning shell or get out of this terrifying house of mirrors? Who knows.

Local 415 on Social Media

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Did you know that Local 415 has an active presence on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)?

If you aren't following us on social media, you might be missing out on important updates about the activities of our Local. You're also missing out on some clever memes and cartoons created by *Local*

Lines co-editor Kim Bosch!

Of course, Local 415's activities are also posted to our website: locallines.org

Another excellent social media channel for members to follow is Ontario College Faculty (on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)), a moderated page for Faculty at all of Ontario's 24 Community Colleges.

