



Members Update for June 18th, 2021

Not a whole lot this week, but a few important items for you....

School Resuming In June?! - And, we're back to no again. The Ministry denied the HWDSB Trustee's request to have in person learning for elementary students for the last week of June. So, students will not be coming back until September, but we still need to wait until all personal items have been picked up from the school and classrooms before we can start doing a full summer clean. To prepare for that, chairs, walls, bathrooms, chalkboards, garbage cans, etc can all be worked on now – just not any desks or lockers that have personal belongings in them. The last thing I want is to have our members accused of losing or misplacing something of value that a student left in their desk and then isn't there when they come to retrieve it.

Congratulations to Ron Flett – Some of you have probably met Ron already, but many of you haven't. Ron was hired by the HWDSB not long ago as an electrician. Ron has been selected by OSBCU to be one of the committee representatives for the Trades/Maintenance Committee. This committee is a sub group that meets regularly to discuss issues that trades/maintenance workers in the OSBCU are having across the province and develop plans on how to improve working conditions and other parts of work life for those members. I want to congratulate Ron on being selected and I know he will work diligently to bring new ideas to the table to benefit trades/maintenance all across the province.

Mental Health Tool – As a part of the Ontario Education Community, our members have access to FeelingBetterNow, an e-mental health platform for assessment and treatment. This platform uses evidence-based e-mental health technologies to help you improve your mental health, allowing you to confidentially identify mental health issues early and take immediate action.

Learn more by watching this FeelingBetterNow informational video and sign up for your confidential and anonymous account at <https://www.feelingbetternow.com/otip>

Second Custodial OSBCU Forum – Tomorrow, the OSBCU will host the second Custodial Forum for all custodial members across the province. I participated in the first forum and it went very smoothly, we had some great conversations around issues we face as caretakers and I learned a lot from members in other locals where they do things differently than we do. If you have the time, please consider logging in to the meeting, sharing some of your ideas and experiences and learning from others. Here's the info for the meeting,

When: Jun 19, 2021 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEvf-uhrD0iH9ANUI_M3WKpKC2Pq7KnuaEi

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Questions that we will be covering at the custodial forum:

- 1- Are you aware of contracting out of custodial work at your board and what actions can we take to eliminate it?
- 2- What actions can we take to better reach and communicate with our custodial colleagues?
- 3- What union training would members of this classification benefit from the most?
- 4- Do you feel you are respected at your worksite? On a sliding scale 1 would be no respect at all and 10 would be very respected. What actions can we take to obtain the respect we deserve for our classification?

Enhanced Cleaners – I feel like I need to touch on this again this week after getting a few phone calls about it. Our expectation as a Local of union brothers and sisters is that we work together and help each other out. If you are in an enhanced cleaning position, I would certainly hope that while your fellow members are doing summer cleaning jobs, you would choose to join them, help and be part of the team. Thinking that you can get up once an hour and go wipe down the same doorknobs and touchpoints isn't going to go very far for your reputation with fellow members while they are cleaning, scrubbing, waxing and doing other jobs for the summer cleaning.



Life Insurance Benefits – An interesting situation came up recently and after getting some information from the Benefits Trust, I wanted to pass it along to all of you. A member was sent a letter explaining to them that their partner would no longer be eligible for life insurance after turning 65. I hadn't heard of this happening before so got in touch with one of the administrators for the Benefits Trust and received this answer:

Coverage for life insurance for member's spouse is provided under the Optional Life Insurance.

As per the Canada Life contract: "Your and your children's optional life insurance will not continue past the end of the day on the last day of the month in which you retire. Your spouse's coverage will terminate at the same time or the end of the day before the date they reach age 65 or are no longer your spouse, whichever comes first." Please refer to page 13 of the member benefit booklet. Below is the link to the member booklet:

[https://www.cupe-ewbt.ca/Content/pdfs/172510%20CUPE%20Education%20Workers'%20Benefit%20Trust%20\(EWBT\)%20Mini%20Booklet%20\(5\)%20All%20Plan%20Members%2002-Dec-20.pdf](https://www.cupe-ewbt.ca/Content/pdfs/172510%20CUPE%20Education%20Workers'%20Benefit%20Trust%20(EWBT)%20Mini%20Booklet%20(5)%20All%20Plan%20Members%2002-Dec-20.pdf)

If you have a spouse that will be turning 65 while you are still working, please note that their life insurance coverage will cease to be in effect the day before they turn 65. As a member, if you are still working after age 65, your coverage will continue until the last day of the month you retire.

June GMM, Special Meeting & Summer Meetings –

June 27th will be our last official General Members Meeting for this 2020/21 school year due to Father's Day being this weekend. As they have been for a while now, the meeting will be held using the Zoom meeting platform. An invite will go out next week with a link to the meeting.

At that meeting, it will be announced that we will be having a Special Members Meeting to deal with proposed amendments to our local By-Laws on July 4th. A copy of the proposed amendments will be sent to all personal email addresses on June 27th for members to review and prepare questions for the By Law Committee. Voting on the proposed amendments will take place during the meeting on July 4th.

Lastly, much like last summer there will be a mountain of information and meetings taking place to deal with school openings, policies and procedures for September. While we don't have dates set up yet – I do plan on having a few informal Zoom meetings over the summer. No union business will be conducted in these meetings, but their purpose will be to keep people in the loop, informed and connected with each other. You may not see weekly updates over the summer, but when information that affects all members needs to be passed on, we will absolutely get that to you through your personal email addresses.

WSIB / Offer of Modified Work – If you are injured at work, we highly recommend that you go see your personal physician or an emergency room doctor as soon as possible depending on the extent of the injury. A detailed list of work restrictions that a doctor recommends is best and explaining to them what your duties are as a caretaker or maintenance worker will be helpful. If you are approached by your supervisor with an offer of modified work, PLEASE talk to one of our local Wellness reps first before accepting or denying that offer. Refusing an offer of modified work may affect your WSIB claim going forward and we don't want to see that happen for anyone.

Summer Office Hours – Just a reminder for everyone that our office closes over the summer as Janna is off. The office will close July 8th and will be open again August 30th. Any communication or questions should be directed to one of our stewards or Executive over the summer. Please use the CUPE 4153 phone list that should be in all caretaking offices in each school. If it's not there, you can find it on our website at www.cupe4153.ca and print one off for everyone to reference. Stewards and Exec will update their voicemail if they are on holidays and not available for a certain amount of time.

I hope everyone has a good weekend with family – the weather is supposed to be nice and sunny & warm so get out there and enjoy it! Take a day trip somewhere and go for a hike. Go visit someone you haven't seen in a while. Rent a canoe and go for a paddle. Take a camera or your phone and go for a walk and take pictures. Whatever it takes to get your mind off work and enjoy time away from your building – just do it.

Cheers!

Blake