



## Update for January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**The Elephant In the Room** - What happens now that the Ministry has extended the pause on in-school learning? Well, with the announcement just made yesterday afternoon - a lot is still in the air. As I try and get this ready for tomorrow - OSBCU is in a meeting with the Ministry advocating for all of our 55,000 members across Ontario for job and income protection as well as child care access. Our own Director of Education is still waiting for details on certain pieces of the puzzle that won't come until sometime today. So,, right now we're all just going on hunches and guesses about what all will happen. We have a staff relations meeting on Monday morning with the HWDSB Senior Team and I told them yesterday that the only thing likely to be on the agenda is how will this extension affect CUPE members and to come up with messaging that addresses questions and doesn't leave any room for misinterpretation. Like I said earlier in a social media post - I know it's tough especially as a casual but please be patient until we know all the facts and sit down with the employer to work things out. Hopefully by Monday afternoon or Tuesday morning there will be a very clear direction for all our members. There's no sense in speculating about things - until you see it in black and white - it's all just a rumor.

**Election Stuff** - In a couple weeks, we will have a byelection for union steward and bylaw committee positions. I want to thank everyone who let their names stand for the election and wish them all the best. It's not easy to run for a position and put yourself out there knowing that you may not be successful, and if you are successful in a position, there's always people who will say you're not doing a good job. I've attached the letter from our Election Committee at the end of this update outlining the election date and how to make sure you can vote. Have your say on the day and take a couple minutes to vote!

**Shift Premium –** There was a question on social media this week about shift premium and how it applies to our members – this is covered in Article 18.06 of the Collective Agreement which says,

18.06 a) The Board shall pay a shift premium for afternoon shift to caretaking staff for night shift where the bulk of the employee's shift hours falls between 2:30 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Afternoon Shift Premium: September 1, 2019 – sixty-nine (69) cents per hour

September 1, 2020 – sixty-nine (69) cents per hour

September 1, 2021 – seventy (70) cents per hour

Where an employee of the caretaking staff voluntarily elects to work a split shift, the shift premium will only apply to those hours applicable to the afternoon shift. What this means to our members is that if the majority of your shift falls after 2:30pm, your entire shift qualifies for the shift premium. So if you worked from 11:30 to 7:30 – 5 hours of your 8 hour shift fall after 2:30 so your put in for 8 hours of shift premium. If you worked from 9 am to 5 pm, only 2 ½ hours of your shift fall after 2:30 so you would not qualify for shift premium for any of your shift.

**HVAC Filters & Who's Changing Them –** We thought this was done and dealt with back in early December at Staff Relations. Yes, the provincial buffoons provided an investment of \$50 million to school boards to upgrade HVAC systems and while that's just a drop in the bucket as to what's actually needed across the province, at least it was something. Contractors came around and did a 'survey' of our HVAC systems and recommended upgrades. Most of our upgrades at HWDSB are in the form of upgraded filters that do a better job at filtering out smaller particles in the air. In the vast majority of our schools, this is just a straight filter swap – the filters are the same size, just with different filter material, similar to what you can do with a furnace in your home. Changing filters is CUPE work and will stay CUPE work. It's called job protection and it's important to realize that. It's not a case of "I don't care if the board sends someone in to change filters, that just means I don't have to do it" - because where does that stop? If the board wanted to send someone in to mop floors or collect garbage or to do the enhanced cleaning – is that going to be OK? No it wouldn't. Full stop. Not happening because it means our own members end up losing out. I have been in touch with Bob Avery and communicated to him that we were told in early December that this would be stopped and only if modifications to actual HVAC equipment to handle different filters would outside contractors be doing that work – but yet it's still been happening in some schools since then. I did receive word from Bob that they believe this is coming from one contractor and possibly only one of their employees who may not understand the situation. I'm hopeful that is actually the case. Needless to say, if you do have contractors show up to change filters in your building, you should politely ask them to leave the filters so that caretaking can change them and immediately get in touch with your supervisor and/or Bob about it.

I don't have much more to say about anything this week. I know there's going to be very tough decisions ahead for some of our members and there's no good answers to a lot the questions people are asking and sometimes there are no answers at all because it hasn't been thought through properly by the Ministry or the employer before holding a press conference or sending a memo. Last April we weathered a storm with most of our members working but some being out for months before being called back. We've been through hell and high water with enhanced cleaning guidelines and battling back positive cases in schools since September. Now this. I think we've all had enough with Covid but we may have a few more battles ahead of us.

Stay safe, stay healthy,

Blake Corkill

## **JANUARY 28, 2021 BY-ELECTION**

**8:00 AM – 5:00 PM**

### **CANDIDATES FOR SHOP STEWARD (4 Positions Available)**

Danny Catanyag	Michelle Madley
Flora DiCarlo	Laurie Penner
Suzy Godelis	Kathleen Powell
Marilyn MacAloney	Dave Wardell

### **CANDIDATES FOR BYLAW COMMITTEE MEMBER (1 Position Available)**

Flora DiCarlo  
Laurie Penner

This by-election will be held online. **Once again, we state that the only way to vote on January 28<sup>th</sup> is to be registered on our CUPE website with a @cupe4153.ca email address.** Credentials for this by-election will be sent only to this @cupe4153.ca email address (not your personal email address or your HWDSB email address!). If you have any questions or problems AT ALL, please contact the Union office by phone (905)544-7733 or email at [officeadmin@cupe4153.ca](mailto:officeadmin@cupe4153.ca). Our office administrator will be glad to help you register, or with existing email addresses and/or passwords. Please log onto your email account **before** the election date to ensure you are able to vote on Election Day.

In Solidarity,  
CUPE 4153 Election Committee