



Update for February 19th, 2021

Unfortunately a really short work week doesn't mean a really short update this week! Some of you will be receiving 2 copies of this – one to your cupe4153 email and one to your personal email. We're just making sure things are working properly on the new system so no need for alarm or concern and I apologize for any confusion but we want to make sure things are working properly before making any further decisions on our relationship with our current web and email service provider.

Snow Removal IS Overtime - I can't believe some supervisors are actually trying to get away with telling people that snow removal on Tuesday doesn't qualify as overtime 'because you're already getting paid'. I literally can't think of a more uninformed, ridiculous or simple minded response which could have financial implications for our members. If they're not sure (and they all should be) then the correct answer is – let me find out for you. These are the same supervisors that don't know the collective agreement or labor laws and try to get their way by saying what they think will sound reasonable to a member. **If you were called in to clear snow on Tuesday, you mark down 3 hours overtime, or submit a lieu time sheet for 3 hours at time and a half. If you're not paid for it on your next pay, or are told again that it's not overtime – please let me know immediately.**

A Huge Thank You! - Unless you've got a private jet and could get away for a vacation in the last week, you'll know too well that between Friday morning and Tuesday morning, we got hit with quite a bit of snow. Tuesday around noon, the call was made to have some staff go in and dig out schools so they would be ready for staff and students on Wednesday morning. **I want to give a huge shout out to all our members who bundled up and spent hours cleaning up after the storm. It wasn't super heavy snow, but it wasn't light and fluffy either and depending on which way the wind was blowing, there was some huge drifts around some of our buildings. We should all be proud of keeping everyone safe and getting things cleaned up!** And yes, we are aware of (again) some supervisors who may have taken matters into their own hands about how many staff were allowed to go in and help, and we will be dealing with that next week at our staff relations meeting.

Monthly Meeting – Sunday at 10am we'll be having our February monthly meeting on Zoom. Email invites were sent out Tuesday morning to the personal email address the office had on file for members. Members can join by phone or computer, with or without video. You can listen in just like a phone call, or watch what's happening if you would like to. I'll post the invite at the end of the update that has the computer link and phone numbers with codes to call in. And yes, I expect there will be a few bugs that we need to work through, but we'll learn how to use everything on the software to our advantage. **Please check your personal emails (Gmail, Hotmail, Rogers, Cogeco, etc.) for the meeting invite sent out Tuesday. It may be in your spam or junk folders so please look there if it's not in your Inbox. One way to get future emails in your inbox is to add 'cupelocal4153@bellnet.ca' to your contacts.**

March Break Cancellation – Just another in a long list of ridiculous decisions by this government. What does this mean for us? If you had holidays or lieu time being used for March break, I have been assured that you will be able to reschedule for when the break does actually occur, or just save them until summer. As we are normally scheduled to work during the break, none of our members should have an impact on EI or other programs like other worker groups. Cancelling holidays or lieu time can be done through your web portal or through your supervisor. If contacting your supervisor about it – please put your request in writing in an email so you have documentation if there's an issue in the future.

How To Get In Touch - As of Tuesday, the State of Emergency in Ontario has been lifted and we're back to a Rubik's Cube of color coded zones that nobody really understands. However, it does mean that our extraordinary office administrator Janna is in person again. If you have an issue that requires an in person visit to our office – please call ahead to make sure someone will be there. Sanitizing your hands will be required when you enter the office and a face covering when social distancing cannot be maintained is mandatory. Please do not come to the office if you are not feeling well or have any Covid related symptoms. For most issues, contacting the office by phone or email can resolve things and you can reach the office at 905-544-7733 or by email to cupelocal4153@bellnet.ca

New Questions on Job Postings - I got a call from the HR Dept just before the job postings went up this week about some new questions being added to the application. The employer is trying to keep record of who makes up their workforce after some internal recommendations about hiring practices about a year ago. The questions ask about heritage, orientation and other things. Answering is totally optional and has NO influence on who is awarded the job as our posting process is based on seniority. This is purely for information purposes and demographics of the employer and all members are free to check the 'I choose not to answer this question' box.

Snow Removal Guidelines – A big thank you to brother Geoff Thompson who is one of our Membership Officers for putting this piece together as I was running real short on time this week!

If you every happen to get called in to do snow removal at a building you are not familiar with, or if you want to verify your responsibilities for the areas requiring snow removal/salting, just like work schedules, there is an official Board document that should be available to all staff for these purposes. Every school should have this posted on the Caretaking bulletin board, but if for some reason you cannot find it, there is a resource to help you out.

Every school was required to do an exterior layout map of what snow removal/salting areas Caretaking is responsible for, the City is responsible for, and what a Contractor is responsible for. To locate this document, log in to eBase, go to "Documents", then in the upper right Search bar, type "snow" - this should return any documents related to snow removal. Usually there are 2 - one for Contractor contact information, and one for snow removal layout. The snow removal layout is a colour coded document that will show the areas of responsibility for snow clearing/salting.

There should be no playgrounds to clear as we don't do that as per Board direction (Snow Clearing at HWDSB Schools Internal Memo attached for reference).

If your map is incorrect, hasn't been updated to reflect any current changes, or if you need help verifying who does what on it - please contact your FOS...and, of course, your Union is here to help too - contact an Executive member or Steward for help.

Well Water Postings - (Bonus Topic from brother Thompson) - New to our Collective Agreement in Appendix "E" is the following: "Effective September 1, 2020, all employees must have successfully completed Board approved well water training in order to post into a school where they have well water."

Please send an email to the Union Office at: cupelocal4153@bellnet.ca indicating if this is training you wish to take. We can approach the Board with a firm number of interested members to get the training provided ASAP. You need to have this training successfully completed BEFORE you can post for a job in a well water school.

Enjoy the weekend and I wish you all dreams of warm sand between your toes, a drink with an umbrella in your hand and the gentle sound of waves in the distance!

Cheers,

Blake

February General Membership Meeting

Zoom Conference Call

Topic: CUPE 4153 February Meeting

Time: Feb 21, 2021 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81569622213?pwd=Yk14Vi9yVU9Qc1ptaXM5STg1bG1KUT09>

Meeting ID: 815 6962 2213

Passcode: 154677

Dial by your location

+1 647 374 4685 Canada

+1 647 558 0588 Canada

Meeting ID: 815 6962 2213

Passcode: 154677

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81569622213?pwd=Yk14Vi9yVU9Qc1ptaXM5STg1bG1KUT09>

INTERNAL MEMO

DATE:	October 31, 2019
TO:	Elementary and Secondary Principals
FROM:	David Anderson – Senior Manager, Facilities Management
SUBJECT:	Snow-clearing at HWDSB Schools

As we approach winter, this memo serves as a reminder of HWDSB guidelines for snow-clearing. Snow-clearing at HWDSB schools is a responsibility that is shared by Board staff, contractors, and the City of Hamilton.

Responsibilities

HWDSB Staff will clear, salt and/or sand:

- Walkways from the city sidewalk to the school
- School steps and portable steps
- Walkways to the portables
- Ramps to schools and portables
- Area outside entrances and fire exit doors
- Fire exit stairs & ramps

HWDSB Contractors, after 5cm+ of snow, will:

- Plow parking lots and sidewalks when HWDSB Facilities staff deem it necessary
- Salt and sand the parking lot before school starts
- If required, Head Caretakers may also salt or sand parts of the parking lot

City of Hamilton is responsible for clearing:

- Snow and ice from sidewalks directly in front of schools which is a top priority for the City
- Note: It may take up to 24 hours after a snowfall for sidewalks to be cleared. Report a sidewalk fronting a school in need of clearing at **905-546-CITY (2489)**

What about playgrounds?

Playgrounds are not plowed or cleared. Head Caretakers inspect playgrounds and sand and/or salt areas made slippery by changing temperatures.

Students will need to take extra caution when walking or playing on school property that may be slippery. Principals concerned about weather or playground conditions may hold indoor recesses and lunch/nutrition breaks.

For more information regarding HWDSB snow clearing procedures, please refer to the infographic which is available on the HWDSB website by following the link below. Please also refer to the website for the most recent version of this document.

For any questions specific to your school, please contact your Facility Operations Supervisor.

[Snow-clearing at HWDSB Schools](#)