



Members Update for March 25th, 2022

Social Committee Get Together – Our Social Committee has been waiting for this day just as much as we all have for the past two years – and it’s time to have a get together, IN PERSON! No union business, no votes, no Zoom or Teams meeting – just a good old in person fun time!

When – April 9th @ 7pm **Where – EndZone Bar 1305 Main St. East (across from Delta High School)**

Let us know you’re coming – If you plan to attend, please let Darlene Barrick know by texting or calling 289-237-8505

Upcoming Important Dates – Mark your calendar folks – we’ve got some dates lined up for you in the next few months!

April 9th – Social Night at EndZone Bar

April 24th – Monthly Members Meeting

May 15th – Monthly Members Meeting & Election Nominations

June 23rd – Election Day

June 26th – Monthly Members Meeting & New Union Positions

Election Committee – **We need 3 members to help organize and oversee our June elections.** These 3 members cannot run for any positions in the election. Your roles will be to contact nominees to determine if they accept or decline their nominations, scrutinize election campaign materials and handle any election day issues from members, along with any other questions or concerns that come up during the election process. If you are interested in helping the Local by serving on the Election Committee, please email the office at cupelocal4153@bellnet.ca and let Janna know.

Classroom Conditions - If you’re having issue with classrooms left in terrible conditions on a regular basis, please email your school, classroom number and a few pictures of the classroom to classroomconditions@gmail.com and we’ll make sure they get passed along to senior managers.

Bargaining Team – Your bargaining team met on Tuesday and Wednesday this week to go over the results of the Local Bargaining Survey and begin going over the collective agreement line by line to suggest changes that would benefit our members. We will be meeting again next week as we have timelines that need to be met for submitting issues to the OSBCU. I want to thank everyone that took the time to fill out the survey – we had about a 25% participation and while I wished that was higher, we will take those suggestions and priorities and work with them.

Meeting your Mobilizer! - Starting next week, you'll be getting a visit from your mobilizer. Each zone of schools will have a mobilizer that will be responsible for keeping you up to date on issues coming from the OSBCU and talking with you about events surrounding bargaining. The first contact you'll have with them will be to consider signing a letter to the next Premier of Ontario asking them (whoever it is) to make properly funding Education in Ontario a priority. Your mobilizer will bring the forms around, ask if you're willing to sign it and if you are – that's fantastic as we're hoping to have a 75%+ participation rate for this letter across the OSBCU membership. When you've signed your letter, you'll keep the pen, and your mobilizer will take the letter back to our office and then forward it along to OSBCU for them to present to candidates running as leaders of the provincial parties. If you want to take a selfie with your signed letter, that's even better and I'd love nothing more than to create a giant poster of individual pictures of our members all in agreement and standing together on this issue! All the letters and pens will be put together for the mobilizers early next week, so keep your eyes and ears open for a visit and practice your signatures!

Along with the letter to the future Premier, **please check out the report** of what the last 10 years of cuts have done to our wages at <https://osbcu.ca/news/ten-years-of-cuts/> so when these types of conversations come up with family & friends, you know the facts about how much we've actually lost.

Many Thanks – Unfortunately in our line of work, we don't hear many positive comments directed our way. More often than not, we just get crapped on because we missed sweeping up a drinking box straw wrapper. And while most of us have grown some thick skin over the years, it's nice when there is appreciation shown and passed on to us for the work we do. Maybe if the employer used a carrot instead of sticks, our morale would be a lot better!

I want to tell all of you how much I appreciate what you all do. Our plumbers, electricians, glaziers, locksmiths, mechanics and everyone else in the trucks – you're the best at keeping our schools operating and functioning properly by showing up to fix and replace things. When something breaks, our own cavalry rides in on rusted out trucks and vans that probably wouldn't sell on Kijiji for anything more than scrap value. They show up, they diagnose and get to work getting the lights back on or a tennis ball out of a toilet or in my case earlier this week – board up 6 windows shot out with a pellet gun in one night. Then they get back in their rust buckets and ride along to the next call for help.

Our caretaking staff is second to none across the province. The way we approach our jobs, support the students through our work and our smiles, create a clean, safe and welcoming environment for students and our teaching co-workers – it all makes a huge difference to the 50,000 students and 7,000 staff at the HWDSB. The crap we deal with day after day (sometimes literally) would be enough to send lesser people running from the building with their hair on fire. But not us – we roll up our sleeves, grab a spray bottle, rag and a mop and we charge in like we’re going into battle. Anyone who thought being a caretaker would be easy has never followed us around for an 8 hour shift.

Our family of Executive, stewards, health & safety reps, social committee, women’s committee and trustees work tirelessly for our members. Many evenings I’m part of messages in group chats and over email going back and forth between members and union reps. Some of our phones and emails start buzzing at 5:30am and keep going until late into the night. Most of this happens while we’re working in our own schools and sections or taking time away from our real families. We are very fortunate to have the elected reps we have that work hard to serve all our members to the best of their abilities. Like any family, we don’t always agree on things and we do have some heated discussions, but one thing we always come back to is the question of what is in the best interest of the individual member or the Local as a whole. We may not always agree, but we always need to be agreed that we do have a common goal – keeping our jobs secure and securing the best possible pay, benefits and working conditions we can.

We ask a lot from our elected positions, and we get the best from them with the training and guidance they’ve been given. Our employer asks a lot from our members, and we give it because we know the work we do has a direct impact on the learning that happens day after day in all HWDSB locations. The students we serve know us by name after we’ve spent a while in a school. Some call us janitors, some call us caretakers, some call us garbage collectors – but whatever term they use, they really do appreciate the jobs we do. We’re the ones who they smile at when they get sent out into the hallway for a while. We’re the ones they feel they can talk to when they don’t trust anyone else. We’re the ones who have for the past two years kept them as safe and secure as possible so they can continue learning and developing. Never forget the impact and importance of your job here at the HWDSB. Some people may look down at it, some may refuse to acknowledge it, some may even disregard your contributions entirely. But we know that if we didn’t show up and do what we do – the rest of the system falls apart awfully fast.

Your job is needed. Your job is important. Your job is crucial to the operation of a “business” with almost 60,000 customers in 100 locations. Never forget that and don’t let anyone try and convince you otherwise.

Have a fantastic weekend everyone!

Cheers,

Blake