



Quick Update.....June 11th, 2021

Let's dive right into things shall we.....

School Resuming In June?! - Wait a minute – why is this still here? We all know that Do Little Dougie made an announcement that schools were closed for in person learning until September last week. But hold on folks – the Trustees of the HWDSB voted on Monday night to ask the government to allow them to open schools up for the last week of June. Yup, you heard that right – our Trustees think it's a good idea to have elementary kids (the vast of which have not been vaccinated) come back for a week of in person learning. A couple days ago I sent out a letter I sent to the Director and Board Chair about the issue and the Director is scheduling a meeting today with all other union presidents to explain the reasoning behind the ask. If there's anything of substance that comes from the meeting, I'll pass it along to you next week.

Central Bargaining Stats – Just under 100 members took the time to go online and complete the Central Bargaining Issues survey for the OSBCU. I was hoping more of our members would take 5 minutes to complete it, seeing as wages, vacation, sick leave and benefits are all Central table issues and not bargained locally. Without going into too much detail – because it would bore you to tears – wages and job security were the two most important issues to the members that completed the survey from our local and I don't think that will be very different for any other local across the province.

Booking Vacation Time - Last week, a memo from some supervisors went out and was incorrect. After some back and forth with the employer, they have agreed that any block of 5 consecutive vacation days will be considered a week and not single days, even if it is over a period of a weekend. For instance, if you wanted vacation from Thursday to Wednesday – they were planning on counting that as 5 individual days. That has been fixed and they agreed it was an error. Any 5 consecutive vacation days will constitute one week as per the collective agreement as it rightly should. Members are still eligible to take 5 individual days off over the summer as per the collective agreement as well.

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 – Next Saturday, 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 – Ok, so our members in enhanced cleaning positions have two separate issues this week.

1) Current Situation - Enhanced cleaners will continue in their current roles until August 31st. Their focus will continue to be on all the enhanced duties (touchpoints, washrooms, etc.) including schools that don't have daycares or other programs running over the summer. Members in these positions are encouraged to assist the team at their school(s) with summer cleaning duties, but it is not mandatory for them. As a local, our position is that we work together and help each other whenever possible. If an enhanced cleaner refuses to assist with summer cleaning jobs as their time permits, the area supervisor will be making stops to ensure that the enhanced cleaning duties are being performed satisfactorily. As the local president, I sincerely hope that none of our enhanced cleaners would refuse to help the rest of the team and risk alienating themselves from other members.

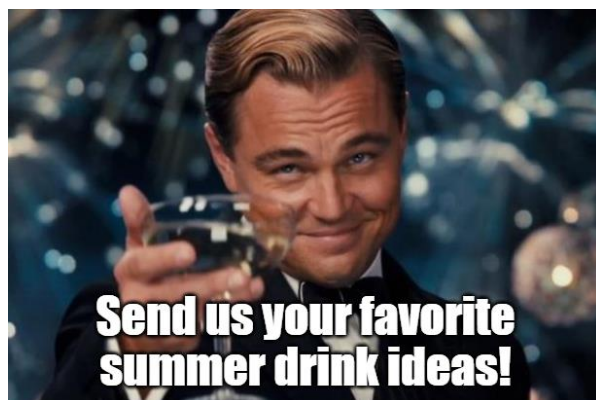
2) Enhanced plans for September – as of right now, we know that 22 full time positions are funded for enhanced cleaning from September to January. What we don't know is how that is going to look in September. We could see 22 elementary schools have 8 hour enhanced coverage. We could see 44 elementary schools have 4 hour enhanced coverage. We could see a mix of those or something different. We are currently in a holding pattern and waiting on guidance from Hamilton Public Health as to what their expectations are on cleaning of touchpoints, washrooms, common areas, etc starting in September is. Right now is too far away to gauge positivity rates, Covid numbers, etc for them to make a decision on that. I expect sometime over the summer there will be discussions on what the enhanced positions look like and how the employer decides who will fill them – could be by posting them, could be allowing people to bump up within their own location. As more information on these jobs becomes available, we will share them with you to keep you informed.



Asbestos Issues – Geoff Thompson took the time this week to put together a piece on Asbestos in the workplace and the number of Capital Projects going on around the board this summer. I've attached his piece at the bottom of the update and encourage you to read it and be aware of any work (custodial, maintenance or Capital) going on in your buildings. Get familiar with what areas of your building contain asbestos – read through your blue book in the caretaker office – be safe at work!

Social Media – CUPE 4153 has our own Facebook page where we make posts about things happening in the local, letting members know to check their personal emails, etc. - you can find us on Facebook here – like and follow the page to keep up! Just keep in mind that it is NOT a closed group and no private info relating directly to members or the workplace will be shared there. Offensive or divisive comments will be deleted and group members will be removed. <https://www.facebook.com/cupe4153>

If there is a member who is interested in looking after our social media – coming up with themes, making posts, creating content, etc. - please get in touch with me directly. A good understanding of Facebook, Twitter and other platforms would be a definite asset.



Before next week, if you have a favorite beverage you like for the summer – alcoholic or not – send it along with any directions to make it, to me at blake.corkill@cupe4153.ca and over the next few weeks I'll post them to share with everyone and we can all get through the summer together! Make sure to include your name and school you're working at so people know who to thank when they find a new favorite!

Cheers!

Blake

Asbestos Beware! - Be Aware of Asbestos

Funding is flowing from the Federal and Provincial Governments to School Boards for HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning) upgrades to deal with COVID-19.

Approved from the over \$17 million the HWDSB is spending on these upgrades, are the following improvements:

- Bottle filling stations – 86 locations
- Touchless door operators – 86 locations
- Infrared water faucets – 36 locations
- Ventilation improvements (new roof top units or classroom unit ventilators) – 30 locations (See attachment for detailed locations)

Our local School Board HWDSB is under a very tight timeline to complete such projects...and with haste, there are usually mistakes. We've already had instances of contractors not following proper HWDSB Asbestos protocols – not viewing the blue Asbestos Inventory books prior to starting work, leaving work areas with friable asbestos still present, etc. This is a clear danger to all CUPE members! – we all need to be aware of our rights and responsibilities when it comes to Asbestos.

The HWDSB has an Asbestos Management Plan (AMP), all the details can be found here:

<https://hwdsbonca.sharepoint.com/sites/myhwdsb/hS/Shared%20Documents/Asbestos/HWDSB%20Asbestos%20Management%20Plan.pdf>

There is a lot of information to be aware of in the Board AMP and the Union does not expect every member will have every fact of it memorized, but here are the essentials you need to always keep in mind:

Learn if your building has Asbestos in it – there should be a blue Asbestos Inventory in every Caretaking Office and Staff Room, read it and find out where the asbestos is in your building.

If any worker comes into your building to make any repairs, always make sure FIRST that the area they are working in does or does not contain asbestos. If it does and you are not sure that the worker is taking proper precautions, please do the following:

- Contact your FOS (Facility Operations Supervisor) immediately to relay your concerns. You are to give them the chance as a manager to address the situation. Management has the legal obligation to deal with all safety issues regarding asbestos.
- Contact your Union – your first point of contact is anyone on the Health & Safety Committee. If you cannot get a hold of anyone, contact a Steward, or contact an Executive Member – the point is your Union cannot help you if they are not aware of the situation, please call!!
- You have the right under the Occupational Health & Safety Act to initiate a work refusal – do not be afraid to exercise your right, it is your right (and responsibility) for you to leave the workplace to return home to people who love and depend on you, we are in it together – call your Union for help!!...do not every put yourself in a situation where your life is in the hands of someone other than YOU!!

We all need to work together on this as-best-os we can!! 😊

	LOCATION	GENERAL SCOPE
1	Ancaster Meadow	Replace Childcare RTU
2	Balaclava PS	Installation of new ventilator units and RTU
3	Bennetto	Installation of new ventilator unit
4	Buchanan Park	Installation of new ventilator unit
5	Cecil B. Stirling	Replace AHU
6	Dundana PS	Replace AHU
7	Ecole Elementaire Michaelle Jean	Installation of new ventilator unit
8	Flamborough Centre Senior PS	Installation of new ventilator unit
9	Franklin Road	Installation of new ventilator unit
10	Gatestone	Replace Childcare RTU
11	Gordon Price	Install Childcare RTU
12	Highview	Installation of new ventilator unit
13	Hill Park Learning Centre	Replace AHU
14	Huntington Park	Installation of new ventilator unit
15	James Macdonald	Replace AHU
16	Lawfield Elementary School	Replace Childcare RTU
17	Lisgar	Replace AHU
18	Memorial PS (Hamilton)	Installation of new ventilator unit
19	Millgrove PS	Installation of new ventilator unit
20	Mount Albion PS	Installation of new ventilator unit
21	Norwood Park	Installation of new AHU
22	R A Riddell	Replace AHU
23	Ray Lewis PS	Replace Childcare RTU
24	Richard Beasley	Replace AHU
25	Rosedale	Replace AHU
26	Sir Wilfrid Laurier	Install Childcare RTU
27	Sir William Osler	Replace Childcare RTU
28	Westmount SS	Replace Gym AHU
29	Westview	Replace AHU
30	Yorkview	Installation of new ventilator unit