



Members Update for August 26th, 2022

Does the Crown & CTA Response Piss You Off? - Well, after being back to work for a couple days and digesting more of the info I missed while away, I'm even more upset about the government's offer to the OSBCU – specifically on wages. Never mind the job security, funding for extra staffing, short term sick benefits, etc. etc. Sure, let's just continue to ask that Education Workers take a pay cut “because there's no money” while managers and others aren't subject to Bill 124 and it's 1% increases for the last 3 years. Even last year, good old Skinny Jeans Lecce took a nice increase for himself while you and I – were supposed to be happy and pay all our inflation riddled bills with a 1% raise. But to be generous and show how much we appreciate all the work you do on the front line in schools – we're gonna offer you 1.25%! Don't you feel valued and happy now? The paper the Crown and CTA counter proposals were written on are even more useless than the 1 ply toilet paper schools are issued while the Ed Center gets to wipe with 2 ply. See a trend here? There's money for some things, but not for others. It's a matter of values and priorities, not a money issue.

If you're really upset about the latest offer – and to be honest I don't think they'll get much better – then you have a decision to make along with all 55,000 of us across Ontario. Valuing yourself and the job you do each day and week enough to vote YES in September when it comes to a Central Strike Vote or accepting a useless offer that will either drown you financially or have you quit and look elsewhere. I will be voting YES – you can count on that. Since when did a public servant agree to be treated like dirt year after year, have their family income cut year after year, have their benefits attacked year after year, see their students suffering because they don't have the tools they need to succeed year after year – and then when they ask for what they both DESERVE and NEED – we are attacked and called greedy?

Strikes aren't something looked forward to by anyone but the media. I'm a single dad with two daughters. I have all the same bills as anyone else and a few extra ones – I do have a bit of a fishing gear addiction. **None of us can “afford” a strike. But at the same time, none of us feels like slowly withering away, losing our apartment or home, our vehicle, having our hydro cut off or not being able to afford to get to work.** I know there's lots of tough decisions to make for your families during these times. We are all going to be making them. But here's my opinion – for what it's worth. I'm going to fight these cuts to my life, my enjoyment and my families security. The work I do can't only be valued in empty, hollow words. It has to be valued in all ways, including financially. I think every one of us deserves a real raise.

Starting next week, members of our mobilizing team headed up by Laurie Penner and Jason Atkinson will be visiting schools and bringing information to you about a number of things including getting your commitment to vote YES in September for the Central Strike Vote.

Yesterday, I sent a letter to our HWDSB Board of Trustees. I've attached a copy of the letter for you to read. For those of you that don't know – the OSBCU bargains our Central Agreement with the Crown (government) and the CTA (Council of Trustees Association). The HWDSB Trustees are part of the CTA. So, the very Trustees that we have here at the HWDSB have provided input and opinions that shape the counter proposals including the insulting 1.25% increase in wages. It's disgusting, plain and simple. Other school board Trustees have come out in full support of the OSBCU proposals and I'm asking ours to do the same. I promise you when I have a response from them, I'll be sure and share it with you. It's simple – either our Trustees support us and our proposals or they don't.

To try and wrap this up and not take up too much more of your time today because we've all got Monday on our minds with co-workers returning to our buildings and the mayhem that the week before schools brings:

The Central Strike Vote will take place the last week of September.

Last weekend, it was an overwhelming majority vote from Locals to NOT include work to rule activities this time around so if there is a removal of services, it will be a full walk out strike. A full removal of services – if bargaining talks break down – wouldn't be legally possible until sometime late in October.

Based on what I see, hear and know as of today – I think it's best that every one of you and myself plan for holding picket signs for at least a while sometime this fall because I have absolutely zero faith or confidence in the government to take our proposals seriously.

The court system will not save us. Legislation always end up hurting us. Bill 115, Bill 124, legal settlement for Bill 115 that provided \$800 for 3 years of zero wage increases. Being designated "essential" does not come with increases and benefits – look at what's happened in healthcare here in our own backyard. Being together and having true solidarity is the best chance we have.

That's why for my family and myself, I'm voting YES to the Central Strike Vote. Because the job I do provides value to the families and people of Ontario. Because I deserve to be treated and compensated fairly for the work I do. Because any increases I do get goes right back into the economy – I don't have an offshore account to stash money in. Because I refuse to accept the empty words that "we don't have money for that" while there's a \$10 billion dollar very controversial highway waiting to be built that will just serve to enrich a few developers and serve a tiny part of the population in the province. I'm voting YES for all these reasons and more and I hope you'll commit to doing the same.



Review of the Crown & CTA Response : OSBCU has created a graphic that breaks down the legalese info in the Crown & CTA response into usable information. You may ask why should we care about prep time & DECE's in kindergarten rooms – and that's a valid question. Across the province, OSBCU represents a variety of different Education Worker positions – in some boards like ours we have caretaking & maintenance. In other boards like our brothers and sisters in the Hamilton Catholic Board – they represent EA's. In other boards they represent librarians, speech pathologists, clerical support, payroll, ESL teachers and dozens of other job classifications. These proposals benefit all our members and even if one piece seems strange or unimportant to you – it matters to the whole and should be supported. I'll include the graphic in the attachments with this update.

There's been lots of vacancies over the summer and unfilled positions – lots of schools are still struggling to get things finished and be ready for the first day of school. If you're available to work this weekend or next weekend to help out (and put some money away for a rainy day.....) please contact your supervisor and let them know if needed, you're able to work some overtime and help another location out!

Cheers,

Blake



CUPE Ontario School Boards Council of Unions (OSBCU) What does the August 15, 2022 Employer Proposal mean for you?

What CUPE-OSBCU Proposed	What the Crown/CTA Proposed	What would the Employer Proposal mean for you?
<p>Wage increases of \$3.25/hour in each year of the next agreement</p> <p>Pay casual employees the same rate as permanent employees</p>	<p>2% increase for members earning less than \$40,000 per year</p> <p>1.25% for members who earn \$40,000 or more per year</p> <p>Continue lower pay rates for casual employees</p>	<p>A real wage cut for all education workers of 9-11% over the next 4 years.</p> <p>Cumulative wage cut of 20-22% since 2012.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention problems would continue and worsen, meaning jobs unfilled and fewer supports for students.</p> <p>Increased workloads.</p>
<p>Improve job security/service security language to ensure minimum staffing levels</p>	<p>Elimination of all job security/service security language</p>	<p>School boards could, and would, cut staff below existing levels, denying students the services they need.</p>
<p>Additional funding to create new staff in all education worker classifications</p>	<p>No new money for staffing</p>	<p>Students who need additional supports would be deprived of what they need.</p> <p>Workloads would increase to the breaking point and schools will be less able to function.</p> <p>No ability to increase cleaning standards in schools.</p>
<p>Preserve the existing sick leave and short-term disability plan</p>	<p>Massive cut to short-term disability plan</p>	<p>Most members would not be able to access the short-term disability plan they currently have and will lose income at a time when they need it most.</p>
<p>Paid prep time for members who work directly with students</p>	<p>No paid prep time</p>	<p>Unpaid work would continue to be expected of education workers.</p> <p>The employer does not understand the value of prep time.</p>

What CUPE-OSBCU Proposed	What the Crown/CTA Proposed	What would the Employer Proposal mean for you?
Guarantee that a Designated Early Childhood Educator is in every Kindergarten class	No guarantee of a DECE in every Kindergarten class	Thousands of students would be denied the benefits of the two-educator model of full-day Kindergarten.
Require all boards to provide minimum hours of work for education worker positions	No change to hours of work for positions that are currently under the normal standard	Fewer hours of work for low paid workers, and less time available to provide supports for students.
Improve access to professional development for all education workers	Status quo on professional development	Education workers would be denied access to training and skills development required to keep up in a dynamic field
Benefits funding to allow for improvements to the plan for all members	Freeze funding for benefits for 4 years	Benefits would be cut substantially by 2024. The benefits plan will be unsustainable without funding.